The Palgrave Handbook of Learning and Teaching International Business and Management

Edited by
Maria Alejandra Gonzalez-Perez
Karen Lynden · Vas Taras

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ISBN 978-3-030-20414-3 ISBN 978-3-030-20415-0 (eBook)
https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-030-20415-0

This Palgrave Macmillan imprint is published by the registered company Springer Nature Switzerland AG
The registered company address is: Gewerbestrasse 11, 6330 Cham, Switzerland

Acknowledgments

Vas Taras

I would like to express my deep admiration to the work of my coeditors, Maria Alejandra Gonzalez-Perez and Karen Lynden, who have completed as we were preparing this volume. From the idea to write the book, to organizing countless meetings with publishers and authors, to managing thousands of emails and files—their leadership, work ethics, and attention to detail have been very inspirational, impressive, and humbling.

Maria Alejandra Gonzalez-Perez

I want to express that it was an absolute pleasure for me to work with my coauthor in several projects, and with my friend with whom I share many passions and affinities—Vas Taras. Taras is an inspiration to many in the world. His restless, curious, adventurous, and committed mind and spirit, his passion for teaching, and his reflections positively impact us. But what I value most about Taras is the emotional and strategic support I receive from him in every project we have worked on together. Taras has been my great defender. That's why I absolutely recommend having him as a colleague, coauthor, and friend!

I also thank Taras immensely for having involved Karen Lynden. A month before we presented the proposal of the book, I did not know Lynden. I confess that I am quite resistant to establishing new relationships of any kind with new people. However, I loved working with Lynden. It made me feel very

good that Lynden respected my work style and supported me in the moments where we had to exert a very strict pressure to be able to meet the deadlines to get this project in less than a year. With Karen very quickly because of the respect I felt for her. Karen's commitment, kindness, and speed of response were visible, and they generated so much confidence that I felt a great complicity and compatibility with Lynden. I can say openly that Karen complemented me well in this project; and Taras was the inspiration and the emotional engine who supported me all the time. Taras, thank you for trusting me one more time. Lynden, thank you for being my complement. I think this project proved that we are a wonderfully fascinating trio.

Finally, I want to thank my loved ones who were patient and gave me time, understanding, and love all these months to finish this book. To my parents Guillermo and Luz Marina, to my sisters Catalina and Vanessa, my niece Antonia and my nephew Miguel. Thanks to my beloved family: Cian Felipe, Laura, Tiwaz Andrés, and Valentín Amado. And of course, thanks to Angela who gave me cafes, breakfasts, water, and sweets every day.

I also take this opportunity to thank Universidad EAFIT in Colombia (my home institution) for supporting me in this project. To my Dean, Ricardo Uribe, who is passionate about experiential learning, also my University President and great leader, Juan Luis Mejia Arango, my department head Carlos Mario Betancur, and my special colleagues.

I also want to thank the Academy of International Business (AIB) for being the best association that exists in the universe. I can be biased about this statement but the truth is that I feel that at AIB I have found an opportunity to meet heroes, celebrities, rigorous scientists, and maternal and paternal colleagues, I have met people I now love as sisters and brothers. So, I thank AIB for being such an important part of my life and for allowing me to serve the world through the academy.

Karen Lynden

To Vas Taras: Thank you for opening a world of ideas and collaborations to thousands upon thousands of students, professors, and businesses across the globe. A wonderful person to work with: innovative, high-energy, sharing, kind, professional, and patient. Thank you for all of the connections and opportunities you create.

To Maria Alejandra Gonzalez-Perez: Thank you for your trust and openness; for being a great communicator and collaborator. Gonzalez-Perez created the digital architecture of this multi-phased and complexly layered

project. She is a master organizer, expert project planner, and strategic designer. Her professionalism and strategic vision are admirable, and I am grateful to have had this outstanding opportunity to work with her and learn from her in this capacity.

To the coauthors: It has been an incredible process to work with you all in creating a handbook that represents a vast diversity of ideas dedicated to providing students experiences to learn and grow through high-impact learning activities, projects, and programs. Know your work is preparing your students for their careers—to achieve their dreams—and is improving the way we teach, learn, do business, and interact as human beings in the world.

To the Academy of International Business, AIB-SE (go Southeast!), and the X-Culture Community: Thank you for providing publication and conference opportunities. I've gained some of the greatest professional and personal relationships in my life through these networks—all while collaborating on a number of dynamic projects through the years.

To the faculty and staff at the Bryan School of Business and Economics at UNC Greensboro: Thank you for creating a culture of collaboration, inquiry, and community. It is an honor to be a part of the Department of Management.

To my students: The world becomes a better place through knowledge and idea sharing. Special thanks to those students who participated in my first X-Culture cohorts. You inspire me!

To John—husband and best friend: Thank you for your enthusiastic support, encouragement, and all of the coffee talks though this project. *What would we do if we could do anything?* The best is yet to be.

Dear reader: Thank you for picking up this Handbook in search of new ideas. We are all in this together! May you be encouraged to join communities where you can collaborate and express your unique contributions. We are all learning from each other.

Final Note

The coeditors thank Marcus Ballanger, Commissioning Editor for Scholarly Business at Palgrave Macmillan, for motivating us and supporting us to do this follow-up Handbook and for his very insightful, valuable, and expeditious feedback.

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Introduction: Learning and Teaching International Business and Management Using Experiential Learning Pedagogy

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Learning and Teaching International Business and Management Using Experiential Learning Pedagogy

Maria Alejandra Gonzalez-Perez, Karen Lynden, and Vas Taras

In 2014, Palgrave published *The Handbook of Experiential Learning in International Business*. The book was designed to be a one-stop source for international managers, business educators and trainers who seek to either select and use an existing experiential learning project, or develop new projects and exercises of this kind.

The success of that book prompted requests for a follow-up edition. After a few years of hard work in assembling a new team of editors and authors, we present here a follow-up volume. Its goal is to offer a broader and updated perspective on experiential learning pedagogy for international business and management, and beyond.

One development observed since the publication of the 2010 original edition of the handbook is that international business as a discipline and a profession is becoming more transversal. International business topics and courses are increasingly incorporated in business and non-business university programs around the world. This 2019 new edition reviews theoretical and empirical approaches of experiential learning and its role in increasing the

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M. A. Gonzalez-Perez et al. (eds.), *The Palgrave Handbook of Learning and Teaching International Business and Management*, https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-030-20415-0_1

effectiveness in teaching and learning of international business, and also, in the incorporation of international business-related concepts and competences in business and non-business university curriculum.

Same as in the original handbook, this follow-up edition has two major parts. The first part provides an updated overview of the theories of experiential learning and effectiveness of teaching and learning in international business through the use of experiential learning projects. Part two provides a collection of specific applications of experiential learning in international business and related fields. Each chapter of the book describes a different experiential learning project, including large-scale international collaboration projects, joint projects with international businesses, designing experiential learning activities, simulations, experiential activities, or other experiential projects used in business and non-business courses.

Each chapter provides a detailed description on a hands-on project that the authors use to improve learning in their teaching. The description includes the project background and history, challenges, best practices, suggestions for future International Business (IB) educators who may want to incorporate this or similar experiential learning in their courses, and guidelines for developing similar experiential learning activities.

The described projects range from large projects that cover entire semester, to smaller projects and activities that span only a few days, to quick exercises and activities that take only a few minutes to a few hours to run. Some of the projects described in this part of the book were developed as parts of formal courses or training programs, while others can be used independently and offered as an extra-curricular option for the students (competitions, internships, etc.).

The purpose of this handbook, as before, is to be a one-stop source for educators and trainers who seek to either select and use an existing experiential learning project or develop new projects and exercises of this kind.

This handbook contains a total of 44 chapters divided into 3 sections as follows:

- Part I: Introduction: Learning and teaching international business and management using experiential learning pedagogy.
- Part II: Theory-based and conceptual chapters: Learning and teaching international business and management using experiential learning pedagogy.
- Part III: Application-based chapters: Applications of experiential learning pedagogy in international business management learning and teaching. This section offers examples such as:

- Course design
- Class projects
- Capstone projects
- Consulting/corporate challenges
- International competitions
- Partnerships/joint projects with businesses and community
- Arts, culture, and experiential learning in international business
- Online collaborative platforms and global virtual teams
- Study tours and study abroad experiences
- Executive education

The 2019 edition of the handbook presents a wide-ranging collection of chapters authored by professors and researchers, spanning a great diversity of university and organizational affiliations. Eighty-seven co-authors of this edited volume collectively represent academic institutions in 23 countries in Asia, Africa, North America, South America, Europe, and Oceania.

It is our hope that the readers will put the experiential learning theories and practical examples provided in this book to a good use. We encourage the readers to build upon these theories, replicate and apply the lesson plans, projects, and programs documented in these chapters.

We hope that the handbook will inspire a creation of new theories and methods for implementing impactful experiential learning activities, projects, and programs in their curriculum, within their organizations, and through their work in the field.

Maria Alejandra Gonzalez-Perez is Full Professor of Management at Universidad EAFIT, Colombia and Former Vice-President of Administration at the Academy of International Business (AIB) (2015–2018) and the regional chapter chair for Latin America and the Caribbean (2018–2021) of the same organisation. She is also a member of the global council of the Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) 1 of the World Government Summit, coordinator of the Colombian universities in the virtual institute of the UN Conference for Trade and Development and editor-in-chief of the business journal *AD-minister*. She has published 14 books, nearly 50 academic peer-reviewed papers and several book chapters in the areas of internationalisation, sustainability, corporate social responsibility and international migration.

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Part II

Theory-Based and Conceptual Chapters: Learning and Teaching International Business and Management Using Experiential Learning Pedagogy

2

Revisiting the Impact of Education Philosophies and Theories in Experiential Learning

Irwyn Shepherd, Elyssebeth Leigh, and Amanda Davies

Introduction

Familiar habits around experiential teaching and learning that have evolved during the development of International Business (IB) as an educational discipline are being questioned in the twenty-first century. The first, and perhaps the most obvious of these questions, concerns the ways in which technology, such as web-based information and social media, is rapidly altering individual access to knowledge. The second concerns employers' increasing assertion of their right to define the capabilities they expect of new graduate employees (Jackson & Chapman, 2012). The third is that students themselves now have quite different expectations about how and what education has to offer them—especially around the importance of knowledge sharing in the digital space rather than

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M. A. Gonzalez-Perez et al. (eds.), *The Palgrave Handbook of Learning and Teaching International Business and Management*, https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-030-20415-0_2

knowledge hoarding (Hase & Kenyon, 2000). Students are thus being oriented toward a future where *knowing how* to learn using immersive, interactive and reflective activities eclipses the current focus on *knowing what* to memorize. All of these factors indicate that International Business educators are facing challenges on current modes of teaching and assumptions about how to formulate, deliver and assess relevant learning outcomes (LOs) in this changing landscape.

This chapter invites readers to pause and reflect on their current level of awareness of, and ability to address, the andragogy[1] related to experiential learning in tertiary IB education settings. The chapter focuses on how to contribute more effectively to experiential learning and teaching in IB through identification and use of best practice and evidence-based educational underpinnings, particularly relevant to uses of simulation as a teaching and learning method. Evidence from educational practices in other disciplines is offered in support of this approach, and a research-based Conceptual Framework model, which identifies and describes ten pivotal, interacting education theories, is provided to facilitate application of experiential learning strategies. The Conceptual Framework model is web-based, allowing accessibility and interactivity. Two different examples using this model are presented to demonstrate starting points for IB educators, who are attending to fundamentals of course, unit and content design. These are provided to show how educators can construct bespoke, contextualized and experiential learning strategies while encompassing relevant theories and activities.

Experiential Learning in International Business

Designing and delivering experientially based learning programs involves effective combinations of relevant knowledge with appropriate application of education philosophies and theories. Such applications will involve a conscious understanding—or may rely on a more intuitive awareness—of educational precepts informing particular learning approaches and contexts.

Although content-expert academic educators are often not expected to demonstrate appropriate teaching capabilities, teaching and learning contexts are becoming ever more complex. This makes it just as unacceptable for educators to remain ignorant of philosophies and theories that inform their practice, as it would be for researchers to remain ignorant of research methodologies relevant to the work of conducting research.

[1] In some instances, the word here would be 'pedagogy'—however, this term refers to theories of teaching children, and as we are addressing the task of helping young adults learn, we are using the appropriate term of 'andragogy' referring to theories of teaching adults (younger and older).

If student learning experiences are to be optimized and intended learning outcomes achieved, educators and researchers alike require a comprehensive grounding in, and skills for, an appropriate and effective application of evidence-based practices. This chapter explains how to embed learning theories into experiential teaching practices through use of a Conceptual Framework model, which gives educators access to tangible and supportive guidance for design, development and delivery of experiential learning opportunities. The Conceptual Framework model provides a resource not otherwise available in a single location to aim for evidence-based educational fidelity.[2]

In a very literal sense, International Business (IB) educators operate as managers of their environments as they teach. They are implicitly modeling, in real time, their beliefs about education, as well as about managing and educating. This suggests an obligation to both know *about* underpinning educational and management theories, and know *how* to strategically and effectively apply them. We are asserting that academic educators, including those in IB, must make specific and concerted efforts to enhance their own educational skill sets to ensure that learning experiences they design and provide do actually enhance the student experience beyond passing on information. Through the use of evidence-based educational design of experiential learning, educators establish a stronger educational position to ensure learners are work prepared, with appropriate twenty-first-century employability skills.

Rationale

Whilst acknowledging there is a growing array of research about what content to include in IB subjects, employers are increasingly raising concerns over the lack of work preparedness of potential employees (Lowden, Hall, & Elliot, 2011; Wilton, 2008). They are particularly concerned about the varying capabilities for connecting theories to context and translating theory-based knowledge into operational practice. In effect, the demand is that graduates be better prepared to effectively turn knowledge into action in work environments facing disruptive, competitive challenges locally, nationally and globally. Work integrated learning is one example of educational strategies designed to respond appropriately to such demands through improved experiential learning (Cooper, Orrell, & Bowden, 2010).

[2] Striving to design and deliver as precise as can be attained, educational outcomes using appropriate education theories/frameworks, learning models and instructional design models to achieve identified learning objectives/learning outcomes (observable and measurable knowledge/skills attitudes/values) (Shepherd, 2017).

Industries operating in high stakes environments—in which uncommon occurrences can lead to unfavorable outcomes—are investing heavily in simulation-based experiential learning strategies. They recognize the benefits of replicating and learning to prepare for potential dangers through the extended use of authentic, experiential activities. The outcomes of decisions made in such contexts provide opportunities for users, and associated industries and disciplines, to investigate how to apply similar strategies to increase the learning and teaching impact of experiential education interventions.

One extensive user of experientially based training and learning is the aviation industry—a prime example of employers of IB graduates and an early adopter of immersive interactive simulation to address the array of technical and human factors associated with staff preparation for routinely complex and occasionally unpredictable incidents (Davies, 2013, pp. 16–17). More recently, the healthcare industry has followed suit, embracing and embedding the benefits of simulation into its web of services, addressing clinical, management and teamwork learning needs—all with a focus on patient safety and evidence-based outcomes. Raemer (2006) reports that the majority of disciplines in healthcare are embracing simulation methods to help improve education outcomes and mitigate risk with a positive influence on patient safety.

Other high-stake industries applying simulation-based learning to the task of improving staff development and systems management include the defense forces, law enforcement/policing and the nuclear, petroleum and mining industries. For example, a 1998 report by the Australian National Audit Office (ANAO) stated that defense had invested about AUS$1 Billion on simulators since 1960 and would invest over AUS$1.1 Billion in simulation over the next five years (McFarlane & Kruzins, 2006). Such extensive investments in experientially based learning indicates a strong commitment to preparing staff for the practicalities of their workplaces and is a strong indicator that academic contexts, especially IB-related programs, need to extend their use of similar teaching and learning strategies to prepare graduates for more immediate engagement with skill-oriented work contexts.

Quality Management of Experience-Based Learning

The use of simulation-based experiential learning has been increasing in healthcare workplaces since the mid-1990s and is becoming more familiar in related tertiary education. The ‘Conceptual Framework for Simulation in Healthcare Education’ (hereafter Conceptual Framework, Shepherd, 2017a)

emerged from ongoing efforts to develop educationally based realistic learning contexts in healthcare. The Conceptual Framework model and process guides context and content experts, collaborating on teaching strategies that need to be (and be seen to be) both engaging and aligned with the current and future expectations of learners and employers.

In healthcare settings, the content experts are clinicians, possessing expert skills and knowledge but usually unaware of how to combine relevant educational theories with their experience-based practices. Like IB educators, police educators and those working in other disciplines where there is a post-graduation work focus, clinical teaching roles anticipate that the educators model the professional practices they teach. Thus, associated learning environments need to address the increasing array of expectations that graduates will be immediately effective and efficient as contributors to organizational performance from their entry into twenty-first-century workplaces.

The Conceptual Framework model was initially evolved to support the development of educationally sound healthcare learning contexts and is now accessible as an interactive app[3] for a wider range of audiences. Its use enables the development of interactive teaching strategies by enhancing educators' (often unconscious) reliance on practices drawn from their own past experiences of being a student, by replacing familiar, unquestioned habits with informed application of appropriate theory-based educational concepts. The Conceptual Framework model provides subject matter experts with guidelines for the use of appropriate and relevant educational theory in a way that does not require prior knowledge of the theories. This evidence-supported format enlarges the scope for developing learning environments to prepare students to address employer expectations and enhance long-term employment prospects.

It seems that simulation for education and training is often adopted as a result of emerging awareness of its use in related contexts. Just as health care is drawing on prior aviation experiences, the increasing expectations of work preparedness indicate that it is timely for IB educators to consider how to emulate healthcare, aviation, policing, the military, mining and other industries—and more widely embrace simulation as a learning and teaching strategy. While there is evidence of simulation and gaming being used, there is a paucity of evidence-based educationally sound literature in the IB domain, so it is of value for IB educators to look at the journey of other disciplines and confidently build on their experiences, especially health, which has a significant International Business component. There is significant evidence-based research in health

[3] Search for 'Simulation Framework' in apple and android app stores.

education contexts demonstrating the efficacy of simulation as a learning and teaching method (Shepherd et al., 2007; Shin, Park, & Kim, 2015). The Conceptual Framework model and related design processes offer a way to develop strategic learning activities grounded in education philosophy and theory.

While experiential learning has a wide range of forms, and the Conceptual Framework model is broadly relevant to all of them, experiential learning has a particularly close association with simulations and games that replicate aspects of 'real time/real life' concepts and modes of working. Use of experiential learning (Kolb, 1984) is pivotal in providing for the evolving expectations of graduate capabilities; however, if it is to be relevant to specific contexts, users must understand both what 'lies beneath' its forms and processes and how to adapt these to specific environments and circumstances.

The Conceptual Framework model is a means of ensuring educational fidelity and is incorporated into experiential learning contexts. In this context, educational fidelity refers to the process of ensuring that learning processes are faithful to the contexts and conditions they replicate using appropriate theories and frameworks to achieve observable and measurable learning outcomes, including knowledge, skills, attitudes and values (Shepherd, 2017a, b).

Tiered lecture theaters, rooms with fixed furniture and teaching practices requiring desks to always 'face the front' are symbols of learning environments stuck in the nineteenth-century concepts of education as information transfer (Robinson, 2013). Such domains continue to exist, and while they support transfer of data, they cannot satisfactorily support engagement-oriented learning that is intended to support quick, efficient integration into workplace requirements of the knowledge acquired in formal academic contexts.

From a quality perspective, an educationally sound theoretical framework model for designing and implementing experientially based learning environments encourages educators to relinquish the comfort of old-fashioned 'teaching' contexts in favor of active, facilitated learning strategies. In addition, theoretically sound processes for generating student engagement and enhancing acquisition of knowledge and skills also support the capacity for identifying, developing and using authentic forms of assessment.

Simulation and Experiential Learning

Simulation is a strategic, experientially based teaching, learning and assessment method. It is a dynamic, effective theory-to-practice change agent utilizing active learning modes employing space, movement and conceptual challenges to imbue the learning environment with 'life like' experiences. It

includes the application of contextualized techniques and technologies to engage, enhance and examine the student experience in controlled, relatively safe and supportive settings representative of future work environments. Simulation supports and extends acquisition of technical and non-technical skills, in preparation for employment and the development of resilience (Evans & Shepherd, 2017). Assessment of the quality of the impact and outcomes from use of simulation for learning is also well documented across disciplines, such as policing and health (Davies, 2013; Shepherd, 2017b; Ziv, Ben-David, & Ziv, 2005), but comparatively unknown in disciplines where immersive simulation is used less often.

An example of simulation-based experiential learning providing the conduit for theory to practice is found in police education and training resources, such as VirTra (2018)—a fully immersive floor to ceiling environments of replicated real-life police-citizen interactions, requiring critical decision making by learners. Students first acquire knowledge of communication theories relevant to de-escalating conflict situations. This is followed by immersion in the VirTra environment and subsequent debriefing by instructors. Here, the pivotal element is the continuum for the learner, from knowledge acquisition, to application in a simulated environment, to reflection on actions taken and plans for application in real life when they return to duty and are required to apply the learning in operational policing duties.

Increasingly, this learning process is acknowledged as both agile and adaptable to other professional learning environments, including those which are less physical and more process or text based, for example, business continuity management. Application of, and experimentation with, simulation-based learning is artificially limited when educators are constrained by historical teaching models at the expense of innovation.

Boundaries among, and questions about, the values and validity of various forms of simulations and learning games continue to be debated—see, for example, Ellington (1999) and Prensky (2007). From our perspective, the distinctions are blurred, since all (or may) involve some form of experiential learning, and the educational principles informing their use have more common characteristics than differences (Leigh & Spindler, 2004). An applied understanding of relevant educational theories, identified with the help of the Conceptual Framework model, enables educators to design experiential activities, including simulations and games that are both educationally sound and appropriate for their contexts. This is particularly relevant to IB educators who are recognizing the need to review units of study for the purpose of including experiential learning and/or simulation-based activities to provide more authentic exposure to business management environments and activities.

The Conceptual Framework Model and Experiential Learning

As with healthcare, policing and other disciplines, good practice in International Business can provide learning strategies with both educational fidelity and appropriate truthfulness, linking content and contexts of learning. The Conceptual Framework model applies a heuristics-oriented approach to examining educational theories through use of a cycle of questions (How? What? When? Where? Why?) toward developing experiential learning exercises, including simulations and/or game-based activities. It informs users about key features of relevant educational philosophies and theories and prompts choices appropriate to specific teaching and learning contexts.

The interactive model, presented as a spinning wheel (Fig. 2.1), replicates a web of affiliations among ten interconnected educational concepts selected for their pertinence to the goal of applying theory to practice. The ten theories are: adult learning theory, self-determined learning, tacit knowledge, learning styles/characteristics, experiential learning, critical thinking/judgment, reflective learning practice, skill development/clinical competence, self-efficacy and deliberative practice and acquisition of expert performance. Each is briefly explained in the text.

1: Adult Learning Theory
2: Self-determined Learning
3: Tacit Knowledge
4: Learning Styles / Characteristics / Preferences
5: Experiential Learning
6: Critical Thinking / Clinical Reasoning / Clinical Judgement
7: The Reflective learner / Guided reflection
8: Skill Development and Clinical Competence
9: Self-efficacy
10: Deliberate Practice and Acquisition of Expert Performance

Fig. 2.1 The conceptual framework for simulation in healthcare education

Locating the Conceptual Framework Within Learning Design

The Conceptual Framework model is introduced via three definitions—Education Theory, a Conceptual Framework and a specific Conceptual Framework model as applied to simulation in healthcare education—to establish boundaries around its focus and intent. It is clearly underpinned by the educational philosophy of social constructivism/constructivist learning and includes operational instructions on accessing information about the ten embedded education theories.

Social Constructivism

Social constructivism as a sociological theory of knowledge applies philosophical constructivism to social settings (Bruner, 1966). This locates learning as a social and cognitive activity involving social interaction and participation among learners (Kiraly, 2000; Vygotsky, 1980; Wenger, McDermott, & Snyder, 2002). This is connected to the principles of authentic learning (Pearce, 2016), in both reality (Rolloff, 2010) and representations of reality (Jarvis, Holford, & Griffin, 2004).

The fundamental tenet of constructivist theories of learning is that learners construct new knowledge to *make sense of* their experiences and subsequent interpretations. Applying this to learning design involves use of learning activities selected to produce experiences designed to produce new meaning and new knowledge acquisition encouraging learners to actively seek and create understanding of events. As such, constructivist theories reflect the intent to foster development of critical thinking and triangulation of relationships among knowledge acquisition, inquiry, skills and attitude development.

Education Theories in the Conceptual Framework Model

Theory 1: Adult Learning Theory—Andragogy

Adult Learning theory—Andragogy proposes that adults bring well-formed capabilities and prior knowledge to learning contexts, and to these, they will add meaning gained in new learning experiences. It is therefore proposed that

new learning experiences need to be constructed to build on prior knowledge so as to inform future knowledge acquired from new experiences. Andragogy, defined by Knowles (Pappas, 2013) as the art and science of adult learning, provides principles and characteristics equally applicable to experiential learning and simulation and games for learning. It encourages consideration of adult learners as independent and aware of their own plans and goals as learners, while often relying on others with more experience to guide decision making.

Theory 2: Heutagogy or Self-determined Learning

Heutagogy is considered an extension of adult learning and further addresses the learning characteristics and needs of learners, including the learner's capability for development. According to Hase and Kenyon (2000), it is vital to support and build on the importance of self-determined learning in adaptive learning activities, especially in information and educational technology spaces. This extends the perception of adult learners as being able to manage their own learning, and therefore being able to decide their own learning pathways and be less concerned about formally constructed support systems.

Theory 3: Tacit Knowledge

Tacit knowledge as a theoretical concept emphasizes that each learner has a personal level of tacit knowledge built from such factors as age, prior experiences, acquired expertise and capacity for using heuristics. Tacit knowledge (Polyani, 1969)—also called informal knowledge (Nonaka, Toyama, & Konno, 2000)—emerged from the field of knowledge management and refers to all the acquired and stored knowledge and experiences brought by learners to new learning events. The concept, as used here, proposes that prior knowledge can—and will—influence learners' initial responses to, and subsequent applications of, education interventions. It emphasizes that effective learning designs must make specific allowance for such influences.

Theory 4: Learning Styles/Characteristics/Preferences

Learning styles, learner characteristics and learner preferences as a cluster of concepts suggest that learners adopt specific learning strategies in

response to particular learning goals and environments. Accepting this as a design consideration requires making an accommodation for differing strategies to produce optimum individual learning outcomes. Learning styles, characteristics and/or preferences (Honey & Mumford, 1986; Kolb & Kolb, 2017) continue to be a key consideration for educators using experientially based learning modes, especially when these may create contexts that are unfamiliar to learners. Understanding how learning styles and choices impact on learning, and thus affect the capacity for effective cognitive and social constructivism to take place, is invaluable in the design and delivery context.

Theory 5: Experiential Learning

Experiential learning is not restricted to engagement in activity (Kolb & Kolb, 2017); it involves participants in reviewing and processing, reflecting on and demonstrating understanding of experiences as a result of such engagement. This concept is not just about exposure to, and participation in, an activity. It also concerns how participants review, process, reflect on and demonstrate specific knowledge/skills as a direct outcome. While the experience itself provides relevant context and learning trigger(s), the learner's own experiences assist in acquiring, refreshing and applying knowledge, feelings, attitudes and skills.

Theory 6: Critical Thinking/Clinical Reasoning/Clinical Judgment

The cluster of theories variously known as critical thinking/clinical reasoning/clinical judgment are inter-related concepts referring to learning intended to develop a range of cognitive and (especially) metacognitive capabilities. These include an ability to think clearly and rationally, understand the logic relationships among ideas and identify, develop and assess arguments, spot inconsistencies and problem-solve through reflection and analysis (Lau & Chan, 2015). These provide the cognitive background to the processes involved in clinical reasoning and lead to the development of quality clinical judgments in competent practice (Lapkin, Levitt-Jones, Bellchambers, & Fernandez, 2010). Critical thinking, reasoning and judgment are best developed via experience-based learning through practical design and delivery processes.

Theory 7: The Reflective Learner/Guided Reflection

Similarly, reflective learning theory (Argyris & Schön, 1974; Rogers, 1982) introduces strategic use of debriefing, involving reflection in and on practice, helping to consolidate development of knowledge and skills. Reflection is the opportunity to re-examine experiences. It can be conducted via a chronological review of what comes to mind first and working through the experience from that starting point. It also validates time spent reviewing the thinking processes that occurred during the experience. The three stages of reflection are awareness, critical analysis and new perspective. As a metacognitive process (a thought 'toolkit'), reflection is a pivotal and essential component of all three stages, allowing the learner to make sense and decisions within each (Collingwood, 2005). Musing, contemplation, ruminating and deliberation on information received contribute to eventual decision making and subsequent action/s.

Theory 8: Novice to Expert Theory

The concept of novice to expert addresses skill development and clinical competence. It also acknowledges that knowledge and skill can decay over time and proposes that ongoing practice and development is essential for continued confident practice. The novice to expert trajectory (Benner, 1984) identifies how learners progress through levels of knowledge acquisition, skills and attitudinal development toward ever higher competency, providing opportunities for measured, attainments and providing learners with vital feedback on their rate of progress.

Theory 9: Self-efficacy

Self-efficacy indicates individual belief in personal capacity to act in ways that achieve particular performance outcomes (Bandura, 1990) and refers to the process whereby learners review learning, understanding, achievements, actions and successes and develop capacity to make further decisions based on that mix. Self-efficacy is a pivotal element in the preparation of both teachers and learners to ensure respectful attention to outcomes, requiring educators to be well prepared for ensuring learners are in an optimal learning space. Conversely, learners, provided with appropriate resources and opportunities, are anticipated to develop a positive sense of self becoming confident of their

own capabilities. Educational practices and assessment methods built on awareness of the power of self-efficacy are powerful means of instilling learners with confidence through practice.

Theory 10: Deliberate Practice and Acquisition of Expert Performance

Deliberate practice and acquisition of expert performance (Ericsson, 2008) relates to learner involvement in increasing their own capacity and capabilities through active engagement in deliberate practice. Concepts of deliberate practice and acquisition of expert performance come into play as learners achieve progress and take action toward making learning a sustainable component of their practice. Deliberate practice involves direct experience in various contexts coupled with active reflection making them ideal settings for supporting deliberate practice and renewing/extending expert performance.

Contextual Exemplars

The following case studies present different approaches to learning design, to assist IB educators contextualize application of the Conceptual Framework model. The first addresses a design need in the context of International Business. It uses a case study approach to guide readers through the steps by which the educators ensure educational alignment. The second one examines an application of the Conceptual Framework to a unit of study in policing. This application demonstrates a pragmatic pre-design and delivery approach, demonstrating a constructive alignment method for ensuring that the design phase will generate an experientially sound learning program.

Application 1

This case study outlines application of the Conceptual Framework model to a unit of study in an undergraduate International Business (IB) degree in Finland. The course is an 'Introduction to Management' in a Bachelor of Science in Business Administration, taught in three-week blocks. There are two cohorts, each of 40–45 students and the unit of study occurs in the second and third study modules at the start of the program. At the time these events began, the course was using a mix of short experiential activities, group

discussions and lectures. After exploring the characteristics of various engaging educational methods, it was decided to use a specific simulation-based learning approach known as 'classroom as organization' (CAO), a fully immersive learning experience.

For administrative purposes, the seven learning outcomes linked to the previous approach were retained. These learning outcomes refer to Bloom's Cognitive Domains at levels 1 and 2 in the categories of 'Knowledge' and 'Comprehension'—now titled 'Remembering' and 'Understanding' (Cullinane, 2010). In effect, the text of the learning outcomes focus on conceptual understanding (i.e. 'knowing about'), rather than acquisition of managerial skills and abilities (i.e. being able to). Considering management to be a skill (capability) oriented process, the strategy chosen was to extend the outcome statements to include a focus on being able to—in effect, adding statements about 'knowing how'.

There was an initial idea of re-phrasing the existing statements to reflect the expanded focus; however, this would not be possible without considerable administrative intervention. As time was short and it was possible to re-design the teaching processes without altering the statement of course outcomes, the focus was shifted to incorporating the higher levels of Bloom's Taxonomy (viz. applying, analyzing evaluating and creating) with a parallel list stating learning outcomes in terms of capabilities and practices.

Table 2.1 illustrates the resulting paired statements with the course outcomes as per the syllabus documents on the left and the practice-oriented outcomes on the right. The table is included in course documents, but not in the syllabus.

To develop this set of parallel texts, three components from the Conceptual Framework model informed the thinking behind the development of both the curriculum documents and the contents of Table 2.1. How these three theories were applied is described briefly in the following order: novice to expert (Benner, 1984), experiential learning (Kolb & Kolb, 2017) and reflective learning (Schön, 1983).

Novice to Expert

Designing a course to be skill based while also meeting theoretically framed learning outcomes is complex. Students, anticipating a process of 'being taught about information', are unlikely to feel confident to tackle tasks for which they assume they are unprepared. Expecting to be 'tested' via recall and

Table 2.1 Paired learning outcomes statements—introduction to management

Learning outcomes	Actions expected to be completed to demonstrate Acquisition of managing behaviors
For this course—upon successful completion—include the ability to: 1. Understand fundamental concepts and theories in contemporary management 2. Know and understand decision-making models and management & leadership styles 3. Understand the role of communication and communications systems in management 4. Know and understand the impact of technology on work and management systems 5. Understand the importance of human behavior and creativity in management functions 6. Know and understand the importance of ethics and corporate responsibility 7. Understand the challenges of conducting business in the global community	1. List, define and apply concepts 2. Use a variety of decision-making tools fit for purpose 3. Take the lead in getting things done 4. Articulate your thoughts and communicate them effectively 5. Listen to others actively 6. Use technology to communicate and take action in this organization 7. 8. & 9. a. Recognize/describe social (external) situations b. Recognize/describe personal (internal) situations c. Recognize/describe how your own unconscious cultural assumptions and viewpoints can influence your behavior d. Act on your own initiative (using whatever resources you have to achieve your own objectives) e. Create activities, presentations, posters, games and learning processes that demonstrate your knowledge and help others learn

explanation, they will be hesitant to undertake tasks that require them to do such things as dissect, judge, prioritize and create. Yet how else will they become prepared for the (as yet) unknowns of their future careers, if they do not take on new and unfamiliar tasks beforehand?

The full novice to expert sequence is as follows: novice, advanced beginner, proficient and expert (Benner, 1984) with an expectation that the novice students have little or no knowledge or capabilities in the context they are entering, and the learning task is thus one of acquiring increasing skill levels through engagement with theory and practice. Thinking of students as 'novices' in this new (academic) context must not exclude acknowledgment of relevant, previously acquired skills, and this means ensuring that prior knowledge is identified and shown to be relevant and applicable in this new context.

A very early learning task has groups collecting and listing each member's prior experiences of 'managing and being managed' (Introduction to Management (ITM) course notes), and using these lists, they need to collect statements about

what they consider to be 'good and poor' management practices. Thus, they are both revisiting their 'novice' status while considering what will be required to move beyond it. Soon after this activity is completed, students are invited to join an organization (the CAO) which they will build from the ground up, and whose key product will be their own learning. In effect, they are beginning the task of positioning their unformed and malleable organization as one which will be created and crystallized through the actions they take to identify and extend their capabilities beyond the novice level.

Debriefing this exercise highlights the fact that some students already possess management skills and knowledge, and are thus simultaneously 'novices' in this new context, and somewhere between 'advanced beginners' and 'proficient' as managers in those prior contexts.[4] As individuals, and a collective entity, building their organization, the new task is to apply theories to identifying skills, judge what is required to move toward expertise, plan how to design and implement processes to extend and improve their current levels of proficiency.

The 'novice to expert' educational framework thus provides a logical and explicit pathway for developing a learning trajectory embedded in current knowledge which, with appropriate facilitator support, moves (more or less) smoothly through structured situations (guidelines for which are in course materials) toward increasing expertise. In a three-week course, full expertise is not achievable, but the groundwork has been laid for students to continue developing their own skills as each new study unit arrives.

Experiential Learning

Experience-based learning aims to help learners create personally relevant, permanent behavior change by moving knowledge work beyond 'understanding things' into devising and implementing new habits and behaviors. Proponents consider learning to be a multi-layered process cycling through action, reflection, analysis and application. In moving the ITM from a largely theory-oriented course to an experiential learning one, the aim is to make explicit the importance of accepting that 'knowing' has four aspects—

[4] For example, all male Finnish students must complete compulsory conscription and most do so before entering tertiary study. They may, depending on preferences and associated military decisions, attain a rank anywhere from corporal (in the Navy, petty officers 3rd class), to sergeant (petty officer 2nd class) in Non Commissioned Officer (NCO) ranks, while graduates of Reserve Officer School may leave with the rank of second lieutenants (in the navy, sub-lieutenants).

'knowing what' (content), 'knowing how' (skill acquisition), 'knowing why' (concept building and acquisition) and 'knowing when' (practical application). The course now makes this phased cycle of learning explicit through a naming strategy to remind everyone that the four components interconnect and rely on each other.

In a CAO simulation, learning-through-doing is at the core of all work. Students track attendance patterns, give and receive feedback on performance, design, present and assess theory sessions, manage and assess their own and each other's contributions and reflect on current and prior experiences to identify how 'to manage' in specific conditions and circumstances. Since this is the beginning of a learning journey key aspects of content and processes are specifically oriented to developing awareness of how to apply managerial concepts to their personal development so that this particular set of experiences becomes building blocks for ongoing development.

Reflective Learning

Reflective learning is, in some respects, a subset of the experiential learning cycle and has also acquired its own rich set of theoretical work through its importance in contributing to closing the loop on learning. Schön in Gilroy (1993) is described as considering reflection to be 'the exercise of interactive interpretive skills, in the analysis and solution of complex and ambiguous problems'. Boud (1996) describes three key stages as being: 'a) event, b) reflective processes (returning to experience—managing feelings—re-evaluating experience), and c) outcomes (new perspectives, changes in behavior)'. Given the situated nature of reflective learning, it has many names such as the occurring at the end of specific large-scale activities which may be called a 'post-project analysis' or 'after action review'; in simulations it is usually termed 'debriefing'.

Brookfield (1995) suggests that teaching is not an innocent practice and further that becoming aware of our own assumptions about what we do and how we do it is both a puzzling and contradictory process. As educators in the field of management, the focus needs to be on helping intending managers understand that the same is true for their future roles. Thus 'reflective learning' is presented as an intensely engaging and energizing practice, although at times it may appear to be a passive process. In the course under review students are required to write reflectively, to discuss events and experiences for the purpose of analyzing results and designing new processes to guide their

approaches to future experiences. As much as possible they are encouraged to 'reflect on action' (after events) and 'reflect in action' (pausing in the midst of activity to reconsider motives and feelings and re-evaluate the continuing relevance of planned steps). With this in mind, much of what they produce becomes assessable material, ensuring daily musings are valued as part of any good manager's repertoire.

This case study demonstrates the value of access to a comprehensive reference model like the Conceptual Framework, to ensure that educational rigor—together with immersive and engaging learning practices—is evident in both the design and delivery phases of an experiential learning activity.

Application 2

This application demonstrates a different, similarly contextualized—approach to use of the Conceptual Framework model in a program designed to prepare police officers for their responsible role in the community. The following is applied when considering the design component of an immersive, experiential simulation for a specific unit of study in policing, essential to professional and skill-based practice.

As part of the constructive alignment process, appropriate underpinning education theories are immersed into the mapping process early to ensure there is a high level of educational fidelity. This is designed to contribute to a robust design and delivery of the simulation and to the subsequent assessment and evaluation strategies. It also allows time to consider the educational methodology from both student and educator perspectives.

The steps followed are as follows:

- Identify the learning outcomes (LOs) to ensure they accurately and contextually reflect the learning and teaching intent of the unit of study being addressed.
- Cross-reference and map the various relevant education theories to the Los.
- Review the unit content that maps to the LOs and decide what point of focus is related to the education theories, and consider what content or other learning intervention is required to be delivered and how and when.
- Determine how, when, where and why these LOs will be assessed and designate the assessment activity.

As an example, a unit of study has been identified along with its pertinent LOs, and this mapping exercise is demonstrated in the following table (Table 2.2).

Unit of study: 'Developing communication skills for de-escalation of conflict situations'.

Table 2.2 Design mapping exercise

Learning outcomes	Underpinning education theories	Content concepts	Assessment strategies
1	Andragogy Heutagogy Tacit knowledge	About learning as adults, self-managed learning, prior understanding	a. Application of communication theory to case studies
1,2	Andragogy Learning styles Experiential learning Reflective practice	Knowledge and skill development	a. Apply through demonstration in simulation-based exercises communication knowledge and skills for de-escalating conflict situations
2,3,4	Andragogy Learning styles Critical thinking reasoning, Judgment Reflective practice	Knowledge management and links to practice	a. Critique personal performance in simulation-based exercises;
2,3,4	Andragogy Learning styles Reflective practice novice to expert Expert performance	Knowledge management Practice development	a. Demonstrate the application of personal reflective practice and critique of performance in simulation-based exercises b. Evaluate the application of communication concepts in simulation-based exercises by others
2,3,4,5	Andragogy Reflective practice Self-efficacy	Personal awareness Self-confidence	a. Discuss how to sustain and continually improve communication knowledge and skills for de-escalating conflict situations

Unit Outline

In this unit, a police student will be provided with theory and simulation-based experiential learning exercises to develop his/her communication knowledge and skills to de-escalate conflict situations.

The LOs linked to this unit of study are:

- Identify and explain the key communication concepts for de-escalating conflict situations;
- Apply key communication concepts for de-escalating conflict situations;
- Examine through comparison the application of key communication and concepts for de-escalating conflict situations; and
- Evaluate/critique the application of key communication concepts for de-escalating conflict situations;
- Develop knowledge and skills of key communication concepts for future application to de-escalate conflict situations.

In this application, it can be demonstrated that using the Conceptual Framework model to cross-check the relevant education theories with the learning outcomes ensures there is a quality approach in place when aligning the content concepts (through which the educator can now clearly ensure all attention is focused on the learning outcomes) and associated assessment strategies. This increases the educational validity and reliability of the course unit and contributes to both a more authentic experiential learning and assessment experience—with the expected social outcome being a safer police officer and a safer community.

Measuring Outcomes in IB

Irrespective of which theory or combination of theories is applied in developing experience-based learning programs in IB, it is important to ensure the validation of authentic, meaningful and sustainable learning. This occurs at several levels. These levels of validation include the work of the respective course/program manager, academics, skill instructors, educational designers, learners and their future employers/stakeholders. The ultimate test of experiential learning design is the reality of application of the respective learning in the real world in immediate and long-term applications.

Whilst the evaluation of learning programs' effectiveness often concentrates on whether a student graduates, an important test of the validity of the

learning can only really be established through evaluation of the learner's application of the knowledge and skills in the reality of the workplace. This can be facilitated by the use of rubrics that are explicit about statements of learning processes and go beyond knowledge recall. A validated and reliable rubric designed to gauge to what extent the leaner has achieved the learning outcomes can help the educator objectively ascertain application of the appropriate knowledge, practice and attitudinal evidence. Importantly, the tighter the learning outcomes are constructively aligned with the assessment strategy and processes, the more valid and reliable is the outcome. Undertaking subsequent evaluations using validated assessment tools in the learners' own field of practice provides the final evidence of the value of the experiential learning design and indicators for continuous improvement of such course design.

Summary

This chapter advocates that knowledge about, and the application of, education philosophies and theories through use of a Conceptual Framework model (Shepherd, 2017) and simulations providing learning experiences impact positively on International Business education programs. A further value of this approach is the potential for assessing in a holistic manner (Davies, 2017) to support and enhance educational validity and reliability of the learning processes.

Nineteenth-century modes of information transfer do not easily align with twenty-first-century needs for development of adaptive personal wisdom, skills and attitudes. The CF model is an educationally sound, evidence-based framework supporting integration of experientially based learning into IB courses, allowing educators to expand teaching repertoires, provide relevant, authentic engaging learning and assessment opportunities. From an operational perspective, it is important to understand that the educational framework model is a 'reference point' allowing educators to identify and align the relevant education theories with their learning outcomes and assessments during the constructive alignment phase in design. As familiarity with the process increases, the time taken to apply the model decreases, evolving into an efficient and effective process.

It will become an imperative that IB educators revisit their courses to ensure more explicit consideration and application of education philosophies and theories in Experiential Learning design. Use of simulations that are designed to a high standard of educational fidelity enhances learning and assessing opportunities. Students benefit from the closing of the theory to practice gap through greater use of more authentic experiential activities that better reflect the skills, knowledge and attitudes required in twenty-first-century workplaces.

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3

Evaluating Outcomes of Experiential Learning: An Overview of Available Approaches

Raghu Kurthakoti and Deborah Cain Good

Introduction

Today's undergraduate and graduate students are a product of the digital revolution. Philosophically, they see a need to shape jobs to fit their lifestyles versus their lifestyles fitting their jobs. Those entering the workforce seek regular feedback from a variety of sources and steadily desire increasing job responsibilities and decision-making involvement. They work in diverse, globally competitive organizations that are often more oriented to knowledge management than manufacturing management. Preparing these students for the workplace requires a recognition of new learning styles and thus demands new teaching styles.

A 2002 report by the Association to Advance Collegiate Schools of Business (AACSB) noted, "preparation for the rapid pace of business cannot be obtained from textbooks and cases, many of which are outdated before they are published" (p. 19). Further, the report called for "outward-facing curricula and experiential education [that] can create the critical intersection between classroom and business learning that keeps faculty and students connected to

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rapidly changing business models" (p. 20). With the publishing of this report, colleges and universities began a slow but steady reorientation to the materials covered in class and the manner in which that information was presented. For many universities, experience-based learning became the focus of faculty meetings and retreats as instructors sought to define the concept and develop methods and materials that exemplified that approach.

So where does higher education stand a decade plus after this landmark report on the subject of experiential learning (EL) and teaching? What are the teaching methods most commonly used within this realm? And most importantly, how are the work products of experiential-based learning evaluated so that there can be a clear gauging of how effectively the transfer of learning has occurred?

This chapter will be structured as follows:

First, we will define what experiential learning is and the different operationalizations of the pedagogy. Then, we will continue with a brief overview of literature to identify various assessment approaches commonly used to evaluate the effectiveness of experiential learning. We will finally conclude by discussing the appropriateness of the various experiential learning approaches and assessment tools in achieving the specific learning goals and outcomes.

What Is Experiential Learning?

Experiential learning (EL) has been variably defined within the context of higher education. The earliest definition of EL can be traced to Rogers (1969) (as stated in Hoover, 1974) who defines EL as "It has a quality of personal involvement—the whole-person in both his feeling and cognitive aspects being in the learning event".

The most well-known definition of EL in the domain of management education is the one provided by Kolb (1984). He (1984) defines EL as "a holistic integrative perspective on learning that combines experience, cognition and behavior".

However, this definition has been overly simplified to "learning by doing" (Hoover, 1974, 2008). Taking the notion of whole person learning and the inclusion of affect and behavioral components in addition to cognition, Hoover (1974) provides an expanded definition: "Experiential learning exists when a personally responsible participant (s) cognitively, emotionally, and behaviorally processes knowledge, skills and/or attitudes in a learning situation characterized by a high level of active involvement" (p. 35).

Thus, it appears that the involvement of the whole person and the impact on affective and behavioral components in addition to cognition are necessary conditions for a pedagogical approach to be termed experiential learning.

Experiential Learning Versus Learning from Experience

Learning from experience is what takes place in the daily context of individuals whereas experiential learning is concerned with creating the context within which learning is expected to take place (Usher & Solomon, 1999). Thus, the deliberate and formal process of creating experience with the explicit intention of learning is the focus of experiential learning. Andresen, Boud, and Cohen (2000) define the characteristics of experiential learning that make it different from other approaches. They state that for learning to be experiential, three necessary conditions must exist at some level:

1. Involvement of the whole person
2. Recognition and active use of all the learner's relevant life and learning experiences
3. Continued reflection on earlier experiences in order to add and transform them into deeper understanding

However, from an implementation point of view, EL differs from other approaches in three ways:

1. Intentionality of design in the situation or experience to ensure learning
2. Facilitation by an outside agent (facilitator, teacher, etc.) whose skill level may influence the outcome of learning
3. Assessment of learning outcomes to understand what has been achieved through the EL approach

But as Gentry (1990) notes, what students achieve through experiential learning is usually a function of their perceptions and often beyond the control of the facilitator of the EL (teacher). The objective of the provider in the EL process is, therefore, to create an environment that provides the necessary stimulus for gaining the intended learning from experience.

A variety of pedagogical approaches are available to educators in business (in general) and international business educators (in particular). These include but are not limited to—case studies, simulations, group projects, internships, and field trips.

In the next section of this chapter, we will take up each of these pedagogical approaches and discuss how these approaches are assessed and what aspects of learning are evaluated in each technique. After a careful review of the extant work on the various assessment tools available to evaluate EL, we will discuss an approach that can be utilized to determine what methods are best suited to assess particular learning outcomes. We believe that such a framework of assessment tools and their appropriateness in assessing specific outcomes would help adopters of EL techniques to develop better evaluation metrics.

An Overview of Assessment Tools Used in Experiential Learning

In this section, we will briefly discuss the assessment tools currently and commonly used for specific experiential learning approaches in various business disciplines. While we understand that a thorough literature review and analysis of all experiential learning approaches and their assessment is most desirable, space limitations prevent us from delving too deeply into any particular EL approach. Our intention is to provide an overview of commonly used EL approaches and the most frequently used assessment tools within those approaches. Thus, an educator intending to adopt EL approaches in their pedagogical repertoire would have an idea of what common assessment approaches are available and how suitable they are to assess specific learning outcomes.

Case Studies

The case study method is defined as "a method that involves studying actual business situations—written as an in-depth presentation of a company, its market, and its strategic decisions—in order to improve a manager's or student's problem-solving ability" (Helms, 2006). Thus, by offering a dilemma or a problem situation to students, a case study lets students experience the same uncertainties faced by the decision maker and allows students an opportunity to develop a viable recommendation to address that dilemma by integrating and applying conceptual learning from the discipline.

The earliest recorded use of case studies for student learning can be traced to 1870 when legal cases were utilized in classrooms at Harvard Law School.

This approach was then adopted by the Harvard Business School around 1920 (Klonoski, 2013). The case study, therefore, represents one of the oldest experiential learning approaches in business education. Case studies have been used across various disciplines within business including marketing, management, human resources, finance, and international business.

Lundberg, Rainsford, Shay, and Young (2001) identify nine different types of cases based on their experience of writing and teaching cases. These are—iceberg cases (focusing primarily on the application of conceptual knowledge to a situation), incident cases (enables students to compare their decisions against generally accepted practices of the discipline), illustrative cases (to illustrate the application of business practices to a scenario), head cases (to understand the reasoning and actions of the principal actor in the scenario), dialogue cases (to understand interactional dynamics and consequences of style within a situation), application cases (a situation where a known technique could be applied to solve a problem), data cases (to sift through information and organize them in a meaningful way such that a decision can be made), issue cases (to understand and appreciate context and antecedents of a scenario), and prediction cases (to make predictions based on conceptual models in a given situation).

Given this typology of case studies in business, one can easily see how assessment of case studies becomes a critical issue in evaluating student learning. Due to the diverse nature of outcomes, case studies are used to evaluate various components of student learning. According to Dixit et al. (2005), case studies aim to achieve learning in the form of an improved range of skills and attitudes of the students. Also, depending on the type of case being used, behavioral (decision making, empathizing), conceptual (pattern recognition, abstract generalizations), and technical (use of frameworks/models, check lists) outcomes could be possible student learning elements from a case study.

Based on past research, Sridevi (2012) identifies nine different skills that are commonly assessed using case studies. These are: Analytical decision making, application, oral communication, time management, interpersonal, creative skills, self-analysis, and written communication skills. The versatility of learning goals of a case study as listed by Dixit et al. (2005) and Sridevi (2012) is consistent with the varied types of cases commonly used in business and with those in Lundberg's et al. (2001) aforementioned typology.

Anderson and Schiano (2014) suggest three stages in which cases could be evaluated—before class, during class, and after class. They also provide different ways to evaluate at each of those stages (oral and written formats; individual and group level). Short written assignments and prepared presentations are recommended for pre-class assessment. Class participation seems to be the

most recommended approach to evaluate learning during class time. Reflective papers, examinations, and group presentations of analysis are the most suggested approaches for evaluating learning after class.

Unlike a traditional examination, however, evaluating learning from a case study is not easy as there is seldom a "right" answer to a problem situation. Each problem can be handled in multiple ways, each one being equally effective in addressing the problem situation. Similarly, evaluating learning from case studies must provide for the optional "correct" answers. Corey (1998) proposes using class participation (a simple 1–5 point Excellent—Unsatisfactory scale) and patterns of performance over multiple sessions or in examinations (using a case as an exam question) to evaluate students. To more objectively detail the learning outcomes, Corey (1998) suggests the use of elements such as clarity of problem definition, drawing of relevant conclusions based on the observations of case information, design and appropriateness of quantitative analysis to address relevant questions, reasoning behind recommendations, and plan of action when evaluating student learning from cases.

Focusing on written reports, O'Keefe and Chadraba (2013) recommend standardization of student case report formats as well as evaluation rubrics for assessing these reports. They recommend evaluating reports on three dimensions—structure, substance, and style. This standardization approach to grading reports helps instructors to grade all students consistently. Interviews with students and instructors on the benefits of using such a standardized assessment reveal that this approach allows the students to receive the feedback quickly and helps improve their recommendation generation and presentation for future submissions. They found the rubric easy to understand and preferred the coded feedback to incomprehensible long text-based feedback. For the instructors, this standardized approach makes grading many reports easy and helps in faster turnaround. Having coded feedback based on a standard rubric helps instructors to track student improvements over time as well as track key areas of concern for a group of students.

Markulis (2007) suggests using presentations to evaluate learning from cases. He provides a rubric (p. 92), which also evaluates substance, structure, and style components in the presentation. However, he found that prepared presentations did not result in engaged discourse or effective conveying of application of knowledge, two critical outcomes expected from the course. A discussion with students led to the finding that students did not know how to engage the audience during presentation. Therefore, based on his experience, Markulis (2007) recommends using facilitated presentation for assessing student learning outcomes (especially ones dealing with communication and engagement skills).

Bontis, Hardie, and Serenko (2009), in their comparative study across multiple evaluation formats that predict student grades, found that multiple choice tests were the best predictor of student achievement. However, among experiential approaches, case-based exams and class participation were found to be good indicators of student grades with cases being very close to multiple choice tests in their predictive ability.

Simulations and Games

Simulations and games (terms used interchangeably) have been in use since 3000 BC when they were used to train field officers on battle strategy. Over time, these war games, combined with operational research, technology, and experiential educational theory, resulted in the early movement toward the use of business games in education. The combination of these forces resulted in creating experiential environments that enabled institutions of higher education to adopt the pedagogy into their curriculum. The first known use of business games in higher education was pioneered by the American Management Association in the mid-1950s (Wolfe, 1993). Thus, simulation and games represent the oldest experiential form of training and probably the second oldest experiential pedagogy in business education after case studies.

Business games can take on many forms based on a variety of factors including the number of players involved, the number of decision variables involved, and the amount of feedback to the players. Initial games in business were primarily simple, uncomplicated, and hand scored. With the access to technology in the form of computers, the complexity of these games has exponentially increased. Business games can deal with individual functions (like marketing or operations), concept games that focus on a particular concept (sales force management or managing promotions), or a total enterprise simulation (that holistically deal with complex management of all functions of an organization) (Faria, Hutchinson, Wellington, & Gold, 2009).

Based on their review of 40 years of publications in *Simulation and Gaming*, Faria et al. (2009) identify nine themes as to why business simulations are used in education. These include: Experience, strategy, decision making, outcomes as per Bloom's taxonomy, teamwork, motivation, theory application, involvement, and integration of ideas. Of these nine, in the last decade, the top five reasons why simulations and games are used in business education, in rank order, are—gaining experience, formulating strategy, outcomes as per Bloom's taxonomy, decision-making skills and teamwork. This is a drastic shift from the 1970s when the primary focus of the games was to achieve

learning outcomes as per Bloom's taxonomy whereas in the 2000s, the primary reason was to provide experience (Faria et al., 2009, p. 479). This was also prompted by changes in accreditation standards which required institutions to demonstrate relevance and accountability of education, making the experience and focus on outcomes the key drivers for the use of simulations. Thus, simulations and games have an integral role in the experiential learning pedagogy.

To achieve these themes, educators have implemented the business games in the last decade by focusing primarily on interactivity, complexity, and teamwork (Faria et al., 2009, p. 481). These have been a result of great developments in personal computing as well as the development of the Worldwide Web that has made it possible to create interactive games that are complex and can be played by teams that are either co-located or spatially separated.

Ben-Zvi (2010), in his study on the use of simulations as teaching tools, found that utilization of simulation games helps students in achieving higher order cognitive processes (apply, analyze, evaluate, and create) across conceptual, procedural, and meta-cognitive knowledge dimensions. Self-reported scores from participants involved in the simulation indicated that students found the game to help in independent thinking and was intellectually challenging contributing to overall learning experience.

Anderson and Lawton (2009) state that the desired outcomes of using a simulation are learning (teach vocabulary and concepts, enhance retention of knowledge, demonstrate difficulty of executing concepts), attitudinal (provide common experience, engage students, develop their attitude toward the discipline), and behavioral (apply and implement concepts, interact with peers, practice and improve decision-making skills). Given the time commitment expected for simulations, they are inefficient approaches to teach factual knowledge, vocabulary, and other basic learning aspects. Games are also seen as less efficient and less effective in teaching specific concepts (such as product life cycle or political environment which are better taught through targeted cases).

Based on their review of 40 years of research covering simulations and other experiential learning approaches done by the Association of Business Simulations and Experiential Learning (ABSEL), Howard, Markulis, Strang, and Wixom (2006) found that about 57% of the studies reviewed assessed some combination of cognitive and affective outcomes whereas less than 1% of the studies assessed behavioral outcomes.

Given the varied nature of reasons for using simulations as a pedagogical tool, it is hard to develop a universal assessment tool to assess learning from simulations. Most simulation assessments have focused on affective learning

(Anderson & Lawton, 2009) but have found no evidence that this perceived positive attitude for simulations was correlated with the students' performance on the simulation. Further, they state that there has been less success in being able to measure behavioral outcomes as it has been extremely hard to demonstrate objectively that (a) simulations have resulted in the desired cognitive outcomes and (b) these changed cognitive outcomes resulted in the changed behaviors.

In an attempt at developing a framework for assessment in simulations using the four levels of Kirkpatrick's framework of learning, Schumann, Anderson, Scott, and Lawton (2014) summarize that reaction (Level 1) can help evaluate both learning experience, as well as provide suggestions for improvement, and develop benchmarks for future experiences. This is usually achieved by administering some form of satisfaction surveys but is likely to be more effective and meaningful if conducted with a control group to address confounding factors.

Learning for knowledge, skills, and attitudes (Level 2) should involve measuring a change in the component of interest that can be directly ascribed to the simulation being used. A pre- and post-assessment using a control group is the best approach to assess if meaningful learning has been achieved by using simulations. Extant research, as reviewed by Schumann et al. (2014), has only demonstrated effectiveness of simulations relative to lower order learning. Not much assessment has been conducted pertaining to higher order outcomes, primarily due to lack of proper assessment instruments. To assess behavior (Level 3), a recommended approach is to conduct a longitudinal study to ensure that learning from simulations has resulted in changed behavior in future courses. Finally, the evaluation of results (Level 4) has not been properly addressed in the simulation literature. This is primarily because, except for corporate training programs, there is a dearth of specificity in identifying the relevance of results to be examined. A longitudinal study involving post-matriculation outcomes (for instance, job performance, salaries, promotion, or grades in other courses) could be a good way to assess whether simulations are helpful in achieving the desired results. However, in each of these cases, the key issue in assessment is the ability to isolate the effects of simulation and demonstrating the causality of simulations in the desired outcomes remains to be addressed.

Gosenpud and Washbush (1996) did not find any significant relationship between performance in simulations and learning. However, given the overwhelming anecdotal evidence indicating simulations lead to learning, they conducted a study to identify why some learn more than others and what variables help predict learning in simulation. Learning was measured as a

pre- and post-assessment based on a test linked with simulation and learning was measured as the difference between post- and pre-assessments. Common sense variables (how well students understood and how simple the students perceived the simulation early on) correlated highly with learning. When they correlated learning with explicit goals set by students, they found that students expressing goals based on simulation metrics (financial etc.) learned more than students expressing goals based on grade and competition. However, the correlation between performance and learning was almost nil as in their previous studies.

In their review of literature assessing effectiveness of experiential learning, Gosen and Washbush (2004) state that studies concerned with simulation effectiveness have suffered criticism for lack of validity and generalizability. This stems from a lack of generally accepted theory and method to validate business simulations. Due to a lack of consistent research based on sound methodology across multiple simulations, validity of learning from simulations is questionable at best.

In reviewing 20 studies dealing with simulation assessment, Gosen and Washbush (2004) conclude that 14 studies focused on learning and 6 on attitudes. Ten of the reviewed studies used objective measures, whereas only one study focused on convergent validity. Thus, the validity of measures used to assess simulation effectiveness needs more research.

Supporting the previous views on lack of support for the relationship between simulation performance and learning, Teach and Patel (2007) suggest that even in simulations that allow for a broad-based formula to assess performance, profit overwhelms all other explanatory variables in the model making these broad-based assessment tools as ineffective as performance on a single metric to evaluate learning. They further assert that assessments in simulations are based on performance due to the assumption that students learn "just-in-time". Thus, a better performance on a host of measurable metrics indicates that students *learned* the relevant concepts leading to better performance. However, contrary to this accepted view, Teach and Patel (2007) suggest that learning in simulation is often not "just-in-time", but "just-a-little-late". This means that students do not necessarily learn before a good performance result but are more likely to learn after a disappointing performance. Thus, any assessment using simulations should account for this learning and not just performance. In order to be able to better evaluate learning from simulations, Teach and Patel (2007) therefore suggest the following strategies to ensure adequate learning occurs through the use of simulations—identify and select simulations based on learning outcomes that are expected to be realized, clearly articulate and state to the students what these learning

objectives are for the simulation (for instance, be able to understand the relationship between advertising and price or be able to evaluate the impact of cultural distance on rate of product adoption).

Teach (2018) suggests that instead of focusing on profits and other metrics of performance as an indicator of learning, the focus should be on metrics like measuring and analyzing errors in forecasting or the ability to operate within constraints of resources. He lists about 20 items that students participating in a simulation *might* learn (p. 57), many of which are non-cognitive/concept oriented and therefore need to be assessed based on the effort that students put in to master these areas through constant practice and application.

Cadotte and MacGuire (2013) suggest the use of a combination of assessment tools—a comprehensive business plan, stockholder report, and executive briefing using a rubric (p. 40)—to assess student learning from simulations. Given the time commitment required by the students and complexity of the simulation involved, they recommend a process of continuous feedback and assessment to ensure learning from the simulation. Using these tools, they were able to show that participants were able to demonstrate a higher level of understanding increasing from about 20% at the beginning of the simulation to 80% by the end of the simulation. They also found that this approach of teaching and assessment resulted in an increased confidence of students in making various functional decisions as well as team management skills.

Our discussion on assessment in simulation therefore seems to suggest that using a more traditional assessment tool like a test combined with specific goals linked to simulation performance can lead to a better assessment of learning rather than focusing primarily on performance of the simulation. Survey instruments to evaluate student experiences with the simulation and longitudinal studies dealing with transferability of skills across courses and domains are also viable approaches to evaluate learning from simulations.

Group Projects

Group projects are one of the components of a broader pedagogical approach called cooperative learning. The theoretical basis for this cooperative learning can be traced back to the 1930s and 1940s when Philosopher and Psychologist John Dewey sought to teach students by encouraging them to be active participants in the learning process by letting them work in small groups on topics of interest to them (Sharan, 2010). Cooperative group learning leads to student achievements as described in the elements that mediate cooperative learning (Johnson & Johnson, 2009).

Given that most business graduates are made to work in team-based environments after their graduation, group projects are seen as a critical component for achieving desired program outcomes in students. The cooperative learning arising out of working in teams to solve problems provides an experiential context for students to learn and apply their knowledge in problem-solving situations. Group projects gain even more importance as an experiential pedagogical approach due to their emphasis by employers and accrediting bodies (Braender & Naples, 2013).

Group projects are especially preferred as an experiential approach due to their higher degree of skill transferability compared to other approaches to learning. According to Gaumer, Cotleur, and Arnone (2012), group projects bring in a host of advantages to learners including opportunities to assume and demonstrate leadership, objective-oriented task organization, task delegation based on strengths and weaknesses of individual team members, ability to deal and manage conflict, ability to gather and analyze large volumes of data while distinguishing between relevant and irrelevant information related to project goals, ability to effectively communicate with and persuade team members, and solve problems using conceptual knowledge.

So and Brush (2008) found that collaborative learning, a key feature of group projects, resulted in increased satisfaction as well as social presence among students of a distance learning course. Schultz, Wilson, and Hess (2010), through their qualitative study with students, found five themes supporting group projects. These were better quality of deliverables, a richer and wider set of ideas, enhanced cognitive and social learning, shared (and reduced) workload, and reduced anxiety and stress due to complexity of the projects.

In assessing group project effectiveness in global virtual teams (GVTs), Taras et al. (2013) state that such collaborative learning group projects, in addition to the above stated benefits, also impart critical components unique to cross-cultural and global teams. These include cross-cultural communication, collaboration under temporal and spatial dispersion, and managing different work styles and team management skills in low technology contexts. They have also been shown to be especially valuable to developing and third world countries in giving a realistic sense of cross-cultural experience without the accompanying cost of international travel.

However, studies have also shown that group projects have their own set of unique challenges that sometimes make them less appealing to students. Gaumer et al. (2012) state that social loafing and uniform grading across the group irrespective of effort are some of the major limitations. Schultz et al.'s (2010) study identified three themes that would deter students from preferring

group projects—grade reciprocity (dependence on peers for personal grades), social loafing and freeriding, and challenging and conflicting schedules.

Given the multitude of benefits of group projects for students, these have been widely adopted and used across higher education institutions worldwide. However, given the extensive cognitive, affective, and behavioral outcomes expected from group projects as well as their varied implementation, the tools being used to assess student learning from these group projects have also been varied.

Peer evaluation has been recommended as a key assessment tool to address student concerns of social loafing and freeriding problems (Braender & Naples, 2013; Figl, 2010; Gaumer et al., 2012; Pathak, 2001; Schultz et al., 2010; Taras et al., 2013). Other commonly used approaches to evaluate group projects involve self-reported surveys (Taras et al., 2013), oral presentations (Anderson & Schiano, 2014; Cadotte & MacGuire, 2013), written reports (Anderson & Schiano, 2014; Taras et al., 2013), and changes in perceptions and behaviors (Taras et al., 2013).

Whenever a group work is being evaluated using written or oral presentations, it is recommended that a clear, easy to understand, and objective rubric be developed and shared with students to create transparency in grading of the work (Anderson & Schiano, 2014; Cadotte & MacGuire, 2013; Markulis, 2007).

A unique challenge facing evaluation of group projects and any group work in general is that the final work product is normally a group submission. However, evaluation and grading of students is performed for individual students. So a fair and transparent way of assessing and allocating a grade to individual students based on their specific contribution to the project becomes critical to develop and maintain effective team environments. Peer evaluation, as discussed above, is a common way to evaluate individual performance and it is often weighted in some manner to provide a score reflective of individual effort and contribution by each member. Braender and Naples (2013) suggest that when using peer evaluations for assigning individual grades on group work, a process of continuous evaluation by peers throughout the length of the project should be followed. In such a process, the initial peer evaluation should be only used as information to help individual members correct their behaviors and bring them in line with group expectation. Relying on a single end of the project, peer evaluation deprives students from intermediate feedback and opportunities to learn and modify behavior thereby undermining the learning process. Whenever peer evaluations are used for evaluating team work, care should be taken to gather evaluations related to the team as well as individual members. Evaluation of individual members provides a measure of individual

competencies and performance (cognitive, affective, and behavioral). In addition, peer evaluation instruments should also seek evaluation of the team by each individual member. Such measures would help the instructor in identifying conflict within the team (task, relationship, or process related) and satisfaction with the team. Measures of conflict can easily help the instructor to identify sources of problems and address any concerns before they start affecting team dynamics and, therefore, learning. They also suggest other strategies for the fair evaluation of individual members such as timely completion of tasks and assignments and cross-validation through written tests and oral presentations (also see Taras et al., 2013).

The problem with the above approaches in evaluating individual performance in a group setting is that most of the measures are subjective. Tests are seen as more objective measures of learning, but the performance on tests may not be a clear indication of learning through collaboration/project unless the test is specifically designed to assess knowledge related to the group project. A more objective measure was suggested by Braender and Naples (2013), who used analytics data from their learning management system (LMS). The LMS allowed the researchers to create a team space where each student's activity logs were recorded. This provides the number of times students logged in to work on their team project, amount of time spent in the team space, and nature of work performed. Their study shows that this objective data not only correlated highly with project grades of teams, but also helped address issues of social loafing, inadequate effort, and conflicts within teams. This helped them address any major team conflicts in a timely manner to ensure smooth performance in the teams.

Internships

The ultimate goal for most students pursuing college education is to find a job that offers good benefits and career growth opportunities. Historically, internships can be traced back to eleventh- and twelfth-century guilds where professional apprenticeship was used by master craftsmen to ease their work. Later, in the late nineteenth and early twentieth century, the field of medicine used the practical experience of apprenticeship into training. It was more formally inducted within other disciplines and became a part of mainstream education only in the 1960s (Spradlin, 2009). Even today, the term "intern", commonly used across disciplines, comes primarily from the field of medicine to describe an individual who has a degree but without a license to practice (Haire & Oloffson, 2009).

Internships have become a common practice in most business schools both at the undergraduate and graduate levels. This is reinforced by accrediting agencies (AACSB, Accreditation Council for Business Schools and Programs (ACBSP), etc.), who expect students to have applied knowledge and skills related to business problems as a requirement to accreditation. Other common terms used to describe these experiential exercises include service learning, practicum, and apprenticeships. In this chapter, we use the term "internships" in a more generic sense to include all these different variations of the concept.

Internships help achieve higher order learning outcomes and are known to provide numerous other benefits including enhanced understanding of content knowledge leading to higher academic achievement, opportunity to develop network skills and seek gainful long-term employment, apply learning from classroom into real-world problem solving by integrating theory and practice, providing a set of realistic expectations in the business world, improved social and communication skills, cultural awareness (both organizational and interpersonal), increased positive attitude about self, and civic engagement (Bukaliya, 2012; Celio, Durlak, & Dymnicki, 2011; Knouse & Fontenot, 2008; Simons et al., 2012; Warren, 2012).

A most common way of assessing the success of an internship program is through assessment of participant and supervisor satisfaction through self-reported surveys. Simons et al. (2012) used a multimethod approach combining qualitative and quantitative measures as well as student, faculty, and supervisor feedback to assess the extent of learning in a practicum experience. Their study, through a pre- and post-assessment using standardized scales, revealed that students going through the practicum experience demonstrated a greater extent of personal, civic, and professional development. The analysis of supervisor feedback indicated that students going through a practicum demonstrated greater levels of knowledge, skills, and attitudes relevant to the work profile.

Through meta-analysis involving 62 programs engaged in service learning, Celio et al. (2011) found that service learning resulted in significant effect on five areas of student outcomes—attitude toward self, attitude toward school and learning, civic engagement, social skills, and academic achievement. The mean effect size was the highest for academic achievement followed by social skills, demonstrating that this experiential learning approach does achieve the primary objective of the exercise.

In another meta-analysis, Warren (2012) used 11 studies across disciplines which assessed student learning outcomes through an experimental design. His analysis indicates that both self-reported measures and objective measures (test or assignment scores) were significantly and positively related to student

learning outcomes. Although self-reported measures of learning had greater effect on learning outcomes than objective measures, there was no statistical difference between the self-reported and concrete measures. This shows that both self-reported measures and objective measures are equally valid means of assessing outcomes in internships.

Using an ordered probit and linear regression analysis on students in the United Kingdom participating in internships, Mandilaras (2004) found that students undergoing internships in economics demonstrated higher academic achievement. Academic achievement was measured as class of degree (for the ordered probit model) and grades received in the last two years (for the regression model). Results were consistent in both models indicating that internships not only have immediate, but also far-reaching impact (as they end up getting better marks overall or a higher class of degree). This indicates that longitudinal or long-term horizon measures of assessment may also be valid approaches to assess outcomes of internships.

Some of the specific tools used to evaluate student learning outcomes of internships include—oral presentations on the content and experience of the internship, written reports submitted and evaluated by both faculty and internship supervisor, use of daily journals or reflection papers from students on the experience and lessons learned, a portfolio that includes an analytical and reflective description of project(s) performed, the mapping of the experience to stated outcomes and a resume (Pittenger, 2018). Surveys and feedback from employers normally focus on students' competence on knowledge (general business concepts, functional concepts relevant to the internship experience, global issues), skills (written and oral, teamwork, leadership, time management, other technical), and attitudes (desire to learn, ethical approach to problem solving, dependability) (Pittenger, 2018; Simons et al., 2012).

With most institutions requiring their students to engage in internships in their junior/senior year of the undergraduate degree, internships are often used to assess not only student learning outcomes for the particular course/experience but also assurance of learning at the program or school level for the purposes of accreditation. Normally in such cases, assessment is conducted by an individual/team who is exclusively dealing with assessment tasks and would assess students' outcomes in line with the program-level desired outcomes.

Study Abroad Experiences/Field Trips

Study abroad programs can trace back their history to the early twelfth century. Although one might argue that an even older precedent exists for study

abroad when Aristotle, born in Macedonia, studied in Greece, the first recorded study abroad pioneer is Emo of Friesland who traveled from Northern Holland to study at Oxford University in 1190 (Lee, 2015). However, in a more formal way, the first recorded study abroad program in the United States was initiated by the University of Delaware in 1923 when Professor Kirkbride, an instructor in modern languages, proposed to send students from the University of Delaware to France for their junior year. Eight students participated in this first year-long experience (https://www1.udel.edu/global/studyabroad/information/brief_history.html).

Study abroad is one form of academic internationalization which has taken many other forms over the years including student exchange programs, inclusion of international students, joint and double degree programs, visiting faculty/scholars, international curriculum, student clubs, international campus events, community-based partnerships and projects, collaborative research, international conferences, and seminars (Knight, 2004).

Study abroad programs have been used in a variety of time frames (semester-long or year-long programs, major abroad programs, and short-term study abroad involving two to four weeks of study). However, irrespective of implementation, all study abroad programs share a common goal that they aim to achieve through the experience—enhance cultural quotient (CQ) (understand their cultural values and biases). Other goals that have been used for study abroad programs include enhancements in students' knowledge, developing skills, shaping attitudes, building confidence, developing a broader world view, career development, language learning, ability to pursue subjects/topics not available elsewhere, and enhancing creativity (Dwyer & Peters, 2004; Kinginger, 2011; Lee, Therriault, & Linderholm, 2012; Nolan & Kurthakoti, 2017; Sachau, Brasher, & Fee, 2010).

Deardorff (2006) suggests a list of specific intercultural competencies (Table 2, pp. 249–250) that are relevant in assessing the successful internationalization of academic programs and could be used as a guideline to determine learning outcomes from a study abroad program. Continuing further, she provides a list of commonly accepted approaches as agreed by scholars and faculty. This includes use of tools like case studies, interviews, self-reported surveys, observations by the host culture, self-reflection, use of journals and narrative diaries. Further, talking specifically about study abroad programs, Deardorff (2011) suggests the use of pre/post testing, program satisfaction surveys, self-perspective inventory, direct evidence using critical reflection papers and capstone projects. An interesting finding of Deardorff's (2006) study is that, in spite of its simplicity in implementation, a majority of scholars are not in favor of using pre/post assessments as these tend to rely heavily

on self-reported scores and are likely to be affected by other factors. Similarly, they also believed that using observations alone was not a good approach to assess cultural competencies as they tend to be subjective in nature. Thus a combination of the approaches discussed before seems like the best way to assess learning from a study abroad program, especially as it pertains to cultural competence.

Scholars have also used standardized scales (Earley & Mosakowski, 2004; Van Dyne, Ang, & Koh, 2008) to study the enhancement in cultural intelligence among students studying abroad and have found that students who engage in study abroad experiences, even as short as eight days, demonstrate a significant improvement across all dimensions of cultural intelligence (Nolan & Kurthakoti, 2017).

Chieffo and Griffiths (2004) developed a 21-item scale covering four dimensions of global awareness (intercultural awareness, functional knowledge, global interdependence, and personal growth and development). On comparing scores across the 21 items for students engaged in short-term study abroad versus those who did not study abroad, they found that study abroad students demonstrated a higher level of global awareness across all the four dimensions indicating that even short study abroad programs lasting a month can have significant benefit to the students in terms of enhancing their global awareness.

Matsumoto and Hwang (2013) evaluated ten available scales to assess cultural intelligence and, in conclusion, demonstrated the scales that have higher reliability and validity across varying conditions. Accordingly, they recommend the use of the CQ or cultural quotient (Van Dyne et al., 2008), intercultural adjustment potential scale (ICAPS) (Matsumoto et al., 2001) or the multicultural personality questionnaire (MPQ) (van der Zee & van Oudenhoven, 2000) to assess cultural intelligence and serve as a tool for assessment for the multidimensional cultural intelligence construct.

Table 3.1 briefly summarizes the key components of the preceding discussion on the assessment of various experiential learning approaches, their learning outcomes, and accompanying assessment techniques.

Discussion and Conclusion

Experiential learning is an integral part of the curriculum in many business and international business programs at many U.S. colleges and universities. When developing specific experiential learning scenarios for students, professors and instructors must be guided by the outcomes of such experiences and

Table 3.1 Summary of learning outcomes and assessment tools used in common EL approaches

EL approach	Expected outcomes of EL approach	Tools used for assessment of outcomes	Some considerations
Case studies	• Communication skills • Analytical skills • Decision making • Application skills • Time management skills • Creative skills • Self-analysis skills • Interpersonal skills • Empathizing skills • Pattern recognition	• Written reports • Oral presentation • Facilitated discussion • Case examination • Multiple choice tests • Reflective papers • Quality of class participation	• Assessment can be done—before, during, or after class session • One-time assessment is seldom indicative of learning. Assessment has to be continuous and for extended period of time, preferably across courses • There exists a gap between faculty perception and student perception of the acquisition of the skills through case studies
Simulations and games	• Provide experience of running a business • Decision-making skills • Problem-solving skills • Leadership skills • Expand knowledge • Learn from mistakes • Integrate business functions • Teamwork • Formulate strategy	• Self-reported surveys to assess learning from mistakes • Performance • Struggle • Forecasting accuracy • Student engagement • Ability to operate under constraints • Assessment of student effort • Comprehensive business plan • Executive briefing • Oral presentation • Traditional exams and tests	• Is performance the "correct" measure of learning since learning in simulations does not occur "just in time", but more often "just a bit late" • No direct relationship between performance and learning • Simulations are usually not the most effective way to achieve lower order outcomes of Bloom's taxonomy • Most of the work has been on cognitive and affective learning, very little on behavior

(*continued*)

Table 3.1 (continued)

EL approach	Expected outcomes of EL approach	Tools used for assessment of outcomes	Some considerations
Group projects	• Cultural competencies • Collaboration (local and global) • Communication • Interpersonal skills • Leadership skills and task delegation • Teamwork • Conflict management • Analyze relevant information	• Written reports • Peer evaluation • Presentation • Self-reported scores on surveys • Tests and assignments • Student satisfaction • Reflective papers • Assessment of student effort based on analytics from LMS or other platform used for managing group work	• Are peer evaluations a good measure of assessing learning? • Need an objective way to assess individual effort • Reports and presentations should have easy to understand rubrics • When using peer evaluations, it should be continuous and done multiple times • Peer evaluations should also separate evaluation of team from evaluation of individual team members' competency
Internships and service learning	• Integrate knowledge with application • Increase relevance to classroom learning • Interpersonal skills • Teamwork skills • Increase job opportunities • Develop problem-solving skills • Cultural awareness • Attitude toward self civic engagement	• Evaluation by internship coordinator or supervisor • Analytical and reflective papers by students • Self-evaluation reports • Self-reported surveys • Competencies as defined by professional bodies in the field • Tracking student success after graduation • Oral presentations on the content and experience • Better class of degree (GPA) and higher course scores	• Perceptions of core competencies needed for internship success differ between student and employer • Longitudinal and broad-based assessments are better to tease out the transferability of skills across courses
Study abroad and field trips	• Cultural competence • Personal development • Functional/domain knowledge • Language learning • Develop cross-cultural skills	• Standardized scales for pre- post-assessment using self-reported surveys • Tests and exams • Observations • Critical and reflective essays • Journals Presentation	• Scholars believe pre- post-assessment lacks validity • Observation alone is not a good measure, so is self-reported data • Need to use a combination of metrics to assess achievement of outcomes

not by convenience or the desire to emulate competitor programs to ensure that students are being given an optimal opportunity to build a wide range of skill sets that will benefit them in the academic setting as well as in future employment situations. Such a process includes identifying those learning outcomes, using the outcomes to develop learning objectives and determining assessment techniques that will measure how effectively those outcomes have been achieved.

In order to effectively assess the outcomes of experiential learning, it is critical that the learning objectives intended to be achieved by EL be specified in advance. This well-defined set of objectives will then lend itself to assessment by the instructor by the use of appropriate assessment tool(s).

Yet, developing such objectives can be difficult. Philbrick, Maryott, and Magnuson (2017) note that skills desired in graduating students by employers are not always uniform nor clear. The researchers, unable to find academic studies offering clear objectives to incorporate into experiential learning projects, conducted focus groups with human resource professionals to generate business discipline (marketing, human resources, accounting, finance, business information systems, and supply chain) specific objectives for such usage.

Skills to focus upon in experiential learning which are desired by employers can also be identified through business-based organizations such as Payscale (an online compensation and benefits firm) and in the "popular" business press such as *Forbes Magazine*, but one must recognize that sample size and rigor in those sources are often unclear. In areas like accounting and actuarial sciences, there exist specific standards by external agencies (American Institute of Certified Public Accountants (AICPA), Society of Actuaries (SOA)) from which students are expected to obtain certification in order to perform specific tasks associated with their profession. In such cases, these standards provided by the external agencies serve as the guidelines on what skills are to be assessed by the EL approach (Beard, 2007).

One core "difficulty" in delineating experiential learning objectives is that the key skills to be assessed are often "soft" (team-based, interpersonal, and leadership elements) in orientation which requires definition, calibration, and assessment applications to be carefully detailed and integrated for the chosen experiential learning approach. Careful attention to the desired EL outcomes coupled with a recognition of student learning styles best addressed by each experiential learning process will provide for the alignment of objectives with learning evaluation.

David Kolb's learning styles inventory serves as a useful tool in meeting this challenge. The inventory looks at how abstract concepts are acquired and utilized by the learner. Kolb (2014) examines two core dimensions in acquisition and utilization—the nature of conceptualization (abstract or concrete) and

the nature of utilization (reflective observation or active experimentation). These two dimensions produce four learning styles (convergent, divergent, assimilative, and adaptive or accommodating).

To ensure that the intended outcomes of experiential learning scenarios are aligned with students' learning styles, each of the EL approaches examined in this chapter can be assessed by Kolb's four styles of learning (convergent, divergent, assimilative, and adaptive). The convergent learning style is one of abstract conceptualization and active experimentation. Games and simulations fit this style quite effectively as both abstract functional concepts (such as the nature of the "best" marketing mix for an identified market) can be developed via the trial and error involved in each round of a marketing simulation. Aspects of an internship, particularly one where students can see the impact of multiple attempts at manipulating elements of a particular concept also are examples of this style.

The divergent style (concrete experience and reflective observation) is best exemplified in long-term group projects, internships, and study abroad settings where the length of the experience allows the student to see actions/decisions and consequences in a more holistic fashion. The same two settings (study abroad and internships) can also address the adaptive learning styles (concrete experience and active experimentation) of some students. Again, the length of these EL experiences (12–16 weeks at a time) provides a number of varying opportunities for specific actions and decisions to be taken by students along with reflection to occur on the consequences of said action. Then, it allows for follow-up via another action or decision with such follow-up being reflective or active in nature depending on the circumstances.

Finally, the assimilative learning style (abstract conceptualization and reflective observation) is readily matched to the case study method or more short-term, single subject-based group projects. In both cases, these experiential learning approaches require the students to examine issues and make recommendations on their resolution but in neither case are the suggestions actually implemented so the resulting consequences can guide future behavior. Table 3.2 examines each experiential learning outcome in relation to Kolb's learning styles.

In a similar approach, Good, Boyas, and Klein (2019) propose a model to effectively create assessment tools that connect the numerous activities possible within EL with the varied learning outcomes associated with courses that use EL as a pedagogical approach. Here, they examine specific courses in two disciplines, human resources and accounting, noting the objectives of each course, the experiential learning activity undertaken, and the assessment tools

Table 3.2 Aligning EL outcomes and Kolb's learning cycle

	Kolb's experiential learning cycle			
Activity outcomes	Concrete experience	Reflective observation	Abstract conceptualization	Active experimentation
Decision making				X
Analytical			X	X
Written communication		X	X	X
Oral communication	X	X		
Problem solving	X		X	X
Leadership		X	X	X
Conflict management	X	X	X	
Teamwork	X	X		X
Cultural competency	X	X	X	
Time management				X
Empathy	X			
Creativity			X	X
Strategy formulation			X	X
Domain knowledge		X	X	

used for that activity as well as whether the evaluation was a summative or formative one.

In light of these discussions, we believe that a good approach to develop assessments for experiential learning should be based on a clear understanding of the learning outcomes for the course/program as well as the specific objectives of the experiential activity.

As illustrated in Fig. 3.1, once the objectives and the student learning styles are paired with the EL approach (as described in Tables 3.1 and 3.2), the final step is to examine the method of assessment to be used to ensure that the intended learning outcomes are achieved. In examining the research on specific EL types summarized in Table 3.1, the core outcomes can be classified into three broad categories: Knowledge, skills, and attitudes.

Knowledge acquisition is the primary focus of education in general and college business curricula in particular. Such knowledge can be broad in orientation covering conceptual and theoretical aspects (e.g. what are the key elements in capitalist theory and how do they differ from socialist theory?), specific in its focus covering a particular domain or function (e.g. accounting versus human resources) or cross-cultural (e.g. how does interpersonal space

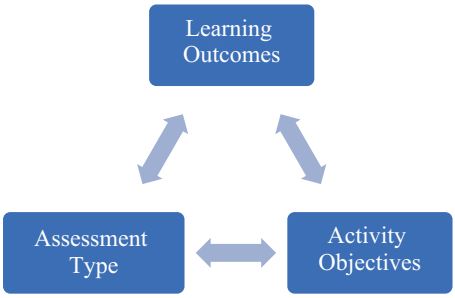

Fig. 3.1 A model for developing assessment for experiential learning pedagogy (illustration by authors)

differ between individuals in the U.S. vs. Brazil?). For conceptual, theoretical and cross-cultural knowledge acquisition, internships, and study abroad experiences allow the student the time and variability that facilitates such learning. As the research shows, multiple assessment approaches including short-term self-report journals and longer term self-reflection and interviews will provide evidence of the learning outcomes obtained.

For more functional or domain knowledge acquisition, case studies, games and simulations or projects are viable options to consider. Learning outcomes specific to the focus function can be best determined by written reports, oral presentations, self-report surveys, peer evaluation, and even tests and assignments. These same three approaches (case studies, games and simulations, and projects) facilitate skill acquisition (decision making, interpersonal, problem solving).

Finally, attitudes are most likely impacted by internships, projects, study abroad programs, and games and simulations. These four EL approaches tend to support decision making or action taking by students within the setting and allow the students, often because of the length of the activity, the opportunity to see the results of their actions. Such opportunity for viewing consequences is often the nexus of a change in attitude such as learning from mistakes, greater cultural sensitivity, or enhanced ethical awareness.

In conclusion, this chapter represents one of the first attempts to holistically view the various approaches commonly used to assess experiential learning outcomes and critically examine their relative merits and limitations. We believe that this evaluation of the various assessment approaches will enable practitioners of EL to make informed decision about the choice of tools to be used for assessing experiential learning while taking into account student learning styles.

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4

Comparing Online and Face-to-Face Creativity Development for International Business

Tiit Elenurm

Introduction

Creativity in developing innovative business models is essential for successful international business development. Supported by networking and open innovation, multicultural team creativity influences success of growth-oriented start-ups. Chua and Ng (2017) explain why ability to think and solve problems creatively in a multicultural environment is critical for success in the twenty-first century. Creativity in international business is essential for discovering new international business opportunities but also in the process of integrating culturally diverse human resources and developing cross-border teamwork practices. Creativity supports transversality of university education (Beighton, 2018). Creative activities enable learners to think "out of the box", to combine different knowledge sources and team member contributions in order to apply ideas for developing new meaningful international business practices.

Transversality is related to globalization of the multicultural competence and intercultural knowledge sharing (Jung & Embree, 2016). Multicultural competence is defined by Pope, Reynolds, and Muller (2004) as the awareness, knowledge and skills needed to work with others who are culturally different from self in meaning. Transversality in the international business context assumes diversity in teams, synergy of competencies and knowledge

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M. A. Gonzalez-Perez et al. (eds.), *The Palgrave Handbook of Learning and Teaching International Business and Management*, https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-030-20415-0_4

sources for monitoring new global, regional and local trends and in developing and validating new business ideas. Transversal skills enhance employability of students at international labor markets, their mobility and ability to succeed in a diverse world by developing intercultural competence (Deardorff & Arasaratnam-Smith, 2017). Overcoming disciplinary barriers between entrepreneurship, international business, digital skills and teamwork readiness for experiential learning assumes transversality in an academic environment and flexibility in applying suitable experiential learning processes in co-operation with international academic and business partners.

Creativity development results and lessons learnt for international business should also be transferable to further learning activities and to new international business situations that learners face already during their university studies or after graduation. Another aspect of transferability is reflecting creative experiences and transferring knowledge between students of different nationalities in their face-to-face or online joint learning activities.

This chapter explains the role of online and face-to-face creativity development for searching and creating new international business opportunities and for developing capabilities to co-operate with business partners from different cultures. Online brainstorming platforms such as www.tircider.com and many similar digital tools make it technically easy to collect creative ideas from all over the world without any face-to-face contact of people that upload ideas to these platforms. Active and constructive involvement of entrepreneurs and learners in such online creative activities however assumes trust, commitment and common understanding of the objective and principles of online communication. Some networking and entrepreneurial online knowledge sharing and learning by doing tasks may assume face-to-face creativity development or combination of face-to-face and online learning experiences.

This chapter contributes to conceptualizing choices to be made, when online and face-to-face tools are used for developing creativity in learning related to international business. Creative features of experiential learning practices are compared from the point of view of freedom applied by learners in team formation in choosing and specifying practical project challenges for their team and the role of team members in the practical entrepreneurship and international business development process. Comparison is also based on the time frame for the learning by doing projects and for applying face-to-face and online teamwork.

Literature Review

Kyrö (2015) statement that entrepreneurship is related to the process of using opportunities, new venture creation, growth, risk and acquisition and allocation of resources in order to make things happen is a departure point for

understanding the role of creativity in experiential learning for cross-border entrepreneurship. Ramoglou and Zyglidopoulos (2015) reflect discussion about business opportunity search and identification versus constructivist approach to new business opportunity creation. In the international business, opportunity search can be interpreted as finding new foreign markets for business ideas that have been already validated at domestic markets. Business opportunity creation corresponds to development of innovative products and innovation ecosystems (Adner, 2012) that may assume open innovation readiness to encourage new ideas from outsiders and efforts of born globals to find early users and investors at the global scale.

Mainela and Puhakka (2011) suggest that a new international venture emergence assumes an entrepreneurial process involving four major elements that link networks to international business opportunities: venture drafting, resourcing, learning & creation and finally legitimizing the emerging venture. Creative processes are related to all these elements. Bingham and Davis (2012) differentiate direct and indirect approaches to developing global growth competencies. A direct approach means that entrepreneur learns through own trial and error, experimentation and improvisation. An indirect approach means replicating the success models of other enterprises and looking for advice from investors, business partners, trade associations and governmental agencies. Entrepreneurship education should prepare students for choosing the appropriate internationalization path and timing that corresponds to the nature of their business idea, cross-cultural awareness and readiness to use international contacts.

Glavas, Mathews, and Bianchi (2017) have collected data from Australian international entrepreneurial firms and highlighted the importance of international opportunity recognition for leveraging internet capabilities and international market performance. They however point out that firms have to be vigilant, when developing internet-based networks and suggest that traditional face-to-face networks contribute to deeper business co-operation than internet-enabled networks. Rosenbaum (2017) at the same time presents empirical evidence that online networking is a suitable foreign market entry tool for female entrepreneurs without spending excessive time on traditional face-to-face networking that could disturb their work-life balance.

Morris, Neumeyer, and Kuratko (2015) have explained that already during the first stage of entrepreneurship initiative potential entrepreneurs should understand the diverse portfolio of possible growth routes of their venture, including co-operation with business angels and involvement in international networks, although preliminary co-operation priorities can change during their entrepreneurial journey. This journey can be started by using experiential learning that takes into consideration imitative, individually innovative or co-creative entrepreneurial orientations (Elenurm, 2012). Individually innovative

and co-creative entrepreneurship both assume creativity but co-creative entrepreneurship uses team-based development and networking, including international networks, for developing, validating and implementing the business model. The co-creative entrepreneurial orientation utilizes knowledge sharing in networks and open innovation (Chesbrough, 2017) for developing new business ideas. Co-creation assumes diversity of ideas but also common values and accepting the role of partners in network-based knowledge sharing and in new knowledge co-creation. Imitative entrepreneurs are not oriented on radically new business ideas but rather search and follow established best practices. However, some degree of creativity and international business networking is also needed for searching best practices and for adapting these to new markets, where these practices so far have not been applied. In emerging economies and in less advanced market economies, entrepreneurs can use cross-border networking for transferring business models from more advanced market economies to their own business environment.

Knowledge acquisition and learning through networks have become important for successful entrepreneurial initiatives (Del Mar Fuentes-Fuentes, Bojica, Ruiz-Arroyo, & Welter, 2017). Online social and business networks allow access to diversified international knowledge sources but information re-sharing on social networking sites has been during recent years also discussed in the context of fake news, pointing out the need to critically assess information quality in social networks (Koohikamali & Sidorova, 2017). Trust between cross-border partners is among important success factors of export performance (Bodlaj, Povše, & Vida, 2017). Hakanen, Kossou, and Takala (2016) emphasize that building interpersonal trust in networks is a slow process, where partners acquire knowledge about each other, show respect and fairness, keep their promises, communicate effectively and share responsibilities. Trust building in online networks has become an important issue in social media research (Kapoor et al., 2017). Cross-border entrepreneurship and international business assume broader online networking scope and more diversified knowledge sources than locally oriented entrepreneurship. Trust building is an important pre-requisite for deepening creative co-operation. Global Entrepreneurship Monitor (GEM) 2012–2014 Estonian surveys have demonstrated the role of team-based co-creative entrepreneurship in developing ambitious internationally oriented entrepreneurial initiatives but also international networking needs of early-stage entrepreneurs. Entrepreneurs that have international growth ambitions and innovation focus often rely on knowledge sharing with people arriving from other countries. Entrepreneurs that are domestically focused trust more their close friends and spouses as business knowledge sources (Venesaar et al., 2014).

It is not self-evident anymore that all students will start an export-oriented business in the country of their birth and/or education without involving their start-up teams founders from other countries or transfer their enterprise to a new location outside the country, where the business was at first launched. Sharing economy phenomena, such as Uber taxi drivers, are among global trends that expand digital entrepreneurship business models across borders and turn around established entrepreneurship patterns (Richter, Kraus, & Syrjä, 2015).

Networking among students is influenced by their enrolment in higher education institutions or other formal networks that enable learning communities. Wenger, McDermott, and Snyder (2002) already more than a decade ago explained the importance of communities of practice and stressed the role of peripheral participation in such communities in order to develop competencies required for networking. Social media is at present creating daily numerous participation opportunities that may be more or less relevant for education and self-development. Online networking offers opportunities for cognitive diversity that enables creativity and innovative learning, but it can also lead to communities where like-minded persons repeat and reinforce the narrow-minded views of each other or disseminate fake news. In a world of information overload and diversity of knowledge sources, learning to evaluate the quality of online information and deciding which knowledge sources to trust have become more complex. Creativity assumes ability to challenge unreliable information and to apply critical thinking, when assessing established beliefs and practices. Critical thinking skills can be developed in participatory experiential learning, where students are exposed to current business practices, and teamwork is used for developing new product or service ideas (DeSimone & Buzza, 2013).

Cross-border entrepreneurship development means positioning learners in the context of international business opportunities but also resource-based entrepreneurial efforts in line with the effectuation (Chetty, Ojala, & Leppäaho, 2015; Sarasvathy, Kumar, York, & Bhagavatula, 2014) logic. That may mean testing one's creative capabilities outside learner's comfort zone and the need to face cross-cultural communication challenges and risks that are not evident in their domestic business environment.

Creativity is often featured as a soft skill that can conflict with orientation on measurable results (Pereira & Costa, 2017). Business creativity however assumes readiness to define objectives for fruitful idea generation and ability to follow some procedures and timetables if the intention is to be competitive at the marketplace. Team creativity assumes discipline in time management for presenting ideas and for agreeing on further co-operation efforts. Co-operative

learning on blended courses, involving both the online component and the face-to-face project work, is discussed by Johnson (2013). This author points out the need to apply peer reviews and to allow members to "divorce" themselves from project teams in order to diminish the problem of free riders.

Creativity in international entrepreneurship, especially in start-ups that have global growth ambitions, is also applied for raising money from investors that are ready to support innovative business development. Business angels as active investors create long-term relationship with entrepreneurs and can act as mentors but in this co-operation process also conflicts can arise as the result of scarce resources, personal differences and goal incompatibilities (Collewaert, 2016). Business angel activities have in recent years expanded in many developing countries and emerging economies (Romani & Atienza, 2016; Wang, Tan, & Liu, 2016). The need to understand creativity in co-operation between investors and business founders is especially important for young start-up teams that have not accumulated their own personal saving. Their efforts to find investors and mentors can be interpreted as an element of the effectuation logic (Sarasvathy et al., 2014).

Face-to-face learning in classroom can be an interactive ideation and creative team building experience for students involved but convergence of e-learning and face-to-face learning is an essential tool for increasing cross-border networking and knowledge sharing opportunities with students from different cultures. Blended learning has been defined as systems combining face-to-face and computer-mediated instructions (Manwaring, Larsen, Graham, Henrie, & Halverson, 2017). Blended learning involves combination of face-to-face classroom learning activities with asynchronous and/or synchronous online learning. In the context of cross-border entrepreneurship readiness, it is important that blended learning helps students to develop their networking skills and get familiar with students in other countries. Understanding knowledge sharing and project work style differences in face-to-face and online communities is an important blended learning outcome for enhancing networking readiness. Blended learning can be arranged as a multistage process rather than a single time and place bounded event in order to encourage students to be independent learners outside the classroom.

Kedia and Englis (2011) stated that globalization of businesses has occurred faster than the internationalization of business schools. International co-operation opportunities of universities have to be taken into consideration, when assessing usability of online and face-to-face creativity development options for learning international business.

Creative processes in international business can focus on understanding international business opportunities and also on acquiring resources. In both

these situations, also creativity in socializing with potential foreign partners is needed. Creative processes in teams depend on trust building and commitment to attain shared objectives. Literature overview serves as the basis for formulating the following criteria for comparing different experiential learning practices from the point of view of developing creativity and transversality for international business and transferability of learning results to practice.

1. Developing creativity in discovering or creating new business opportunities and finding resources for learners' own entrepreneurial vision.
2. Creative learning is focused on business information "gatekeeper" role by assisting owners of already operating businesses.
3. Developing creativity in promoting own knowledge sharing needs and choosing team members for cross-border entrepreneurship.
4. Developing creativity in finding international networks and checking validity and relevance of information shared in networks.
5. Time frames for ideation and applying team creativity in online and face-to-face communication modes.
6. The balance between guided experiential learning and the freedom to choose ideation object, methods, communication tools and timing by the team of learners.
7. The share of face-to-face and online activities in the experiential learning process.

First two criteria specify if international business opportunities are discovered to pursue learners' own entrepreneurial vision or learning is related to discovering international business opportunities for some practitioners that have presented their business development challenges to student teams. Criteria three and four reflect creativity in social relations, in promoting own competencies and in team building but also critical thinking for assessing validity and relevance of available information. Criteria 1–4 also reflect the role of the effectuation logic in the experiential learning process. Time frame, degree of structuring the task and giving guidance to learners influence the autonomy of learners to choose when and how they prepare and perform ideation and what creativity tools they use. The final seventh criterion specifies what (if any) is the way to combine face-to-face and online creative activities to blended learning. Blended learning applications also influence travel arrangements if learners are from different countries.

Research Methodology

The methodological departure point of our approach in this chapter is action research on experiential learning processes, where students contribute to international business initiatives and/or start their development journeys as start-up entrepreneurs focused on international business opportunities. Educational action research examines and reflects both the potentials and the challenges of educational practices centered on learning projects in different formats and with various internal and external partners (Mandrup & Jensen, 2017). Chapter compares different experiential learning projects, including student enterprises program at the Estonian Business School and inter-university pre-incubation activities that were part of the Estonian entrepreneurship education development efforts, course Cross-border business projects with Baltic entrepreneurs, X-Culture global teams, Nordic Ideation Camps and Nordic Angel Programs. Pluses and minuses of these experiential learning processes for enhancing creativity in international business opportunity identification, international business model development, entrepreneurial team creation and applying creativity in teamwork are analyzed. Challenges to balance creativity and execution in experiential learning, finding the right mix of online and face-to-face creative activities and integrating inputs from different disciplines are explained. During five of six projects also quantitative anonymous student feedback has been collected but its format has not been the same to enable quantitative comparisons of different experiential learning programs. Experiential learning has also a role in bringing learners outside their comfort zone, and immediate satisfaction with teamwork and learning results is not the only indicator for assessing long-term implications of experiential learning and features of a program. Comparison of programs is mainly based on observations of learning processes in the instructor role, discussions with other instructors, group work of students on lessons learnt and on individual verbal feedback from students.

Comparison of Creativity Development in Experiential Learning Programs

Estonian Business School (EBS) has been involved in several experiential learning programs. We compare six programs that are related to international business. About these programs, we have evidence to compare creativity development activities and their implications by using seven questions that were specified, based on our literature review.

Student enterprises program has been part of the EBS curriculum from the year 2000. Students that study in the Estonian language have developed their business idea during two semesters, when they at first study foundations of entrepreneurship resulting in "raw" new business ideas that have been further developed during the teamwork in student enterprise course. Final stage of the program has been competition of teams that has contributed to creativity in pitching to jury that has allocated some seed money to the start-up project of the best team. As many foreign students have studied at EBS by using the Erasmus exchange program only for one semester, they have had a shorter version of student enterprise activities and their involvement in joint teams with Estonian students has been limited. During recent two years, the final stage for presenting business models to the jury has been conducted in a joint session that has enabled some sharing of ideas from students that have different national background. Two-semester length of the program has given enough time to screen business information online and to validate ideas with potential early users. Teams have also had time to discuss their ideas with coaches. Older students that already have entrepreneurial experience are encouraged to take the role of coaches. Students have had high degree of freedom to choose their team members and to organize their ideation activities in the team. Although some business ideas that are based on using online tools and even some business models for non-traditional financial services have been developed further and turned to real businesses after the program, many business ideas have not led to practical entrepreneurship as students enter the program already at the end of the first study year. First-year students tend to change their business ideas when they continue their program in autumn. They have limited pre-knowledge and resources and in many cases are after a year interested in different career and entrepreneurship opportunities.

In 2017, Estonian entrepreneurship education framework program launched pre-incubation programs **StarterTech** and **StarterCreative** that bring together to joint sessions students from several Estonian universities. These pre-incubation programs mean intensive 3–4 hours sessions after two weeks, where guest speakers and mentors assigned to each team encourage student teams to take next steps in their business development efforts. Ideation time spans during sessions are however only 15–20 minutes and creative thinking outside the training room depends mainly on commitment and time arrangements of each team. Although teams follow presentations of other teams during sessions, inter-team feedback about strengths and weaknesses of ideas presented by other teams is not a special focus of learning. At the end of the program, there are semi-finals and final of pitching business models that have been developed by teams. Business angels are also involved in the final

session at an event called Startup Day, where the best teams are rewarded based on their presentations. Although students are encouraged to develop prototypes and test these with users, pre-incubation program time span of three months is quite limited to conduct these activities that are essential for specifying and possibly re-defining client's problem that could serve as input to the new round of ideation.

Course Cross-border business projects with Baltic entrepreneurs is the course that has been specially designed to enable creative teamwork of cross-cultural teams, where incoming Erasmus exchange students have co-operated with Estonian students as international business information "gatekeepers" for Estonian and some Finnish entrepreneurs interested to screen and compare international business opportunities. At first, the course name was *International Business Opportunities in the Baltic Region*. During recent two years, the name of the course was changed to *Cross-border business project with Baltic entrepreneurs* in order to reflect more exactly the main focus of this learning experience that assumed finalizing the preliminary task from entrepreneur after face-to-face meeting that was usually conducted by the team at the location of the entrepreneur. Before such meetings, student teams were supposed to analyze and assess competencies of their members to perform the task and to propose additional sources for finding relevant business information through their networks. During the period from 2006 to 2017, international student teams of the Estonian Business School conducted field projects for 79 Estonian small and medium-sized enterprises in order to support their internationalization efforts. Each team consisted of 4–6 students representing different nationalities mainly from Europe but also from some Asian and Latin-American countries. Team formation principle was diversity of nations in each team. Students could swop between teams if they agreed with another student to change their teams in order to work for the tasks that have the best match with self-development interests of both students. Such exchanges were however done by less than 10% of all students. Among the business sectors that offered projects for these teams, the most active were innovative entrepreneurs involved in information and communication techology start-ups, in design and tourism. For many years these teams have mainly worked in face-to-face communication mode, both inside classroom and visiting their project enterprises, although Moodle and during recent years Canvas e-learning was also applied to train students for online teamwork. In 2013 and 2014, cross-border online teams were created that involved students studying at the Haaga-Helia School of Applied Sciences and at the Estonian Business School. There were however difficulties to arrange intensive online meetings between EBS students that had jobs at daytime and Haaga-Helia students that wanted

to have synchronous online chats during their daytime classes. Students that were able to visit entrepreneurs near their location and students that could not do it because of logistic reasons had often different understanding of the context of their joint task that inhibited ideation.

Globalization of business opportunities assumes capability to co-operate with students as potential entrepreneurship partners all over the world. **X-Culture online project work** was applied at the Estonian Business School in 2013 as a pilot project in order to assess the suitability of this online co-operation tool for the *International business* course or for a special free elective. Starting from 2015, it has been used during international business courses for the whole student group. The global X-Culture consortium http://x-culture.org/ connects annually more than 9000 students from 150 universities in 40 countries. X-Culture creates multicultural teams to enable action learning for overcoming cultural differences in online networking. Team members cannot choose other team members. X-Culture organizers allocate students to virtual teams following the principle of geographical and cultural diversity of each team. Students have to build their team consensus on the international business opportunity challenge they try to solve together by working online over a period of two and half months. Students must pass pre-test in order to demonstrate their knowledge about online communication and knowledge sharing tools and X-Culture rules. Creativity in X-Culture is needed for identifying new international business opportunities that match needs of companies. But creativity in X-Culture teams is also needed for aligning knowledge sharing styles of students from different cultures and for finding the best online co-operation tools, including social media applications, in situations where team members never meet each other in a physical space. There is no direct face-to-face contact with the client enterprise during project work. In fact, even more than hundred teams may choose to prepare a report for the same enterprise. During recent two years, enterprises have however been encouraged to conduct webinars with X-Culture teams in order to answer the questions of team members and to specify their task at the beginning of this experiential learning process. During the project work weeks, students are involved in regular peer-review assessments in order to understand their pluses and minuses in online co-operation from the point of view of other online team members.

Nordic Ideation Camp program that started in 2017 combines a week for online team formation and ideation preparation with intensive one-week ideation camp, involving students from Denmark, Finland and Estonia. The third week is for reflection and follow-up, when students are back at their universities. This is a co-operation project between Copenhagen Business Academy, Haaga-Helia School of Applied Sciences and Estonian Business

School. Student teams start working on assignments presented to them online by enterprises one week before the camp. They do main ideation and idea validation in the camp face-to-face learning environment, where they can fully concentrate on the task of their team. Pre-camp week has however important role for identifying competences of team members through online tools and collecting data from each participating country as input to ideation during the intensive face-to-face teamwork in the camp. Compared to X-Culture and Cross-border business projects with Baltic entrepreneurs, the Nordic Ideation Camp experiential learning process is more compressed in time. Face-to-face ideation in the camp starts from filling in the empathy canvas about potential customers and several canvases support ideation mainly from the point of view of design thinking and understanding clients. Students are encouraged to validate prototypes based on their preliminary ideas through face-to-face interviews with potential customers already during the camp. This process supports new rounds of ideation.

Nordic Angel Program (NAP)—https://www.nordicangelprogram.com/—is a cross-border training and investment program that brings together start-up entrepreneurs and business angels from Nordic and Baltic countries. Compared to other described programs, NAP represents more radical approach to experiential learning as start-ups in this program want to raise money for their business development and business angels team up to choose together the best business idea and new business founder team to make their risky investment to the start-up based on voting in two rounds. At first from the long list of about 100 start-ups the short list of 15 is voted, based on their online profiles in the Startup Includer screening tool. Start-up profiles include information about problem, solution proposed by a start-up, market, team, accomplishments so far, pre-money valuation and amount of capital the founding team is seeking. Pitch deck and other materials can be added. When giving votes on the scale 0–4 to suitability of start-ups to be qualified for the face-to-face pitch round, investors can add comments. The process is structured and fact-focused but during 5-minute pitches by representatives of 15 chosen start-ups both entrepreneurs and business angels demonstrate their creativity by presenting arguments, how their business ideas change international markets and what are potential problems when implementing their business concepts. Next voting round will lead to due diligence of four founder teams that have presented most attractive business ideas to investors. The best founder team can raise €200,000–250,000, depending on the number of business angels that have each invested €5000 to NAP and have participated in choosing the best investment option. NAP is arranged by national networks of business angels in the region and it is not an academic program. This program has however many features of an experiential learning process. Among

members of start-up, teams are often students or recent graduates of universities. Business angels learn from feedback and discussions with other investors and start-up teams. There are training sessions for disseminating experience of more experienced business angels to new or less experienced investors. Start-up teams demonstrate their creativity during pitching sessions and receive feedback during the selection process. Voting about real investments creates real action learning and risk-taking context in NAP.

Findings and Analysis

A crucial experiential learning choice is to involve students in their own start-up creation or to link their project challenge to assisting already operating entrepreneurs in their international business development efforts. Student enterprise courses support proposing and developing new business ideas but potential of students to generate innovative ideas can be better used if pre-incubation enhances joint team creation by involving students representing different universities and specializations. Described student enterprise and pre-incubation programs support creativity at early stages of business opportunity search and team formation for start-up creation but the Nordic Angel Program focuses on creativity to mobilize financial resources and to use mentoring by business angels as providers of smart capital. In order to benefit from NAP, start-up teams should have clear intention to implement their business vision and demonstrate how creative they have been in involving competent team members, in finding realistic business model and in validating their ideas at the marketplace.

Other experiential learning programs compared in this chapter do not directly focus on ideation for learners' own business development. These programs however gave students valuable experience of entrepreneurs already experienced in business and helped to understand challenges of their commissioners in international business development. Many students have limited resources and if their vision is to continue learning, it may be better at first to learn from mistakes of other entrepreneurs, before committing own resources to the first own business development idea, even if this idea is creative. The best student teams have managed to use ideation for finding new international partners and marketing opportunities for entrepreneurs and to learn from the feedback of their clients but also to challenge in constructive and creative ways some assumptions of business challenges presented by entrepreneurs. Creativity in understanding mindsets of more experienced

practitioners and ability to challenge their attitudes that may lead to success trap are potential results of solving problems of entrepreneurs in creative ways but in many cases, students have mainly collected data in line with the task they received and have not gained experience of re-defining their client's problem. That has limited their creative thinking space. In situations where students have had limited online access to entrepreneurs for asking additional questions about business challenges, results of their project work have been more superficial than in programs, where face-to-face meetings with entrepreneurs and opportunities to re-define the task have been available. Using webinars in X-Culture has potential to overcome this limitation in online learning.

Table 4.1 presents concise comparison of some learning practices based on the main criteria that should be taken into consideration, when discussing features and implications of compared programs in order to develop and apply creativity in experiential learning for international business.

Creativity development through promoting own skills and knowledge sharing needs in international teams depends on diversity of cultures represented in teams. Global diversity can be more easily attained in fully online projects such as the X-Culture. Combined online and face-to-face learning programs such as the Nordic Ideation Camp however demonstrate to students differences of team building and trust creation opportunities in online versus face-to-face communication. Creativity in promoting own skills and knowledge sharing needs for international business and cross-border entrepreneurship can be supported through self-regulation in team formation. This principle can be followed in student enterprise and pre-incubation team formation. In inter-university pre-incubation, it assumes explaining advantages of professional diversity in teams, when students from different universities come to the opening event of the program. However, it would be possible to use also online talent hunting, supported by competence profiles and video presentations of students if the nature of task allows students to team up based on such information. Face-to-face classes in the course Cross-border business projects with Baltic entrepreneurs have enabled some flexibility to swop students between teams. As the result of compressed pre-week schedule, it has been technically more complicated to re-group students in the Nordic Ideation Camp, even if some students were interested to work for another enterprise. Differences in motivation and communication abilities of team members has been the main reason for student complaints if they are not satisfied with their grades and claim that they have been more committed to the joint project work than other team members. These complaints are more typical if teamwork is only online, teams are global and students cannot choose team members. Option to vote out non-performers has not been actively used.

Table 4.1 Comparing experiential learning practices in the context of creativity development for international business

	Learning practices compared					
Comparison criteria	Student enterprises	Inter-university pre-incubation	Course on Cross-border business projects with Baltic entrepreneurs	X-Culture	Nordic Ideation Camp	Nordic Angel Program
1. Student's own business development	Ideation supported depending on the share of international students at university	Supported by diversity of specializations of co-operating universities	Preparation by learning from practitioners	Preparation by learning from practitioners	Preparation by learning from practitioners	Supports investments to already established founder team and prepared business model
2. Learning from entrepreneurs as international information "gatekeepers"	Feedback from practitioners as mentors	Feedback from practitioners as mentors	Focus on international information search, option to re-negotiate team task with entrepreneur	Export plan development; Many teams work for the same entrepreneur	Learning from interviews with end-users	Feedback by investors after pitches of start-up teams
3. Creativity in promoting own knowledge sharing needs in international teams	Essential in team formation and choosing the business idea	Possible for creating inter-university teams, focus on diversity of professional skills	Possible to swop between teams based on pre-knowledge and personal development vision	Focused on division of roles, solving leadership challenges and voting out non-performers	Promoting own ideas in intensive full day sessions	Promoting founder team competence to acquire investments

(*continued*)

Table 4.1 (continued)

Comparison criteria	Learning practices compared					
	Student enterprises	Inter-university pre-incubation	Course on Cross-border business projects with Baltic entrepreneurs	X-Culture	Nordic Ideation Camp	Nordic Angel Program
4. Creativity in networking and online information search and validation	Focused on information supporting own business idea	Comparing information collected by students from different specializations	Focused on collecting and validating information from different countries	Focused on online combination of information from team members	Mainly as preparation for camp	Convincing investors that team understands clients and competitors
5. Time frame for online and face-to-face ideation	One or two semesters	Short sessions during two and half months	Three and half months course	Two and half months	Pre-week and intensive one-week camp	Sessions and rating of investment opportunities during 3–4 months
6. Balance between guided and self-regulated learning	Classes and training materials about business development plus team tasks, mentors	Short practitioner presentations about business development plus team tasks, mentors	Training materials and class discussions on progress of teams, feedback from entrepreneurs. Teams independent in teamwork	Pre-training materials, structured instructions, weekly peer reviews, final feedback from several tutors	Canvases for design thinking, information is made available to students step by step	Structured assessment framework in Startup Includer and time limit for pitching
7. Share of online and face-to-face learning activities	Instruction and discussing team results in classes, supported by e-learning	Intensive face-to face sessions for knowledge sharing, mentors' feedback online	Instruction and discussing team results in classes supported by e-learning	Only online activities, optional conferences for winning teams	Getting to know team members and some information search online, main ideation in face-to-face camp	Learning and discussion mainly face-to-face, rating investment opportunities online

Online information search and validation gives better input for creativity in programs that cover several months. At the same time, intensive Nordic Ideation Camp allows student teams to make fieldwork for interviewing end-users and to demonstrate during face-to-face meetings their solution prototypes in order to get feedback from clients for further ideation. That opportunity does not however work for international business development, focused on distant foreign markets. The most structured approach among compared experiential learning programs can be found in X-Culture. Students give extensive online feedback about stages of their joint learning. That allows to guide large number of international teams through the process, where timeline is important. The Nordic Ideation Camp uses design thinking canvases to structure ideation in teams and at the final stage teams that work for the same entrepreneur are supposed to combine their input to one presentation. Other programs are more open to self-regulated learning and for adjusting learning activities to specific content of projects and to composition of teams.

Share and role of online and face-to-face learning is different in compared programs. The X-Culture is most active in using and developing online teamwork, the Nordic Ideation Camp is most focused on intensive face-to-face ideation. Other programs try to combine face-to-face activities with online brainstorming or idea assessment tools.

Discussion and Conclusions

Online cross-border team formation for discovering international business opportunities is a challenge for students that are mainly used to team up with fellow students from their own campus and nationality. Giving students the right to choose if they find new business opportunities individually or in teams, start their own entrepreneurial journey or solve a challenge of some other entrepreneur, would create open space for experiential learning and creativity. More supervised and structured approaches however give students regular feedback from team members representing other cultures and deepen understanding of their strengths and weaknesses in cross-border networking and in international entrepreneurial teamwork. Each of compared programs has pluses and also limitations for cross-border team creativity development. The Nordic Ideation Camp that combines some online teamwork and intensive use of creativity techniques in face-to-face teamwork helps students to master some creativity techniques, but this framework does not allow extensive pre-work for finding and combining diverse knowledge sources. The X-Culture enables creativity based on diverse international composition of

teams and helps students to promote their creative ideas in cross-cultural communication. The X-Culture co-operation framework provides students with some freedom of choice concerning the content of the international business development project and social media or other online tools used for knowledge sharing inside the team. At the same time, students do not face the creative challenge of choosing their international team members. They can only vote out free riders that do not contribute to the team. Developing trust for further creative co-operation is difficult without face-to-face meetings. Student enterprise programs put student's own business idea development to the center of the learning experience but students may miss commitment and resources to implement their idea.

The Nordic Angel Program integrates experiential learning of start-up founders and business angels that consider investing to these start-ups but this program assumes that the founder team has already developed their international business model.

Communication difficulties in international team projects have sometimes led to strengthening stereotypes about other nationalities as lazier and less able to bear responsibility in entrepreneurial activities. It is however better to discuss these negative reflections in the framework of entrepreneurship studies in order to find solution-oriented ideas in the team learning context than to be surprised when facing such problems in project work practice after graduating university studies.

Further research of larger samples and longer time span is needed for understanding long-term impact of experiential learning for managerial and entrepreneurial success in international business. From the point of view of creativity development, an issue for further research would be the amount of detailed guidance the academic staff should offer for team formation, for choosing online teamwork and ideation tools, for specifying the regularity of their online communication and for establishing their roles in teams.

Recommendations for Experiential Learning Developers and Instructors

Creating international business readiness in cross-border teams involves several stages from promoting personal skills and business ideas online, finding foreign contacts for entrepreneurial knowledge sharing, discovering business opportunities in different countries, creating cross-border teams for venture development and gaining cross-border experience of validating business ideas

at distant markets. Involvement of international students in the longer learning cycle than one semester is more suitable for learning through a student enterprise practice in order to contribute to several stages of enterprise creation and development processes. Shorter programs can however contribute to creative discovery of business opportunities and cross-border teamwork readiness for further practical international business initiatives.

Creativity is facilitated by diversity of knowledge sources and breaking borders of the learner's comfort zone. Different patterns of team formation and combining online and face-to-face learning have to be chosen, depending on the time horizon of the international business initiative and resources of the entrepreneurial team to implement their ideas in real international business. This chapter contributes to comparing pluses and minuses of some experiential learning practices that prepare students for international business. Table 4.1 allows you to position your own experiential learning practice or vision in relation to eight criteria based on questions highlighted in this chapter. This will help you to understand pluses and limitations of different experiential learning options for creativity development and application but also for enhancing international business readiness of students. Your choice for further development of experiential learning practices depends on your intended learning outcomes but should also take into consideration available resources. A large university that has students from many countries all over the world can easily enable cross-cultural diversity for ideation in face-to-face teams but if composition of student body is mainly mononational, online cross-border learning will expand the mental space for learning international business. However, even in international universities students need to develop their skills for finding and validating relevant online information that is essential for international business development. They also need international contact network and ability to share knowledge in online learning communities.

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5

Understanding the Global Business Environment Through the High-Impact Practice Activities

Irina Naoumova and Annette Rogers

Introduction

Simply stated, our business is educating students. Nonetheless, our complex reality warrants involvement with external environments, even as these environments seek to address their own specific wants and needs, so as to position ourselves at the front edge of serving multiple stakeholders. In addition to utilizing curriculum designed specifically to educate students in their desired areas of study, there is a constant morphing of academia (Brennan, 2008) to meet the needs of the environments that lay beyond the brick and mortar walls of the institution. Specifically, engagement with outside environments creates well-rounded young adults (Burch, Heller, Burch Freed, & Steed, 2015) equipped to understand the work, people, and processes of the industries they choose for their careers and the environments which impact those industries (Winsett, Foster, Dearing, & Burch, 2016).

For over ten years, the University of Hartford Barney School of Business has prepared students through career-ready programming. This practice has been embraced both domestically and internationally using terms such as career-ready (Dey & Cruzvergara, 2014), work-ready (Chavan & Carter, 2018), and work-integrated learning (Atkinson, 2016). These practices engage students before, during, and after immersion in actual organizations. They may involve practices such as personal image management,

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M. A. Gonzalez-Perez et al. (eds.), *The Palgrave Handbook of Learning and Teaching International Business and Management*, https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-030-20415-0_5

understanding work expectations, developing relationships with members of the organization, applying knowledge, and building new knowledge by interacting with the work. Ultimately, the student expands self-concept (Scroggins, 2003) as well as acquires new knowledge in their chosen curriculum.

The world of business and education continues to seek improved methods and ways to engage the worker and student. High-impact learning (New Bersin & Associates, 2012) offered promise for training the workforce and improving performance. High-impact practices (Kilgo, Ezell Sheets, & Pascarella, 2015; Kuh, 2008) were shown to be linked to student learning and improved performance. These papers explore the use of high-impact practices to expose students to international business, culture, and diversity. Based on the above, in this chapter we will discuss the theoretical background of high-impact practices. We will then explain the curriculum and how it relates to high-impact practices. This will be followed by examples of high-impact practice projects and courses. Lastly, we will conclude with recommendations for future research.

Theoretical Background

According to Kuh (2008), practices previously considered as "effective educational practices" were upgraded to "high-impact practices" based on research showing substantial educational benefits, particularly for certain groups of students. High-impact educational practices approach is based on the experiential learning theory (Brownell & Swaner, 2009; Moon, 2013; O'Neill, 2010). This approach has specific value in developing true leaders for an internationally diverse business environment (Agnew & Kahn, 2014; Priest & Clegorne, 2015; Quaye & Harper, 2014) and thus, it has been introduced in international business education. While being accepted originally by educational and accreditation bodies in the United States, it is gradually being adopted in other countries' educational systems (Klochkov, 2016).

The high-impact practices' gains have been tested statistically (Kuh, O'Donnel, & Reed, 2013). This confirmed the impact of the identified practices on student learning—general, personal, and practical learning. Kuh, O'Donnel, and Reed (2013) see the need of developing a systemic approach to cover the entire course of study at the university. For our research, we compiled the findings of the above publication on gains of the high-impact educational practices Fig. 5.1. Based on systemic approach, Kuh, O'Donnel, and Reed (2013) suggest including high-impact practices/projects (HIPs) in academic programs at all educational levels—freshmen and sophomore years as well as senior years of study. Another focus of the paper (Kuh, O'Donnel, & Reed, 2013) was on confirming deep learning and self-reported gains to be

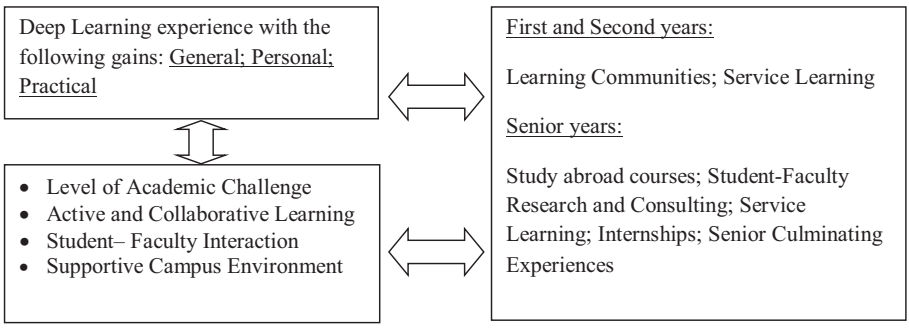

Fig. 5.1 High-impact educational practices and gains' diagram. The diagram was developed by authors of the chapter based on the findings presented in Kuh, G., O'Donnel, K., & Reed, S. (2013). *Ensuring quality & taking high-impact practices to scale*. Washington, DC: Association of American Colleges and Universities (AAC&U)

statistically significant for HIP activities. We connected these findings in Fig. 5.1 for better visualization.

In 2014, the University of Hartford adopted the high-impact practices/projects (HIP) approach, recommended by the American Association of Colleges and Universities, transforming its curriculum to assure valuable changes in student learning, and incorporated it in its strategic plan. The adopted framework included three principles guiding the student experience and a specific sequence to place the HIP at particular moments in the student career.

Although the freshmen and sophomore courses also introduce the high-impact projects at the University of Hartford, in our research we focus on upper level HIP practices that are used as educational experiences in the senior years of the bachelor's degree, as well as master's programs. Following the systemic approach, we discuss all the senior years' HIP projects and share our challenges and experiences on each of them.

University Curriculum and High-Impact Practices/Projects

The University of Hartford Barney School of Business revamped its curriculum to include high-impact practices in its global business environment class along with other courses that introduce the concepts of international business, culture, and diversity as discussed in the literature (Boyte-Eckis, Minadeo, Bailey, & Bailey, 2018).

We focus here on upper level training—senior undergraduate and master's degree program. The graduate program curriculum has been condensed to twelve courses; nine foundational courses and three electives are offered

on-site or online in seven-week formats. Foundational courses such as economics, organizational leadership, and marketing introduce the global environment, thus allowing future courses to reinforce and take a "deeper dive" into the content. In addition to the change of curriculum, concentrations were added to allow a focus in a specific area such as International Business. The student body is comprised of adults from local organizations, undergraduates continuing for a graduate degree, and international students seeking to locate physically to campus. Additionally, with the ease of online offerings, we expanded to recruit regionally and globally for students. University of Hartford business school faculty agreed to add international business content to all business courses to stress the need for professionals with global mindsets.

Explanation of High-Impact Practices/Projects and Courses: Examples

The chapter aims to share the multiyear experiences of experimenting with high-impact practices and projects (HIP) in undergraduate and graduate programs. Kumcu and Kumcu (1998) explain the importance of having such courses in the curriculum. According to Kuh, O'Donnel, and Reed (2013), the upper level experience includes study abroad courses, student-faculty research and consulting, service learning, internships, and also senior culminating experiences. We will go through all of them separately, providing our examples, sharing lessons learned and recommendations for followers.

Several HIP projects have been specifically developed for international business-related courses. The diverse population of companies participating in the University of Hartford projects consisted of local, nationwide, and foreign firms heavily involved in international business; small entrepreneurial companies; as well as large multinational corporations such as United Technologies, Stanley Black & Decker, and CIGNA.

Based on Kuh, O'Donnel, and Reed (2013) classification, included among the HIP projects and assignments we used over the multiyear period were:

- Service-learning courses and course components combined in our curriculum with study abroad courses and internships
  - Study abroad courses with service-learning components
  - Study abroad internships

- Student-faculty research and consulting
  - Consulting projects for international companies and domestic companies operating internationally
  - Study abroad student-faculty research and consulting course
  - The workshops as an example of the use of consulting methods
  - Independent study courses—research projects resulting in student presentations at the international academic conferences
- Senior culminating experiences
  - Cases on international companies and other assignments with international content
  - Collaborative projects with overseas universities including videoconferencing with student classes and teams abroad
  - International online business plan competition
  - Analytical projects performed for partnering multinational corporations (MNCs)

Study Abroad Courses and Internships with Service-Learning Components

Study Abroad Courses with Service-Learning Components

The study abroad courses combine the benefits of firsthand experience traveling overseas, deep dives in on-site international business visits and country culture while interacting with the native populations (Black, Mendenhall, & Oddou, 1991) and acquiring important course-related knowledge and theories (Bakalis & Joiner, 2004). Practical assignments are especially valuable for developing a so-called global mindset (Douglas & Jones-Rikkers, 2001). Internships could be incorporated in the study abroad experience when partnering university organizes connections with local businesses.

Global awareness is an underpinning of the business program. Both undergraduate and graduate students elect to participate in study abroad course for academic credit. For several years, the University of Hartford sponsored trips to Bermuda for 10–15 students. The trip served three purposes—students participated in an international experience, they learned about the industry of the country they visited, and they completed a project that involved social responsibility. As in the case of Bermuda, students studied both the financial services and hospitality industry. Prior to leaving their home country, students

prepared papers and made presentations on the industries, healthcare, education, government, and people groups of Bermuda. For some students, these trips were their first experience outside the United States. Having firsthand experience of arriving and adapting to a country's culture broadened the perspectives of students. For example, riding the island bus system is a simple task of acquiring a bus pass, understanding the bus schedule, waiting for the appropriate bus, and then boarding. Yet, as simple as this might seem, it is important when entering the bus to greet the bus driver with a "good day". Not to do so is seen as poor manners and immediately called out. Witnessing another culture—their habits, practices, protocols, and boundaries—expands the mindset of students. No longer are the students on their home turf and therefore find themselves slightly off-balance as they negotiate the terrain. This type of learning is immediate and applied in the moment. Experiences such as these are formative learning used to sort and categorize differences, which in recall become life's learning moments.

As for the social responsibility projects, undergraduate students were involved in the local youth business plan competition that included middle and high school students. First, a theme appropriate for business development was chosen by the sponsoring organization. A group of up to 60 Bermudian students were selected to participate in the competition based on submitted essays. Bermudian students were put into teams of 6–8 individuals and given an initial concept to build upon. Undergraduate students were then divided among the teams to provide consulting experience and help with strategizing the concept. The team had three days to develop the concept into an idea and make a final presentation. Teams presented a rough draft at the end of the first day, reworked and developed the idea the second day, and then presented to a panel of judges from area organizations the third day. This one activity locked in a global mindset for most students. Several things occurred simultaneously—the personal involvement of the students with each other, the intense atmosphere accelerated interactions thereby generating a rapid learning curve, and the semi-controlled environment permitted personal sharing of information and shared experiences. All of these resulted in students understanding firsthand a mindset that generally is read in books but not truly understood until it is experienced. Undergraduates were proud to be part of the teams and recognized that their contributions were framed within a cultural background foreign to their initial thinking. This knowledge, coupled with a new worldview of an island culture, allowed for different interactions with diverse students once back in their home country.

Summary of outcomes for students:

Business knowledge combined with cultural training leads to a better and faster adjustment in an international business environment.

Challenges and suggestions for followers:

Organizing an international trip and a set of activities is a challenge itself. On top of that, a busy schedule could be disrupted by unpredictable events and thus a professor has to have a backup plan for not possible meetings and travels within the hosting country.

Study Abroad Internships

We require all undergraduate students to complete internships. On the graduate level, it is a choice, not required. Allowing students to additionally use their study abroad trip as an internship serves two purposes. First, they experience the cultural learning and gain insight from participating with other peers. Second, they are given managerial responsibilities that help the professor organize, plan, lead, and control the trip. They assume a certain level of responsibility for the success of the trip including communication with the other participants, developing relationships in a different context since they are students but also hold an administrative role, and have increased complexity in their engagement with the work, professor, group members and experience.

Summary of outcomes for students:

Experience is gained in how to organize and lead others and understand administrative tasks and processes while adjusting in international environment.

Challenges and suggestions for followers:

Responsibility for others, as well as one's self, is generally a new experience for many students. It may be difficult for some to separate the tasks of the internship from the experience of the study abroad activity. Thus, in addition to organizing the course, the professor has a responsibility to mentor the intern student. At the same time, it makes the work easier for the professor as the student assumes some of the course tasks.

Student-Faculty Research and Consulting

Consulting Projects for International Companies and Domestic Companies Operating Internationally

The introduction of consulting projects (Heriot, Cook, Jones, & Simpson, 2008; Muir, 1996) in business courses that cover a large variety of topics, including organizational—human resource management, leadership, market

intelligence, and competitive international strategy, allow for learning along with the development of practical experience.

While working on consulting projects in their classes, students were exposed to the problems of international companies. One of the projects is designed within the graduate entrepreneurship course. It is used as an elective for the Management and Marketing concentrations of the Masters in Business Administration (MBA) program. Graduate students from other programs university-wide often take this course. In the class, students are required to perform a "360-degree" analysis of a company, conduct its internal and external analysis, and come up with valuable suggestions on company improvements. International companies are welcome to participate in a project. Companies from Hungary, Romania, Puerto Rico, India, France, and Taiwan enjoyed the benefits of free of charge student consulting. Graduate students typically have a 10–15-year experience of being employed by multinational corporations. They use their experience while working on the consulting projects. Analytical assignments involving feasibility, market, competitive landscape, and strategic analyses are required for the project. Additionally, students perform an internal life-cycle analysis and determine weaknesses of the company's organizational structure and its internal divisions. It was not uncommon for students to work with international small- and medium-sized companies that are eager to penetrate the American market and benefit from its economy of scale. Although the companies are well established in their home countries, it is not necessarily an easy way for them to apply their domestic advantages internationally. Thus, cultural analysis becomes extremely important. For that purpose, we combine Hofstede's (Hofstede, 2011) or Trompenaars' (Trompenaars & Hampden-Turner, 2011) approaches with CAGE (Cultural-Administrative-Geographic-Economic differences/distances) analysis (Ghemawat, 2001). To connect to the companies and have a semester-long collaboration with them, we request a contact person to be assigned on the company's side. The contact person is to be available for students through calls, email, Skype, WhatsApp, or other videoconferencing formats. To find an interested company we contact countries' consulates, local ethnic groups or organizations, who help typically connecting foreign companies with American peers. The documents, including an application form, interview form, and explanation of project requirements and outcomes, are developed by the University of Hartford professors and lawyers. The consulting project is free of charge for companies and is considered a service to the community by young professionals. This practical course combines and utilizes all student skills by helping international companies developing a market penetration plan for the American market on a local, regional, or national level.

This course and consulting projects have proven to be successful as confirmed by testimonials of students and companies. The student, engaged in the project, confirmed that it was "the strongest course that required the intense work and combination of knowledge from many previously taken courses". Students also appreciated the knowledge they gained on other country's culture and way of doing business, which was "very different from working with the US company".

Even with the success this project had over a decade, there are several significant challenges of which the potential followers should be aware. The companies must be carefully screened by the professor. Availability of information on the company is critical for the project success. The contact person should agree to communicate with students when necessary. This person must have a broad knowledge of that company, preferably be its owner or top manager, or immediate subordinate of a manager with easy access to the needed information. He or she must be committed to the project, and thus, the best way to have this commitment is to sign the agreement with the company management; confidentiality agreement would also be a plus. There should a backup of contacts on both sides in the event of an urgent situation. In addition, the company should have a website containing valuable information. The common requirement for the project is availability of the company representative for the kickoff event (could be done through videoconferencing). This is where the company presents their strategies and problems. Also, they must be available (live video) for the final presentation by student teams. The course is designated as "writing intensive" since the assignments require submission of written documents and a project report.

Summary of outcomes for students:

The course provides an opportunity to apply the variety of theories to practice, work with international company, learn about international environment, and develop consulting skills.

Challenges and suggestions for the followers:

Major challenges are associated with recruiting international companies dedicated to the project and eager to provide the needed information for the students from an abroad university. An instructor has to have a consulting experience from the past.

Study Abroad Student-Faculty Research and Consulting Course

In another graduate course used for the International Business concentration, one of the requirements for the students visiting Bermuda was to provide

consulting services as part of their social responsibility requirement. Students were assigned to work with a nonprofit organization to assist with a problem they initially defined. Some of the organizations needed help with local strategies for business development, some with supply chain management, while others had leadership and succession planning issues. Consulting opportunities encourage the application of knowledge accumulated as students move through their program. Understanding an issue from a cultural standpoint may be learned better through experience than taught in a class. The design of the consulting project required nonprofit organizations to establish the problem statement as they understood it and what they wanted to be solved. Groups of students were given different organizations to work with and the problem statement prior to the on-site visit. They were able to reach out to the organization and ask questions for further clarification. They researched the problem, came up with additional questions to ask during the visit and lists of data to collect. One learning point reflected by a group after arriving on the island "it was one thing to imagine what we believed the issues were and how to deal with them based on a book knowledge or past personal experience, it was another to understand that local conditions—environmental, political, etc., could cause a different view of the problem than imagined prior to the visit or just based on the problem statement". After returning home, students continued their work analyzing the data collected and arriving at a solution. It was important for lines of communication—email, videoconferencing, phone calls—to remain open for clarification and questions. At the end of the semester, they used videoconference technology to share with the leaders of the organization recommendations to address or solve the problem.

Summary of outcomes for students:

The cultural exposure of real people and real problems served to connect real-world learning to book learning.

Challenges and suggestions for followers:

Similar to many other international projects, communication becomes a key for success. Scheduling and pre-travel preparation takes a significant time but rewards at the end. Instructor's consulting experience is necessary.

The Workshops as an Example of the Use of Consulting Method

Workshops are designed to focus on a specific point of learning. For over a year, the business school has enjoyed a strategic partnership with an international company. The first cohort of 68 students completed an Organizational

Leadership class and offered a significant takeaway when the course ended. During conversations around the leader's style, the responsibility of developing followers, understanding expectations for both a follower and a leader, and goal awareness for the organization and individuals, students agreed organizational citizens are responsible for mastering in their profession. Acknowledging the organization provides training and development, the responsibility for upward mobility however was deemed to be owned individually. All students in the course are in an MBA program, and upon completion will be granted a credential, positioning them for upward movement in their professional careers. It does not, however, insure that movement will occur. Therefore, it is the careful management of one's image around individual performance that warrants attention. Performance orientation, a reward for performance and excellence, is a globe cultural dimension (Northouse, 2018). For this class, students were from the United States, China, and New Zealand. These countries score high on performance orientation. The purpose of image management is increasing success to meet personal interest so that choices are made according to a desired outcome. Given the group demographics, an Image Management Workshop served both the domestic and international students in the class. To accommodate both online and on-site students, two options were made available. First, an on-site workshop for anyone living close enough to attend was created. On-site workshops generate more activity as developing the concepts takes time and conversations add to the richness of the learning. For example, one student shared what had held her back, unbeknownst to her, which caused a conversation about female mindsets with female role models. Making this more interesting as a conversation was the home nationality of the woman and female role model. In addition, a webinar workshop was provided. While less interactive due to technology issues, size of the group, and time and place issues, this group shared how cultural differences affected the perceptions of not only those they sought to influence, but also their immediate working group. Both workshops encouraged the exploration of current self-image and desired self-image in the organization. In that, while all populations were high on performance orientation, several identified takeaways that their leadership could be augmented by focusing on group social image management or ethnocentrism (Northouse, 2018).

Summary of outcomes for students:

Focused learning in combination with the experience from the diverse team environment.

Challenges and suggestions for followers:

Careful planning, preparation, and facilitation during the workshop are necessary. Technology could be a challenge for the online format of workshops.

Independent Study Courses: Research Projects Resulting with Student Presentations at the Academic International Conferences

Another example of student-faculty research and consulting component of our curriculum is the independent study course format for guiding international business-related research with student presentations at international conferences. It is typically done for the students in the upper echelon of company management, or those interested in pursuing a doctorate degree in the future. Industries and topics analyzed were the United States food and agriculture with exports trends to the international markets; pharmaceutical industry in Turkey and market penetration strategies of global pharmaceutical corporations; insurance business global trends and possibility of mergers and acquisitions. The flexibility of the course schedule compensates for its intense research agenda. The professor and students agree on a format—it could be blended with some on-site and online meetings depending on student's working schedule and traveling calendar. Students are required to submit a proposal for such a course with the research topic and brief description of the research outcomes. The course is subject to approval by the departmental chair. The professor develops the schedule of activities and research tools to use and oversees the student research. The department or college supports the students' travel to an international academic conference to present their research results.

Summary of outcomes for students:

Deep and focused faculty guided research and experience of presenting at international academic conference.

Challenges and suggestions for followers:

The professor has to provide an individualized teaching and guidance to a student typically requiring more hours of contact than could be expected for a regular course. Some universities are not willing to pay for independent study courses, and thus, grants will be a help.

Senior Culminating Experiences

Cases on International Companies and Other Assignments with International Content

The literature supports the use of case studies and problem-based assignments to help student learning, understanding of global views, and analysis of real-world situations (Savery, 2015).

A class of 44 graduate students, from the same international company, analyzed a Harvard Business School case—"Johannes Linden: Managing the Global Executive Committee". The assignment involved using a discussion board and answering three questions. Blackboard is the platform used for online discussions. Students were asked to consider the leader's style, the effectiveness of the Global Executive Committee and decide on the yearly bonus considering an unexpected cost reduction. This was a particularly interesting discussion as each student gave their initial answer without knowledge of their team members' responses to the questions. Individuals were then asked to comment on each of their team members' responses for each question. At the end, they were to summarize any new learning or understanding gleaned from their classmates' initial or post responses. What evolved was an inside view of different cultural understandings of leadership. For example, three students from America, New Zealand, and Spain respectively commented on the leadership style—"his style is quite confrontational" or "I would describe his style as balanced … the right intentions, by encouraging his team to work collaboratively" or "he is both charismatic and highly involved". This discussion, identifying three different styles, indicates the cultural differences perceived by students. It is through this three-part discussion that individuals can understand their differences in thinking and their worldviews. This type of exercise creates an effective and safe space for exploring and understanding without repercussion.

In addition to HIP case discussions, students completed a two-hour online simulation. For this exercise, the class was divided into eight teams of five participants each. Students were physically located in different time zones such as the United States, New Zealand, China, and Spain. Each team selected a time and day that worked best for the group in the fourth week of the seven-week course. The exercise required participants to climb Mount Everest without being rescued. Each climber had specific personal goals and the team had specific group challenges. Students received a grade for both their personal goal accomplishments and group challenges. The purpose of the simulation was to underscore concepts true for virtual and diverse teams such as interest and information asymmetry, cognitive and affective conflict, group dynamics and team effectiveness. All teams could complete the simulation twice. There was a caveat—if teams chose to do it twice, then the second try counted, regardless of the score. This choice presented a conflict for individuals as they could now improve their personal score by achieving more individual goals or make the same decisions as before maintaining their individual goals/personal score. Additionally, they could choose to focus on achieving additional group challenge points which would help everyone's score. Of eight teams, two elected not to complete the simulation again, agreeing among themselves that

they had achieved a fair and equitable result for everyone. Neither of the teams that declined had culturally diverse members. After completing the simulation, each team was involved in a video WebEx with the professor to discuss three perceptions: the experience of working virtually, the differences in how everyone made decisions and shared information affecting themselves and the group challenges, and how they felt distance—both physical and cultural—affected their performance. The teams generally concluded the technology used to communicate during the simulation either helped or hampered personal and group goals, depending on the medium used. Communication was not considered an issue when video technology was used as it was felt this allowed everyone to read each other and share more information. Students described the chat box function provided in the simulation as cumbersome. It was hard to read everyone's comments quickly, thus decisions were made before complete agreement has been reached. Physical distance was not an issue unless the technology crashed, as it did for a couple of teams. Cultural distance was witnessed depending on the conflict and decision-making mode utilized by individuals. Students generally agreed their perceptions were influenced firstly by their "home" environment, secondly their desire to reflect the "company's" culture since they were from one company, and lastly, as team members shared the possible scores they would receive, the members collectively agreed to forego their individual scores for the greater good of the team. This exercise allowed for a conversation answering the question "Why did you do that?", which would generally not be discussed publicly in organizations. The key for the exercise success was that a student group had to ascend to a trust level that belied their personal or organizational cultures.

Summary of outcomes for students:

Students explore cultural distance, appreciate it, and find various ways to communicate through differences, and perform complex tasks as a team.

Challenges and suggestions for followers:

Professor has to monitor and mediate possible conflicts, facilitate class discussions and videoconferences. Different time zones are additional complication for scheduling.

Collaborative Projects with Overseas Universities Including Videoconferencing with Student Classes and Teams Abroad

A collaborative project was implemented in the graduate International Business course. In collaboration with the partnering Radboud University

(Netherlands), the case study on Nestlés bottled sparkling water company Perrier was introduced to students. The author of the case study, Dr. Oliver Furrer, a professor at Radboud University, joined the project. The teams consisted of students from either USA or Netherlands' classes. No mixed groups were allowed in this project. Students, both in the USA and Netherlands, were assigned the same research questions and requested to use cultural dimensions in their analysis. Separately, they had class discussions before videoconferencing with each other. During the videoconference, students were asked to share their answers to the case questions, and peer university student teams were required to add and/or comment on their answers. This ensured that all answers and opinions would be heard. Before the videoconference, students were also assigned to perform a cultural analysis of the peer country's culture. For that purpose, they were required to understand cultural dimensions of their peers' country. During the videoconferencing, students were encouraged to ask specific questions and interview peers to confirm or reject their initial findings on peers' culture. The initial perceptions in both countries were that the Western style of doing business is pretty similar and the European Union and American students would have similar answers on case questions. Culturally, they also were expected to be very close. In reality, students' research and data collected during videoconference interviews were typically forcing them to reject their initial perceptions and conclude that there were substantial differences within the "'Western business style". Here are the exemplary testimonials from the class: "Until we ran through the cultural analysis, we thought the American team was too straight forward in their decisions, we even considered it as rude. We understand their point much better now" (from Netherlands' student); "I could not even expect the business in Europe would be so dependent on trade unions, it is extremely inefficient to have long paid vacations and relaxed environment … but after live discussions on their culture, I feel it all makes sense" (from American student). Student testimonials confirmed this HIP project as being instrumental in changing their thinking to reconsider their approaches to the everyday assignments within their multinational corporations, which is consistent with qualitative research findings (Schworm et al., 2017; Takeuchi, Chen, & Lepak, 2009).

Summary of outcomes for students:

Students recognize the cultural differences within the "Western style of doing business", develop an understanding of rationale behind counterpart's business decisions.

Challenges and suggestions for followers:

The project requires instructors to work together on scheduling, teaching and communication tools, choosing a case to discuss, and follow-up in class discussions. Cultural differences between instructors might be a challenge. Instructors facilitate class discussions and videoconference session communication.

International Online Business Plan Competition

Another example, combining practical experience and knowledge of international business setting, was the international online business plan competition organized by the University of Hartford. In its maximum, it involved more than 200 students from seven countries—five continents. This project was in place for five years and helped improving entrepreneurial programs in participating universities worldwide. Moreover, it educated students from five continents on real-world international business environments, country differences and similarities. The idea was to use typical practice of business plan competitions that universities run as a part of their entrepreneurial studies education and make them mezzanine-level events with a new format featuring an online international business plan competition. The University of Hartford, Barney School of Business and alumni sponsors supported all the activities and prizes financially. The requirements for participating universities included the following:

- technical support and practice prior to the live competition;
- at least one business expert/judge, a prominent business leader and/or entrepreneur, for the day of a competition per country;
- at least one faculty advisor (typically in charge of a mezzanine-level internal business plan competition);
- the use of LivePlan business plan writing software to ensure consistency of the plans' structure and their level of detailing; and
- flexibility in the scheduling given the difference in time zones.

The pre-competition collaboration between instructors became a critical trust factor for the success. The winners of a mezzanine-level business plan competitions at participating universities, teams or individuals, were invited to compete against each other through the online videoconference format.

The day/time of an online competition had to be scheduled in advance—at the end of the academic semester or year (typically in May). Business plans and slide presentations had to be submitted two weeks prior to a live event.

This allowed judges to read all plans and prepare questions to ask during a live competition. Students were given five minutes to pitch their idea followed by a Question and Answer session. Presentations were streamed live and were open to the public. The open live streaming was scheduled for interruption for 15 minutes after all students completed their presentations to allow judges from all participating countries to elaborate on winners. The elaboration of judges was also held in a videoconference format but not streamed to the public. The live streaming of the event had to resume when winners were determined. Winners were awarded the monetary prizes to be used as a seed money for their ventures.

The videotaped presentations were used by participating universities for educational purposes, thus, technology and internet speed were critical factors for success. Training sessions and practices for technical personnel, organized by University of Hartford, were required.

Every participating institution had to recruit a judge so their country specifics could be presented at judges' elaboration session. One country-one vote approach was used. During the time allocated for reading all business plans (two weeks prior to the event) judges were invited to network with each other and answer country specific questions.

Instructors' and judges' networks had a separate value connecting business people around the globe, as well as helping professors improving their courses and sharing best practices. This was in line with the findings of Doherty, Meehan, and Richards (2015) and McKelvey and Zaring (2018) who confirmed the value of academic engagement in a society and importance for economy growth and development.

Training sessions for instructors and judges were found to be necessary to ensure all requirements were followed. Another training session that appeared to be very helpful was on the use of LivePlan, the cloud-based business plan writing software by Palo Alto company which sponsored the competition as well.

The University of Hartford lawyers' team developed the documentation to ensure the legitimate proof of idea presentation primacy and business plan ownership. Benefits and challenges of this unique experience were similar to those described in many research publications (Jimenez, Boehe, Taras, & Caprar, 2017; Taras & Ordeñana, 2015; Trautrims, Defee, & Farris, 2016). Among those receiving benefits were several groups—instructors, students, and business and society in general.

The instructors reported the improved curricular and syllabi, close connections with peers abroad, new opportunities for collaborative research projects, and professional development. Students were interviewed and their responses

and demographics have been collected and recorded. The benefits discussed in their responses indicated better preparation for their profession, receiving offers from employers, and better understanding of other countries' ways of doing business.

As for the challenges, they associated with administering an international cross-country project. To ensure the equality, sustainability, and quality the training sessions were developed on (1) administering local projects; (2) technical support; (3) judging a competition, including clear expectations and criteria for the written business plans, oral presentations, and Questions and Answers' sessions; and (4) on mentoring student teams. Although an opportunity was provided for instructors and judges to be involved in the networks/blogs, we did not train them for that.

The above, along with other elements of transnational higher education concepts, presented by Yang (2008), confirmed to significantly raise the student adaptive capacity (Hurst, Azevedo, & Hawranik, 2018), engagement and motivation, and increase learning results. Extending into online education, these types of projects revolutionize the educational format and reflect on globalization in business (Kuo, Walker, Schroder, & Belland, 2014; Volery & Lord, 2000).

Summary of project outcomes for students:

The participating students gained practical experience of business plan writing and competing against peers from other countries. Videotaped presentations became teaching materials and improved student understanding of business concepts as well as ways of doing business in other countries worldwide.

Challenges and suggestions:

The most challenging was training the trainers. Another problem was dealing with technology glitches. A backup videoconferencing technology is to be considered for every competition session.

Analytical Projects Performed for Partnering Multinational Corporations (MNCs)

The literature explains that the highest quality of student involvement and motivation is derived through close connection of the course projects to their own company, its partners, or students' desirable future employers (Suutari & Brewster, 2000).

The goal of the current study was to investigate the achievements of the following groups of students in the HIPs in international business-related

courses at the Barney School of Business, University of Hartford. Internationalization of business education presents in different forms (Hawawini, 2016). We observed in our projects and experimented with the following categories:

1. International students, citizens of other countries. Their number is growing as a result of educational mobility (Beech, 2018)
2. First and second-generation immigrants. They become a significant contribution to the labor force in Western economies (Fang, Zikic, & Novicevic, 2009)
3. Domestic students
4. Mixed teams that include two or all three of the above categories. When working together, they develop trustful relationship and better learn from each other (Cheng, Fu, & Druckenmiller, 2016)
5. Mixed teams—employees of one company, operating in different countries. The research confirms that position-based differences create more obstacles to firm performance than their ethnic composition (Haas & Cummings, 2015), which helps these teams to faster adjust to the business calls.

Given that students from the above groups had different international cultures' exposure (Ott & Michailova, 2018), it influenced the quality of their class performance as well as engagement in class activities (Lokkesmoe, Kuchinke, & Ardichvili, 2016). The students could associate that with the importance of diversity in multinational companies. The literature review supported the use of the various forms of HIPs identified as increasing cultural exposure in international business-related courses. Similar to all the above categories of high-impact practices, our findings correspond with the literature (Berry & Hammer, 2018) on experiential learning and show better learning results and motivation in a high "cultural exposure" environment.

Successes of these multifaceted projects included: critical learning by students as they personally engaged in dialogue for the first time with someone in another country, in some cases one-on-one activities highlighted differences in thought and action, for others discovering their interaction with the surrounding environment taught them to consider others, and others found that differences in opinion could be based on different backgrounds rather than self-centered perspectives. For some students, they discovered that being in the same company did not mean everyone thought the same and made decisions in a formulaic way. Moreover, it was revealed in their interactions that not only

did culture matter, culture influenced the behavior witnessed of others. Failures in the project resulted more from technology issues that people issues.

Administrating the projects virtually created communication as well as time and place issues. Currently, two-thirds of our students choose online courses, whether they are local, regional, national, or international. It is not uncommon to have an international student in an online class due to space limitations in its on-site version. Additional limitations exist around the type of personal technology used by the individual and available in their homes; such as computers, laptops, pads, cell phones, bandwidth, and internet. Technical requirements and broadband issues create "drops" when teams are trying to meet. Further exacerbating the projects is limited time to complete the work given the length of the course. Individual assignments, load, and project implementation must be taken into consideration as many students will complete two courses in a seven-week time span in addition to their work requirements.

Summary Discussion on the Approach, Outcomes, and Recommendations

The chapter described the University of Hartford business school experience in applying the experiential learning theory concepts, specifically, the research on high-impact educational practices, to the international business-related courses. The University commitment and college strategic move on using high-impact practices approach in a systemic way, as recommended by the literature (Alcón-Soler, 2015; Black & Mendenhall, 1989; Trout, 2018), led to the restructuring of its Bachelor of Science in Business Administration (BSBA) and Master of Business Administration programs. HIP projects were recommended for the use in all blocks of these programs. While refocusing of the BSBA program is still in progress, the MBA program enrollment doubled already in a span of just two years. The changes to the MBA program were—the balanced online/on-site delivery, including HIPs in all the program courses, increased intensity of the courses which led to an opportunity to shorten the length of the courses. Students have positively evaluated the changes and confirmed that they "better absorbed the knowledge in … [this] highly intense and dynamic course[s]"; "improved the team working skills dramatically in the internationally diverse team"; "the dynamic pace of the course[s] helped better learning theory through practice".

As discussed in the theoretical section, we had a goal to implement the following categories of high-impact practices: study abroad, internships, service-learning components, student-faculty research and consulting, and senior

culminating experiences (combining knowledge gained from multiple courses). In this chapter, we shared our way of implementing them in international business-related courses. We learned from the process and shared our experience with potential followers, warning them about possible challenges, and thus, managing their expectations. Student outcomes, discussed in the chapter, were in line with the ones presented in Kuh, O'Donnel, and Reed (2013). The gains were indeed systemically covering all three levels: general, personal, and practical.

As a summary of our recommendations for educators and followers, we would like to stress the need for the attention to the following factors.

1. Personality-related characteristics of students, instructors, guest speakers, experts, and judges (language proficiency, leadership skills, etc.)
2. Project-related characteristics
   (a) Planning/preparation of a project (timing/scheduling, balance between teamwork and individual assignments, student load)
   (b) Project implementation (technical, financial resources, and labor)

Although enthusiasm and passion of instructors are the necessary intangible components of the success of educational projects, we would argue that the tangible factors play an essential role in HIP implementation.

Our examples lay the groundwork for followers to understand the "underwater stones" upon which project leaders may tread. When preparing a project, special attention should be paid to the use of above resources in the on-site, online, and blended forms of education. Globalization is affecting the forms of higher university education (Machin & Murphy, 2017) and creating more opportunities for teaching and learning (Wingo, Ivankova, & Moss, 2017). It is extremely important to share educators' experience and learn from each other.

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6

Experiential Learning Using Social Media in International Business Education

Massiel Carolina Henríquez Parodi and Ilan Alon

Introduction

Social media and digital technologies have become a critical component of contemporary business. Internet marketing capabilities bolster international market growth through the enhancement of international networks and information availability capabilities in SMEs, thus increasing international market growth (Mathews, Bianchi, Perks, Healy, & Wickramasekera, 2016). Nowadays, the internet and digital technologies are deeply embedded in society, so the importance of proficiency in social technologies and knowledge of the business applications of digital platforms are an important aspect of the human capital dimension (Walkel, 2016a) and of its central, pedagogical role in management and international business education (Thomas & Thomas, 2012; Walkel, 2016a, 2016b). Indeed, the fact that such technologies are important in business makes it obligatory for higher education institutions to reinforce students' knowledge in their applications for business training and collaboration in various business contexts (Greenhow & Lewin, 2016; Wankel, 2016a, 2016b) and to increase cross-cultural managerial skills (Taras & Ordeñana, 2015; Wankel, 2016b).

Employers today expect new graduates to understand the uses of information and communication technologies and to be social media savvy, especially

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M. A. Gonzalez-Perez et al. (eds.), *The Palgrave Handbook of Learning and Teaching International Business and Management*, https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-030-20415-0_6

in marketing-related tasks (Benson, Morgan, & Filippaios, 2014). These are all skills than can be absorbed through experiential learning at universities.

When experiential learning is included in the classroom, specifically in business education, the advantages and learning outcomes can be much more positive than traditional teaching methods. Alon and Cannon (2000) conducted a study with a group of international business students where they worked on international projects while organized in teams. In these projects, the students constructed business plans for real companies seeking internationalization. Through this experience, the students gained content knowledge of international marketing, information management skills, teamwork knowhow, and communication skills. All of these are necessary skills for business professionals. In the course of this experience, the students could learn new skills and augment their theoretical knowledge of business practices with hands-on applications.

Patricia and Henry McCarthy (2006) have also shown the importance of experiential learning in the classroom. They found that experiential education integrates students' academic studies with opportunities for direct learning. Through experiential learning, students must make real decisions, going beyond the analysis of simply a hypothetical situation or case.

Moreover, analyzing experiential learning from the student perspective, Kim Hawtrey (2007) evaluated a range of learning methods, both passive and active, using a student survey that provided insights into undergraduates' attitudes toward various class activities on economic courses. The survey was conducted with 500 students enrolled in a third-year undergraduate economics course. The students ranked developing their knowledge of the subject as the most important goal, ahead of preparing for exams and stimulating intellectual curiosity. Furthermore, Jensen (2016) analyzed an experience-based learning activity to teach international trade and observed how it stimulated discussion and active engagement in the classroom. When students are engaged in experiential learning activities and participate actively, academic achievement and levels of learning will increase, as well as social satisfaction and well-being (Arjomandi, Seufert, O'Brien, & Anwar, 2018).

Traditional learning modes have been perceived to be inadequate, scoring lower when students are asked to rank different types of learning activities against achieving certain objectives (Orus et al., 2016). The student participants in the survey welcomed greater use of experiential learning modalities, especially public media and in-class presentations. Active participation in experiential learning activities has a direct influence on the perceptions that students have of the acquisition of cross-curricular performance and on their academic results (Orus et al., 2016).

The purpose of this chapter is to demonstrate how experiential-based learning can be applied in international business education through social media marketing projects. Additionally, the intention is to reiterate that the learning effectiveness of traditional classroom activities is enhanced when engaging in experiential-based learning.

Experiential Learning and Social Media Marketing

The internet has allowed marketing education to be internationalized in a very creative and cost-effective manner. Traditional classroom education (face-to-face lectures) is being replaced by technology-enhanced approaches (Green, 2015), where technology plays a substantial role inside and outside the classroom. Crittenden and Crittenden (2015) state that "digital and social media marketing is a fast-moving phenomenon, and marketing educators must stay abreast of the times. Not only are the tools changing constantly, the issues related to the tools are also expanding rapidly" (p. 71). The internet has even become the classroom itself, with MOOC's or Massive Open Online Courses, in which students can sign up for classes delivered by renowned universities for a small fee or free. The role of technology is essential in the development of high-quality teaching (Mishra & Koehler, 2006), but the incorporation of technological tools alone is not enough. Extraordinary teaching requires the interplay of content and pedagogy with technology.

As Seno-Alday and Budde-Sung (2016) have indicated, effective teaching requires alignment between the articulated learning outcomes of a course and the corresponding design of the syllabus. The course syllabus covers not only the course content and teaching methods/pedagogies but also assignment selection and design. In a study conducted by Alon and Cannon (2000), the outcomes came from a learning experience using an internet-based platform, Globalview.org. This platform facilitated interactions between students and real-world companies. It became an important tool to bring the realities of the business world into the classroom while giving the students the opportunity to participate in projects similar to those they might become involved with after graduation. As Carr and Hayes (2015) noted, graduate students, particularly in the field of computer-mediated communications, need specific training, instructors, and opportunities to learn the right techniques to manage the information and data provided by social media platforms.

Learning how to create content and manage information that millions of people read, listen to, or watch must be a priority for firms, business educators, and students. Currently, there are many studies that reveal how educa-

tors use social media, including videos, as pedagogical tools for teaching and sharing academic content (Gruzd, Haythornthwaite, Paulin, Gilbert, & Esteve del Valle, 2016; Hong et al., 2016; Snelson, 2015). Moreover, YouTube and audiovisual use and production is increasingly becoming a tool for teaching in universities. During the year 2016, Facebook had 1.23 billion active users on average (Facebook, 2017). YouTube (2017) has over a billion users worldwide and reaches more 18–49-year-olds in the United States than any cable television network.

In a study developed by Manca and Ranieri (2013) analyzing Facebook as a technology-enhanced learning environment, the pedagogical benefits of the platform as a teaching tool were pointed out. For instance, different information and learning resources can be used to widen the learning context. Ajjan and Hartshorne (2008) identified benefits considered by faculty in regard to the uses of social media in the classroom: it improves student learning, increases student–faculty interactions as well as student–student interactions, improves student satisfaction with the course, enhances students' writing skills, and is relatively easy to integrate in the curricula.

The pace at which markets are moving and evolving forces firms and businesses to innovate and look for more modern ways of reaching their final customers, staying at the top of their market, and adapting to change. As Kotler and Pfoertsch (2010) state in *Ingredient Branding*, the idea that branding is simply the equivalent of an advertising campaign is outdated; rather, it is one aspect of external communications. For it to be effective and successful, all of the messages that a company sends through different channels have to be consistent with its essence and with the message they wish to put out. Indeed, this represents another reason why marketing professionals need to be proactive, open to change, and agile in order to keep up with the rapid rate of change of social media trends and markets.

Not only have the potential benefits of utilizing social media as an academic tool been widely studied, but the drawbacks and obstacles of its use have also been analyzed. The main hindrances are identified by Manca and Ranieri (2016) through the study of 6139 members of Italian universities. Social media deployment barriers have been divided into three dimensions:

- Cultural and socio-relational dimension: includes student distraction, traditional roles, issues related to student–faculty relationships, and privacy management.
- Pedagogical and teaching dimension: management of workload, pedagogical effectiveness, and diffusion among students.
- Administrative and managerial dimension: time consumption, institutional support, and technical integration among tools.

Other contraindications pertaining to the use of social media for teaching include its efficacy compared with traditional ways of teaching and learning, such as face-to-face lessons, paper-based knowledge sources, and face-to-face communications among teachers and students. Concerning business education, Piotrowski (2015) identified drawbacks of the uses of Web 2.0 technologies noted by students, including the risk of off-topic socializing during interactivity, issues related to privacy, and data overload. On the other hand, for faculty members the biggest downsides were the plethora of social media outlets and lack of knowhow in interactive mobile technologies.

Many marketing and business educators are yet to engage in the utilization of social media as a tool for teaching (Tuten & Marks, 2012). The main reasons for not embracing it involves the lack of expertise on the part of faculty members, the quantity of tools, limited lecture time, and the perceived limited functional uses of the tools. Thomas and Thomas (2012) have noted reluctance on the part of researchers, business school professors, and scholars to change the way in which they work and embrace the "technological revolution."

Employers count on graduates to have knowledge of the uses of social media, particularly in tasks linked with marketing (Benson et al., 2014). Given the increasing importance of social media in modern business, it is crucial that it is included in the education of future managers and business professionals. It might be even more beneficial if relevant education is led by teachers proficient in the topic and accompanied by hands-on experiences. According to Chang (2015) and a report published by Informate Mobile Intelligence, people in the United States check their social media apps on average 17 times a day and are the biggest consumers of mobile phone data in the world, spending an average of 4.7 hours on the phone per day. At a global level, daily time spent on social networking by internet users worldwide from 2012 to 2016 grew from 96 minutes to 118 minutes per day according to the statistics portal Statista (2016). Therefore, it should be a priority for business educators to provide students with the opportunity to learn how to create content that people will consume through social media.

This chapter is intended to serve as a guideline for instructors wanting to use social media as a teaching tool in the classroom and who wish to teach their students through experience. It can be of especial use for instructors teaching marketing- and branding-related subjects as part of international business or management studies curricula. It is based on a class project designed to teach global marketing through social media by applying Kolb's experiential learning model. In order to evaluate the learning effectiveness of the activity, it analyzes the attitudes and perceptions of students regarding a

class project of making a social media promotional video at a business school in Norway and compared the results with those of a previous study developed by Alon and Herath (2014) where the perceptions of 155 students enrolled in an international marketing course were analyzed at master's and undergraduate levels at a private US college and at a public university in Israel. These analyses were also performed to give insight into the perceptions of business students about the practical use of social media as a tool for teaching. All study groups shared the same pedagogical style and guidance.

The rest of the chapter is structured as follows: there is a description of the project, its learning objectives, and its application of the experiential learning cycle; then follows a description of the optimal fit of the project and the challenges encountered. Subsequently, evaluation of the learning effectiveness is discussed, as well as replication possibilities. Finally, the project's theoretical and pedagogical contributions are explained.

The Project

The activity consists of giving students an assignment: imagine they are representing an investment promotion agency and are tasked with developing an advertising campaign for an international or domestic firm using social media, among other international communication outlets. The company wants to improve its image, increase exports and inward investments, and attract more customers. The students have to develop a media campaign that will include a short video to be posted on YouTube, with the possibility to be shared via Facebook and other platforms.

The Basics

- The activity is aimed at graduate and undergraduate students of international business, management and marketing-related careers.
- This exercise was developed within the framework of four weeks, but it can be performed in accordance with the syllabus of a given course.
- The optimal group size is 3–4 students.
- It is required that each group has access to a computer and to video-editing software (e.g. Windows Movie Maker or iMovie).
- The activity is included in an international marketing class or that of a related subject. Students should plan and produce the video by themselves.

Learning Objectives

- Introduce students to material related to corporate marketing and branding.
- To develop multidisciplinary decision-making skills.
- To evaluate potential business opportunities using various business models.
- Encourage students to analyze the qualitative and quantitative data presented to decision-makers.
- Development of solutions for the issues related to the monitoring and adaptation of the digital marketing strategies of the brand, taking into consideration the 4 Ps (product, price, place and promotion) and different brand audiences.
- Higher technical proficiency for the planning and production of a social media marketing campaign.

Purpose and Description

This chapter reports on a social media marketing project of an international marketing master's course during the 2015–2016 academic year at a Norwegian business school, which required the creation of a promotional video for a company or project to be published on YouTube. The project consisted of, first, grouping the students in teams with a diversity of gender and nationality in order to attain the greatest possible amount of diversity in each. Once on teams, the students decided which real company, topic, or specific project in Norway or abroad they wanted to create a promotional video for. The students had weekly scheduled meetings during the four weeks that the assignment took place, in addition to time spent working on the project outside of the scheduled group work hours. In addition, the students were provided with video-editing training consisting of a lecture/tutorial of video-making techniques with a multimedia expert from the Norwegian business school. During the lecture, the expert shared tools and resources for the students to incorporate images and music without violating copyright.

Every marketing aspect to be included in the video was taught to the students during the class sessions prior to the final presentation. In the meantime, the students had to analyze the company, design their branding strategy, find their audiovisual materials, create the storyline and set all together in a logical sequence, to communicate the message on behalf of the company—as if they were part of the advertising agency.

At the end of the course, all groups made a presentation of their final video and received feedback from their professor and classmates. The best videos

were chosen by vote after the presentations. The students were also asked to respond to a questionnaire (see Appendix), to measure their perceptions and learning outcomes. The questionnaire comprised 20 questions, which were presented as 16 Likert scale questions, one multiple choice question, and three open-ended questions.

Experiential Learning Cycle

Experiential learning occurs when a learner is involved in an activity, reflects on and evaluates it, determines what was most useful, and uses this information in the performance of other activities (Kolb, 2015). It is a common approach to engage students in active learning (Kolb, 2015) and the method can be operationalized in international business courses to facilitate the assimilation and application of theories and concepts, and to develop skills such as critical thinking, problem solving, analytical and creative thinking.

David Kolb (1984) developed the Experiential Learning Cycle (ELC) model, which divides the learning process into four phases: concrete experience (CE), reflective observation (RO), abstract conceptualization (AC), and active experimentation (AE) (Fig. 6.1). The cycle results in a process that involves "experiencing (CE), reflecting (RO), thinking (AC) and acting (AE)" (Kolb, 2013, p. 8). Such a process, according to Kolb and Kolb (2005), allows

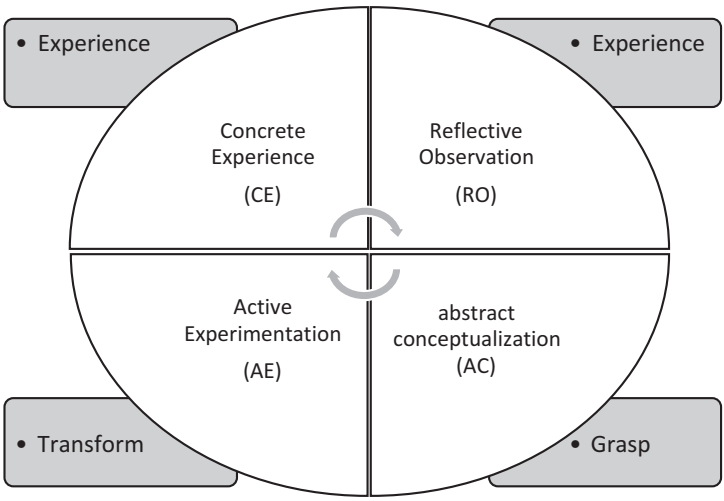

Fig. 6.1 The experiential learning cycle, adapted from Kolb, A. Y. (2013)

knowledge construction by involving the four learning modes as a response to the learning context and subject to be learned.

Based on Kolb's experiential learning cycle, Schaller (2018) describes a field project in a consumer behavior course for undergraduates, which results in positive perceptions and learning outcomes from the business students, validating the hypothesis that the application of Kolb's ELC strengthens the connection between business and marketing teaching with the real world and actual life, and increases the value perception of the learning activity, motivating and engaging students, thus positively affecting their learning outcomes and performance. Additionally, according to Pieri, Valenta, and Iriti (2019), the application of Kolb's experiential learning cycle to the design of MBA curricula by incorporating experiential learning increases the value proposition of the graduate programs, given the importance of experiential-based learning to bolster professional development.

Regarding the project, once the students were organized into teams, they decided which companies, topics, or project in Norway or abroad they were going to create the video for. In this first part, the students have a CE that gives place to reflective observations. As previously mentioned, the students had weekly meetings to work on the project, in addition to time spent working on the project outside of scheduled group work hours, which allowed them to have their own observations, facilitating the RO phase of the ELC. Additionally, they were provided with training in video making with a multimedia expert from the Norwegian business school, as well as their marketing lectures in class: here, they were taught the concepts and technical requirements necessary to create a social media marketing campaign. In this part of the project, the AC phase comes into action, where the students analyze and assimilate specific knowledge and concepts in order to enter the AE. In that latter phase, they put in practice the concepts that they learned throughout the ELC (Fig. 6.2).

Skills and Competencies

The learning objectives for this project are to acquire knowledge related to corporate marketing and branding, to develop multidisciplinary decision-making skills, and to analyze the qualitative and quantitative data presented to decision-makers in order to monitor and to adapt the digital marketing strategies of the firm, taking into consideration the 4 Ps and its specific audience. Additionally, it aims to provide students with technical proficiency in the planning and production of a social media marketing campaign.

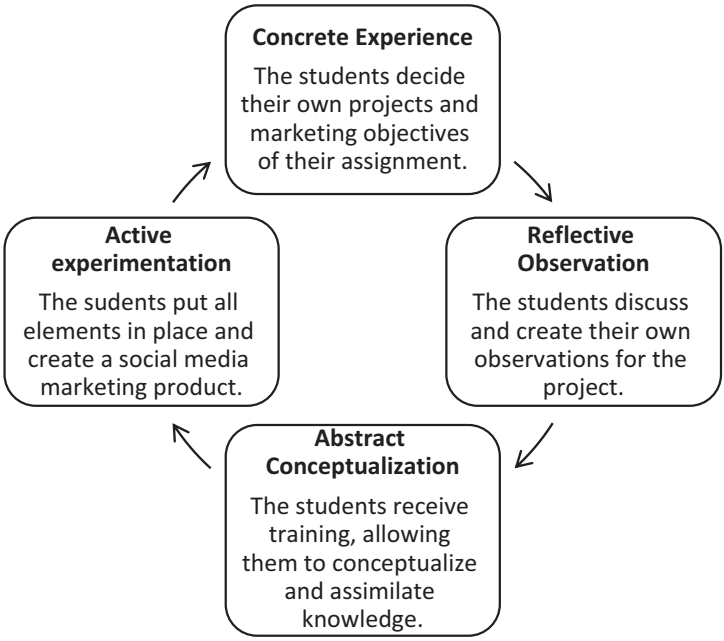

Fig. 6.2 Application of Kolb's experiential learning cycle on a social media branding project

More specifically, some of the skills and competencies that this project aims to enhance are the ability to use technologies in marketing activities, to supply a real-world understanding of the challenges associated with global branding, new skills related to international marketing, as well as to make students more knowledgeable about the implementation of social media marketing campaigns. Furthermore, it has a goal to enhance the general knowledge of social media marketing, e-marketing and related concepts, and for students to learn about international marketing as a key aspect of international business.

Among the learning objectives of the activity are how to create a storyline and how to develop a promotional video, as well as the gaining of knowledge related to editing and video making, and learning about the importance of target customers, target markets, and the customization of audiovisual advertising.

Through this project, students learn how to work in multicultural teams, given the fact that the teams were formed with an emphasis on gender and country diversity. As mentioned by Jimenez, Boehe, Taras, and Caprar (2017), diversity in teams increases the likelihood of complementarities in skills, knowledge, and abilities among the team members; and as stated by Grant

(1996), it facilitates learning and innovation. This diversity was also part of the idea behind the multi-country collaborative experiential learning student project named X-Culture (Taras et al., 2013; Taras & Ordeñana, 2015), where students would develop cross-cultural competencies, in addition to business competencies and skills. In this experiential learning project, students had the chance to use an array of social media applications and information technology tools such as Facebook, Skype, Dropbox, Google Drive, and WhatsApp, which allowed them to learn how to use these platforms in a business setting, while having an international teamwork experience that could be applied to disciplines such as international business and management, marketing, psychology, and economics among others (Poór, Varga, Renata, & Taras, 2016).

Through the project described in this chapter, students learn how branding is practiced in the real world and improve their understanding of the importance of emotional appeal in marketing and of the core aspects behind creating successful and engaging commercials. As expressed by (Taras et al., 2013), students involved in experiential learning-based teaching and global teams have more real-life experience that will be useful for their future jobs.

Optimal Fit

The project would work best in class groups of 20 to 40 students, organized in teams of three to four members. For classes of closer to 40 students, the group can be organized in teams of five. It is important to guarantee diversity of gender and nationality, the second being of particular importance in international classrooms. Moreover, the project can be performed in any regional or cultural setting.

In terms of the educational level most appropriate for the development of the project, both undergraduate and graduate level are suitable. It is preferable that the project is developed as part of a course where students participate in class regularly, since they have to receive marketing lectures and will obtain relevant knowledge for the accomplishment of the activity during the project time frame. This includes both the international marketing lectures performed by the instructor and the video-making lecture. The technical lecture should preferably be performed by an expert.

Students with previous experience in video editing should also attend all classes, including the technical lecture, since they will not only be taught how to use the different video-editing software, but also other technical aspects of audiovisual production and will receive advice on how to obtain audiovisual materials that will not violate copyright regulations.

Challenges

The main challenges of the project were largely related to time limitations, lack of knowledge and experience in editing software, and lack of access to audiovisual material and equipment.

The most common difficulty experienced by students was getting the required information and materials from the organizations they chose to make the promotional videos for. Not all organizations would facilitate or share audiovisual materials. Consequently, some teams had to create their own materials, which put them at a disadvantage vis-à-vis other teams that had access to pictures or videos directly from their organization. This obliged the team members to be creative and to find other ways of obtaining or creating what they needed, either by doing it themselves or by getting it from the internet. In case the material was obtained from a third party, the most important thing was to always respect copyright and give the respective credits.

Besides, some students were more technically savvy than others or had more experience in the use of video-editing software: some students had to learn from scratch, while others had used it previously, which meant that it was relatively easier for them to finish the project. As in most such studies, some groups experienced an imbalance in the workload among the different team members. Sometimes, not all students attended the group sessions intended for the development of the video project. This was exacerbated by the fact that the editing was generally performed on the laptop of only one of team members.

In order to address the challenges related to obtaining audiovisual material, the course organizers can help find a firm to make a promotional video about. The firm should provide students with access to the necessary materials and relevant information. Additionally, since not all students have previous knowledge of video-making software, a possible way to overcome this challenge would be to distribute students who already have technical knowledge among the different teams.

Evaluation of Learning Effectiveness

The grading implemented in the international marketing masterclass where the project took place is only defined by the final exam. Therefore, the project was not graded with a quantitative grade but only with a pass/fail mark, which is a prerequisite to sitting the final exam. Since there was not a quantitatively

measurable grade, the learning effectiveness of the project was measured with three methods: the students made the video and presented it; they fulfilled the technical criteria; they completed a survey about their perceptions of the activity.

First, all students delivered their final video and presented it in class. Second, to evaluate these videos, the following ten criteria had to be demonstrated or included in the final presentation:

- technical proficiency (the video works well during presentation, has good sound and picture quality)
- target market is identifiable
- unique selling points and positioning provided
- video does not violate copyright
- video has a clear purpose: calls for action, behavioral objectives
- transition of slides is smooth and logical
- 4 Ps are addressed
- voice and music are at the right level and consistent with the presentation
- length is well balanced with content, audiences, entertainment, and aesthetic values
- credit is given (name, date, title, sources).

Even though there was not numerical evaluation, in other circumstances and under the consideration of the instructor the project could be graded by assigning a percentage of the grade to each one of the technical criteria of the video.

At the end of the class, the best videos were chosen by vote after the presentations were completed, and all students responded to a questionnaire and provided their insights of what they considered to be the skills that they improved or gained from the exercise, as well as the key barriers to completing the project. The survey data were collected and divided into two categories: general group perceptions and best videos versus the rest of the class, to compare the difference in perceptions of learning effectiveness. In order to know if there is a statistically significant difference in learning perceptions between the students who made the best videos versus the rest of the class, we analyzed the data by performing a Mann–Whitney *U* test.

As seen in Table 6.1, with the *p*-values from the Mann–Whitney *U* test, we can affirm that there was no statistically significant difference in the perceptions between the group of students with the best videos and the rest of the class, except for their perception regarding the experience gained in terms of the uses of technology. The students who made the best videos had a higher

Table 6.1 Best videos versus rest of the class's student perceptions

	Best videos $N = 9$		Rest of the class $N = 30$		Total		
	Mdn	MAD	Mdn	MAD	Mdn	U	p
A1: More productive than listening to a lecture	4.00	1.00	4.00	1.00	4.00	121.50	0.64
A2: More enjoyable than listening to a lecture	4.00	1.00	4.00	1.00	4.00	120.00	0.60
A3: Gained real-world understanding of the challenges associated with global branding	4.00	0.00	4.00	0.00	4.00	128.00	0.78
A4: Finding relevant information sources was difficult	3.00	1.00	3.00	1.00	3.00	107.50	0.34
A5: The exercise taught me new skills relating to international marketing	4.00	1.00	4.00	0.00	4.00	100.50	0.21
A6: The exercise gave me more experience of the uses of technology	**5.00**	**0.00**	**4.00**	**1.00**	**4.00**	**73.50**	**0.03**
A7: Stimulated my interest in social media and its uses in international marketing	4.00	1.00	4.00	1.00	4.00	98.00	0.20
A8: Greater appreciation of teamwork	5.00	0.00	4.00	1.00	4.00	84.00	0.08
A9: Exercise should not be assigned to future classes	2.00	1.00	2.00	1.00	2.00	83.50	0.07
A10: This exercise was one of the best parts of the course	4.00	1.00	3.00	1.00	3.00	101.00	0.24
A11: Made me more knowledgeable about the implementation of social media campaigns	4.00	1.00	4.00	0.00	4.00	115.00	0.58
A12: The learning experience provided by this exercise was not worth the effort	2.00	1.00	2.00	0.50	2.00	126.50	0.76
A13: Understanding of international marketing was enhanced by completing this exercise	4.00	0.00	3.50	0.50	4.00	84.00	0.07
A14: This exercise motivated me to learn more about social media marketing	4.00	1.00	4.00	0.00	4.00	106.00	0.30
A15: The project was challenging	4.00	1.00	4.00	0.00	4.00	123.00	0.66

Note: 1 = Strongly disagree, 5 = Strongly agree
Bold indicates the factors with statistically significant difference in perceptions between groups.

perception of the experience gained in the uses of technology compared with the perception of the rest of the class ($U = 73.50$, $p = 0.03$).

The project followed a similar exercise that was conducted among 155 students on international marketing courses at graduate and undergraduate levels at a private American college and at a public university in Israel between 2011 and 2013, where the students' assignment was to make a video to promote a country (Alon & Herath, 2014). The data collected from both student groups were compared using descriptive statistics and a ranking methodology.

Through a ranking methodology (Table 6.2), it was possible to compare the perception of the students of the Norwegian business school with the 2011–2013 students from the American and Israeli universities who made a similar social media marketing project, also applying experiential learning theory.

When comparing the student groups' attitudes, both agreed with the first and second most important factors: the exercise gave them more experience in the uses of technology and through it they gained real-world understanding of the challenges associated with global branding. Additionally, the project was more enjoyable than listening to a lecture and it taught them new skills relating to international marketing.

This comparison of perceptions between two completely independent groups of students, from different years, countries, and schools (exercises performed at an American College and Israeli University between 2011 and 2013 and at a Norwegian Business School in 2016), and the similar results confirm the effectiveness and increasing importance of the use of social media as a teaching tool and of the application of experiential learning theory in the classroom. In both groups, the students placed the same factors as the highest and lowest and both strongly agreed that through this approach they had gained more experience of the uses of technology and real-world understanding of the challenges associated with global branding. This showing of a similar general perception confirms the great importance and usefulness of the operationalization of experiential learning theory when teaching international marketing.

Transferability and Replication

The skills and competencies gained by students through this project are surely relevant in the workplace, especially given the increasing importance of social media and digital marketing. Participation in a project of this nature will equip students with competencies with which they will be able to make sound

Table 6.2 General student perceptions ranking comparison

	Norwegian University Exercise (2016)		US and Israel University Exercise (2011–2013)[a]	
	Mean $N = 39$	Ranking	Mean $N = 155$	Ranking
A6: The exercise gave me more experience in the uses of technology	**4.10**	**1**	**4.30**	**1**
A3: Gained real-world understanding of the challenges associated with global branding	**3.97**	**2**	**4.23**	**2**
A2: More enjoyable than listening to a lecture	3.85	3	3.93	5
A5: The exercise taught me new skills relating to international marketing	3.85	3	3.93	5
A7: Stimulated my interest in social media and its uses in international marketing	3.79	5	3.97	3
A15: The project was challenging	3.79	5	3.79	10
A8: Greater appreciation of teamwork	3.67	7	3.61	12
A11: Made me more knowledgeable about the implementation of social media campaigns	3.59	8	3.97	3
A1: More productive than listening to a lecture	**3.51**	**9**	**3.79**	**9**
A14: This exercise motivated me to learn more about social media marketing	3.46	10	3.86	8
A13: Understanding of international marketing was enhanced by completing this exercise	3.36	11	3.91	7
A10: This exercise was one of the best parts of the course	3.18	12	3.65	11
A4: Finding relevant information sources was difficult	**3.00**	**13**	**2.74**	**13**
A12: The learning experience provided by this exercise was not worth the effort	**2.49**	**14**	**2.03**	**14**
A9: Exercise should not be assigned to future classes	**2.26**	**15**	**1.71**	**15**

Note: 1 = Strongly disagree, 5 = Strongly agree

[a]Extracted from Alon and Herath (2014)

judgements about what is needed in order to implement social media marketing campaigns in real business practice.

This exercise can be replicated in any higher education context where international business, management, or marketing is taught. There is no limitation in terms of geographical location or origin of the participants. It is advisable for there to be a diverse student group in order to facilitate plurality of thought and opinion, consequently increasing the expected learning outcome.

The project described in this chapter was performed in a classroom of 39 students, where 17 had Norwegian origin and 22 had non-Norwegian origin, representing 12 different countries: Germany, Poland, Romania, Ghana, Uganda, Cameroon, Nepal, Afghanistan, Pakistan, Sri Lanka, France, and Colombia.

The project can be adapted to suit different topics and does not necessarily need to be limited to the making of a promotional video for social media; it could be brought one step further by including other aspects of social media marketing. One example of a new aspect that could be included in the activity is social media analytics, an increasingly significant part of digital marketing with growing importance in international business.

If future instructors decide to include new topics or modify those to be taught during the project, it is necessary that the changes be reflected in the curriculum, and in the objectives, evaluation criteria, and learning outcomes of the project.

Debriefing

At the end of the class, all groups presented their final video and the students received feedback from the instructor and fellow students. During the presentation, students were expected to explain the mission, vision, and strategy of the company or related information, the objectives that they hoped to achieve and the message they wanted to communicate with their social media marketing video. Some international marketing aspects and concepts taught in class were discussed, as well their application in the video (e.g. segmentation, call for action, emotional appeal, messaging, storyline and narrative, etc.), in addition to the technical aspects that were part of the evaluation criteria.

Conversational learning was applied during this phase. As suggested by Kolb and Kolb (2005), conversational learning allows one's own experiences to be a source of learning. The interactions that occur during this process contribute to bringing meaning to an experience through conversation.

Each student team received interactive and constructive feedback from the instructor and peers. They were able to talk and to listen, complementing the learning process by reflecting, clarifying concepts, and answering questions and comments made by the instructor and fellow students.

Contributions and Implications

Through this exercise, we can affirm that experiential education is an effective complement to traditional teaching methods. As Kolb noted, "with the recognition that learning and development are lifelong processes, there comes a corresponding responsibility for social institutions and organizations to conduct their affairs in such a way that adults have experiences that facilitate their personal learning and development" (p. 15). This project facilitates the personal learning and development of students by preparing them for real-world challenges. Simulating real market conditions is a challenge for educators and institutions, but this project shows that is certainly worth the effort to create experiences that expose students to that sort of environment. It provides them with the opportunity to gain and use their understanding of managerial skills while training for the future through hands-on technology-centered projects.

Theoretical Contribution: Theory Advancement

The project described in this chapter contributes to Kolb's (1984) experiential learning theory, by testing and operationalizing it through a social media marketing project in an international marketing class, where a process of experiential education was applied and its leaning effectiveness confirmed. The evidence provided by the fact that two independent student groups, both the 2011–2013 student groups in the United States and Israel and the 2016 group in Norway, chose the same factors as the most and least important (factors A6, A3, A12, and A9) for the same project at different places and in different years, indicates the benefits of experiential education and the use of social media as a tool for its implementation. Both groups clearly gained real-world understanding of the challenges associated with global branding and got more experienced with the uses of technology. Furthermore, both groups agreed that there were challenges involved with the project, that it was worth the effort, as well as that it should be incorporated in future classes. These results verify the great importance and usefulness of the application of experiential learning theory in international business education.

Pedagogical Contributions: Increase Engagement

The contribution of the project is mostly pedagogical, by operationalizing experiential learning theory through the use of a social media marketing project. As Ramburuth and Daniel (2011) noted, effective teaching should engage students in the learning process, and this student group successfully engaged in a creative process that was considered more productive and enjoyable than going to a lecture by participants. This is closely related to the results of the study conducted by Li and Armstrong (2015), where they found that extroverted international managers "have a preference for grasping new experience by engaging in concrete experience rather than abstract conceptualization; prefer to transform experience via active experimentation rather than reflective observation; and tend to have an accommodative learning style" (p. 1).

Utilization of information and communication technologies in the classroom motivates students to be actively involved in the learning process. Moreover, it contributes to the cultivation of abilities related to creative and critical thinking, integration and retention of information, and facilitation of the comprehension of what has been learnt in a comprehensive and dynamic way. Information and communication technology tools serve students to develop significant learning abilities that will become long-lasting skills (Esteve Mon & Gisbert Cervet, 2011). As mentioned by Gonzalez-Perez, Velez-Calle, Cathro, Caprar, and Taras (2014), universities and higher education institutions are putting greater importance on innovative teaching methodologies in order to instruct the business leaders of today and tomorrow.

By using social media as a teaching tool, along with experiential learning-based pedagogical techniques, students will find themselves in a learning environment that allows them to create, cooperate, share ideas, and take decisions, while the educators will be their guides, providing the necessary structure to build knowledge (Berger & Wild, 2016) and gain skills for their future.

Competencies Development

Part of the relevance of this chapter relies upon its pedagogical contribution, specifically in the development of competencies with the implementation of experiential education in the classroom, applying Kolb's experiential learning theory (1984) through a social media marketing project.

When comparing perceptions of students in the project at the Norwegian business school with those of students in the United States and Israel who

participated in the same type of exercise, all groups coincided in their perceptions of the most important factors. Both groups' survey results ranked the same learning outcomes as the most important takeaways of the project. These outcomes are related with the development of specific competencies, such as increasing their experience with the use of technology and gaining real-world understanding of the challenges associated with global branding. All student groups also agreed with the experience being valuable and that it should be assigned to future classes, providing further insight into the usefulness of experiential leaning-based projects for business and marketing education.

Appendix

Other Outcomes

- After presentation of the final videos in the class, the two best groups were chosen by vote. Members of the groups that had made the two best videos were asked by the business school administration to develop a promotional video to be used by the university.
- The video that won the first place was about the city where the university is located, portraying it as a family-friendly destination. The mayor showed interest in using it for touristic promotion of the city.
- Additionally, when one of the companies found out about the video, it decided to contact the students.
- Upon completion of their studies, two of the participating students found jobs at different organizations with functions related to digital marketing.
- In the subsequent year (2017), Kristiansand's City Hall decided to participate in the project. The municipality provided the students with relevant information about their vision, strategic objectives, and audiovisual materials.
- Also in that year, an external panel of experts judged the videos; those awarded first and second place won a private dinner with the city major.
- The winners in 2017 won a monetary prize as well as their video being used to promote the city in an international exhibition.

Links to YouTube Videos Developed by the Students

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=V7UaTXi5FK0
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Do95sp-0C34

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=nAU8fVNbrT0&feature=youtu.be
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0ap03f-Gwzo&feature=youtu.be
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-DFsoYdlAC8
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=J5g6ZOjgP7g

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Part III

Applications of Experiential Learning Pedagogy in International Business Management Learning and Teaching

Course Design

7

Structuring Your IB Course to Create a Foreign Market Entry Plan Using Active Learning Strategies as "Building Blocks"

Longzhu Dong, Angie Stombaugh, and Cindy Albert

Introduction

Doing business internationally requires a complicated multidimensional balance between the costs and benefits. While the differences in cultures, political and economic systems, regulatory systems, and institutional structures in different countries may add to the cost side, these exact same factors, along with access to new markets and resources and economies of scale and scope, can also generate benefits for international companies. However, in an undergraduate international business course, students usually do not have practice with or the applied critical skills needed prior to the class (Snyder & Snyder, 2008). So, how can a face-to-face course give students experience with global challenges and help them develop the knowledge/skills needed in their future international business-related careers?

This chapter introduces an innovative teaching approach that scaffolds 11 interconnected active learning strategies (ALS) (see Appendix 1 for a list of these strategies) throughout the course to help students practice the required tasks and skills needed to complete a semester-long project: a foreign market entry plan. These 11 ALS include simulations, games, online database exploration, role-playing, and case studies, which allow the students to explore real-life problems, utilize skills, and practice international business (IB) strategies within

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M. A. Gonzalez-Perez et al. (eds.), *The Palgrave Handbook of Learning and Teaching International Business and Management*, https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-030-20415-0_7

the classroom. Through these ALS, feedback, and completion of the plan, students acquire the critical knowledge and skill for an IB-related career.

Scaffolding is "a pedagogical method in which an instructor provides graduated levels of assistance" (Murray, 2012, p. 28). Since students, as novice learners, may not have the knowledge and skills needed to complete a foreign market entry plan, these ALS are internally selected and arranged in a sequential order as the building blocks with which to build a foreign market entry plan. The idea of building blocks refers to the scaffolding of knowledge and skills across a class. By doing so, the professor can break down essential skills needed to complete the plan and guide knowledge and skill transfer for the new learners (Alexander, Bresciani, & Eppler, 2015).

The Basics

- Most suitable audience: Undergraduate or graduate
- Time required: Semester-long project, 14 weeks, 275-minute periods per week
- Optimal group size: 20–40 people (more students can be accommodated with variations in the structure)
- Materials and technologies required: Laptop accessibility and supplies for individual activities (see Appendix 1)
- Cost: Less than $10 for the semester but will vary depending on the ALS selected

Learning Objectives

The expected knowledge and skill development for this course occur through the application of the activities and critical-thinking processes practiced in a real-life IB context. Through the active learning strategies and final project, five student learning objectives will be achieved. The student learning objectives are designed with Bloom's taxonomy (Anderson, Krathwohl, & Bloom, 2001) in mind. All five objectives are written at one of the higher levels of learning on the taxonomy.

1. Apply conceptual knowledge about the world's diverse cultures, communication styles, and values to an international business project
2. Evaluate global systems and institutions in a historical and geographic context

3. Explain how individual and collective decisions have global implications for international business
4. Use culturally appropriate linguistic communication skills in/for international business environments
5. Analyze ethical dilemmas and make ethical decisions in the context of international business

Project Overview

Kolb's (1984) experiential learning cycle guides this project because the expectation is that students will develop critical-thinking skills that will be transferable to future IB opportunities. In order to promote the development of critical-thinking skills, students need to be actively engaged in the learning process, participate in activities that focus on the instructional process, and have an assessment that challenges their thinking (Snyder & Snyder, 2008). Kolb's experiential learning has four main stages. The Concrete Experience stage is when the student is actually doing an activity or having an experience. The Reflective Observation stage is when the student reflects on the successes and challenges of performing the activity. The Abstract Conceptualization stage is when theory is applied to the experience of completing the activity. The final stage of Planning Active Experimentation is when the student considers the theory and reflection of the experience to guide planning in future experiences (Kolb, 1984).

This course includes one final project designed using each step of Kolb's (1984) cycle. The scaffolded ALS give the students practice as they develop their critical-thinking and problem-solving skills to help them be successful when they put all the parts together for the final project. Creating a foreign market entry plan is the big assessment this course is focused on. Using Kolb's cycle, it is the challenging assessment necessary to complete the cycle. Using a visual metaphor as the framework and graphic organizer helps students see how the course is structured and how it fits together to meet the objectives. The visual image is also descriptive enough for students to know which part of the foreign market entry plan they will be working on each week.

This project uses the visual metaphor of a structurally sound house as the framework for students to visualize how the course objectives and the ALS fit together to prepare them to create a foreign market entry plan as their final project. The objectives are the outside structure; they act as the purpose or glue that holds the course together. All lectures, ALS, and assessments are directly related to the objectives for the course. Inside the structure, the course content

is broken into six themes. The Ice Breakers and Team Formation is the foundation for the course and includes one exercise. Part 1: Company Introduction—there are no student exercises for this part. Students are expected to choose and research a local company of interest. Part 2: Country Analysis is the major component of the foreign market entry plan and includes five exercises. Part 3: Entry is learned using four exercises. Part 4: Staffing can be learned using just one exercise. Part 5: Marketing Strategy includes two exercises. Eleven ALS are completed in 10 weeks, with two ALS being completed during week 3. Also notice that ALS 5 teaches concepts in both entry and marketing strategy.

The objectives for this class are based on skills needed to be successful in international business. Students need to have experiences to develop their affective and perceptual skills key skills that occur during Kolb's (1984) concrete experience and reflective observation stages (Kumar & Bhandarker, 2017). The first process of concrete experience is when the students complete the exercises with their team. Using reflective observation, the students may observe inconsistencies between their experience and their understanding. Through the professor's modeling, questioning, and guidance during the presentation part of each ALS, the students reflect on their new understanding of the concept and make connections to the final project.

An example of this concrete experience with reflection is ALS #2: Identifying the Best Location for a Bank Branch Abroad (Cavusgil, Knight, & Riesenberger, 2012), (Exhibit 7.1). This is a group exercise that occurs early in the sequence.

For each group exercise, the students work together to discuss the problem and use the skills recently learned to find the best solution. When students present their findings to the class, the professor challenges their thinking by asking questions for the class to think about. The reflection resources are linked in Appendix 1 for each ALS. The follow-up questions are designed to help students make sense of the concepts and transfer the knowledge and skills to the final project.

Working together with peers to complete the activities helps facilitate understanding of the abstract conceptualization stage of Kolb's (1984) cycle. Without the active learning component of the activities, students may not be able to understand the concept. For example, culture shock and cultural empathy are easy to explain in the abstract, but to deal with culture shock and to develop cultural empathy requires an actual experience and reflection. It is during the reflection when learning takes place (Lang, 2016).

The experiential learning cycle is a model that helps us develop critical-thinking skills in our students. If students are to develop, they need to personally discover the information. This personal discovery occurs in the classroom with the professor as the guide. Although group exercises are used during the practice phase of this class, the students reflect on their own learning at the end of the experience.

Exhibit 7.1 ***ALS: Identifying the Best Location for a Bank Branch Abroad (ALS #2)***

Task

For the best location for a bank branch abroad (Cavusgil et al., 2012), students assume that they are managers at a large bank in the U.S. Now management wants to set up a bank branch in one of the following countries: Argentina, Indonesia, Finland, Nigeria, and the country chosen by the team. Students are asked to use eight online resources (e.g., World Bank, Freedom House, CIA World Factbook) to evaluate conditions in these countries along 12 indicators (e.g., population, income distribution, GNI, inflation rate) for setting up bank branches. Based on the research and discussion within teams, students present their recommendation to the class about which one of these countries is most promising for the bank to establish a branch.

Purpose

Students learn specific ways and practical tools to gather information, evaluate, and compare foreign markets in these five general aspects: geography, demographics, economic environment, political environment, and legal environment. This is directly related to the final project rubric.

Process

First, students in the class are introduced to the background of this exercise. The professor briefly introduces the characteristics of the banking industry and the importance of a new international branch to a bank. Then, students will spend 30–40 minutes gathering information from online databases, assigning a value from 1 to 10 to describe the level of each factor, then calculating the total score for each country by adding up the values that the team determined above. Each team justifies their choice of the most attractive country to the rest of the class. After each presentation, the professor provides verbal feedback to each team through targeted questions and reinforcement of the connection of the ALS to the final project. Students learn from their peers and the professor to eliminate mistakes in their process and make their justifications stronger.

Student Challenges

- The exercise does not include all the factors that a bank must consider when making such decisions.
- Quantifying each factor and establishing a weight for each factor can be very subjective without industrial analysis and the analysis of the bank itself, which could be difficult for the student. Background information from the professor is critical here.

Student Benefits

- Students gain the skills and knowledge about how to quantify and compare the macro environment across different countries.
- Students become aware that not all factors are equally important, depending on the strength/weakness of the specific company.
- Students realize that for different industries, a different set of factors is used for analysis.

An example of an ALS for personal discovery understanding of abstract concepts is the ALS #4: Bafa Bafa (Intercultural Learning for Pupils & Teachers, 2018) (Exhibit 7.2). This ALS is a face-to-face group simulation.

Exhibit 7.2 ALS: Bafa Bafa (ALS #4)

Task

Bafa Bafa (Intercultural Learning for Pupils & Teachers, 2018) is a face-to-face simulation training program, which has many variations. Because of the time limit (75 minutes) of this class, a simpler version is used in this simulation; students will be randomly divided into two countries (Alpha & Beta), each of which has their unique culture, behavior patterns, languages, and products. The task is to exchange products with people from the other country.

Purpose

The simulation is intended to improve participants' cross-cultural competence by helping them understand the impact of culture on the behavior of people and organizations. Participants experience culture shock by traveling to and trying to interact with a culture in which the people have different values, different ways of behaving, and different languages (Intercultural Learning for Pupils and Teachers, 2018).

Process

Participants are introduced or briefed about the rituals, customs, and languages of their culture and given time to practice and live in their new culture in separate rooms. After this, exchanges begin that allow a few members of each culture to exchange with a few members of the other culture for ten minutes each. These exchanges continue until all members have had a chance to experience the other culture. At the end of Bafa Bafa, all participants are brought together into one room where the whole class debriefs the exercise and considers issues regarding the interpretation of other cultures.

Student Challenges

- There is a lot of new information for students. Time to practice and understand both verbal and non-verbal communication is needed for the activity to be successful.
- Students will perceive this activity as disorganized because of room transitions and the activity itself. Having an assistant to the professor is critical to manage two locations and transitions to minimize the confusion for students.

Student Benefits

- Students come to understand the meaning and impact of culture and build an awareness of cultural diversity.
- Students begin to appreciate cultural diversity and to examine their attitudes and behaviors toward others who are different than themselves.
- Students learn the potential for misinterpretation that arises when one evaluates another culture solely from the perspective of one's own values and how to work through these misinterpretations

Cost

- For this simpler version of Bafa Bafa, the cost is less than $10.00 with a class of 40 students.

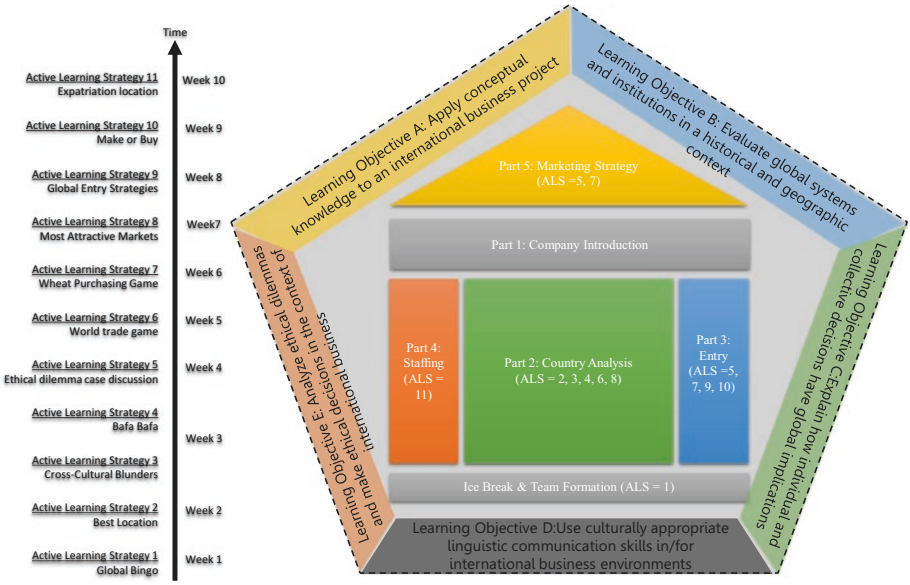

Fig. 7.1 Foreign market entry plan framework

The scaffolded interconnected ALS provide experimentation and feedback as a vehicle to help students successfully complete the final project and to demonstrate their achievement of the student learning objectives. The strategies provide the students opportunities for behavior changes and real-life application critical for Kolb's (1984) final stage of active experimentation.

Using the model in Fig. 7.1, the two ALS examples are the structural support of the country analysis portion of the foreign market entry plan. In the best location (Cavusgil et al., 2012), described in Exhibit 7.1, students learn the five aspects of the framework and tools to evaluate a country's macro environment. The Bafa Bafa (Intercultural Learning for Pupils & Teachers, 2018) activity places students in a situation to experience a different culture. Without understanding the value of the cultural environment, students would be missing a critical element of country analysis. IB is more than just business strategies; the people and the culture play important roles.

Description of the Final Project: Foreign Market Entry Plan

After working through the 11 ALS, receiving peer and instructor feedback, reflecting on the connection between the ALS and the requirements of the final project, it is time to put it all together as a final assessment of student

learning. The final project reflects students' semester-long learning effectiveness. It follows the metaphor of the completed house: lectures are the foundation, which are used to introduce theories and clarify terms with real-life business examples, and the ALS are the building blocks used to introduce analytical tools, online data bases, and provide students opportunities to build their foreign market entry plan. Specifically, 11 ALS will be introduced to students one by one throughout the semester (Appendix 1). These active learning strategies are the 11 building blocks connecting the different parts of the house. As the semester moves forward, students start assembling the final project piece by piece as they learn, practice, and receive feedback on each ALS. By the end of the semester, a draft foreign market entry plan will be completed.

Student groups prepare a report for a real company's (preferably a local company) overall entry strategy into a foreign market/country that they are interested in. The report includes a comprehensive analysis of the social, political, cultural, and economic environment of the selected country, the entry and organizational strategies the company should advance (including potential alliances with local firms, if applicable), and a discussion of the ethical, negotiation, leadership, and human resource management challenges associated with the recommendation. Specifically, the final project consists of completing five major parts and their respective tasks (Table 7.1).

Table 7.1 Foreign market entry plan—Parts and related tasks

Parts	Tasks
Company introduction	Provide a description of your company. Include: 1. A brief history of the company. 2. A brief review of the existing products/services. If the company offers many products, special attention should be devoted to only one product or product line that should be offered in the new market, including its comparison with competing products.
Country analysis	Explain the choice of the selected country that is critical to the economic success of the company in the new market. Include the following factors: 1. *Geography and demographics:* location, climate, size, age, and income distribution, education level, etc. 2. *Economic environment:* GDP levels, unemployment, infrastructure development, ease of doing business, etc. 3. *Political and legal environment:* political and legal systems, political risk, government policy toward trade and foreign direct investment, property rights and intellectual property right protection, corruption, political freedom, etc. 4. *Cultural environment:* cultural values, predominant religion(s), language(s), social class structure, customer preferences and tastes, other factors that may play a role in the design, packaging, and marketing of the product/service.

(*continued*)

Table 7.1 (continued)

Parts	Tasks
Entry strategy	Identify the optimal new market entry mode and provide a detailed explanation for the choice. 1. Specify what constitutes a viable entry mode (e.g., gives a balance of control and risk) 2. Generate a list of viable options (e.g., licensing, franchising, joint venture with a local company, and wholly owned subsidiary) 3. Consider pros and cons of each alternative in the case 4. Select the best choice and explain why
Staffing strategy	Explain how the company should staff operations in the new market. 1. Specify a viable staffing strategy (e.g., offers a balance of cost, risk, and personnel skill/performance) 2. Generate a list of viable options (e.g., use locals, expatriates, third-country nationals, or outsource product development/distribution/branding) 3. Consider pros and cons of each alternative 4. Select the best choice and explain why
Marketing strategy	Describe proposed product promotion strategy. 1. Explain what advertising channels would be most effective and why 2. Explain the exact steps needed to launch and run the advertising campaign (e.g., how an ad could be placed in the proposed newspaper, TV program, or social media site) 3. Conduct a cost analysis of the marketing strategy

Evaluation of Learning Effectiveness

Student learning effectiveness is evaluated based on the following factors: in-class group participation, written report, and oral presentation on the foreign market entry plan. The variety of assessment and feedback strategies enhances the effectiveness of learning and creates a more inclusive environment (Barkley & Major, 2018).

In-class participation is used to evaluate, and more importantly, to motivate students to do the exercises and learn how these exercises can help them build up to the final project step by step. Students do not need to hand in anything on the exercise day. However, they must do a short presentation to the rest of the class on the results of the exercise, where the instructor can offer feedback and point out clearly the linkage between the exercise and the final project. The in-class, verbal feedback given to a person or group is a time-saving strategy that effective teachers use that gives all students the opportunity to connect the comments to their own work (Lang, 2016). Clarity is one of the most impactful elements of an effective teacher (Hattie, 2015). Written, scaffolded directions, with the addition of verbal feedback, enhance clarity for students about the purpose and process for completing the final project. Verbal feedback also allows for dialogue with students about connections between the exercises and the final project.

The final project is evaluated based on a rubric (see Appendix 2) that is tied to the overall guidelines. Students receive both the guidelines and the rubric at the beginning of the semester, so they know the big goal of the course. Having the assignment prompt and the rubric or grading criteria available from the beginning enhances clarity for students and encourages personal reflection about how their weekly exercises are going to be the building blocks to the final project. Distributing the assignment prompt and the rubric at the beginning of the project is a best practice for enhancing learning and creating quality work (Suskie, 2018).

Evidence

Active learning can lead to higher motivation for future learning, more positive attitudes, greater learning comprehension, better knowledge retention, and superior problem-solving skills (Snyder, 2003). The evidence supports that the ALS in this course are beneficial for understanding and for application of the skills needed for success in IB.

Student Feedback

The ALS used in this course require students to work at a high level of thinking, problem solving, synthesis, and evaluation. When students work at the highest levels of Bloom's taxonomy (Anderson et al., 2001), there is more motivation, learning, and teamwork than when working at lower levels of thinking. Sometimes the higher learning can be overwhelming but based on course evaluations students identified two themes related to ALS and the final project.

Practical Application

Students identified that the ALS made the material clearer because they were using the knowledge and skills. For example, one student commented, *A lot of hands-on activities made topics a lot clearer*. Furthermore, with timely feedback in class and interactions after their presentation, students understood the connections of different parts in a foreign market entry plan, just as another student mentioned, *the group project was very helpful in linking all aspects of the course together, I liked how we applied what we learned on the semester project*. In addition, since the material was clearer, students could see application beyond the classroom. One student commented, *Enjoyed the various concepts that were applicable to all businesses. Almost all concepts will be used in the future*.

Student Engagement

Although one goal was practical application, the course did focus on student engagement with the material. Students in this course also identified that the learning was engaging and fun. The material was made more interesting and applicable because of the engagement. An example of this is the student who commented, *I liked doing the activities in class because it made it more interesting and fun*. Another stated, *The activities were useful and fun. The money exchange with body language (Bafa Bafa) was interesting*.

Challenges and Best Practices

Using a new teaching strategy for the first time can be exciting and challenging at the same time. Prep time, translation and language, and special attention to the variety of cultures represented in the classroom are all items to be considered. One of the biggest challenges using this teaching approach is time to prepare. Professors need to decide on their approach right away. Will all exercises need to be created from the professor's knowledge and experience or will activities be researched and edited to fit with the class parameters? This decision parallels one of the ALS used in the class—the "Make" versus "Buy" decision. One recommendation is to consider the amount of time available to prepare the exercises. Then, think about the professor's skills and experiences. Finally, consider the logistics of the class: class size, room configuration, number and length of class sessions, and level of students. It is recommended to have all the exercises and grading criteria completed ahead of time. Have colleagues, student assistants, or others complete the exercises to test for length and difficulty as well as connection to the final project. Perhaps a combination of making and buying is the best choice.

Making all the exercises would be ideal in the sense that all the exercises can perfectly fit in the time limits of the class. For example, for this course, there was difficulty in finding a satisfying exercise for the topic of International Human Resource Management. An expatriate survey conducted by HSBC was found which was very interesting and informative. Using this survey, a hypothetical situation where students are expected to take the manager role was created by the professor. Then, based on the HSBC dataset, the students conduct research and create a summary evaluating, comparing, and contrasting the possible issues expats may encounter. In addition, the students offer suggestions that a company can take to prevent issues from occurring in these markets.

While creating exercises can be very challenging and time consuming, fortunately, existing exercises from various sources (e.g., professors from other universities, companies, textbook, internet, FT.com) are available and closely related to some of the topics needed for an IB project. However, modifications are needed since they may not fit well into the final project for a class. For example, exercises like Bafa Bafa (Intercultural Learning for Pupils & Teachers, 2018) and International Trade Games (Sloman, 2002) were originally designed for a three-hour time frame. Editing the exercise to fit into a 75-minute class period that meets twice a week takes some creativity and time to decide what the most impactful part of the exercise will be for the students and what to omit.

Another challenge is translation and language. If the professor is a non-native English speaker, translating the exercises into the professor's first language and then back to the students' first language is a challenge. Finding exercises can lead to the need to de-code the educational jargon and IB phrases used in the exercises. The exercises may have to be re-written for students to understand at their educational level. Translating and editing is time consuming.

The professor must be aware of cultural differences in the businesses and areas of the world that are used in the project. Explaining why each group may have different requirements in their language and practices to help them understand why the same rules don't apply to all groups will be critical to student success. It is recommended to take some time to discuss the various cultures' practices and languages to increase student understanding prior to beginning the exercises. Another suggestion is to be aware of the many cultures represented in your classroom. Students' perceptions come from their experiences and backgrounds.

Transferability/Replication

Readers are encouraged to take this idea and use it in a variety of courses and with any level of learning. This chapter is one success story, with lessons learned. Any exercise can be edited to fit the discipline, students, location, class size, and project goals. The most important thing is to align your ALS with the objectives of the course and the final project. Then, offer feedback to presentation groups by asking questions and making connections to the objectives and the final project. Creating the connections for the students from the ALS to the final project is critical for the success of a scaffolded approach.

This example comes from a course taught at a regional, public, Liberal Arts University in the upper Midwest with a class size of 40, which fits nicely into

8 groups of 5 students each. This face-to-face class meets twice a week for 75 minutes each time with no teaching assistants. Before taking this class, students are expected to have basic knowledge of economics and finance. Although not a prerequisite, having international experiences would increase the speed at which the students would grasp concepts related to international experiences and understand cultural differences. This exact project could be used with graduate students by changing the learning goals to higher expectations or using parts of the experiences but incorporating reflection and expectations at a higher level.

Students in this class are expected to develop a foreign market entry plan for a local or national company, preferably a company they worked with before or they are very familiar with. Although students are taking a hypothetical role as a consulting team, they are working on real companies that transitions them from a student role to a contributor to a foreign market. All research exercises are based on real-world databases and companies which enhance the discussion and makes the student presentations much more real for the students. The knowledge and skills developed through this approach can be easily transferred to the workplace in domestic or international markets. The approach of using real databases from a wide variety of disciplines can be applied to any course to build a final project that reflects the learning objectives of the class.

This type of project could work for all levels, abilities, and class sizes. Exercises can be edited to fit any level or ability and class size. If the class size increases, one of the biggest challenges will be finding the best way to offer verbal feedback to the groups after they present their findings to the class. Accountability for the group work and offering meaningful feedback for groups to understand and use going forward are two critical components of this project.

Variations of the model could include a co-instructor or a teaching assistant to split the class up for reporting out and feedback. Another option is to rotate the groups that report out to allow for complete feedback and connections to the final project. A third approach is to have the professor, with or without a teaching assistant, rotate to each group and listen to the results of the exercise, give feedback to the group, and then address the whole class with connections to the final project.

Based on number of class meetings, number of days a class meets, and addition of more objectives or content, a professor could use fewer ALS per part. For example, instead of using five ALS to learn about Part 2: Country Analysis, a professor could limit the ALS used to two or three, as time allows. It is recommended to consider the depth of student understanding expected and edit accordingly.

The idea of using a visual metaphor as a framework for a course can be used for any project-based course. Breaking up the project into chunks or parts,

labeling the parts, and finding or creating exercises for students to practice the skills needed to be successful creating the final project is the focus of this chapter. Adding in time for students to present their findings, receive feedback, and reflect on lessons learned after each exercise, and building in plenty of time for instructor verbal feedback are the critical components of this project. It is recommended that professors begin with a project idea, chunk the parts, decide on a visual metaphor that works for the project, and then create the exercises.

Contributions/Implications

This project has several pedagogical contributions to the study of IB:

Meaningful Learning

All learning occurs through reflection. Experiences students have offer the opportunity to think about and reflect on the experiences. Through reflection, students make connections between past knowledge and the experience they just had. Deep, meaningful learning happens when students talk about the connections they make, evaluate what happened and why, and use the new information in a different way than they have in the past.

Competency Development

In addition to increased knowledge and understanding, these exercises require students to apply each skill needed for the final project at least one time in a low-stakes, practice situation in which ample feedback is given from both the professor and peers. The reflection process after the exercise and the verbal report is where the students transfer the skills practiced into a new project without help from their peers. Knowledge transfer is a difficult skill but is a skill that reinforces learning for long-term application (Lang, 2016).

Clarity and Connections

Clarity is one of the most impactful skills a professor can improve to affect student learning. This application-based project has demonstrated that with practice and feedback from the professor during class, clarity improves, students have fewer questions and less confusion, and student confidence in completing the project by themselves increases (Hattie, 2015).

Conclusion

Designing an international business class is a multidisciplinary task (Aggarwal & Zhan, 2018). Thus, multiple pedagogical approaches have been discussed and researched by scholars. In addition to the traditional lecture approach, commonly discussed pedagogies for an international business class include a variety of actively learning strategies (Taras & Gonzalez-Perez, 2015; Wolf & Wright, 2014). For example, case study (Finney & Pyke, 2008), simulations (Xu & Yang, 2010), real-life business projects (Danford, 2006), and experiences in foreign countries (Wu & Martin, 2018) have been found to be very effective in enhancing students' learning and their critical-thinking and problem-solving skills (Peach, Mukherjee, & Hornyak, 2007).

In order to maximize students' learning outcomes, instead of using only one or two of the ALS mentioned above, we introduced an innovative teaching approach by designing a semester-long project that aligns with course learning outcomes and incorporates 11 sequential and interlinked ALS designated to help students understand and complete different parts of the project. These ALS are like building blocks, as the students go through and receive feedback on these ALS one by one, they are building the final project piece by piece.

This experiential teaching approach was also designed based on solid pedagogical theories such as Kolb's (1984) experiential learning cycle and guided by Briggs's principles on course design. After a few years' application, feedback from students has been mostly positive in enhancing learning effectiveness. However, this approach also comes with some limitations. It was originally designed for an undergraduate international business course with a class size around 35 students and a 75-minute time limitation. However, it should be easily modified to fit other student levels (i.e., graduate students) with various class sizes and duration by extending/reducing the semester-long project and adding/removing some of the active learning strategies. For some of the ALSs (e.g., Bafa Bafa), there are also multiple versions available which can be tailored for classes of various sizes and duration.

Appendix 1: List of Active Learning Strategies

There are five main parts that will be evaluated in this final project: (1) Company Introduction; (2) Country Analysis; (3) Entry Strategy; (4) Staffing Strategy; (5) Marketing Strategy. The table below shows what exercises are used in the class and how the exercises are connected to the final project.

1. Active learning strategies	Sources	Brief introduction	Connection to the final project	Learning goals
2. Global Bingo	Dong, L.	Ice-breaker exercise used to determine group order. It is not related to the final project	No	No
3. Best location	Cavusgil et al. (2012)	Based on eight online databases (e.g., World Bank). Students will learn to evaluate five foreign markets (including their team country) in five aspects such as geography, demographics, economic environment, political environment, and legal environment	Country Analysis	B
4. Cross-cultural blunders	Dong, L.	Based on their own international experiences and research, students are expected to identify as many cross-cultural blunders as they can and make suggestions on how managers can avoid them	Country Analysis Staffing Strategy Marketing Strategy	A, D
5. Bafa Bafa	Intercultural Learning for Pupils and Teachers (2018)	The class is divided into two groups, and each group is given a unique culture and trading language. The task for the two groups is to trade paper clips with each other and collect as many clips as possible in 40 min	Country Analysis Staffing Strategy Marketing Strategy	A, D
6. Ethical dilemma case discussion	Adler (2008)	Three ethical dilemma situations are given to students. They are expected to discuss in teams and present to the class what alternatives they would consider, what criteria they use to make the decision, and their implementation plan	Entry Strategy Marketing Strategy	A, E
7. International trade game	Sloman (2002)	Students are divided into teams, each of which acts as a separate country. Countries compete against each other to manufacture paper shapes (e.g., circles, triangles) and sell them to an international commodity market trader at posted prices, which vary with supply and demand. The goal for each country is to make as much money as possible	Country Analysis and foundation for the entire project	B, C
8. Wheat purchasing game	Mitchell, Rebelein, Schneider, Simpson, and Fisher (2009)	Students represent citizens from different countries and need to obtain currency to purchase goods. By participating in an auction to buy currency, students gain a better understanding of currency markets and exchange rates	Entry Strategy Marketing Strategy	B, C

9. Most attractive markets	Hill & Hult, 2017	Focusing on a comparison of two countries of their choice, students will prepare an executive summary that features aspects of the product where stabilization will simply not be possible and adaptation to local conditions will be essential	Country Analysis	A, C
10. Global entry strategies	Dong, L.	Students research the pros and cons of each entry strategy and find real-life business examples for each strategy	Entry Strategy	B, C
11. Make or buy	Symbiosis Centre for Distance Learning (n.d.)	Students will make make-or-buy decisions based on cost analysis	Entry Strategy	B, C
12. Expatriation location	Dong, L.	Students' task is to conduct research and create a summary evaluating, comparing, and contrasting the possible issues expats may encounter in their team country	Staffing Strategy.	A, C, D

Appendix 2: Final Project Rubrics

	Zero 0 pt	Poor 1 pt	Fair 2 pts	Good 3 pts	Excellent 4 pts
Presentation 10%	Zero Did not present	Poor Very little preparation; Does not seem to understand the topic or the business very well; no visual aids or engagement	Fair Satisfactory presentation; good eye contact; use of visual aids minimally effective; some student engagement; several errors on visual aids; only adequate transition among speakers	Good Student presents information in logical sequence which audience can follow; demonstrates knowledge of subject; engaging and good eye contact; good visual aids, PowerPoints to reinforce material with 1–2 errors; Good transition between speakers	Excellent Student presents information in logical, interesting sequence which audience can follow; demonstrates full knowledge of subject; engaging and great eye contact; good visual aids, PowerPoints to reinforce material with no errors; Good transition between speakers
Written Report *20%*					
Company introduction 4%	Zero Student made no attempt, did not present, or was not present during all of the presentations	Poor History of the company or existing products/services was mentioned in bullet points	Fair History and products/services were described in an organized way but lack focus or analysis on competing products	Good History and products/services were described in an organized way; one specific product (line) or service was chosen as focus, and competitors in the foreign market were listed	Excellent History and products/services were described in an organized way; students clearly laid out the reasoning why one specific product (line) or service was chosen (i.e., competitive advantage) as focus based on analysis on the competing products
Country analysis 10%	Zero Student made no attempt to analyze country factors	Poor Student did minimal country analysis and included only 2–3 variables under each analyzing factor listed in the guideline	Fair Student did an adequate country analysis, using 5 or more variables, but did not elaborate on how these variables affected decisions on entry strategy, staffing strategy, or market strategy.	Good Student performed a solid country analysis and tied some variables directly to entry strategy, staffing strategy, and market strategy.	Excellent Student performed exemplary country analysis and tied all variables in the analysis directly to entry strategy, staffing strategy, and market strategy.

Entry strategy 2%	Zero Student did not make a decision	Poor No decision or viable entry mode specified; no justification offered	Fair Student specified a viable entry mode and used at least 1–2 elements of country analysis (i.e., Geography/demographics, economic environment, political/legal environment, and cultural environment) to back decision	Good Student specified a viable entry mode, and used at least 3–4 elements of country analysis (i.e., Geography/demographics, economic environment, political/legal environment, and cultural environment) to back decision	Excellent Student specified a viable entry mode and used each element of country analysis (i.e., Geography/demographics, economic environment, political/legal environment, and cultural environment) to back decision
Staffing strategy 2%	Zero Student did not make a decision	Poor No decision or viable staffing strategy specified; no justification offered	Fair Student specified a viable staffing strategy, and used at least 1–2 elements of country analysis (i.e., Geography/demographics, economic environment, political/legal environment, and cultural environment) to back decision	Good Student specified a viable staffing strategy, and used at least 3–4 elements of country analysis (i.e., Geography/demographics, economic environment, political/legal environment, and cultural environment) to back decision	Excellent Student specified a viable staffing strategy and used each element of country analysis (i.e., Geography/demographics, economic environment, political/legal environment, and cultural environment) to back decision
Marketing strategy 2%	Zero Student did not make a decision	Poor No decision or viable marketing strategy specified; no justification offered	Fair Student specified a viable marketing strategy and used at least 1–2 elements of country analysis (i.e., Geography/demographics, economic environment, political/legal environment, and cultural environment) to back decision	Good Student specified a viable marketing strategy and used at least 3–4 elements of country analysis (i.e., Geography/demographics, economic environment, political/legal environment, and cultural environment) to back decision	Excellent Student specified a viable marketing strategy and used each element of country analysis (i.e., Geography/demographics, economic environment, political/legal environment, and cultural environment) to back decision

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8

Out of the Classroom and into the Deep End: Real World Learning at ICCM

Katherine Rau, Richard L. Griffith, and Tessly A. Dieguez

Introduction

The arena of international business is incredibly complex, and on any given day, global business professionals can be bombarded with ambiguous and rapidly changing situations that demand decisive action. However, the international business training students receive often lacks this real-world complexity. Most students engage in traditional classroom learning, and at best, are presented with case studies that give them experience managing "paper people." These curricula are akin to training for an Olympic swimming event in a wading pool. Few students ever venture into the deep end of the pool prior to the starting gun of the most challenging event of their lives—an international business career. Our goal in founding, designing, managing, and driving the future of the Institute for Cross Cultural Management (ICCM) at Florida Tech was to enhance the experiential learning of students to mentor graduates who have the potential to be medal winners in their respective events.

Simply put, there is no better way to acquire complex professional skills than learning-by-doing. Experiential learners benefit from engaging in multiple ambiguous experiences that can be emotionally charged and full of novel information. During optimal experiential learning, individuals reflect

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M. A. Gonzalez-Perez et al. (eds.), *The Palgrave Handbook of Learning and Teaching International Business and Management*, https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-030-20415-0_8

upon their experience(s), including internal states and social responses to their actions. This reflection allows learners to develop abstract conceptualizations that provide alternative future behavioral options, which then prompts experimentation (Kolb, 1984). Thus, challenging learning experiences serve as a platform for the learner to reframe old ways of thinking and acting. As learners accumulate insights from their experiences, the process of experiential learning becomes easier because learners become better at distinguishing critical information in the present moment and comparing it to their existing knowledge base (Ng, Van Dyne, & Ang, 2009). Learning complex skills through experience (rather than in a classroom) has several distinct advantages. First, experiential learning is inherently more relevant and thus more motivating (Raelin, 2000). Second, learning on-the-job ensures a one-to-one correspondence between newly acquired skills and real-world challenges, essentially eliminating the transfer of training problem (Kolb, 1984). Third, learners have the opportunity to seek and receive real-time feedback that can enable timely reflection and knowledge integration (DeRue & Ashford, 2010). Finally, experiential learning is more variable than two-dimensional training materials, which results in more integrated, generalizable, and permanent skill acquisition (Gupta & Govindarajan, 2002).

Graduate students who work and conduct research at ICCM are quite familiar with the benefits—and challenges—of experiential learning because they live it every day. ICCM is almost entirely operated by master's-level professionals who are enrolled in a master's or PhD program in Industrial Organizational (I/O) Psychology at the university. The institute conducts funded research and also operates as a full-service consulting firm with an annual revenue of more than 2 million dollars. Students are responsible for the design, development, and implementation of all deliverables and frequently find themselves in client-facing roles with executive teams. These students are the driving force behind innovative contracts, such as designing international airports, training the US Army Special Forces, and developing technology solutions for Fortune 100 corporations. Beyond the tremendous skill practice this approach affords students, experiential learning allows for the expansion of tacit knowledge in students, which they are often not afforded in the classroom. ICCM's approach to experiential learning also ensures the acquisition of competencies necessary for success in students' future careers following the completion of their degree.

In this chapter, we will briefly describe the history and context of ICCM and our thought process behind the design and operations of the organization. Next, we will discuss the learning objectives associated with student training and the factors that have shaped our decision-making process. We will then

provide an overview of the experiential learning cycle elements that are relevant to the student experience at ICCM and then discuss how those experiences shape the skill acquisition of the students who work and conduct research at the institute. The success metrics and feedback mechanisms for students will then be reviewed. Finally, we will present our thoughts on how other universities may leverage our learning to start similar experiential learning centers, relay critical challenges we continually face and how to mitigate them, and discuss the implications for students and for international business as a whole.

ICCM History and Context

ICCM is affiliated with the graduate Industrial Organizational (I/O) Psychology program at Florida Tech, which is ranked third in the United States (Vodanovich, Morganson, & Kass, 2018). The I/O PhD program was founded in 1998, and immediately started on the path to become the first program with an international concentration in I/O Psychology. During this time, the speed of international business began to accelerate at unprecedented rates. Even in the dial-up modem era of that time, international business was only a web browser away. It became clear to the I/O program administrators that an international focus was no longer a nice-to-have, it was an emerging must-have if the discipline was to be relevant in the twenty-first century. Therefore, the program began its journey with incremental efforts to integrate international concepts and activities into curricular and co-curricular design.

The culmination of these efforts came in 2009 when the university approved an academic PhD concentration in International I/O Psychology and the formation of an official research center at the university called the Institute for Cross Cultural Management. ICCM was designed to complement the traditional classroom learning and research activities of the international concentration by providing students real-world experience developing talent management solutions for global customers. As an applied research institute, ICCM has three major lines of effort. First, we conduct basic research to examine issues such as cross-cultural competence, global leadership, expatriation and repatriation, and trust formation in global virtual teams. The second line of effort revolves around large-scale funded research, primarily conducted with government and military stakeholders. The third line of effort consists of consulting projects for global organizations seeking to improve their overall organizational effectiveness.

Students learn in the classroom by morning, but the afternoons are filled with opportunities to apply their new knowledge and learn from more experienced peers. Once students express interest in ICCM, they are invited to the onboarding process where they are familiarized with ICCM history, philosophy, management practices, ethics, and the new or ongoing projects that have openings for new team members. Following onboarding, students then have the opportunity to express interest in projects and complete a talent assessment where they document their experience and skills (e.g., 2 years of experience in R statistical analysis). Students are then paired with projects and asked to read and indicate their understanding of the basic expectations of ICCM involvement. At that point, students become formal members of ICCM and are slotted into roles (e.g., analyst, product development specialist) supporting specific projects, where they receive further project-specific onboarding and training. For example, students who are hired to provide training to clients undergo a "Train the Trainer" instructional course where practical training principles (e.g., delivery techniques, how to provide feedback) and other professional development knowledge (e.g., communication with stakeholders, preparation techniques) are taught. Where applicable, students may be asked to sign privacy agreements (e.g., military consulting projects that require specialized clearance, projects where intellectual property is of concern). The various roles ICCM professionals may fill are detailed below.

ICCM Professionals

I/O faculty members (i.e., the executive director, research director, and research scientist) supervise ICCM, but the operations are conducted entirely by master's and PhD students at the university. Students can take on a variety of roles in ICCM, and selection, compensation, and time commitment vary by role. Broadly, the types of student roles in ICCM can be categorized as graduate student assistants (GSAs), hourly consultants, and volunteers. As members gain experience through stretch assignments, they are able to take on projects with more levels of both authority and responsibility.

Graduate student assistant (GSA) roles in ICCM include leadership team members, paid project leads, and team members. The ICCM leadership team consists of students who are responsible for ICCM operations, business, product development, logistics, and research efforts. These are often the most experienced students who wish to sharpen their leadership skills. These roles allow members to have tremendous influence on the strategic direction and operations of the full institute. Other GSA roles include students leading or

supporting grant-funded projects by organizations, such as the Army Research Institute (ARI) or the US Navy, and students working on university or department-wide initiatives. For example, a select group of ICCM GSAs work to design and deliver cross-cultural competence training for Florida Tech students. Most ICCM GSA roles have formal job descriptions that are posted when a position opens.

Compensation for GSAs in ICCM varies, but broadly includes both a stipend and some level of tuition remission. Of the different ICCM roles (i.e., GSAs, hourly consultants, and volunteers), GSAs require the greatest time commitment, ranging from 5 to 15 hours per week. Stable GSA positions (i.e., those that are designed to meet organizational needs and are not project-dependent), such as the leadership team, are selected through a formal yearly process by the executive director, research director, and current leadership team. Students in these positions typically remain in their positions for a minimum of 2 years. Selection for project-dependent GSA positions (i.e., team leads and supporting team members) mimics the process for stable GSA positions but occurs as client opportunities arise.

ICCM hourly consultants are students who are paid by the hour to work on specific ICCM initiatives. For example, students working on a cross-cultural consulting project for the Greater Orlando Aviation Authority are paid approximately 25 dollars per hour of work. The time commitment for hourly consultant roles varies by project demands. For example, some weeks may require 20 hours of work, while others may only require 5 hours. Most ICCM hourly consultants remain in their positions for a minimum of 2 years. ICCM hourly consultants submit an application to project leads based on a provided job description and are selected by the project lead and executive director.

ICCM volunteer roles vary widely. ICCM volunteers can gain experience with applied research, logistics and administration, statistical analyses, operations, training, marketing, and project management. Most of the GSA roles mentioned above manage a team of volunteers that assist with their duties. As the name suggests, volunteers are not compensated financially or selected for their positions. However, students' prior work in ICCM volunteer roles is taken into consideration when selecting GSAs and hourly consultants. The time commitment for volunteer roles also varies by project demands. Most ICCM volunteer roles do not have formal job descriptions. Instead, students are broadly explained what their responsibilities are, and there is some flexibility in how those responsibilities are carried out. The length of commitment to volunteer roles varies by specific role. Figure 8.1 presents a simplified organizational chart.

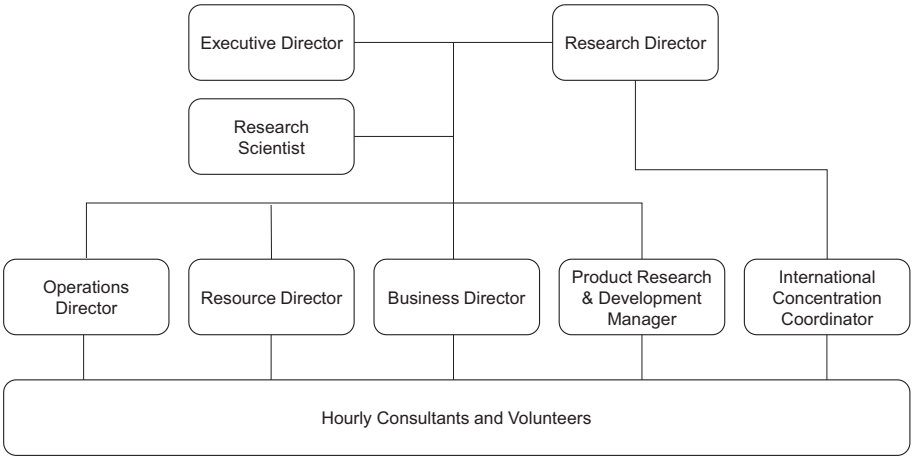

Fig. 8.1 Organizational chart of ICCM. Executive director, research director, and research scientist are faculty/staff roles, while all other positions are held by student members

ICCM Design Rationale

At first glance, it is apparent that the experiences afforded in ICCM provide new members the opportunity to develop and sharpen the technical skills they have learned in the classroom. The vast majority of projects involve a talent management component, and talent management practices serve as the backbone of the curriculum in the student's graduate program. However, the bulk of the learning in ICCM may fall into the broad category of professional competencies. Students learn skills such as project management, presentation skills, marketing, and client relations. A list of examples of technical and professional competency learning objectives might include the following:

- Summarize and apply research findings to address international business problems
- Recommend courses of action and associated metrics to clients
- Analyze and interpret relevant data
- Professionally communicate and thoroughly explain processes and recommendations to diverse stakeholders
- Compile reports that outline project progress
- Translate academic literature and theory into digestible language for stakeholders and general public
- Design and deliver training workshops related to cross-cultural issues
- Manage time and other resources effectively to complete projects

- Understand and navigate contractual language including federal funding opportunities
- Present proposals and status reports to senior executives to gain organizational support

These skills are often the kick starters to fast track careers and separate the "green" employee from a more seasoned professional. Our goal in designing ICCM was to ensure the demands of the organization *exceeded* the demands that a first-year professional might face in their new jobs. Thus, ICCM serves as an initial experience in professional life that matches the complexity, operational tempo, and customer focus of a large applied research or consulting firm.

A second design element of ICCM is the safe psychological environment that underlies the high-performance culture of the organization. A psychologically safe climate promotes risk-taking and being oneself by reducing threats and fear of negative consequences, such as retaliation, guilt, or impaired self-image (Fainshmidt, Klinger, Pezeshkan, Vracheva, & Frazier, 2017). Broad antecedents to psychological safety include interpersonal relationships, group dynamics, leadership, and organizational norms (Kahn, 1990). Psychological safety is positively related to work engagement, task performance, commitment, and satisfaction (Fainshmidt et al., 2017). Psychological safety is largely fostered by ICCM's focus on mentoring. Formal members of ICCM are mentored most prominently by the executive director and research director, as well as other Florida Tech I/O faculty members who serve ICCM in various capacities. These mentors may aid in the transition into working on new projects or taking on new roles, both internal and external to ICCM. Furthermore, members often find themselves informally mentored by other, more senior staff members, which forges friendships that contribute to the amiable, upbeat culture of the institute. The psychologically safe culture of ICCM encourages risk-taking without fear of retaliation. Failures are reframed as opportunities that may advance the goals of the organization in the next effort. While extremely important to learning, a psychologically safe environment is only one of many elements necessary for a successful learning environment. Additional recommendations from the literature and ICCM's attempt at incorporating each of them into the organization are discussed in the next section.

ICCM and the Experiential Learning Environment

On the surface, the main focus of ICCM is to serve the customers of the organization by providing quality, tailored, innovative solutions that solve their problems in a seamless fashion, ultimately providing value to the customer.

However, the real product of ICCM is learning. Experiential learning, especially ICCM's brand of it, may not be the ideal fit for every organization or academic group. Truthfully, the same could be said for all learning styles, yet there are features of experiential learning that are particularly challenging for students, including the level of ambiguity and the reliance on self-direction. To this end, we recommend creating and fostering an environment that best suits experiential approaches to ensure effective learning.

Bransford, Brown, and Cocking (2000) asserted that a learning environment must be learner-centered, knowledge-centered, assessment-centered, and community-centered in order to facilitate learning. We believe these aspects are particularly relevant to the experiential learning environment at ICCM. An environment is learner-centered when the facilitators and fellow learners appreciate the knowledge, skills, attitudes, and beliefs learners bring to the table (Bransford et al., 2000). For ICCM, specifically, our learners primarily consist of master's- and doctoral-level students of all ages who have a colorful array of educational and occupational backgrounds. It is not enough, however, to only gather those with diverse experiences into one room; the culture of the organization has to be one that truly believes in the value each person can bring to the educational setting. Respecting and understanding the perspectives of others has been supported in the literature as a foundation by which facilitators can validate learners (Duckworth, 1987). We have found that by drawing on the strengths and experiences of our members, we can capitalize on divergent thinking, ultimately lending to innovation and a healthy reframing of our perceptions. To most effectively capitalize on the uniqueness of your organization's individual members, we recommend strategically pairing those with different skill sets or varying levels of education or experience when forming new teams or assigning new project leads.

Bruner (1981) characterized knowledge-centered learning environments as those that prioritize the development of sound knowledge structures, knowing that such structures are essential in planning and strategic thinking. These environments celebrate being knowledgeable and emphasize sensemaking. This focus is extremely relevant for learning environments that require thorough mental models in order to understand the bigger picture. ICCM utilizes an internally developed process model to ensure projects are completed in accordance with our philosophy (i.e., integrating both science and practice), reinforcing the knowledge structures of the I/O science and practical considerations needed across various projects. The process model is flexible enough, however, to still encourage new approaches, critically analyze past approaches, and generate new research questions, all of which reinforce well-organized mental models. Additionally, ICCM enhances its member's metacognition, or the awareness and understanding of one's own thought processes, by expect-

ing new information to make sense but allowing for questions if and when it does not. These points of clarification may occur in more formal settings, such as dedicating a block of time during a meeting to answering questions or informally as projects are underway. By providing further clarification only when questions are asked, our facilitators avoid placing restrictions on how others may frame the project and reinforce the ambiguity of the "real world."

Assessment-centered learning environments involve opportunities for learners to continuously receive feedback consistent with learning goals and subsequently revise their work following the receipt of feedback (Bransford et al., 2000). The specifics of ICCM's assessment systems are discussed in depth in the learning effectiveness section of this chapter.

Most important to ICCM, and likely to other experiential learning programs as well, is the emphasis on a community-centered environment. Bransford et al. (2000) explained that in community-centered environments, "learning is enhanced by social norms that value the search for understanding that allow students to make mistakes in order to learn" (p. 145). By consistently trying new approaches, perspectives, and techniques, our members learn from the failure more than they would if the project had been executed seamlessly the first time. Taking a variety of approaches allows students to learn from and adjust processes that do not go as smoothly and ultimately standardize the processes that *do* work. At ICCM, we believe and encourage error in the pursuit of success. Not only is this message verbally communicated by leadership, but it can be evidenced in how freely students voice their opinions or ideas without fear of judgment and how willing students are to work on a project with which they have no prior experience. In an engagement survey administered to ICCM staff in April 2018, 94% of respondents felt comfortable voicing their opinions within the organization. We believe we inhabit a growth mindset, defined by Heslin and Keating (2017), as the belief that individual characteristics are malleable as opposed to stable. Ultimately, Heslin and Keating (2017) suggested that approaching experiential learning with such a mindset leads to the most effective learning outcomes, and such a mindset is fostered through promoting a growth mindset culture. At ICCM, we develop our growth mindset culture by dedicating resources (e.g., time, money, space) to ensure student development, which communicates to our members that the utmost goal of ICCM is to teach and prepare our students. We frame tasks as an opportunity to further develop one's skills and hold the belief that skills are trainable and knowledge is learnable. As mentioned, failure is viewed as an opportunity to learn and, sometimes, as a new opportunity to chase a new project or develop a new method. Lastly, we attribute the success of our members and our organization as a whole to hard work, rather than to fixed intelligence, as evidenced by our Executive Director's signature line, "work hard, be cool."

A second pivotal element to community-centered environments is a connection to the broader community, which stresses the importance of connecting learning with outside activities (Bransford et al., 2000). ICCM, and field experiential learning in general, is entirely applicable to "real-world" activities. Rather than reciting a textbook or relying on fictional activities to teach our students, our organization works with real clients facing real issues. In addition, we make it a point to understand how various organizational problems may be interrelated and the disastrous outcomes such problems may result in. As such, ICCM prepares our members for their future careers by introducing them to the environments in which they will work in the future, developing the relevant skills necessary to make a valuable contribution, and providing a deeper understanding of why this work matters.

The Experiential Learning Cycle at ICCM

Kolb (1984) defined learning as "the process whereby knowledge is created through the transformation of experience," (p. 41). Kolb (1984) conceptualized experiential learning as a continuous, dynamic, and holistic process that involves feeling, reflection, thinking, and action and results in turning experiences into learning (Kolb & Kolb, 2005; Ng et al., 2009; Passarelli & Kolb, 2012). The experiential learning cycle consists of four stages or bases: concrete experience, reflective observation, abstract conceptualization, and active experimentation (Kolb & Kolb, 2005). Ideally, learners go through all four stages of the cycle (Zhang, Zhou, & Stodolska, 2018); specifically, concrete experiences serve as a foundation for reflective observation. Reflective observation is crystallized into abstract concepts, and these abstract concepts serve as a foundation for implications for action (Kolb & Kolb, 2005).

Involvement in ICCM provides students with a wide variety of opportunities for participation in the experiential learning cycle. Since ICCM consists of multiple co-occurring projects and members are involved in a variety of projects, students often engage in different parts of the experiential learning cycle at the same time. For example, a student may be in the concrete experience stage through their involvement with one ICCM project, while simultaneously engaging in the abstract conceptualization stage through their involvement in another project. This reflects the complexity of the business environment in which individuals have to juggle multiple projects and responsibilities at the same time.

The following section will describe how the experiential learning cycle takes place at ICCM both broadly and through using three specific and independent ICCM projects as examples: the Cross Cultural Competence Assessment

System (3CAS) validation project, the Greater Orlando Aviation Authority (GOAA) Project, and the Cross Cultural Management Summit. All three of these initiatives have student staff who serve in different roles.

Cross Cultural Competence Assessment System (3CAS) Validation Project

The 3CAS validation project is an applied research project in which ICCM, along with Educational Testing Service (ETS), has been contracted by the Army Research Institute (ARI) to validate a measure of cross-cultural competence for the US Army. In order to determine if the 3CAS can predict a Soldier's cross-cultural performance, a significant statistical relationship between the 3CAS and cross-cultural performance needs to be demonstrated. In order to test this, cross-cultural performance needs to be operationalized and measured. High-fidelity Soldier training simulations provide the opportunity to collect this data in an environment that mimics what Soldiers face in the field.

The ICCM 3CAS team consists of three GSAs who are responsible for leading this validation effort. The 3CAS GSAs have developed measures of cross-cultural performance informed by best practices, developed training programs for raters using the cross-cultural performance measures, observed Army training simulations, and synthesized knowledge in literature reviews and stakeholder reports. The ultimate goal of the project is to collect validation data during Soldier training exercises using the cross-cultural performance measures developed by ICCM. Through involvement in the 3CAS project, ICCM GSAs learn about stakeholder management, working with government entities, and applying research to practice.

Greater Orlando Aviation Authority (GOAA) Project

The Greater Orlando Aviation Authority (GOAA) project is a consulting project in which ICCM, in partnership with another consulting firm, has been contracted to assist with making the Orlando Airport the first cross-culturally competent airport in the world. ICCM provides cultural advice and services related to the design, planning, development, and operations of the Orlando International Airport. The ICCM GOAA team consists of a full-time research scientist and approximately six paid student consultants. The team has conducted surveys and focus groups of airport passengers, conducted research and literature reviews on airport design, and developed and executed

cross-cultural competence and customer experience training for airport executives and staff. Through involvement with the GOAA project, ICCM students develop training development and facilitation skills, learn the logistics of a large-scale consulting project, and gain the opportunity to translate research into language and activities employees can easily understand.

Cross Cultural Management Summit

The Cross Cultural Management Summit is a conference hosted by ICCM that brings together thought leaders, researchers, and practitioners in cross cultural management. The Summit consists of keynote speakers, group discussions, and interactive activities related to culture and management. ICCM has hosted the Summit three times: in 2014, 2016, and 2018. For each Summit, the planning committee consisted of ICCM student volunteers led by a faculty chair. ICCM student volunteers were responsible for developing the Summit program and agenda, managing attendee registration information, coordinating event space logistics and meals, hosting keynote speakers, and marketing. Through involvement with the Summit, ICCM students developed the skills to plan and execute a large-scale event.

Concrete Experience

The concrete experience stage of the experience learning cycle involves tangible and immediate exposure to a situation or experience (Ng et al., 2009). In ICCM, the concrete experience stage generally involves being given instructions for a task, such as conducting a literature review, building a training, analyzing data, constructing a project plan, or planning an event. Specifically, for the 3CAS or GOAA projects, the concrete experience can be conceptualized as being given an overview of the overall project by reading the original project proposal and being assigned to a specific role on the project team. For the Cross Cultural Management Summit, the concrete experience can be conceptualized as experiencing a prior Summit as a participant, reading about a prior Summit, and being assigned a leadership role, such as program committee chair. Within these projects, specific concrete experiences might be asked to create a scale for measuring cross-cultural performance of Soldiers in a training exercise, being asked to create a training module on understanding your own culture for GOAA employees, or being asked to keep track of Summit registrant contact and payment information.

Reflective Observation

The concrete experience stage provides a foundation for the second stage of the experiential learning cycle—reflective observation (Sato & Laughlin, 2018). In the reflective observation stage, individuals start to understand why things happen and what they mean (Zhang et al., 2018). It involves internal processing and helps people examine different views of situations. In ICCM, generally, reflective observation takes place through regular all-staff meetings, specific project meetings, discussions with project leads and faculty, and debriefings. These discussions facilitate in-depth learning, clarify areas of confusion, encourage peer learning, and help close the gap between experience and understanding. Specifically, the 3CAS and GOAA project teams meet once a week to check in and discuss tasks and assignments. Additionally, after members of the 3CAS team travel to Fort Bragg or members of the GOAA team have piloted training sessions with airport employees, team members meet to debrief those specific experiences. For the Cross Cultural Management Summit, reflective observation took place through weekly all-staff meetings and specific sub-team meetings. After the 2018 Summit took place, an all-staff meeting was held specifically to debrief Summit staff and attendee feedback. These debriefs inform the learning that takes place in abstract conceptualization, the next stage of the experiential learning cycle. For example, after piloting a 3CAS data collection form at Fort Bragg, the team discussed Soldiers' reactions to and opinions on the form based on the context in which they operate. Specifically, the 3CAS team discussed the time and environmental constraints Soldiers face in their context, which informed edits to the data collection form.

Abstract Conceptualization

In the abstract conceptualization stage, reflections are assimilated into knowledge and concepts that can guide future thinking and new ideas (Ng et al., 2009; Sato & Laughlin, 2018; Zhang et al., 2018). In ICCM, generally, abstract conceptualization takes place through independent student research projects, writing book chapters, writing white papers or refereed publications, writing grant proposals, and putting together presentations and materials for stakeholders. Specifically, in 2018, for the 3CAS and GOAA projects, ICCM students were tasked with putting together a brief overview of each project, its tasks, and value and presenting it to the president of the university. For the 3CAS project, the team was tasked with putting together an interim report

for stakeholders outlining tasks that had been completed and the processes the team engaged in to arrive at the deliverable. For the Cross Cultural Management Summit, a team was created specifically to create recommendations for future Summits based on attendee and staff feedback on the 2018 Summit. Through creating these materials, ICCM students crystallized their reflections from the reflective observation stage into concrete knowledge that can be used for future tasks and projects.

Active Experimentation

In the active experimentation stage, the knowledge gained from the abstract conceptualization stage is tested in and applied to new environments (Ng et al., 2009; Zhang et al., 2018). Generally, ICCM encourages the development of new approaches based on prior experience. For example, a first-year ICCM student might be involved in an ICCM project as a team member, and later in their tenure, get further involved as a team lead. That student can use the knowledge gained from their prior experience as a team member to make suggestions as team lead that could improve the overall success of the project. In the GOAA project, team members might use their experience creating a training module for a certain group of GOAA employees to inform how to create another training for a different group of employees or create a training on another ICCM project. For the Cross Cultural Management Summit, recommendations from the post-Summit feedback team will be specifically applied to future Summits. In sum, ICCM provides opportunities for student to participate in the experiential learning cycle through a rich variety of experiences.

Evaluation of Learning Effectiveness

The purpose of assessing member learning is twofold; it is evaluated at several levels of analysis that roughly correspond to Kirkpatrick's evaluation model (Kirkpatrick, 1976). First, reactions to the learning experiences at ICCM are assessed at two stages: onboarding and the annual employee engagement survey. Members are surveyed using Qualtrics to understand skill gaps that are in place when the student joins ICCM, their overall impression of the onboarding process, and their self-assessed learning regarding ICCM values and processes. In addition, ICCM conducts an annual engagement survey which measures employment attitudes (and the drivers of those attitudes) and evalu-

ation of the experience the member has had during the previous year. The engagement survey is not only an indicator of learner reactions, it has also been instrumental in organizational learning and a key tool in the continuous improvement efforts of the organization.

In terms of Kirkpatrick's second level of analysis, mastery of knowledge is measured in two ways. First, many of the activities in ICCM are used as projects for classes in the graduate I/O program. For instance, students developed a standard operating procedure (SOP) for a 3C training workshop as part of the requirements for a project in a master's-level training and development course. In these cases, students receive a formal grade for the work as well as developmental feedback from the instructor of the course. Second, those projects are reviewed by an ICCM faculty as part of the R&D process. In these instances, students are asked to walk the faculty member through the project in a formal presentation. The faculty then provide feedback and guidance on aspects of the project that can be improved before it is ready for "prime time." During this process, the faculty members can gauge student learning and address any deficits that arise in real time. These discussions are learning-rich environments that allow for reflection and the expansion of concepts. Mastery of knowledge is also measured through students' culminating experiences of comprehensive exams and dissertation proceedings, both of which are necessary to obtain their degree. While these are administered and facilitated through the graduate I/O psychology program, these events showcase the knowledge and skills developed through a student's time in ICCM. For instance, the master's exam is designed as a work sample; students are fictitiously approached by a client via email and asked to share their knowledge on a specific topic and offer potential interventions relevant to the client. This technique aims to assess not only a student's consulting skills but also their professional skills. Doctoral comprehensive exams consist of both written and oral testing methodologies. The written portion is meant to assess a student's breadth of knowledge regarding all major areas of I/O psychology and depth of particular concentration areas. The oral portion, however, is more focused on the ability to handle stress, quick thinking on one's feet, and professional communication in a high-pressure situation. These examinations are meant to assess not only learning throughout a student's time in the program but also the student's readiness to enter the workforce and contribute effectively to organizations or academia. Likewise, dissertation proposal presentations and defenses serve to demonstrate further developed research capabilities and extensive knowledge gained, both of which are fostered through ICCM experiences with applied research. Performance on dissertation procedures are

often compared against a student's performance on his or her thesis to assess growth in research, I/O principles, and professional communication.

Kirkpatrick's third level of analysis, behavior, is often assessed during client interactions and then discussed during after-action reviews and formal debrief sessions. For instance, a team may prepare for a two-day meeting with senior executives to present results of a previous interaction and discuss next steps on the overall project plan. Following the meeting, the team meets to discuss if objectives were met, how each member contributed to the outcome, what aspect of team performance can be improved, and so on. Behavior that needs correction is met with timely, constructive feedback that enables corrected future behaviors.

Finally, project results are assessed through a combination of hard and soft metrics. When interventions are put in place, corresponding objective metrics are often used to measure success where possible. For instance, if the team was initiating a customer experience initiative, a Net-Promotor-Score might be used to see if the initiative had the desired impact. Conversely, if a training was implemented to improve employee cross-cultural competence, training effectiveness may be evaluated using subsequent employee performance data (i.e., supervisory ratings) or assessments administered following the training. In addition, as a key metric for ICCM is a total focus on the customer, we actively seek customer feedback data to see if the customer is pleased with not only the outcome, but the interactions and customer focus of all ICCM staff. The information gleaned from these inquiries allows ICCM to continue improving the customer experience. For example, ICCM collects evaluation data in the form of online questionnaires from Summit participants and GOAA employees who have undergone training. In a way, the students are directly evaluated by this customer feedback, as students have developed and executed these initiatives. We also make diligent efforts to ascertain qualitative feedback from our various stakeholders. In a recent query, executives for a large international testing firm provided the following feedback to ICCM:

Question: If someone called you and said "Why should I do business with ICCM," what would you tell them?

Customer 1: *Because they are the leading experts in their field, they are effective communicators, and they can deliver. They also impressed me as a very flexible team that is highly responsive to client needs.*

Customer 2: *They're a great group of colleagues to have as part of your team. They're extremely competent, collaborative, and all around just a pleasure to work with.*

When asked what value ICCM brought to the client's organization and how we helped the organization reach its goals, the following feedback from the same organization was provided:

Customer: *ICCM staff members we worked with were extremely talented, knowledgeable, and responsive. They demonstrated great customer service orientation and as the R&D lead for this project, I truly enjoyed our collaboration.*

In asking the client the biggest surprise or what made them the happiest in working with ICCM, they answered:

Customer: *The team's efficiency. Though I am fully aware that this project is not the team's only project (nor full-time job), you would never know it when working with them. They are incredibly on top of things and are able to turnaround quality deliverables in a very short time. Such customer feedback not only confirms successful aspects of our efforts but more importantly, informs room for improvements in various processes.*

Providing Feedback to ICCM Professionals

Once learning is assessed, feedback must be given to members on both positive and negative aspects of performance. Constructive feedback is necessary to promote effective behaviors and attitudes. In cases where behaviors or work are not directly observed by the executive director, research director, or research scientist, members' work is accessible through various means. For example, detailed project plans are required for each project, complete with specific tasks, responsible members, and due dates. Members are encouraged to update the project plan in real time as tasks are completed so that every ICCM member can have an accurate idea of a project's progress. Additionally, full staff meetings are held monthly to discuss the states of all projects to highlight accountability and celebrate accomplishments. Outside of full staff meetings, project meetings are regularly held where project team members discuss the work. The executive director, research director, or research scientist is aware of these scheduled meetings and may occasionally sit-in on a meeting for more in-depth briefings on a project.

If the executive director, research director, or research scientist identifies performance or specific behaviors or work they would like to reward or correct,

informal positive or constructive feedback is given in real time. In the past, ICCM has utilized more formal procedures to give feedback to members annually, but has found that informal feedback is beneficial for several reasons. Firstly, in fast-paced consulting work, correcting ineffective aspects of work is most advantageous when feedback is given immediately following the recognition of suboptimal work. In this case, the behavior or work can be corrected immediately, allowing for improvement and avoidance of potentially damaging relationships with clients by providing lower quality work. Secondly, informal feedback that is continuously given contributes to a healthy feedback environment. As such, members view feedback as less punitive or intimidating, and instead, as a positive tool to advance development. Part of developing a healthy feedback environment means that team leads are also encouraged to give both positive and negative informal feedback to supporting team members. Peer learning and peer feedback seems to mitigate some of the harmful effects of receiving feedback from authority figures, allowing members to process peer feedback more effectively. Project leads are urged to consistently reward positive behaviors and performance through verbal feedback and displays of appreciation. Specifically, ICCM utilizes an 'appreciation drawer' filled with gift cards to various establishments around town. As members want to reward and recognize others for their contributions, they are free to gift others with these gift cards.

Transferability

It is useful to examine transferability of skills and competencies gained from ICCM experiences to other environments using a transfer of training framework. Transfer of training refers to extending what has been learned in one context to another (Noe, 2017). ICCM as an organization can be considered a training context, as most students are involved in it as a part of their graduate school training. Skills, competencies, and knowledge that students gain from ICCM experiences can be expected to transfer to the "real" workplace, other cultures and environments, and across disciplines. We use real workplace in quotation marks because, although it is embedded in a graduate program, ICCM is a real workplace, with real clients and projects. Transfer of training is more likely when individuals are conscientious and motivated, there is strong supervisor support, and the work climate is positive (Blume, Ford, Surface, & Olenick, 2017; Colquitt, LePine, & Noe, 2000). Finally, metacognition is important for transfer and the encouragement of "learning that is directed toward understanding through exploration and experimentation" (Bell & Kozlowski, 2008, p. 299) is important for effective transfer of training.

Skills, competencies, and knowledge that students gain through ICCM can be expected to transfer to other environments because the predictors of transfer mentioned above are integrated into ICCM. With the exception of occasional undergraduate interns, ICCM students are mostly graduate students who are quite conscientious and motivated. At the top levels of ICCM administration, the executive director, the research director, and the research scientist strongly support ICCM staff. This supportive culture trickles down to the ICCM leadership team and project leads, who in turn do the same for their teams. Similarly, ICCM espouses a positive work culture characterized by respect for student competence, high levels of collaboration, and genuine concern for student well-being.

Members of ICCM are also prepared to work in the global business environment. ICCM skills and competencies should transfer to other cultures and international contexts because ICCM is a cross-cultural organization. Roughly, 30% of members in the organization are international students. ICCM students have hailed from all over the world, including China, Lebanon, Sweden, Japan, Egypt, Ethiopia, Spain, Scotland, and Vietnam. Expanding upon culture beyond the geographic conceptualization (Chao & Moon, 2005), ICCM members come from different geographic regions in the United States, different religions, different ages, different work experiences, and, in some cases, different academic backgrounds. Given this, ICCM students learn to work with individuals from different cultures, which should transfer to culturally diverse work environments or ones within different cultures. Additionally, ICCM's work revolves around cultural research, cross-cultural competence, and internationalization. Thus, students are immersed in the concepts and skills that comprise cross-cultural competence. Given this deep exposure to culture and cultural concepts, ICCM employees should be able to effectively use learning from ICCM in cross-cultural environments.

Replication

In order to successfully replicate the ICCM model, a number of factors need to be considered, including member demographics, domain-specific knowledge, the competitive makeup of the market, and room for error. ICCM members are graduate student paraprofessionals. They are driven to learn, eager to gain experience, dedicated, and highly competent. While all of these characteristics can be found in undergraduate students, the nature of ICCM work (e.g., interactions with high-stakes clients such as the US Military) demands a higher level of commitment and relative independence. This is not

to say that undergraduate students cannot be involved in these types of efforts; ICCM has had undergraduate interns before. However, we would suggest leveraging the talents of graduate students who can serve as mentors for undergraduate students while they develop their skills.

ICCM's approach is grounded in rigorous, scientific, I/O psychology-based research. This reliance on scientific research is part of the ICCM brand and lends credibility to ICCM expertise and solutions. Given this, ICCM staff need to have extensive training in domain-specific research. In order to successfully replicate the ICCM approach, including its science-based approach, members need to have deep domain-specific knowledge about their discipline and the research methods used to generate new knowledge.

ICCM has the benefit of existing in a relatively niche market. There are not many research institutes or consulting firms that specialize in a cross-cultural view of organizational effectiveness. This relatively low level of competition allows ICCM to be flexible and thoughtful in its approach to international consulting. For example, ICCM often has the luxury of time in the project planning stage. Any type of replication efforts need to keep the competitive environment in mind, and conduct a thorough competitor analysis.

Finally, any attempts to replicate the ICCM approach need to consider the available room for error. In international consulting, there are often multiple ways to approach the same problem. This sort of environment is ideal for a wide variety of students who may come at the same problem from different viewpoints, but in the end come up with equally viable solutions. An organization focused on developing students through experiential learning is best suited for environments in which there are multiple right answers and wide latitude for solutions.

Challenges

ICCM is not without its challenges, including varying levels of student skill level, the turnover and new employee cycle, and working within an academic calendar. Domain-specific knowledge is important for ICCM staff; however, staff have different levels of both explicit and tacit knowledge. For example, some ICCM staff members are first-year students who have recently completed a bachelor's degree while some ICCM staff members have nearly completed their PhD coursework. Additionally, members range on their amount of experience: some members entered graduate school immediately following the completion of their bachelor's degree, while others have worked in a corporate environment for several years (or decades!) before beginning their

graduate work. The challenge of an uneven playing field can be addressed by making sure to assign appropriate projects to ICCM members based on their skill levels. For example, projects requiring advanced skills or knowledge or assignments that have higher stakes should be staffed, at least in part, by members who are more senior. For more junior students, previously mentioned mentoring and onboarding are key to providing guidance and structure during one's introduction to ICCM. Additionally, after more junior students have the opportunity to gain experience from ICCM involvement and have built on their domain-specific knowledge through their coursework, they are able to gradually progress to leadership roles to further their development. By pairing more junior consultants and those with more experience, tacit knowledge is more fluidly transferred. For instance, junior consultants are able to witness first-hand the development of another's leadership abilities, learn for themselves which leadership behaviors are effective versus ineffective, and incorporate those behaviors into their experiences, facilitating growth of themselves as leaders. Additionally, for the ICCM members who have already spent years working in corporate environments, taking on mentor roles and helping others develop professionally often comes naturally. Experiential learning's learning-by-doing approach, and in some cases, learning-by-watching, allows for students grouped by varying levels of experience to learn both explicit and tacit knowledge in a psychologically safe environment.

The transitory nature of students is another challenge for ICCM. Turnover of top performers is a given, as the most skilled, knowledgeable, and developed students graduate each year. At the same time, each year brings a crop of new employees in the form of first-year students who are not familiar with ICCM projects and processes. This challenge can be addressed with standard operating procedures (SOPs), organized shared Google Drive folders, "lessons learned" resource documents, structured onboarding processes, and mentoring. Such practices encourage knowledge sharing both vertically and horizontally and allow for beneficial processes to standardize more rapidly. The goal is for those first-year students to eventually attain a level of skills comparable to the staff ICCM is losing each year, and then continue the cycle.

Finally, the academic calendar poses some challenges to ICCM. Most of ICCM's clients are in the commercial and government sectors, meaning these clients do not have summer and holiday breaks. Following a traditional academic calendar means fewer ICCM student staff are available during these breaks in the semester due to other commitments or student funding restrictions. This issue can be addressed with internal open communication about student availability, open communication with clients, risk assessments and the formulation of contingency plans, and detailed project plans. Beyond the

obvious lulls in productivity that accompany an academic calendar (i.e., summer and winter breaks), there are also waves of inactivity synonymous with graduate work. For instance, first-year ICCM students must be onboarded into the organization within the early weeks of fall semester and may not become fully acquainted with the projects they are involved in until several months have passed. On the opposite end of the spectrum, upper year doctoral students may be decreasing their level of input on teams as they begin studying for comprehensive exams, significantly reducing the overall amount of hours spent on a project on a regular basis and the experienced guidance offered by that contributor. The same interventions that alleviate the problems associated with turnover may also aid in the struggle with the academic calendar. In such cases, SOPs and other documents that inform the context, previous decisions made, and successful ways to accomplish tasks help guide the work to be completed in the face of missing or not fully functional team members. The academic calendar also poses a challenge to some clients with regards to funding and work schedules. This challenge is ongoing and must be addressed by each institute that works in the domain of academia. Each client and project will require its own timeline and financial considerations, so unfortunately there is no "one size fits all" solution. However, running a student-driven institute with real clients requires situational awareness in addition to purposeful business development and client acquisition. Such organizations need to be aware of their own limitations and ways in which these challenges can be addressed and mitigated. For instance, this may entail working with one's home university to establish funding vehicles for students over the summer months to ensure commitment to work during breaks. Additionally, clients and partners of the institute must be aware of the limitations imposed by the academic calendar and willing to work with the waves of activity versus inactivity to the extent possible. Failing to seek out the right clients or having open communication with existing ones may mean missed deadlines, disappointed stakeholders, damaged relationships, and a loss of current and future potential work.

The aforementioned challenges of varying skill levels, turnover, and working with the academic calendar are not impossible to overcome. While some of these challenges may be transferable to another organization similar to ICCM, specific challenges may be unique. Prior to developing or expanding such an organization, we urge you to consider what challenges you might face and research possible solutions thoroughly.

Contributions and Implications

The trials, tribulations, and even successes of ICCM's practical application of experiential learning has led to what we consider to be valuable contributions to the implementation of pedagogical learning, specifically with regards to increased engagement, appropriate levels of ambiguity, and the importance of self-determined learning.

At Florida Tech, I/O graduate students have a plethora of opportunities to involve themselves in research or applied work. Relative to these other outlets (i.e., faculty-led research labs and other consulting firms), ICCM has consistently seen higher levels of participation from students. Our members do not consist of only the graduate students with an applied focus, either (i.e., compared to those planning to enter academia or research alone). Students who do not plan to work as consultants are just as involved in ICCM as those who do plan to do this type of work in the future. According to our most recent engagement survey (administered in April 2018), the average ICCM member worked on four or more projects in the 2017–2018 school year. The level of involvement is typically steady across standing in the program (i.e., first, second, third, fourth year, and beyond). The common thread of these high levels of participation, we believe, is the allure of experiential learning. While being thrown into work with little to no practical experience is often intimidating, the highly ambiguous environment in which our members participate in the design, development, and implementation of all deliverables seems to work wonders for an individual's growth. In the same engagement survey, 100% of respondents indicated they felt that ICCM allowed them to develop themselves above and beyond the knowledge and experience gained from their coursework. Our members, regardless of their future career aspirations, enjoy and value the work they do for the organization and the lessons they learn as a result.

To appropriately frame the ICCM experience and optimize experiential learning, we have learned to be transparent about our learning practices when recruiting new members and new clients. I/O Psychology research has found that providing candidates with realistic job previews prior to hiring enhances organizational commitment, job satisfaction, performance, and job survival (Premack & Wanous, 1985). As such, we try to practice what we preach and give all parties interested in joining ICCM an idea of how we operate. That is, we introduce potential new members to the leadership team, discuss the various current projects, and the internal processes we adhere to. In doing so, students are made aware of the work they would be committing to and can

ultimately decide whether or not to self-select in. On an organizational level, we have also found the notion of self-selection to be just as important when considering which clients to take on. All of our clients are made aware of our organizational dynamics prior to contract negotiations. In order to create and maintain fruitful relationships with our clients, we have found that there has to be a commonality of shared values that encourage learning and development of students just as much as conducting sound science and implementing effective solutions.

Conclusion

While the initial shock of entering the deep end of the pool can be daunting for the uninitiated, we have found that providing a guided real-world learning experience to students results in deep learning and early career success. In addition, this focus on learning by doing has resulted in high levels of engagement that has benefitted ICCM and the university as a whole. At ICCM, we continue to strive for improvement in designing learning experiences and serving our customers. Our hope is that by detailing our experiences and approaches, we can help other learning organizations develop their own institutes to provide Olympic quality learning experiences that will shape future international business success.

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9

A Scaffolded Approach to Teaching National Culture: From Hall to Hofstede to GLOBE

Todd Friends and Dawn Keig

Introduction

Many international business principle courses have learning objectives that include mastery of both strategic and interpersonal global concepts. Culture can inform both levels of analysis, and for that reason teaching national cultural similarities and differences can be essential. In incorporating culture, international business teachers have a bevy of different national cultural frameworks at their disposal from which to choose (Nardon & Steers, 2009), two of the most popular being the Hofstede (1980) and GLOBE (global leadership and organizational behavior effectiveness) (House, Hanges, Javidan, Dorfman, & Gupta, 2004) models. The relative pros and cons of these two cultural mainstays have been debated extensively in literature for over a decade (Hofstede, 2006; Javidan, House, Dorfman, Hanges, & de Luque, 2006; Smith, 2006).

With so many choices and no particular discipline-level agreement on their convergence, the specific selection of *which* national cultural model to adopt for a particular classroom might be driven by any number of criteria. For example, an instructor may choose whichever model is utilized by the selected course textbook's authors and/or by the faculty member's personal research practices or literature familiarity. However, rather than proposing that teachers should select one particular national culture framework over another in

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M. A. Gonzalez-Perez et al. (eds.), *The Palgrave Handbook of Learning and Teaching International Business and Management*, https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-030-20415-0_9

teaching culture in international business, in this chapter we suggest a *scaffolded* pedagogical approach that includes a linked set of assignments that deliberately move students through a number of national cultural models.

This technique has been developed, implemented and refined over the past ten years at Whitworth University, a Christian liberal arts university with approximately 3000 undergraduate and graduate students located in Spokane, WA. Whitworth's undergraduate business program includes a required international business principles course for all business students, regardless of their particular major fields of business study. The use of the scaffolded introduction to national culture in this mandatory international business course helps reinforce for students both *what* national cultural frameworks mean and also *how* they can be effectively applied in international business situations. For the student who does not study abroad, this Whitworth course simulates foreign immersion exercises, requires international project networking, and conducts case studies allowing the students to learn and engage cultural perspectives different from their own.

Background

This pedagogy leverages a variety of different models of national culture in a scaffolded fashion. The specific cultural dimensions highlighted by each model are summarized in Table 9.1. Hall's (1976) writings, a simplistic model that is recognized as being a foundation of many national cultural models that follow, provide the broad baseline. With three basic dimensions, *context*, *space* and *time*, the emphasis in the Hall model is on identifying and evaluating high and low context environments.

The technique then progresses to Hofstede's (1980) more specific set of cultural dimensions, the model that remains the most-cited and utilized framework of national culture in international business research. Hofstede's model offers a set of five foundational criteria which identify patterns in what individuals in different national cultures value: *power distance*, *uncertainty avoidance*, *individualism/collectivism*, *masculinity/femininity*, and *long-/short-term orientation*.

Finally, the nine GLOBE dimensions (2006) are introduced as the final link in the chain of cultural models. The GLOBE study expanded upon Hofstede's work on values and investigated 'practices' in addition to 'values' (Dorfman, Hanges, House, Javidan, de Luque, 2006). The historical philosophy of professional study programs in business has been to focus teaching on the practices of how things are done and how to do them. For this reason,

Table 9.1 Dimensions in the three national culture models used in scaffolding

Hall (1976)	Hofstede (1980)	GLOBE (2006)
Context: Extent to which the context of a message is as important as the message itself.	*Power Distance*: Beliefs about the appropriate distribution of power in society.	*Power Distance*: Degree to which people expect power to be distributed equally.
Space: Extent to which people are comfortable sharing physical space with others.	*Uncertainty Avoidance*: Degree of uncertainty that can be tolerated and its impact on rule making.	*Uncertainty Avoidance*: Extent to which people rely on norms, rules and procedures to reduce the unpredictability of future events.
Time: Extent to which people approach one task at a time or multiple tasks simultaneously.	*Individualism-Collectivism*: Relative importance of individual vs. group interests.	*Humane Orientation*: Extent to which people reward fairness, altruism and generosity.
	Masculinity-Femininity: Assertiveness vs. passivity; material possessions vs. quality of life.	*Institutional Collectivism*: Extent to which society encourages collective distribution of resources and collective action.
	Long-Term vs. *Short-Term Orientation*: Outlook on work, life and relationships.	*In-Group Collectivism*: Extent to which individuals express pride, loyalty and cohesiveness in their organizations and families.
		Assertiveness: Degree to which people are assertive, confrontational and aggressive in relationships with others.
		Gender Egalitarianism: Degree to which gender differences are minimized.
		Future Orientation: Extent to which people engage in future-oriented behaviors such as planning, investing and delayed gratification.
		Performance Orientation: Degree to which high performance is encouraged and rewarded.

Derived from summaries in Nardon & Steers (2009)

The Basics

Most suitable audience	Curriculum target is for junior and senior business undergraduates with global perspective requirements.
Time required	Time required is one third of a semester of a standard semester 3-credit hour course. Best taught over a period of five weeks so each step of learning can be processed.
Optimal group size	20-40 students
Materials and technologies required	• Introductory layman/practitioner culture book – e.g. *Foreign to Familiar* (Lanier, 2000) • Lecture slide content an journal article references on Hall, Hofstede, and GLOBE models • Case examples (see Appendix B)
Cost	Average $12 per student

Fig. 9.1 The project experience

GLOBE offers an attractive culmination point for the scaffolding pedagogy because of GLOBE's incorporation of specific measures of practice as well as values. This offers a great potential for student application and positions GLOBE to act as a soft set of business tools that can consciously increase the effectiveness of cross-cultural management. Students are challenged to apply learnings from the practice-oriented GLOBE model to case studies.

Through this multistep scaffolded process, students gradually acquire a cross-cultural lens and toolbox that can be applied when preparing for international business (Fig. 9.1).

Learning Objectives and Process

The following process incorporates Bloom's Taxonomy (2001) and Kolb and Alice's (2009) second stage of Experiential Learning Theory development model. Referred to by Kolb as the specialization stage, learning originates 'from formal schooling through the early work and personal experiences of adulthood, where social, educational, and organizational socialization forces shape the development of a particular specialized learning style' (p. 48). The student engages in a series of hypothetical cultural environments through immersion exercises, cultural readings, international project research and cultural theory applications. All leading toward the Bloom's Taxonomy objective of know when and how to cross-culturally apply the lenses of the GLOBE cultural dimensions.

The following seven stages are the conceptual application of Blooms Taxonomy (Anderson & Krathwohl, 2001):

- Apply the GLOBE cultural dimensions in various cultural contexts in international business (*Understand & Apply*)
- Define and describe the nine GLOBE cultural dimensions (*Remember*)
- Summarize what each GLOBE dimension is about (*Understand*)
- Develop a cross-cultural lens by applying one's knowledge of different GLOBE cultural dimensions to the content of cases in international business practices. The learning objective should not be quantity, but of quality in depth of a GLOBE dimension's knowledge and achieving a working knowledge on how to apply them. (*Apply*)
- Differentiate between the GLOBE cultural dimensions. Compare differences in country attributes of culture and practices in doing business. (*Analyze*)
- Assess whether or not the cross-cultural context demonstrates elements of a GLOBE cultural dimension. (*Evaluate*)
- Compose an example that illustrates each of the GLOBE cultural dimensions in a high and low practicing cultural context. (*Create*)

Purpose and Description

This pedagogical project strives to develop a business student that he/she can synthesize and apply cross-cultural theory to international business situations. The process allows the student that has not studied abroad to hypothetically interact with cultural situations of the world (Kolb and Alice, 2009). The learning objective is not one of quantity, the focus is to achieve a working theoretical knowledge of cross-cultural applications. Especially in situations that demonstrate the practices of international business between two countries. This method differs from a transactional approach of focusing on specific national cultures, the project's objective is to tool the student with a cross-cultural skill set or lens that can be applied to various cultural contexts. Instead of a singular cultural focus, the student compares and contrasts different cultural interpretations of the same business circumstances and different responses to doing international business.

In a domestic classroom setting, the student is exposed to a progression of cultural theories through readings, lecture, discussion, exercises, case analysis and feedback. The initial assigned readings and immersion exercise distinguish the fundamentals of high and low context culture attributes of Hall

(1976). These provide a foundation for the progression to learn Hofstede's (1980) cultural dimensions. Hofstede's popular cultural dimensions are common in most international business courses or texts. We believe this project achieves a useful learning by transitioning from Hofstede dimensions to the application of the GLOBE cultural dimensions (House, Hanges, Javidan, Dorfman, & Gupta, 2004). The research of the GLOBE cultural dimensions facilitates a prescriptive approach in examining cultural practices and how they are relevant to international business (note cases in Appendix 2). Whitworth University students have historically and consistently expressed their satisfaction and value in this unique cultural learning experience. The following experiential learning cycle illustrates the logical progression of learning through a scaffold approach to cultural theory learning and application.

Experiential Learning Cycle: Scaffolding Approach to Teaching Cultural Dimensions

A step-stage approach of teaching, building and then applying one's cross-cultural knowledge and lens. It is important to note before the scaffolding process begins, students have begun international market selection (IMS) projects requiring them to conduct primary research in foreign markets. They are directly networking with foreign markets as the scaffolding ascends.

Scaffold 0: Warm-Up

We kick off this curriculum with a cross-cultural ice breaker exercise that centers the students on the general theme of cultural differences. We recommend utilizing the *BaFa' BaFa'* cross-cultural simulation exercise. https://www.simulationtrainingsystems.com/corporate/products/bafa-bafa/

This exercise gives the student an immersed experience with high and low context behaviors that can later be reinforced with specific national cultural model concepts.

Scaffold 1: Introduce High and Low Context Cultures

Students read *Foreign to Familiar* (Lanier, 2000) in preparation introductory lectures on high and low context cultural attributes. Lanier writes descriptive examples of high and low context. Reading comprehension is assessed with a

follow-up quiz (see Appendix 1). Additional consideration can be given to cross-cultural exercises that reinforce high and low context concepts. The *BaFa' BaFa'* exercise is recommended but requires multiple facilitators (www.simulationtrainingsystems.com) Teaching assistants can be helpful with delivering the *BaFa' BaFa'* exercise.

Scaffold 2: Build to Hofstede's Cultural Dimensions

Overlay lecture content based on *Foreign to Familiar* (Lanier, 2000) high and low context learnings with history of Hall's research on context from *Beyond Culture* (Hall, 1976). The history of Hall's high and low contexts findings becomes a segue to Hofstede's *Cultural Consequences* (Hofstede, 1980) research and outcomes. It is important to explain Hofstede's research methodology with IBM. Explain Hofstede's emphasis on measuring cultural values on the basis they lead to cultural behaviors. Focus is given initially to Hofstede's four cultural dimensions of power distance, uncertainty avoidance, individualism/collectivism and masculinity/femininity. Pedagogically Hofstede's cultural dimensions lay the ground work for introducing the GLOBE research (Dorfman, P. W., Hanges, P. J., House, R. J., Javidan, M., & Sully de Luque, M. 2006).

Scaffold 3: Orient Students to the GLOBE Cultural Dimensions

A dialogue on benefits and differences in GLOBE research is in the literature discussion. This section focuses on the curriculum methods involved in teaching the GLOBE cultural dimensions and their application.

1. The original GLOBE white paper readings on the creation of the nine cultural dimensions can be accessed for free through an online search, pages 1–26 are assigned to be read (https://www.researchgate.net/profile/Peter_Dorfman/publication/43490722_Cultural_influences_on_leadership_and_organizations_Project_GLOBE/links/00b4952d034851aa40000000.pdf). Page summaries of each GLOBE cultural dimension are assigned in library reserved readings. Students are quizzed on knowing and defining the nine GLOBE cultural dimensions.
2. Initial teaching and lecture content focuses on five of the ten highest scoring countries in each cultural dimension. The highest and lowest country scores in each cultural dimension. Narrowing the number of countries simplifies and deepens the cultural focus on the highest and lowest scoring

countries in each dimension. Teachers may have a preference for which five they prefer to focus on. Lecture content specifically shifts to the country 'practice' scores in each GLOBE cultural dimension. The focus on practices is pedagogically important for business-related professional studies schools. Knowing cultural values is helpful, practices are seen as proscriptive, 'how it's done' for business learnings.

3. Do not overwhelm the student with too many countries. After the students have learned the fundamentals of each GLOBE cultural dimension, teaching focuses on primarily 12–15 countries that are categorically common high or low scoring countries in the nine GLOBE cultural dimensions (e.g. Japan, New Zealand, Argentina, Singapore, Germany, Sweden, Ireland, USA, Netherlands, Malaysia, Indonesia, Zambia).
4. Introduction of the simple case analysis process, descriptive cross-cultural business cases are introduced to be analyzed by students. Within the context of the case, students assess the observable cultural dimensions and whether they are high or low scores. Simple cases are practiced initially for a week. The breadth of countries involved in the case descriptions remains focused on 12–15 noted in the initial GLOBE dimension lecture content.
5. Case analysis increases to more complex and difficult cases for interpretation and analysis. Case content normally reflects two to three GLOBE cultural dimensions taking place. In most cases, there are high and low scoring country cultural dimensions juxtaposed in the description. Further case examples and answer guides are shared in Appendices 2 and 3. These cases are practiced in class for two weeks and reviewed the third week. Students utilize each case in a review for a final case assessment exercise.

Scaffold 4: Application of Cultural Assessment Skills

After the third scaffold experience, students ascend to a learning level of independently reading case examples that describe a cross-cultural intersection of business practices. Students focus on the context and identify the demonstrated GLOBE cultural dimensions (two dimensions in each case) in flux. They describe how the cultural dimension is unfolding and whether the dimension should be considered a categorical assessment of high or low. The assessment instruments are high and low definitions of each GLOBE cultural dimension. The country culture scope of the exam cases is narrowed so students can focus their review of lecture content on 12 countries (noted above).

The Cultural Skills Assessment exercise and sample case scenarios (as well as representative answer explanations) are included in Appendix 3. The purposes of the exercises are to use case scenarios to assess how well students can (1) identify relevant cultural practices in a given situation, based upon the GLOBE practice model; (2) analyze the potential implications of different actions relevant to those practices; and (3) recommend managerial action based upon that analysis. These particular cases were selected because they align with the list of countries suggested in scaffold 3. These countries have common high or low GLOBE dimension practice scores, making them stand-outs for lecture, discussion and case exercises.

The rubric used to assess the students' responses to the cases is included in Appendix 3.

Skills and Competencies

The pedagogical learning objective of this scaffolded technique is to enhance business students' global perspectives and cultural lenses and their corresponding ability to apply these skills when cross-cultural matters arise in their future professional settings. Developing global perspectives is an assurance of learning goal for our business school as part of AACSB accreditation (Table 9.2).

Developing a working knowledge of the GLOBE national culture model prepares a young business professional to think about cultural variables before joining a global conference call, virtual meeting, and/or international project; before engaging foreign suppliers, customers and coworkers; before taking strategic action such as developing social media campaigns or launching international products. They will be able to refer to the GLOBE cultural dimension characteristics of the target country culture and thoughtfully consider the different cultural lens of how their international colleagues may view the context of doing business.

Table 9.2 Assessment of learning (AOL) results

Learning Goal: Students are well-versed in global perspectives *Objective 1: Students are able to explain differences in cross-cultural management practices*	
Assessment period	**Rubric measurement/avg. score**
Spring 2016	**Cultural competence—identification**: 2.29/3.00**Cultural competence—analysis**: 2.34/3.00**Cultural competence—recommendation**: 2.34/3.00
Fall 2018	*Assessment in progress: Results to be compiled by 1/31/2019*

Note: Corresponding assignment is provided in Appendix 2 and rubric in Appendix 3

Optimal Fit

This teaching method is best delivered in person with groups up to 30 students. It is assumed the teacher has a background in international studies. Reviewing cases requires the teacher to give continuous timely feedback. It is also helpful for students to compare and contrast their case analysis in small groups. International student engagement is always an asset to cross-cultural discussions.

Challenges

A primary challenge for this course content is that it preferably requires a teacher with a working knowledge of the cross-cultural theories and a sense for the application. A teacher with a background in international studies or experiences in cross-cultural content is a strong fit for facilitating cross-cultural exercises and theory learning. The teacher facilitates hypothetical experiential immersion exercises and creates a classroom environment that the student experiences different cultural perspectives. This step-by-step curriculum does not require a lot of theories and may be perceived as limiting since there are so many cross-cultural theories.

The most difficult section to teach and learn is helping the student to differentiate between institutional collectivism versus in-group collectivism. Initially, if the audience is from western culture like the U.S., the concepts of institutional versus in-group collectivism are foreign. The teaching time and case practice on these dimensions need to be comparatively more than other dimensions. We recommend definitively referring to keywords and references to 'organizations' as being part of institutional collectivism. We endorse Brewer and Venaik (2011) in that the GLOBE cultural dimension of in-group collectivism may need to be referred to as 'family collectivism' (p. 440). This will help delineate the difference between Institutional versus In-Group. We recommend the following keyword references in case examples:

Institutional Collectivism commonly associated terms: Company, Organization, Society, Community, Institution, Government terms, Corporation, Businesses, Economies, Cohesion in Organizations and Society.

In-Group Collectivism common associated terms: Family, Friends, Relatives, Inner/Outer Circle, Groups, Loyalty, Family ties, Group Pride

Assessing and grading case analysis takes time and is not always black and white. Creating cases from scratch requires prep time. Initially, when practicing cases with the class, it is best to start simple and build. Allow students to compare their analysis and review the best answers in class. One of the most common errors is that students will describe the cultural context accurately but not associate the most appropriate GLOBE dimension. Some students will become frustrated with the perceived subjectivity of assessment. Cases for exams need to be written clearly and definitively accurate. Students need to appreciate that identifying the nuances of cross-cultural behaviors are not as easily identified as black and white matters.

Evaluation of Learning Effectiveness

Consistent with the underlying scaffolding theory, each progression of three major national culture theories—Hall (1976), Hofstede (1980) and GLOBE (2006)—are evaluated in stages.

Hall's concepts of high and low context culture are tested after a general lecture of content and reading of *Foreign to Familiar* (Lanier, 2000).

Hofstede's theories are a curricular prequel to GLOBE cultural dimensions. A series of lectures and in-class exercises are conducted that reinforce the learning objectives of cultural dimensions. Assigned reading- and lecture-based methods are fine for fundamental learning and multiple choice assessments. For that reason, both Hofstede and GLOBE are comprehensively tested in a final format exam including multiple choice and fill-in questions. The average culture exam grade score out of 100 points in 2018 for 80 students has been 86%.

Additionally, a set of case analysis applications in the form of the Cultural Skills Assessment exercise applying the GLOBE dimensions specifically (noted above and detailed in Appendix 2) is administered. Cross-cultural case analysis requires teaching applied thinking skills that need a series of classroom-based exercise and feedback sessions. Learning needs processing time along with take-home case work. While this learning objective is more difficult and students may score less than on fundamental inventory tests, the appreciation for the more rigorous cultural learning is reflected in the student course surveys.

The Cultural Skills Assessment exercise also serves as an assurance of learning tool in support of AACSB accreditation. Every two years, colleagues assess the Cultural Skills Assessment results of two international business classes (approximately 50 students). This process evaluates our departmental learning goal of having students who are well-versed in global perspectives, and the specific associated learning objective of students being able to explain differ-

ences in cross-cultural management practices. The rubric used for assessing this assurance of learning is included in Appendix 3. The student learning results for the prior two assessment periods are given in Table 9.2.

Additionally, annual student feedback reflects above average student satisfaction with the cultural learning objectives of the course when utilizing this scaffolded technique. In 2018, students rated the course 4.6 out of 5.0 for intellectually challenging and 4.6 out of 5.0 for learning and understanding subject materials.

Transferability/Replication

Students in this course simultaneously work on an international market selection (IMS) project. In addition to formal research methods, students conduct networking to make primary contacts with potential international markets. Student qualitative and quantitative data gathering with foreign industry experts gives them first-hand cross-cultural insight. A twofold IMS approach of learning how best to interact with primary foreign business contacts and assessing the market for a cultural fit challenges the student's cross-cultural competency. Students ultimately recommend which foreign market has the best cultural fit and demand for their product. The students utilize their cross-cultural networking skills to source necessary foreign market profile data and competitive intelligence. The final proposals are presented in the form of a class competition for the best international market selection, followed by an extensive question and answer period. Companies that have partnered with the students through the research process often confirm the students have replicated their own IMS process or their company should have done a similar IMS process and mistakes may have been prevented. Company engagement is often confirming of the student's foreign market direct research gathering.

Another good measure of assessing the retention of cross-cultural knowledge is to ask the student to write an original cross-cultural business case. The student can draw from lecture and reading content to describe the business interaction of two country cultures by juxtaposing practices of one or two GLOBE cultural dimensions.

Debriefing

The first scaffolding exercise of *BaFa' BaFa'* frames the learning structure for this cultural unit. The *BaFa' BaFa'* exercise debriefs with questions such as: What was your experience like when visiting the other culture? What did you

observe? How would an anthropologist describe the culture? What did the artifacts of your culture symbolize? This pattern of examining culture through one's own lens and the lens of the culture continues through each learning scaffold.

Cultural examples and cases are discussed at length to reinforce learning each Hofstede and GLOBE cultural dimension. Descriptive examples of how a cultural dimension would manifest in a particular country culture are part of an associated learning pattern. Case analysis and debrief become a classroom routine when learning the GLOBE cultural dimensions. Simple cases should be introduced early in the lecture scaffold in order to build learning momentum. The discussion questions focus on what cultural dimensions do the student see taking place in the case and what case descriptors led them to their assessment (see Appendix 2). After each case exercise, students discuss their findings in small groups and then discuss with the class at large. As students become more experienced and consistent in their assessment, the final calibration discussions result in similar and accurate assessments.

Contributions/Implications

This scaffolded approach to leading students methodically through exposure to a series of national culture model leverages commonly used components in a new pedagogical way. The learning objective of skilling a student in cross-cultural assessment is ambitious and rigorous. Incorporating content from an anecdotal model (such as in Lanier's *Foreign to Familiar*) and then through Hall and Hofstede and ultimately through GLOBE offers a theoretically grounded, practically focused approach for international business curriculum.

Theoretical/Conceptual Contributions

This project provides a specific and unique application of *scaffolding theory* to the study of national culture in international business education. The pedagogical concept of scaffolding was introduced to general education decades ago (Bruner 1983, 1985) and continues to remain relevant in a variety of educational contexts and levels. Scaffolding conjures the visual image of an educator carefully and deliberately laying an increasingly ambitious series of well-anchored learning 'platforms' upon which they help and encourage students to incrementally climb toward the larger goal.

Table 9.3 Scaffolding theory intentions and application in the proposed project

No.	Scaffolding theory element	Application in proposed project
1	Keeping the learning on target and maintaining the student's pursuit of a particular objective	The unit progresses quickly to maintain momentum, with an initial focus on beginning to understand different cultural dimensions to ultimately being able to apply models to complex situations.
2	Providing explanatory structures that organize the information	Rather than just introducing a long list of different cultural models with different cultural dimensions, the project carefully organizes the models from most basic/foundational Hall model to the more complex Hofstede model and ultimately to the practical application-focused GLOBE model.
3	Taking over any parts of a task that the student is not yet able to perform, simplifying learning	The project does not propose immediate application; the project moves from most anecdotal/basic of concepts to more specific elements, with the application coming in the latter part of the unit.
4	Getting students interested in a task and helping them adhere to the requirements of the task	Beginning the technique with an interactive warm-up activity (e.g. the recommended *BaFa' BaFa'*) increases students' interest in learning the theory.
5	Facilitation of student performance	Students have objective exam feedback on the foundational elements of the models before the application of the models is assessed
6	Keeping students motivated via the prevention or minimization of frustration	Beginning with a very accessible view of culture (e.g. the recommended Lanier 2000 lay book) at the beginning of the unit increases students' confidence and interest in the topic.

Six scaffolding intentions have been distinguished in educational literature (Van Der Stuyf, 2002), each of which is specifically addressed in the proposed cultural teaching technique, as summarized in Table 9.3.

Through the application of the general scaffolding theoretical concept, this project sets a clear purpose and thoughtfully arranges an otherwise disconnected and potentially conflicting set of national culture models into one integrated unit. Students are guided on a clearly defined path between and through the different models helping them discern the relative pros, cons and applicability of all models. At the end of the scaffolding processes, students are able to decide which of the sources to use and how, maximizing the practical learning potential as intended by scaffolding theory.

Pedagogical Contributions

Increased Engagement

The scaffolded approach strives to achieve the Learning Pyramid level of 'learning by doing' (Lalley & Miller, 2007). The Learning Pyramid represents the degree of learning and retention for teaching methods such as lecture (5%), reading (10%), discussion groups (50%), practice by doing (75%) and teaching others (90%) (Lalley & Miller, 2007). Each scaffold follows the Learning Pyramid progression of lecture, reading, demonstration, discussion and doing. Noting that learning retention is stronger at the practice levels of discussion and doing. These two steps are consistently repeated through cultural case analysis in order to reinforce learned concepts. The teacher has the option of increasing retention by presenting final exercises that allow the student to 'teach others'. This can be achieved by students creating their own cases for cultural analysis. The student writes an original international business situation case, presents it to the class for analysis and facilitates the feedback discussion.

Competences Development

The objective of this project is to develop the cross-cultural assessment skills of students through a learning process of synthesizing and applying cross-cultural theory to international business situations. Bringing the student closer to becoming cross-culturally competent to work and compete in a globally connected world. Students learn about their own cultural nuances as well as putting themselves in the perspective of the other culture. They understand that different value, belief and practice systems manifest through different forms of communication.

In this project, the competency of cross-cultural assessment skills is demonstrated by a student who can identify and distinguish the practices of a culture that correspond to GLOBE cultural dimensions. They can identify whether the GLOBE dimension practice is characteristic of a high scoring or a low scoring dimension attribute.

There are four activity measures of curricular attainment of the cross-cultural assessment skills:

1. The cultural learning progress is qualitatively assessed by the teacher through consistent classroom cultural exercises, quizzes, case analysis discussions and questions.
2. A comprehensive culture unit exam inclusive of case analysis (see Appendix 2). Average test scores of 50 students in 2018 have been 86%.
3. Assessment of learning processes for AACSB accreditation requires biennial peer review of course outcomes demonstrating student cultural competence (see Table 9.2 and Appendix 3).
4. Student builds their cross-cultural assessment skills during a semester-long IMS/International Market Selection group project. The student project groups are assessed by peers and teacher in a class competition for the best international market selection proposal. All students read each project proposal, present their own proposals and engage a question and answer period (see Appendix 4).

Appendix 1: *Foreign to Familiar* Reading Comprehension Quiz on High/Warm and Low/Cold Culture Context

Foreign to Familiar Reading Comprehension Quiz

Each question is worth 2 points for a total of 50. Fill in the blanks with the appropriate answer per the Foreign to Familiar book reading.

Which of the following countries are considered Cold or Warm cultures?

1. The Northern States of the U.S. _____
2. Southern Brazil_____
3. Saudi Arabia_____
4. Canada_____
5. The Southern States of the U.S._____
6. The Pacific Islands_____
7. Northern Europe_____
8. The Philippines_____
9. Russia_____
10. Nepal_____
11. A relational or familial behaving culture would be associated with_____cultures.

12. A time is money culture would be associated with _____cultures.
13. Because Switzerland is an old culture and established in their ways, Switzerland is considered to be _____ _____by the author (use the anthropological term).
14. Because the U.S. is a relatively young country and culture and not as established in cultural practices, the U.S. is considered to be _____ (use the anthropological term).
15. Warm cultures are known for their_____ communication style.
16. Cold cultures are known for their _____ communication style.
17. Identify two points to remember when dealing with different concepts of time and planning in Warm Cultures 1._____ _____
18. 2._____
19. Identify two points to remember when dealing with different concept of time and planning in Cold Cultures 1._____ _____
20. 2._____
21. In what type of culture are you going to decline the offer to have cup of coffee or tea politely once or twice implying you don't want to put them out but would enjoy the conversation _____ _____.
22. Describe a Cold or Warm culture greeting (beyond the U.S.) and what the meaning behind the greeting is:_____ _____ _____ _____ _____.
23. If you are an American in your home country hosting someone from a Warm Culture and you go out for ice cream or dinner, what should you culturally do for your invited guest?_____ _____ _____.

24. The *BaFa' BaFa'* Alpha culture would be associates with the_____ style.
25. The *BaFa' BaFa'* Beta culture would be associated with the_____ _____ style.

Appendix 2: Cultural Skills Assessment Exercises

The following are the Cultural Skills Assessment exercise requirements and cases provided to the students as an in-class written assignment as well as some answer background/explanations for each case provided to the assignment assessors (with keywords/phrases in **bold**):

Case Exercise: For each of the following cases, **s**pot and explain the GLOBE dimension cultural concepts taking place in each country's context:

1. **Highlight the keywords/cues/phrases** that point to the cultural differences.
2. **Identify** and explain the primary **GLOBE Cultural Dimensions** taking place in this situation/case. Next, describe your rationale for this identification.
3. Explain 'why' you have culturally interpreted the specific dimension. Remember, there are **sometimes both Highs and Lows are involved**, but not always. Each case illustrates at least **two GLOBE Dimensions** in each country, sometimes **three**. Correctly identifying the dimensions and corresponding High or Low attributes (if applicable) will earn full points. BE THOROUGH ABOUT YOUR EXPLANATION.
4. **Recommend** managerial action based upon your analysis. BE THOROUGH ABOUT YOUR EXPLANATION.

Case 1: A German Corporate Shareholder Meeting

The CEO of a German-headquartered conglomerate in Frankfurt delivered a state of the business speech at the annual shareholders meeting in Frankfurt, Germany. The German CEO Mr. Gundhalder spoke at length and **in detail about the innovative technologies that Siemens had invented** and introduced into the global market, **assuring shareholders that they had focused on quality and every detail**. He announced that the company was about to launch a new aircraft engine that could operate under a high level of air particles, so the engine could operate in the recent volcanic dust experienced by Europe and

keep businesses going. An Irish shareholder introduced herself as Head of Irelands Air Traffic Controllers Union and asked the question '**Wouldn't it have been better to address the market perception that your company lacks concern for a comprehensive employee benefit package instead of spending research funds on such a rare event, trying to control rare and extreme acts of mother nature?'** The CEO responded **'It is critical for the reputation of our brand that we are ahead of the curve in aeronautical technology'.**

Answer Explanation. The GLOBE cultural dimension juxtaposed here is uncertainty avoidance. Germany has a high certainty avoidance seeking to control outcomes, avoiding surprises, focusing on quality, reliability and detail. Ireland has a lower uncertainty avoidance, the thought of controlling responses to mother nature are senseless, they are less concerned with risk. The other present cultural dimensions are a high-performance orientation for Germany seeking to advance and innovate technologies in order to compete and stay ahead of the curve. The Irish culture tends to demonstrate concern for employees over research, thereby, emphasizing a high human orientation, a dimension that Germany score much lower in.

Case 2: Argentinean Natural Resources for Singapore

A high tech Singaporean firm recent purchased a precious metal mining company in Argentina for vertically integrating direct natural mining resources for producing their sophisticated technology. The Singapore CEO had **requested a benchmark report** on similar mining operations. In a meeting in Singapore, the native **Argentinean GM of the mining company asked why they requested such a benchmark study when we are the only mine of this kind in the world. Why would such report matter**? The Singaporean CEO responded 'He had confidence in the mining company, which was one of the main reasons they were attracted to the acquisition'. The Argentinean GM asked again about the benchmark study. The CEO responded, **'Do you know our organization offers our retirement savings and profit sharing plans to all our employees around the world, your miners could double their retirement investment plans with us'.** The Argentinean GM responded **'That is generous but our miners are proud of the risky work they do and have an attitude of living for today and being paid well for their dangerous work'.**

Answer Explanation: Singapore is demonstrating high-performance orientation through its acquisition of the precious metal mining company and requesting a benchmark. Singapore demonstrates a high future orientation in planning for the future through this acquisition as well as planning for employee's futures through

retirement. One could also say Singapore demonstrates a high institutional collectivism by including all employees worldwide in the retirement and profit sharing plans. The Argentina GM shows indifference to being part of the company retirement plan that reflects two Argentina GLOBE dimension characteristics. Argentina demonstrated a low future orientation, a culture that prefers to live in the present and be paid timely for their risky work. Additionally, Argentina demonstrates a low institutional collectivism culture, they prefer to be accountable and compensated as individuals, not part of a large organization group plan.

Case 3: A Japanese Bank Offshores in New Zealand

Auckland, New Zealand has accumulated a significant number of Japanese national immigrants over the past 20 years, specifically women. **These women felt career tracks in Japan favored men.** While these New Zealand Japanese learned to speak fluent English, they maintained their fluent Japanese. **The Japan Bank executives have come to Auckland to assess whether they could build a customer service center in Auckland that would service their customers in Japan. If so, there would be a labor cost savings in having 150 employees in Auckland, New Zealand versus the higher costs in Tokyo, Japan.**

The Japan Bank advertised some positions to be explained at an upcoming job fair. The bank conducted an initial company information and job screening fair that over one hundred New Zealand Japanese women attended with job interest.

The first three speakers were male executives **that verbally identified their association with such an institution as Japan Bank,** each spoke in Japanese about Japan Bank and what the job is like. **Notably about 30% of the Japanese New Zealand female attendees left after the second Japanese male speaker,** this unnerved the third speaker.

The third Japanese male speaker decided to **emphasize the connection and prestige of being an employee of the Japan Bank and being associated with such a good reputable bank.** He went on to give examples of how **the bank takes care of their employees and is concerned about their career development. He also emphasized the importance that employee input contributes toward process improvements and achievement of organization goals.** He said the New Zealand market is new to them and they would need to learn how best to operate from this new market and that he was pleased with how many potential candidates came to show interest. After he finished speaking, he noticed that no one had left and the New Zealand Japanese women began to line up in order to submit their application.

Answer Explanation: In this case, Japan stands out as a low gender egalitarian scoring culture that can limit women's career potential. New Zealand was an attractive country with open immigration laws and a high scoring gender egalitarian culture desired by these Japanese women. Since the Japan Bank is trying to improve costs of service through off shoring, it could be noted that Japan is demonstrating a high-performance orientation. The last part of the case demonstrates a Japanese male executive underscoring the institutional collectivism qualities of the organization and their concern for employees and their development. The New Zealand Japanese women responded favorably by not walking out. Japan is demonstrating attributes of high institutional collectivism that is practiced in Japan and New Zealand. Additionally, the speaker addresses a sense of human orientation that is highly practiced, desired and culturally scored in New Zealand.

Appendix 3: Cultural Skills Assessment Rubric

Learning Objective: We want our students to be well-versed in global perspectives.
Learning Goal: Students can explain differences in cross-cultural management practices.

	Assessment		
Criteria	Advanced	Developed	Beginning
Cultural competence—**Identification**	Student thoroughly identifies the relevant cross-cultural issues in a management scenario.	Student partially identifies some relevant cross-cultural issues in a management scenario.	Student does not adequately identify relevant cross-cultural issues in a management scenario.
Cultural competence—**Analysis**	Student thoroughly applies appropriate cultural models to analyze cultural differences in a management scenario.	Student partially applies appropriate cultural models to analyze cultural differences in a management scenario.	Student omits application of appropriate cultural models to analyze cultural differences in a management scenario.
Cultural competence—**Recommendations**	Student suggest highly developed culturally appropriate recommendations in response to cross-cultural issues in a management scenario.	Student suggest adequately culturally appropriate recommendations in response to cross-cultural issues in a management scenario.	Student does not provide recommendations or the recommendations provided are not culturally appropriate in response to cross-cultural issues in a management scenario.

Appendix 4: International Market Selection Project Survey Rubric

GMMSO4 Project: Global Marketing Management System Online

COMPANY _____

Did I read the full project proposal before this Q & A period yes/no _____

Rate the presented GMMSO section on the following Criteria **1-5:5 being the Highest**

1- Unsatisfactory/Not Compelling/ Would not invest
2- Satisfactory/ OK Work/ Needs Further Development Before Investment Consideration
3- Good/Covered Most Bases/Might Invest
4- Very Good/ Solid Research/Good Case for Investment Consideration
5- Excellent/Compelling Case/ Well Covered and Convincing/ Definitely Invest

Mod 1 Company (Product or Service) Situation Analysis (SWOT/Porters Forces) _____
-target market knowledge, KPI's, financial strength, customer satisfaction, strategic fit

Mod 2 Part **1 Macro-Six** Country Selection Decision Process, Logic, Macro Statistics _____
-quality/credibility of Macro data, logic of weightings, other macro indicators

Mod 2 Micro Final Market Analyses – **Final 2** Countries Micro Data, Competitive Assessment _____
-market details, micro data most relevant, competitive assessment, quantitative and qualitative data

Quality/Credibility of research sources, corporate info, scholarly research, primary contacts _____

Cultural Fit local culture & consumer behavior patterns have been considered and would be a fit _____

Quality of fielding Q & A solid fact answers, did not assume, did not guess**,** acknowledged lack of knowledge when appropriate _____

Overall Teamwork-balanced contributions and equitable knowledge demonstrated, synergy _____
-*Team shared equal participation in answers*

Likelihood to Invest Your Money, How Compelling was the Case _____

Total out of 40 Points _____

Comments/Notes:

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10

Using Experiential Learning Cycle to Promote Diversity in the Classroom

Andri Georgiadou

Introduction

This paper aims to explore the design and implementation of a suitable level undergraduate curriculum that enables students and faculty staff to become acquainted with the theoretical and practical underpinnings of promoting diversity with a view to fostering accessible and effective environments for all. The project addresses a gap in knowledge regarding the teaching approach of a business course taught in a UK higher education institution and seeks to provide new methodologies in raising awareness and building knowledge and skills on understanding diversity. The analysis endeavors to identify potential pitfalls on the way diversity is conceptualized and promoted in the classroom, which can be addressed in the suggested course.

The Project

The project is centered around an undergraduate course of about 200 Business and Management students on cross-cultural human resource management. This course develops critical, analytical, and practical skills necessary to evaluate theoretical, empirical information, and different approaches to cross-

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M. A. Gonzalez-Perez et al. (eds.), *The Palgrave Handbook of Learning and Teaching International Business and Management*, https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-030-20415-0_10

cultural management. By the same token, it equips undergraduate students with practical knowledge that helps them to understand the importance of awareness and sensitivity to their own and others' cultural background and influences. This is mostly achieved through their active participation in their assigned diverse seminar groups, which remain the same for the entire semester. By assigning students into groups consisting of students of different cultural, gender, and religious backgrounds, and not allowing them to form teams themselves, I urge them to work outside their comfort zone and learn first-hand the challenges and benefits of diverse workgroups.

There is one participative "lectorial" (i.e. two hours combining lecture and tutorial) per week, plus a one-hour development workshop. Students are also expected to make use of the time outside of class for group work in preparation for the presentations.

The course uses a variety of teaching methods which include lectures, seminars, and workshops. A feature of the module is the emphasis placed upon the seminars presented by students. Students are expected to participate fully in the course. Prior to each session, they are expected to familiarize themselves with the lecture topic by drawing upon the detailed guided reading and to read selectively from the seminar reading list. In addition, they are encouraged to keep abreast of the current events and be prepared to discuss these and their own work experiences (where appropriate) in their seminar groups. This variety of methods enables students to effectively achieve the module learning outcomes.

Learning Objectives

Learning objectives' taxonomy can be used to determine the curriculum goals. The courses should not only be described in terms of the topics to be covered but also in relation to the desired level of understanding for each thematic unit (Moon, 2002). These taxonomies categorize the learning objectives into three domains: cognitive, affective, and psychomotor.

Bloom's Taxonomy represents each sector as a one-dimensional continuous, while Bloom's Revised Taxonomy describes the cognitive domain using a two-dimensional table. The structure of observed learning outcome (SOLO) Taxonomy (Biggs & Collis, 1982) uses a series of categories describing an amalgamation of quantitative and qualitative differences between students' performance.

For the purpose of drafting this course's learning objectives, Bloom's Revised Taxonomy has been applied. Based on this taxonomy, the learning objectives can be defined, measured, and categorized (Ala-Mutka, 2005). Bloom's Revised Taxonomy defines six overlapping levels of cognitive abilities, which are as follows:

- Recall: the student is able to recall or retrieve basic information from the long-term memory
- Understand: the student is able to identify the meaning of new knowledge
- Apply: the student is able to use knowledge in a new way or to complete and implement a process
- Analyze: the student is able to compare, analyze a concept to its main components, and determine how these parts are related to each other and to the whole
- Evaluate: the student is able to evaluate and substantiate their point of view
- Composite: the learner is capable of producing, reconstituting, and creating a new product or a new idea

Having this in mind, the aims of this course are to enable students to prepare for the challenges of working in an increasingly globalized environment by analyzing the main elements of culture and developing a deeper understanding of the impact of culture on a broad range of management practices and situations. Thus, it is important for the course to be culturally inclusive on the one hand but designed in alignment with the relevant cultural context on the other hand.

Specifically, successful students typically are able to:

1. Recall and understand the concept of culture and its relevance to issues of managerial and organizational behavior;
2. Understand and apply the importance of awareness and sensitivity to their own and others' cultural background and influences;
3. Understand, analyze, and evaluate the key issues influencing cultural differences, which may generally affect leadership and motivation, communications and negotiating, and decision-making and organizational relationships; and
4. Apply the techniques for managing cross-cultural teams for high performance.

Purpose and Description

My main aim in teaching is to encourage students to excel within the field of human resource management. To that end, I emphasize critical reflection, team work, originality, and effective communication skills by asking students to analyze specific journal papers and present their findings within their tutorial groups.

Specifically, within this module, students are assessed based on a critical reflection of a pre-assigned research paper. Their essay should also include a personal reflection on working in a cross-cultural group. The reflective piece should be based upon their group work and learning journal (see below for details). Therefore, the first element of the assignment is based upon the students' experience of multicultural studying and working which is a major discursive theme throughout the course. In the second and third weeks, the students are assigned into small learning groups. They are asked to carry out all the weekly course activities in this group, which mainly involves preparation for the assignment and mock research journals' analyses.

In order for students to complete this assignment, they are required to keep the learning journal after each weekly session, discussing how their learning develops, exploring how the class exercises progressed, assessing their and others' contributions and group members styles of participation, reporting what type of difficulties they had encountered, and their general orientations to the group work. The learning journal notes form the basis of a more critical evaluation which they should use in your individual report.

I am keen to democratize the teaching space, so, in a tutorial setting, I clarify to students that the responsibility lies on them to lead the discussions on the articles' analyses. My teaching philosophy is simple—keep each student included in the learning process and engaged by ensuring that everyone has access to the appropriate resources ahead of time. I want them to go through the active and reflective process of learning by defending perspectives rather than simply listening passively to the tutor's interpretation of a given theoretical concept. I generally suggest that they come to class with notes and outlines of the aims and key messages that the author(s) is/are trying to convey. This facilitates fruitful discussions, wherein it ensures the inclusion and active participation of every single student, as individuals are granted with an access to the relevant material and are given the appropriate amount of time to make notes and prepare themselves prior coming to class.

I am strongly committed to advising my students and have had an ease in developing a professional rapport with them, which is achieved through agreeing on (and not imposing) ground rules from the beginning and explicitly discussing the module's expectations, aims, and objectives during the first lecture. Furthermore, a natural propensity to adopt a mentoring role has been a cornerstone of my professional life. Therefore, I constantly remind students of my office hours and ways to contact me should they have a query, and I expect to continue growing in this role of helping them applying their own skills and knowledge in becoming excellent researchers and professionals themselves.

Experiential Learning Cycle

Having upheld the significance and value of fostering an environment where research on diversity is encouraged, promoted, and valued, I ensure drawing on the pedagogic research to enhance teaching and research and their profound intersection. By engaging students to group discussions and using a plethora of different learning methods and approaches—discussions, videos, group activities, presentations, and debates—I endeavor to immerse them into an active learning journey (Biggs, 2003). Therefore, they undertake the role of participants rather than audience, where they are encouraged to pursue their own questions in interaction with the theoretical background of the discipline of diversity.

The module is classroom based, and I seek to use a number of teaching and learning methods to effectively convey and achieve each lecture's objectives. For one specific session, these included providing an overview of the concept of culture and its relevance to studying management in organizations, as well as a discussion of key cultural dimensions.

Overall, my teaching approach is reflected through students' engagement and discussions (Reeve, Jang, Carrell, Jeon, & Barch, 2004). Debates can be an excellent teaching approach for augmenting students' enthusiasm and motivation, and enhancing intellectual agility. Discussions foster prospects for students to enhance their ability to defend and articulate their opinions, reflect on various different perspectives, and enlist and assess information and evidence (Weber, Maher, Powell, & Lee, 2008).

In light of this, I began the lecture by asking students to provide me with a definition of culture, and recorded every single answer using an active text box. This encouraged them to participate, as my main goal was to give them confidence and turn the classroom into a safe(r) place to freely express themselves. That led us to different levels at which culture can be identified and analyzed. From there, we introduced a number of typologies of organizational culture and thoroughly explained the concept of corporate culture.

Having introduced them into several theoretical frameworks, I showed them a TEDx video about stereotyping and the danger of a single story. The broadcast was followed by a vibrant and fruitful discussion, where students were sharing their personal experiences and reflections on the personal story of the speaker; main points were again recorded on PowerPoint for students to see and make notes accordingly. I concluded the lecture linking their perspectives with the thematic pillars mentioned prior to the video (Stigler & Hiebert, 1999).

Apropos seminar sessions, these always include group discussion and therefore necessitate participation from all students. In order to achieve this, students are asked to familiarize themselves with the seminar topic by reading selectively from the weekly reading lists. Particularly, they are asked to read a specific academic paper that is included in the tutorial pack that was handed to them during the first lecture. Articles from the academic journals provide a valuable learning resource for their study (Healey, 2005); considering that cross-cultural management fits within the areas of my research focus, I am in a position to provide them with the most relevant papers that enhance their understanding on the topic and trigger their interest in further investigating it.

One of the papers under investigation is centered around the Brazilian organizational culture, where a number of published studies are presented and an attempt is made to outline its fundamental characteristics. Similar to every session, students were asked to read a relevant journal paper that was available to them beforehand. At the beginning of the tutorial, students briefly commented on the distinctive content of the paper. They were then given time to answer questions on the aim, findings, and methodology of the paper within their multicultural group (Jacques, 2000).

Once students started to present their answers, the seminar took the form of a question and answer session, where everyone was actively engaged in discussing whether authors' findings were valid, and whether the conclusions were justified. By the end of the session, they had critically examined the theoretical framework developed in the paper, evaluated the research approach adopted by the authors, and assessed the wider implications of the article for individuals involved in cross-cultural management. Additionally, they updated their learning journal by critically assessing the key learning points that emerged for them over the course of the tutorial (Morrison, 1996).

In conclusion, during the students' engagement in the seminar activities, the link between research and teaching practice follows in some degree the Ruthven's (2008) dialogic cycle of creating knowledge within practicing research. Students are immersed to research and acquire academic knowledge through my presentation, studying the papers and discussing these during the seminars. Through collaboration, they reflect on their own understanding of the learning objectives while personally interacting with research, thus participating in a learning environment that promotes the value of diversity through creative thinking and critical analysis.

This impact on the students' behavior and reaction toward diversity is reflected through their journal entries:

> Working within our multicultural group made me realize that whilst we all had very different cultural backgrounds, our attitudes and norms tend to change in multi-cultural contexts. For example, when working in an educational group, we all shared the same aims and objectives therefore knew how to behave and adapted accordingly.—*Student 1*

Moreover, it leads the students to become critical thinkers:

> Cultural open-mindedness, flexibility, patience and the ability to work together have been crucial indicators for our team. The three of us really got on well and there have been no barriers to intercultural communication or cultural aspects which would have prevented us from working well in a cross-cultural team. Personally, I think that working in a cross-cultural team will have a positive impact on daily life, personality and business purposes if you are cultural open-minded.—*Student 2*

while it makes them realize the benefit of coming prepared in class:

> We read all journal articles and have been fully prepared to work on the assigned task during each tutorial. Working on the tasks usually proceeded as follows: first of all, everybody described their point of view towards the task, which had to be answered, then we collected all the important information and afterwards everybody presented some aspects of our findings. Overall, working on the task has been very smooth and efficient. Especially, working on the group presentation and arranging group meetings ran smoothly. Everybody has been well prepared for the meetings, so we could draw up the presentation easily. The presentation itself has been a total success and reflected how well we worked in a cross-cultural team.—*Student 3*

The effectiveness of this teaching approach is justified through the lens of Kolb's experiential learning cycle (1984). Kolb's cycle begins with a concrete experience, thus highlighting that active involvement is the key to learning. In our project, this is facilitated through the discussions during the sessions. The second stage of Kolb's cycle is that of reflective observation. This is achieved through the students' journal entries, which describe and reflect on the way the team members work together toward the achievement of their common goals. During the third stage, the abstract conceptualization, the learner seeks to understand the relationship between what has happened and how these events are interpreted. This is realized through the presentation and discussion of several theoretical models and frameworks that are relevant to the topic under investigation. The final stage of active experimentation is when the

learner sees how the learning is useful to their life and relevant to them. The latter takes place through the journals' critical analysis, as it gives students time to reflect on what could have been done differently and how.

Evaluation of Learning Effectiveness

In order to be assessed for the course, students are required to prepare a critical evaluation of a specific research paper, along with a personal reflection about their experience working in the multicultural tutorial group. Ergo, they are requested to evaluate the main research findings and the conclusions that the researchers present. They are prompted to think carefully about whether these findings are valid and whether the research methodologies, techniques, and conclusions are justified. They also assess how appropriately the researchers link the findings of the project with the literature presented in the literature review. On this account, they learn to evaluate and critically reflect on the use of research techniques and the generation of valid findings and conclusions, they familiarize with the language and practicalities of undertaking a research project, and indulge in the research culture.

On the other end of the same spectrum, Race (2014) highlights that learning depends on the feedback being an essential part of the overall learning and teaching process. In addition, he claims that the prompt and constructive feedback is extremely useful for the continuation of student learning. My experience has shown that students—who receive only negative feedback—find it extremely difficult to follow and effectively respond to any given advice. On the other hand, when students are commended for their efforts, they are much more open to suggestions for improvement (Huba & Freed, 2000).

In light of this, considering that my students are assessed on two essays, I always commence my written feedback with a positive statement, while emphasizing, praising, and building upon the strengths of the assignment. When necessary, I provide constructive feedback, always clearly indicating the weak points and suggesting efficient approaches to turn them into assets. At all times, I conclude my feedback with an encouraging statement.

Literature classifies this feedback strategy as the "sandwich method," and it is highly recommended by scholars (Docheff, 1990: 17). However, sometimes, I need to convey a significant message to the student; that's when I launch the feedback by pinpointing the respective point. By following a different approach, there is an underlying risk of not raising the appropriate awareness for the issue to the student. That being the case, apparently there is no one-size-fits-all on the feedback provision; I assess and approach each situation accordingly.

Nonetheless, I always ensure to recognize the strengths of an assignment. If there is nothing good to say as regards to the content and context of the project, I at least acknowledge the student's effort to submit that piece of work. When asked to provide feedback to students, I keep in mind that my primary role is to encourage and facilitate the development of that student. The broader aim is to enhance the learning process (Pashiardis & Brauckmann, 2008). And this can be achieved once an honest and open relationship between the tutor and the student is constructed that allows the latter to accept and build on the received feedback.

Withal, I think that if the tutor has clear aims and objectives regarding teaching, then students are aware of the expectations and thus their responsibilities toward the module. Ergo, I make sure to present the learning objectives of each session at the beginning of my lecture, whereas I always conclude with a summary of the main points that were discussed. In addition, within the module guide, I link the aims of each teaching session with the overall learning objectives of the module.

Challenges and Best Practices

While I think that overall this approach is appropriate for undergraduate students, it is likely that some students might struggle with the sophisticated vocabulary that is used in research journal papers. In light of this, I would consider providing extra tutorials for anyone who either has English as a second language or finds it difficult to cope with the research terminology. Furthermore, I always invite students to assist with my own research, as this helps them to familiarize with the terminology, as well as with the entire process of designing, planning, undertaking, and analyzing a research project. According to the notion of active learning, effective learning can only be achieved when students are engaged in an active cognitive process, namely, when students interact and actively participate in the process of learning through actively engaging in a research project, then they absorb the material better and accumulate knowledge faster (Meyers & Jones, 1993).

Educators used to be essentially accountable to transfer knowledge to students; nowadays, learning is perceived as a process that requires the active participation and engagement of the students (Fry, Ketteridge, & Mars, 2009). Any problem-solving process and the acquisition and enhancement of critical and analytical skills require active students, which make them the protagonists of the learning and teaching process.

I have found that the seminar setting creates a safe environment for students to explore cross-management-related topics and work with students that they wouldn't have chosen to collaborate with otherwise. The fact that they are not being assessed as a group nor forced to present anything in public assures them that they won't get penalized for being part of a dysfunctional group. This strategy has also proven to be an effective solution to the free-rider problem that often occurs in team works. As regards to less confident students, considering that they are not forced to present in class, they can always engage in the learning process through their own unique way, namely, by recording their thoughts and reflections in their learning journal.

While I think that overall this approach is appropriate for undergraduate students, a lot of students struggled with the sophisticated vocabulary that is used in academic journals. In the future, I will consider providing extra tutorials for anyone who either has English as a second language or finds it difficult to cope with the academic terminology.

Transferability

The paper is centered around an undergraduate course on cross-cultural human resource management. However, as this course develops critical, analytical, and practical skills necessary to evaluate theoretical, empirical information, and different approaches to cross-cultural management, the main findings can be transferred to all corresponding courses. By the same token, since it aims in equipping students with the practical knowledge that helps them to understand the importance of awareness and sensitivity to their own and others' cultural background and influences, the paper can be relevant to all business students interested in pursuing a global career.

Contributions and Implications

Diversity and inclusion are internationally mandated policy phenomena that envisage creating more accessible social and educational environments for culturally diverse individuals. Anti-discrimination legislative caveats stipulate that social and educational institutions are expected to promote inclusion and respond to individuals' diverse needs in effective and non-discriminatory ways (Georgiadou, Gonzales-Perez, & Olivas-Lujan, 2019). Under the light of the recent legislative developments, the value of managing cultural diversity has gained momentum in a number of institutes that deliver business courses intended to familiarize students with the principles and practices of cultural diversity.

The necessity for preparing business students as future policy makers toward effectively managing cultural diversity is evident in a study by the European Commission (2003: 13), under the name Costs and Benefits of Diversity. According to this study, companies with active policies to promote diversity attribute to the important benefits of reinforcing the company's cultural values, enhancing corporate image, and helping to attract and retain highly talented people. Likewise, it provides the employees with greater incentives and thus higher productivity and performance, while it enhances superior innovation and creativity among employees.

There is a number of benefits of a diverse workforce, representative of today's society, and potential business managers must find themselves in position to identify and exploit them (Georgiadou, 2016; Georgiadou, Gonzalez-Perez, & Olivas-Lujan, 2019; Vassilopoulou, Kyriakidou, Da Rocha, Georgiadou, & Mor Barak, 2018).

Differences in deeper characteristics like personality, knowledge, and skills, if properly managed, can constitute a competitive advantage for the team, since it allows the best utilization of each member's contribution (Georgiadou et al., 2019). The surface features, if not overcome, are likely to lead to low cohesion of the group, frequent replacement of members, social isolation, lack of identification of members with the group, and, therefore, miscommunication and poor dedication, which eventually results in poor performance. A lack of awareness and misinformation are the foundation of many cross-cultural pitfalls, and higher institutions cannot afford to allow their graduates to not being exposed to the value of cultural diversity.

To that end, I understand how important it is to create opportunities for my undergraduate business students to be exposed to literature and activities in order to develop critical understanding and skills of the way in which as professionals can respond to diverse human needs. Through the analysis of cross-cultural management-related academic papers, students become acquainted with the theoretical, technical, legal, and philosophical underpinnings of cultural diversity management with a view to fostering accessible, effective, and inclusive environments for everyone. Furthermore, by uploading the relevant material in time on the internet platform (Blackboard), I ensure participation from all students, thus respecting the likelihood of some students requiring more time to get prepared than others—including foreigner students that need to translate the content. Through careful selection of the font size and background color in the slides, I am confident that the material is visible and accessible to everyone.

According to Mezirow (1991), learning is a dialectical process of interpreting a new experience, in which we interact with objects and events, guided by an existing set of expectations. In this respect, in the wake of learning being a

very personal process for each student, I use a number of different learning methods and approaches—discussions, videos, group activities, presentations, and debates—to immerse them into an active learning journey. Suffice it to say here that I don't evaluate nor I force any student to participate in the presentations—it's with the group to decide which students are presenting their answer to the class.

However, in order for students to complete their individual assignment for assessment, they are required to keep a learning journal after each weekly session, discussing how their learning develops, what difficulties they encountered, and their general orientations to the group work. These notes form the basis of a more critical evaluation which they use in their individual report. In this respect, students critically relate their personal reflections to the relevant literature, discussing the resonances between themselves and their fellow group members' experiences and theory and previous research findings in the field.

The development and introduction of a culturally sensitive educational system can be the harbinger to address social issues and create a corporate shared value so as to mobilize a cross-disciplinary and cross-cultural Higher Education (HE) effort to move toward a global responsibility for access and inclusion. On account of feeling respected and included in learning-friendly environment, students in return are enthusiastically engaged in class and embrace every seminar activity.

Having said that, academics are required to design new or re-define existing business curricula. As it reflects societal context, higher education should work to achieve equity for all its constituents and in society as a whole. HE institutions are called not only to carefully reconsider their own curricula designs in order to respond to university students' diverse needs, but also to raise awareness, increase knowledge, and encourage action related to social justice through their programs of study and other activities. To that end, it is important to create opportunities for business students to be exposed to literature and activities in order to develop critical understanding and skills of the way in which they as professionals can respond to diverse human needs. Designing and implementing a suitable business curriculum enables all HE students and faculty staff to become acquainted with the theoretical, technical, legal, and philosophical underpinnings of cultural diversity management with a view to fostering accessible and effective environments for all. The development and introduction of a culturally sensitive educational system can be the harbinger to address social issues and create a corporate shared value so as to mobilize a cross-disciplinary and cross-cultural HE effort to move toward a shared international responsibility for access and inclusion.

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11

Exploring the Effectiveness of Education Learning Space Principles' Application in the Field of Tourism and Hospitality Education

Ching-Chi (Cindia) Lam, Weng Si (Clara) Lei, Fernando Lourenço, and Natalie Sappleton

Introduction

Experiential learning has repeatedly been found to be an effective pedagogic tool (Kwong, Thompson, & Cheung, 2012; Maier & Thomas, 2013). It is widely applied in different courses and degree programs, ranging from vocational, undergraduate and even master's degree programs (e.g. Paul & Mukhopadhyay, 2005; Steiner & Watson, 2006; Tulbure & Orboi, 2014). It has also been demonstrated that experiential learning is an effective learning tool for students of diverse backgrounds. Kolb and Kolb (2005) discuss nine Education Learning Space Principles (ELSP) with applicability to institutional learning environments. In this chapter, an application of the ELSP to two courses of different natures is carried out, and an examination of the principles' effectiveness on skills learning and students' learning attitudes is explored. This study took place in a tertiary education institution and on two courses of a bachelor's degree program. The two courses—event management

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M. A. Gonzalez-Perez et al. (eds.), *The Palgrave Handbook of Learning and Teaching International Business and Management*, https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-030-20415-0_11

and accounting—of very different natures, but each with a tradition of running experiential learning projects, were used as the test beds for applying Education Learning Space Principles. The purpose of this study is to see the similarities and/or differences in the outcomes of two very different courses applying the experiential learning method, plus the new addition of Education Learning Space Principles (ELSP). The chapter provides insights for educators who have been adopting the experiential learning method and who are seeking to further explore and perfect their pedagogical methods.

Students enrolled in event management are expected to learn practical knowledge and skills in organizing events. In the event management course, a class of normally between 30 and 40 students will construct an idea for a themed and charitable event (such as a photography competition or handicraft workshop) which includes a series of different activities. The ultimate goal for the event is to raise funds for a local or an international charity organization. The class is normally divided into different function teams. There are three event managers and function team leaders. The learning outcomes of the course are the hosting of a themed charitable event and the equipping of students with practical event organization and management skills. In contrast, the accounting course is generally categorized as a quantitative course. In that course, similarly a class of around 30–40 students will work on a socially driven accounting project which involves analyzing financial data, making assumptions about predefined economic and societal scenarios (like expansion and financial crises), developing financial budgets, projecting future performance and making management decisions on social responsibility actions. The ultimate goal is to make management decisions through the use of accounting information, with an emphasis on the balance between financial profit and ethical considerations. The class is divided into different project teams. In each team, there will be a team leader and team members. The primary learning outcomes are demonstrating the correct use of accounting information in making ethical management decisions that can balance the need of both company and societal objectives. In this study, we report on a test of the Education Learning Space (ELS) principles and its application on these two different courses, carried out with different teaching pedagogies and with different types of learning outcomes.

Learning Objectives

This experiential project is designed with two core objectives in mind: (1) to imbue in students a positive learning attitude and (2) to equip students with a set of pre-identified skills. These courses incorporate practical elements of the industry and are designed in ways that mirror real-life settings. Students

are expected to experience threats and opportunities, as well as the positive and negative consequences of their decisions in the context of unpredictable, yet realistic situations. These elements will create an attractive environment that draws the attention of the students and which makes participation appealing. Student learning attitudes are captured under two items: their interest in becoming involved in every aspect of the project and their interest in the practical usefulness of the project. These two items are assessed before and after the project in order to identify changes.

For the skills aspects, the courses are aligned with a set of 11 skills objectives, depicted in Table 11.1. They are (1) Communication, (2) Coordination, (3) Being a good team player, (4) Being a good learner, (5) Being a good observer, (6) Interpersonal skills, (7) Make independent decision, (8) Peer relationship, (9) Leadership, (10) Time management and (11) Planning. In addition, the expected skills learned versus the factual skills learned (i.e. the results of this study) are explained in the section on Learning Effectiveness.

The accounting experiential learning project was carefully designed based on a structural layering consideration, using experiential learning as the framework and setting core objectives to deliver practical skills in planning, communication and decision making (note: the categories of skills to be identified), supplemented by the minor objective to infuse the concepts of social responsibility. From these bases, the details were set with the application of the nine ELSP. A clear set of rubrics was developed to evaluate student performance. In a similar fashion, the event management course was designed according to the fundamental structure of an experiential learning project; meanwhile, the application of the ELSP was integrated into the course planning. Table 11.1 depicts the details of the two courses' learning objectives.

Education Learning Space Principles

The design of the courses is aligned with the Experiential Learning Principles together with the application of Education Learning Space Principles. The Education Learning Space principles (ELSP) incorporate the institutional learning environment with student learning styles through nine principles (Kolb & Kolb, 2005). It is an expansion of experiential learning, involving the following nine principles: (1) Respect for learners and their experience, (2) Begin learning with the learner's experience of the subject matter, (3) Creating and holding a hospitable space for learning, (4) Making space for conversational learning, (5) Making space for development of expertise, (6) Making space for acting and reflecting, (7) Making space for feeling and thinking,

Table 11.1 Learning Objectives of the Two Courses

	Accounting	Event management
Communication	This referred to the communication to external parties. For the accounting project, there were three reporting stages, two of which in report format and one in verbal format. The reports were required to be submitted in teams as an individual submission, while the verbal report was set as an intra-class commercial debate between nine different classes. The students are required to use wordings, numbers, figures and tables for the written reports, and any audio-visual tools to support their verbal reports during the debate. These were set with the objectives to develop skills at filtering abundant information into useful and useless types, organization of available materials, expressing ideas through the correct use of written and verbal languages, choosing appropriate tools to deliver concepts and thoughts, and quick thinking.	There were two forms of communication channels formed and used by the class. The first one was a weekly event organization progress meeting, and the second one was a weekly meeting between the course lecturer and event managers and team leaders. The former one was held in class while the whole class of students was present, while the latter one was held outside of class schedule, normally during lunch time or after school in the school library meeting room. These two types of communications served two learning objectives. They were to facilitate personal communication skill in a classroom, where individual students were informed with event organization progress and were encouraged to raise questions and spot issues. The second objective was meant to teach students how to streamline communication and filter information from meeting with course lecturer to the team level via communication between team leaders and team members.
Coordination	A set of supporting documents was provided to each of the students, including the guidelines and requirements, the explanation and cases related with social responsibility and the timeline. For the accounting project, aside from the submission dates of the report and the date of the interclass debate, though they were arranged to have easy and prompt access to the lecturer for discussions and questions within the semester, they were also given absolute liberty to decide on the way and speed to progress. Each team is made up of four or more members, students are expected to develop coordination skills at the distribution of workload between teammates, set up discussion meetings, merge information collected by individual members and provide instant support to teammates during the commercial debate.	The whole class was divided into six functional teams, namely, Marketing, Communication, Sponsorship, Information Technology, Logistics and Administration to take up different functions in organizing an event, together with three self-nominated managers and the course lecturer. Coordination between teams and managers was expected to take place from the beginning until the end of the event organization. The course lecturer played a role to mediate the tasks which were unclear and facilitated coordination among teams in handling tasks and matters. Students were expected to learn the important of coordination among teams in order to organize the event throughout the whole course.

Being a good team player	The project was set for one semester. Students were allowed to choose their own teammates but were not allowed to make any change to the team combination during the entire project. They were expected to solve conflicts, share responsibilities, endure differences in characters and working styles and identify the strengths while avoid the weakness of teammates, turning the weakness into opportunities and putting the benefit of the team as the priority.	The event was usually held at the end of the semester. The course lecturer explained the functions and jobs involved for each functional team at the beginning of the semester. Students had the liberty to choose a team to join. Students were reminded the importance of working as a team and being a good team player in order to fully exercise the team's functions. Every student was expected to be cooperative, share responsibilities, resolve potential conflicts and tackle challenges encountered during the event organization.
Being a good learning	This was their first experiential learning project and was a topic area they might not be well familiar with. These were set with the objectives to educate students at learning outside the traditional classroom lectures. They have to search information from different sources from university database to newspapers, get in touch with the external parties from other lecturers to industry partners. They were expected to learn from the lecturer, their classmates, cases and facts, as well as through correct and wrong deeds per the lecturer comments on the discussions, reports and commercial debate.	Throughout the entire semester, there were numerous matters related to event organization happening, which were very experiential in nature. Students were always being reminded to be open-minded to learn and share cases, scenarios and challenges with the lecturer. The lecturer took all the sharing and discussed those in weekly class meeting to facilitate learning of the whole class. Students were expected to learn and grasp knowledge from within.
Being a good observer	This was an objective specifically set within the commercial debate, when students were expected to express appropriate concepts and ideas while they observed the performance of the opposing teams. This trained their skills at quick thinking and allowed students to be aware on the importance to fully understand the details at a verbal meeting (discussion).	This learning objective was set in the course and was implemented via student's submission of an individual report concerning the entire event organization at the end of the semester. Students were asked to assess and provide observation of the event organization in the report. By setting up this requirement, the course lecturer aimed to train up students to be an observer of event progress and situations.

(*continued*)

Table 11.1 (continued)

	Accounting	Event management
Interpersonal skills	This project was a team project that highly required teammates to communicate with each other in the most effective manner and method, not only during discussions and conflicts but also when presenting ideas to external parties and upon responding to queries.	The learning objective was aligned with the previous. It was assumed that a student who possesses good interpersonal skills is normally a good team player. Other than the lecturer's observation, whether the student was a good team player or not would be reflected in his/her own peer evaluation. Peer evaluation was compulsory at the end of the semester and it was carried out on a team basis.
Make independent decision	The project was set with an open-end answer, with nothing identified as "correct" or "wrong" but instead packaged with "good" or "bad" decisions. Students were not required to achieve a solid goal that is quantifiable but has to establish a clear goal that is qualitative in nature.	Due to the nature of event organization, most of the decisions were made on a team basis. It was very seldom that a student has to make independent decision.
Peer relationship	The team structure was set with the objectives to allow students at learning how to deal with peer relationship. They were allowed to experience the differences between getting along as friends and working along with peers, with the same group of classmates. They were expected to learn how to find a balance at dealing with people.	As teams were formed based on students' will, members were likely to be familiar with each other. Throughout the whole project, students were expected to cultivate peer relationship among themselves.
Leadership	The project was set with a clear goal of abundant flexibility that allowed the benefits of working at their own pace, while imposing the risks that nothing could be achieved at due date if not organized properly. The need of leadership immersed under this setting. Each team was required to identify a leader to take the lead in the distribution of workload, the setting of work schedules and make decisions when necessary.	Each functional team had a team leader, who was self-nominated and was expected to take up certain leading roles to lead the team, monitor progress and serve a communication channel between teams, managers and course lecturer. Due to the nature of this organizational structure, leadership was learned comparatively more by leaders and managers. While the other students could observe and raise comments.

Time management	This objective corresponded with "leadership". The project was scaled with a lenient timeline for students to experience thoroughly each step of the processes and seeking help from the lecturer. However, a well-developed schedule was of utmost importance to reap these benefits. Nevertheless, this setting was also designed with the objective to let students learn from bad time management. They would learn from the threats and drawbacks results from improper time management in case that happened.	Time management was very critical to event management. Gantt charts were used to monitor event progress and were reviewed weekly during class meeting as well as lecturer and team leaders' meetings. Students were expected to learn the importance of time management from the planning stage of an event until the end of an event.
Planning	This referred to the planning of information required based on the requirements of the project, the setting up of timeline based on study schedule and available time, the distribution of work based on the strengths and skills of teammates and the tools to use to achieve the goal.	Together with time management, this learning objective was regularly discussed and reviewed during all meetings. In addition, any incidents due to insufficient planning were logged and reported weekly to the whole class and to be reviewed and evaluated by the course lecturer at the end of the event organization. Students were expected to learn the importance and criticality of planning.

(8) Making space for inside-out learning and (9) Making space for learners to take charge of their own learning. Research studies on the effectiveness of applying ELSP in different teaching typologies in tourism and hospitality education are limited (Lashley & Barron, 2006; Ruhanen, 2006; Xie, 2004). The aim of this study is to investigate the effectiveness of ELSP on students' learning attitude, performance and types of skills learned. Table 11.2 illustrated how each course is implemented based on the ELSP.

Learning Effectiveness

A questionnaire was constructed based on the two levels of Kirkpatrick's (Kirkpatrick, 1975, 1996) model of training evaluation: Reaction and Learning as the conceptual bases. There were a total of 82 questions, allotted into seven sections under four major study areas and demographics and within which the learning attitude and the type of skills attained were examined. A survey was conducted upon the completion of the two courses with a response rate of 66%. Results showed that with the application of ELSP, the satisfaction of the experiential learning projects is positively related with the students' learning attitude. It also affects some type of skills learned, namely, in areas of communication, coordination, interpersonal skills, leadership, making independent decision, peer relationship, planning, time management, being a good learner, being a good observer and being a good team player.

The level of skills learned was classified into five levels from none (1), basic knowledge (2), neutral (3), good (4) to expert (5) through the use of an attribution scale. As shown in Figs. 11.1 and 11.2, the majority of students attained the 11 skills at good or expert level, while only a minimal minority indicated they have learned none or only basic skills. From the accounting project, the top three skills learned by students were becoming a good team player (87%), being a good learner (80%) and communication skills (79%). For the event project, the top four skills learned were also being a good team player (93%), being a good learner (93%) and communication (87%), as well as coordination (87%), while the lowest proportion of students indicated that they were well equipped in leadership (55%) skills. These showed the consistency in the type of skills that can be transferred through ELSP regardless of the disciplinary and pedagogical nature of the courses. The setting of the courses that required and encouraged team work, that replicate actual situations within the industry and which build up team work capabilities seem to be most important. For the communication skills, it covered extensive areas in team building through idea planning and discussions, verbal skills through presentation and written skills in form of reports.

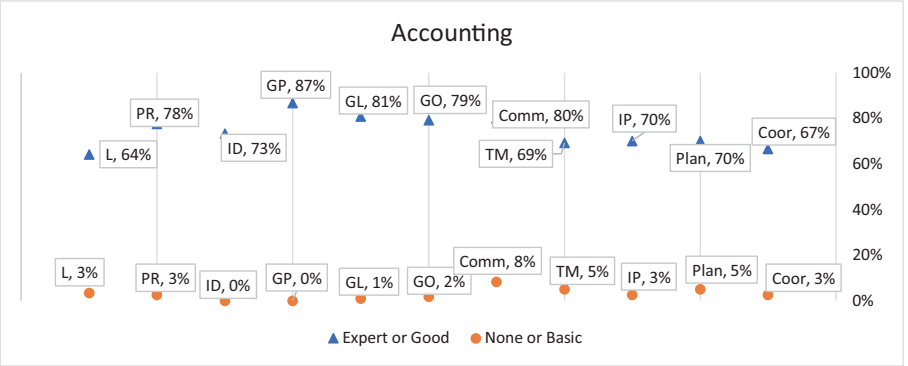
Table 11.2 Education Learning Space Principles (ELSP) and implementation examples in class

	Quantitative (accounting)	Practical skill (event management)
1. Respect for learners and their experience	To carry out an ice-breaking exercise at the first day of class. To call students by their first name after the first week of class.	To carry out an ice-breaking exercise at the first day of class. To call students by their first name after the first week of class.
2. Begin learning with the learner's experience of the subject matter	To explore together with students what they have learned previously (e.g. the technical input of transactions) and to explain how such knowledge can contribute to the learning of the course contents.	To explore together with students the activities they had done previously (e.g. the event hosted in year two of their study) and how those experiences contribute to future learning on the subject matter (e.g. the event to be hosted this semester).
3. Creating and holding a hospitable space for learning	To make students aware of potential challenges (e.g. the destructive outcomes if wrong decisions were made at the design phase) and offer support to overcome the challenges (e.g. considerations that management should undergo).	To make students aware of potential challenges (e.g. sponsorship acquisition) and offer support to overcome potential challenges (e.g. advice on sponsorship acquisition strategy).
4. Making space for conversational learning	To organize in-class discussions to understand the difficulties encountered by students; and through the use of case studies, to initiate topics and grounds for discussion on practical application of the accounting skills and techniques.	To organize class meeting in small group formats and instructor will sit in every group and develop conversation with each group to understand hurdles encountered during the event planning stage.
5. Making space for development of expertise	To design the requirements in a way that students are required to explore the existing social responsibilities in corporations that are being applied, as well as to create new types of Corporate Social Responsibility (CSRs) for the industry. This allows students to apply the knowledge learned through a practical thinking process.	To carry out the review of event functional team's achievement weekly and depict its significance to the entire event management process, in order to create space for students to consolidate knowledge learned every week.

(*continued*)

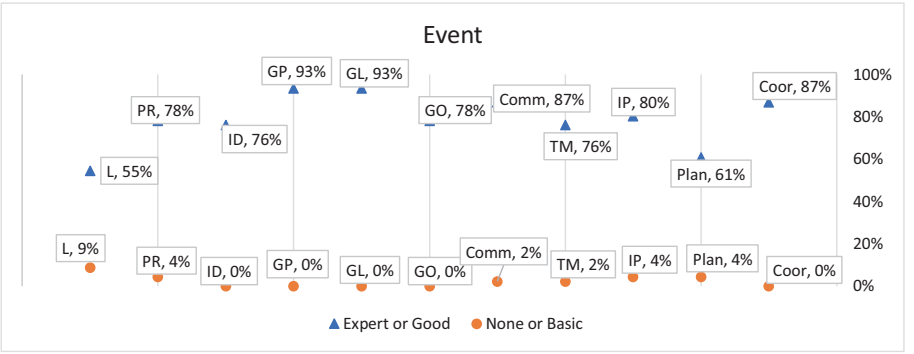
Table 11.2 (continued)

	Quantitative (accounting)	Practical skill (event management)
6. Making spaces for acting and reflecting	To require the students to choose a list of most potential social responsibilities in Stage 2 from the list that they have developed in Stage 1. This enables the students to reflect and consider how rational their original thoughts have been and their ideas can bring along benefits.	To set up an action plan weekly for every functional team. Functional teams carry out the plan during the week and report action taken and issues arise in the next week meeting. This provides space to student for acting and reflecting weekly on the entire event management process.
7. Making spaces for feeling and thinking	To allow students to choose the areas of social responsibilities that they preferred to explore and work on. Students are also allowed to decide if the social responsibilities applied in local tourism and hospitality corporations can be and are potential to apply for their own cases.	To assign roles and responsibilities to all students based on their interest and will to take up the position. Every student will express his/her interest during the first week of team setup.
8. Making space for inside-out learning	To structure the project based on real-life settings, while the decision-making process requires the application of conceptual knowledge with practical considerations.	To match student's interests and previous experiences as much as the event allows in order to better motivate the intrinsic learning of a student.
9. Making space for learners to take charge of their own learning	The details for each stage of the project are provided to students at the beginning of the semester, with a clear set of requirements, guidelines and deadlines. Students are allowed to set their own learning pace and schedule within the big framework	The event to be organized has been presented by the classmates in charge of the concept development at the beginning of the semester. Students are encouraged to express their interest of working area within the event organization. Self-nominations to become event managers and leaders are opened for students to nominate themselves. Space is therefore provided to students and enable them to take charge of their own learning in an area of their own interest.



Comm=communication, Coor=coordination, IP=interpersonal skills, L=leadership, ID=making independent decision, PR=peer relationship, Plan=planning, TM=time management, GL=being a good learner, GO=being a good observer, GP=being a good team player

Fig. 11.1 Level of skills learned by students taking the accounting (quantitative) project. *Comm* communication, *Coor* coordination, *IP* interpersonal skills, *L* leadership, *ID* making independent decision, *PR* peer relationship, *Plan* planning, *TM* time management, *GL* being a good learner, *GO* being a good observer, *GP* being a good team player



Comm=communication, Coor=coordination, IP=interpersonal skills, L=leadership, ID=making independent decision, PR=peer relationship, Plan=planning, TM=time management, GL=being a good learner, GO=being a good observer, GP=being a good team player

Fig. 11.2 Level of skills learned by students taking the event (practical) project. *Comm* communication, *Coor* coordination, *IP* interpersonal skills, *L* leadership, *ID* making independent decision, *PR* peer relationship, *Plan* planning, *TM* time management, *GL* being a good learner, *GO* being a good observer, *GP* being a good team player

To provide precise ideas about the requirements and expectations of the projects, both courses incorporated project guidelines and instructions that were distributed to students at the beginning of the semester, and these were supplemented by the explanation delivered by the lecturers in class. For the accounting course, 47% of students showed they were interested in being involved in every aspect of the project before it started—this increased to 52%

after the delivery of the course. At the same time, while only 43% of students expressed interest in the practical usefulness of the project prior to course delivery; this figure rose to 50% after the conclusion of project. The accounting project was largely incorporated with financial elements that do not commonly exist in the daily life of the students, especially for youngsters in their teens and early 20s. Moreover, for undergraduates majoring in non-numerical tourism and hospitality courses, the quantitative nature of the course might undermine their confidence in their own capabilities, impacting their interest negatively. Consequently, the accounting course incorporates an experiential learning project that provided settings when students can learn in a practical and fun way. Through the "numbering" process, students are guided and immersed in real-life situations, enabling the students to experience the process in a comfortable setting, while understanding the need to acquire the necessary skills.

On the other hand, for an event project, 80% of students indicated they are interested in being involved in every aspect of the projects and 66% of students feel interested about the practical usefulness before the project started. These figures changed to 74% and 64%, respectively, after the project was complete. This could be explained by the actual works involved to complete the experiential project. The actual work involved was heavy and challenging from the students' point of view. For example, students had to learn how to present their event idea to real business people in order to obtain event sponsorship. During the semester, students expressed numerous challenges and obstacles encountered when organizing the events. Due to the nature of different function teams, some teams perceived that their work was more challenging than others. For example, the Sponsorship Team had to go out, present event ideas and seek sponsorship, whereas the Administration Team focused on taking care of the clerical work and documentation and registration of activities. Students normally were very excited at the beginning of the event organization and their enthusiasm would depreciate as they encountered more challenges. Therefore, the drop from 80% to 74% in interest in the project is perhaps expected and understandable. Regarding the practical usefulness of the course, the drop is less easy to explain; however, it provides signal to the instructor that he/she has to reinforce the practicality of the course during the semester through scenarios happening and matters arising of the entire event organization.

Challenges and Best Practices

In order to adopt the nine Education Learning Space principles (ELSP), advanced course planning and additional efforts spent for implementation are critical. As the two courses offer experiential learning project at a group-based

level, group dynamics offer challenges to the instructors. Student complaints of free riders together with ineffective communication, for example, long meetings after class in resolving obstacles encountered during project organization, are the two very common complaints. Thus, the two instructors had to regularly check with each group to detect issues in order to provide resolutions at the earliest stage of the issues/problems arisen. For example, the instructor from the event management course made a suggestion to the students concerning holding long meeting hours after class. The instructor advised the students to set a limit of 90 minutes for each meeting. Furthermore, participants were advised to prepare in advance before meetings in order to avoid long and tedious discussions. The problem of long meeting hours was improved thereafter, as revealed in meeting minutes prepared by the students. Meeting duration was largely reduced from 4 hours to 90 minutes. In fact, this is in addition to the ELSP No. 4—Making space for conversational learning. Although a class meeting to facilitate conversation learning was provided, students might not express any issues nor had free conversation together with the instructors and team members.

For the accounting course, the free-rider issue mainly happened due to differences in the accounting background of the students. Those students who had not studied accounting in their high schools or otherwise experienced accounting tended to depend on those students who had prior experience. Therefore, the course instructor of the course advised the students to share the workload on a fair basis and required them to record the workload distribution plan, which they had to submit by the completion of the project. For the distribution of work, the instructor has guided them in a way that each part of work will be related to certain extent of intense accounting activities to ensure that all team members were equally exposed to the accounting processes.

In the event management courses, students tended *not* to express issues/problems in front of class meetings. This may be due to the Asian culture (Vongsila & Reinders, 2016) and students' habit (Liu, 2001), which often prevents students from raising issues or a problem that they perceive may hurt the whole team's morale in front of the instructor (this expression was discovered during private conversations with a few team leaders of the groups). Thus, they would rather leave the issues/problems to be discussed after class. This is another major reason why teams had prolonged after-class meetings. By having regular check-ups with team members, randomly, instructors will be able to detect issues/problems as early as possible and provide solutions. Besides, the entire exchange between instructors and students offers valuable lessons to students concerning communication skill and interpersonal skill.

In the accounting course, students did not seem to know how to ask questions. As the students did not have adequate skills to master the accounting

knowledge learned and apply it practically, it stands to reason that students may not even have the capability to identify the problem. The instructor therefore arranged casual interim presentation sessions at different times of the semester, when students were required to present their work in front of the classes with all students discussing feasible areas of improvement with the instructor. This allowed students to exemplify their knowledge on ways to handle different parts of the projects through listening to the work of the other teams. This also encouraged students to raise questions through comments on others' work and comments from other teams on their own work. As the instructor provided comments and solutions to each team, students were able to gain a much wider view on the correct methods and feasible options to the various scenarios.

ELSP No. 7—Making spaces for feeling and thinking had been implemented at the beginning of the two courses. Students were supposed to work on areas, roles or responsibilities based on their interest. However, there were students who only realized their real interest after the actual organization of the designated experiential learning projects taking place. If situations similar to this happen, the instructors have to respond to the interest changes flexibly by implementing ELSP No. 9—Making space for learners to take charge of their own learning. For example, the designated instructor may advise across function team or project team participation in order to assist the student(s) in making space to take charge of his/her own learning. Nevertheless, it is a principle that instructors are required to implement skillfully as it could arouse potential confusion among teams and students.

In summary, educators should pay attention to application details and processes, such as ELSP No. 4, 7 and 9. Based on the results and feedbacks of the two courses, we notice how ELSP application process differs from one course to the other. The two courses are both experiential learning projects. By adopting the ELSP, although the results on learning attitudes, performance and skill learned were positive; nevertheless, the details and processes of each adopted principle demands the instructor's attention. In addition, being flexible and accommodating students' needs are crucial when applying the ELSP effectively to achieve good learning outcomes of students in different teaching typologies.

Transferability

ELSP can be applied to a range of courses involving experiential learning projects. Understanding and applying the principles should be integrated as early as possible in course planning. As discussed earlier, the application details

of principles 4, 7 and 9 are to be noted. Our experiences inform us that ELSP is best implemented in a class size of no more than 50 students and works particularly well at the undergraduate level. This is because frequent communication between the course instructor and students is needed to tackle potential drawbacks and address emergent issues. If a class size is more than 50 students, the ELSP can still be adopted, but the course instructor must be able to spare ample of time to communicate with students outside of class contact hours. To minimize the possibility of free riding, based on the extent of workload required and a balance between peer learning versus free riding, the number of students in each project team should be restricted to four or less. Transferability of ELSP adoption will be possible for secondary school because of the frequent contact between a class teacher and his/her class. In addition, students' age and maturity across secondary, undergraduate and post-graduate level may impose dissimilar effects and outcomes of ELSP application. One could reasonably assume that different age group students and maturity levels will demand different levels of attention and interaction with instructors. Thus, different techniques and ELSP implementation method should vary depending on students' dynamics, age and maturity levels. The current study provides two samples of different courses (accounting and event management) adopting ELSP. Educators who are interested to adopt ELSP could implement the principles based on this chapter's experience sharing; nevertheless, transferability onto post-graduate program requires carefully planning aligned with the designed program's nature, for example, number of contact hours, and mode of lectures.

Contributions/Implications

This study provides insights and empirical evidence into the effectiveness of the application of the Education Learning Space Principles. Experiential learning is widely used in education; however, applying all the nine principles of ELSP from the design phase of the course is scarce. The majority of applications crowned themselves as experiential learning as long as the course allows students to learn through practical involvement, but experiential learning should be much more than this simple concept, when it actually encompasses extensive conceptual bases before it can result in factual outcomes. The current study has validated the practicality of applying ELSP under the framework of experiential learning on different types of courses through the detailed discussion on the list of actions, considerations and loopholes. It makes a valuable contribution to the existing literature on experiential learning theory

and practices. With the implementation of ELSP on these two very different courses, this study offers insights to educators who teach similar types of courses (quantitative or practical courses) and provides practice tips in adapting the principles to run and manage a course in similar nature. As the results indicate, the positive effectiveness of ELSP on students' learning, in particular on different skills learned and leaning attitude enhancement, this study offers practicable pedagogical insight to educators.

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Part IV

Class Projects

12

Assessing the Global Readiness of Organizations: An Experiential Approach

Eileen Daspro

Introduction

Today's level of global exports is unprecedented. In 2016, the global value of exports of goods and services represented 28.51% of the global GDP, up from 11.87% in 1960 (World Bank, 2018). At the macroeconomic level, a decline in political and regulatory barriers to trade and advances in transportation and telecommunications technology have together played a fundamental role in boosting global exports during this time. At the firm level, managers' desire to increase sales and profit, mitigate risk through market diversification and lower costs through scale economies have driven company efforts to expand internationally. While this rapid growth in export sales no doubt has brought benefits to many firms, Alexander and Korine (2008) warn that too many firms underestimate the costs and complexity of going global, and erroneously assume it is the right thing to do for every firm. Specifically, they warn all companies to first conduct a comprehensive, cost/benefit analysis of their proposed internationalization decision prior to expanding overseas.

In fact, there appears to be a quantifiable gap between firm interest in internationalization, on the one hand, and their export capability, on the other. In a 2016 Small Business Administration (SBA) report, 50% of small- and medium-sized U.S. companies surveyed stated their interest in exporting. However, a significant percentage of those responding simultaneously

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M. A. Gonzalez-Perez et al. (eds.), *The Palgrave Handbook of Learning and Teaching International Business and Management*, https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-030-20415-0_12

identified the obstacles that were holding them back, which included not having a globally competitive product suitable for export (39%), being unsure of where to start (37%) and fear of the complexity of doing business in overseas markets (24%) (Cazamias, 2017).

Cavusgil and Tamerand Nason (1990) have suggested one way to breach this gap between export intent, on the one hand, and export preparedness, on the other. The authors suggested that firms conduct an export readiness assessment prior to any export operation. For example, CORE (Company Readiness to Export) is a diagnostic tool developed by S. Tamer Cavusgil consisting of 70 multiple-choice questions, in which the firm self-evaluates its export readiness. Export readiness of a firm is determined through an assessment of the strengths and weaknesses of the firm on six key dimensions: competitive ability in the domestic market, motivations for going international, managerial commitment to go international, organizational readiness, product readiness and availability of company resources (Zou, Kim, & Cavusgil, 2009). The CORE diagnostic tool is used extensively by the U.S. Commercial Service as both a training and consulting tool.

This chapter presents the initial experience of a large, private Mexican university, Tec de Monterrey, Guadalajara, using the CORE tool to assess export readiness of a local, medium-sized company. Upon completion, students would complete a course evaluation survey, which included specific questions on the usefulness of the project and student perception of the relevance and quality of their learning resulting from the project. If the results were satisfactory, the activity would then be adopted by the 26 other campi in Mexico and become a required component of the undergraduate business curriculum. To date, the use of export diagnostic tools had been mostly limited to practitioners in government agencies or by consultancy firms. The author posits that the administration of an export readiness diagnostic by students in a real company represents an invaluable exercise for learning about the potential costs and benefits associated with going global. Moreover, as will be shown below, students are able to develop a deeper level of understanding of what global readiness truly is if it is taught in a more holistic way that incorporates explicitly "learning by doing". According to Kolb (1984, p. 38), "learning is a process whereby knowledge is created through the transformation of experience. Knowledge results from the combination of grasping experience and transforming it" (Kolb, 1984, p. 41) Kolb's Experiential Learning Theory posits a cyclical model of learning, consisting of four stages: *concrete experience, reflective observation, abstract conceptualization* and *active experimentation*. These four components correspond to the four stages of implementation of the CORE project, as will be outlined below.

The Project

The Basics

- Suitable audience: Second- or third-year business students
- Time required: 25 hours total
- Optimal group size: 20–25 students
- Materials: CORE diagnostic tool. Available at:
- https://globaledge.msu.edu/tools-and-data/diagnostic-tools
- Cost: none. Registration is free.

Learning Objectives

Upon completion of the project, the students will be able to:

- Assess the competitive ability of the firm in the domestic market through evaluation of the size of its customer base and domestic market share, the complexity of its current sales and distribution network and requisite cash flow to finance international projects
- Evaluate the strategic intent and motivations underlying a firm's decision to go international
- Gauge the firm's degree of managerial commitment to exporting through the amount of time, money and manpower allocated to the initiative
- Analyze the international readiness of the firm's human, financial and product resources required for export
- Determine the readiness of the firm's product/service for international markets by assessing its level of differentiation, compatibility and adaptability to market, legal and cultural obstacles overseas

Purpose and Description

The Tec de Monterrey (Tec) is Mexico's largest private university with 26 campi throughout Mexico and 16 offices around the world, with nearly 100,000 students at the secondary, university and postgraduate levels. In 2015, the Tec embarked upon a bold initiative to reinvent their educational model. The primary aim of the new, Tec 21 model was to improve the competitiveness of its students through the adoption of a competency-based educational model that would better prepare students for the challenges and

opportunities of the twenty-first-century workplace. The gap between student perceptions of preparedness for the twenty-first-century workplace and employer's opinion has been well documented. For example, the Lumina Foundation (2014) showed that 96% of academic officers scored their institution as effective in preparing their students for the labor market, yet only 11% of business leaders surveyed felt that graduates had the skills and competencies which their businesses required. Similarly, in 2018, the National Association of Colleges and Employers (NACE) found wide discrepancies in their *Job Outlook Survey* between the perceptions of students and employers regarding workforce preparedness of recent college graduates. For example, of the 4213 students surveyed, 79.4% believed themselves to be prepared in terms of communication skills and 70.5% in leadership skills, while only 41.6% and 33% of employers thought graduates were qualified in these two areas (NACE, 2017). The report concludes by recommending that more opportunities be created for U.S. students to apply knowledge and skills in professional, real-world settings, whether they be internships, co-ops or consulting projects.

Manpower Group (2018) identified similar findings in their 2018 Talent Shortage Survey report for Mexico. In this case, employers responded that 18% of applicants lacked enough real-world experience for the job vacancies they had available. Similarly, 17% of aspiring employees lacked the necessary hard skills the employer required and another 7% of students lacked the necessary soft skills. Their findings are in line with those of NACE in the U.S. context.

A pillar of the Tec 21 educational model is the competency, defined by the institution as: "the integration of knowledge, skills, attitudes and values which allow a person to develop effectively in different contexts and perform a function, activity or task effectively" (Observatorio Educativo, 2015a). Some of these competencies are "transversal" and are independent of a student's academic program and include problem solving, teamwork, critical thinking, oral and written communication, and so on. Others, in contrast, are specific to a student's discipline and/or academic program.

The methodology chosen for competency development in Tec 21 was challenge-based learning. It is a pedagogical approach that engages students actively in real-world projects typically faced by professionals in today's workplace. The complexity of the challenge and the uncertainty of the context in which it develops require that students work collaboratively to both carefully define the problem and propose an integral solution. The methodology holds valuable benefits for the learner. These include deeper comprehension of subject matter, greater student involvement and motivation in their own learning process and greater student involvement with their professional community outside academia (Observatorio Educativo, 2015b).

Undergraduate business students at Tec take a required course in their second year called *Businesses in the World*. Key themes of the course include the forces of globalization, motives for firm internationalization, political, economic, cultural and legal factors that influence the international business environment and major actors and institutions in the world economy, including the World Trade Organization. In spring 2018, the Tec decided to implement a challenge-based learning methodology in this course. First, course faculty who generally teach the course identified the transversal and disciplinary competencies students were to develop during the course. Next, a local, challenge-based project was developed with a Mexican company partner: Grupo Tarahumara. Grupo Tarahumara is a five-decade old, family-owned Mexican company that sells fruit throughout Mexico, much of it imported from the United States. The professors selected the company for this project because it had minimal experience in export operations and was actively seeking to grow sales internationally. Moreover, the unfavorable Mexican peso/U.S. dollar exchange rate at the time had made it imperative for the firm to diversify its international operations away from imports and toward international export sales, so there was a genuine interest on the part of the company's management to assess their export readiness.

In preparation for the project, a contract was drafted between the Tec and the company's director and legal counsel, outlining the role of each party in the project, the project's scope and key moments during the semester when the company's participation was required in order to implement the project. It also designated a single point of contact between the company and the university, for communication purposes, and explicitly outlined how confidential company information was to be handled. For example, students and the faculty coordinator were required to sign a non-disclosure agreement. Moreover, the contract stipulated that the company would organize a guided tour of the company's offices and installations, a brief face-to-face presentation with managers and a virtual meeting when Tec students could administer the CORE tool. The first two events occurred immediately in week 1 of the semester, while the latter occurred between weeks 2 and 3 of the course.

The professor leading the project organized the students in teams. The heterogeneous teams comprised—three to four students representing different business school majors, genders and grade point averages. Each team assumed responsibility for a set of questions, corresponding to one of the six dimensions of export readiness outlined in the CORE instrument. The professor informed them that peer evaluation represented 5% of their course grade and outlined the criteria by which they would evaluate their peers. The student teams were first asked to register to use the CORE tool at the MSU

GlobalEdge website: https://globaledge.msu.edu/tools-and-data/diagnostic-tools/core. Then, students reviewed the questions they were assigned to ask the company's managerial team as well as the accompanying explanation provided for each item. The aim here was for students to gain a greater understanding of their assigned dimension of export readiness and how it might impact a company's global readiness.

For example, the first section of the diagnostic deals with competitive capabilities in the domestic market. Question 1 is focused on the ***scope of marketing***.

The questions read:

Which of the following best describes the scope of your marketing?

- *We sell primarily to a few customers locally.*
- *We sell to a few customers regionally or nationally.*
- *We sell to a large customer base locally.*
- *We sell to a large customer base regionally.*
- *We sell to a large customer base nationally.*

Respondents or administrators of the questionnaire have the option to click on a "?" icon that provides a detailed explanation of the question and its importance in determining export readiness. For example, the explanation of question 1 reads:

Substantial empirical evidence suggests that those companies that have "gone international" at home are more likely to succeed in export markets. That is, experience in expanding the customer/market base from a local scope to a regional or national scope can be a major advantage. In the process of domestic market expansion, managers gain invaluable experience in dealing with multiple customers with varying needs that are scattered throughout a larger geographic market. Such experience with varied market situations seem to prepare managers in dealing with the complexities of the export market. It can be concluded that expansion abroad is more likely to be successful if the company has successfully expanded throughout its home market.

Then, the professor led a whole group introductory discussion of the different elements of export readiness. Each team was encouraged to share key tenets of their assigned dimension and a few examples of its components. By the time each team had taken their turn, the professor had highlighted on the board the six CORE dimensions with key concepts associated with each. Then, students returned to their teams and brainstormed —two to three follow-up questions they could ask the managers regarding each question. The professor explained that while the quantitative result of the diagnostic was useful, the real value of the exercise was the interpretation the students would make in understanding the complex concept of export readiness as it applied to a real company.

The professor then set up a three-hour virtual appointment during week 2 of the semester with top management of the partner company for the purpose of administering the diagnostic. Four company managers attended representing operations, sales, finance and human resources. While others could have attended, the participation of the directors from these areas was viewed as necessary given the cross-functional focus of the CORE diagnostic. The CORE questionnaire was shared with them one week in advance so they could reflect upon their response prior to the administration date.

The actual administration of the CORE diagnostic took place virtually via Skype. This was in part due to space restrictions in the company to receive a large student group and time limitations on the part of the managers to spend a full day at the university's campus. The professor facilitated the interaction. Each team designated a fixed set of roles for the duration of the activity. A leader from each team was made responsible for asking their assigned questions of the company managers. Another teammate registered the response and any comments in the CORE platform, while a third asked follow-up questions and a fourth student observed the managers reactions. This dynamic continued until all of the student teams had asked the management team all 70 questions of the CORE diagnostic. While one team was asking questions, the remaining teams were encouraged to observe the interaction and make note of comments made or examples of non-verbal forms of communication among the managers throughout the CORE's administration.

A few unforeseen issues arose. First, the students asked a few follow-up questions after each response. A definitive response would allow them to assess the company's readiness, but without an explanation or supporting information, it would be more complicated for the student teams to provide recommendations for the company as to how to improve their export readiness. Second, managers didn't always have the same response to the same question. This may be because they held different perceptions of the company, lacked information their colleagues had or simply because they didn't want to share openly a response that might somehow reflect negatively on their performance or that of their department. Ultimately, the managerial teams provided responses for all questions, but there was clearly no consensus on the correct response for at least 25% of the questions asked, which may have influenced the validity of the diagnostic's result.

Upon completion of the administration of the CORE, students ran the analysis to determine the company's level of export readiness using the CORE website. In their teams, students interpreted the initial evaluation produced by the platform, which is a 3 × 3 grid that represents two dimensions of export readiness: organizational and product readiness on a three-level scale: low,

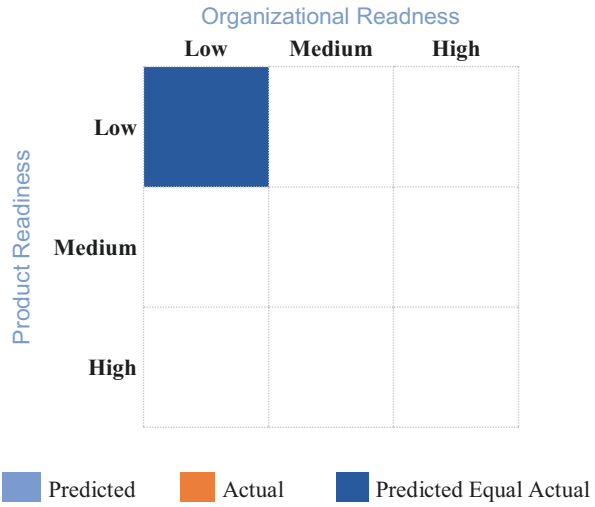

Fig. 12.1 Example of CORE diagnostic outcome

medium and high. Each student team then drafted a list of key weaknesses and strengths that influenced the company's export potential (Fig. 12.1).

Then, the professor led a whole class discussion of the CORE findings and underscored their strengths and weaknesses as they related to export preparedness. Finally, each team brainstormed original recommendations for the company to better prepare itself for export, based on the diagnostic's outcomes on their assigned dimension. While students remained in their assigned role throughout the activity, recommendations were to include insights derived from the information provided by all the student teams and not just their own.

After this activity, students completed an individual written assignment where they reflected upon export readiness as a concept and the CORE as its diagnostic tool. Key prompts for the reflection were: Why was it important to assess export readiness? What components of the survey if any would you eliminate? Were there any important components you feel should be added? Do you feel all dimensions of the questionnaire are equally important predictors of export readiness and hence should be equally weighted in importance? Why or why not?

Finally, students applied what they learned in their final presentation to the partner company. Each team had drafted individually, and then as a single class, conclusions and original recommendations to be presented to the company based on their experience administering and interpreting the CORE diagnostic. During the company presentation, students presented both the CORE methodology, their findings, the class' collective conclusions and original recommendations to the company, as well as limitations identified during the implementation of the methodology.

Given the competency-based focus of the Tec's new, education model, students were assessed based on their level of development of the three declared competencies, described below, on a five-point scale, with 1 being "in development" and 5 being "expert". The professor used the three individual tasks as inputs for completing a competency assessment rubric available in Appendix 1. They included the following: (1) student participation in the activity debriefing led by the professor, (2) the individual, final integrative reflective report and (3) the student's individual participation in the team's presentation to the company. In addition, the students were required to complete a self-assessment at the end of the project, as well as a co-evaluation of their project peers. This can be found in Appendix 2.

Experiential Learning Cycle

In Kolb's Learning Cycle, learners advance, through the processes of concrete experience, reflective observation, abstract conceptualization and active experimentation as they increase and refine their knowledge. Learning is seen as an integrated process with each stage reinforcing another. Learners may enter the cycle at any stage, as long as they execute all four stages of the model.

In the project described here, learning grows as students advance through all four stages of the model. In phase 1, ***concrete experience*** or ("doing") the learner actively experiences an activity with high learning potential, whether it be a role-play, a simulation or a consulting project. In the CORE project described here, the students had a concrete experience when they administered the CORE diagnostic directly to the company's management and interpreted the results. In the second stage, ***reflective observation*** ("watching"), the learner reflected upon the new learning, its importance and any inconsistencies that might exist between their previous concepts of the construct and new perceptions resulting from their concrete experience. Learners reflected not only on what went well, but also what could have gone better and why, based on their experience. In the case study described here, students reflected individually upon their concrete experiences, addressing differences between their original perceptions of the export readiness and new ones derived from their first-hand experience assessing the construct.

In phase 3, ***abstract conceptualization*** ("conceptualizing") students drafted guidelines for implementing a new export readiness construct. On the basis of their concrete experience, students reflected on what they would do differently next time and why, articulating clearly the critical success factors for determining export readiness.

Finally, in phase 4, ***active experimentation*** ("experimenting") students applied their new knowledge of skills in the real world. In the project described here, students do this when presenting their findings to company management. First, they drafted conclusions and original recommendations based on their experience and reflections regarding export readiness and the company's level of preparedness. Subsequently, they presented and substantiated their findings to the company's management. During this process, company managers actively questioned their findings and asked students to describe the employed methodology, interpret their results and justify their recommendations. Students also identified possible limitations in both the methodology and the diagnostic tool itself, including suggestions for future implementation.

Skills and Competencies

One of the particularly valuable aspects of this project is that students must integrate knowledge from across the business disciplines (marketing, finance, human resources, etc.) and apply it through the use of the CORE diagnostic in their determination of a firm's readiness to export. The ability of students to relate concepts across the business disciplines in decision-making makes the activity particularly challenging and relevant in terms of skill development. The course professor identified one transversal competency to be assessed which was termed "global vision" and two relevant disciplinary, international business competencies for the activity, described below:

- Demonstrates awareness and interest in one's own social, political and cultural panorama on the national level and that of others on an international level
- Evaluates economic, political, legal and socio-cultural variables at the national and industry levels that impact the competitiveness of a firm and its product in international markets
- Assesses the readiness of a firm to sell internationally, considering financial resources, managerial commitment and expertise and product capabilities

Optimal Fit

This activity would work best for second- or third-year undergraduate business students who have completed or are near completion of their required business core courses. Ideally, this activity would be done in a traditional classroom in a face-to-face format. The recommended class size is 20–25 students. An important requisite is the availability of a company partner, in this case, a

small- or medium-sized company looking to export. The presence of small- and medium-sized businesses looking to grow internationally is common across major metropolitan areas in the United States and around the world and hence should not limit this project's replicability.

Challenges

One initial challenge faced in this project was finding a suitable company to whom the CORE could be administered. While many small- and medium-sized businesses existed in a large metropolitan area of over 4.2 million people where the Tec Guadalajara, Mexico campus is located, not all companies were willing to participate in the CORE export readiness assessment, either because they were not interested or because they were wary of sharing confidential information with a group of students. Ultimately, the Tec required all students and faculty members to sign a non-disclosure agreement, so that companies would rest assured that information would be kept confidential during and after the project. For this activity, the team relied heavily on state (JalTrade) and federal (Promexico) export promotion agencies in Mexico for potential company contacts. In addition, Tec signed an agreement with Promexico to formalize the collaborative arrangement between the two institutions.

Another challenge encountered was the actual administration of the CORE diagnostic. The Tec team administered the diagnostic to a number of company managers since the questions are based on performance indicators from different functional areas in the firm. The managers did not always share the same answer for the questions, which posed a challenge as to how to actually fill out the questionnaire and with whose response. In the future, it is suggested to continue to administer the CORE to a managerial team of marketing, production, sales and human resources managers, and so on but to assign certain questions to certain managers based on their functional area of expertise. In this way, conflict may be avoided or at least reduced and the validity of the results enhanced.

An additional challenge the team encountered was the quality of the answers provided by the managers during the assessment. While the questionnaire itself is multiple choice and yields a quantitative assessment of export readiness, in fact, responses to the instrument's questions without explanation or follow-up are of limited value. Students appeared to be intimidated to ask follow-up questions and the managers themselves did not openly volunteer additional information, especially when their response might be construed as negative. In the future, the importance of this stage will be reinforced with the company partner. Students also need to be better prepared with previously drafted follow-up questions. Students role-playing the activity ahead of time with someone they do not know would also be useful.

Evaluation of Learning Effectiveness

Ideally, the Kirkpatrick training model could be used to evaluate the project. It is a commonly used method to evaluate the effectiveness of learning solutions. It comprises four levels. In the first, ***reaction***, learners' reaction to the training they receive is gauged. What did the participant think of the training they received? Did they find it useful? In the Tec project, students were administered a survey toward the end of the semester where they were asked to consider whether they found the project to be useful for their professional practice. Among the student participants, 87.5% highly agreed or agreed that the project was relevant to their future professional practice.

In the second stage, ***learning***, actual student learning from the project was evaluated. The same survey results showed that 87.5% of students felt they had developed competencies, skills and abilities relevant to their academic and professional practice. This outcome was reaffirmed by the faculty member who evaluated the level of individual competencies of the students demonstrated during the project. Specifically, 91.6% of the 24 student participants were evaluated at the satisfactory level or higher for all three of the declared competencies.

The third level, ***behavior***, is focused on whether students actually use their new skills and the fourth ***results***, on the observation of actual behavior change in the workplace. Since students were first- and second-year business students, and most were not working at the time, these two components of student learning were not measured.

Transferability/Replication

The competencies developed in the CORE project are essential for international business professionals. Alexander and Korine (2008) have argued that all too often firms pursue internationalization strategies which ultimately fail because they fail to first perform a cost/benefit analysis first of the benefits of going global. Professionals in both domestic as well as international firms need to be able to determine whether organizations and their products are internationally competitive prior to initiating overseas sales. According to the U.S. Small Business Administration, at least 50% of firms seek to expand internationally. While the same indicator does not exist for Mexico, per se, it is known that the number of firms that export in Mexico is very low, less than 1% of the total registered businesses (Urmeneta, 2017). Assuming this level of interest is generalizable to firms who do not export in other countries, the possibility of carrying out a CORE project with a small- or medium-sized business looking to go global should be both relevant and possible.

Contributions/Implications

The CORE project provides insightful contributions to international business pedagogy. One critical strategic question facing firms today in 2019 is whether they are ready to go global. The CORE diagnostic represents a validated methodological tool for students to conduct this assessment. Initial evaluation of learners' reaction and competency development in the project suggest that this type of experiential project is both relevant and effective in developing key competencies international business professionals should possess, as they relate to the assessment of organizational and product readiness for international markets. While this was not an explicit aim of the project, the professor, too most likely enhanced his/her own competency in export assessment through this kind of exercise. If as a higher education professional, one seeks to better prepare our students for the challenges and realities of the twenty-first-century workplace, it is reasonable to expect that educators should also strengthen their own understanding of competencies currently demanded by the business community.

Appendix 1: Competency Rubric

TRANSVERSAL Demonstrates awareness and interest in one's own social, political and cultural panorama on the national level and that of others on an international level	In development	Basic	Intermediate	Advanced
DISCIPLINARY Evaluates economic, political, legal and socio-cultural variables at the national and industry level that impact the competitiveness of a firm and its product in international markets	In development	Basic	Intermediate	Advanced
DISCIPLINARY Assesses the readiness of a firm to sell internationally, considering financial resources, managerial commitment and expertise and product capabilities	In development	Basic	Intermediate	Advanced

In Development: the individual demonstrates a **minimal use** of the competency and is currently developing it

Basic: the individual demonstrates **limited use** of a competency and requires additional training to apply

Intermediate: the individual demonstrates a **functional** proficiency level which enables the competency to be exercised effectively

Advanced: the individual demonstrates **in depth** proficiency level; is able to assist, consult or lead others in its use

Appendix 2: Self-Evaluation/Co-Evaluation Rubric

Self-Evaluation/Co-Evaluation Rubric

Assign yourself/teammates a score on a scale where 0 =(Totally Disagree) and 10 =(Totally Agree)

Variable	Yourself	Teammate # 1	Teammate # 2	Teammate # 3
Punctuality to class and meetings				
Participates actively in class and with the team				
Completes all tasks well				
Contributes meaningfully to the class and team				
Communicates effectively and respectfully				

Summarize in a few sentences below WHY you deserve this score. Be specific about your contribution to this project.

Summarize in a few sentences below your justification of your teammates' scores.

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13

An Immersion into Global Assignment Destinations

Miriam Moeller, Corene Crossin, and Rui Torres de Oliveira

Introduction

Global mobility is on the rise. According to the United Nations in 2016, the number of international migrants—that is, persons living in a country other than where they were born—reached 244 million in 2015 for the world. This number represents a 41 percent increase compared to the year 2000. Moreover, it suggests a rapid rise not only in world population but also in the percentage of the population who will be living *and working* abroad—either temporarily or permanently.

The share of international migrants in the global population reached 3.3 percent in 2015, up from 2.8 percent in 2000. That is, 33 percent of the population of Europe, 75 percent of the population of the US, 1.2 times the population of Brazil or 44 times the population of Finland—to put it in perspective.

Some other interesting statistics include that, in 2015, two out of three international migrants lived in Europe or Asia, and nearly half of all international migrants worldwide were born in Asia. In Europe, Northern America,

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M. A. Gonzalez-Perez et al. (eds.), *The Palgrave Handbook of Learning and Teaching International Business and Management*, https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-030-20415-0_13

and Oceania, international migrants account for at least 10 percent of the total population. By contrast, in Africa, Asia, and Latin America and the Caribbean, fewer than 2 percent of the population are international migrants. Among major regions of the world, Northern America hosts the third-largest number of international migrants, followed by Africa, Latin America and the Caribbean, and Oceania. Of the 20 countries with the largest number of international migrants living abroad, 11 were in Asia, 6 in Europe, and 1 each in Africa, Latin America and the Caribbean, and Northern America. These numbers suggest that the percentage in growth in international migration is in proportion greater than the growth of the world population.

International migration nonetheless poses challenges. Each year, tens of billions of dollars are spent by organizations to move personnel across borders (McNulty & Inkson, 2013). These company-assigned expatriates—or CAEs in short—last an average of 3–4 years serve a particular purpose (Harvey, Mayerhofer, Hartmann, & Moeller, 2010; Suutari, Brewster, & Dickman, 2018). These individuals represent a crucial talent pool for organizations to deliver the value they seek (Collings & Isichei, 2017; Deloitte, 2013). Despite the substantial costs involved, however, expatriation often results in an unsatisfactory return on investment for the company (McNulty & Inkson, 2013) and an unsatisfactory experience for the expatriates and their accompanying families (Pinto, Cabral-Cardoso, & Werther Jr., 2012). The reason for this usually is the poor delivery of effective expatriate management.

Mobility handbooks serve as guides for organizations to manage their international migration and workforce. A global mobility handbook is a key reference for administrators looking to create a successful international assignment or expatriate program. The handbook helps organizations solve the inevitable complications in relocating highly valued personnel to new and foreign markets and is an invaluable asset in today's globalized business environment (Frith, 2015).

In short, global mobility handbooks offer human resources (HR) personnel and strategists insight into some of the most challenging areas of international migration across recruitment, performance and career management, training, and compensation. Similarly, university courses on HR serve to prepare future HR managers to anticipate problem areas and respond swiftly to crises as they arise. This project is designed for students to formulate and communicate points of reference for human resource administrators as they relate to some of the new and continuously growing emerging market (EM) destinations we see today. A global mobility handbook, and projects as this, is a key reference guide for HR administrators looking to create a successful international assignment or expatriate programs.

The Project and Experience

'Insight', relative to the proposed experiential learning project approach outlined in this chapter, is the graduate's capacity to gain an accurate and deep understanding of the global workplace mobility scene, beyond what may seem obvious. Close to 300 million people live and work abroad today (UN, 2016), a majority of which are relocated as CAEs. The Global Mobility Handbook project offers students the opportunity to develop insight into the challenges faced by CAEs. It presents an experimental learning approach to international business students through the process of self-selecting international human resource management (IHRM) challenges and developing insights into these challenges specific to emerging market (EM) contexts.

Human resource management departments rely on hiring, developing, and retaining insightful employees who have the capacity to think critically about managing globally mobile employees (Dickmann & Andresen, 2018). Students who do not pursue a career in human resources, but as future employees and managers similarly gain from this experiential learning exercise, as it foreshadows the intricacies of an international assignment and its challenges, whereby emerging market destinations arguably present the greatest assignment challenges (Brookfield, 2016).

These intricacies manifested in the volatility, uncertainty, complexity, and ambiguity—also known as VUCA—of the business environment are driven and have also become visible in several other HR-related areas: First, there are changes in the workforce demographics such as lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender (LGBT) community and female breadwinners (Moeller & Maley, 2017) and, second, there is an increased number and types of international assignments (short-term, long-term, rotational, flex-assignments, etc.).

A principal in Mercer's global mobility business said that although short-term assignments are often highly beneficial, HR must be aware of the challenges such assignments bring: 'The increased diversification of assignment types adds complexity, which can result in potential compliance and policy challenges for HR and mobility directors' (Rossier-Renaud, 2015, p. 1). Students must understand the agility required in today's world to function as an employee or to assist others to function in those contexts (Mack, Khare, Kraemer, & Burgartz, 2015).

The Basics

1. Most suitable to third- or final-year undergraduate students
2. Time required: Minimum of 1 hour outside of class and 1 hour in class for discussion and self-reflection per human resource management topic assessed
3. Individually assessed project with the assistance of two persons in class discussion
4. Students must be present in class to participate
5. Cost: Materials and technologies required (e.g., printed instruction handouts); time to be insightful.

Learning Objectives

The two major objectives of the project are (1) to identify major global HR mobility challenges within the context of recruitment, training and development, compensation, and performance management, and (2) to critically evaluate the complexity involved in managing a globally mobile workforce in an emerging market context only to derive insight into practical implications.

These objectives correspond to Bloom's taxonomy and enables students to remember (i.e., recall facts and basic concepts), understanding (i.e., explain ideas or concepts), apply (i.e., use information in new situations), analyze (i.e., draw connections among ideas), evaluate (i.e., justify a stand or decision), and create (i.e., produce new or original work). With this taxonomy, the project emphasizes higher order learning objectives.

Likewise, it contributes to graduates' ability to gain an accurate and a deep understanding of someone or something (insight!) and prepares them in the following ways:

1. As future globally mobile employees;
2. As future managers managing globally mobile employees; and
3. As critical thinkers about the impact of global HR policies and practices on strategy.

Purpose and Description

Main idea: The Global Mobility Handbook project presents an experiential learning approach to undergraduate international business students through the process of (a) self-selecting international human resource management

(IHRM) challenges across identifying and selecting, training and development, compensation, and performance management, while likewise (b) asking students to develop insights into these challenges specific to emerging market (EM) contexts. At the end of this project, students will be able to:

(a) Identify and give examples of critical IHRM challenges,
(b) Demonstrate an ability to translate these challenges to emerging market contexts,
(c) Construct arguments around the utility of solutions,
(d) Critique similar solutions of their peers, and
(e) Engage in focused self-reflection.

The *Global Mobility Handbook* entails a series of 4 written 600–800-word assessments. Students are expected to conduct independent, in-depth research and to subsequently describe and elaborate on one EM country characteristic. Country characteristics can span a myriad of topics including culturally or socially manifested practices and principles, characteristics of the law or any other justifiable characteristic deemed context appropriate. Students are then expected to apply the selected characteristic to the pre-selected EM context. The idea is to demonstrate the practical implications on how the EM country characteristic can influence the practice of weekly IHRM elements covered. A series of four individual assessments was designed for continuous improvement. The project is neither industry- nor company-specific and is based on individual performance. The project involves, pre-, during, and post-class preparations and reflections.

This project also provides students with a firsthand opportunity to craft their own Global Mobility Handbook for a specific EM destination. The project is useful not only for those students graduating from university and beginning a career in HR, but also for those interested in or selected for international assignments at some stage in their professional lives. This project provides students with a window into the intricacies of moving abroad in a company setting.

The number of international assignments is growing in the locations that represent some of the most difficult assignment challenges (see Brookfield, 2016). Some of the countries presenting the greatest challenges for international assignees are China, Brazil, India, Argentina, Mexico, Russia, Philippines, United Arab Emirates, Ukraine, Liberia, Uganda, Colombia, India, Indonesia, Japan, and Malaysia to name a few. Each year, a set of two EM destinations are selected. The class is then split in half to allocate each destination to different students.

Participants

Second, third, or final year, predominantly undergraduate international business students; elective for non-majors. Students take on the role of a global human resource specialist in charge of developing a global mobility handbook to better manage present and future assignment destinations.

Covered Subject

1. International careers, international assignments, international assignees
2. Human Resource Management/Global Talent Management
3. Identifying and selecting, training and development, compensation, and performance management
4. Emerging markets specificities and business systems

About the Assessment

1. Context specific to one of two pre-selected emerging market destinations
2. Country characteristics can span a myriad of topics including culturally or socially manifested practices and principles, characteristics of the law or any other justifiable characteristics deemed context appropriate
3. Series of four individual assessments designed for continuous improvement

Assessment Criteria and Expectations

After completing this project, students will be able to critically evaluate emerging market cultures while applying them to international human challenges and opportunities as they relate to an international migrant population. The assessment rubric for this project lists five criteria inclusive of percentage attributed to each criterion by which students' work will be evaluated. Each criterion is accompanied by a set of detailed expectations, approximate response length per criterion and other information to support the process of this assessment.

For Criterion 1 (Description and Elaboration of Emerging Market Country Characteristic [20%]) students are expected to conduct independent in-depth research and to subsequently describe and elaborate on one relevant EM

country characteristic. Descriptions should be thorough, insightful, and logical, and differ each assessed week. (Note: Country characteristics can span a myriad of topics including culturally or socially manifested practices and principles, characteristics of the law or any other justifiable characteristics deemed context appropriate.) Students are to highlight their characteristics in yellow. Response length: ~250 words/1 page/2–3 paragraphs.

For Criterion 2 (Evaluation and Application of Emerging Market Country Characteristic to International Human Resource Management Function [20%]) students are expected to apply the selected EM country characteristic. The idea is to offer insight into the potential practical implications on how the EM characteristic can influence the practice of each relevant week's IHRM element (i.e., recruitment, performance management, training, and compensation). Assessments are meant to be as context specific as possible. Response Length: ~350–400 words/1–1.5 pages/3 paragraphs.

For Criterion 3 (Reflection of Evaluation and Application [20%]) students are expected to engage in comparisons between their work specified in Criteria 1 and 2 and new ideas discussed during the lecture. The challenge to students is to summarize and critique the discussion taking place in class. A careful reflection will highlight areas of weakness and/or omission in the student's practical implications section. Students are asked to comment on these weaknesses and/or omissions and write a brief reflection, in a thoughtful manner. Response Length: ~100–150 words/0.5–0.75 page/1–2 paragraphs.

For Criterion 4 (Variety and Utility of References [20%]) students are expected to demonstrate an ability to use a wide array of appropriate references from varying sources correctly—if applicable, across Criteria 1 and 2. They are also expected to consistently apply a referencing style. Total of three to five references maximum.

For Criterion 5 (Grammar and Formatting [20%]), students are expected to present a carefully executed project. This means that the project has no misspellings and/or grammatical errors (references and in-text citations excepted). The project will be exceptionally and professionally formatted. NB. Why am I marked on grammar and formatting? Imagine submitting work that contains numerous grammatical and formatting errors but contains exceptional content. Then, juxtapose this scenario by submitting work that has flawless grammar and formatting but contains inappropriate or non-relevant information. Which reflects worse on you? Take pride in your work and present it in a professional manner.

Experiential Learning Cycle

This project is an exercise in experimentation. The answer is unknown, and students must create new knowledge. Kolb's (1984) theory is concerned with the learner's internal cognitive processes, whereby learning is the process through which knowledge is created through the transformation of experience. The experience in this project forces students to individually envision a new experience or situation (Stage 1); it invites students to reflect (Stage 2); it offers students an opportunity to question an existing idea, as it is impacted by the new experience of the situation (Stage 3). Students are given an opportunity to apply their idea(s) to the world around them to see what happens (Stage 4) by legitimizing their ideas to peers. Kolb (1984) argues that effective learning only occurs when a learner can execute all four stages of the model. Therefore, no one stage of the cycle is effective as a learning procedure on its own. We argue that all stages are covered in this project.

Skills and Competencies

The project is designed to enhance several skills and competencies:

1. Students' capability to organize and manage resources;
2. To evaluate and inform practice;
3. To communicate ideas is a simple and elegant manner;
4. To understand the context in which they are or will be operating;
5. To showcase cultural awareness and an ability to express this awareness;
6. To engage in self-reflection as a process of learning, managing several activities at the same time;
7. Time management; and
8. Building new knowledge, subject knowledge, connecting subject knowledge with context and insight.

It therefore reinforced in a systematic way the research skills students would have had to develop already during the first 2 years of university.

Optimal Fit

This project teaches skills that anyone graduating with a degree in business ought to possess. It is best to apply the project in a context where some

face-to-face interaction is possible. To date, the project has been applied in an undergraduate setting though it is possible to apply this type of assessment at any level (e.g., postgraduate, MBA, and corporate trainees). The class overall benefits from a diverse group of individuals—with different linguistic and cultural backgrounds—to enhance the discussion of the importance of cultural differences. The assessment is best administered in a setting where there is enough time to offer instructions and an enthusiastic, dedicated, and diligent team or markers/graders and resources behind you to manage continuous feedback.

Challenges

It is natural for students to be overwhelmed when introduced to an assessment which offers a great degree of flexibility, demands insight, and an independent novel contribution to human resource management. Students are naturally inclined to opposing this type of assessment because it triggers uncertainty about their performance in the course. For instructors of this assessment, it is recommended to leave adequate time in class to address their concerns and offer an example or showcase the process of getting started. This builds confidence. The challenges and/or questions encountered most frequently from students are as follows:

1. Where do I even begin?
   The project offers a handbook to explain the project; this handbook includes links to library resources to assist with searching for information and time management for individual tasks.
2. What is insight? How do I create insight?
   One of the criteria by which students are evaluated is 'insight'. Insight is explained when introducing the project as well as during the discussion sessions. Creating insight requires students to understand the content of the subject extremely well.

From an instructor's point of view, we recommend taking into consideration the following:

3. China is a popular destination country. In classrooms high with a Chinese student population, care must be taken in allocating students to certain countries. Other emerging market destinations may likewise be impacted.

4. Consistency, mechanisms, and timing for offering feedback can present a challenge in that the following must be managed well: (a) allocation and training of a grading/marking team, (b) consistency across feedback categories, (c) the ability of students to understand feedback and incorporate it in the next round, (d) consistency in the timing to access feedback, and (e) adequate consultation times for those with further questions.

The course in which this project has been implemented has been offered to two different modes, 2-hour seminar + 1-hour tutorial and most recently in a 3-hour seminar, which has absorbed the tutorial.

Evaluation of Learning Effectiveness

Kirkpatrick Training Evaluation Model

According to Kirkpatrick and Kirkpatrick (1975) offer insight into the training evaluation model but arguing that all training must be justified and budgeted in order to decide whether to continue or discontinue the training program and to gain information on how to improve future training programs. This can be accomplished by evaluating the following four levels:

Level 1: Evaluating Reaction: Students' reaction to the project are favorable if students are primed for the dynamics of the project. Students are continuously reminded of the relevance of the project to their career and career management. Likewise, students are encouraged to pay attention to the details of the project and are given advice and feedback on several occasions.

Level 2: Evaluating Learning: Please note our discussion on Project Effectiveness.

Level 3: Evaluating Behavior: Consultation with the student have showcased the relevance and utility of this project to their current and future career prospects.

Level 4: Evaluating Results: Students are supported throughout the series of four submissions with consultative sessions, in-class discussion and questioning opportunities, and timely feedback on each submitted assessment. This process offers students an opportunity to improve with each assessment submitted.

Rubrics

At the beginning of the course, students are offered a detailed assessment rubric which translates the expectations into a range of outcomes from exemplary to unacceptable—across each criterion. The description ranges from 1 to 10, whereby:

a. For Criterion 1, a score of 10 signals that the student has provided a thorough, insightful, and logical description of country characteristics, helps the audience visual country characteristics in a clear and interesting manner, uses key terminology and interprets it correctly, and elaborates on country characteristics of major importance.
b. For Criterion 2, a score of 10 signals that the student has provided logical arguments and derives insightful conclusions, using a variety of information from varying sources, offered practical implications precisely impacting the emerging market context and has made no general assessments.
c. For Criterion 3, a score of 10 signals that the student has engaged in comparisons between existing work and ideas discussed in the tutorial and summarized the in-class discussion in an exemplary manner.
d. For Criterion 4, a score of 10 signals that the student has demonstrated an ability to use a wide array of appropriate references from varying sources correctly and has consistently applied referencing style (in-text citations and reference list).
e. For Criterion 5, a score of 10 signals that the project has no misspellings and/or grammatical errors (references and in-text citations excepted) and showcases exceptional/professional formatting.

Each criterion is weighted equally. Marking is done online, and marks/grades are automatically transferred into the grading column. Option for structure feedback exists.

Application of Bloom's Taxonomy

Using Bloom's taxonomy lingua, Criterion 1 asks students to 'remember' and 'understand' whereby the project asks students to (a) independently research emerging market culture characteristics and subsequently (b) describe and elaborate on one relevant emerging market cultural characteristic. Criterion 1 asks students to 'apply', 'analyze', 'evaluate', and 'create' whereby the project asks students to (a) apply their emerging market research by offering insight

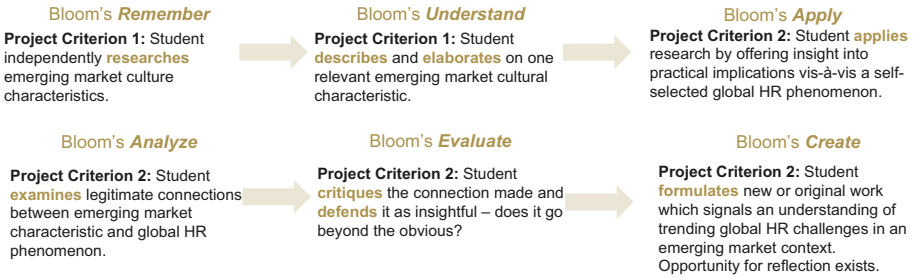

Fig. 13.1 Process example, using China as the emerging market context

into practical implications vis-à-vis a self-selected global HR phenomenon, (b) examine legitimate connections between emerging market characteristics and the global HR phenomenon, (c) critique the connection made and defend it as insightful—does it go beyond the obvious, and (d) formulates new or original work which signals an understanding of trending global HR challenges in an emerging market context. Opportunities for reflection exists throughout this process. Figure 13.1 offers an example, using China as the emerging market context.

Students will be interested to better understand what is meant by phenomenon, insight, and sometimes emerging markets (Fig. 13.2). Be prepared to answer these questions.

A phenomenon is

1. a fact or situation that is observed to exist or happen, especially one whose cause or explanation is in question;
2. a fact, occurrence, or circumstance observed or observable; or
3. something that is impressive or extraordinary.

Examples of phenomena in IHRM are as follows:

Example 1: High international assignment failure rates *(the phenomenon)* are influenced by emerging market level of hostility *(EM characteristic that will impact adjustment of expatriate and family and therefore impact recruitment efforts of global firms)*.

Example 2: Trailing spouse satisfaction/adjustment (*the phenomenon)* is influenced by host-government visa restrictions *(the EM characteristic that will impact trailing spouse satisfaction/adjustment and therefore recruitment efforts of global firms)*.

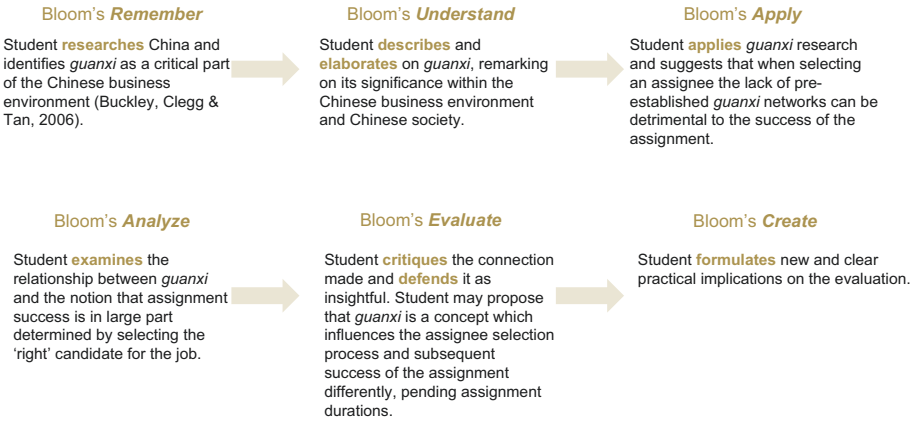

Fig. 13.2 Recruitment example

Criterion 1: Description and elaboration of emerging market country characteristics (~1 page)

Abbreviated Response: Mexico is an interesting place for global firms to operate. According to (insert credible source here), Mexico is named as one of the top ten most dangerous countries in the world (this is the first country characteristic—'hostility'). Numerous global firms operate in Mexico and are therefore exposed to a variety of dangers. Elaborate on dangers/hostile environment. … Furthermore, Mexico's government appears to exercise serve restriction of visa issuance relative to spousal visas (this is the second country characteristic—'host-country visa restrictions'). Elaborate on these restrictions.

Criterion 2: Evaluation and application of emerging market country characteristics to international human resource management function (~1–1.5 pages)

Abbreviated Response: Global firms that operate in Mexico are exposed to various physical hostilities/dangers. Describe *how* dangers/hostility can impact the expatriate and/or their accompanying families. The imposition of such dangers/hostilities can not only significantly impact the expatriate's level of adjustment/success but also that of the accompanying family. This has implications for how effectively a global firm can staff operations in Mexico. Furthermore, family members, particularly trailing spouses, may be greeted with further impositions in Mexico, namely those of spousal visa restrictions. This means that not only will the expatriate family be living in a hostile environment, but the trailing spouse will also not be able to continue with their choice of career/job. These circumstances increase the risk of expatriate assignments.

Criterion 3: Reflection of evaluation and application (~0.5 page)

Abbreviated Response: After the tutorial discussion, I realized that I had omitted the fact that (insert realization here); this in turn has the following implications on operating in Mexico (insert implication here).

Project Effectiveness

The project was developed and introduced to an undergraduate international human resource management course in 2016. It has been implemented for 3 consecutive years and has been well received as evidenced by pre- and post-testing of several questions relative to students' knowledge of, experience with, and confidence in IHRM content in EMs.

Testing in 2016 and 2017 has shown significance for 10 out of 11 questions. Questions include the following: I appreciate the significance and influence of emerging markets in an exponentially globalizing world; I understand the implications of conducting international HRM in emerging market contexts; I understand the importance of establishing global mobility support systems within multinational corporations' human resource management departments; I am able to critically evaluate emerging market cultures and apply it to IHRM challenges and opportunities; I appreciate that working in a global environment is complex and requires thorough planning and management of global mobility in global firms, among others.

Transferability and Replication

The project has been applied to an undergraduate course human resource management course. Enrolment consists of third- or final-year students. Currently applied in 3-hour seminars, class size is between 120 and 160 hours; multicultural classroom. The concept is translatable into other courses as its focus is on Bloom's taxonomy. Beyond this, there are opportunities to translate this expertise into corporate training. The project can be transferred across locations, cultures, institutional environments, and disciplines, as each involves the use of phenomenon and the need for insight. Adjustment of pre- and post-testing may be necessary. We recommend online submission and online feedback mechanism through the university/school's preferred online support structure. We note that in order to streamline feedback, categories of feedback must be identified and programmed into the system.

Self-Reflection and Debriefing

A debrief comes in the form of covering Criterion 3 (reflection of evaluation and application). This is held in class but may also be administered during smaller tutorials sessions with up to 25 individuals. Students are prompted with the following activities:

1. Form groups of up to five and sit around one table
2. Share with each other your findings—phenomena and cultural characteristics
3. Share your findings with the class
4. Spend the final 5 minutes of class writing a reflection

There is a chance that you will be offering ideas about what it could be though students should be well equipped to name at least a few interesting ideas based on the lecture/seminar. Thereafter, cultural characteristics are offered and discussed. These can be noted on a simple whiteboard or an easel for students to have a visual. The next task would be to state the following to students: Your answer to Criterion 2 suggests that cultural characteristics can influence IHRM phenomena. How? Please explain and discuss with your group members.

Contributions/Implications

At the university level, the top grade is only achieved if a student can show 'consistent evidence of substantial originality and insight in identifying, generating, and communicating competing arguments, perspectives, or problem-solving approaches' (source: University Course Grading Standards, Australia). It seems imperative then to design assignments which align with the principle of enabling students to create original and insightful answers to problems faced by international organizations.

Pedagogical contributions involve students developing an ability to create insightful and original answer to self-identified problems faced by international organizations. This skill is transferable to other subjects. Likewise, students develop a competence in understanding the global mobility scene and its application to real life projects. It builds a level of confidence in students to put forth their ideas about connections between phenomena and observed cultural characteristics. We think the breadth of the contribution is noteworthy as well. It influences those who work in HR but is valuable for anyone going

into the workforce. We all work globally to some extent and need to understand its drivers, challenges, and repercussions. We are looking for students' own unique, insightful and creative examples. Insights are derived from combining curiosity and independently conducted research.

Theoretical and Conceptual Contributions

Theory Advancement

Kolb's (1984) theory of experiential learning is extended by placing the internal cognitive processes into the context of emerging markets, whereby learners are simultaneously asked to envision a global HR phenomenon *and* an emerging market cultural characteristic, during Stage 1. Both scenarios are new experiences to consider. This is a demanding process and requires students' full commitment and understanding of the task. International business and therefore global HR challenges are inherently complex because of their cross-cultural and multifaceted nature. In an experimental sense, this complexity is incorporated into the project.

In the end, students show an improved level of confidence and ability to interact with emerging market cultural ideas. They can converse about phenomena in international human resource management. Having that heightened sense of confidence in learning would increase levels of student learning, student satisfaction, and employability. The learning in general has been that this exercise stretches students to not only apply knowledge but to create new knowledge at the same time. The range of Bloom's taxonomy is used.

Pedagogical Contributions

Increase Engagement

The project gives students a great degree of freedom to create. This is terrifying for some students, especially those from non-Western cultures (Buckley, Clegg, & Tan, 2006), who are expected to go by the rules and do exactly as the instructor, lecturer, or professor tells them to. It is a pleasure to see students' thinking beyond what they believe they were capable of. Plan enough office hours but keep boundaries on how much time each student can spend asking questions outside of class time.

Because this project gives students a great amount of freedom to execute, continuous in-class feedback is necessary. Asking students to share their thoughts and examples assist to alleviate any uncertainty. Moreover, others can learn from the experience and enhance their respective projects. It is as much about finding the answer as it is about understanding how to ask the right questions. It is important to note deadlines in advance so that students can manage their time effectively. Create a template which students can download. Use the same template each time a part of the project is submitted.

Conclusion

The two major objectives of the project are (1) to identify major global HR mobility challenges within the context of recruitment, training and development, compensation, and performance management, and (2) to critically evaluate the complexity involved in managing a globally mobile workforce in an emerging market context only to derive insight into practical implications. These objectives correspond to Bloom's taxonomy. We have evidence to suggest that this project works in its experimental design format, as evidenced by pre- and post-testing of several questions relative to students' knowledge of, experience with, and confidence in IHRM content in EMs. The project is useful not only for those students graduating from university and beginning a career in HR, but also for those interested in or selected for international assignments at some stage in their professional lives. This project provides students with a window into the intricacies of moving abroad in a company setting. Theoretical, conceptual, and pedagogical contribution are discussed.

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Part V

Capstone Projects

14

Kratos Universidad EAFIT: A New Platform to Live Learning Experiences

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Introduction

Kratos is an experiential learning program created at Universidad EAFIT in September 2017. It was developed by students and instructors and seeks to complement and transform student development processes through experiential learning, so undergraduate students can develop certain employability or soft skills desired for a successful professional future. Based on synergies between education, public, and private sectors, its intention is to have an impact upon education, as the institution believes in new learning methodologies that promote knowledge together with an education based on challenges, experiences, and teamwork. These allow preparing professionals capable of dealing with the different problems existing around the world today.

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M. A. Gonzalez-Perez et al. (eds.), *The Palgrave Handbook of Learning and Teaching International Business and Management*, https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-030-20415-0_14

To achieve this, students are invited to participate in international-level challenges where they work in interdisciplinary teams, develop technological appropriation and creativity, learn to handle high-pressure situations, improve academically, develop resilience and emotional intelligence, and innovate. This program currently includes six projects bringing together teams of 20–45 people, between students, mentors, and instructors. A description of this program forms a valuable contribution to this handbook, as it provides good practices that can be replicated in different educational institutions and in international business programs that wish to work in an interdisciplinary and experiential manner with other programs and projects.

The program's design, structure, and work method are presented as a reference for those who want to implement this kind of program in their institutions, because its results have shown to be successful, both in terms of performance and in terms of soft skills development. Thus, Kratos is conceived as an educational platform created under experiential learning guidelines. Its name was agreed with the program's main sponsor and originated based on the Greek God named Kratos, who was the divine personification of strength and power in Greek mythology. A third word was added: Future, to allude to the fact that the program's participants are undergraduate students who will enter the workforce in the near future, providing employability skills in high demand. So, the name usually comes along with the slogan: Kratos. Strength, Power and Future.

The Experience

The target audience for this program is undergraduate students from all disciplines within Universidad EAFIT. All projects take over three months to be developed and each one involves from 20 to 45 people, including students and instructors. Each project requires specific materials, software, professional support, and other resources according to the nature of the resulting artifact that will compete in international challenges. Students participate at no cost because the institutions and companies involved provide financing for the projects.

The Kratos program intends to provide an opportunity for all students to learn by performing a specific role within a project, and to measure, monitor, and analyze the acquisition and development of employability/soft or work-related skills, including creativity, job tension, emotional intelligence, teamwork, and resilience.

Purpose

Defined as layered technology architectures that present a governance model that includes rules for participation and rewards (Parker & Van Alstyne, 2014; Tiwana, 2013; Yoo, Henfridsson, & Lyytinen, 2010), the literature highlights the roles of platforms as mechanisms that facilitate innovation and knowledge (Laursen & Salter, 2014). Faced with this scenario and considering the effectiveness of active methodologies for learning (Paul & Mukhopadhyay, 2004), the Kratos program has arisen as part of an institutional plan that searches for new knowledge generation, transmission, and adoption schemes and mechanisms. This initiative was conceived under the guidelines of experiential learning and materialized through high impact projects that seek to respond to complex challenges.

The program has been designed as a platform that intends to potentialize learning in students, permit the development of competences that complement technical skills, and consolidate a nascent innovation ecosystem. Based on an analysis of real-life situations and applying approaches like experiential learning, it seeks to promote active learning, interpersonal and collaborative skills, open research, problem-solving, critical thinking, intrinsic motivation, and a desire to learn (Springer, Stanne, & Donovan, 1999). On the other hand, cooperative environments are a way to attract and direct students, generating greater levels of participation and commitment that can facilitate the development of skills like critical thinking, metacognitive learning, synthesis, and integration (Johnson, Johnson & Smith, 1991).

Kratos' operation requires a cross-cutting structure responsible for managing multiple matters related to project planning, execution, and control. Program leadership is the responsibility of the deans of the University's Business School and Engineering School, assisted by a general coordinator. There is also a Committee made up of the persons in charge of the different processes included in the initiative: learning process, communications, financial planning, and operations.

The program's general coordinator is responsible for ensuring proper technical and administrative management as well as optimal team performance. The financial level manages associated internal and external resources so that projects are executed under strict cost, scope, time, and quality guidelines. Sponsorship Management and Communications seek to promote the visibility of the program's sponsor and allies, ensuring proper internal and external communications. The learning process direction is responsible for ensuring the process of team constitution and sustainability and for measuring student learning within the Kratos projects. The program's organizational chart is given in Fig. 14.1.

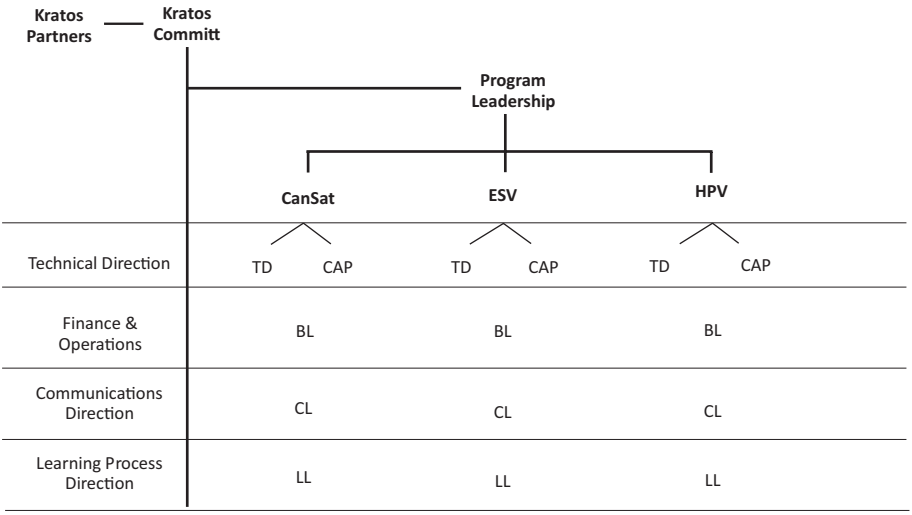

Fig. 14.1 Organizational chart, Kratos program

The program's structure is replicated on a smaller scale in each project. At the start and during the development of each project, Kratos is organized into subsystems according to structure, knowledge, and performance requirements. Each team has its own organizational, operational, and working structure, but there is a set of roles that work directly with the Committee: Technical Director (TD), Captain (CAP), Budget Leader (BL), Communications Leader (CL), and Learning Leader (LL). It is worth highlighting that the platform currently comprises six projects with teams of 20–45 people, between students, mentors, and teachers. The purpose is to welcome as many students as possible and to put in place a harmonious working structure.

Three main projects were implemented during 2018: Kratos CanSat, Kratos ESV (electric solar vehicle), and Kratos HPV (human-powered vehicle). An overview of these projects follows.

Kratos CanSat

This project brought together undergraduate students from different programs, all of them space science enthusiasts, to build a tin-can-sized satellite and compete in the Global Space Balloon Challenge. This challenge consisted of using a high-altitude balloon or satellite to reach the greatest height possible within the stratosphere, perform in situ measurements, establish a communications link-up with the experiment, and return to land effectively. The competition is also an opportunity for developing near-space activities.

The satellite was launched in April 2018 from a Colombian Air Force Base and took into account the elements under evaluation, namely design and educational innovations. This team was made up of 35 students from different undergraduate programs at Universidad EAFIT. The team leaders were one full-time professor and one part-time professor, both of which had ample experience in the fields of experimental mechanics, electronics, telecommunications, and aerospace engineering.

Kratos ESV

This project worked on designing and building a solar electric vehicle that would compete at the iLumen European Solar Challenge in the cruiser category. This competition is a 24-hour resistance race where teams from different universities around the world and their corporate partners, together with 2 Tesla Model S automobiles, show off the potential of their solar electric vehicles in terms of energy consumption, aerodynamics, and design as they face off in a 24-hour test around the Zolder (Belgium) race circuit.

In September 2018, Kratos participated in this event with very good results in the aspects that were evaluated: Regularity, fast lap, Ko Chicane, technical innovation and number of laps. The team was made up of 45 students from different undergraduate programs at Universidad EAFIT, and its technical leadership was in the hands of an expert with ample experience in the development of electrical and solar vehicles.

Kratos HPV

This project was based on a competition to design and build the physical model of a human-powered vehicle without external assistance. In other words, the movement must only be generated by the pilot's pedaling capabilities. This challenge evaluates vehicle design, design report presentation, an oral presentation before a jury of the physical artifact, vertical and lateral loading capacity, the system's roll resistance, and mechanical resistance performance during an endurance track test. Kratos participated in the national competition at a University in Medellin during November 2018.

The team was made up of 47 students from the management, science, humanities, economics, and engineering schools. Its leader was a full-time professor with ample experience in the fields of mechanical engineering, manufacturing, communications, and working with groups of students.

Besides technical leadership, all projects had assistance from a committee responsible for validating compliance with specific milestones and for providing solutions to any mishaps or eventualities that might arise.

Multiple skills are required for developing this initiative. On a personal level, capacities for working under pressure, assertive communications, resilience, teamwork, as well as abilities for managing difficult situations played a critical role in project success. On the other hand, and on a professional level, real-life experience of classroom teachings, comparisons between theory and practice, autonomous learning and multidisciplinarity are highlighted. The academic skills required include project management, logistics, budgeting, fundraising, design, conflict management, and marketing.

Experiential Learning Cycle

Developed based on the contribution of psychologists such as Piaget and Dewey, experiential learning contemplates a holistic model of the learning process wherein knowledge is generated through the transformation of experience (Kolb, Boyatzis, & Mainemelis, 2002).

In this sense, the experiential learning theory (ELT) pedagogical proposal maintains that (1) learning should be understood as a process, not in terms of results, (2) all learning is relearning, (3) learning requires solving conflicts between forms of adaptation in dialectical opposition to the world, (4) learning is a holistic process of adaptation, being the result of cognition along with the integrated functioning of the total person—thinking, feeling, perceiving, and behaving, (5) learning results from synergistic transactions between the person and their surroundings, and (6) learning is the process of creating knowledge (Kolb & Kolb, 2005).

In light of the foregoing, experiential learning is made up of a spiral cycle involving concrete experience, reflection upon experience, the formation of abstract concepts, and applying this reflection to new concepts (Kolb, 1984). In the specific case of the projects developed within the Kratos program, experiential learning theory (ELT) follows an ongoing, four-stage cycle, where (1) students actively carry out a project (concrete experience); (2) students reflect back on that experience (reflective observation); (3) students attempt to conceptualize a model observed in the experience, with the help of the faculty advisors (abstract conceptualization); and (4) the model is tested by planning and executing new experiences within the platform (active experimentation) (Kolb & Kolb, 2005).

Skills and Competences

Kratos arose from its creators' conviction that the technical knowledge imparted by the universities nowadays, using traditional teaching methods, is insufficient in and of itself to account for the success of graduates in the job market. Concurrently, it was detected that soft skills were becoming increasingly more important for employability in today's companies. Soft skills are usually referred as employability skills and are related to an individual's perceptions of the present and future conditions and how they expect to deal with positive or negative circumstances (Rothwell & Arnold, 2007).

According to the Confederation of British Industry, employability is "a set of attributes, skills, and knowledge that all labor market participants should possess to ensure they have the capability of being effective in the workplace—to the benefit of themselves, their employer and the wider economy" (2009). Likewise, several researchers have defined employability in different ways. Garavan (1999) refers to it as "the new form of psychological contract between employers and employees". Harvey (2004) explained it as "the ability of the graduate to get a satisfying job". Another definition of employability is "the capacity and the willingness to be and to remain attractive in the labor market, by anticipating changes in tasks and work environment and reacting to these changes in a proactive way" (de Grip, van Loo, & Sanders, 2004), while others have referred to it as "a form of work specific active adaptability that enables workers to identify and realize job opportunities" (Fugate, Kinicki, & Ashforth, 2004). The bottom line is that employability is the shared responsibility of both employer and employee (Clarke & Patrickson, 2008).

As regards employability skills, the Conference Board of Canada (2004) defines them as the ones a person needs to possess to enter, keep, or progress in the working world. Employability skills are basic transferable skills that represent essential functional abilities and enabling knowledge required to have success at all levels of employment in the workplace in the twenty-first century (Overtoom, 2000). Others refer to them as "a set of achievements, understandings, and personal attributes that make individuals more likely to gain employment and to be successful in their chosen occupations" (Yorke & Knight, 2004).

Understanding attitudes regarding these skills is important because education and industry appear to operate under different systems and because it has been found that employability skills predict the potential for professional advancement (Rosenberg, Heimler, & Morote, 2012). According to Richens (1999), even if a collaborative process existed between education and indus-

try, the structure of education has hindered the implementation of systemic change. On this matter, Duzer (2006) pointed out that the educational system, with its foundations in a nineteenth-century structure and a linear pedagogical process, is not capable of satisfying the needs of the current global economy. In this regard, a need exists to integrate other teaching approaches in the learning process so different entities (employers, academics, government, employees, and students) can participate in developing and improving employability skills. This is the foundation of the Kratos program.

Employers have maintained that their greatest needs are for soft or employability skills. Some authors have even stated that if nothing is done to improve educational performance, the gap between the skills required by the industry and the abilities received by graduates will continue growing (Plastrik, Seltzer, & Taylor, 2003). Besides, Robst (2007) emphasized that more general transferable employability skills provide individuals with abilities that allow them to enter the workforce, perform jobs, advance their careers within companies, and change job positions within and between industries.

In 1991, The US Labor Secretary's Commission on Achieving Necessary Skills (SCANS) identified that students believed that employability skills are learned through doing, and through participation in extracurricular activities (US Department of Labor: The Secretary's Commission on Achieving Necessary Skills (SCANS), 1991), and later on, Rosenbaum (2002) declared that if students do not learn basic employability skills before being hired, they may not have the opportunity for learning them at work, as employers may be reluctant to invest the resources required to provide corrective training for these abilities. McMasters (2004) even stated that there is an "ignorance of industry needs from a university perspective" (McMasters, 2004, p. 368).

An inventory of the employability skills and the different classifications proposed by the literature, returns that these skills can be classified as follows: Critical thinking skills, leadership skills, management skills, interpersonal skills and self-perceived skills (Lankard, 1990; Misraa & Khuranab, 2017; Schermerhorn, 2008; US Department of Labor: The Secretary's Commission on Achieving Necessary Skills (SCANS), 1991). Several researchers have observed that employers describe the latter of these, together with work habits, as more important than academic abilities (Bracey, 2007; Carnevale, Gainer, & Meltzer, 1990; Rosenbaum, 2002). Rosenbaum suggested that "it is these skills that are sometimes considered to be the best predictors of job performance" (Rosenbaum, 2002, p. 10).

As stated before, companies and academia have pointed out that a gap exists between the attributes of graduates and company requirements in terms of skills or competences (Amen, 2014; Gazier, 1999; Nair, Patil, & Mertova, 2009;

Osmani et al., 2015; Plantilla, 2017; Plastrik et al., 2003; Rosenberg et al., 2012). There is a clear need to improve these soft skills in university contexts and the techniques used to do this include case studies, role-playing, business games, corporate analysis, and group discussions, among others (Rao, 2014). Universidad EAFIT has prior experience with precise and specific experiential learning projects (Escalante & Uribe, 2015), but these were isolated and the skills developed and processes undergone by students were not monitored from their inception. Kratos was created as a program founded on experiential learning premises, which would comprise projects with participation from students and faculty from all disciplines, with the sole purpose of developing employability skills. What the program does is to facilitate student enrollment in international competitions with the goal of fostering their potential.

Based on the extant literature on experiential learning, the Kratos committee posits that competitions are a good scenario to develop the students' soft skills such as the ones measured by the program, that is, those related to the self-perceived skills category mentioned above and to attitudes toward knowledge and skills development. Specifically, previous research has shown that experiential learning and student competitions that require design activities may enhance creativity (Ayob, Hussain, Mustafa, & Shaarani, 2011) and passion but can also have negative emotional consequences (Schuster, Davol, & Mello, 2006).

Creativity, in an organizational context, refers to the generation of novel and potentially useful ideas (Woodman, Sawyer, & Griffin, 1993), and as such, it is considered a process through which ideas are conceived, and therefore, it is when reinvention and redefinition take place with the underlying purpose of finding original solutions (Stokes, 2011). For Kratos, creativity is a fundamental competence, as it refers not just to the creation of new devices but also to resourcefulness for solving problems. This plays a fundamental role in overcoming obstacles and is necessary for situations that require novel solutions (Marguc, Van Kleef, & Förster, 2015; Mumford, 2003). In this regard, the literature alludes to the efforts made for developing approaches that will systematically improve student creativity, including innovative teaching techniques (Brent & Felder, 2014), creative design heuristics (Daly, Yilmaz, Christian, Seifert, & Gonzalez, 2012), and workspaces for fostering new ideas (Halverson & Sheridan, 2014).

Kratos projects are highly demanding in terms of time and effort. They require commitment, responsibility, and a lot of passion from their participants, and, consequently, job tension is also monitored as a soft skill. Job tension or job-related stress arises from an interruption of an individual's cognitive-emotional system and/or natural balance by external demands

within the working environment (Lazarus & Folkman, 1984). Over time, this tension can have negative effects on people's mental and physical health (Ganster & Rosen, 2013) if it is not detected and treated. Additionally, job-related stress influences people's results and levels of satisfaction, as a result of the exhaustion of their mental and physical resources (Demerouti & Bakker, 2011; Mackey, Perrewé, & McAllister, 2017). Evidence indicates that physical health, psychological well-being, and work satisfaction are related (Dewe, 1991). The literature also mentions that excessive workloads, ambiguous roles, changing technology, financial pressures, and stakeholder demands are some of the most frequent and significant causes of stress (Wang, Mohd-Rahim, Chan, & Abdul-Rahman, 2017). In Kratos, these causes of stress are present, so performance under job stress is a soft skill that is expected to be developed by actively participating in the projects.

The term resilience is nothing more than contemporary jargon for what earlier generations of psychologists labeled ego strengths. The idea of a resilient individual brings to mind an invulnerable person or a survivor and is highly related to adaptation to change and motivational control. In this regard, the concept refers to an individual's dynamic capacity for modifying a characteristic level of ego-control, as demanded by the context they are immersed in, so as to preserve or enhance system equilibrium (Block & Kremen, 1996). In other words, it is related to the ability to change from and also return to the individual's characteristic level of ego-control after a temporary accommodation-requiring influence occurs. The ego-resilience construct, which is referred to by this learning metric, is an employability skill that indicates "the linkages of the ego structures that keep the personality system within tenable bounds or permit the finding again of psychologically tenable adaptational modes" (Block & Kremen, 1996, p. 350).

People's creativity, resilience, pressure management or job tension, and emotional control levels differ. This is why these competences are analyzed at the start and end of Kratos program projects, to account for their development.

The term "Emotional Intelligence" was first coined by Salovey and Mayer (1990) and is based on the theory of intelligence from the 1920s where Thorndike (1920) insinuated that there could be other types of intelligence other than the merely cognitive known as intellectual intelligence (IQ). Later on, the multiple intelligence theory was proposed (Gardner, 1993), introducing seven different kinds of intelligence. These seven intelligences include interpersonal intelligence, defined as the capacity for recognizing differences in emotions, characteristics, motivations, and life purposes in individuals (Gardner, 1993). It was on this intelligence that Salovey and Mayer based their work on emotional intelligence by also relating it to social skills.

Emotional intelligence focuses on emotions and moods and how an intelligent person reasons based on them (Matsumoto & Hwang, 2012; Salovey & Mayer, 1990). There are many definitions of this concept, including the one that gave rise to it. All of them share the understanding that emotional intelligence includes awareness, knowledge, regulation, and management of one's own and others' emotions (George, 2000; Martínez, 1997; Mayer & Salovey, 1997; Prati, Douglas, Ferris, Ammeter, & Buckley, 2003; Salovey & Mayer, 1990). Apparently, the development of this concept is rooted in the difficulties of measuring rational thinking to predict success in life (Dulewicz & Higgs, 2000; Goleman, 1998; Salovey & Mayer, 1990). This means that IQ was insufficient for doing so.

There are two approaches to the concept of emotional intelligence. While Salovey and Mayer (1990) viewed it as an ability, Goleman (1998) and Bar-On (1997) considered it a personality trait. The difference lies in the fact that the personality trait perspective considers that emotional intelligence is an "innate characteristic that enables and promotes well-being" (Harms & Credé, 2010, p. 7). Alternatively, the ability perspective considers it a tool for comprehending and regulating emotions and for understanding and integrating them into cognition (Harms & Credé, 2010), and that, therefore, it can be developed. Within this context, emotional intelligence is considered ability, and is defined as a "subset of social intelligence that involves the ability to monitor one's own and others' feelings and emotions, to discriminate among them and to use this information to guide one's thinking and actions" (Salovey & Mayer, 1990, p. 189).

In Kratos, creativity, job tension, emotional intelligence, resilience, and teamwork are measured at different points of time in students that participate in the program's projects. Projects go from building and competing with satellites, solar electric vehicles, and human-powered vehicles, to contending in business case competitions and computing challenges.

Optimal Fit

University-based undergraduate programs form the ideal context for Kratos' operations because this is where students, besides acquiring technical and disciplinary knowledge in their different career options, prepare for immersion into the job market. In graduate programs, students already have jobs, and this context requires different actions by the university to strengthen employability competences. Besides, the spirit of Kratos lies in voluntary, extracurricular participation by students, no matter their grade average, semester, or

prior knowledge, as the purpose is to learn by doing and that students go beyond their obligatory assigned curricular roles (extra-role performance).

The nature of Kratos projects is attendance-based, and teams are set up according to the needs of the competition and the required technical specifications. This has an effect on the size of the team, the subsystems, and the assigned roles. Besides, each project demands specific resources and technology and, therefore, specific budgets and timetables. Learning measurement is then planned according to the specific nature of each project, in terms of time and human resources.

Challenges

Time constraints are different depending on the programs the participants are enrolled in. Thus, their performance will be affected by the time available. In this regard, although the learning measurement model is the same for the entire program, and the competences to be developed are the same in all projects, a specific measurement timetable must be planned for each project, and the 360-evaluation must be adjusted to the structure and role determined for them.

Participants enroll voluntarily making it difficult to discern the extent to which the participation in the project truly fosters their learning processes. An experimental design will help disentangle whether, besides motivational factors, experiential learning activities boost student's skills and professional competences. An impact study was initially proposed for this matter, but an experimental design requires implementing it simultaneously throughout each project's duration.

Students often do not realize the importance of measuring skills, competences, learning processes, and performance. They seem to focus on the project (i.e. solar electric vehicle, balloon) and sometimes complete surveys in an unconscious manner. This can affect the measurement of the learning processes.

Since participants are volunteers, it is not possible to offer them incentives. In real-life/work situations, employees receive monetary and non-monetary incentives. Certain actions have been performed, such as offering them the opportunity to use the work done in Kratos to validate another complementary or elective assignment from their programs, with approval from the Coordinator. In any event, this challenge requires thinking of possibilities to include experiential learning activities in curricula of the university's undergraduate programs.

Evaluation of Learning Effectiveness

Assessing training effectiveness in Kratos entails using the four-level model developed by Donald Kirkpatrick (1994). These levels are (1) Reaction, (2) Learning, (3) Behavior, and (4) Results. The first level (reaction) measures how students (the people being trained), react to the training, whether participating in the project is a valuable experience, and what their perceptions are about the instructor, topic, materials, and all the support provided by the program. Reactions are measured to understand how well training is received and to improve training for future students. For this aspect, both the logbook and focus group methods are used.

At the second level (learning), training is measured in terms of what and how much students have learned. For this, four soft skills were identified as the most important for students to develop, with Kratos being a program that focuses on the development of employability skills. To measure these, a longitudinal model was designed allowing skills to be measured at the start, during and after training. This level uses tools such as impact studies, scales, and metrics to account for the learning process.

The third and fourth levels are the most challenging because time, budget, and human resources are needed to measure behavior and results effectively since both levels take place months or even years after the initial training. To evaluate how much student behaviors can change based on the training they received, it is necessary to have performance information from their respective professional environments. And to measure the results of Kratos projects including outcomes, benefits, or final results and how they are linked to the training, long-term actions need to be taken to closely follow indicators such us employability, employee retention, employee performance, and income levels, among others, compared to those that did not receive training.

The Kratos program has a team in charge of the learning process called learning process direction. This team gathers both qualitative and quantitative information throughout the process of putting together the teams, and planning, building, and developing the projects. Data is gathered using different methods and is in turn used to measure effectiveness. The following are the different sources of information and tools used for measuring learning:

Log books: Project leaders fill out a logbook every two weeks containing the main problems faced, the solutions applied, the lessons learned, incoming and outgoing members and their reasons for joining or leaving the teams. Additionally, the logbook has space for registering the actions implemented for fulfilling the projects' main goals and deadlines in terms of resources, deci-

sions made, and roles assigned. These logbooks are the main source of information for a qualitative analysis of the learning processes and project effectiveness, and they help interpret the quantitative data gathered with other tools.

Focus groups: Focus groups are implemented at the beginning and end of the projects to have conversations with team members, especially students, with the purpose of eliciting their feelings, perceptions, and opinions about the process. This is another input for a qualitative evaluation of the program's effectiveness, carried out by mentors and a psychologist responsible for analyzing the information recorded in the focus groups.

Impact study: Pairing model research was designed with the purpose of identifying pairs of project participants who are not part of the team. Certain students are identified based on non-measurable characteristics such as sex, age, social categorization, and the school they come from, and then a survey is applied to them to compare their results with the control group (Kratos team) and determine the impact of participating in this experiential learning processes, compared to those that do not.

Scales: One of the program's main objectives is to report on the learning process of the students participating therein. With this in mind, mentors searched for the optimal instruments that would measure the soft skills the program intended to develop. Several scales were chosen because of their sound psychometric properties to be applied to students, and a longitudinal design was set up for them by means of a timetable containing monthly measurements at the beginning, and every two weeks toward the end. Four skills in total are measured, using the following scales:

1. Creativity: Scale by Zhou and George (2001)
2. Perceptions of Job Tension: Scale by House and Rizzo (1972)
3. Resilience: Scale by Block and Kremen (1996)
4. Emotional Intelligence: Scale by Lopez-Zafra, Pulido Martos, Berrios Martos, and Augusto-Landa (2012)

These scales were back translated using three official translators to come up with a final version in Spanish. This version was validated in a pilot test with approximately 250 students, the number that heeded the call to join the program in mid-August 2017. This validation was performed so as to apply the survey in a Colombian context and in their native tongue, Spanish.

A measurement timetable was defined for each project, taking into account the project start and end dates. The unit of analysis is individual, and all are self-reported. Analyses to be performed use statistical procedures including

EFA, CFA, MANOVA, structural equation analysis (SEM) and longitudinal analysis and comparing models to report on the learning process of all students involved.

360° metrics: An additional quantitative metric is used to complement the information and reduce the self-serving bias of having all self-reported measurements. This scale specifically measures team skills in a 360° scenario. The scale is implemented as follows: (1) the team leader, along with each subsystem leader, evaluates each team member, (2) subsystem leaders evaluate the general team leader, (3) each team member evaluates one peer, and (4) self-evaluation from every team member. The scale used is a back translation of Strom, Strom, and Moore's (1999) instrument.

Feedback from sponsors and allies: Sponsors are heavily involved in the process and constantly come by to observe project progress and performance. They provide ongoing feedback to the Kratos Program Director and express their satisfaction and expectations regarding results, seeing the impact made on students in terms of personal growth, competence development, discipline, and motivation.

All allies decided to collaborate with Kratos because of the impact the program could make on the students and on society, and because, with their participation, they can help students build their potential, learn by doing, develop their skills, and make their dreams come true. Sponsor and ally satisfaction, and their manifestations of no regrets, are also measures of effectiveness.

Transferability/Replication

It is expected that the competences developed through participation in Kratos projects will materialize at the workplace and positively complement the knowledge acquired by students during their time at the University. This transfer can be evidenced by following up student performance once they have graduated, in their jobs, through their immediate superior or performance evaluations. This, in turn, constitutes an impact measurement for the Kratos program.

The authors trust that the program, its design, and operation, together with the findings resulting from the data analysis, will have applicability beyond its own borders. The point here is that employers are likely to look for the same types of skills in different labor markets, so the multidisciplinary approach of Kratos makes no distinction between the program the students are enrolled in and the discipline they study. The model Kratos has put together can be replicated in other institutions but customized to their specific context (resources).

The findings of early studies have been influential and were used as a springboard to shape the parameters of this program. After having framed the basic employability skills, we expect to determine the size of the skill gap among college undergrads, faculty, and employers.

Having all processes formalized and written out facilitates replicating this initiative in other context, and the leadership structure designed for the program and which provides support for all projects, namely the committee, provides transversal provision to the way of doing things, because several aspects such as team configuration, role assignment, viability studies, budget execution, and media plan execution, among others, are implemented in the same manner for all projects. The Kratos image, for example, is the same for all projects. This is also true for merchandising, presentation templates, and social media posts.

Another aspect that facilitates program transfer and replication is that Committee members are also employees of Universidad EAFIT meaning that internal processes and required procedures flow more easily. Students have institutional support and assistance through their teachers and, therefore, participation in the different projects is considered a representation activity.

Debriefing

At the end of each Project, a closing session is held to receive feedback for the process from all participants. In here, all students who successfully participated in the projects receive at the end a certification they can include in their portfolios. Although records are kept of all the activities performed, and the entire process is followed up, the closing session is a space where, without the pressure of competition and with a retrospective point of view, students, and professors can evaluate lessons learned and areas for improvement. With the areas for improvement identified and the suggestions made by participants, the Kratos Program designs an improvement plan with corrective, preventive, and improvement actions for all projects.

Feedback about performance is given to each student based on commitment, results, and attendance to the projects' activities. This is given by each project's technical director and based on the logbooks and observation. Quantitative feedback about the results of the surveys is made when data analysis is finished. Longitudinal studies require having all measure moments collected and information crossed. Once this is done, the Committee shares a written report to all students in an aggregated manner, to preserve the anonymity of participants.

Focus groups, as a measurement strategy, are a valuable source of information for the program, as they give rise to learning-centered discussions and allow gathering insights on the team and collaborative work performance.

In other areas, an important task performed by the Committee is formalization of all processes, as this allows for clear rules-of-the-game when recruiting students, configuring teams, designing structures, drawing up media plans, managing communications and relationships with different stakeholder groups, implementing project and budgets, and, of course, achieving a final project and competing.

One aspect that should not be forgotten is that fluid communications must be maintained at all times with sponsors and partners, as the support received from them is realized through the media visibility provided them by the Kratos program as well as the brand consolidation expected from the image projected by Kratos' participation in different competitive scenarios.

The instructors that accompany projects are constantly aware of student activities, of the role they play within the team, and whether they are attending to their curricular obligations, as it cannot be forgotten that participation in Kratos is of a voluntary and extracurricular nature. Likewise, this assistance allows them to attend to situations that arise during the course of each project or solve issues that arise normally and that could hinder schedule fulfillment or resource execution, and, ultimately, team performance.

Implications

There is an urgent need to transform or move from rote learning to reflective learning practices, as the current state of employability skills in Colombia presents a difficult panorama, not just because of low employability rates, but also because of the current inability for meeting employment criteria defined by employers due to a detected skills gap.

The implications of this study will be useful for guiding both the industry and academia on how to incorporate and improve employability skills among professionals. In the future, the requirement will exist to integrate available employability models into the curriculum, and into organizations, to close the gap between skills held and skills required by the industry, such that an appropriate solution can be provided for the same.

Kratos structure and form of operation could serve as a reference point for replicating it in other educational environments, besides, as it is an initiative that integrates several disciplines, involving students and professors, and also promotes collaborative work with the industry and the government.

The impact of the program is also in internationalization. The contests Kratos participates in are of international nature. Also, the projects follow procedures and rules of international standards, and the program, as an experiential learning platform, has been socialized in international conferences and publications such as the Global Business School Network (GBSN) Annual Conference, Frontiers in Education (FIE) Annual Conference, International Conference on Higher Education Advances (HEAd), and European Foundation for Management Development (EFMD) Annual Conference.

As for visibility, the University has been positively impacted by Kratos performance and good results obtained. Thanks to the media ally, the program has reached more than 3 million people in the country through different means such as radio, television, newspaper, and social network. The website www.eafit.edu.co/kratos contains important information such as the description of the program, the projects it covers, and its main achievements.

Theoretical Contributions

Kratos applies educational methodologies that are being explored at Colombian universities. Although challenge-based learning and experiential learning have been amply studied in developed countries, not much academic literature can be found on these topics for the Latin American context.

The implementation of a program that applies new teaching methodologies in the Latin American context and the measurement of lessons learned, contributes in different ways to the academic literature related to education.

In the first place, applying challenge-based and experiential learning in the Colombian context allows validating whether experiential education methodologies are applicable in emerging countries. In the second place, the research carried out by Kratos allows providing an empirical contribution to how challenge-based learning and experiential learning impacts work training for undergraduate students. And, finally, the Kratos program intends to provide evidence for how multidisciplinary work can provide better results regarding the development of soft skills.

Kratos has documented the manner in which the ELT (experiential learning theory) pedagogical proposal can be applied in a university environment in Colombia. Besides, the excellent results obtained by Kratos in the competitions where it has participated, allow inferring that the students in the program are obtaining and potentializing soft skills in an adequate manner.

Although the results of Creativity, Perceived Job Tension, Resilience, and Emotional Intelligence have not been finalized, the good results achieved in the competitions in which Kratos has participated are indicators that cannot

be ignored. Outstanding results have been achieved in all the competitions Kratos students have participated in: Second Place at the National Case Competition, Universidad de los Andes, 2017; First Place at the Best Photo and Best Design at GSBC 2018; Fourth Place at the Cruiser Category, Ilumen European Solar Challenge 2018; and First and Third Place at the National VTH Championship 2018.

Said results account for the correct appropriation of soft skills by students and, therefore, the correct application of the ELT model within a university context in Colombia. This has an impact on the improved performance of individuals and work teams. Regarding data analysis, provisional results account for the fact that skill development is a process that takes time and effort and that to measure learning, experimental, and longitudinal models need to be used to identify growth and impact curves for the learning methodology.

Pedagogical Contributions

The Kratos program, through its experiential learning or challenge-based learning programs, facilitates the development of soft skills, by confronting students with activities that have real performance impacts. Having to manage budgets, plan activities and resources, manage projects, build artifacts, assign roles, manage personnel, design communications plans, relate with sponsors and partners, work in teams and solve day-to-day situations, among others, in non-simulated spaces, means that the consequences of all these actions have real-life effects, which they will eventually come up against in their future jobs. Besides, facing off against other teams in different national and international competitions provides them with cultural exposure and healthy competition, where they deploy feelings of competition, anxiety, pressure, among others, and where it is necessary to use competences like creativity, job tension management, resilience, emotional intelligence, and teamwork.

The multidisciplinary nature and diversity of the participants also mean that they need to find ways to work together collaboratively with their team members to learn from them and complement their skills.

Once again, the students' passion and their desire to win in the different competitions increase student engagement with the projects. They employ additional study hours to contribute to their tasks and perform their roles, and to general project development. This implies a challenge for teachers, as the intention is that students participate actively in Kratos, without neglecting their academic obligations at the university. The good results achieved by the different projects are considered recognition of the students' efforts, who, with great satisfaction, state that they are proud to belong to the Kratos program.

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15

Global Financial Strategy of MNE with a Selected Overseas Subsidiary Expansion

Sylwia E. Starnawska

Introduction

The chapter presents an applied capstone project individually performed by students as an experiential learning activity in the final capstone course of Master of Science in Finance (MSF) degree online program and in the Global Finance and Investment graduate certificate. Students are exposed to various characteristics of different international markets while exploring country risk profiles, existing financial instruments, and possible entry strategies. The project supports the development of transferable skills for managing a corporate financial function across cultures in the global financial market.

Projects are recommended as one of the forms of experiential learning activities, both as individual student's work and as a team assignment. They add an invaluable dimension to a student's education but are quite challenging for instructors to design and supervise. In most cases, projects are time consuming, individualized, and need original work of an instructor based on professional practical expertise with consideration of the required learning objectives. Projects help understand processes, practices in business, and professional standards in the relevant field.

New emerging technologies in the higher education alter the role of an instructor and require the use of evolving teaching models and methods, including experiential learning opportunities, such as project-based learning.

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M. A. Gonzalez-Perez et al. (eds.), *The Palgrave Handbook of Learning and Teaching International Business and Management*, https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-030-20415-0_15

Sharing faculty experience, templates, and best practices can be very helpful to promote this approach, overcome existing limitations, enhance students' experience, and improve learning outcomes.

Literature Review

Experiential learning is a well-researched learning model with benefits noted, as including the increased retention of students from year to year, deeper understanding of the material, greater self-esteem, and empowerment (Taras & Gonzalez-Perez, 2015). Projects are a valuable alternative when internships are unavailable, limited, or inaccessible. Students, employers, and accreditors highly value hands-on experience (Khanna, 2018).

Project-based learning engages students in collaborative real-world problem-solving with an intrinsic motivation to learn. Instructors need to facilitate student's success by encouraging them to be both inspired initiators and critical evaluators of their work during their very conscious, exploratory, and creative work. An instructor needs to frame worthwhile questions, structure meaningful tasks, coach knowledge development, and support the acquisition of research skills, social skills, interpersonal skills, and technical competencies while assessing students' learning from the experience (Efstratia, 2014; Hee, 2017; Osipovskaya & Miakotnikova, 2017). Project-based learning method is successful when students' interests are captivated, students decide about the resources they use, cooperate and communicate with Q&A in order to achieve the goal, innovate with technology, and receive frequent feedback with an opportunity to revise upon the instructor's guided reflection with the final presentation for the audience (Efstratia, 2014; Schwering, 2015).

Efstratia (2014) and Park, Cho, Yoon, and Han (2013) acknowledged numerous advantages of project-based learning. Instructors can alternate interaction with each student during the project to support the different pace and learning styles for various students' needs and abilities. Projects offer unlimited opportunities for learning, although an instructor's assistance is a vital stimulating factor during a knowledge transformation process of learning. Projects are important for essential skills development: cognitive skills, problem-solving, critical thinking, collaboration, communication, decision-making, and thinking innovatively (Efstratia, 2014; Rob & Etnyre, 2009; Scholten & Dubois, 2017).

Radford, Hunt, and Andrus (2015) used the experiential learning theory (ELT) as a frame to develop marketing projects and recognized numerous benefits. Students take responsibility for their own progress and deal with

complex issues in the real and relevant macro and micro contexts. The integration of a systems-level analysis with rigorous managerial decision-making experiences helps students understand decision-making as a constructive engagement with societal functions. Projects lead to higher levels of learning and engagement with a better understanding of complex concepts, improved problem-solving ability, greater retention of the material taught because students are challenged to think, debate, and discuss. Incorporating higher order cognitive processing of problem-solving and judgment is also associated with academic, personal, social, and career development opportunities for students. Experiential learning projects complement approaches, such as case studies and lectures, which are already well established in the business curricula (Ghosh, 2013).

Efstratia (2014) explained that project-based learning is marginalized by educators themselves because of training, experience, and technology needed for projects. There are many separate steps, including activities, workshops, labs, and researches with much more assessments required until the final evaluation of students' learning outcomes. Moreover, instructors have to be able to facilitate students' "journey" to inquiry and students' fulfillment of their "need to know". Instructors are discouraged from implementing this method because sometimes they are not enough experienced, they lack motivation, consider project-based learning as an additional effort-requiring activity and are also restricted by syllabus' contents or a short length of the course.

Jumaat, Tasir, Halim, and Ashari (2017) and Connolly and Begg (2006) discussed the implications for project-based learning as an example of the constructivism learning theory reflecting the notions of "authentic learning activity" and "hands-on learning" with students solving realistic and authentic tasks in the multidisciplinary environment with an application of prior knowledge. An application of technology empowers learning with an instructor acting as a facilitator. Constructivism practices need to be followed in the project design, such as the inclusion of engaging, cognitive, and demanding tasks, continuous monitoring and assessment, a learner's reflection on learning.

According to Radford et al. (2015), managerial rigor depends upon the degree to which educational efforts in the project reflect real decision-making in the dynamic business environment. Experiential learning is most effective when learning mechanisms closely reflect the lived experiences. It poses additional challenges for instructors as also evidenced by Pollard (2012).

Alam (2014) presented the study of his use of a semester-long team project in the international marketing course in response to pressure to improve efficiency and better prepare students because employers and practitioners are expecting a higher quality of transferable skills of graduates. His initiative was

also a response to the request from the accrediting agency to include action-based projects in the global business courses. He observed better students' satisfaction when a project was introduced because this approach appears to produce an enjoyable yet challenging learning experience. Moreover, experiential projects play a key role in grooming a student into a self-starter, who will be able to work with minimal supervision and displaying more apt presentation skills, negotiating approach, and higher propensity to risk-taking with the ability to apply theories into practice. All of them, constituting the competencies, are so much desired by employers. Although, he admitted that the project requires extra effort, time commitment, and energy on the instructor's part in the preparation, execution, and evaluation phases. Learning outcomes and benefits of the project fully justified the application of this experiential learning activity in the course design. Students were expected to integrate, synthesize, and analyze the information presented to them via classroom instructions and other outside sources, and additionally to reflect on the process in the individual reflection papers at regular intervals. Regularly scheduled deadlines, a breakdown of the project into phases, required bi-weekly reports, the inclusion of group discussions, and presentations encouraged students to maintain a steady progress throughout the semester and minimized procrastination. The schedule helped the instructor monitor students' progress to ensure that they were on task (Brown, 2018).

The increasing demand for flexible, time- and location-independent academic study programs supported by technology advancement creates a great opportunity for scaling up experiential learning in the online format (Quinn & Shurville, 2009). Stroth, Knecht, Günther, Behrendt, and Golba (2018) presented an example of a hybrid master's program based on the concepts of active and cooperative learning meeting needs of diverse and dispersed groups of students. They exemplified the progressing complexity of the process of learning from experiential learning, through project-based learning, to research-based learning by engaging theory and experience in the relevant, structured, and context-embedded activities. This approach is oriented at the development of subject-related student's competencies. However, students need the support of motivational coaching instructors to acquire self-organization, active, and cooperative learning skills to engage effectively in problem-solving and to activate and share prior knowledge.

Experiential learning in online format enhances student's formative assessment. However, there are some challenges to be addressed in the course design. Rigorous time management of the project is needed for students to take full advantage of the feedback. Moreover, peer reviews and peer feedback received during online discussions, especially in scaffolding approach, are

highly valued and supported by students' engagement in the individualized context (Chen, Moore, & Vo, 2012; Duesing, Ling, & Yang, 2016; Roach, 2014; Santovec, 2004). There are many benefits of experiential learning online because learning can be self-paced and mastery driven, accompanied by technologically assisted supervision to foster accountability and interaction. Building this connectedness is the main imperative of online management strategies based on intense and socially rich facilitation with expanded course curriculum contents of experiential-based activates (Duesing et al., 2016; Santovec, 2004).

Project Design

In order to encourage an application of a project, as an experiential learning format, I chose to present in this chapter, the applied project I designed: *Global Financial Strategy of MNE with a selected overseas subsidiary expansion*. Students perform this experiential learning activity over the 15-week-long semester in the final capstone course of Master of Science in Finance degree online program and in the Global Finance and Investment graduate certificate. The project requires an application of professional financial expertise with a global understanding.

The project includes key components of the global financial strategy of a selected MNE with the proposal of the overseas subsidiary investment with a recommended outline to be followed by students, as highlighted below. In the project, students are exposed to various characteristics of different international markets while exploring country risk profiles, existing financial instruments, and possible entry strategies. Students need to incorporate an investigative analysis of the destination financial markets into their design of the global financial strategy of the selected Multinational Enterprise (MNE). The project is based on careful research, well-referenced data, and the individual creative input of each student. It should be theoretically sound and focused on the application of the proposed solutions in the current corporate world.

Students work on individual projects throughout the course, based on the MNE, individually selected by each student, and ensure access to the financial information about the enterprise (publicly traded American corporations are most transparent and available). The project is divided into parts following the course three modules reflecting three major pillars of the global corporate financial management.

Detailed Outline of the Project

Module 1: Risk and Corporate Efficiency Management in the Global Environment

(Project—part I outline)

Select a global company (in consultation with the instructor), assess its *overall financial performance* (efficiency vs. risk, trends, ratios, DuPont identity analysis, company value, stock price), and compare with the industry.

Identify the overall cost of capital, that is, weighted average cost of capital (WACC) and the required rate of return for the company (cost of debt vs. cost of equity).

Select a country for a recommended overseas expansion (in consultation with the instructor).

Perform a *country risk analysis*.

Define the role of the subsidiary within the global supply chain management of the corporation.

Identify a suitable entry mode (risk/control tradeoff and diversification).

Identify WACC and the required rate of return for a subsidiary.

Identify transaction, translation, and economic exposure of the subsidiary (and risk factors behind them).

Prepare the *proposal for the risk management framework* (for the company with the subsidiary recognized in it) with the relevant instruments and participants.

Suggest options for improving the multinational financial system of the company for better value creation for shareholders (e.g., centralization of financial functions, the intercompany fund-flow mechanism, and tax burden optimization).

Module 2: Short-Term (WC) and Long-Term Financing Strategy of a Global Firm

(Project—part II outline)

Evaluate and design the capital structure, dividend policy, financial leverage of the firm worldwide, and the planned subsidiary separately.

Identify and discuss and internal and external (domestic and international) sources of financing for the company and the subsidiary separately (compare with the industry patterns and corporate treasury roles).

Discuss and assess the corporate currency position (separately of the company and of the planned subsidiary).

Address the limitations of the MNE international expansion by the sustainable growth rate.

Assess the needs, availability, the cost of multinational working capital instruments, and design the recommended WCM strategy for the planned subsidiary.

Consider the flexibility needed for the seasonal and cyclical fluctuations.

Module 3: Global Investment Strategy in the MNE

(Project—part III outline)

Discuss the global expansion strategy of the firm (corporate and financial strategic objectives, modes of entry).

Prepare a well-defended *investment proposal* (based on the foreign project appraisal) arguing about the relative attractiveness and strategic fit of the analyzed subsidiary.

Design the financial *contingency plan* for addressing potential country risk escalation for the subsidiary (financial distress, loss mitigation, and the ultimate exit strategy).

Learning Objectives

As a capstone, the project integrates the skills required to make coherent decisions about interrelated strategic issues while designing a *global financial strategy* of MNEs and assessing proposals, such as overseas subsidiary investment.

Learning objectives for this project are aimed at demonstrating knowledge and competency in the topics listed in the project outline and research-based learning activities required to engage students in the scaffolding format to support progressive experience, feedback, and learning. Continuous exchanges of pertinent real-time market information along with a critical analysis of research findings in the multi-stage process allow for reassessment, reconnect, and revised recommendations for strategic actions. It follows the Bloom's taxonomy (Anderson et al., 2001) requirements of progress: (a) from understanding (knowledge) of the international business (IB) environment and specific corporate objectives on the real example selected, (b) applying financial theory in the assessment process, (c) analyzing existing real business opportunities and challenges in the international business setting, (d) presenting the synthesis by

incorporating all information into comprehensive and coherent assessment of the corporate business situation in the global competition, (e) designing and evaluating practical and feasible solutions for the selected MNEs with the consideration of the industry and the target foreign market, and finally to (f) creating the final revised proposal in accordance with the professional standards.

Experiential Learning Cycle

The project is individualized and student centered while adopting reversed learning activities. It involves interactions between each student and the financial market environment. During guided exploratory research of both the corporate environment and the financial market environment, students apply prior learning and create knowledge by transforming their experience.

The project is facilitated by three-course discussions on related key topics of the international financial markets required for the global financial strategy design and the foreign project appraisal.

Following the experiential learning theory (ELT) (Kolb, 1984) recommendations, the cycle of experience, reflecting, thinking, and acting is repeated multiple times during the project according to the parts of the project scheduled as learning actives.

It is usually challenging for students to make productive observations of the IB-related differences in the business environments with the existing corporate barriers of internal transfer of knowledge (Starnawska, 2006a, 2006b). The projects mitigate these shortcomings of experiential learning by:

- Breaking the project into chunks for more cohesive learning experience, fuller understanding, and more meaningful conclusions;
- Gradually increasing and diversifying guided and narrowly focused experience while developing well-defined capabilities with an application of relevant professional tools;
- Referring to specified expected experiences to help students acknowledge the relevance of it to their knowledge, through an application and required problem-solving
- Ensuring that business-related context is highly relatable to students by letting them select and find their own way to experience it.
- A structured project design that is enquiry based for problem-solving with instruction for active discovery and new concept development

- Creating the enforced comparative and relative approach in the project construct for contrasting, contesting, and finding limitations to expose IB-related differences
- Engaging hands-on approach to develop skills for selecting and scrutinizing information and understanding the application in the real and current business context
- A project design, which supports balanced learning style in the online environment in accordance with Kolb's terminology holistically engaging feeling, thinking, reflecting, and acting

Evaluation of Learning Effectiveness

Students need to submit the project in the stipulated sequenced parts in order to capitalize on the extensive feedback from the instructor. Although executed in parts, the coherence of the project should be maintained, as issues are highly interrelated. The project should be concise, comprehensive, and clearly articulated, including examples of the formal financial document of managerial communication at the executive level.

The project performed in stages as designed exposes students to the sequence of advancements experienced during the course. It applies the Kirkpatrick and Kirkpatrick's (2016) training evaluation model in a couple of repeated cycles of the following phases: (a) a reaction to findings after the exploration of the real business environment; (b) learning during research and analysis to meet tailored requirements; (c) designing behavior while planning and proposing solutions recommended for business application; and (d) scrutinizing results in the multifaceted assessment of the final investment proposal.

As part of the accreditation process with IACBE (2017), according to recommended key learning outcomes, the MSF faculty identified seven learning goals that guide the curricular architecture and the delivery of content areas (courses). These learning goals are *Managerial Communication*, *Ethical and Critical Reasoning*, *Leadership*, *Disciplinary Knowledge*, *Strategic Thinking and Decision Making*, *Global Understanding*, and *Teamwork*. Together the MSF courses cover all of the seven learning goals and this final capstone project is evaluated with a corresponding rubric in two direct measures of student learning at a master level according to the accepted Outcome Assessment Plan.

The rubric for learning outcomes assessment reflects experiential learning objectives, indicating clearly the expectations, as recommended by Duesing et al. (2016).

Challenges and Best Practices

In this part of the chapter, I discuss more in detail the background and the history of this project, challenges faced in the current application, recommended best practices based on my experience, and possible suggestions for future IB educators who may want to incorporate experiential learning projects in their courses.

Challenges

As noted at the beginning of this chapter, there are many challenges observed in the literature with the application of project-based learning. However, considering specifics of the project, a graduate level of study, and an online delivery of the course, I could notice additional initial challenges, which I was able to mitigate by adopting relevant measures. These challenges include (a) a costly access to the professional financial databases, (b) a specific communication process in the online course, (c) a required extensive engagement of a professionally and internationally experienced instructor, (d) more technological support needed for virtual interactions, (e) an imperfect knowledge transfer due to the limited absorptive capacity in the communication process, (f) more flexibility to support students' needs of faster professional mid-career transitions or promotions, (g) a pressing imperative of time-accelerated and cost-efficient learning across borders, and (h) reduced attractive on-site opportunities in IB for students in the form of internships or early job placements.

Best Practices

I developed the following important guidelines for best practices in the implementation of the project presented in this chapter to overcome the highlighted above challenges:

The selection of the topic is a critical step in the success of the project as a learning activity to be assessed at the completion for the final MSF learning goals accomplishment. It requires attentive mentoring from the instructor to provide for the meaningful and thorough learning experience. The project serves as the capstone to be a culminating part of the MSF program. Therefore, the project needs to encompass and exhibit skills acquired during the whole program of study. To meet this objective, the selection of the topic needs to consider the choice of the MNE and, additionally, the country for the over-

seas expansion proposal. These two components are highly correlated to make a compelling investment proposal, although each recommendation for a corporation and a country needs to meet a separate set of requirements. It is very beneficial for students to select the MNE from a home country (in this case a publicly traded American Corporation) because a student is familiar with the company. It provides a student with at least a brief initial perspective of the business entity. Thus, it reduces the learning curve at the very beginning of the project. It can also recommend selecting the MNE in the industry, in which the student has a strong personal interest, based on prior experience or intended future engagement. A strong self-motivation is a very important factor to ensure students' deep and continued commitment to the challenging experiential learning activity. Students need to be self-driven with their exploratory process. The selection of a publicly traded corporation ensures potential access to extensive data and information, including public news coverage, analysts' coverage, industry reports, mandatory reporting, public relations, and investor relations support, all with online access. It is also vital for the project to assist students with the recognition of the financial management specifics and trends related to the selected industry, for example, relatively unique financial institutions pose a challenge. Understanding the driving forces of the selected industry helps in focusing on the relevant key performance indicators on the management dashboards and the important factors behind them.

The second initial decision that each student has to make individually at the beginning of the project, but assisted by the instructor, is the section of the country for overseas expansion. The choice is subordinated to the objectives of the selected MNE. It is also structured within the IB theoretical framework of selecting an entry mode into a foreign market based on the motives of international expansion with a focus on meeting the corporate financial objectives. Instructor's knowledge is paramount in guiding the student's hypothesis for the selection of the suitable host cost country destination to be possibly verified and confirmed in the project. The selection of the host country has to support the learning objectives of the project, which have to be well exposed in the final virtual presentations (the MSF program is offered fully online). The host country has to have an existing, researchable, and transparent financial sector with a legal and institutional framework. There needs to be an operational efficiency of the financial market and some availability of the financial instruments required by MNE. It is much easier to work within the matured financial market environment, but it is not necessary for the project. However, a student has to be able to prove the feasibility of the MNE entry into the selected host country with the recommended

long-term and short-term financing strategy and global investment strategy while meeting learning objectives.

I can recommend the use of *discussions for replication of the virtual collaboration*, experience sharing, relative, and peer evaluation that supports individual projects. These are especially useful for the parts of the project when IB cross-cultural competency is required for the relative assessment of host countries selected by students in the course (Cools et al., 2009; Kayumova & Sadykova, 2016; Li, 2010; Starr-Glass, 2011). These discussions address the key topics related to international financial management and comparisons of various host country financial markets as follows.

In the first discussion, students focus on currency risk (determinants and currency exchange rates forecasting) and the benefits of currency exchange rates forecasting for MNEs. They address an issue of the applicability and reliability of currency exchange forecasting models and techniques. Additionally, they must consider the limitations of the currency models and possible disrupting factors and market distortions while supporting their views with research findings and corporate and country examples.

The second discussion relates to the international financial markets and instruments (advantages and limitations). Students must debrief their course mates on the local financial market (sectors, segments, institutions, regulations) of the host country for their recommended expansion from the perspective of a global treasury of MNE. They must consider needs and preferences while presenting available and missing financial instruments (with trading volumes and pricing), as compared with the highly developed financial market in the US (preferably the home country of their chosen MNE). They follow to discuss the advantages of the instruments available at the local host market under consideration for their global financial strategy, and limitations of the instruments, partners on the local market (with reasoning), with possible suggestions how to overcome (or to substitute) them. Students need to be specific and quantitatively oriented. Next, through the peer review process, students respond to posts of other course mates addressing observed similarities and differences of their chosen local financial market for their recommended expansion, as compared with other local financial markets selected and presented by other students. They benefit from the ideas of other students and enrich other students' posts by the recommendations of resolving recognized problems while acknowledging local financial market deficiencies.

The last discussion centers on WACC, the required rate of return, and risk assessment. Students explore the meaning and the challenges of assessment and the application of concepts of: WACC, the required rate of return, and risk assessment (and explain how they interrelate) with the impact on the

shareholder value creation. Students need to address the current expected value ranges of those metrics on the financial markets with the tradeoffs observed (also on the example of their selected MNE and through an overseas expansion). They will also be recommended global financial strategy changes to affect those metrics in the desired direction for the maximization of the shareholder value through a corporate treasury function.

An instructor needs to provide *support in exploratory virtual visits* in the institutions of the regulatory framework and market participants, such as stock exchanges, central banks, supervisory authorities. Additional resources are required to explore fully the international financial environment, including research organizations (governmental and non-governmental), rating agencies, information databases, corporations, and so on. An involvement and guidance of the instructor are of paramount importance providing ideas, links, and resources (Starnawska, 2004). Students also need assistance with the application of relevant technology and sources of information for the project.

A well-organized scaffolding *structure and strict timeline* of the project should be followed for a coherent and correct execution with *frequent communication* patterns.

Benefits

A project approach to experiential learning provides numerous advantages. I can agree with many benefits discussed in the literature and the pedagogy recommendation for online experiential learning. As my contribution to the advocacy for project-based learning, I observed the following important advantages that my project delivered to students.

The described project provides *flexibility* for students as contrasted with internships. They can freely select MNE and the country of their interest to pursue in the project. Moreover, there is a flexibility of time while studying online. Students can register in the fall or in the spring for the 15-week-long course while continuing their career and professional or family engagement. This is a huge advantage of the project because available internships for the students are not always with desired business entities, are time consuming, and are often non-paying.

The project is also a very *comprehensive* experiential learning experience at a professional level as compared with internships. Students explore regulations and institutions and are required to research, analyze with critical thinking, perform a relative assessment for the industry, provide a full and well-supported critique, and design new solutions after reflecting on the status quo (the company and the relevant markets). The creative stage is heavily

scrutinized in both cyclical and final evaluation processes. Students' internships usually do not envisage this extent of the involvement and the insight into the company's activity with a more fragmented and supplementary focus, and with no decision-making authority, because student's role during the internship is considered temporary and auxiliary. Therefore, the scope of the project is much greater than the activity during internships because students would not be allowed to perform a full line of duty in the financial management capacity during the internship in the real decision-making function. Students during the internships usually benefit mostly only from a much narrower view and a limited participation and much below the executive level.

There is a continuous support process from the instructor in the project. Experiential learning is based on individual observations and participation. However, it is greatly enriched by inspirational, constructive, and corrective *feedback* from the supervising instructor. In the internship setting, supervision and support are not always easily available. In the project, students benefit from much more extensive and continuous support of the instructor serving effectively as a supervisor and a mentor.

The project setup allows for both *a formative and a summative assessment* of students' learning in the scaffolding design of this extensive and continuing activity. The closed loop and a two-way communication with planned several sequenced and task-oriented cycles during the project ensure a formal review of student's progress, recommendations for improvement, and resources for assistance. It is also an opportunity for corrective actions, additional inspiration, or more explanation to enhance the mastery of learning and a knowledge transformation. The supervision is intense, instructive, and with substantial input because of the challenges often faced in the experiential learning process. A direct involvement of the instructor is highly individualized in the nurturing and cooperative format of executive coaching. This focus on the frequent formative assessment and support in the project leads to the positive final summative assessment when students achieve clearly defined learning goals during this ambitious professional experience. Students build self-esteem and strengthen their confidence after overcoming challenges while being encouraged and supported by the instructor visibly dedicated to their success.

The project, as the experiential learning activity, allows for a *high control of learning process*. Additionally, it is theoretically very sound because of its structure based on the discipline merits and professional field requirements. Students are required to resort and refer to the textbook by Shapiro (2013) for theoretical models and frameworks, concepts, analytical tools, financial formulas, and the professional terminology application with full understanding.

The *theoretical rigor* is enforced by a mandatory inclusion of the identified concepts and tools to be used in the project, such as:

- The DuPont identity for an expanded in-depth performance assessment and forecasting;
- A comprehensive market risk analysis and management (with ethical concerns, ratings, and rankings);
- Framing the company and subsidiary comprehensive relations setup (interactions, financial implication, support for entry mode);
- An improvement of the centralized treasury function efficiency and tax shield benefits;
- Currency forecasting and parity models application, market distortions recognition;
- The international CAPM and WACC for investment proposal appraisal;
- Internal and external hedging techniques with relevant existing instruments, seasonal fluctuations;
- Limitations and deficiencies of financial instruments, liquidity, corporate governance, and government intervention;
- A capital gap analysis with an application of the corporate sustainable growth rate, leverage, and dividend policy implications;
- A sensitivity analysis of policy changes.

The *extended duration* of the project supports an effective knowledge transformation with a focus and a full recognition of the IB-related context. It is possible because the financial market is heavily internationalized with significant correlations among regional markets. There are many commonalities based on the same concepts, the terminology, financial models, and similar financial instruments and institutions, including the IB-related dimension. International differences exist and students have to expose them in the country risk analysis performed in the project. Many financial institutions have to operate on the international scale and students display familiarity with the global issues while exploring similar or comparable financial concepts observed across borders while actively engaging in finding differences. The financial function in modern organizations is also becoming progressively digitized and the use of cloud-based solutions becomes a norm in corporate finance with a real-time, any place, and any time, flexible access and communication across the enterprise via ERP systems.

The project stimulates *innovativeness* because students are not constrained by company policies of the internal chain of command, short-term perspective, or lack of voice as it could happen in the internship placement.

The project encourages new ideas because students enjoy the freedom of exploration and evaluation by themselves in the creative stage.

Students produce a report during the project, which is their *original work* in the *professional* writing style with an application of *primary resources* they need to validate. The experience during the project requires a student's own critical evaluation of the current business and international environment via *relative assessment*, beyond just one company internal perspective. The interaction with other students during the course supports the formation of their views, broadens their comparisons, and stimulates critical thinking about their individually selected MNE and the host country.

The project has a strong intended focus on the *global perspective* as required by the MSF program learning goals assessed by the relevant rubric. There is a multifaceted coverage of the IB-related issues in the project. Students explore MNE, host country risks, and the international financial market with the objective to improve the corporate financial function via an international expansion. It requires excellent integration of a complete IB perspective with the functional financial expertise not always captured by short-term and narrowly oriented internships or even not common during a study abroad opportunity.

The second quite often missed perspective in the internships is *ethical reasoning*, although so important in the IB-context. The project makes students very sensitive to the issues related to ethical decision-making, because it is one of the criteria of student's performance evaluation required by the accreditation. It is included in the evaluation rubric for program learning goals assessment. Ethical issues are highly contentious in the financial field, making them less exposed in the professional setting during the internship. Strict following of student's learning goals in the learning process provides assurance of developing professional skills and managerial competencies desired in the field of global finance.

The engagement of students in the selection of the topic (both MNE and the host country) needs to be supported by the *individual student's rationale* for such a choice, making it a great benefit for their professional grow and career development. This is a very valuable difference from the internships where students are not often placed in the companies or locations of their preference.

The presented project specifically resonates well with the selected expectations of AACSB (2018), which recommends inclusion in the accreditation standards for business accreditation of the following elements: (a) *research-based learning projects*, which engage in experiential and active learning designed to be inclusive for diverse students and to improve skills and the

application of knowledge in practice; (b) *technological agility*, which integrates current and emerging technologies, including the application of statistical tools and techniques, data management, data analytics, and information technology throughout the curriculum; and (c) *competency-based education* (*CBE*), which allows students to progress at their own pace, based on their ability to demonstrate proficiency with a specific skill or competency.

The project meets the criteria of *accessibility and open education with practical orientation*, so much publically advocated for with the urgent need to reduce costs of higher education with much more focus on gaining expertise in the high-demand employment fields by students, and in way that is more efficient. This is also a response to the decrease in public funding for higher education, and to the call for the competency-based education appreciated by employers and accreditors. The format of the project resembles the apprentice experience gained from the instructor and the interaction with the business environment, but in a more flexible and accommodative modern setting of distance learning. The project can be an example of how higher education responds to the disruption of the industry resulting from the digital transformation, beyond just altering the mode of delivery.

Genesis

My background and the *history of this project* were critical for the successful development of this experiential learning activity.

In my former capacity, I had the privilege to serve as an ERASMUS (European Community Action Scheme for the Mobility of University Students) program coordinator, and later also as an organizer and a supervisor of IB internships, including a study abroad internship. Along with my prior successful international business experience in the management of financial institutions, mainly MNEs, it gave me the ability and a strong motivation to develop projects supporting experiential learning for students in my courses. I could observe that the ERASMUS program supported by the European Credit Transfer and Accumulation System (ECTS) and substantial EU funding provides a great cross-cultural and academic experience but with limited work placements opportunities. A study abroad format has some additional drawbacks, such as time, cost commitment, and is less attractive for non-traditional students.

I started project-based teaching by adopting, for my undergraduate course in International Business, a Market Entry Strategy Group Project (MESP) recommended by Wild, Wild, and Han (2008) along with their textbook.

Students had to research a nation as a future market for a selected well-described product of their choice. While working in teams, students had to research and analyze a country, then recommend a course of action to the producer with a presentation to be delivered orally during an in-class face-to-face meeting at the end of the semester. Students were expected to follow the MESP Guide with an accompanying template and a list of recommended online resources. It was a great icebreaker for an entry-level course for students with a very limited international exposure. The project was comprised of four modules: Market Intelligence Report, Business Environment Analysis Report, Report on Opportunities for Market Entry, and Market Entry Strategy Analysis, with detailed instructions how students were supposed to progress toward the final learning outcome. The project had a strong IB framework of a cross-border expansion with a focus on a marketing function.

Later, I continued to develop semester-long, large-scale IB-related projects with relevant instructional materials for my courses, with notable two of them worth mentioning, besides the project presented in this chapter. One of them in the Global Strategy course for MBA Global Leadership program and another project covering a simulation of stock portfolio construction, management, and evaluation, reflecting an investment process in my Investment Analysis course.

There has been a very strong rationale for developing referred experiential learning projects during my academic career. Based on my application of examples, I could observe students' excitement, enjoyment, and full engagement. They really experienced professional roles using real-time data, not just simulations. Although they faced many challenges, their satisfaction compensated for their effort. Performing professional functions gave students exposure to the reality (not only a virtual reality). Students were committed to the process because they could appreciate the value of the skills they were acquiring. Many students were positively surprised because they would not envision themselves accomplishing so much during the project. That worthwhile experience, they would expect to be highly aspirational to undertake, was seen by the students as extremely beneficial for their careers. They worked on documents and data, which they will be expected to deal with in the international business in the financial capacity. That rewarding experience provided students with a real encounter with institutions and financial instruments they have to know professionally. While presenting their projects, students were very proud of their accomplishments and confident about their future professional performance.

Transferability/Replication

The project supports the development of transferable skills for managing a corporate financial function across cultures in the global financial market. It is suitable for any delivery mode in an executive education or at a graduate level in business programs for an IB-related finance core course or an MBA specialized elective. For an undergraduate program, the scope and difficulty of the project should be reduced accordingly, and possibly the activity could be converted into a team project. As an example of the concept, the project can be used for creating similar projects in other IB areas, as I did in the past. Additionally, the project incorporates recommendations for the online experiential learning pedagogy included in the literature. As discussed in the chapter, the design of the project helps enhance the benefits of students from the experiential learning. I also presented suggestions on how to address and minimize the challenges of experiential learning on the example of online project design with best practices. The project is relatively easy to implement, adapt, or modify to the online course or in-class course homework assignment. The project, as my original work, is also intended to serve as a template or the inspiration to design online experiential learning activities.

Contributions/Implications

The project draws on the recommendations of experiential learning theories and practices. It also applies the concepts of professional apprenticeship career tracks but expands it into the new digital business environment and with significant advancement in the online pedagogy.

The project is much beyond an international business case study. It involves identification and exploration of the international financial market and a financial strategy of a selected MNE at a professional level and with the professional expertise.

The project smooths the transition to the professional corporate environment with a recognition of the IB-related context of the global financial market and of a foreign target market for an overseas subsidiary expansion. It is cost effective, as compared to the international placement, and it is not challenged by the time and place constraints or the extended duration commitment. Therefore, it serves best a rapidly growing population of non-traditional students with prior professional experience seeking the mode of online study. From the perspective of the learning objectives assessment, the project pro-

vides for a high control of the learning process and a knowledge transformation into IB-related capabilities under close mentoring of the instructor and frequent interaction with the course mates while eliminating language barriers. Thanks to immersing the project in the real-life conditions and constraints of the current global financial market, the experience avoids the simplification and misguidance of an artificial business simulation. Virtual access to the international space and business institutions crosses physical barriers to provide instant and valuable experiential learning opportunities without monetary challenges.

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Part VI

Consulting/Corporate Challenges

16

Genuine Consulting Experience: Developing Internationalization Strategies for Small Businesses

Gabriela Bonilla Chumbi, Courtney N. Bowles, and Wolfgang Messner

Introduction

For many years, business school programs and their research have been critiqued for their lack of relevance to real-world management practices. While being Chairwoman and Chief Executive Officer of PepsiCo, Indra Nooyi complained that "we have these kids who don't know anything about business in great detail. They come out [of business school] saying they've got an MBA and they've got an education but not knowledge" (quoted in S-W, 2016). David, David, and David (2011, p. 51) found in an empirical study that "résumés of business students nearing graduation revealed low to no proficiency on the job description-derived skill sets," explaining that the disparity between business school focus and practitioner needs is potentially problematic. To overcome this disparity, they encourage business schools to be more responsive and initiate reforms to align their curricula with corporate needs. For example, "students who acquire specific business license/certification/skills may have a distinct competitive advantage over students who rely solely on their academic training" (p. 59). Mintzberg (2004) noticed that the teaching agenda of business schools is mainly about pre-

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M. A. Gonzalez-Perez et al. (eds.), *The Palgrave Handbook of Learning and Teaching International Business and Management*, https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-030-20415-0_16

senting academic management theory to students who have no or limited experience as managers. He suggested to overturn the model and focus on the practice of management by bringing experienced practicing managers into the classroom. But the irrelevance of management education and research for management practice in organizations continues to be discussed in academic outlets (e.g., Bennis & O'Toole, 2005; Minocha, Reynolds, & Hristov, 2017) and between alumni of business schools, alike. There is a glaring "disparity between business school focus and business community needs" (David et al., 2011, p. 51). Critical thinking, problem identification, creative problem solving, effective communication, and persistence are among the most often mentioned missing qualities (Smith & Gibson, 2016). Leavitt (1989, p. 40) very pointedly said that "business schools have been designed without practice fields," and Bennis and O'Toole (2005, p. 96) criticize that they ultimately not only fail "to impart useful skills" but also fail "to lead graduates to good corporate jobs." David et al. (2011) consequently demand that business schools more closely align their pre-graduation training with post-graduation job requirements.

Each year and around the world in an estimated 14,000 business schools (McMillan & Overall, 2016), students read 15–20 million case studies with the average postgraduate business school course featuring 10–12 cases (Nohria & Rivkin, 2018). Their pedagogy is designed to (a) expose students to real business dilemmas, choices, and decisions; (b) help focus on key issues while keeping the wider organizational, industrial, and societal context in mind; and (c) train students to make impactful decisions in complex situations even with incomplete information (Nohria & Rivkin, 2018). At their core, they focus on a variety of simple and complex but predictable problems and routines with known solutions; they teach decision making by role-playing (McMillan & Overall, 2016). We believe that working on cases is an important part of management education, as they provide students direct and intimate access to the internal workings of a wide variety of companies across industry verticals and geographies (Nohria & Rivkin, 2018). We also believe that it is immensely important in preparing for decision making. However, in reality, most students will not leave business school and be directly hired into a position where they can make decisions based on the information someone else collected for them. More likely than not, they will—at least initially, and probably for a number of years—be the ones who will collect, condense, and present such information to someone else higher up the corporate ladder. Business schools should therefore offer "a pedagogy that reflects authentic and legitimate practitioner learning" (Ellson, 2009, p. 1162).

The major management consulting firms have a highly visible presence in on-campus recruiting. "Management consulting is the providing to management of objective advice and assistance relating to the strategy, structure, management and operations of an organization in pursuit of its long-term purposes and objectives. Such assistance may include the identification of options with recommendations; the provision of an additional resource and/or the implementation of solutions" (IMC, 2016, p. 5). For many undergraduate and postgraduate students seeking intellectual stimulation and professional prestige after college, applying to these firms can be a good stepping stone that opens doors to a variety of jobs in other companies (Weiss-Meyer, 2014). Notwithstanding, from client interaction to data visualization and slide deck building, business schools traditionally teach few of the skills central to management consultants (Weiss-Meyer, 2014). We specifically argue that traditional cases are ill-suited to prepare students for such kind of assignments where they need to diplomatically deal with different stakeholders, navigate across the organization and the organization's extended network, manage a project roadmap and workload for an extended period of time, and keep to committed deadlines (Ashley, 2018). That is why we argue for the necessity to bring "practice intelligence" (Minocha et al., 2017, p. 464) into the classroom. Real-world business problems are messy and complicated, and it takes at least a few weeks to bring together the data and information to support executive decision making. Of course, we believe in the importance of looking at the business world through the lens of theory for "understanding the forces that bring about change and the circumstances in which those forces are operative" (Christensen, Wang, & van Bever, 2013, p. 107). But searching for the answer neatly condensed into half a page somewhere in a 20-page case is a poor substitute for training practice intelligence. Instead, we suggest a course where students spend a few weeks in class learning how to execute consulting projects, then go into the field working on real business challenges with real clients in small teams, and finally create a slide deck which they deliver to an audience that includes their clients and practicing consultants. This partnering with real businesses and project-based learning increases the career opportunities of students (Friend, 2010; McMillan & Overall, 2016; Smith & Gibson, 2016). But project-based learning also requires students to take responsibility for their learning and involvement in the learning process into their own hands; they "drive their own learning through inquiry, as well as work collaboratively to research and create projects that reflect their knowledge" (Bell, 2010, p. 39). As a result, they will learn much more (Pfeffer & Fong, 2002).

Consulting Project

Both as part of the undergraduate and postgraduate International Business curriculum at the Darla Moore School of Business, University of South Carolina (US), we offer an advanced project-based strategy course on management consulting in an international business environment. Students are placed into the role of advisors to small- and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs); they engage the client and scope their consulting assignment, conduct an international market analysis, and develop go-forward recommendations. The project is free of cost, both for the participating SMEs as well as for the students.

Learning Objectives

This course aims to bring "practice intelligence" (Minocha et al., 2017, p. 464) into the classroom. This involves:

1. Understanding issues and challenges concerning firms in international business: By working directly with domestic firms that wish to internationalize, the students are able to develop client business insight and demonstrate risk and quality management. This ultimately leads to continued learning and development as students develop consulting skills that are relevant to internationalization projects.
2. Scoping a problem together with a client and drawing a roadmap to develop a solution: Working with the clients to develop a solution to their problem allows the students to enhance their consulting process techniques. During this process, the students utilize engagement and assignment management skills to research and understand the client's requirements, which they then use to develop a project plan.
3. Selecting the right resources for a detailed research analysis: In order to select the right resources for the research analysis portion of the project, students must develop client business insight, consulting knowledge, and analytical skills and display adequate engagement management and knowledge of appropriate tools and methodologies.
4. Defining a course of action and timeline for every stage of the project: After completing the scoping meeting with the client, students are tasked with developing a project plan, roadmap, and timeline. To do this, the students must display engagement and assignment management skills and knowledge of the consulting process technique.

5. Applying previously acquired knowledge to develop the suggestions for the project: During the entire project lifecycle, students should draw from their business school education and demonstrate how their classroom learning can be applied to real-world client problems (i.e., display functional specialization).
6. Identifying strengths of team members and allocating tasks accordingly: Key to success in collaborative projects is the ability to effectively build team environments. This requires driving group performance by motivating others without directly supervising them. Working in teams of five, the students must decide how to divide work in order to produce the highest quality product for the client. This will result when students display high levels of assignment management, analytical skills, professionalism, and emotional intelligence.
7. Managing workload against timeline: It is crucial to the success of the project that students adhere to the timeline provided to the client in the project plan. In order to do so, students should develop their assignment management skills.
8. Developing an implementation plan for the suggested solutions: Based on the scope defined in the kick-off meeting and the needs of the client, the students will utilize client business insight, functional specialization, engagement, risk, and quality management to develop an implementation plan for the proposed solution. Students should also consider risks and mitigation alternatives to their proposed solution.
9. Communicating effectively the results and recommendations through management consulting style slide decks. In addition to regular updates to the client, the project will culminate with the students explaining their findings, recommendations, and implementation strategy in a final client presentation. In order to most effectively communicate these to the client, students will develop consulting process techniques that are necessary to develop effective slide decks.

Project Partners

The execution of such a course requires support from the local business community. We partner with the South Carolina Small Business Development Centers (SC SBDC) for acquiring client projects and Integration Point for specialized information on global trade management:

South Carolina Small Business Development Centers (SC SBDC): The SBDCs are a gateway and proven providers of small business assistance in the US. Hosted by leading universities and state economic development agencies, they offer free, private consulting, resources, and seminars to advance South Carolina's economic development by helping entrepreneurs grow successful businesses (Chrisman, 2017). This advanced international strategy course is offered in cooperation with the SC SBDC, which provides the students with consulting projects to work on during the semester. A representative from SC SBDC comes to class to give a presentation on the organization, their work, and how they handle the different consulting projects they work on. This representative also explains to the students the importance of confidentiality in consulting projects, and students are required to sign a confidentiality agreement before the start of the projects. Additionally, the SC SBDC provides the instructor a list of the consulting projects that will be assigned to the students and the name of the SC SBDC business consultant that is in charge of each project. Students work with the consultant to engage the client, understand the client's business needs, conduct a market analysis, and develop concrete go-forward recommendations.

Integration Point: Integration Point (www.integrationpoint.com) was founded by Tom Barnes in 2002 and was acquired by Thomson Reuters in 2018. Integration Point specializes in the development, implementation, and support of a global trade management software to efficiently manage the import and export of goods around the world. Prior to starting the projects, students take a training course in which they become familiar with all the trade knowledge research options and data that Integration Point provides and learn how to navigate the platform. During the course, students take an exam to prove their knowledge and ability to use the trade database system, which allows them to get an industry certificate as an Integration Point specialist. In the consulting project, the use of Integration Point greatly contributes to the students' research and understanding of every transaction involved in the international trade process, which results in a more accurate analysis and recommendation about global trade operations management for the clients' companies.

Project Description

This course is an advanced undergraduate and postgraduate course on management consulting in an international business environment. It follows the idea of project-based learning in that it mirrors a real-world business situation

(Danford, 2006) and engages students in an investigation of an authentic problem (Blumenfeld et al., 1991). In project-based learning, the student-driven teacher-facilitated approach to learning is central to the curriculum (Bell, 2010).

Offered to final-year undergraduates and pre-experience postgraduates, the course is designed around life and real-time internationalization projects from SMEs. These client projects are sourced and managed by the SC SBDCs, which then connect the clients with the student consultants. As part of the course, students are confronted with real and unstructured business problems. This helps students realize that business problems are not isolated finance, supply chain, or marketing issues but that business strategy and execution always integrate across disciplines. Students learn how to apply theoretical frameworks taught in other courses (e.g., the CAGE distance framework, product-market matrix, scoring techniques) and learn to back up their suggestions with hard data obtained from a variety of global trade databases, such as Integration Point. As an additional benefit, students have the opportunity to get officially certified as an Integration Point global trade business analyst.

The course transforms the classroom into an active "war room" of learning, consulting, and project execution. Working with the SC SBDC account managers and client representatives, the students structure and scope the consulting question. Being given limited time for working on their cases (six weeks with a hard deadline, competing with demands from other courses, exams, etc.), they need to timebox the scope of their project. Students also practice multiple directions of stakeholder communication and expectation management toward their professor as well as toward the SC SBDC account manager and their client. This allows the students to observe how management consultants and business managers alike are not only valued for functional and technical expertise, such as skills in extracting information and constructing solutions, but are valued even more for the ability to succinctly communicate and aid top management in a decision-making process.

The timeline of the course follows the roadmap shown in Fig. 16.1. At the outset of the course, students are provided several weeks of lessons on the various aspects of management consulting, best practices for working with clients, and details on how to effectively deliver their work. These classes are not limited strictly to the upcoming project, but instead aim at providing students with insight into the consulting industry and what is expected of consultants by their employer and their clients. It should be noted that these lessons are not exhaustive; this course, and management consulting itself, is a continuous learning process. These introductory courses are intended to put all the students on a level playing field and establish a baseline starting point for the

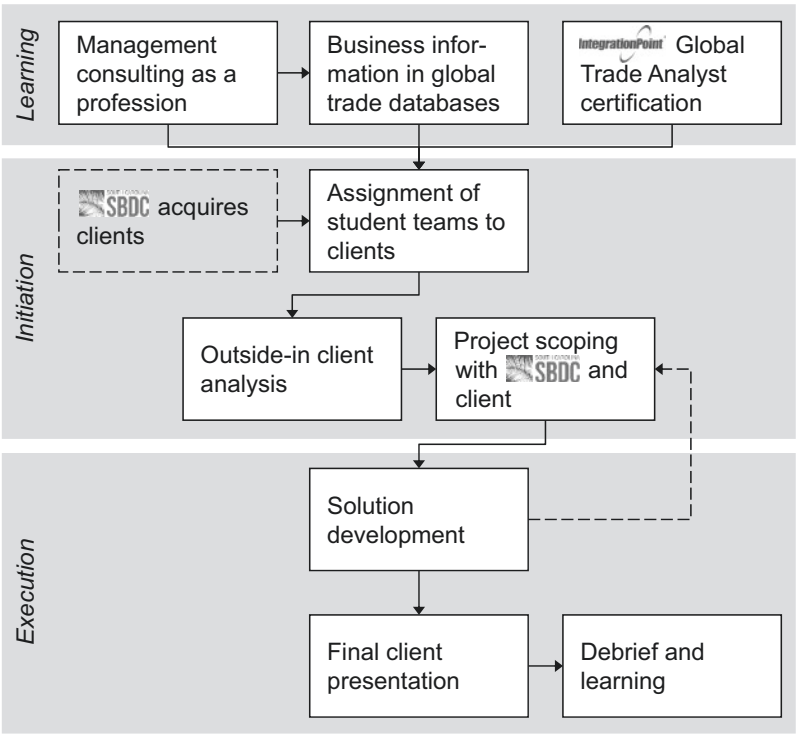


Fig. 16.1 Course roadmap

projects. Next, the students are self-assigned to project teams and conduct an outside-in analysis of the client prior to their initial meeting. At the kick-off meeting, the students present this analysis to the client and the SC SBDC consultant and begin project scoping. After this initial meeting, the students prepare a project plan and effort estimation for the clients' approval. Once this is obtained, the students begin solution development. This process culminates with a final client project presentation, where the students deliver a recommendation and plan for going forward to the client.

The overall approach to this course can be replicated to other domains, such as marketing, strategy, and human resources. However, experience shows that working on client projects requires students to have gone through plenty of classic case work beforehand. Students need to be experienced in seeing the big picture, distilling problems, and applying frameworks to solve business problems. By ensuring this, project success rates have continuously been high. But perhaps, most importantly, this kind of course gives our students a leg up in the job search by allowing them to showcase practical experience as student business consultants on their resumes. This also improves their job interview success rate by offering them exciting talking points.

Experiential Learning Cycle

In this experiential and hands-on course, the student is placed in the role of a management consultant or advisor to a company, which has expressed strong interest in expanding its global business operations. Students work alongside SC SBDC business consultants to engage the client, understand the client's business needs, and develop an efficient and effective plan of action. Students will combine and apply the knowledge acquired in previous courses to conduct a market analysis, develop business internationalization strategies, and present the results and recommendations in a professional management consulting style slide deck. Following the experiential learning theory, this course creates "knowledge through the transformation of experience" (Kolb, 1984, p. 41). This embraces an emphasis on the process of adaptation as opposed to studying content and considers knowledge as a continuously created transformation process rather than something which can be transmitted by the faculty and acquired by the student (Kolb, 1984). Figure 16.2 shows the mapping of the project to the experiential learning cycle (e.g., Kolb, 1984; Kolb & Kolb, 2005).

Skills and Competencies

This project is designed to enhance 13 core skills and competencies that are part of the industry-standard management consulting competency framework (Pergoff, Sopo, Scellato, Burdett, & Outlaw, 2016):

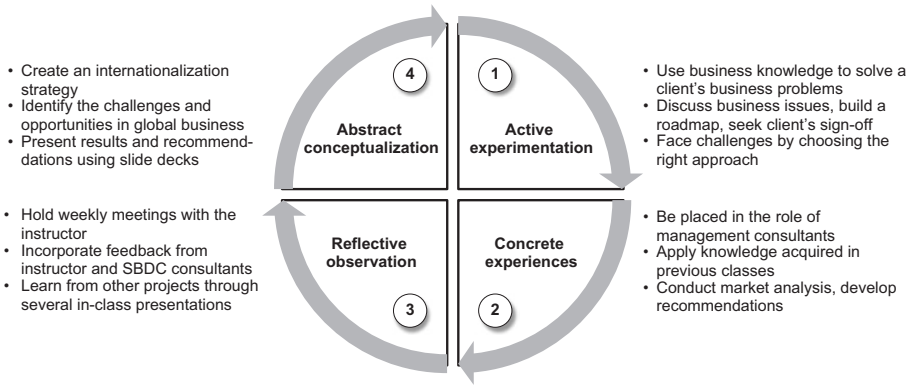


Fig. 16.2 Experiential learning cycle

1. Client business insight: Understanding the internal and external factors impacting projects
2. Consulting business insight: Understanding the management consultancy environment and its commercial aspects
3. Functional specialization: Being recognized as an expert in a discipline
4. Engagement management: Determining the scope of client assignments, managing client and stakeholder expectations, engaging expertise of others where appropriate
5. Assignment management: Managing client assignments effectively, delivering timely solutions while balancing priorities, and managing time effectively
6. Consulting knowledge: Capturing, sharing, and applying knowledge in a structured way relevant to engagement needs
7. Consulting process technique: Using a range of techniques to deliver solutions of mutual benefit
8. Tools and methodologies: Selecting and using appropriate tools and methodologies
9. Analytical skills: Applying analytical and pro-active thinking to ensure robust and appropriate client solutions
10. Risk and quality management: Defining risk criteria and identifying, mitigating, and managing risks and outcomes, defining quality standards, and ensuring quality of delivery and client satisfaction
11. Ethics and professionalism: Operating with professionalism and integrity and working in the best interests of the client
12. Personal interaction (emotional intelligence): Taking responsibility for impact of selected course of actions, handling complexity, and interacting effectively with others
13. Continuous learning and development: Planning self-development and showing track record of personal growth

In Table 16.1, these practical skills and competencies are each broken down into sub-categories and mapped against the course roadmap depicted in Fig. 16.1. The alignment of the course with the management consulting competency framework aims to build practice intelligence, which ultimately leads to the learning objectives being fulfilled.

Table 16.1 Practice intelligence developed in the course

Reference to consulting competency framework	Phases of the course		
	(A) Learning	(B) Initiation	(C) Execution
Client business insight—Understanding the internal and external factors impacting projects			
Client understanding		Researches the client business, the industry sector in which it operates, and its stakeholder	
Client business knowledge		Researches similar businesses, competitors, and best practices	
External awareness			Formulates analysis for client including political, economic, social, technological, legal, and environmental factors
Consulting business insight—Understanding the management consultancy environment and its commercial aspects			
Management consulting business knowledge	Studies the structure of consulting (including profit and loss and client confidentiality)		Understand the scope and nature of management consulting, including its limitations
Commercial aspects of assignments		Develops commercial awareness and scopes and estimates project	Improves self-marketing capability
Functional specialization—Being recognized as an expert in a discipline			
Functional knowledge and skills			Puts business school education in international business and other functional areas to practical use

(*continued*)

Table 16.1 (continued)

Reference to consulting competency framework	Phases of the course		
	(A) Learning	(B) Initiation	(C) Execution
Sectorial knowledge and experience			Demonstrates how business school education can be applied to the client's business sector
Engagement management—Determining the scope of client assignments, managing client and stakeholder expectations, and engaging expertise of others where appropriate			
Scoping client requirements		Researches, understands, and defines client requirements. Defines scope of work and presents a comprehensive written scope statement and roadmap plan	Engages the client in selecting options and taking ownership of the assignment's execution
Managing client interface			Manages client and stakeholder expectations. Communicates the assignment progress effectively, and conducts regular assignment reviews with client, SC SBDC, and faculty
Partnering and networking			Builds and engages network to support client engagement
Assignment management—Managing client assignments effectively and delivering timely solutions while balancing priorities and managing time effectively			
Managing successful outcomes			Manages own delivery under guidance. Ensures that objectives and deadlines are met

(*continued*)

Table 16.1 (continued)

Reference to consulting competency framework	Phases of the course		
	(A) Learning	(B) Initiation	(C) Execution
Planning			Plans and manages own time. Demonstrates competent use of time-tracking tools. Reviews project plans.
Managing the assignment			Handles change in project scope, shows flexibility to adapt to changing demands and deadlines. Demonstrates ability to manage ambiguity. Keeps big picture in mind, while addressing details. Identifies and develops work streams
Working on all aspects of a project		Operates competently across the project lifecycle, from scoping to closure	
Managing handover to client			Shows ability to close own deliverables. Performs handover to client
Consulting knowledge—Capturing, sharing, and applying knowledge in a structured way relevant to engagement needs			
Using a logical process approach to capturing and building knowledge			Gathers data, and translates data into useable output
Sharing knowledge and experiences with others	Shares acquired knowledge about trade databases with the class		Shares acquired knowledge to build value for the client. Coaches others in using trade databases

(*continued*)

Table 16.1 (continued)

Reference to consulting competency framework	Phases of the course		
	(A) Learning	(B) Initiation	(C) Execution
Applying knowledge, tools, and technical expertise to create value for the client	Builds knowledge of trade databases as appropriate tools		
Consulting process technique—Using a range of techniques to deliver solutions of mutual benefit			
Presentation	Learns tools and techniques to build slide decks	Uses presentation tools to run the project scoping meeting …	… and the final client project presentation
Written reports		Produces clear client correspondence	Selects most appropriate charts to support project documentation
Facilitation			Leads group sessions
Coaching and mentoring			Enables client learning through knowledge transfer
Consensus building		Develops skills in building consensus within team and with client	
Tools and methodologies—Selects and uses appropriate tools and methodologies			
Selects and uses appropriate diagnostic tools, methods, and techniques			Evaluates trade databases to obtain best data available within budgetary constraints. Tests client hypotheses with robust data
Analytical skills—Applying analytical and pro-active thinking to ensure robust and appropriate client solutions			
Problem solving			Challenges assumptions and probes into detail
Decision making and recommendation			Works effectively in a complex environment with uncertainties and incomplete information

(*continued*)

Table 16.1 (continued)

Reference to consulting competency framework	Phases of the course		
	(A) Learning	(B) Initiation	(C) Execution
Interacts effectively with others	Assesses own consulting skills and understands the strengths of others		
Risk and quality management—Defining risk criteria and identifying, mitigating, and managing risks and outcomes; defining quality standards and ensuring quality of delivery and client satisfaction			
Managing risk and issues			Requests advice in achieving milestones from SC SBDC and faculty
Managing quality			Works with basic quality concepts (working to specification, cost of quality). Seeks feedback
Ethics and professionalism—Operating with professionalism and integrity, working in the best interests of the client			
	Learns about client confidentiality	Understands the value of independent professional advice in client kick-off meeting	Ensures professional advice is sound by reviewing it with SC SBDC
Personal interaction (emotional intelligence)—Taking responsibility for impact of selected course of actions, handling complexity, and interacting effectively with others			
Taking responsibility for own actions			Maintains responsibility to keep to agreed scope of work
Handles complexity			Works effectively in complex environment
Interacts effectively with others		Shares views with others and expresses own ideas clearly. Is prepared to listen to client and others	Works effectively in a team environment

(*continued*)

Table 16.1 (continued)

Reference to consulting competency framework	Phases of the course		
	(A) Learning	(B) Initiation	(C) Execution
Demonstrates influencing skills		Presents ideas to the client convincingly	Motivates others and drives team performance without directly supervising them
Demonstrates communication skills		Conveys ideas and thoughts in a clear focused style using effective graphical, written, and oral communication techniques	
Continues learning and development—Planning self-development and showing track record of personal growth			
Self-development	Identifies opportunities for self-development during consulting skills assessment		Seeks opportunities to further own development by seeking and acting on feedback from client, SC SBDC, and faculty
Actively seeks out new and appropriate tools	Develops awareness of a range of consultancy tools and techniques	Identifies relevance of tools and techniques for project execution	

Debriefing

All consulting projects incur some difficulties. Sometimes, the agreed scope is more difficult to meet, on occasion some students do not perform on par with their peers, effort and timelines may take longer than estimated, or the findings of the market analysis are not quite as noteworthy as the team anticipated. Debriefing the course with a formal post-project review is the start of a continuous learning process for the students, as it is critical for them to accelerate their future projects and learn novel approaches to overcome difficulties. Debriefing is much more than an informal conversation to discuss what did and didn't work; it digs into why things happened or did not happen and

explores implications for the future (Sundheim, 2015). In this course, we use a formal project review template to capture the following topics:

Project summary: The first section of the post-project review captures the scope of the project. It contains enough detail to provide a full understanding of the project and to base the rest of the evaluation on.

Project team staffing: This part provides information about who the project team consisted of, including names, contact information, and project role and responsibilities. This information is useful for answering any questions that may arise after completion of the project. In management consulting companies, this is the basis for staffing consultants on future projects.

Project deliverables (planned vs. actual): This portion of the post-project review describes the expected deliverables of the project (as originally agreed with the client) and compares them against the actual deliverables. This helps to identify any occurrences of scope creep and to understand the reasons why a client might be dissatisfied with the deliverables.

Handover to client: This section describes the handover of the project to the client, including any difficulties or challenges the team faced.

Project costs and schedule: This portion looks at how the estimated effort for the project compares with the actual effort. Effort estimations may be affected by scope creep, poor planning, schedule delays, progressive elaboration, or many other factors. This section should highlight how effort was controlled and reasons for effort overrun or underrun. It helps to see how actual results compare to planned ones. It gives a good view of the project's performance and provides valuable input to future projects.

Recommendations: This section highlights any recommendations and lessons learned which could be of use in future consulting projects.

In addition, students are asked to assess their team performance according to the course evaluation criteria (see next section). Self-assessments offer several benefits, both in an educational environment as well as in the professional business world. They show how teams see their performance and if they understand what was expected of them. They also show how well the project sponsors and their managers (in this case, the faculty and SC SBDC) have been communicating with them. If there is a big gap between the perspectives of self- and faculty-assessment, it becomes clear that there was a misunderstanding. Students also learn that for their own career advancement, it is important to be honest but not self-depreciating in self-assessments. The debriefing and assessment conversations may be uncomfortable, but students "realize that the discomfort of getting things out on the table is minimal compared to the pain of making the same mistakes again" (Sundheim, 2015, p. 3) in their professional career after graduation.

Evaluation of Learning Effectiveness

In order to gauge project success, several sources of feedback on the project are collected from the client and the students, which are detailed below. This course uses these points of feedback, in addition to more traditional grading methods, to provide students with a concrete response to their work (e.g., feedback sheets from the client and teammates) and to provide the professor with comments on the value of the course.

Clients' feedback at the end of the project: At the end of the project, each client is asked to provide a written assessment of the consulting services provided by the students, and score the teams on a 5-point Likert scale with a non-applicable option on the following criteria: skills to complete the project, knowledge of international business, understanding of the client's challenges, quality of the results achieved and report produced, completeness of project scope and results achieved, appropriateness of results/report for the client's needs, communication with the client, accessibility to the client, listening effectiveness, clarity of expression (e.g., of ideas) during joint interaction, and overall interaction with the client. In addition, free-text feedback about the value of the project for their business is solicited from the clients. This feedback is later shared with the students. This provides the project teams with a candid evaluation of their work from the most important stakeholder, the client, and provides the students with issues to think about in future projects (i.e., what worked for the client and what didn't).

Students' peer reviews of team members: At the end of the project, students are asked to complete a review sheet in which they provide feedback on the participation and contribution of each member of the consulting group to the overall result of the project. This holds each individual team member accountable and provides the professor with a more candid look into the workflow of the group for grading purposes.

Students' feedback on the overall project experience: Via the university course feedback system, students are asked to share their opinion on the experience and value of the project for their education and preparation for the corporate world. This allows the professor to evaluate the learning effectiveness from the students' perspectives and possibly make adjustments to future courses.

In the past, both clients and students have derived a large amount of value from this course. Clients receive detailed solutions to their problems, and students gain real project experience that they otherwise might be lacking. From the students' perspective, this project is more effective than traditional

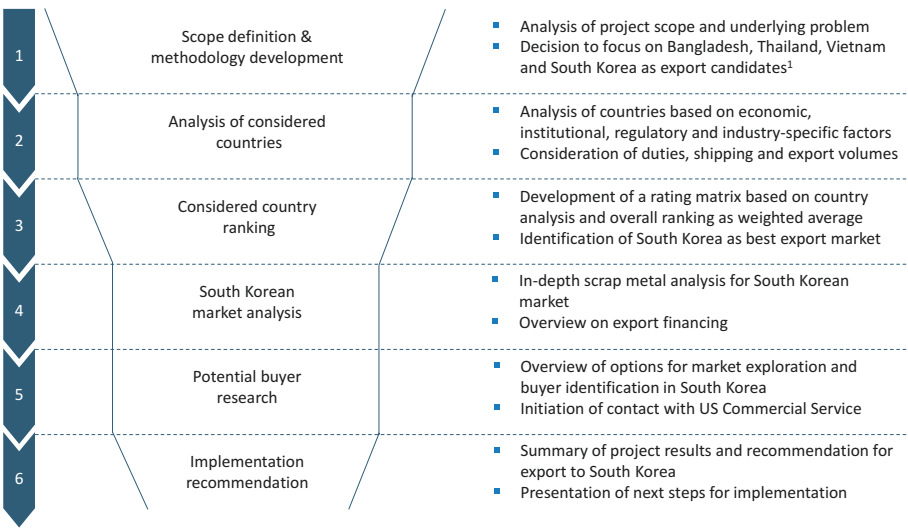
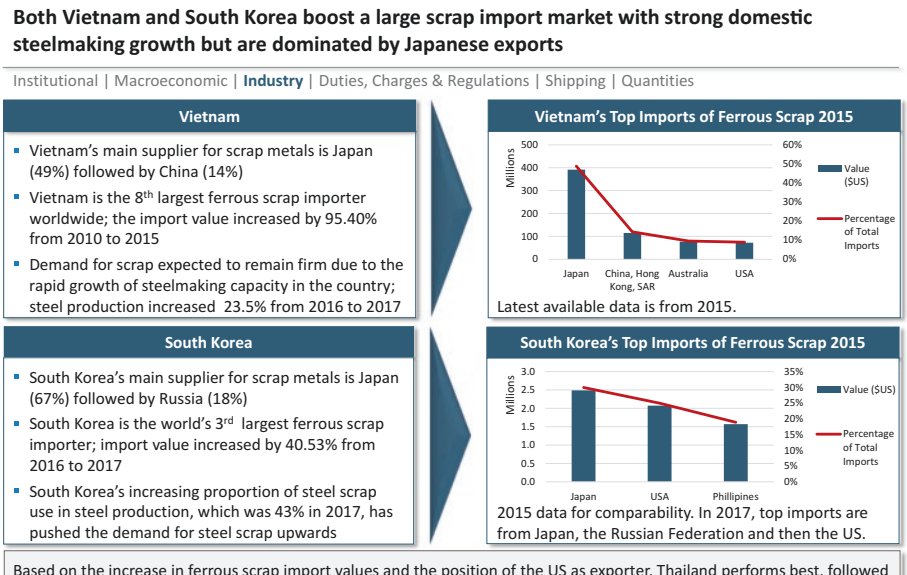


Fig. 16.3 Example methodology slide

teaching methods, such as lecturing, because it allows them to apply the frameworks they have learned to real-world problems. Additionally, it provides students with insight into what a career in consulting might entail and allows them to build marketable experience that will make them more competitive in the interview process. Students come away from the course with industry skills, such as the knowledge of effective management consulting slide creation (see Figs. 16.3 and 16.4) that will put them a step ahead when beginning careers in the consulting industry and in business functions of multi-national companies alike. It also gives them an insight into the world of SMEs and entrepreneurship.

For the purpose of grading, the course has individual and group evaluation components. Individual grading is done on the following four components:

1. Attendance and participation (15% of overall grade): The faculty's subjective assessment of a student's contribution to class and to the consulting project.
2. Management consulting slide (10% of overall grade): As an activity prior to the consulting project, students are asked to collect information about a publicly available global trade database and present it in a concise slide deck.



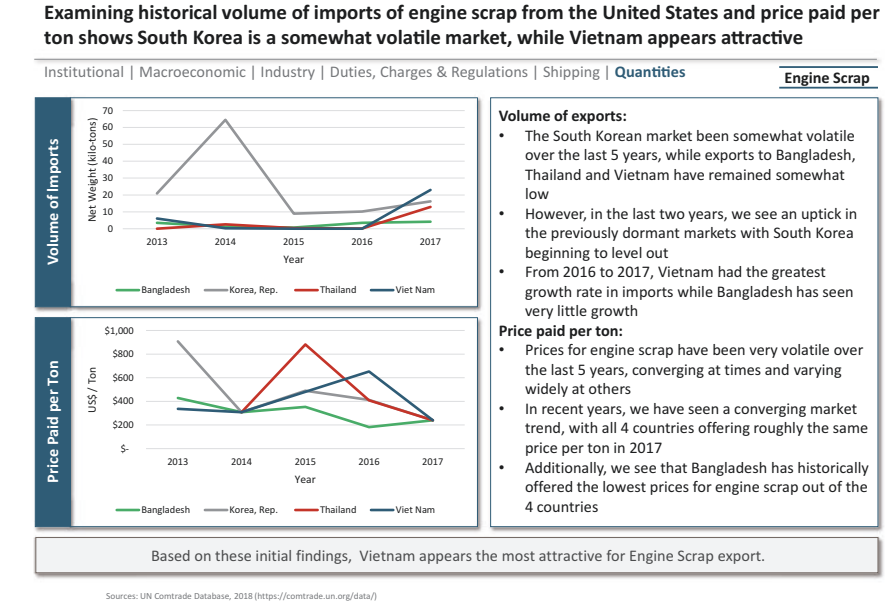


Fig. 16.4 Example industry research slide

3. Integration Point certification (10% of overall grade): A certification exam is administered in cooperation with Integration Point; the results count toward the course grade.
4. Peer evaluation of consulting project (10% of overall grade): As an individual adjustment for the group grade, the team members assess each other based on their attendance at group meetings, flexibility to schedule such meetings, preparedness, contribution, active part in research, and overall contribution to the success of the project. This assessment is then moderated by the faculty.

Group grading is done on the following two components:

1. Preparation of consulting project (10% of overall grade): After the project kick-off meeting with the client, the faculty assesses the student team on the following criteria—outside-in analysis of the company, industry environment, and/or markets; slides and other material used to moderate the kick-off session; logistics arranged for the kick-off session; moderation of the kick-off session; project plan; effort estimation; and stakeholder mapping and communication plan.
2. Execution of consulting project (45% of overall grade): This is the faculty's assessment of the project work based on the following criteria—progress of consulting project; communication with stakeholders and interaction with client; overall usefulness of work for the client; quality and creativity of approach; depth of research; storyline across the slide deck; layout of slides; precision and neatness of slide deck; tracking of effort spent; final client presentation; and post-project review.

Challenges and Development of Best Practices

Despite many strengths, this course is not without its very own challenges, for the instructor, the students, and the participating clients alike.

Challenges for the Instructor

Project scope: At the beginning of the course, the instructor is likely to know little about the scope and direction of the client projects. Therefore, the faculty is likely unable to answer students' initial questions about project focus

or to provide immediate and concrete guidance on the course of action the students should take. Further, as the project progresses, students often turn to the professor when they reach places with uncertainty about how to proceed. At these crossroads, the faculty can often only guide students from a methodological perspective and encourage them to try things out. While learning as a process (and not in terms of outcomes) is the core proposition of experiential learning (Kolb & Kolb, 2005), it is an experience that many students are not used to from solving standard case work.

Grading: Each project has its own complexities, and not all clients are equally easy to handle. Some projects require more background research and analysis, while others may require marketing plans and complex strategy development. Because of the wide variety of projects and client needs, objective assessment relying on quantitative scales describing student performance cannot be used by the instructor. Experiential learning requires complex thinking and contextually sensitive performance by students, and this simply cannot be measured with validity by objective ratings. Instead, a valid assessment of students' project performance requires the instructor's professionally developed awareness of quality in consulting project work, taking context into account. To give subjective assessments more reliability, we recommend using the aspects described in the previous section for building a rubric which is clear enough for students to understand. During project debriefing, students can be given a chance to apply the rubric themselves.

Student professionalism: Some students may not take the project seriously enough, trying to find shortcuts and procrastinating on project delivery. This sometimes results in escalation by the client and SBDC consultant, which the instructor then has to manage. Some students are reluctant to accept their clients as real clients with real problems who are looking for real advice. When students believe that their assignment is a "school project" without any business impact, they enter a downward spiral of demotivation, which ultimately results in the client losing interest in working with them.

Managing conflict: "Teamwork is another 21st-century skill that can make or break a project" (Boss & Krauss, 2007, p. 123). The instructor might sometimes be faced with the task of helping students solve conflicts among the members of the team and deciding how to grade the ones not effectively or efficiently participating in the project development.

Challenges for the Students

Industry ambiguity: Students are often not familiar with the client's industry vertical. Additionally, many of the projects are not in the traditional industries (e.g., financial services, automotive) that are being taught at business schools via case studies but are in niche industries (e.g., scrap recycling, wine, shipping containers). This can pose a challenge to students as it will require them to invest more time learning about the industry, which more often than not raises further questions rather than yielding answers and increases ambiguity as the project progresses.

Communication complexity: Students need to find the best way to effectively communicate with their team members. "Good communication skills are part of effective teamwork and will help keep their team organized and on track […] and gives them opportunities to learn from and challenge each other" (Boss & Krauss, 2007, p. 115). Additionally, students depend on client responsiveness for information to drive the project forward. This requires students to maintain frequent communication with the client, providing updates and asking relevant questions. Thus, the students rely on the client to respond in a timely manner to information requests and provide constructive feedback when needed.

Scheduling constraints: Students must find time and space for regular team and client meetings. This is often a big challenge for students who are involved in extracurricular activities or have to work to fund their studies.

Project scope: The project scope is entirely open and up for negotiation with the client. Therefore, the students need to scope the project themselves, rather than being assigned a more traditional task, such as an essay question. This can be difficult for students who are unfamiliar with the consulting process and client industry.

Instructor help: In this type of project, the instructor is not able to provide definite answers about all industries and issues in the project and is often only able to provide feedback on the methods and approach. Therefore, students must rely on themselves, teammates, SBDC consultant, and client to find answers to their questions.

Challenges for the Clients

Client background: Clients included in these projects typically have an SME background and are not used to working with management consultants. Thus, clients can be unfamiliar with the processes used by the students and may

have an unrealistic project scope. The client may expect the students to complete work that was not initially agreed upon or by a different means than the management consulting practices the students employ. This can result in frustration for the client as they feel the students are not using the best approach or fulfilling their duty to the client.

Communication: Clients must spend time answering students' emails and questions. This effort often competes with day-to-day business operations, so clients must find a way to balance project and business needs.

Time commitment: There exists an inherent time commitment with these projects. Many of the students' questions have not yet been considered by the clients, so clients may need to spend extra time to find the necessary information (e.g., a product's HS number for exporting). This can be a challenge for the clients who are used to devoting their entire day to the company's operations.

Replication and Transferability

Year-on-year replicability depends on acquiring new clients in cooperation with SC SBDC. Since 2016 and in the format described here, this course was run in 7 separate classes with a total of 22 clients and 25 project teams. In slightly different formats, the experiential learning cooperation with SC SBDC goes back to 2011. But the overall approach presented within this chapter can be replicated to other settings, such as consulting projects in the areas of marketing, strategy, and human resources. Based on our experience, we suggest the following constraints for optimal learning outcomes:

1. Class size should not exceed 20 students, that is, 4 projects with 5 students on each project maximum.
2. This type of project works best for both undergraduate as well as pre-experience postgraduate classes.
3. This type of project only works in face-to-face teaching environments, not in an online environment.

Contributions

Business school education is in a period of finding new means of more deeply engaging students in their educational experience and achieving greater outcomes in terms of job readiness. The advanced project-based strategy course

on management consulting in an international business environment contributes to student learning from a pedagogical perspective as well as to the business school's community outreach.

Pedagogical Contribution

Increased student engagement: "Students […] turn their noses up at cases older than three or four years" (Seshadri, as quoted in S-W, 2018). But in our consulting projects, they are connected to real clients with current business problems that need to be solved in real time. In order to be able to present valuable outcomes for the client, the experiential learning setup described in this chapter motivates students to work harder, get more involved, and become emotionally invested.

Development of practice intelligence: In order to be effective, practicing management consultants need to exhibit practice intelligence to be successful in all elements of the consulting lifecycle as described by the management consulting competency framework (Table 16.1) and across the course roadmap (Fig. 16.1).

Improving job readiness: While some degree of amateurishness and naïveté is almost expected of entry-level management consultants, a steep learning curve is expected from them (Weiss-Meyer, 2014). This course can help students get a leg ahead of the competition and provide a resume booster to show real experience on consulting projects. Project-based learning has been shown to vastly improve project management skills (Estevez, Garcia-Marin, & Ayuso-Munoz, 2018).

Business Community Outreach

Support of SME companies in their path to internationalization through free consulting services as provided by SC SBDC and students enrolled in this course contributes to the US government's mission of export promotion. Furthermore, cultivating relationships with businesses also helps business schools improve their reputation in the community at large (McMillan & Overall, 2016). Getting involved with the business community is a chance to make new connections, open up opportunities for student internship and job placements, and create a lasting positive impact. This does not have to be expensive or difficult, but it requires creativity and quality project execution. And those SMEs who have participated in this project-based course know how valuable their contributions to student education is.

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17

Experiential Learning Through Student-Led Assessments: The Noodle Bar Strategy

Sarbari Bordia

Introduction

In this book chapter, I will outline the rationale, techniques, and benefits of using student-led assessment strategies. In particular, I discuss one such strategy that I have created and implemented called **the noodle bar assessment strategy**. I have been using this strategy in my courses for several years. To explain the title, noodle bars are Asian-inspired food outlets that allow customers to choose the combination of ingredients they want in their noodles. Such outlets usually have a set of ingredients, such as noodles, sauces, vegetables, and meat (or meat substitutes). While customers are expected to order a dish that combines the broad categories of ingredients, they are also allowed choices within each category. For example, a customer that dislikes rice noodles but still likes the sauce of a Pad Thai (a popular Thai dish), can mix the Pad Thai sauce with a different variety of noodle (e.g., Soba noodles, usually in Japanese dishes). The end result may not be a traditional Pad Thai but one that is suited to the customer's palate or diet.

My motivation in creating and using the noddle bar assessment strategy was based on the following pedagogic questions: *(1) Should assessments only be evaluations of learning or can assessments incorporate learning onto themselves?* and

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M. A. Gonzalez-Perez et al. (eds.), *The Palgrave Handbook of Learning and Teaching International Business and Management*, https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-030-20415-0_17

(2) How can I make assessments interesting and useful for students? To answer the first question, assessment strategies that motivate better learning in students are the ones that allow students to explore information relevant to them (Stevens & Levi, 2013). Also, from an identity perspective (an area I work on as a researcher), individuals choose careers, professions, and roles that are related to their core identities, including personal, linguistic, and cultural, to name just a few (Ashforth & Mael, 1989; Bordia & Bordia, 2015; Chreim, Williams, & Hinings, 2007; Ely, 1994; Slay & Smith, 2011). We also know that individuals consider the alignment of work, education, family, and values in choosing the right graduate degree or even the right school (Battle & Wigfield, 2003). International students also consider alignment of home and host cultural identities in making choices of graduate destinations (Bordia, Bordia, & Restubog, 2015 Bordia, Bordia, Milkovits, Shen, & Restubog, 2018). Therefore, it stands to reason that students may like to make such choices in terms of learning as well. The response to my second question is also linked with the social identity theory. Individuals engage with activities based on perceived similarities with their identities (Ashforth & Mael, 1989). For example, we may undertake projects at work based on our interests, experiences, and expertise because we perceive similarities between these activities and who we are (i.e., identity). Again, it seemed likely that students would see assessments that have some personal relevance to their lives as interesting and worth putting effort into.

I write this chapter as a course convener (responsible for all aspects of the course, including delivery, assessments, grading, etc.) of a graduate level course on cross-cultural management. This course is part of a suite of courses recommended for all management students but necessary for international business students (the business school offers MBA as well as several master's degrees, such as Masters of International Business, Masters of Marketing). This course is not recommended during the students' first year of studies but, in some cases, students will enroll in this course in the second semester of their first year. I have been convening this course for eight years (2010–2018) and have been using the noodle bar assessment strategy for this period of time.

In the rest of the chapter, I briefly discuss the experiential learning literature followed by how a student-led assessment strategy fits within the parameters of experiential learning. Following this, I discuss the learning objectives of the assessment strategy, experiential learning cycle, evaluation of learning effectiveness, benefits, challenges, best practices, and transferability of the assessment strategy, contributions to the literature, limitations and future pedagogic directions, and conclusion.

Review of Experiential Learning Literature and Fit of Student-Led Assessment Strategy

Seminal works on learning mechanisms by psychologists such as Piaget, Dewey, and Lewin collectively propose that knowledge generation is predicated upon individuals' experiences and the ability to transfer such experiences into a set of theoretical and/or practical information that can guide future experiences (Kolb & Fry, 1975). Influenced by this body of research, Kolb (1984) created a model of learning based on experiences. Given that experiential learning is based on students' ability to experience, and therefore learn, it is inherently learner-centric and allows students to make some decisions on what they wish to learn (Kolb, 1984). Experiential learning cycles include specific experiences, observation and reflection on these experiences, the formation of abstract constructs based on the experiences and reflections, and finally the testing of these new constructs in future experiences (Kolb, Boyatzis, & Mainemelis, 2001). Experiential learning also includes adaptation and interaction with the environment and allows students to come to a decision on what to learn and how to learn based on active experimentations (Kolb & Kolb, 2005). Such adaptations include the experiences to be internalized by individuals at cognitive, emotional, perceptual, and behavioral levels (Kayes, Kayes, & Kolb, 2005).

The importance and difficulty of creating instructor-led cross-cultural experiential learning is well documented (e.g., Earley & Peterson, 2004; Gonzalez-Perez & Taras, 2014 Taras & Ordeñana, 2014). Instructors, in such courses, create several cross-cultural experiences through examples, cases, current events, and even discussions of humorous anecdotes. However, there is no surety that such activities in a class seem personalized to all students due to the limitation of instructors' experiences and hence schematic network. Hence more is needed in order to motivate students to internalize experiences to create theoretical perspectives that can be translated to action in the students' work life.

The application of experiential learning has happened successfully in a variety of learning contexts, both formal and informal. In student contexts, experiential learning has been used in classroom activities (see Carolyn Buie Erdener's project in Taras et al., 2014), short-term work internships (see Adam Jones and Greta Meszoely's projects in Taras et al., 2014), study abroad programs (Gonzalez-Perez, 2014), and intercultural and international group work (Crossman & Bordia, 2012 Taras & Ordeñana, 2014). Much of the application of experiential learning has been in learning activities that have

subsequently been evaluated for learning effectiveness. To the best of my knowledge, assessments themselves have been a product of learning in the context of experiential learning. Given the importance of assessments in formal learning and degrees, building experiential learning into the assessment process is likely to benefit students in terms of learning during assessment preparations and subsequently internalizing the assessment experience into their knowledge base. Hence, the inclusion of student-led assessments in the spectrum of activities on experiential learning is important.

Student-led assessments can help students to choose topics of assessment that take into account their prior educational, work, and cultural experiences, providing them the motivation to learn more on topics that interest them and may be useful in their future career needs. Individuals learn best when they have some prior knowledge of the context of the learning (Tobias, 1994). Also, motivational research suggests that individuals are motivated to gather knowledge on areas that they find relevant to their life/work experiences or on topics they see as beneficial to their future endeavors (Shepard, 2000). The diversity in the student population in terms of culture (domestic, international, and third/hybrid culture students), careers (managers, physicians, and diplomats), and educational backgrounds (management, social sciences, international relations) means that any one set of assessment is unlikely to be personalized for most of the students in any given year. Hence, allowing students to choose their own assessment context (i.e., a case) and theoretical perspective (mostly cross-cultural theories but sometimes additional theoretical perspectives from management or the social sciences) in implementing effective workplace decision-making is important for a diverse population of students. These features underpin my assessment structure in the graduate level cross-cultural management course. Along with a broad understanding of all areas in the course (see course outline in Appendix), students also have the freedom to develop expertise in areas of personal and professional interests.

Students are provided with a programmatic approach to the course assessments. First, they are asked to identify a real-life case and find a set of cross-cultural problems in it. A real-life case may be one that has occurred in the past (e.g., Toyota's car-recall and delay in the CEO's apology statement in the US market). Students may also choose to write about fictitious but realistic cases they have identified from textbooks or other outlets. In such cases, I ask students to show the case to me in the context of the textbook or other publications to make sure that the student does not have direct access to theories that have already been used by academics to explain and recommend actions in relation to the case. Alternatively, if the material suggests that the student will have undue advantage, but the student is very keen on the case, I ask the

student to utilize other theoretical perspectives and come up with a new set of actionable recommendations. In some cases (only a few over the years), students will have their own case based on work experiences and will write up a two-page case for me to consider before moving forward with the assessments. The students are asked to discuss their case choice with me. A cross-cultural problem is defined as an action or perception of (including misunderstanding) action based on differences in cultural values (Arnett, 2002). The problem may not be visible to both parties involved in the action or perception. Nevertheless, negative relationships can be a result of cross-cultural problems. Second, for the first assessment, based on students' identification of the most important cross-cultural problem, they are asked to choose an appropriate cultural theory and conduct an in-depth literature review of the theoretical aspect of their choice. I allow students to identity the most important cross-cultural problem based on their interpretation of the case as the perception of any problem can have negative effects even if others do not agree to the problem (Arnett, 2002). Students once again run their cases and theoretical choices by me to ensure alignment between the two and receive personalized consultation on the geographic, cultural, and political context of the case. Such individualized advice motivates students to develop some regional expertise, which is vital to the success of international business (Taras, Kirkman, & Steel, 2010). Third, the final assessment is a report to the organization (this is not sent to the organization but I assume the role of the CEO of the organization and assess the report in terms of background research, applicability, and professional style of the report). Students are asked to assume the role of a cross-cultural consultant, analyze the case, and provide recommendations for better practices.

Learning Objectives and Experiential Learning Cycle

The assignments provide opportunities for personalized learning for students so they gather knowledge on broad areas of the course and also develop expertise on a chosen topic. As mentioned in the introduction to this chapter, I call this personalized assessment program the noodle bar assessment strategy. Just like at a noodle bar where we choose our own set of ingredients (noodle, sauce, and meat/veg.), my students choose their own ingredients (case, theory, practice) to create a holistic set of assessments that are rich in contextual, theoretical, and practical implications. In week 1 of class, I discuss this strategy with the students and explain the concept of the noodle bar assessment. I discuss

how the case is the noodle as it provides context to the rest of the assessment activities. Like the noodles provide bulk to the dish, the case provides a sizable chunk of the information necessary to contextualize and understand student's theoretical choices and practical recommendations in the assessments. Like the sauce flavors the dish, the theoretical perspectives chosen by the students provide essence to the assessments, providing rationale for the analysis of problems as well as practical recommendations to the organization. Finally, just as the meat/veg provide nutrition to the dish, practical recommendations presented by the students can allow organizations to avoid past mistakes or rectify them in the present time.

In a programmatic approach to the noodle bar assessment strategy, I ask students to consult with me about a case by the end of week 3 of the semester (12 weeks). I meet students individually, ask them to describe their case and provide a rationale as to why this case interests them (e.g., a student from Australia picked Starbuck's inability to run a profitable business in Australia and having to close down majority of their stores in the country). I then ask them to describe one important cross-cultural problem they see in the case while alerting the students to the fact that they will have to identity others later in the semester (e.g., customer care was perceived as impersonal at Starbucks as Australians are used to neighborhood baristas knowing them personally). Some of these problems are overtly discussed in the case write-up (published or unpublished documentation of the case) while others may be inferred by the students. Following this, I ask students to consider a theoretical perspective that resonates with the problem. For the example above, the student suggested that Australia is a more communitarian society with the government and local members of society taking care of each other and therefore an impersonal coffee shop was not appealing. I allow students to interpret the problem and theoretical connection to some degree but make sure that they are not erroneously analyzing any aspect of the case or theory. The rationale behind this is that individuals are likely to interpret different problems (or no problem at all) based on their schema and life experiences. Whether others evaluate the problem to be authentic or not, a perceived problem can lead to cross-cultural challenges.

In assignment one, which is due end of week 6, students are asked to consider the abovementioned key problems from the case. The end product of the first assignment is a literature review on the theory after a brief description of the case and a rationale for the use of the theory. If the theory is an extensive model of correlated constructs (e.g., Hofstede's model has five key constructs: individualism and collectivism, power distance, uncertainty avoidance, masculinity and femininity, and long- and short-term orientation), then I ask

students to choose one construct for the first assignment. Students are asked to review the literature for the origins of the theory or construct followed by an in-depth literature review of the research done in international business utilizing the theory or construct and any criticism that may have been discussed by researchers in the literature. Finally, students have to provide examples of how the theory or constructs may be applied in the workplace. In short, through this assignment, I expect students to become experts on the theory or construct of their choice and be able to apply it in the context of the workplace. Through this activity, I hope for my students to achieve the three lower levels of Bloom's taxonomy: knowledge, comprehension, and application of the theoretical construct.

The first assessment in this scheme requires students to first internalize or experience the case. Because the case may not be a "lived in" experience of the individual (although some students will create a case based on their own work experiences), I encourage students to read media releases or other communications on the case in order to create a holistic understanding of the case. For example, students may look at national or international media discourse on a case (e.g., why IKEA failed the first time in Japan but later succeeded with a revised strategy). For contemporary cases, students also look at social media discourse on the case to understand public opinion. This allows students to experience the case as best as one can without being a part of it (Kolb & Kolb, 2009a). From this experience, students observe cross-cultural problems within the case and reflect on the possible theories or literature that can explain the problems. Once they have developed an understanding of the theories, via their preparation for the in-depth literature review, they are in a position to synthesize their reflections into abstract concepts (Kolb & Kolb, 2009b).

The final assessment, due end of week 12, addresses the three higher order levels of the taxonomy: analysis, synthesis, and evaluation. However, the lower levels are also addressed for other theoretical perspectives. Prior to the assessment, I meet the students again and discuss the requirements of the assessments. Students are asked to further analyze the same case and look at three key problems, one of which is the one they have already looked at in assignment one. After identifying two more problems (sometimes these are associated or hierarchically linked problems), students are asked to link each problem to a short literature review of a theoretical perspective (the first problem and its theoretical link remains). In doing this, the students have to undergo the three lower levels of the taxonomy again. After the choice of three problems and three theoretical constructs have been made, students have to write a report to the organization in which they are expected to collectively synthesize the three literature and associated problems to come up

with recommendations for better practice (usually three but numbers can differ). In suggesting recommendations, students are asked to evaluate the recommendations based on available information on various aspects of the organization's background. For example, suggesting expensive training programs for a small- or medium-size enterprise or practices that stand against local religious or cultural practices may not be viable options.

For the final assignment, based on their experience by reading various narratives in relation to the case (organizational, public and sometimes governmental opinion on the case), students are able to engage in reflective observations. While most students do not contact the organization in question, they consult with other students in the class to check for potential flaws in their reflections. Some students, who write their own cases based on personal experiences, often seek the advice of other stakeholders in the case (often current or former colleagues) to test their assumptions of the case. Coupled with case reflections, the theoretical/literature review helps students develop abstract concepts, and they are able to recommend actions that the organization can take to rectify their problems/mistakes. If the cases chosen by the students are dated and future actions have already been taken by the organizations and are available for students to read, I ask students to make additional recommendations. Such additional recommendations may be novel in nature or provide further details on prior actions. Given that individuals view cross-cultural differences based on their own cultural schema (Arnett, 2002), students often come up with novel recommendations that have the potential to add value to extant problem-solving of the case.

Benefits of the Noodle Bar Assessment Strategy

The noodle bar assessment strategy has several benefits for students. First, students develop different skills through the assessments. Students learn to respond to different types of readership. Any training for managerial roles needs to account for communication to different audiences (Tobias, 1994). By assuming the role of a scholar in evaluating one assessment and that of a CEO in another, I encourage students to present their arguments effectively for different audiences. Related to the above benefit, students also develop effective writing skills in two genres (literature and report writing) and the ability to transfer knowledge from one assessment to another. Both writing skills and transferability of academic knowledge to the workplace are cornerstones of education (Bordia et al., 2018).

Second, students are encouraged to take a holistic approach to a case by engaging with media coverage and other publicly available information. Taking a 360-degree view of a problem is vital for any sustainable and effective solution in the workplace (Shepard, 2000). The current assessment strategy allows students to learn this.

Evaluation of Learning Effectiveness

The assessments are evaluated by me. Students are provided with assessment rubrics at the beginning of the semester (see course outline for rubrics in Appendix). I also explain these rubrics to students in the first seminar and again two weeks before the due date of the assignments. I tell the students that for the first assignment they should expect me to stick to my role as an academic in the field of expertise in marking their assignment. For the final assignment, I tell them that I will assume the role of the CEO of the organization in the case. In doing so, I will be looking for a professionally written report that briefly explains to me the relevant literature used to justify the analysis and recommendations. I remind the students that a CEO may not be cognizant of the literature on cross-cultural management and information has to be appropriately presented to an educated, professional, but not expert audience. In addition, I upload slides on literature review/research essay writing and professional report writing styles on the course website. Students are asked to follow such formats and writing styles for the assignments. While I do offer to read outlines and drafts of assignments before submission, not many students take me up on this offer. The ones that do take me up on the offer usually submit a good final draft.

Some of the common challenges students face in the first assignment are (in order of severity of challenges) as follows: (1) instead of a literature review, students use the literature to write a report to the organization (essentially a weaker version of the final assessment instead of the first), (2) literature review is not in-depth, does not include key citations, or is only specific to a region (e.g., a review of individualism and collectivism only in the Middle-East), and (3) literature reviewed is good but writing is not (often a concern for international students). Students receive comments based on the nature of their challenges on the final draft. I tick the right space on the rubric when I give them back the marked assignments. If the assignments receive ticks from satisfactory to needs more work, there are comments on these issues. For example, for the first challenge above, the comments may be

> *In essence you have done the final assessments in the first instance. Your job in this assessment was to do an in-depth literature review of the theory/literature you employed to understand the major problem you isolated in the case. This assignment was not about recommending solutions to the organization, but to show that you understand a key theoretical perspective applicable to the case*.

I also provide summative assessments of the key challenges and why students have lost marks in this assignment in class.

For the final assignment, some of the key challenges are (in order of severity of challenges) as follows: (1) analysis of problems or recommendations not adequately explained for a professional audience (i.e., not written in a persuasive way, not guided by adequate theoretical or practical justifications), (2) literature review to educate the professional audience and justify the analysis/recommendations not focused enough (e.g., the construct of power distance is explained but not the outcome of this construct on workplace behavior), and (3) report is not professional in nature (e.g., not formatted well, does not have headings/subheadings, long paragraphs, colloquialism in writing). Once again, students receive ticks in the appropriate sections of the rubric and any weaknesses in the assignments receive comments such as

> *your report had good quality literature review, analysis of the problems, and recommendations, but the format was not appropriate for a professional report. I saw several long paragraphs without thematic subheadings that could parse the content. It is appropriate to have short paragraphs and additional sub-thematic headings. This helps busy/time-poor executives to see a 'road map' for the content and allows them to read the report quickly*.

Challenges of the Noodle Bar Assessment Strategy

Many students, over the years, have appreciated the noodle bar assessment strategy, including providing qualitative comments in anonymous course evaluations: "*I really love the assignments. I thought it brought out what this course was really about*", "*The assignment format was good, giving enough scope for postgraduate students to explore areas of interest*", and "*The course structure was relevant to the contemporary issue of cross-cultural challenges in corporations. Individual case study provided an interesting look into the cultural aspect of the business and its implications*." I have also received very high teaching evaluations (4.25 out of 5). There are, however, several challenges for students and

the course convener in relation to this assessment strategy. I outline the challenges for students first.

First, international students, who are non-native English speakers, face some difficulties in the writing of the assignments. Both academic and professional English may be a challenge for such students. However, the assessment strategy also provides such students a platform to improve upon their English writing capabilities. Such students are encouraged to start their assignment drafts well ahead of time, seek additional consultation with the course convener, as well as academic and professional writing services within the university (usually offered free of cost to the students).

Second, short timeframe for students to choose cases (within three weeks) often is a challenge for students with limited workplace or professional engagement. Usually, MBA students are very good with this aspect of the assessment strategy. However, several other master's degree students may not have mandatory work experience requirements. Such students, especially if they are international and straight out of their undergraduate degrees, struggle to find cases in the short timeframe.

Finally, assignment one appeals to some types of learners. Usually, learners with an academic orientation perform better in assignment one. Such learners are often (but not exclusively) recent graduates of a western style undergraduate degree or PhD students who take the course as an elective. These students have recent experiences in literature reviews, can critique the literature, and are proficient in academic writing. Students who have limited or dated experiences in literature reviews and academic writing (e.g., experienced practitioners who did their earlier university degrees several years back, international students coming from countries where exams are the primary mode of assessments) find assignment one challenging. Assessment two appeals to students who have extensive work experiences and are adept at professional writing.

From a course convener's perspective, the challenges include, first, a larger than average number of consultation hours with students. Most universities suggest 2–3 hours of consultation per week during the semester. However, the noodle bar assessment strategy, on an average, requires me to consult with students for 5–7 hours. The consultation hours are not the same each week, and usually peak to 10–12 hours, before due dates for assignments. Second, each assessment is unique and takes longer to mark. Once again, universities suggest about 30 minutes for an assessment that is around 30% of the course mark. Given that each assignment is unique, deals with a different case, a variety of literature reviews, different problem analyses and recommendations, assessments take at least 45 minutes to mark, with the more complicated assignments that are likely to get lower marks requiring longer time. While I do not get a lot of assignment outlines or drafts prior to submission,

this does take additional time and prospective course conveners wishing to use the noodle bar assessment strategy would be wise to factor this into their timeframe budgeting for the course. Overall, I would not recommend such assessment be used for courses where enrolment is over 60 students unless the course convener has access to additional markers. Also, I would not recommend course conveners undertake this assessment strategy for more than one course each semester.

Transferability of the Noodle Bar Assessment Strategy

The noodle bar assessment strategy is applicable to most graduate courses in international business and management that have the following components associated with its content: literature/theory, real-life/realistic cases, and practical outcomes. While I have not taught courses in international relations, healthcare management, or political sciences, I have had students from these disciplines who have enrolled in my courses and have informally said to me that they liked this assessment strategy. In an unsolicited email, one such student said that he was "*grateful for your acceptance of the topic of cultural aspects of indigenous Australians and because it has application in health care, was of interest and value to [me]*".

I have also used this strategy for a qualitative research methods course where the first assignment was based on a literature review and the final one was a proposal for a research project in the student's chosen discipline. The assessment strategy has worked well for the research methods course. I have received an average of 4.7 out of 5 for this course and some anonymous comments include "*I was able to pick lots of important tips from her and I believe that those will help me doing my research and publishing my work. Examples she provided during the course were the most important strength of the course*", and another student wrote "*Dr Bordia is a strong proponent of the subject matter. She has worked in the field and is able to teach the subject from experience (both good and bad) but also was able to compare and contrast with quantitative approaches*."

In addition, this assessment will be of value to executive MBA courses where students come with a vast array of practical experience and often undertake the degree as a quest to personalized problems they have encountered in their workplaces. A more extended version of this assessment strategy can also be utilized in Doctorate of Business Administration (DBA) degrees where enrolled research students seek research experiences that resonate with their workplace experiences. Students undertaking individualized industry research or internship experiences can also benefit from this assessment strategy.

This assessment strategy may be applicable to elite or advanced year undergraduate courses. Some undergraduate courses in later years require students to have a high grade point average. I anticipate the students in such courses will have good time management skills and may be able to multitask on such assessments. Such an assessment strategy may be particularly suitable in undergraduate courses that have workplace or research internship components. Also, undergraduate students may need additional consultations and the submission of an outline of the assignments should be made mandatory if the noodle bar assessment strategy is implemented.

Contributions to Experiential Learning Practices

The noodle bar assessment strategy, as all pedagogic activities that require extensive effort, yields several benefits for students. First, students develop theoretical expertise on a section of the cross-cultural management literature by engaging in an in-depth literature review including understanding the origins of the theoretical construct, the identification of research gaps, critical evaluation of the literature, and application of the literature in the workplace context. Given that students will not remember all aspects of a course in years to come, they are likely to remember the aspects that they put focused effort in and choose to understand on their own volition. Second, students develop some regional expertise in relation to the case they choose. Intra-country differences are often neglected in international business literature (Tung, 2008) and geographic, political, linguistic, and religious challenges are often underplayed in the broader international business literature (Bordia & Bordia, 2015 Brannen, 2004 Kostova & Roth, 2003 Luo & Shenkar, 2006). Hence, students' ability to analyze such challenges stemming from the case adds significant value to learning about the international business context and how some organizational practices that work well in one context may not work in another. Third, by creating, assessing, and recommending action in a professional report format, students gain important skills in terms of activities they have to undertake at the workplace.

In this chapter, I have introduced a student-led assessment model that has yielded experiential learning for my students. In addition to the noodle bar assessment strategy, I have other assessments that allow for experiential learning in the course. Students are provided with substantial time for group-led problem-solving activities via cases that I introduce in class. Through such activities, students achieve two crucial employability skills—creative problem-solving and teamwork. To enable students' familiarity with digital learning,

the course also includes an assessable online discussion forum. Each week a set of questions based on the topic of the week are presented to students and they are asked to respond to the questions based on their experiences and/or extant knowledge of the literature. This includes a week of no seminar when students are asked to work through two cases of and provide an in-depth analysis of the cases. This week's activities are a training for the case analysis in the assignments in the noodle bar assessment strategy. Through such a peer-learning platform, students have the opportunity to collaborate, learn from each other, show leadership, and sometimes handle conflict—all of which are identified by industry as important skill gaps among university graduates. Students have responded very positively to this pedagogic structure: "*Class discussions and sharing stories really helped make the concepts relevant*", *"a very open and engaging style and… very supportive and receptive to all contributions which made the class more willing to contribute and therefore made for very interactive seminars*", and "*The group activities… is very useful and interesting… makes the 3-hour seminar feel like one!"* Based on my assessment strategies in the cross-cultural management course, I present the following model of experiential learning through innovative assessment practices (Fig. 17.1).

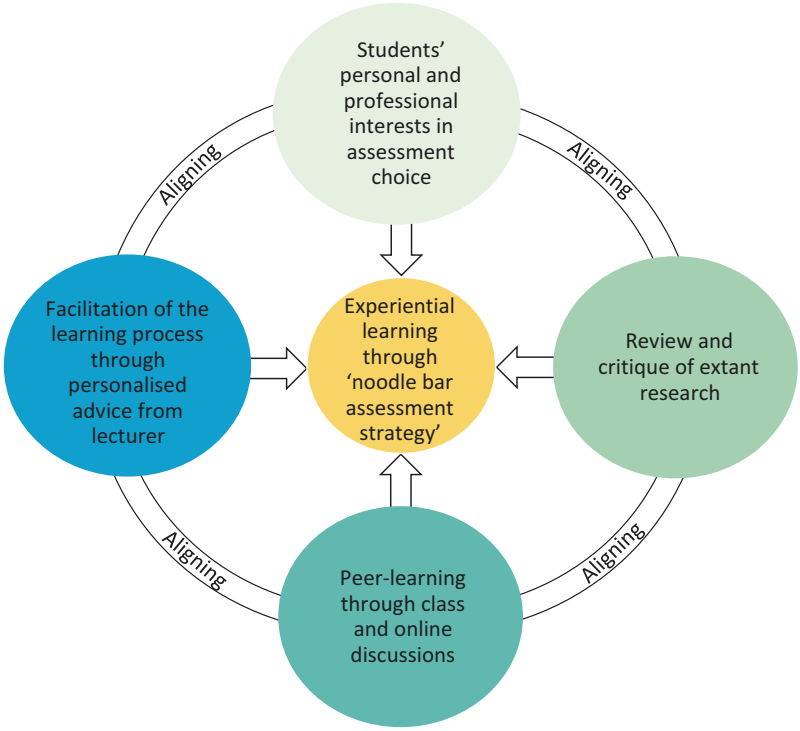

Fig. 17.1 Activity assessment model

Figure 17.1 illustrates the interconnected elements of the assessment strategy and how they collectively provide experiential learning to students in the course. First, the students' personal and professional interests are reflected in the student-led assessment choices (i.e., the case). Second, the choice of theoretical perspectives by students lends to theoretical expertise unique to each student. Third, both the abovementioned elements are facilitated by personalized consultation from the course convener. Finally, peer-learning is facilitated through the in-class and online discussions.

Limitations and Future Pedagogic Directions

In my implementation of the noodle bar assessment strategy, I have received positive feedback from students (both quantitative and qualitative). However, I have not taught the discussed courses with any other assessment strategy. Therefore, I am unable to compare student learning or performance with any other assessment strategy. Future pedagogic implications of this strategy may indicate if the application leads to certain specific learning that other strategies would not. Also, the implication of the assessment strategy with undergraduate students may lead to further pedagogic improvements of the strategy. The cases students typically choose have been historic and publicly available in nature. It would be interesting to see how students cope with evolving cases (real life or simulated) and whether this requires further innovation in the assessment strategy. Finally, students have worked by themselves on the assessments and much of the consultation with the course convener has been face-to-face. Further innovation may be needed if the assessment strategy were to be used in group and/or online assessments.

Conclusion

The assessment strategy outlined in this chapter should be of value to any course that requires students to come with some degree of life and or work experiences. It is valuable to courses that require students to analyze information from multiple perspectives. Most importantly, it is valuable in areas of education where there is no one specific way of problem-solving and where contextual information has to be integrated in order to achieve successful outcomes. While I have outlined how the noodle bar assessment strategy can be used in developing experiential learning in international business students, I hope this chapter assists academics in other disciplines to achieve experiential learning for their students.

Appendix: Course Outline

Please note:

1. Name and number of course has been masked as the course is the intellectual property of the university.
2. In the interest of space and word limit, only the rubrics of the two main assignments outlined in the noodle bar assessment strategy have been presented. For further information, please contact the author.

Course Schedule

Week	Summary of activities
1	Seminar: **Introduction**
2	Seminar: **Models of cross-cultural management**
3	Seminar: **Cross-cultural teams in organizations**
4	Online case studies (no Seminar): **Theory to practice—intercultural case studies**
5	Seminar: **Intercultural communication and multilingualism in organizations**
6	Seminar: **Negotiation and conflict in cross-cultural management**
7	Seminar: **Diversity in the Australian workforce**
8	Seminar: **Global careers—expatiation and repatriation**
9	Seminar: **Leading in a multicultural organization**
10	Seminar: **Global organizations—MNCs and off-shoring**
11	Seminar: **Employee-employer relationships and cross-cultural management**
12	Seminar: **Cross-cultural training: Effectiveness and myths**

Assessment Tasks

For the main assignments in this course, you will have to take a programmatic approach. You will have to take the following steps:

1. Your first task is to **identify** a case study which has a problem in relation to cross-cultural management. The case may be found in popular media releases, practitioner and/or academic publications, hypothetical cases from books or journal articles other than the ones recommended in this course or from personal experiences (if you take this approach, please maintain confidentiality of all parties involved). Once you have identified a case, please discuss the case with me before you go on to the next steps. This should be done by the **end of week 3** so you have enough time to work on the assignments.
2. Identify the key cross-cultural construct in the case (any realistic case will have several issues in relation to culture. You will have to identify the most important one for the given case) and write a **research essay for Assignment**

1 (2000 words +/− 10%; 30%, to be submitted on Friday week 6 by 4 pm). In this essay, you should outline the emergence of the theoretical construct, further developments based on the research literature, application to contemporary global organizations, and any criticism the construct has encountered from researchers and practitioners in the area. When you submit the essay, please submit a copy of the case as well.

3. For **Assignment 2**, write a **report** on the case you have identified (2000 words +/− 10%, 30%, to be submitted on Friday week 12 by 4 pm). In writing the report, you will have to imagine that you are a management consultant with expertise in cross-cultural issues. Your job is to identify what went wrong in the management style or decision-making process in this context. Use the theoretical perspectives you have learned in the course to identify the mistakes that were made. Recommend how these can be rectified based on the research literature.

Assessment Task 1: Research Essay

Details of task: Identify the key cross-cultural constructs in the case (any realistic case will have several issues in relation to culture and write a research essay). In this essay, you should outline the emergence of the theoretical construct, further developments based on the research literature, application to contemporary global organizations, and any criticism the construct has encountered from researchers and practitioners in the area. When you submit the essay, please submit a copy of the case as well.

Assessment Rubric

	Excellent	Good	Satisfactory	Needs some more work	Needs much more work	Mark
Content						/20
Detailed discussion of the theoretical perspective.						
Examples provided to illustrate the theory in an organizational context.						
Discussion of relevant issues in relation to the question.						
Inclusion of citations from key research to develop argument.						
Applications/recommendations for the contemporary global organization.						

(*continued*)

(continued)

	Excellent	Good	Satisfactory	Needs some more work	Needs much more work	Mark
Structure, language, and referencing conventions						/10
Structure of essay:						
Introduction: Thesis statement, definition of key terms and outline of argument.						
Main Body: Logical discussion, persuasive arguments, and clarity in the author's 'voice'.						
Conclusion: Summary of main argument and no new ideas or references.						
Language:						
Appropriate paraphrasing, quoting and summarizing from sources.						
Appropriate sentence structure, grammar, and word limit.						
Referencing:						
All ideas taken from sources are appropriately referenced.						
Reference list matches in-text references and is written in a consistent style.						
Total Marks: 30						

Assessment Task 2: Report on case study

Details of task: Write a report on the case you have identified. In writing the report, you will have to imagine that you are a management consultant with expertise in cross-cultural issues. Your job is to identify what went wrong in the management style or decision-making process in this context. Use the theoretical perspectives you have learned in the course to identify the mistakes that were made. Recommend how these can be rectified based on the research literature.

You must have the following sections in your report:

Cover page
Executive summary
Introduction
Literature review
Analysis of the problem
Recommendations
Summary
References

Assessment Rubric

	Excellent	Good	Satisfactory	Needs some more work	Needs much more work	Mark
Content						/20
Appropriate identification of the problem						
Detailed discussion of relevant theoretical perspective(s) in relation to the problem						
Discussion of relevant contextual issues associated with the problem						
Inclusion of key citations from research to analyze the problem						
Creative and effective recommendations to rectify the problem						
Detailed description of the recommendations (including a budget if necessary)						
Recommendations presented in order of priority						
Links between the recommendations and existing theories/research						
Rationale behind the choice of recommendations						
Suggestions on relevant follow-up activities when necessary						
Report format						/10
Report has all the sections suggested in the case study						
Each section consists of information relevant to that section (4 marks)						
Professional format of the report						
Appropriate sentence structure, grammar, and word limit						
Appropriate paraphrasing, quoting, and summarizing from sources						
All ideas taken from sources are appropriately referenced						
Reference list matches in-text references and is written in a consistent style						
Total Marks: 30						

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18

Better Students, Better Companies: Connected Learning Methodology

María de las Mercedes Anderson

Introduction

Education should transcend the process of transmitting content in the classroom: it should allow this content to be used in the transformation and improvement of society. Education in Peru is still traditional (Mejía, 2017). A teacher stands in front of the class and outlines concepts; students listen and take notes, and then are evaluated through written exams, but not through the practical application of what they have learned. Globalization and new trends in teaching-learning methods lead to a process of pedagogical innovation which we must accept as an opportunity and a challenge.

Fieldwork is applied as a teaching tool. It helps students develop their sensitivity, perception and observation skills to perform a thorough and critical analysis in situ. Consequently, they learn to analyze in order to arrive at solutions that have scientific value. It is a way of motivating the relationship between theory and practice, of facing reality.

Throughout this chapter, the techniques used for the application of a methodology based on experience will be described—the Connected Learning Methodology (CLM)—along with its benefits. The CLM methodology has been applied since 2015 in one of the subjects of the International Business Career course at the University of Lima, having emerged from the suggestions

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M. A. Gonzalez-Perez et al. (eds.), *The Palgrave Handbook of Learning and Teaching International Business and Management*, https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-030-20415-0_18

of companies where students did internships. These suggestions cited a need "to relate the student to reality" or to "a greater approach with the company." This is how the following questions arose: (1) How do we bring the student closer to reality? (2) What would be an appropriate subject for us to apply an experimental methodology? And (3) do we have the right teacher? Analyzing the different contents of the subjects and the teachers, we chose the Export and Import Opportunities subject to shift from a traditional methodology to an experimental one.

In the first question, we find that the fieldwork strategies that motivate better learning in students are those that allow them to explore information and experiences relevant to them. Learning outside the classroom involves a process of construction and reconstruction in which the contributions of each student play a decisive role, and students attribute meaning to what they learn in relation to their reality (Palazón, Gallego, Gómez, Pérez, & García, 2011; Torres, 2010). It is the result of a dynamic process, in a team, and its relationship with the environment, in which knowledge is built, values, attitudes, skills and abilities developed, new knowledge schemes accommodated and reorganized (this being the modification of cognitive structures) that allows the student to understand, reconstruct and face reality, and to develop their potentialities (Fernández, Gonzáles, & Ruiz, 2015).

The following questions led us to develop the CLM methodological project, which seeks to transfer knowledge acquired in the classroom by students to small businesses. These small businesses benefit in turn from the new knowledge, technologies or processes delivered to them through students. The transfer of knowledge to the company is given via the fieldwork carried out by students, where the student combines theory with practice and corroborates the knowledge learned throughout their studies.

Next, we will briefly discuss the literature on experiential learning. We will show the learning objectives of the evaluation strategy that we hope our students to carry out; we will consider Peruvian exports in the global market; we will explain how we apply the CLM methodology; analyze the cycle of experiential learning; review skills and competencies, and the optimal profile of the learner; evaluate the effectiveness of learning and its outcomes; consider the challenges and best practices of the evaluation strategy, the transferability of the strategy and, finally, the adjustment of the evaluation strategy for learners and entrepreneurs.

Review of Experimental Learning Literature Applied to Fieldwork

The origins of experiential education were in the earlier phases of human development, where there was the oral transmission of the rules of life and certain cultural models that passed from generation to generation, generating a transmission of knowledge (Cardozo, 2014).

At the beginning of the twentieth century, education began to be reformed and new scholars emerged. Among them, John Dewey is regarded as the father of modern experiential education. Dewey (1938) developed the principles on which experiential education is based. Some of them are centered around the idea that the content of the subject should be related to the student's concerns, that new knowledge can be anchored in previous knowledge, that cooperative work is encouraged instead of competition for grades, that the educational experience opens up to the student the potential of the future rather than reinforcing the conditioning factors of the past, and that the teacher is responsible for selecting the influences the student will receive and to help them find a way to express their unique talents for the benefit of the society to which they belong. Experiential learning occurs when a person is involved in a certain activity, looks back critically and determines what is important and necessary to remember, and uses that information to perform another activity (Dewey, 1938).

David Kolb was interested in exploring the processes associated with the sense of concrete experiences and the different learning styles that may be involved in individual and social change, experiential learning, professional development and vocational education. With Roger Fry, Kolb created the model of the four elements: concrete experience, observation and reflection, formation of abstract concepts and testing in new situations. These are represented in the circle of experiential learning. Kolb joins Dewey in emphasizing the nature of the development of an experience as a fundamental axis for learning, and stresses the importance of role-playing in learning, as it was his desire to distinguish their approach from cognitive theories of the learning process.

The experimental learning methodology was recognized more widely in the 1970s and the Association for Experimental Education (ESA) was established in 1977 (Hammerman, Hammerman, & Hammerman, 2001).

Definitions for experimental education have changed over time. Ford (1986) called it "learning by doing or experiencing," and suggested that outdoor education can be seen as experiential, especially when learning takes place through experiences.

ESA defined it thus: "Experimental education is a process by which an apprentice builds knowledge, skill and value from direct experiences" (ESA, 2002). This definition is supplemented by three pillars: (1) reflection, critical analysis and synthesis; (2) the results obtained are personal and are the basis for future knowledge and experiences; and (3) educators motivate the opportunity to explore and for students to examine their own values.

Experiential learning is also considered capable of capturing the interest and involvement of participants, contributing to the transfer of learning (Luckner & Nadler, 1997). According to Morin (2001), this culture of knowledge construction must be generic, feed intelligence in general, confront the great human questions, stimulate reflection on knowledge and favor the personal integration of knowledge to form critical people, responsible for their own learning and their performance.

In times of globalization and rapid change, education needs to have a transformative effect and contribute to development (Herrera, 2004). It is considered of great importance to teach students to make reasoned decisions, and to understand that the teaching of science is aimed at preparing citizens to participate reflexively, in an informed and responsible way, in finding the solutions to social and personal problems (Torres, 2010). This requires students to have more effective learning and didactic environments, and educational settings that enable them to develop their thinking skills and learning ability (Torres, 2010).

The main objective of the experiential teaching and learning methodology is to promote a positive attitude among students, to maintain curiosity and improve motivation in order to generate attachment and linkage to scientific research, throughout their lives. To do this, it is necessary to bring the student to the investigation of phenomena, facts and theories, so that they can make observations, ask questions, review different sources of information, contrast new information with what they already know, analyze and interpret data, formulate answers, give explanations and reach conclusions (Fensham, 2009).

There are various options for the construction of knowledge beyond traditional teaching, which are considered broad, systematic, flexible and framed within a humanistic culture. In recent years, Learning has always been one of the fundamental goals of any educational project (Pozo & Monereo, 1999); therefore, the teacher must see the educational fact as having the purpose of building diverse and creative subjects in complex societies (Torres, 2010). From this conception, a teacher consolidates their actions through reflection and understanding of the educational reality, thus promoting the maintenance of their professional activity in the student formation.

CLM is a pedagogical strategy based on fieldwork, where not only is what is theoretically explored in class verified in on the ground, but this approach also contributes to the transfer of knowledge from the student to the employer and from this to the other workers—a chain of knowledge transfer that enriches the general knowhow. It is an inclusive strategy that promotes teamwork and understanding of the business world. It is the real and experiential way of understanding and interpreting the business context.

Learning Objectives for the Subject of Export and Import Opportunities

CLM has two main objectives; the first is related to students and reality, and the second is focused on SMEs and their internationalization in foreign trade. The first objective of the CLM pilot project is to provide students with the opportunity to experience, in real time, the existing problems of a foreign trade company. The aim is for students to learn how to apply their knowledge in companies that are already operating and need support to improve their performance in the export market. Students should be able to interview the owners or managers of companies and analyze the information gathered in order to compare the objectives of the companies and propose appropriate changes and improvements, taking into account internationalization and profitability. The second objective of learning and knowledge transfer is aimed at companies cooperating in the project. They must be able to acquire managerial and operational knowledge to assist them in decision-making in order to improve their efficiency and effectiveness.

Through the CLM methodology, students apply their knowledge directly to real life and experience on the ground what they have learned in class. While working through methodology in companies as specialized consultants, they learn to apply their social skills, and develop observation skills, critical thinking, analysis and innovation. The small-scale entrepreneur does not always have all the requisite knowledge, experience and skills to analyze their local reality as well as the international one in which their company is located; but a third person, in this case the student, can observe the whole picture and propose new technologies, models and processes. The synergy of the company and the student with technical skills helps to create more consistent values in the small company.

CLM contributes to the internationalization of small businesses through exports, making them efficient and competitive in the global market. Thus, students not only feel that they are supporting the small businesses, but also that they are supporting their country in generating more exports, higher incomes and employment.

Overview of Peruvian Exports in the Global Market

Since 2001, when Peru exited the ATPA (Andean Taxes Preferences Agreement) which was renewed in 2002 as ATPDEA (Andean Trade Promotion and Drug Eradication Act) and the Peruvian Ministry of Foreign Trade and Tourism was created, the latter has become one of the main engines of the Peruvian economy. Trade policy has been focused on increasing and diversifying trade. In 2015, the National Strategic Export Plan for 2025 (PENX 2025) was adopted, which represents an opportunity to boost sustainable and diversified growth of Peruvian exports through an improvement in the competitiveness of Peruvian foreign trade.

The PENX 2025 adopts a new approach: the consolidation of Peru's global presence through the internationalization of the Peruvian company. The critical subject of this plan is Peruvian companies, which generate employment, produce and exports. For more than a decade, Peru has had an open trade and investment policy aimed at integrating its economy into global markets. This comprises a network of 19 free-trade agreements covering 95% of foreign trade, or about 85 million dollars in annual exports and imports (Mincetur, 2018).

Since 2014, Peruvian exports have reached 181 foreign markets, making Peru the country with the highest growth (22%) in Latin America. It is worth mentioning that 95% of its 7415 non-traditional foreign trade companies are SMEs (Mincetur, 2018).

Peruvian exports are 70% commodities (copper, gold, lead, zinc, fishmeal and others) and 30% non-traditional products (agricultural products, textiles, fisheries, chemicals, iron and steel and jewelry, among others). When we refer to non-traditional products, we mean those that undergo an industrial process through which value is added, such as jewelry, packaging, textiles, processed foods and others. These exports not only have a higher level of profitability in terms of their price, but also generate another dynamic in the country: more employment and income for businesses, and an improvement in the quality of Peruvian products. They even include the possibility of opening up greater opportunities in the international market, because in this way our products begin to be recognized and well spoken of. As of 2018, Peru achieved a new record in non-traditional exports, reaching US$13,219 million (US$2100 million in 2001), of which numerous goods showed record figures, including grapes, avocado, cranberry, mango, wool and fine hair items and steel among others (Mincetur, 2018).

Peru must generate more non-traditional exports, as these are related to the effort of entrepreneurs to conquer and diversify the destination markets. They are goods with a high level of differentiation, whose production tends to generate higher added value and employment. Their external production and sale are related to the exploitation of comparative advantages that have increased their competitiveness and thus allowed them to establish and strengthen their niches in international markets.

The prospects for non-traditional exports depend mainly on their global demand and competitiveness. Among the main weaknesses are a high dependence on imported inputs, low investment in research, low linkages between universities and companies, institutional impediments and slow issuance of health certificates—in addition to infrastructure deficiencies and a poor export culture (BCR, 2008). This situation gives rise to the following questions: could the academy help improve competitiveness? How can we transfer knowledge to SMEs?

As one of the weaknesses of non-traditional exporters is the lack of links between academy and company, we have developed a pilot project with the aim of transmitting the knowledge acquired by students through their classes to SMEs and implementing the CLM methodology. The application of this pilot methodology will enable SMEs to acquire new knowledge to improve their organization in terms of their foreign trade processes. Students, by interacting with entrepreneurs, transmit their knowledge with a view to ameliorating the weaknesses of entrepreneurs, such as their low levels of competitiveness and inclusiveness in global value chains.

Connected Learning Methodology

The first step to implement CLM is the seeking out and selection of companies by the teacher of the subject. The teacher also talks with SMEs and explains the methodology to be applied and the new knowledge and tools that will be transferred to them. The selected companies should be SMEs that are in the process of developing foreign trade operations. Our approach also considers the business model and the leadership of the employer for the transmission of knowledge to the student, in order that the student can interpret it and diagnose the situation of the business, as well as the willingness of the employer to receive the diagnosis and recommendations provided by the student.

CLM addresses students on the International Business Career course, but students in other areas, such as Industrial Engineering and Administration, also tend to participate. The teacher forms groups of four students, preferably

all taking different courses, thus forming multidisciplinary teams, which promotes an integral perspective and enriched decision-making by having different perspectives and more complete arguments. In addition, these different perspectives can advance possible future problem solving or scenarios, which is also a way of transferring new knowledge among students from different academic programs.

The teacher makes known the ten companies with which they will work and each group chooses one. Students are also informed about CLM, its purpose and benefits for them and for the employer. In the first two months, in addition to theory and case studies, students develop a question guide (survey) which they must ask the employer in order to obtain the information required for their analysis. These questions are verified by the teacher, because each one is based on the type of company that each group will visit and these companies do not necessarily belong to the same category, which enriches the students' experience even more because they learn how to interview various sorts of company (Fig. 18.1).

In the third month, students visit their chosen company and usually collect the necessary information for their diagnosis, in addition to answering any questions that the employer might ask them. This business diagnosis is a tool that allows students to discern the state of the company in different areas of management related to foreign trade.

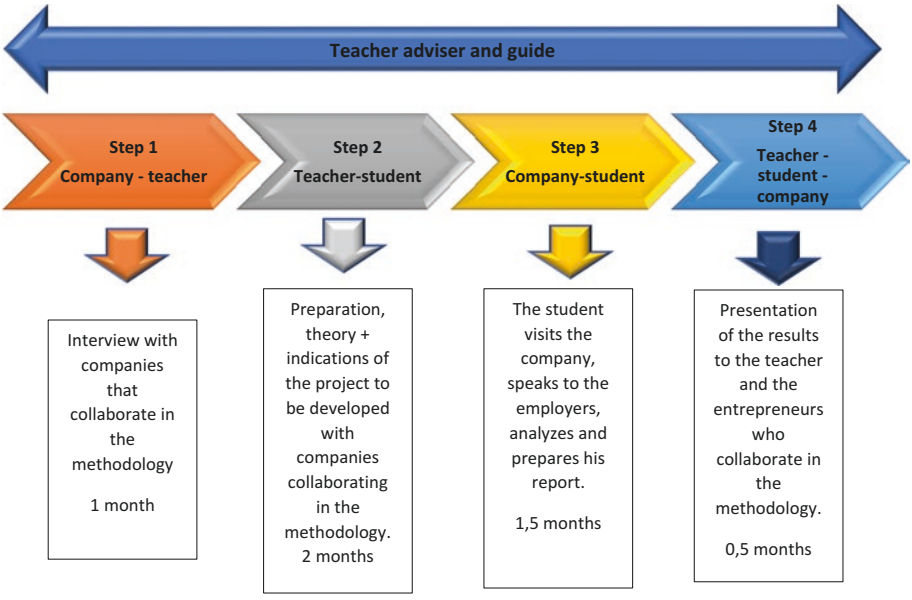

Fig. 18.1 Stages of the project and staff involved. Prepared by the author

Then, each group of students meets and develops its own critical analysis and interpretation that, through their ordering and reconstruction, discovers or expresses the logic of the process as it has played out, the factors that have participated in this process, how they relate to each other and why they have done so in the given company. After systematizing their information, the students prepare a presentation that they will give to the company, and in which they will make known its strengths and weaknesses, and how these weaknesses can be solved through logistical tools, international promotion, improvement of exportable offerings and a strategic plan.

Cycle of the Experiential Learning

In order to know if knowledge or the learning process is truly generated through CLM, we must break down the methodology and differentiate the different stages proposed by Kolb's theory (1984).

1. First stage: Concrete experience, the student visits and interviews the entrepreneur.
2. Second stage: Reflective observation, the student observes, reflects on and establishes a connection between their own knowledge, what is observed and the results obtained from the reflections carried out. At this point, they understand what happens and can predict results if they were to see a similar situation.
3. Third stage: Using observation and reflections from experience, the student reaches the level of abstract conceptualization. They come to understand why situations such as those presented in the analyzed company occur, thus moving from reflection to a generalization that will allow them to recognize similar situations.
4. Fourth stage: Active experimentation, which is the application in practice of the conclusions obtained by the students through what was observed, reflected on and conceptualized. In CLM this is not necessarily a direct application by the student, but the student suggests it and the entrepreneur usually applies it, as experience shows.

In each of these stages, value is generated in the learner through the development of different forms of knowledge. Effective learning is thus achieved. In any international accreditation, creditors analyze the business and institutional links that the career under consideration may have. This is how the

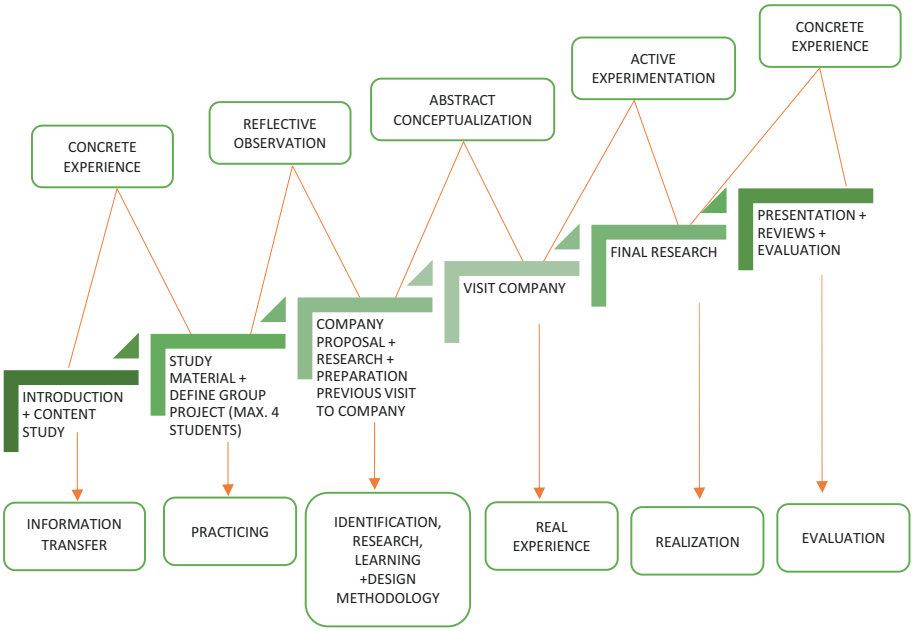

Fig. 18.2 Connected learning methodology cycle. Prepared by the author

International Business Career course at the University of Lima presented the CLM project, which was widely accepted by the accreditors (IAC-CINDA) for applying unconventional methodologies. It was seen as a great contribution and a generator of knowledge and competencies—and therefore of value—for the student and for the company. Likewise, creditors suggested that this type of methodology should be applied in other subjects, which was the reason why another subject was designed with the CLM methodology, but with other guidelines suitable to its particular syllabus.

Each stage provides a valuable lesson for students, who can develop different cognitive processes and achieve effective learning (Fig. 18.2).

Skills, Competencies and Student Profile

Through the approach outlines in this chapter, students take a more active and autonomous role in learning. They are no longer just receivers of information but become an active part of the teaching-learning process (Delgado, 2005). It takes some effort to learn to learn and to learn to teach.

The teacher is no longer just a provider of knowledge but a counselor who makes the learning process of students very dynamic. The teacher provides

guidance to students so that they can search for information, motivating them continuously and encouraging their active participation. This requires more personalized attention for each student or group of students.

The CLM methodology plays an important role in the development of student competencies. We can classify them as follows: (1) competencies related to the subject matter (theory and cases) and which are taught by the teacher during class time: knowledge, comprehension, application, establishment of relationships, observation, critical analysis, innovation, critical recognition, situations, among others; (2) generic skills: teamwork, behavior, expression and technicalities; and (3) transversal competencies: knowledge and application of certain technologies.

What we learned from the implementation of CLM is that how we learn is as important as what we learn. So far, we observe that in presenting their proposals students are very energetic and enthusiastic with details, and share everything they have learned, which is always positive for companies in that they receive new knowledge and tools for their business models. The average profile of the student of a subject that participates in CLM is that they are 21 years old, in their last year of undergraduate studies and aims to be an entrepreneur or to know in practice the problems that small businesses experience when internationalizing.

It is optimal to work with approximately 40 students, in which groups of four students are formed by the teacher, who is the supporting body, guide and motivator of the effort of the students. The work of the students should be developed in small groups so that they can more easily organize, assume positions and produce common efforts to achieve individual and group goals. The teacher also seeks to develop in the student the emotional, behavioral and valued domain. In such groups of up to 40 students, it is highly feasible to monitor the knowledge learned or strengthened and the skills developed.

Evaluation of the Effectiveness of Learning

The Kirkpatrick Training Assessment Model (Kirkpatrick & Kirkpatrick, 2016) was used to assess the effectiveness of the project. In the first level of assessment, the student's reaction to enrolment in the course was measured. At the second level, learning takes place while the learner applies his or her knowledge learned in his or her project in real time. The student strengthens their skills as a professional and as a human being, and throughout the project the teacher evaluates their learning and work.

At the third level, behavioural change occurs when students apply their knowledge to the needs and problems of companies, and companies analyze, learn and apply what they have learned too, which improves their decision-making. At the fourth level, that of organizational performance, students evaluate the teacher according to what they have learned and have been able to apply in their project; they also recognize that there may be topics that need to be strengthened. Student feedback is very important to generate more opportunities for the subject, career, SMEs and for themselves.

Results and Challenges

In the first level of the Kirkpatrick Training Assessment Model, we find the following development in the subject's enrolment (Table 18.1):

This data allowed us to evaluate the students' interest in the subject, despite it being a non-compulsory course. In the 2018-2 cycle, the number of students to enroll was 52, therefore a section of 40 students was opened and 12 students remained waiting to fill the minimum portion (15 students) required to open a new section (University Rules). By not reaching the minimum, only a section of 42 could be opened.

For the evaluation of the following levels of learning assessment, the students' own perception of their competence development was empirically analyzed, as well as content assimilation and approach to the professional world after being part of a CLM subject. To this end, a survey was prepared on the

Table 18.1 Enrolment registration in the subject Export and Import Opportunities

Period Semesters	Number of students enrolled	Observations
2014-1	19	The new methodology was not applied during 2014
2014-2	24	
2015-1	42	Implementation of new CLM methodology begins
2015-2	42	
2016-1	41	
2016-2	41	
2017-1	41	Every semester the syllabuses of the subjects are revised, taking into account the needs of the market, new knowledge and scope that they want to be delivered to students
2017-2	45	
2018-1	84	
2018-2	42	

achievement of the objectives set. One of the most notable results was the application of 95% of students to apply this methodology to other subjects as well.

In the second level, that of learning, CLM confirms that it is important to experience fieldwork because it breaks up the monotony of the classroom and helps the student to live in the true business environment. This allows students to enact the theory and apply it to real companies (Vera & Martínez, 2013). The survey shows that only 15.2% of students consider this program to be entirely theoretical, while the rest consider it a highly analytical and practical form of learning (Table 18.2).

Fieldwork is a different way of learning and is adaptable to any type of research. It offers opportunities for teaching and learning for both teachers and students. Their attitudes are more important because they guide learning beyond the theory of courses (Table 18.3).

The student adopts a much more active and autonomous role, ceasing to be a mere receiver of knowledge to become rather the author of their own learning process (Delgado, 2005). This involves an effort on the part of the student to learn to learn, where competencies acquire a fundamental relevance in the teaching-learning process.

The teacher becomes a guide and a driving force in the students' learning process, that is, the teacher must provide the student with the necessary criteria to know how to seek out, find and select the information needed to be

Table 18.2 Type of approach to the methodology applied

	Number of students	%
Conceptual	7	15.2
Analytical	10	21.7
Practical	12	26.1
Business	17	37.0
Total	46	100.0

Table 18.3 Skills and competencies acquired through CLM

	Number of answers	%
Critical analysis	18	30
Investigation and research	8	13
Interpersonal relationships and teamwork	10	17
Visualize business opportunities	15	25
Learning through third parties' experiences	9	15
Total	60	100

Note: The number of responses was higher because there were students who answered two or three alternatives

turned into knowledge, as well as performing functions of motivation, dynamization and stimulation of study, while promoting participation and offering more personalized attention.

In the third level of learning the student develops their fieldwork, which promotes the development in processes of information, interpretation, formulation of hypotheses and experiences; this causes the students to read, think critically and reconstruct what they have seen (Echeverri, 2015). They also develop skills to solve problems that reinforce their moral values in society. CLM students learned critical thinking skills and competencies through third-party experiences, interpersonal relationships and teamwork.

For the project, interdisciplinary teams were chosen in order to foster a wider span of collaboration and a variety of perspectives for a certain spectrum of problems. This helps form strong links between students, the teacher and the company's individual owners or executives; and ultimately, it helps the student to increase his or her ability to solve problems (Vera & Martínez, 2013).

At the fourth level, the teacher is evaluated under five criteria, one of which is the teaching methodology. In this criterion, the teacher is evaluated by the students, and reaches an average of 17 points over the last three years (the evaluation score is considered between 0 and 20 points).

The project develops added value for companies. There was not a single company that was dissatisfied with the students' comments and ideas, which offered valuable contributions related to finance, business development, logistics, market intelligence, international marketing and related fields. When asked if the students had generated value for the company, none of gave a negative answer. A group of students formed and supported the development of a new website so that the company in question could sell its products abroad, a tool that may be considered very simple but is not necessarily implemented in SMEs. Other groups of students provided entrepreneurs with a presentation model to be used in negotiations or to make themselves known in the world. Likewise, students also provided entrepreneurs with information about the market or markets where they could export, with all the necessary requirements to complete a transaction correctly. Due to the good performance of the students, some of them have remained to carry out preprofessional practices in some of these companies.

As a quality control, we completed a thorough interview with the course teacher. The teacher has a record of each company that participated in CLM and the problems they face, and reports on the performance of the students. All this remains confidential, at the request of the companies. These records are important because some of the companies asked the teacher to provide more information on a given topic in order to deepen their improvements or

Table 18.4 Evaluation rubric. Students' competencies developed through fieldwork

Activities	Developed competencies	Evaluation				
		0–5	6–10	11–14	15–17	18–20
Planning, execution and follow-up	Work plan					
Bibliography investigation	Knowledge buildup (theory)					
Work previous to visiting the companies	Capability development, planning, organization, execution and evaluation					
Question guide, paper writing and discussion of results	Written communication					
Group presentation, discussion of problems and possible solutions	Oral communication					
The student manages leadership, accepts criticism and works in teams collaboratively	Attitudes					
The student is honest and transparent in managing information, turns in papers on time and is on time to class	Values					
The student accepts their mistakes and looks to grow and learn from them	Self-evaluation					

processes. This shows us that companies require constant support and knowledge transfer to solve different problems, and therefore these companies will be considered for future opportunities.

During the four-month course, the students were evaluated through several written examinations and also by the teacher (Table 18.4). Evaluation scores range from 0 (minimum) to 20 (maximum) per student.

Different competencies allow students to get involved in their own learning process. They are responsible for building their own knowledge and directing their learning. They are aware of expectations and objectives throughout the process. The teacher told us that throughout the course, he saw how the attitudes of students changed and how they became increasingly involved in the project. So far there have been no students who disapprove of the subject and when they present their final work they are usually very analytical, relating what was learned in class to reality and always have interesting proposals for improvement opportunities for entrepreneurs.

Similarly, the teacher told us that throughout the course the students asked many questions, cleared doubts, made observations and many correct and incorrect analyses. This means that a very active teacher–student interaction was achieved, with valuable contributions for the student. This type of interaction is not usually carried out in a traditional teaching environment.

Likewise, it was also a challenge for the teacher to learn about each of the companies in order to properly guide the students. The student must be able to respond in their final analysis as to whether the company could be internationalized or not, through their own analysis and conclusions.

It is the teacher who selects and speaks with the companies prior to the beginning of the course, so that they participate in the methodology applied in the subject. One of the great challenges is that companies called upon to participate in and support the training of students do not always attend to the situation in a professional way and may not make known their real status, and even less their internationalization process. It is often the case that the information is not complete or, simply, despite having agreed to receive the pupils, the company then will not take them on.

Students are prepared beforehand to take on the challenge of being welcomed into a company and to know how to request information, but we cannot fail to recognize that requesting information from companies is not easy, does not always occur with the desired openness, in many cases due to lack of organization, jealousy for their knowhow or simply because they do not have it.

In this practice, the student builds his or her experience in direct contact with the entrepreneur, for which he or she uses a series of tools and designs an action plan prior to the interview with the entrepreneur. This plan will help them work more effectively both alone and as a team.

Transferability and CLM Application

We believe that this methodology should apply only to undergraduate students, from different courses, but especially at business faculties. Students are asked to analyze the management and operation capacity of the company and its internationalization process, and are not required to undergo a thorough financial process. Due to the results obtained with CLM, it was decided to take this methodology to another subject, but with the difference that in this case it is the entrepreneur who indicates that they want the students to analyze, apply, innovate or create. The teacher is a guide-advisor to the students, who has chosen companies related to foreign trade. These are businesses that seek to explore foreign trade issues; for example, one wanted to know more about opportunities for analysis of the cuttlefish business. The methodology

leads to a transfer of knowledge and experiences at the entrepreneurial-student-entrepreneur-teacher level, with the aim not only of learning from the learner, but also of transferring to the entrepreneur, which then benefits the country by making its export program more competitive.

This methodology can be applied to other subjects with the possibility of field studies, but they must conform to the objectives according to what is sought and the competencies that are to be developed in the student. In this way, the methodology can also be used in all business faculties, especially in subjects of the last year of a course, with the aim of integrating all the knowledge learned throughout it and applying it in companies or sectors that require management and innovation support. Thus, we have companies that receive support and students who are taught the reality of a situation and how to show solidarity with it.

Contributions to Knowledge Transfer Through CLM

CLM means a pedagogical contribution of knowledge development and transfer, in search of comprehensive training for students to adapt to the needs of society and to an increasingly competitive transnational labor market, which requires certain profiles and skills and knowledge that are constantly being updated and applied to real-life scenarios.

The transfer of knowledge from teacher to student and from teacher to entrepreneur has been taking place during the course of this study, in which 70 small businesses have been visited, and five are being advised by students; three have welcomed students as preprofessional practitioners; and ten, after receiving their diagnosis, invited the teacher because they wanted to consult him directly on the recommendations made by students in order to implement or improve them, which led to a further visit by a group of students. Throughout this process, students developed greater knowledge and gained real practice experience, just as an internationalization consultant would do. This methodology has opened the doors to work for the students who participated in the project, while helping them to determine their business opportunities as entrepreneurs.

Conclusions

The CLM methodology, applied to the curriculum of a subject, generates practical and analytical learning opportunities. It allows the curriculum to be directed to the formation and transformation of people as individuals in relation to their competencies, leadership abilities and ability to make decisions, as well as from the synergistic and systemic point of view in the interaction

with other individuals, in effective communication, in the formation of high-performance work teams, in raising awareness and strengthening their values and culture.

We have found that with CLM students contribute, dialogue and propose the most appropriate models for the internationalization of companies, which helps entrepreneurs to make better decisions in their international operations. In this way, companies have used their experience with our students to acquire new knowledge and technologies that strengthen their capabilities and resources, which makes them more suitable to adapt their business model to changes in their competitive markets.

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19

On-site Applied Learning with the Use of Mixed Methods as a Reflective Learning Model in International Business

Arkadiusz Mironko

Introduction

Applied learning has received increasing attention since the 1990s, yet, in practice, it remains elusive and challenging to implement and assess learning outcomes. This chapter proposes a transformational learning model for international business courses grounded in an on-site learning experience where students first individually and then in teams work on a live corporate challenge. The project-based challenge discussed here offers a two-fold approach. First, for learners, it serves as a platform to develop skills by addressing a prescribed problem, to seek and receive feedback, reflect on the feedback and learning, and offer new solutions to the challenge. Second, for faculty, it offers a chance to adopt the learning environment and to design assignments which deliberately assess applied elements of learning, such as adaptive and critical thinking skills, in addressing questions and problems in a live business setting.

By analyzing and combining a number of applied learning and assessment methods, the mixed methods model is used in this course to create a single continuous learning experience. The application of the mixed methods used in the course, which is offered as an elective in the full-time MBA and executive MBA programs, allows a study of relevant theories, host company background information, and concludes with a hands-on project where feedback

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M. A. Gonzalez-Perez et al. (eds.), *The Palgrave Handbook of Learning and Teaching International Business and Management*, https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-030-20415-0_19

and reflection are integral parts of skills-building experience. The course begins with online background learning, remote project analysis, and team collaboration, then progresses to an on-site visit to a company abroad, in this case in China, with a facility visit, interaction with local managers and decision-makers who designed the project, and where presentation of a proposal concludes the course. Participants' activities focus on the opportunity to reflect on their learning at each stage and to present their new findings and recommendations while also receiving immediate, on-the-spot feedback from local experts and the problem business owners. This course follows the didactic–experiential learning continuum (Bird, 2015; Bloom, Englehart, Furst, Hill, & Krathwohl, 1956; Kolb, 2014). In allows students to learn and derive meaning through observation, interaction, and hands-on experience.

The course's transitioning between cognitive and behavioral learning methods will be explored here. This chapter will also discuss the progression of learning from knowledge acquisition to reflection on new insights and the implementation of the proposed decision. The feedback and reflection loop strengthens the learning outcomes in this transformational continuum, where reflection and new action will lead to practical decision-making, implementation, and assessment of outcomes (Brannan, White, & Bezanson, 2008). With new teaching methodologies based on theory and experience, along with new technology-based learning platforms that are developing, being tested, and used every day, learning styles and assessment methods need to adopt as well. This chapter will explore valuable dimensions of a hands-on, reflective, on-site learning experience relevant for international business as a discipline.

The cornerstone of this method will be an on-site, hands-on project which helps to develop lifelong learning skills. The next section describes how the project is integrated into the course. Section "Applied Learning and Assessment Methods" demonstrates how existing learning and assessment methods from professional fields other than international business are adopted here. Then, Sections "Evaluation of the Learning Effectiveness" and "Challenges and Best Practices" explore the evaluation of learning effectiveness, Section "Transferability and Replication" examines best practices and transferability, and the final section draws some practical conclusions and recommendations.

The Practical On-site Learning and Project Steps

The particular course discussed here, titled Global Competition and Economic Development, with a focus on China, was taught for a number of years at Rotterdam School of Management Erasmus University. Each year, a group of 35 to 40 MBA students visited two cities—Chengdu (officially a second-tier

city) and Shanghai (officially a top-tier city). Before meeting in China, the participants learned and prepared for this experience in online sessions containing relevant country-level and industry readings, cases, lectures, and discussions. This allowed the participants to familiarize themselves with the local business environment in the host location, dominant industries, some local regulations, and practices to better understand and function in the new environment. The central assignment of the course is a live project challenge. Although different from year to year, the projects have revolved around the questions of exploration of new markets for a specific product with a particular focus on local regulation and compliance due to medical or technology factors, and intellectual property protection in target markets.

To tackle the project, students were put in teams of five to six, each based on a number of diversity criteria such as nationality, undergraduate degree major, and industry experience, so as to form diverse teams. The existing teams' dynamics were disrupted, in some years, by adding local students from the University of Electronic Science and Technology, our host university in Chengdu. The new team members were allocated to the teams randomly due to time, information sharing, and other logistical constraints. The addition of local students offers a new dimension to the teams' dynamic and team learning. The studies of Hall (1996) and Parker, Hall, and Kram (2008) show that team members' individual learning styles can complement or distract from the success of a team. The study of Hall (1996) also points out that random team assignments may lead to conflicts and opinion clashes which require teams to resolve the differences. Such differences of opinion, however, end in a deeper learning experience. Collaboration on the project in teams together with the indigenous students, although often challenging, added a new dimension of experience and was generally much appreciated by the participants. Team discussions and the visits to companies other than the project host—manufacturing, software development, and service providers—also opened up a new outlook on the local conditions and corporate culture which would be hard to recreate in a classroom setting. Meanwhile cultural visits, such as to museums or performances, offer comprehensive understanding of the local sensitivities and dimensions for course participants.

The Project

To apply the mixed methods in the course, the following practical steps are taken to offer experiential learning through an on-site company-based consulting project. This project comprises the following six elements to facilitate learning:

1. Preparation phase—learning in the online course, through reading, lectures from local faculty and managers, and studying the challenge
   (a) reviewing and conceptualizing a business project individually
   (b) collaboration on the project in teams via online discussion and in person—usually one week before arriving at host destination
   (c) continue to collaborate on the project in teams together with indigenous students (where/when available), in this case, from the host university in China—usually for five to six hours over two days;
2. Visit the facilities of the project host company (Laoken—manufacturer of medical equipment) and meet the management team
   (a) coordinate additional visits to corporate sites where students can observe, discuss their early findings and understanding of the project, and ask questions. Allow more time to work on the project after having a conversation with management and the opportunity to visit the facilities;
3. Prearranged time to request and seek additional insights and data
   (a) receive answers to the questions posed by the teams and get feedback from the problem holder;
4. Allocate additional time to reflect on the feedback, new findings, and discussions and continue to work on the final proposal and reframe as needed;
5. Deliver final presentation and receive final feedback;
6. Write individual reflective assignment.

Each of the above elements facilitates learning and builds on the earlier steps of the study in the program as well as in the course itself. The design of the course and the study trip combine the material with the specifically chosen related activities on-site. Both lead to addressing the challenge, which is the main element of the applied learning experience.

Organization of the Course

When designing the course and selecting the project challenge, we were guided by the following question: What skills and knowledge do we want the participants to develop by taking this course? To implement the components discussed above and the learning objectives, the following steps need to take place in design and delivery of the course:

- Online preparation and study to set a benchmark for future learning
  - selection of relevant course reading materials and cases supporting the project challenge;
- Work with the local partners, both corporate and academic, as far ahead of the planned date as possible, at least six months ahead, to:
  - identify topics, needs, and criteria to help source speakers covering desired subjects
  - reach out to your network to determine subject fit, availability, and logistics;
- Project sourcing
  - identify the host company and specific project
  - after you have agreed on the project, make sure you have also arranged company visits, access to the problem holder and key personnel remotely and while in the country. Make sure to organize this ahead of time with the host company and identify the committed project owner, whom you and the students will have defined access to. This point cannot be overstated.

Moreover, there is a need to identify and estimate costs. Things can add up quite quickly, so you want to let your institution and students know what the study trip will cost with a degree of accuracy.

Applied Learning and Assessment Methods

The opportunity to consult on the project sets up the learning platform for the course. Learning in the international business field requires particular knowledge, experience, and frame of mind from both students and faculty. Therefore, every year before redeveloping the course and sourcing the project we ask, how can this course help students learn better? In order to provide students with an effective and quality learning experience, we follow a number of studies on the subject of experiential learning, including in disciplines other than business. For example, studies from the field of medicine, which conclude that actually performing a task, such as surgery in medicine, or an experiment in engineering (Miller, 1990; Van Tartwijk & Driessen, 2009) is the key to learning and assessment. In their study, Van Tartwijk and Driessen

(2009) follow a devised path of learning: know, knowhow, show, and do. Each step in the learning assessment pyramid builds on the earlier steps of acquiring knowledge in know and knowhow stages, and demonstrates knowledge by being able to show it in practice.

For the final step in the assessment process, we should create the conditions for participants to apply their newly acquired knowledge. In the international business field, making a decision or a proposal while understanding the case in more detail should include such elements as: business and work conditions, logistics, team strengths, state of facilities, corporate culture, and tacit capability (Berry, 2018), which leads to an ultimate learning experience in the field. Such an environment, which we have attempted to create via the course discussed here, is the equivalent of lab conditions for international business students.

It is by being on-site, at a destination, in the offices or assembly plants of the foreign companies we are studying that the application of acquired knowledge can take place. In such hands-on conditions, students can test their newly acquired knowledge and ask questions to people who are "in the arena," doing the jobs, making the decisions and so improve their learning. This hands-on experience helps to reduce ambiguity present in nearly every business decision made by the stakeholders in the process.

On-site Learning Experience

Based on the learning assessment pyramid introduced by Miller (1990) and revised by Van Tartwijk and Driessen (2009) this course builds further, by applying more detailed steps of learning and assessment in the international business environment. Students working on addressing the problem in hand learn from on-site presentations by executives of other institutions than the project host, and they may visit financial and government institutions, as well as manufacturing plants in other industries. Additionally, facilitators have invited local faculty to offer lectures and discussions on selected relevant topics.

The key learning objectives in this course follow a progression from learning about subject industries and host country economy to analyzing a problem that the students have researched and where they have proposed new courses of action. Then they receive feedback on their proposal, reflect on the learning, and offer a new course of action—the do element—proposing implementable decisions, which in some cases were put into practice. The feedback from the actual decision-makers, reflection on this feedback, and the opportunity to reframe the proposal are the key learning objectives in the

course. Throughout the course a number of elements, such as case analysis and discussions, have provided multiple sources of evidence in assessing student learning. The final presentation by each team along with an individual reflective paper serve as the key assessment tools for the course.

On-site Experiential Learning Cycle

Building on existing evaluation and assessment methods, this chapter focuses on the hands-on behavioral stages of learning emphasized in the example of on-site experiential learning by Jiusto and DiBiasio (2006). The review of the related theories and practice focuses the key elements of learning in the course by applying the learned information to the posed live scenario, similar to the one addressed by Brannan et al. (2008) who compared two groups of nursing students, those learning from lectures alone and, second, those learning by clinical decision-making in practice. They find that the simulation method made a positive difference in the nursing students' ability to answer questions in a test of cognitive skills.

In the project example discussed in this chapter, we focus on international business students participating in on-site, hands-on decision-making, through on-site observation and analysis of the business problem in the live environment. After receiving and reflecting on the feedback to the initial proposal from the project owner, the students have time to evaluate alternative courses of action and their potential outcomes. Then, as a last step, the teams decide on their final proposal, which they deliver in a presentation to commissioning management and receive feedback again from the corporate stakeholder as to the likely outcomes of the proposed solution and whether the company will proceed as the team has proposed. This final stage completes the cycle.

The Importance of Reflection on the Experience in the Learning Process

The project employs as its foundations earlier research, such as that of Van Woerkom (2004) and of Brannan et al. (2008) who observed a number of organizations and concluded that critical reflection is key to learning in professional fields. Although, as Korthagen and Vasalos (2009) point out, reflection being increasingly utilized in corporate and professional training does not always meet the necessary learning objectives. This lack of results is evident where the key learning points are loosely or superficially defined. Instead,

Korthagen and Vasalos (2009) propose a concept of core reflection which leads from inner inspirations and beliefs to reflection and questioning of current and future possibilities and goals regarding the studied subject. They construct their model by using what Csikszentmihalyi (1990) calls 'flow,' that is, a state of being entirely in the here-and-now. Flow is described as absorption in a task so completely that you do not notice time passing. This focus allows us to arrive at possible answers and learning by fully combining our capabilities in addressing the questions raised. Hence, learning in a hands-on environment with multiple phases of analysis—first, individual work, then teamwork, after which teams make an initial proposal and receive feedback with more insights, and then reflecting on how the new information impacts the earlier proposal, upon which re-evaluating solutions and making a final proposal create the method most relevant to the international business field. Using the learning models discussed above, this chapter focuses mainly on deeper application of the learning steps under the final—do—stage.

The linearity of this assessment model should be augmented by the opportunity to offer and receive feedback while working on the defined project. The additional steps taken in the do element—analyze the problem (become familiar with the issues raised), apply (propose a solution), receive feedback from a stakeholder in the project, evaluate (reflect on the feedback and reassess the proposal), create (develop the final proposal, propose and receive feedback on the proposal to be implemented by the project stakeholder), are applied here as the way of learning and assessment in the international business field (Fig. 19.1).

The elements of the do step—application of the acquired knowledge, earlier learning in the program and experience through analysis of the business problem, sharing a proposal with the stakeholder of the business problem, receiving feedback and ability to clarify through questions, reflection on the feedback, and presenting a final proposal—allow learners to integrate their freshly acquired knowledge into new solutions. This immersive learning experience with participation in industry-driven decision-making activity is a cornerstone of the course. Reflection on our learning and an immersive experience are also key elements in learning new material and skills. Therefore, the assessment of learning in the experiential setting with the use of the mixed methods needs carefully to consider how learning in the course is tested and measured. The combination of the methods in the learning cycle employed in the course provides a suitable methodology for learning in the international business field (Fig. 19.2).

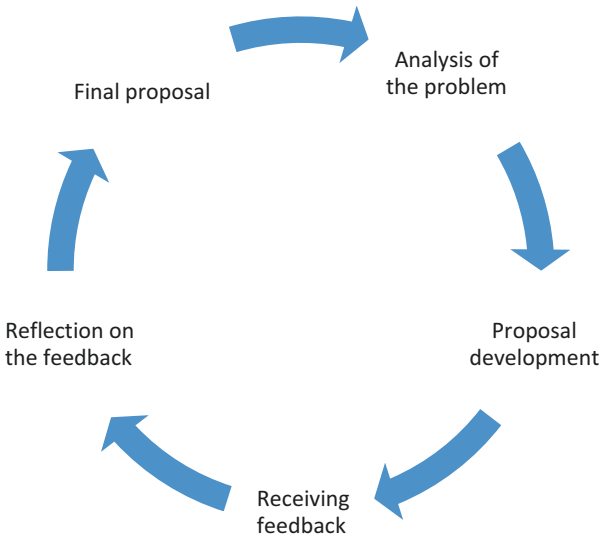

Fig. 19.1 The applied experiential learning cycle in international business

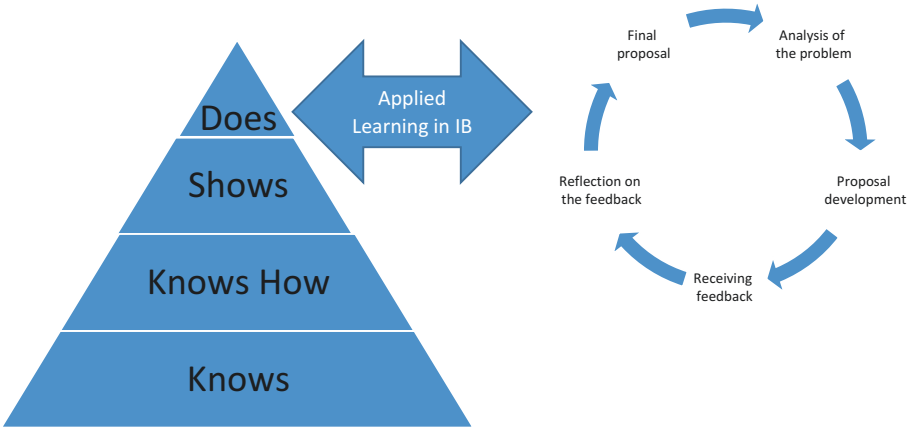

Fig. 19.2 Integrated applied learning and assessment cycle model in international business

Evaluation of the Learning Effectiveness

The course and the consulting project discussed here were designed with the understanding that having the experience of doing the tasks necessary to complete the assignments in a live setting and then reflection on the steps in the process leads to the actual practice of the learned skill, which in turn enhances

learning (Park, 2015; Van Tartwijk & Driessen, 2009). Here, exploration of the topic follows the assessment of learning methodology derived from Van Tartwijk and Driessen (2009), building on the demonstration of knowledge versatility with use of multiple business disciplines relevant to the project in a progression of learning outcomes—from demonstration of the learned material, to knowing how things work, to showing how things work, to finally performing the task. While working on the project at the company site in China, students have learned by experience, observation, discussion, and contribution to a live challenge the host company faced at the time. Assessment of the problem and feedback loop are the main learning outcomes in the proposals delivered by teams. This cycle offers an opportunity for students to receive feedback, self-assess individually and as a team, and propose again, by utilizing their learning and critical thinking skills.

Evidence and Learning Assessment Process

One of the main steps in the project are in-person visits to the corporate and manufacturing facilities at the host location abroad. This significantly enriches students' learning, allowing them to observe, experience, and reflect, which contributes to their future professional growth. The students themselves, along with the faculty and corporate partners, evaluate their contributions and learning by proposing ideas and solutions—outputs that follow Miller's (1990) conclusion that optimal learning can only be evaluated by outputs, not inputs into the learning process. That is why the proposals and their quality are the central assessment of learning instruments in the course.

There is significant benefit of visits to the selected companies and experiencing first-hand the nature of doing business, corporate culture, local conditions, and so forth, through which students have developed a common point of reference which transcends textbook learning or sharing of individual experience, as also supported by Van Tartwijk and Driessen (2009). This experience further helps to deepen participants' future learning (Ash & Clayton, 2009) and sets a benchmark for better understanding of and a situational context for the problem analysis and solving.

This is also evidenced, although subjectively, by participating students' reflection on and evaluation of the learning and the entire course experience in the comments that follow:

> Group work and discussing of the final presentation created a true learning experience, gaining insights from each other's cultural and business backgrounds and various angles and perspectives. (Survey, 2013)

> I think a reflection of each day and summarization of the previous day added value to recall all the concepts discovered. (Survey, 2013)

These testimonies, along with the learning evidence exhibited in the final reflective papers, were used as a tool to improve future iterations of the course. The work on the course assignments itself also demonstrated deeper analytical understanding and applied reflection on the concepts while providing solutions to the challenge, not just a summary or repetition of the theories and concepts studied.

Although often not easy to assess, the do steps of the learning cycle are part of a valuable reflective and transformational learning method which builds on participants' existing knowledge. Evaluating students' responses during the program and the final feedback, we can observe the challenge points that correspond with the learning moments, such as looking at the project in the teams when opinions may differ, or while receiving feedback—when proposals may be challenged and a new course of action or unanticipated potential outcomes may emerge. The debrief sessions, frequent discussions with students and company managers, along with the survey feedback were also used to close the loop in learning outcomes and to improve future iterations of the course.

Challenges and Best Practices

A course's development, design, approval, evaluation, and logistics can all pose their own unique and institution-specific challenges. In the case introduced here, the course development and approval was not a cumbersome task due to the institutional focus on the international business experience and applied learning in the MBA programs. The (re)design of each specific iteration of the course annually—as each year the course has a different focus based on the students' interests as expressed via survey, industry focus, companies visited, current economic climate, and so on—follows a macrostructure based on the course learning objectives. The evaluation of learning in the course is based on the course learning goals corresponding to the learning objectives of the program, which focus on

> enhancing of the participants' understanding and preparation for effective business functioning and decision-making in the fast-changing global economic environment; better understanding of the emerging markets and their complexities; the participants will be exposed to China's dynamic economy and business environment through on-site learning, discussion, and consulting with local and foreign participants in that environment. (Direct quote from the course syllabus)

The main focus of the assessment is on the evaluation of analytical ability, reflection, and idea generation in addressing the project challenge. To test the effectiveness of the method, the course facilitators need to create assignments that are structured on order to demonstrate, rather than to tell us, that the learners have developed a deeper understanding of the material and the problem presented and have the ability to successfully apply knowledge to hands-on analysis of the problem and new solutions (Eyler, 2000). For example, students need to demonstrate in their presentation how they understand the problem, what alternative courses of action they have considered, which course of action they propose and why, how is it going to be implemented, and what are the expected outcomes. The project owner then evaluates the proposals as to their feasibility of application in the specific context of the challenge by offering feedback.

The practical and logistical aspects of the organization of the study require quite a bit of work and attention to course assessment design. For the course and the study trip to be successful, we need to invite local faculty and corporate speakers to bring real-life challenges which are currently worked on by the management and analyzed by participating students individually and then in teams before they present their understanding of the business challenge.

Assessment of Learning Elements and Course Evaluation Practicalities

The following elements are key points in making sure we deliver on the learning objectives of the course:

- Engagement in the analysis and discussion of the challenge
  - utilization and application of material covered in the course and information acquired during company visits and interactions with the management apropos relevant solutions

  - idea-generation stage consisting of individual and team understanding and analysis of the challenge;
- Presentations
  - create an environment where teams of students can develop and design proposals they all agree on
  - presentation of proposals may pose challenges as to who presents, equipment and facilities needed, and who will answer the questions;
- Final reflective essay assignment
  - the reflective essay covers elements of the learning objectives of the course by demonstrating the content analysis, learning experience, and skill development stages;
- Study trip survey.

All elements of the course, materials, site visits, lectures, teamwork, study trip, and guest speakers are evaluated. The feedback helps with redesign for future iterations of the course.

The focus on defining precisely the learning objectives, the feedback and reflection stages, and assessment of the learning goals helps to determine the value that hands-on activities offer the participants. To maintain awareness of any potential challenges that students face during the visit and in addressing the project challenge, we hold daily debriefing sessions which generally have a two-fold focus. First, to set a common base of understanding and contextualizing of each day's activities. Second, to determine individual participants' and teams' enthusiasm and engagement in the challenge. Sometimes during the sessions, or in private, students express their frustration with the access to information (we rarely have sufficient information when working on current corporate challenges), project analysis progress, or a team member. The debrief time often serves as a good reflective experience for teams and the entire cohort.

Logistical Aspects

In planning to deliver a course employing the mixed methods discussed here, we must recognize that organizing the course at a distance, although in the end very rewarding, has its challenges. The challenges were different every year. Engaging guest faculty, speakers, site visits, project development requires a network. In this example, facilitators have not engaged a company organiz-

ing study trips. However, this may be an option as well. Leveraging our own and an institutional network, although more labor intensive for coordinating faculty and staff, may also strengthen the institutional network of the school. It is strongly recommended here that designing, obtaining necessary approvals, and delivering a similar course with a study trip and a current project will require advanced planning at least six months or in many cases more than a year. We should allow ample time to plan, reach out to the relevant network, prepare, and execute every element of the course and the steps in the process.

Finally, in practical terms, having a trusted partner institution at the chosen destination will make this experience both possible and rewarding. Leveraging your own and the institutional academic and professional networks abroad will allow for the development of a great learning experience. Above all, it is very practical to have someone working with the faculty, before and during the process, on logistical matters related to the course and the project, as well as travel, accommodation, and safety aspects.

Naturally, the method discussed here has its limitations too. Despite a carefully designed course and meticulously planned on-site experience, participants may get distracted by the new conditions and divert their interests elsewhere. Work on the assignments at the host location can be challenging as the conditions for collaboration may be different than those which the participants are used to in their home university or country. Work with local students and managers should be prefaced by a self-awareness, cultural and language sensitivity briefing which can significantly help the process.

Transferability and Replication

The transformational learning trajectory utilized in the course introduced here has a number of building blocks. These blocks range from knowledge gathering and demonstration, which are cognitive elements, to demonstrating how this is done, and finally to evaluating the alternatives, proposing a course of action, receiving and reflecting on feedback, and offering the final proposal. All this adds up to performing tasks that are behavioral elements, creating a continuum where skills can be developed, tested, and implemented. This applied learning framework also allows for the acquiring and testing of solutions in training environments beyond academia, such as corporate training and consulting.

The hands-on method of learning, in addition to at the business school, in both undergraduate and graduate programs, also has practical applications in corporate settings. In fact, with successive iterations of the course, it was opened up to the executive MBA program and later also to the alumni of the school who often had senior leadership positions in their companies. This is an additional example of the relevance and suitability of this method of learning in the international business field.

The increasing popularity of the adaptation of the applied methods of learning in international business is testament to its effectiveness. More importantly, in the eyes of the hiring managers candidates with hands-on experience in solving real-life problems have an edge in securing jobs (NACE Report, 2017). Candidates who possess only theoretical knowledge are frequently viewed by hiring managers as pre-experience candidates, who do not always have a relevant or correct context for utilizing their knowledge. The experience-based, on-site course demonstrates directly a deeper enhancement of participants' understanding and preparation for effective business functioning and decision-making in the rapidly changing global economic environment.

Discussion and Conclusions

The application and evaluation of the mixed methods approach provide a useful tool for experiential learning. The steps introduced here imitate very closely, in fact as closely as possible, real-life decision-making in corporate boardrooms. In short, by addressing the challenge and following the method discussed here, students practice and develop problem-solving skills. The most surprising contribution in the course is also seemingly the simplest: the ability to reflect on a problem and feedback individually and as a team, something that seems natural and that we should all be able to do. However, the key here is the ability to be self-aware in the process, take new information on board, readjust, and develop new solutions—it turns out that this is a complex process and elements are often missed. When practiced deliberately, the use of mixed methods can be a powerful tool in our business repertoire in both academic and corporate environments. International business professionals practicing the method should allow experience to develop and its reflection in skills by consciously repeating and practicing the process in new scenarios.

This course implements a practical methodology very useful in an academic arena as well as in consulting and corporate training, by combining theoretical frameworks with the practical application of problem-solving steps. The

effectiveness of the method depends on the participants' level of commitment and engagement in the project. Participants who take longer to adjust and move between learning steps may experience something of a challenge and require additional adjustment, coaching, and reflection. While the participants who can adapt with ease between different learning steps tend to benefit and enjoy the experience the most. Here are a few statements found in the course evaluation, indicating the relevance of the method:

> If it wasn't for this trip, I would not be able to grasp life in China. Intense and diverse exposure that causes reflection from different point of views. (Survey, 2012)

> This course was fantastic for our group to get to know each other better and learn about a foreign country. There is no comparison to classroom learning. (Survey, 2013)

Furthermore, the scores of a few relevant survey questions on the scale of 1 (being the lowest) to 5 (being the highest) provide additional support:

The study trip format is an effective teaching methodology	4.75
The course added value (useful tools, concepts, and insights)	4.58
This course is relevant for a management career	4.67

The surveys also yielded comments less supportive of the course and the project. However, these comments generally were critical of limited access to the management team, not enough time for on-site interaction, limited access to the company data, and aspects related to the demanding schedule, which I along with the program manager adjusted every year to accommodate such observations.

The method of building on the existing knowledge base by analyzing, seeking and receiving feedback, reflecting, and providing implementable solutions to live business problems is a skill that will help us not only to succeed in business school but more importantly to succeed in business by learning how to solve problems for life.

What Is in It for the Participant and Business Schools?

As the popularity of study abroad programs carries on growing, having practical international business exposure continues to present advantages.[1] One such arena where the advantage of having international experience is clear is the job market (Fig. 19.3). New hires and executives alike who have interna-

[1] Short-term visits (about one to two weeks), mid-range programs (over two weeks to one month), international exchange (one semester or more), including study abroad (completing a degree).

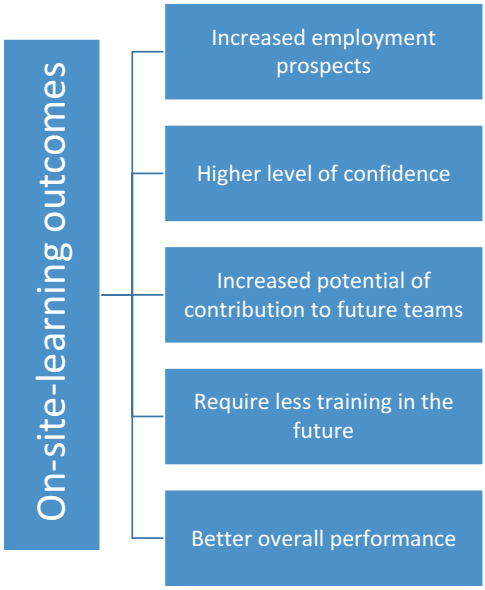

Fig. 19.3 Self-evaluation and hiring manager comments (based on the results of the course evaluation and recruiter feedback)

tional experience command higher ability to land jobs and earn higher salaries (Judge, Cable, Boudreau, & Bretz, 1995). They are also shown to have a higher level of confidence, require less training and therefore can contribute faster, which manifests itself in higher overall performance.

Besides the students themselves, the indirect beneficiaries of this process are the business schools. As higher average salaries of graduates help schools' standings in business school rankings, so everybody wins.

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Part VII

International Competitions

20

Ideas for Action (I4A): An Experiential Learning Competition that Promotes Youth Entrepreneurial Ventures to Finance and Implement the 2030 Agenda

Mahmoud Mohieldin, Maria Alejandra Gonzalez-Perez, and Djordjija Petkoski

Introduction

Since November 2014, the Office of World Bank Group Senior Vice President Mahmoud Mohieldin and the Zicklin Center for Business Ethics Research, Wharton School, University of Pennsylvania, have been working together on the Ideas for Action (I4A) Initiative, which engages young people to develop innovative ideas to finance and implement Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). The level of participation and the quality of contributions signal a great level of involvement of youth in the future of international development. I4A has seen impressive growth in just five years. In 2018, 2100 teams from 124 countries submitted final proposals for the I4A competition, tripling

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M. A. Gonzalez-Perez et al. (eds.), *The Palgrave Handbook of Learning and Teaching International Business and Management*, https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-030-20415-0_20

the number submitted in 2017. In 2019, Ideas for Action attracted over 3000 proposals from over 10,000 teams from 142 countries indicating the initiative's growing recognition with a 50% increase from 2018 in the number of proposals.

The Ideas for Action Initiative targets the younger generations (ages 18–35) as they will be the ones affected and responsible for the implementation of the global development agenda by 2030, including the SDGs and the Paris climate change agreement. I4A offers students and young professionals in the public and private sectors the opportunity to create, design, and implement creative, disruptive, and innovative ideas to implement and accelerate the goals. In other words, "The Ideas for Action (I4A) initiative is a youth competition on financing and implementing the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)" (Ideas for Action, 2018: vii).

The guiding philosophy of I4A is based on innovative partnerships and a "platform of platforms" for implementation and impact. The initiative supports and complements regional and global ones that can deliver in specific country contexts, as well as at the regional and global levels. It complements other existing global, regional and country-level initiatives operating in a similar space.

Setting the Scene

Nearly half of the world's population—2.9 billion people—is under the age of 25. Youth are the segment of the society that will most be affected by the outcomes of development programs initiated today. To truly tackle the enormous challenges the world currently faces, fresh and innovative ideas will need to come from young people and be nurtured to fruition.

The importance of cross-border investments for development is undeniable. The flows of foreign direct investment (FDI) have been one of the most important indicators to measure the globalization of the world economy. In addition, FDI has been the main foreign source for financing development (along with remittances, official development assistance, equity portfolio investment, public/private long- and short-term loans, and other sources). FDI is not only a source of financing; it also contributes to the development of capacity and strengthens institutions in developing countries.

We are, however, experiencing a long period of FDI stagnation. In fact, 10 years after the financial crisis in 2008–2009 that negatively impacted many countries, global FDI flows remain 5% below pre-crisis levels. In 2017, international FDI decreased 23%, and although there is uncertainty about 2018, the scenario for developing countries and emerging markets is expected to be

more positive. In fact, foreign investment in Latin America and the Caribbean grew 8%, and in South America 10%, which represents the first growth registered since 2011, during the boom in commodity prices (UNCTAD, 2018).

In recent years, more than 100 countries have designed and adopted industrial development strategies, yet this has not been reflected in an increase in FDI flows worldwide. This situation has implications for the governments of both developed and developing countries, and raises profound questions about the type of policies and interventions required to overcome the period of stagnation of cross-border investments.

Mukhisa Kituyi, secretary general of UNCTAD, during the World Investment Forum in October 2018 in Geneva, highlighted the importance of the private sector, and of seeking the promotion of investments oriented toward sustainable development.

The World Bank Group (2018, p. 2) has identified key enablers of the Financing for Development agenda, including the following:

- Mobilizing all sources of finance and increasing their combined impact
- Leveraging public finance
- Crowding in the private sector in financing development
- Strengthening multilateral development banks' capacities to catalyze finance
- Harnessing technology and disruptive business models
- Improving investment data
- Creating development finance partnerships and building multistakeholder platforms

Ideas for Action: The Competition

Through this annual competition open to young people from all over the world, youth offer fresh and innovative ideas on contributing to sustainable development, and can get involved in achieving the 2030 Agenda.

To participate in Ideas for Action, teams must register on the Ideas for Action online platform (ideas4action.org). Youth teams (ages 18–35) must include a minimum of two people and a maximum of six participants. There are no limitations regarding the affiliation or nationality of the members of each team. Thus, team members can belong to different universities, companies, government agencies, and live or work in different nations. It is a competition that looks for locally oriented solutions, and encourages joint work via global virtual teams. In fact, one of the goals of Ideas for Action is to foster a global dialogue on development challenges.

The proposals submitted to the Ideas for Action competition are innovative and cover a broad section of themes. For example, the 2018 winning idea, **MINO Microbubble Technology**, from Indonesia, proposed a technology that increases dissolved oxygen in water to improve fish farm yields. The ASEAN (Association of Southeast Asian Nations) region, which has a high level of production in fishery products, plays a major role in meeting global food demand. However, a key challenge to expanding fish farming is the availability of land and fresh water. MINO Microbubble Technology claims their system can increase the amount of dissolved oxygen in water up to 7 parts per million (ppm), compared to other systems which reach up to 3–4 ppm. The group says this has been proven to increase fish yields by up to 40% when compared with existing aerator technology.

The second-place proposal from 2018, **Starlight**, from Rwanda, suggested a women-led business model to improve sustainable access to energy. In sub-Saharan countries, electrification rates are low and the use of kerosene lamps is harmful to people's health and to the environment. With Starlight, the idea is to replace all kerosene lamps with solar-powered lanterns in Rwanda and neighboring countries. The proposal also aimed to empower women microentrepreneurs by creating a women-centered direct sales network to bring affordable and clean energy to their communities. They propose a system of recruiting, training, and supporting local women to become clean-energy microentrepreneurs, selling and delivering solar lights. Following a successful pilot project, the team is looking to scale the distribution and impact schools across Rwanda.

The third-place winner from 2018, **Amal**, from the United States, proposed a new legal software program and digital platform that allows women in MENA (Middle East and North Africa) countries to understand their rights in their country of residence and to complete the paperwork required to secure access to these rights. Amal offers resources to legally secure these rights through a central, automated document generation software.

The proposals that achieved runner-up status include (in alphabetical order): Al Derb (Mauritania, Qatar), Arab Youth Parliament for Water (Egypt, Lebanon, Morocco, Tunisia) and Pennepidemic (Republic of Korea, United States).

The winners were selected through a vigorous three-stage selection process evaluating the creativity, significance, feasibility, and clarity of the proposals. Reviewers included young World Bank Group staff members and Wharton students, along with technical experts and senior executives from the World Bank Group, Wharton School, CitiGroup, GTIS Partners, PepsiCo, and the G-24 Secretariat. Other competition partners included the World Bank Group Youth to Youth Community, the Young Americas Business Trust, and the Organization of American States.

I4A is not exclusively an "essay competition." It convenes several workshops, called Ideas Labs, as opportunities for interested young people to get information and share knowledge and ideas. Equally important was the creation of several I4A clubs; among the most active of these clubs are the one at Wharton School and those in Belgrade, Serbia, China, and Hong Kong special administrative region (SAR), China. These targeted activities have engaged young professionals who took part in the competition, as well as those who are simply interested in global development.

It is our hope that I4A will help the World Bank Group and other development partners recognize young people with bright ideas so they can participate more fully in solving the world's greatest challenges. Thus, by encouraging the next generation of global leaders to think beyond the existing approaches to development issues, we can help innovative solutions germinate and take root.

Incentives to Participate in the Competition

Through the Ideas for Action, participants get to compete globally through an intense and dynamic process of interaction and knowledge exchange with experienced corporate executives, academics, government officials, as well as leaders of development, financial, and multilateral organizations. The organizers of the competition (the World Bank Group and the Zicklin Center for Business Ethics Research at the Wharton School of the University of Pennsylvania) have designed a series of incentives for the finalists and the winners of the competition.

Winners of the competition receive the opportunity to:

- Present their ideas in person at an Ideas for Action event held during the Annual Meetings of the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and the World Bank Group. The winners and finalists can network with academics, government officials, and potential investors who attend the Annual Meetings.
- Publish their proposals in the World Bank Book: *Financing and Implementing the Sustainable Development Goals: Ideas for Action*. The top ten proposals are included. In 2018, the Ideas for Action book was launched at a side event at the World Bank Group–International Monetary Fund Annual Meetings in Bali, Indonesia, in October 2018, where the winning teams presented their proposals. The previous versions of this book have been used as teaching tools for undergraduate and graduate classes at the Wharton School as well as at several other schools throughout the world. In these classrooms, students had the opportunity to comment on the winning proposals and to share their ideas with the winning teams. To facilitate the use of the book, teaching notes will be made available to interested academics.

- Receive support from a project incubator at the Wharton School to accelerate the implementation of the idea.
- Benefit from additional unique capacity development and networking opportunities with experts from international development and financial organizations, including the World Bank and the International Financial Corporation, academia, and the private sector (Ideas for Action, 2018). In addition, the Zicklin Center and Knowledge@Wharton have joined forces with the World Bank Group to further strengthen the capacity development and knowledge exchange components of the Initiative.

Of course, beyond the awards, additional expected outcomes are strengthened innovation and implementation capacity and heightened knowledge exchange.

During the history of Ideas for Action, African countries[1] have had the greatest participation thanks to strong local partners, support from the Africa Region Vice Presidency of the World Bank, and promotion by and support from development ministries and agencies. In recent years, the Middle East and North Africa Region,[2] Latin America and Caribbean, European nations, and Asian countries, particularly Indonesia and India, as well as Canada and the United States have begun to more actively participate in this competition.

In Latin America, Colombia, Brazil, Argentina, Chile, Costa Rica, Ecuador, Guatemala, Mexico, Paraguay, Peru, and Venezuela are the countries with the most participants. In the 2018 competition, Colombia ranked fourth among more than 130 countries with 154 projects in the Ideas for Action competition, and the Universidad EAFIT was the university with the most proposals presented in the world.

At Universidad EAFIT in Colombia, the participation in Ideas for Action is part of the requirements of its undergraduate course "Ethics and Corporate Social Responsibility." This course is taught each semester to over 300 business management students, and eight lecturers motivate and supervise the participation of the students. Juan G. Perez is one of the lecturers of the course. Perez asks his students to analyze each of the SDGs and generate a strategy that would provide a solution to the objective with which they most closely identify. "From there we obtained very well-structured projects that we

[1] For many years I4A has been closely partnering with the African Region (AFR) Vice Presidency of the World Bank. I4A is an important building block of the AFR Youth Strategy. In 2018, over 300 proposals were submitted from the Democratic Republic of Congo. At the event in Kinshasa the top 5% of the proposals were recognized by the government.

[2] Under the leadership role of the MENA Vice President at the World Bank, as well as in partnership with local young leaders, the I4A is making an impressive expansion in several countries, in particular Egypt and Jordan.

then presented to the competition, although the most important thing is that they took great lessons, generated innovative ideas, and now focus some of their work on the fulfillment of these objectives," says Perez. Several other schools and universities, including Wharton and Hult International Business School, are incorporating I4A into their curriculum.

Ideas for Action in the Classroom

I4A is well-suited for courses, both at the undergraduate and graduate levels, which explore corporate responsibility, development, social enterprise, entrepreneurship and intrapreneurship, innovations, and related topics from a multidisciplinary and multistakeholder perspective. These are courses that review theories and practice of corporate and other key stakeholders' responsibility, and how they apply to a number of complex business, development, and policy situations in the evolving local and global business landscape. Issues are usually organized in relation to key stakeholders of business leaders in a local and global economy: the providers of capital, business partners, consumers, clients, labor, multilateral development actors, multilateral banks, foundations, donor agencies, and the broader society. These courses emphasize the interplay between the economic dimensions of these issues as well as their ethical, development, environmental, and social aspects. The objective of incorporating I4A into their coursework is to help students anticipate complex issues that they will confront in their professional careers and to develop skills to think more clearly and critically about how such issues can and should be resolved. I4A can help students to better utilize various frameworks that can be used in identifying, structuring, executing, and evaluating business-led projects with economic, development, environmental, and social goals.

Thought-provoking class sessions can be organized around the "draft/initial version" of students' I4A proposals that can help reframe issues so that the right problems are addressed. The focus is on rigorous and in-depth analysis of real-life cases identified by the students, role-playing, and decision-making exercises aimed at making business and social enterprises, small and big, a force for co-creating blended value and shared prosperity. To assure that the course concepts remain anchored in practical application, students form teams reflecting their career interests or past experiences. They can then prepare class presentations, based on the I4A projects, to be delivered at the end of the semester. The presentations should clearly outline action plans that resolve conflicting business, ethical, development, environmental, and social dilemmas in creating blended value. The work on the I4A projects can provide additional flexibility for personalized intellectual exploration, based on students' background, experience,

and career paths. By submitting their proposals to the I4A Initiative, the students become part of a global network with plenty of opportunities for additional capacity development and knowledge exchange. Professors can utilize the "Global Classroom" approach to connect their students with their peers from other universities around the world. Providing feedback to I4A projects prepared by students from other universities and countries can be a powerful vehicle for learning, helping them to appreciate the challenges of contextualization and localization, and facilitating knowledge exchange.

Organizing the I4A Project Work

At the very beginning of the semester, students are required to specify a need with strong economic, development, social, and environmental dimensions and to evaluate the potential and appropriateness for the need to be addressed through a business-based approach. Examples of business-based approaches include harnessing existing business enterprises, starting a new business or social enterprise, government policies to encourage business involvement, and applying business skills and thinking to non-business organizations. The four books *Financing Sustainable Development. Ideas for Action* 2015, 2016, and 2017 and *Financing and Implementing the Sustainable Development Goals, Ideas for Action* 2018, published by the World Bank, can be very useful resources regarding the needs participants said are worth addressing. The I4A project work can start with an executive summary that specifies a need worth addressing, a suggested method to address the need and how to measure impact. Through various in-class and homework exercises the students engage with their professors and peers to further develop their initial idea. In the process, the students are encouraged to form teams with diverse and relevant experience. The project work aims to provide additional flexibility for personalized intellectual exploration, based on the students' background, experience, needs, interests, and career paths.

Experiential Learning Cycle in Ideas for Action

- **Concrete experience**: For successful participation in Ideas 4 Action, students and young professionals from the private and public sectors need to gain familiarity with the challenges associated with target goals of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, in particular, the Sustainable Development Goals.

- **Reflective observation**: Participants should observe the local environment and institutional context and identify challenges to be overcome.
- **Abstract conceptualization**: Students and young professionals form a group including 2–6 members. Groups may include participants from different schools, institutions, companies, countries, and nationalities (Ideas for Action, 2018). Based on their understanding of the 2030 Agenda, and the identification of a local challenge, participants design an idea to overcome that challenge.
- **Active experimentation**: Students socialize their projects with their peers in their teams and classroom, as well as with other teams in different locations, and then submit their project to the Ideas 4 Action platform https://www.ideas4action.org. Students submit their project according to the following requirements:

  (1) Team name and team members; (2) Short abstract (1000 characters); (3) Explanation of problem and context (2000 characters); (4) Explanation of your solution—why is it relevant? What is new about it? By whom, by what means, and when would it be implemented? What is the expected impact? (5000 characters); (5) Are there similar examples? If so, where and how? Please elaborate. (1000 characters); (6) What are the challenges you might face and how can they be addressed? (1000 characters); (7) Each team will be allowed to submit charts/graphs/pictures via a link to a Google Data Studio or Tableau Public page. (Ideas for Action, 2018)

Evaluation of Learning Effectiveness

The organizers of the Initiative (World Bank Group and the Zicklin Center for Business Ethics Research at the Wharton School of the University of Pennsylvania) convene group of experts from academia, governments, and development professionals annually to select the best projects, and to choose the finalists and winners. Submissions are first evaluated according to how well teams demonstrate the following four attributes:

> 1. Significance: proposals should be specific enough that they can go into some level of depth, but significant enough that they impact a large number of people and/or businesses and nations. 2. Originality and creativity: teams should present a solution that is original and creative; submissions should present ideas that are either undeveloped or severely underdeveloped in international development research and literature. 3. Feasibility: teams should include a brief "roadmap to adoption" that argues for the feasibility of the solution and addresses any

obvious roadblocks; all submissions should be actionable and measurable; they should also be based in practicality rather than just theory. Teams are encouraged to tie their submissions to a particular country or region of the world. 4. Clarity: teams should present their idea in a clear and concise manner. (Ideas for Action, 2018, p. 3)

Complementary: Learning can be measured in the classroom either by adopting the criteria and attributes specified by the organizers of the competition, or considering additional dimensions such as the following:

- Socialization of the project: teams must prepare and present the project to their classmates and the instructor. Supporting material (digital and non-digital) can be used for the presentation. Team members should prepare a concise, forceful, and persuasive presentation to demonstrate that they have a grasp of the idea they are presenting and should try to convince the audience of the local relevance and transferability of this project. Students could be guided to use the elevator pitch technique in less than 40 seconds.
- Creation of alliances: teams may identify an implementing partner. This can be a community organization, a government agency, a small local business, a group of people, or an individual. The purpose of this designation is for the students to make sure their projects complement SDG 17 (partnerships for the goals); and also, locally identify experts that can be instrumental or strategic to implement the project presented to Ideas 4 Action.
- Sustainability knowledge and skills: technical knowledge of the SDGs. This implies having clarity of concepts, and additionally, being able to determine and technically measure specific development needs in a given location. In addition, be able to use established indicators (e.g. Global Reporting Initiative (GRI) indicators or in Wikirate), or create new indicators to measure sustainable development in accordance with the targets of the SDGs.

Contribution to the Existing Literature

Different studies have documented how business plan competitions effectively promote the development of entrepreneurial skills and competences (Bullough, de Luque, Abdelzaher, & Heim, 2015; Jones & Jones, 2011; Ladd, Hind, & Lawrence, 2018; Russell, Atchinson, & Brooks, 2008; Taras & Gonzalez-Perez, 2014). The development of entrepreneurial skills is, for many governments, of great importance when they decide to promote economic development, innovation, economic productivity, creativity, and entrepreneurship. In fact,

SDG 8 aims to "promote sustained, inclusive and sustainable economic growth, full and productive employment and decent work for all." Several of the SDG 8 targets and indicators have a direct connection with the creation and strengthening of jobs associated with entrepreneurial activities that contribute to achieving this critical goal.

Business plan competitions have several benefits, and among them we can highlight the following: networking opportunities, peer feedback, access to mentors, increased self-confidence, self-efficacy, enhanced ability to take risks, and positive impacts on the larger university eco-system (Boh, De-Haan, & Strom, 2016; Ladd et al., 2018; Russell et al., 2008). In addition to having elements of a business plan competition, Ideas 4 Action, has the characteristic of having a focus on financing the 2030 Agenda.

Conclusions and Recommendations

By encouraging the participation of students with supervision and mentors (i.e. faculty) in international competitions, and promoting a global dialogue around sustainable development and reaching the goals of the 2030 Agenda, business schools and universities are demonstrating civic engagement and highlighting ways university social responsibility (USR) efforts can support the SDGs. This has associated advantages. For example, in previous studies (El-Kassar, Makki, & Gonzalez-Perez, 2019) it has been found that university social responsibility (USR) initiatives have a direct effect on students identifying with the university.

Additionally, experiential learning activities such as ideas and business plan competitions, field trips, study trips, and other pedagogical activities contribute to the efficacy of instruction (Taras & Gonzalez-Perez, 2014). The perceived effectiveness of teaching in business schools is also associated with specific dimensions: class delivery, class preparation and design, instructional traits, and personal characteristics (Simendinger et al., 2017). These activities also encourage participation in a global dialogue. Through competitions like Ideas for Action, students can make an active contribution to achieving the SDGs—they learn by doing. Students also become the leaders. We need to achieve the SDGs while devising entrepreneurial solutions that can also be a source of future employment for themselves and their communities.

First-place winner: CareNX Innovations Private, Limited, India: This proposal aims to address the problem of neonatal morbidity and mortality by creating end-to-end solutions for labor monitoring, addressing the Sustainable Development Goal 3, "Good Health and Well-Being." This team has developed

two interconnected, indigenous, and portable smartphone-enabled solutions, "Fetosense" and "U-Act," for fetal monitoring and uterine contractions for early identification and intervention of preterm labor. Both devices are positioned on the abdomen and share the results to a mobile application that can be forwarded to the OB-GYN directly. The devices would be used in conjunction with an existing mobile maternal care program "CareMother," a portable diagnostic kit for antenatal tests. The team plans to partner with Indian government agencies and pharmaceutical companies to carry out the necessary steps for supply chain distribution. This proposal was selected based on the strength of its potential for scalability, its goal of improving good health, and its existing proof of concept.

Second-place winner: Gather, UK/Madagascar: This proposal aims to provide a solution to outbreaks of enteric and diarrheal diseases by directing investments of sanitation to high-risk areas, through geospatial data analysis. This team produces SFDs (Shit Flow Diagrams) and has launched its services in Madagascar, the country rated the fourth worst in the world for sanitation provision. This proposal addresses Sustainable Development Goal 6, "Clean Water and Sanitation." The team has outlined complimentary ideas such as Sanitation Data Hubs and a Global Sanitation Data Commission to help work toward this goal. The team has plans to scale up its project by developing financial and management plans with members of local governments and partnering with local organizations. This proposal was selected for its emphasis on addressing sanitation issues, and using the power of technology and data to work toward these goals.

Third-place winner: WellPower, East Africa (Kenya): This proposal is a tech-enabled, vertically integrated clean water provider and distribution network that aims to address the issue of clean water access, which affects at least 350 million people in sub-Saharan Africa, and 19 million in Kenya, the team's target country. This proposal addresses Sustainable Development Goal 6, "Clean Water and Sanitation." The team's idea includes installing and operating a solar-powered water filtration system in the communities that works along with a mobile app and SMS service that matches water customers with local delivery men who are able to provide clean water on demand to these services. Through this digital and cost-effective distribution model, this proposal can effectively allow users to get clean water conveniently at an affordable price.

Runners-up (in alphabetical order): Eco Panplas (Brazil), Eko Group H20 (Colombia), Damogo (South Korea), and Komodo Water (Indonesia).The winning proposals and the runners-up, as well as the honorable mentions—(in alphabetical order): Community Health Leaders (Ukraine), E Vigilante (Bangladesh), Footmo (Uganda), Fresh Source (Egypt), Golden Banana Syrup

(Indonesia), Good Waste (Jordan), Hilico (India), Irada (Egypt), Living Waters (India), Vinsighte (Nigeria), and WASE (Italy)—will be compiled in the book Ideas for Action 2019, which will be launched at the side event at the WBG-IMF Annual Meetings in Washington, DC, this October. I understand that the top three winning teams will also have the opportunity to present their proposals at this event, as well as other events that we are exploring.

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Part VIII

Partnerships/Joint Projects with Businesses and Community

21

Experiential Learning in International Management Consulting: Connecting International Students and Global Management Consulting Firms

Corrado Cerruti and Ernesto Tavoletti

Introduction

The critical relevance of experiential learning in higher education is well established in the literature (Kolb & Kolb, 2005; Kolb, 1981, 1984, 2014), and its historical roots lie in the American philosophy of pragmatism and progressive education (Dewey, 1897).

The professional schools of medicine, law and engineering have been at the forefront of putting experiential learning pedagogies into practice, and despite criticism for their failings (Van de Ven, 2007), their contributions to the respective professional fields are not in doubt. By contrast, the gap between management science and practice has been widening, making academic research less useful for solving practical managerial problems (Bartunek, Rynes, & Daft, 2001). In addition, the teaching in business schools seems to be of little use for managerial practice (Rubin & Dierdorff, 2009), and a prominent management scholar has even been making the convincing argument that teaching in business schools can actually be very harmful for managerial practice (Mintzberg, 2004).

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M. A. Gonzalez-Perez et al. (eds.), *The Palgrave Handbook of Learning and Teaching International Business and Management*, https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-030-20415-0_21

Within this scenario, in recent years, many business schools have developed new experiential learning-based programs (Taras & Gonzalez-Perez, 2015). So also has the University of Rome Tor Vergata by means of an international summer school on "Management Consulting in the Digital Age" that is rooted in its two-year international Master of Science in Business Administration (MSc BA). Within this program, which is entirely taught in English, there is a specialization in management consulting (from now on MC) which is the result of an innovative cooperation with several leading global management consulting firms (from now on MCFs). The summer school grew out of this MSc specialization, in cooperation with a network of European Universities, allowing the program to engage since its very beginning with students from not less than seven European universities. In 2017, 76% of the participants were foreigners and the percentage grew to 83% in 2018 (from Belgium, Denmark, Finland, Netherlands, Germany, Spain, the United Kingdom). The two-year master's degree in which the summer school is embedded is in itself an experiential learning project with very strong links to MCFs. We focus only on the summer school, as this is the place where experiential learning is at its best. The connection to the master's degree is in the sense that the summer school puts into practice what students have learned in the master's degree lectures, and they do so in a full-time immersion with consultants and foreign guests, in a relaxed setting and away from everyday routine. The students from the Master of Science in Business Administration attend the summer school at the end of the first year. This summer school is an experiential learning-based program allowing students to interact directly with leading MCFs on key topics related to digital transformation.

Digital transformation receives the highest attention in the MC industry: the word "digital" is repeated 33 times in the annual survey on the state of the industry published by the European Federation of Management Consultancies Associations in 2017 (FEACO), and "given that consulting on digital transformation appears to require both new skills and a willingness/availability to invest, it appears that in most countries, the MC recovery has been driven by large and very large consulting companies" (FEACO, 2017, p. 10). The number grows to 51 times in the 2018 report (FEACO, 2018). MCFs are very much engaged in digital transformation in terms of bringing the potential of new digital technologies into effective and profitable business applications, from pervasive computing, wireless mesh networks, and 3-D printing to machine learning, nanotechnology and robotics (Segars, 2018). The description of this international summer school, linking management and data science from an MC perspective, is the objective of this chapter.

As global MCFs play a very central role in the spreading and application of management ideas in international businesses and are aspirational employers for many business students, this experience is relevant for other leading business schools who want to develop similar educational programs in cooperation with global MCFs.

With reference to one specific case, this chapter will illustrate which environmental conditions and implementation steps drove the engagement of global MCFs in experiential learning-based programs.

The Learning Experience

The Basics

- The most suitable audience is made up of second year MSc students with a background in Management or Data Science/Engineering who are targeting a career path in MC.
- It is a one-week, intensive, case-based and practice-oriented residential program, run by the University of Rome Tor Vergata.
- The summer school takes place at Villa Mondragone, in Frascati, near Rome, and one afternoon is spent at the PwC Experience Centre in Rome.
- The optimal group size is around 30–40 participants to allow strong personal interactions.
- The fee per participant is €1500 and includes course fee, accommodation and meals. However, 100% full fee waivers have been provided by the University of Rome Tor Vergata to all the students attending the past two editions.

Learning Objectives

The learning objectives of the program include all three levels of the revised Bloom's taxonomy (Krathwohl, 2002): Level one: (1) remembering, (2) understanding; Level two: (3) applying, (4) analyzing; Level three: (5) evaluating, (6) creating.

Level one relates to the background theory and understanding of the MC industry and of digital transformation. Considering that students taking part in the summer school may have either a Management or a Data Science/Engineering background, there are preliminary online modules both on Management/MC and on IT/Digital transformation aimed at establishing a shared starting point.

The level two objectives of applying and analyzing refer to the ability to apply the management concepts and IT tools acquired in their first MSc courses and are strengthened, in the online modules, to real business cases faced by MCFs as reported by both faculty and lecturing consultants.

The level-three objectives, of evaluating and creating, refer to the ability to develop effective solutions to the MC projects, presenting them to the management consultants who are challenging their group work. In this third stage, the innovativeness of the students' proposals has to face the real life constraints that consultants highlight from their general experience as well as from their actual involvement in the design and implementation of the assigned projects.

The timetable for the summer school is as follows. The summer school starts on Sunday afternoon (from 3 to 7 pm) with an initial ice-breaking session where all the participants introduce themselves and give their motivation to take part in the summer school, as well as their view on the key issues regarding digital transformation. The summer school ends on Saturday morning with a final debriefing session where students comment on what they have learnt and say what they would love to have seen included in the program, and also, they receive feedback on how they approached the summer program and their performance (both as to learning and as to team interactions). The core of the summer school activities run from Monday to Friday, from 8:30 am to 5:30 pm with an hour-long lunch break and two coffee breaks during the day. During each day, the students are always in the classroom with the instructors (from both the academic and consulting companies) and have lunch with them. Twice during the week, they are also asked to work after dinner to prepare presentations for the following day. Once during the week, the students and instructors all go for a dinner together, where some of them are engaged in a brief cooking training in order to stimulate creativity and strengthen personal relationships.

Purpose and Description

We know that the big international MCFs are typical, aspirational employers for the best business schools' students: the online Harvard Business School careers dataset (2018) indicates "consulting" as the destination of 25% of its alumni, preceded by "financial services" 29%, and followed by "technology" 19%.

On the other side, a shortage of talents is reported in the industry (Beechler & Woodward, 2009), especially in the face of the digital transformation affecting both clients and MCFs. In the annual report of FEACO, the

Chairman highlights the ongoing "war of talents": "Digital transformation has changed the game and from the client side, there is greater need for a different set of services. MC will need to acquire new capabilities to match the challenging requests coming from its clients. In several European countries this has opened up a true 'war for talents' where the consulting companies are fighting, among themselves and with leading players in the new economy, to recruit high potential, new graduates" (FEACO, 2017). In the last report, he also highlights that "the so called 'war for talents' (…), is greater than forecasted in many European countries" (FEACO, 2018). There is also evidence "that the current period is more than just a cyclical effect and that the market has started a long period of growth driven by digital transformation" (FEACO, 2017), where "the two 'classic' pillars of the Management Consulting industry—namely Strategy and People & Change—while growing slightly in absolute terms, are facing a decline in market share" (FEACO, 2018), in favor of technology consulting and operations consulting.

In this scenario, data science applications are as important as the management tools in order to move forward digital transformation processes. However, consulting companies are finding it difficult to identify candidates who are able to master (or at least understand well) these two aspects. In order to bridge the gap between graduate students and MCFs with specific skills in digital transformation, the Master of Science in Business Administration of the University of Rome Tor Vergata developed an international summer school on "Management Consulting in the Digital Age" as an experiential learning-based program in addition to its "regular" teaching activities. Therefore, one of the key goals of this summer school is to expose management students to the potential of data science applications (whether analytics or machine learning) and data science students to the relevance of management tools, so that every student is more aware of the comprehensive set of skills required to effectively design and implement digital transformation processes.

The Master of Science in Business Administration is built upon seven different specializations, ranging from "Marketing and Sales" to "Entrepreneurship". The most popular specialization is "Management Consulting". The location in Rome favors relationships with global MCFs, as most of them have a branch in the capital, both for consulting in the public administration (14% of the European MC market according to FEACO, 2017) and private sectors. This is a point of strength in Europe as "consulting addressed to the Public Sector is the fastest growing client industry" (FEACO, 2018).

Within this program, several courses are jointly developed, together with companies and associations, hosting entrepreneurs and managers from leading MCFs and international companies. Beyond the "traditional" academic

courses, the program includes seminars and workshops carried out by managers and professionals, such as the "Supply Chain Operations Reference Model", "Accenture Public Management Consulting Lab", "Business Intelligence and Data Mining", "SAP Hands-On Basic Course" and "Business Simulations on SAP ByDesign". It has a strong focus on international markets and provides the necessary tools to understand and face the global dynamic competitive markets of today. Therefore, the program, in the context of a dynamic learning environment, helps students in the building of a strong and internationally open career path. The strength of the summer school as an experiential learning project in international MC is based on two pillars:

1. A close cooperation with global MCFs strengthened by a long and consolidated cooperation with the MCFs Associations at the Italian and European level, namely Confindustria Assoconsult and FEACO
2. A strong European university network made up of young research universities (YERUN)

As to the close cooperation with global MCFs, the starting point was the annual report on the state of the MC industry in Italy; since 2010, the University of Rome Tor Vergata has been in charge of preparing such a report and presenting it to the annual gathering of the CEOs of the association of the Italian MCFs in Rome (Assoconsult, which includes all the global MCFs as they all have a branch in Italy). That report offered an invaluable opportunity to establish a permanent relationship with the Italian branches of the global MCFs. The effectiveness of that annual report opened the way to doing the same for the European association of MCFs (FEACO). Therefore, since 2015, the University of Rome Tor Vergata has been preparing the annual report on the state of the MC industry in Europe, taking the opportunity to extend a strong relationship with global MCFs at the European level.

As to the European university network, the University of Rome Tor Vergata is part of the Young European Research Universities Network (YERUN), and has been since its foundation in 2015. YERUN is made up of 18 European universities that are included, or have been included at least for one year, in the QS ranking Top 50 under 50 years old or the ranking 100 under 50 years old. The members of this university network have a number of key values in common: (1) an orientation toward creative, innovative and outstanding scientific research; (2) a responsibility toward a global, fair, solidarity minded, multicultural and diverse society; (3) a commitment to internationalization; and (4) a focus on teaching quality and quality assurance. The network is supporting the development of research-led and practice-oriented programs in

order to strengthen the employability of its graduates. Thanks to the collaboration within the network, the summer school started with the participation of seven European universities, which increased to ten universities in its second year, with the expectation of a further increase in the third year. The international dimension further strengthens the experiential learning, simulating the variety of cultural backgrounds that characterize the MCF team working on international assignments.

Leveraging on these two strengths (deep knowledge of the MC industry and participation in a European university network), the international summer school "Management Consulting in the Digital Age" engages 30 students in in-depth interactions with consulting companies on digital transformation cases. The summer school itself lasts for one week but an online module starts in advance in order to allow students to have a shared background. The lectures are hosted in an inspirational 600-year-old Renaissance age villa, named Villa Mondragone, which used to be a Pope's summer residency and is now a property of the university. The summer school offers an invaluable opportunity to connect international students and top management in a relaxed setting and for long hours. In the 2017 and 2018 editions, the following MCFs and software vendors (in alphabetical order) lectured in the school: Accenture (the strategic impact of digital technologies), CapGemini (governance issues in digital innovation), IBM (design thinking and digital transformation), McKinsey (unlocking potential of data and analytics for value generation), PwC (digital business process management), SAP (enterprise resource planning (ERP) as an integrated platform for digital processes) and SAS (the potential of business analytics).

Moreover, as many global MCFs have international, accelerated career paths (called "fast tracks"), the Master of Science in Business Administration is leveraging on these programs, as well as on the Erasmus Programme opportunities in order to provide its graduate students the opportunity of having an international career in MC.

Experiential Learning Cycle

Four main activities revolve around the experiential learning program, and they go from theory to application and from application to theory: (1) theoretical knowledge, (2) online teaching, (3) in-class application of MC tools and (4) interactive experience. Therefore, the experiential learning cycle can be depicted as shown in Fig. 21.1.

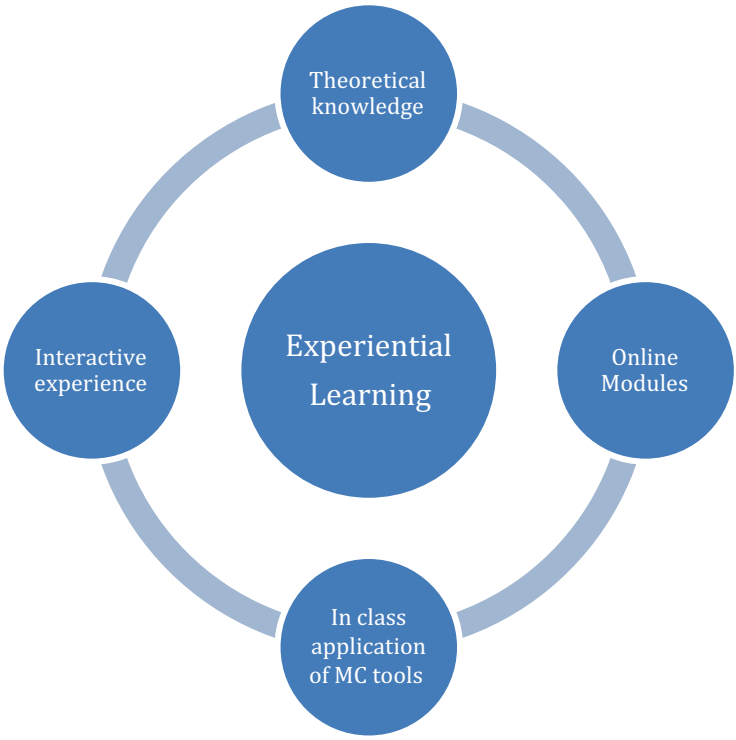

Fig. 21.1 The experiential learning cycle

The theoretical knowledge on which the summer school is based is mainly related to management consulting projects (management of a consulting project, problem diagnosis and solution development and communication and implementation) and digital business model Innovation (co-creating value with customers, crowdsourcing and open innovation, social media business models and capabilities and implementation of digital business models). This content is developed in the regular academic courses with the direct involvement of experienced management consultants.

The Master of Science in Business Administration includes the attendance of one or two practice-oriented courses (on top of or in place of an internship). These courses are taught by professionals and not by academics, with a strong focus on actual management tools and actual cases. These courses include "External audits and its background" run in cooperation with Deloitte, "Financial due diligence process" with PwC, "Public management consulting lab" with Accenture and "SAP business simulations" with SAP and Reply (one of the leading Italian SAP consulting partners).

These contents are also included in the online materials that participants to the summer school are required to go through and learn. These materials include videos, slides and interactive forums.

The in-class application of MC tools, as already mentioned, is based on business cases developed by management consultants. The solutions to these cases are developed by participants in groups and presented to the consultants, obtaining their feedback on both content and the presentation approach.

The experiential learning activity that takes place in a typical class and that connects all classes is as follows. In brief, there are two types of facilitators in the room/program: academic instructors (normally two or three) and consultants with different levels of seniority (normally three or four, changing every day). The consultants set the stage by sharing real cases they have dealt with, while the academic instructors support the working groups both as to the content development and as to the team dynamics. What connects all classes is the fact that each day students work on real cases faced by the MCF presented in that class, and they do so side by side with consultants working on a real case. Consultants benefit from the fresh and out-of-the-box point of view of students and can spot young talent. Students benefit from being allowed to work on contemporary and real business cases that the consultants face.

The main difference with the business cases that are available in academic depositories is that the business cases adopted in the summer school are not designed for teaching. The cases discussed in class by the participants are real cases on which the consulting companies have been working: the client name, as well as some figures of the business cases cannot be disclosed for confidentiality reasons, but the situations are real and the participants get real experience. These characteristics make the discussion more lively and close to a true working experience. The cases range from a larger M&A in the utilities/telecom industry to the digital customer journey in the global exhibition and events industry or digital solutions for a National Health System. Moreover, the discussion is not facilitated by an academic but by those same consultants that are working on the case in their respective MCFs, with academic instructors supporting the working groups.

An additional valuable interactive experience has been made possible thanks to the support of the PwC Experience Centre in Rome. This center is a flexible space to support all the digital activities organized for (and with) the clients: 3-D printing new prototypes; observing clients experiencing a new prototype through a unidirectional and mirrored dividing wall; allowing visitors and consultants to use unallocated workstations to work everywhere, supported by adaptable tools, choosing to stay in the work area or in the cafeteria

or in the auditorium; hybrid areas with writable walls like the Sandbox, a zone equipped with a device wall, formed by a monitor suitable for many devices (tablet, smartphone) and modular tables to change the space based on different needs. Students going from classes to the PwC Experience Centre have the opportunity to put into practice their theoretical knowledge.

The experiential learning does not end with the summer school but it normally moves forward with an internship in a global MCF while in education.

Regarding the number of students taking an internship in a global MCF, we are not tracking this indicator specifically but we know that the "Management Consulting" track/specialization is the most popular among our students (reaching almost 40% of the total number of the enrolled students), and we expect that around 50% of our MSc BA students obtain an internship with a consulting company. While we cannot track this indicator for the summer school, as most of the students are from foreign universities, we expect a similar or higher number among the students attending the summer school.

Most of the time, the internship leads to a focused master's thesis in this area, leveraging on the internship experience. The master's thesis implies a time of reflection on both the internship experience and the learned theory, and it leads to new theory development. In 2018, several global MCFs have been offering internships that led to a master's thesis, including Accenture, EY, PwC and KPMG. Most of these theses focus on the management implications of the digital transformation seen from an MC perspective. Some of the most popular topics include artificial intelligence and machine learning, blockchain technology, business intelligence, process mining, implementing SAP, digital transformation in China and in emerging markets, big data, industry 4.0 and digital processes for the sharing economy.

Skills and Competencies

Master's students with any background can apply to the summer school but most of the selected participants attend a master's program in Business Administration/Management or Data Science/Engineering.

The soft skills and digital competencies developed during the summer program are the typical ones required for a junior consultant in a global MCF working on digital transformation projects. These skills and competencies are in high demand in the market due to the significant growth of the MC industry: the FEACO (2018) annual report shows that in 2017, the European MC industry has grown substantially in terms of turnover (+7.8%) and employment (+5.2%). In the past three years, European MC turnover has been grow-

ing on average 7.7% per year, while the European GDP has grown 2.4% per year, and MC has been performing constantly better than the overall European economy since 2012.

While data are fragmented, it appears that employment growth is concentrated mainly in the large and very large consulting companies, that is, those with more than 50 employees, and this reassures the strategic intent of the program to strengthen cooperation mainly with global MCFs.

In preparation for the summer school, we conducted a number of interviews with consultants cooperating with the Italian Management Consulting Association, and we recorded and transcribed them. One of them reports that there is a desperate need for skills and competencies in order to move the digital transformation forward: "Since technology is changing more and more rapidly and we are talking about exponential technologies, it's still almost impossible to keep up with skills and competencies internally just by hiring, by growing organically. The next method is that there is much more interest in acquisitions than in the past" (PwC, senior consultant, male). The concern is not specific to any MCF in particular but is widespread throughout the industry: "we start seeing the HR department coming to us with key issues on people, competencies, and organization changes that are required to support the digital transformation" (KPMG, senior consultant); "we see as a key challenge, also for the coming years, is the setting up of new skills and the attraction of new talent; that is because the digital transformation requires a combination of skills that comes from the technology, the business, and the design background" (Deloitte, senior consultant, male). The shortage of competencies and skills reported in our interviews extends to the whole industry according to the words of the FEACO President: "Consulting industry is facing an even more competitive and selective market scenario, with higher requirements both with regard to competencies and to capital than there used to be years ago" (FEACO, 2018); and it is especially relevant for global MCFs: "Moreover, given that consulting on digital transformation appears to require both new skills and a willingness/availability to invest, it appears that in most countries, the MC recovery has been driven by large and very consulting companies" (FEACO, 2018).

In this scenario of shortages of talent in the digital transformation, the summer school is a valuable tool for both the University of Rome Tor Vergata and the local branches of global MCFs in order to attract and train talented foreign students. The summer school is just one-week long but through word of mouth of students and instructors it is a window to attract talented students to the regular master's degree of the university and young consultants to the local branches of global MCFs. This explains why the university is covering all the costs of the school and providing a unique and exclusive venue, scholarships and full fee waivers to all attending students.

Optimal Fit

The spirit of the summer school "Management Consulting in the Digital Age" is well represented by its location. It takes place in Villa Mondragone, a Renaissance age villa, in the hills of Frascati, where international students and consultants can spend long hours together, working on MC digital transformation projects. In addition to the University of Rome Tor Vergata, the Frascati hills host an important branch of the European Space Agency (ESA) (ESRIN, the ESA Centre for Earth Observation), the Italian Space Agency (ASI), the Italian Agency for Alternative Energies (ENEA), the Italian National Council of Research (CNR), the National Institute for Astrophysics (INAF), the National Institute for Nuclear Physics (INFN), the Italian Institute for Geophysics and Volcanology (INGV), the Rome Astronomical Observatory (OAR), and many private research labs, generating the second highest concentration of researchers in Italy, in a unique historical landscape overlooking the city of Rome.

The optimal fit of the program is around 30–40 students as learners and around 6–8 MC companies as program partners. All the students receive scholarships in order to attend the school, and they are from all over Europe, as are the consultants.

The goal is to reproduce the same spirit of collaboration and engagement that takes place in the summer school throughout the academic year, with a constant dialog between students, MCFs consultants and scholars. In fact, the overall specialization in Management Consulting that is part of the MSc in Business Administration does not limit itself to offer students internships and job opportunities in global MCFs, with occasional invitations to consultants for seminars. The specificity of this specialization is that it has been thought about and developed in cooperation with the Italian Association of Management Consulting Companies as well as with many local branches of global MCFs. Moreover the contents of this program are continuously renewed by the same teaching staff that is in charge of this degree, who are also in charge of the yearly reports of the Italian (Assoconsult) as well as the European Management Consulting Associations (FEACO), with all the data, interviews and analysis that these reports involve. The students do not help prepare either the national or the European annual report on the state of the MC industry, but they benefit from the uniquely updated and deep insight of their instructors on this industry.

In 2018, the team working on the European annual report was composed of three academics from the University of Rome Tor Vergata and two senior management consultants (FEACO, 2018); the team working for the national

annual report was composed of four academics from the University of Rome Tor Vergata and one senior management consultant (Assoconsult, 2018).

With respect to the summer school—as well as with respect to the practice-oriented courses in the master's degree—management consultants are involved in the selection of the topics, in the case development, as well as in presenting their cases and engaging with students, but all the programs are run by the university. There is not an exact correspondence between the management consultants involved in the master's degree and in the summer school but some of them are the same. Over the years, the university has developed strong relationships with several consulting companies, and in many of them it has several contact points that are rotating in this initiative. In the summer school as well in the master's degree practice-oriented courses, consultants often come together with an HR representative as they often use these events to carry out recruitment activities, or at least, to try and identify potential talent to be contacted at a later stage.

Challenges

The first challenge of the program is attracting international talent from both emerging markets and developed economies. While the summer school has managed to attract talented students from many YERUN universities, the Italian MC industry is not perceived as being at the forefront of the digital transformation, and therefore, it is easier to engage international talent in a short initiative than in a degree program. "In Italy, we are not perceived to be a strong digital player, because historically we came from more a compliance, regulatory, transformation or more, let's say, traditional transformation. There is a procession gap in the Italian market specifically that we have to cover. This has almost another implication, which is the difficulty to attract talent, specifically multidisciplinary talent that is required to support the digital transformation process" (KPMG, senior consultant, male).

The second challenge is nurturing a real transdisciplinary experiential learning-based setting for digital transformation. The digital transformation projects require an interdisciplinary approach that is partly reflected in the participant's selection criteria and partly enhanced during the course (especially with regard to the complementarity between management and data science). "At the end of the day, digital is all about interacting with machines. Design skills and capabilities, and the integration with other disciplines like ethnography, just to give you an example, or sociology or design, or even aesthetics, are equally important. That's why for instance, we have invested in the experience centre we have,

where we're home […] like universities, or labs, and startups and providers, so the way you manage those components, those articles, and the ecosystem as a whole is extremely important of course. This is called open innovation and we believe that digital has to go hand in hand with open innovation" (PwC, senior consultant, male).

The third challenge is making the summer school financially sustainable. The fee per participant is €1500, which includes course fee, accommodation and meals. The cost for the university is higher than that if we add the time invested by academics and staff, and hotel accommodation and meals for visiting consultants (the venue of Villa Mondragone is free of charge, as it is a property of the University of Rome Tor Vergata). All the students in the previous two editions of the summer school received a scholarship in the form of a 100% fee waiver, either directly offered by the university or by a private foundation that supports initiatives in favor of the University of Rome Tor Vergata students. In addition, many students have received a full/partial reimbursement of traveling expenses. For the future sustainability of the initiative, the university is applying for a dedicated Erasmus funding.

In the previous two editions, business partners contributed in kind by preparing the cases and presenting them to students free, but the university is considering engaging them also with financial contributions once the summer school will have proven to be an effective channel for recruitment as well as a flagship initiative.

Evaluation of Learning Effectiveness

The summer school program aims to develop participants to perform as effective management consultants in digital transformation projects. The learning objectives are measured in terms of the number of students who secured a job position in a global MCF after graduation. The increasing trend in the number of students securing a job in global MCFs is a measure of success, though it is dependent on other environmental factors. In fact, job market results, whenever they are available, are much more effective than typical training evaluation models (Alliger & Janak, 1989) in order to evaluate graduate education. The program is also an answer to the increase in students' demand for practice-oriented education and synergies with real firms. The data of the first two editions have not been collected in a structured way as participants are coming from different universities and attending different programs; however, scattered evidence highlights that several participants received internship proposals from the MCFs engaging with the summer school.

Students' feedback and qualitative evidence can be integrated with quantitative data in order to assess experiential learning effectiveness. The summer school, to which the best students are invited, is a part of the program where the learning experience is at its best and the comments from students are an additional indication of the learning effectiveness. Here is a typical example: "Every activity that we were presented with, or task that we were supposed to complete, was a hands-on opportunity to learn. It was very exciting to work on a "project" that was supposed to be delivered in accordance with specific requirements and meeting the defined deadline, making the experience more immersive and real. In addition to this, I think that all of us participants realized that the whole experience aimed to give us an internal perspective on what consultants face in their work, being assigned to more complex projects as days passed, but with less and less time to work on them. Then, once the time was up and the project was—supposedly—finished, the learning was taken even higher thanks to the opportunity of presenting the work to consultants and receive an immediate, tailored feedback, which was even more value-adding" (Italian, female). A questionnaire has been sent to all the students attending the summer school, and it has come as a surprise that a recurring theme is students reporting that informal interactions with consultants during meals or coffee breaks, more than in lectures or project drafting, were the real highlights of their experience.

Transferability/Replication

We believe that the described educational program can be inspiring and serve as a reference for other leading business schools in the world who want to develop a short practice-oriented program.

The main start-up conditions for establishing this program are being engaged with and gaining the trust of MCFs. In the case of Tor Vergata, that was made possible by the consulting service that the university provides to the Italian (Assoconsult) and European association (FEACO) of MCFs through the annual report on the state of the industry. The report provides interviews with top management in MCFs, quantitative analysis and a final report presented at the annual meeting gathering. That gives the university the network and the credibility to involve MCFs in both the teaching program and the internship. This approach has been the one adopted by the University of Rome Tor Vergata in order to approach global MCFs but other universities might have different options and opportunities in order to engage MCFs, such as alumni or academic research projects or joint training programs they already have with MCFs. Therefore, the link to national (or continental/

regional) associations is not a sine qua non, and a business school well connected to MCFs could clearly do the same as an alternative. The link to associations was the Tor Vergata's way.

The transferability of knowledge is in both directions: (a) from the university to the MCFs, through students, insights from the annual report, master's and PhD theses on specific MC topics and developing new theoretical ideas; and (b) from MCFs to the university, through consultants teaching in class, providing advice to the program design, offering opportunities for internship and case studies in the field.

The main limitation is that the program is relevant for leading business schools only, able to establish links with global MCFs. It requires physical closeness to local branches of global MCFs in order to have a constant exchange of students and consultants and strong research ties. The candidates for hosting a similar program in Europe are the typical locations of global MCFs, which are capital cities or "economic capitals". The location of the University Rome Tor Vergata in the Italian capital city is a point of strength because digital consulting addressed to the public sector is the fastest growing segment of MC (FEACO, 2018), but as there are many leading business schools in Rome and just one summer school in digital MC, a favorable location is just one ingredient. The situation is probably different for the USA and other nations with a high labor mobility, but it is a fact that physical proximity favors exchanges and partnerships. Therefore, the program is not a valuable option for universities located in a peripheral area that is not attractive for global MCFs.

In contrast, we do not consider as a limitation the fact that this contribution deals with a single industry and cannot be applied in other industries because, for business and management studies, management consulting is not just "an industry" among others. MC is "the industry" that transfers management ideas into business and management practice. Therefore, our perspective is not narrow but targeted on the industry we should reflect upon in the context of experiential learning, and in order to make management studies as relevant for practice as medicine, engineering or law.

The global MC industry is also especially relevant because it can make a difference for some of the most talented students we have in our business schools: "the employment generated by this industry is, in roughly 90% of the cases, characterised by professionals, mainly new graduates from universities, who find a qualified path into the labour market" (FEACO, 2018). In fact, it is well known that the early experience in global MCFs, thanks to the opportunities and networks they provide, can open the way to fast managerial careers for some of our best students.

Therefore, the starting point for establishing a similar program could be an "engaged scholarship" (Van de Ven, 2007) in the university community who is able and willing to cooperate with the national association of MCFs, considering that these associations are normally eager to establish contact with universities in order to support the recruitment activities of its associate partners. The shortage of competencies and skills in MCFs for the digital transformation, which we documented in this chapter, opens opportunities for many business schools around the world. The specific peculiar local needs of the MC industry and the strengths of the local business school may form the basis upon which to establish an experiential learning-based MC program in order to match the two sides. It is likely that a relevant issue will be related to the local adaptation of global MCFs and cross-cultural issues.

Contributions/Implications

This chapter contributes to pedagogy, by reporting an experiential learning-based summer school that links graduate education with MC practice and MCFs. The pedagogical effectiveness can be evaluated in terms of both employment and careers of students in MCFs.

It also offers an example to business schools which are in the process of establishing a program to suit both the needs of MCFs and the aspirations of students who dream about having a career in a global MCF.

The chapter also contributes to theory, challenging the trade-off between higher education excellence and relevance for local economic development. The traditional assumption is, in fact, that global higher education relevance is incompatible with paying attention to local needs, because applying students, research partners, research funds and students' employers should be global. In that frame, disregarding local economic needs would be a sine qua non for higher education institutions who want to invest their resources in pursuing global excellence. While the dilemma is probably absent for a few global, higher education institutions, it is especially critical for European ones due to both the presence of a multilevel economic and institutional governance (European, national, regional, provincial, municipal) and the relatively low mobility of labor at the European level. By adding a European best practice case in MC education, where local economic relevance for local branches of global MCFs is combined with a cutting-edge international summer school, this chapter contributes to the literature that suggests higher education excellence and local economic development can go hand in hand (Rip, 2002).

The chapter also contributes to the debate on the role of business schools in the digital transformation. The reported experience suggests that higher education institutions can establish successful partnerships with global MCFs in order to develop those young talents with interdisciplinary competences that neither MCFs nor universities can forge by themselves alone: "you come from financial auditing, there I assume, that most of the EY employees, consultants, were mainly graduates from the school of economics, or management, and nowadays, what you're saying is to try to get a more different background for your newly graduated students" (EY, senior consultant, male). Global MCFs experience serious challenges in attracting the talents they need for the digital transformation: "Let's make a little bit of a joke. You're an engineer, you wear shorts every day, you wear Hemi shoes, and you are used to perceiving the Big Four as the guy wearing shoes every day, wearing a tie, talking just about finance and all this … it's very very hard to have an argument convincing those guys that we are more […] we have shears censors, or with hammers or whatever. But we have created those paths to make our career more suitable being to those people. Because those are talents that we need in the market" (EY, senior consultant, male). Focused intensive programs can complement master's degrees in business administration and be effective bridges between international students with all sorts of backgrounds (IT, engineering and hard sciences at one extreme and humanities at the other) and global MCFs, at a time when they are in desperate need of multifaceted talents to navigate the digital transformation.

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22

Bringing Experiential Learning into the Classroom: 'Fireside Talks'

Hinrich Voss and Giles Blackburne

Introduction

Several years ago, on a one-year MSc International Business programme at Leeds University Business School, we trialled interactions with guest presenters from industry on an elective module called 'The Economy of China'. The module leader Hinrich Voss, with the help of Giles Blackburne (at the time working at China-Britain Business Council), invited several company executives with international business experience to sit on a panel, share their views on China, and engage in a discussion with students. We found, however, that this format, along with similar kinds of guest lectures, suffers from three problems. Firstly, students tend to attend such interactions with little to no preparation. Secondly, it is usually not possible to inform students about detailed content before the session or to make any presentation slides available in advance. Thirdly, the relevance of the talk to the students' assessment is not clear. As a result, students tend to economise their time and focus on other assessment-related tasks. The interaction between the students and visitor ends up being ad hoc and unstructured. As a consequence, whilst the students enjoy the change of pace and perspective offered by an external speaker, they are not able to take full advantage of the opportunity. And for the company executives, the visit bears little value because of the limited and low-level

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M. A. Gonzalez-Perez et al. (eds.), *The Palgrave Handbook of Learning and Teaching International Business and Management*, https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-030-20415-0_22

interactions with the students. These challenges are symptoms of the tensions Clinebell and Clinebell (2008) identified business schools as having to address in order to provide meaningful and relevant education. In response to these shortcomings, Hinrich Voss developed 'Fireside Talks' with the main objective of creating a rich, interactive learning environment, in which students could not only learn and practice their subject, but also fully capitalise on the opportunity to engage with a business leader (Kolb & Kolb, 2005, 2009).

Fireside Talks

This chapter presents a highly resource-effective experiential learning activity called 'Fireside Talks'. As a student-business co-curriculum interaction, Fireside Talks can expose students to real-life business challenges and also allow them to experience face-to-face meetings with senior managers.

Businesses are first identified by the module leader and invited to share a current challenge they are facing in doing business with one or more overseas markets. Such challenges have included, for example, 'given the rising labour costs, how long can I still manufacture in China?' The challenge along with a brief about the business and its industry is posted in the course's virtual learning environment. Working in groups, business school students are given up to two weeks to conduct research into the company, its industry, and the matter at hand, in order to find a solution to the challenge. They must also prepare and host a 90-minute meeting with a senior manager from the company, the Fireside Talk, to take place either at the Business School or at the premises of the business. One preparation and one practice session are scheduled into the students' timetable for these purposes. During the preparation sessions, the challenge is discussed and evaluated together with the students, along with access to data and the scope to apply theories and concepts from the module. Students are then given tasks that address particular aspects of the challenge. One group of students, for example, may collect statistics on labour costs, while another is becoming familiar with the industry. The students are given two weeks to collect materials and present them internally for feedback. The formative feedback from the lecturer focusses on the materials collected; on their reliability and relevance; on how well they are related to and supported by theories; and on how the materials presented can make a difference to the business. In terms of theory, the students are free to use the theories taught in the programme and are not restricted to theories from this module.

The Fireside Talk is then delivered in the form of a student-hosted roundtable at which the students present their research and possible solutions and

discuss these with the senior manager in attendance (the module leader observes from the side and takes a passive role). The senior manager is briefed to engage with the students as if they were consultants and to ask follow-up questions and give feedback after the presentation. This format allows all participants to critically reflect on the challenge set by the business and on the material the students have collected, interpreted, and applied to the business case (Gray, 2007). At the same time, the usage of the term 'Fireside Talk' is intentional, to induce an atmosphere of easy flowing conversation around a topic of mutual interest. Indeed, a digital image of a fire in a hearth, as a backdrop for the Talk, reinforces the general idea. In line with such an environment, students are instructed not to present with the support of visuals, for example, PowerPoint, but rather to communicate their arguments and recommendations verbally. They are, however, permitted to share limited and relevant hard copy handouts.

The Fireside Talks take place in addition to the lecture plus seminar structure of typical modules at Leeds University Business School. Designated on the timetable as 'Practicals', the Talks are scheduled to take place at an unusual timeslot for students, from 18:00 to 20:00, in order to accommodate the availability of the business community. Presently, the Talks are integrated into an optional MSc International Business module that covers developments in the Chinese and Indian economies (Fig. 22.1).

11-week module: China and India in the Global Context				
Pre-sessional	Recruitment of businesses for the Fireside Talks and agreement on the particular challenge to be discussed.			
Week 1	Lecture			
Week 2	Lecture	Seminar		
Week 3	Lecture	Seminar		
Week 4	Lecture	Seminar	Practical: Fireside Talk Briefing	
Week 5	Lecture	Seminar		
Week 6	Lecture	Fireside Talk Practice Session	Practical: Fireside Talk Delivery	
Week 7	Lecture	Seminar		
Week 8	Lecture	Seminar		
Week 9	Lecture	Seminar		
Week 10	Lecture	Seminar		
Week 11	Lecture	Seminar		

Fig. 22.1 Indicative timeline for Fireside Talks

Outside the formal briefing and practice sessions, student groups are encouraged to meet informally, in their own time, in order to appoint presenters and prepare their contributions. The seminar slot before the delivery doubles as a practice session to ensure coherency and avoid overlap between groups.

Motivation

As mentioned above, the main motivation for introducing this innovation is that the outcomes of other commonly used forms of student-business interaction, such as business panels and guest lectures, have not been found to be very satisfactory for students or businesses. When relying on such methods, the actual engagement between the student and business is often somewhat one-way and superficial. Furthermore, the businesses themselves do not gain any practical benefit from their interaction in terms of, for example, student insight and knowledge exchange. As a result, businesses can feel reluctant to support the module on an ongoing basis and to return the following year. This risks threatening those links to industry that study programmes must demonstrate in order to increase the employability of their graduates and to fulfil accreditation requirements.

With Fireside Talks, a business can benefit from firm-, industry-, or country-focussed research that is directly related to its own circumstances and information requirements. The student cohort on this module typically has a good representation of Chinese and Indian students who have access to resources in their native language that are inaccessible to most local businesses. They can therefore interpret political and business developments from an emic perspective (Buckley & Chapman, 1997). During the session, the business can also challenge the students' recommendations, provide constructive feedback, and request clarifications. Indeed, the business can request that further research be conducted and for findings and final recommendations to be shared at a later date. This kind of 'win-win' format has so far been highly appreciated by both students and businesses.

As students become ever more concerned with employability prospects within an increasingly competitive job market, employers also regard evidence of real-world experience and problem-solving skills as being amongst the key criteria for selection. Teaching methods that are able to imbue students with practical insights and develop their ability to understand the challenges faced by businesses are therefore seen as valuable by both students and employers.

Learning Objectives

Viewed through the lens of Bloom's taxonomy of educational objectives (1979), by participating in the Fireside Talks, students will be able to recall contextual data and theoretical knowledge gained from classroom lectures and recognise their relevance for understanding the reality faced by a firm engaged in international business. They will then be able to apply this knowledge to a problem or challenge faced by the firm, and in doing so, determine which elements of classroom knowledge are most useful and relevant, supplementing, where required, with research of their own. Finally, they will prepare their 'findings' and use their judgement to make recommendations to the company.

Overall, the Fireside Talk exercise strengthens the students' understanding of—and ability to—apply theory. This is reinforced by an opportunity to interact directly with business leaders (often for the very first time for the students). Such an experience raises the commercial awareness and confidence of students and tests their ability to engage in critical thinking.

Experiential Learning Cycle

The engagement offered in the Fireside Talks covers the breadth of the experiential learning cycle (Cassidy, 2004; Kolb, 1984). It does so first by facilitating an opportunity for students to test out what they have learned in the classroom ('active experimentation'), and then, by experiencing a real-life interaction with a company in which they can be an active participant ('concrete experience'). Students can enjoy the benefit of constructive feedback and discussion with a company executive ('reflective observation'), and finally, they can learn from an overall interaction which is likely to influence their future behaviour and perspectives ('abstract conceptualisation'). In this sense, Fireside Talks can be regarded as an effective teaching tool for the purpose of 'learning by doing'. The experience is capped, in the current iteration of how the Fireside Talks are run at Leeds, by the students having to write a reflective essay about the Fireside Talk as part of an assessed coursework essay (see Fig. 22.2). This ties the students' engagement with the Talks directly to their performance on the module.

Your reflective note will be marked using the following criteria

1. Have you shown an understanding about the specific problem/task presented by this firm or organization?
2. Have you situated this problem/task within the context of opportunities and challenges arising from developments in China and India?
3. To what extent have you shown that you have applied content from this module and from your own research to this practical case?
4. Have you clearly conveyed the outcome or recommendations to the firm or organization of this Fireside Talk?
5. What role did you play in this Fireside Talk and how did you benefit from taking part?

Fig. 22.2 Guidelines for Fireside Talk reflective essay

Feedback from Students

Now in their sixth year, Fireside Talks continue to receive exceptionally positive feedback from students at the end of semester module evaluation surveys. The student feedback we have received supports the positive findings by Paul and Mukhopadhyay (2005) and Chavan (2011) on experiential learning in international business education. One short-term benefit is the external stimulus to engage with course material, through a real, tangible case study. One student expressed:

> The Fireside is good for us to practice [our knowledge about China and theories learned across the programme] and have a chance to communicate with business people.

Furthermore, because we invite managers and decision-makers who have lived in China or India (or who are regular visitors to these markets) to participate in the Fireside Talks, the Talks are viewed as being 'fresh' and 'better than regular case-based discussions'—this is to say paper-based case studies (see also McCarthy & McCarthy, 2006). The close encounter with experienced managers is regarded as being 'really interesting and inspiring' for the students. As one student commented: "Through having meetings and discussions with employees from companies, we learned a lot—it's a significant experience."

Students have also acknowledged that the Fireside Talks go beyond the immediate goal of satisfying module assessment requirements. One student commented that "the Fireside Talks were really helpful. I feel it is useful for developing my practical skills in the future." This is because "it helped me gain industry exposure while learning a lot about the business techniques used in China" and "how companies approach the Chinese market in real life". Moreover, understanding how managers collect and interpret similar data to those collected by the students can give the students an insight into how managers make sense of complex and evolving environments in the real world. This is further enhanced through feedback during the student manager interactions. A student commented, "I like the feedback which came from the company's manager during the Fireside Talk." According to Hattie and Timperley (2007), feedback is effective when it is 'clear, purposeful, meaningful, and compatible with students' prior knowledge' (p. 104). We view such feedback from the business managers as being highly valued by the students, not least because it is difficult for the module leader to replicate it with authenticity.

Students hosting Fireside Talks and, later, alumni also highlighted the soft skills, confidence, and sense of empowerment they received by participating in the Talks. Students were typically interacting for the very first time with 'real' managers and business owners and were therefore uncertain about how to engage with them and what to expect. Frank and constructive comments directed at the students' work by the managers can give students the confidence that they are able communicate with superiors, raise their views, and defend their perspectives using valid underlying data.

The company and manager selection is also very important for addressing any misapprehension from students, such as "the experience gained (from the Talks) is quite limited as it is a very artificial environment". A meeting between students and managers beside a digital fireside video is indeed an artificial environment. The real value, however, is the interactions between these two groups and the knowledge the students can gain from discussing their views with managers. Managers are briefed to treat the students like internal staff or consultants—and can therefore be very quick to identify holes in their arguments or destroy their carefully researched and crafted arguments! There is nothing artificial about this facet of the Fireside Talk, and this is an aspect that should be emphasised to students.

For completeness, we also need to report that the businesses themselves are finding the Fireside Talks useful—for both airing ideas with students and also for identifying potential interns and employees. Despite having less firm- or industry-specific insight, students often demonstrate that they can offer an

independent, objective perspective to an issue raised by the company—especially foreign students who are familiar with the target markets. To our knowledge, four students have been invited to company placements, of which one has been employed. Finally, the Business School itself also appreciates the Talks because they support its corporate engagement and accreditation agendas.

Challenges and Best Practices

Corporate participants—Identifying and securing business involvement can be challenging and time-consuming. The business needs to possess expertise suitable for the module, have the right senior manager available (not only in terms of expertise but also in terms of his or her willingness or capability to engage with students) and also have a task that students can feasibly work on. To date, businesses have been mainly sourced through the personal relationships of the module leaders established while working in an industry or running a 'China business club'. In order to be sustainable, however, the recruitment of businesses needs to go beyond relying on personal relationships alone.

We have explored this challenge and believe we can rely upon four alternative strategies to identify businesses:

1. Alumni are an important bridge into industry and have an interest to support their alma mater or return to it. While in the first instance, this often means alumni from our International Business programmes (where we have existing relationships), this opportunity is by no means restricted to these. Both the Business School and the University as a whole have dedicated alumni offices that can support the identification of relevant alumni and reach out to them. Alumni offices can be very receptive to finding contributors for educational activities as this provides them a tangible offer with which to approach alumni and to manage relationships. An advantage of identifying speakers through the University alumni office is that this goes beyond mere Business School alumni and can identify alumni from any degree working in relevant positions and businesses.
2. The International Business division at Leeds University Business School has established its own advisory board in order to advance its pedagogy and research agenda. Board members range from entrepreneurs and micro multinational enterprises (MNEs) to large MNEs and represent the kind of businesses that could be invited to a Fireside Talk. Indeed, three of the board members participated in the Talks before being invited to become

advisors to the division. Other board members have expressed a strong interest in contributing to teaching activities, as well as in reaching out to their own networks to recommend suitable businesses.

3. Government bodies with an agenda to foster international trade and investments can be allies for Fireside Talks. Their mission is to strengthen the international business activities of the national or local economy, and they are therefore seeking ways to engage with the business community and support it. An important consideration is also their extensive business networks. Government bodies that are of interest include local actors like the city council, the local enterprise partnership, and inward investment agencies. At a national level, the Department for International Trade, which has local representations, is the main actor. Relationships to these bodies typically exist at the business school and/or university level.
4. Advanced professional service providers such as law firms, accountancies, or consultancies could sponsor the Fireside Talks. The service provider could identify and invite clients to the Fireside Talk as part of its client engagement strategy. In return, it would gain access to University research capabilities and expertise. This model could also involve an element of consultancy training by the service provider for the students.

Confidentiality—Businesses are asked to share a challenge which they are currently facing. These challenges typically relate to a strategic decision concerned with business expansion or development. As such, the challenge itself, as well as the subsequent discussion during the Fireside Talks, could give rise to confidentiality concerns (though to date no business has raised such concerns). We have tried to avoid confidentiality becoming an issue by working with the businesses to craft a challenge that is specific, yet generic enough to not reveal any sensitive information. Furthermore, the students only receive the firm's name and industry sector, as well as the particular challenge. No further internal information is shared with them.

In case any concerns about confidentiality persist, a non-disclosure agreement (NDA) between the business, the students, and the professor could be signed. The legal department of any university would have a template NDA that could be adapted to the Fireside Talks. If an NDA is deemed necessary, then it would have to be agreed and shared very early with the businesses and the students would also have to be informed about the meaning and consequences of the NDA.

Evaluation—Evaluation of the engagement with the business through formal assessment can potentially give rise to problems. Businesses participate in the Fireside Talks voluntarily and we try to organise the session at the most

suitable times for the businesses. Nevertheless, managers may need to cancel at short notice should an urgent matter arise. Contingency plans are therefore needed to permit formal assessment to still take place.

The least risky approach would be to evaluate students through the end of semester examination and explicitly state that students may use the Fireside Talk as an exemplary material to substantiate their answers. However, in this case, students may end up not referring to the Fireside Talks at all. When we first established the Fireside Talks, we adopted this approach to ensure that we were not dealing with too many uncertainties.

As the Talks become a more established feature in the curriculum, assessments could be designed to be more closely related to the Fireside Talks. For example, the problem or challenge provided by the business could be abstracted and presented in a more *generalised* form. Students could then use the research they conducted for the Fireside Talks to inform their assignment. Since this would then not be an assignment directly related to a named business, the assessment would be safeguarded in the event that the business was not able to attend the Fireside Talk.

Ensuring relevance to teaching content—Whilst companies are asked to bring their own challenge to the Talks, there is a risk that the task might be viewed by students as not being directly linked to module teaching content. Selection of the 'right' company and fine-tuning of the Fireside Talk task through discussion with the manager can help address such concerns. The links between the Talk and teaching content can be highlighted during the preparation sessions and in debriefing sessions after the Talk. Comments and concerns raised by the business can also be incorporated in subsequent lectures to highlight the connection to the module.

Regularity—In order for students to gain positive insights from the Talks, it is necessary that they are given sufficient time to conduct research and to prepare well. An earlier arrangement of weekly or biweekly Talks was viewed by the students as being too onerous and made worse by our selection of different companies from different industries for each Talk. In response, we reduced the number of Fireside Talks (to two per semester). We also asked, where possible, the manager to attend the Talks twice in order to extend or deepen the interaction. These changes addressed student concerns successfully—and for us, also reduced the burden of identifying suitable organisations.

Resources—To create the atmosphere suggested, we are simply using a YouTube video (or Vimeo, Dailymotion, etc.) of a fire in a hearth. To facilitate the meeting and conversation, place names can be positioned on the tables. The businesses appreciate receiving a full list of students attending the Talks in order to take note of better performing students. No further resources are required.

Funding—Funding may be required for two aspects of the Fireside Talks. Firstly, businesses may expect to receive reimbursement for travel or even to be paid for attending. Secondly, funding may be required to invite the business and student representatives for dinner after the Talk, as a means to show gratitude or even to continue the discussion. With regards to paying businesses, we do not mention the possibility of fees when contacting companies and reasonably expect that they will agree to become engaged with the activity without charge because they see some potential benefit (e.g., free consultancy and exposure to potential employees) or because the opportunity fits in with their social and corporate outreach activities. We have not needed to pay businesses so far. The latter expenses are paid out of divisional teaching funds and the costs controlled by limiting the number of dinner attendees to six people maximum.

Governance—The running of the Fireside Talk is in the hands of the students rather than in the hands of the module leader. This structure addresses Tomkins and Ulus (2016) critique that classroom-based experiential learning can be focussed on and constrained by the lecturer's own business experience. For an effective running of the event and in order to portray the kind of expertise and professionalism we would like to show to the invited guests, a suitable student needs to be selected to run the proceedings and should be coached on how to organise the session. All students need to be instructed on how they should engage and contribute to the session. This includes making them aware of cultural expectations when participating in a business engagement (e.g., dressing smart-casual, wearing name badges, taking off jackets and hats for the meeting, etc.).

Class size—A potential challenge for Fireside Talks is the class size, but this can be overcome by dividing the company's challenge into smaller tasks and allocating to groups. For example, in a 30-member strong class on the module 'The Economics of China and India', we broke the task into China and India sections, with three sub-questions. In six groups of five students, each tackled one sub-question and presented their finding in 10 minutes (see Fig. 22.3). The largest class size to date has been 44, with sub-tasks distributed across seven groups. With one student representative giving introductory remarks, and the final group given the responsibility of summarising and wrapping up, a large session can still be productive. However, in view of the intimate atmosphere promised by Fireside Talks, smaller class sizes of up to ten students are more desirable.

Fireside Talk Topic Example: the outlook of the economic, political and regulatory environments in China and India relevant to Company X

1. **The economic, political and regulatory environment for international business in China**

   Groups 1, 2 and 3 will prepare provide the following: (i) economic outlook (ii) key political developments (iii) trends for regulatory change - relevant for Company X in China.

2. **The economic, political and regulatory environment for international business in India**

   Groups 4, 5 and 6 will prepare to provide the following: (i) economic outlook (ii) key political developments, and (iii) trends for regulatory change - relevant for Company X in India.

Fig. 22.3 Fireside talk topic and student groups

Transferability and Replication

This experiential learning activity is based on the simple premise that the business has a challenge that it is willing to share with the students. So, the general idea is transferable across cultural contexts, geographical locations, or subject areas. Fireside Talks can therefore be applied to any course in a business school. They may also be adapted to enhance company visits or field trips in order to ensure that students benefit fully from off-campus activity (we have trialled visits to local companies successfully). Likewise, the external visitor does not necessarily need to be a senior manager from a business. Local government officials who are responsible, say, for inbound tourism or for attracting inward investment can also provide the focus for a Fireside Talks. For example, they can discuss marketing strategies and public policy considerations with students.

While the Fireside Talks at Leeds are currently assessed and marked as a reflective essay, the Talks could also become part of a larger group project, where students develop their presentation into a full business report, or even a dissertation, which is then assessed. For students, the advantage of contributing to such a report is that they not only have something tangible to hand to a company, but they can also refer to the whole experience in their job applications.

The Fireside Talks can also align with a number of objectives within the university. For example, invited guests could be required to be university alumni, or to be a member of a school or divisional advisory board. This helps

to strengthen ties with important stakeholders who often seek opportunities to be actively involved. Career services may also be engaged to provide generic presentation skills to help students make a good impression at a Fireside Talk, as well as to discuss with students how best to utilise their Fireside Talk experience in curriculum vitae (CV) and job applications. Considering the effectiveness and potential of Fireside Talks from a more holistic, university perspective can therefore highlight the wider potential of a simple and straightforward, but nevertheless, highly resource-effective idea.

So far, we have only run face-to-face Fireside Talks. We view these as being most effective, since the business and students can interact with each other in person. However, if sophisticated online teaching arrangements are available, then it is also possible for businesses to join the Talks remotely via Skype, Zoom, Adobe Connect, or similar.

Contribution and Implications

Fireside Talks deepen the learning process. After engaging in self-directed research resulting in findings and recommendations, students must present their findings directly to businesses, and by doing so become more immersed in and actively engaged with their subject (Kolb & Kolb, 2005, 2009). The fact that the challenge has been set by a business rather than by an academic shows the students that their course content is relevant and, moreover, that it can be applied to real-life issues faced by businesses, rather than just be consigned to theoretically abstract scenarios (Clinebell & Clinebell, 2008; Paglis, 2012). Students who have experienced the Talks have commented to the lecturers that "what you teach is actually correct!", and this has led to greater engagement and attention in subsequent lectures.

Typically, students have limited work experience and will have experienced few if any business meetings with senior managers from business. The Fireside Talks also equip students with an understanding of how to be engaging within a professional environment, how to gain and retain the attention of senior managers, and how to sell their ideas to them (Paglis, 2012). They also instil confidence within students that not only are they able to communicate with senior managers, but also that their views will be listened to—meaning that ultimately, they have something to offer. Alumni have commented that this is the major positive impact that Fireside Talks can bring. In this respect, this teaching method also supports students' employability. Students with less work experience now have a 'consultancy story to tell' on their CV when they apply for jobs. Such a differentiator may allow them to secure a job more easily.

Overall, we believe that Fireside Talks, or versions thereof, can offer business schools a flexible, relatively easy-to-set up, resource-friendly, yet highly valued method of experiential learning. The benefits may accrue not just to students and businesses but also have potential to dovetail into a variety of other university priorities, such as the employability agenda, industrial liaison, alumni engagement, and accreditation.

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23

Teaching Embedded Entrepreneurship Through Experiential Learning in International Business

Hans Hendrischke and Wei Li

Introduction

One of the challenges educators and managers face today is to contextualize entrepreneurship in emerging market economies and in China in particular. Entrepreneurship is generally taught in a Western market context that does not require extensive contextualization. By teaching entrepreneurship narrowly as managers seeking opportunities, taking risks and demonstrating resolve, students may have difficulty grasping the comprehensive entrepreneurial engagements that have created enormous productive social, political and economic changes in emerging markets.

In recent years, entrepreneurship scholars have increasingly drawn on institutional theory to understand the processes underpinning entrepreneurship in emerging markets (e.g. Hoskisson, Eden, Lau, & Wright, 2000; Tracey & Phillips, 2011). The institutional context of a market determines the ways in which an entrepreneur can intervene, and to a great extent also determines the success or failure of a particular strategy. In the case of China, entrepreneurship faces multiple formal and informal constraints whose understanding requires institutional more than cultural analysis. Teaching entrepreneurship in the context of China as a globalizing economy covers the two aspects of local embeddedness of entrepreneurship in the domestic economy and of

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M. A. Gonzalez-Perez et al. (eds.), *The Palgrave Handbook of Learning and Teaching International Business and Management*, https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-030-20415-0_23

pursuing cross-border entrepreneurship in International Business. The former is to familiarize students of entrepreneurship with operating in a complex institutional environment. The latter serves to enable students of International Business to understand the challenges of operating across institutional borders.

In this chapter, we propose a structure for experiential learning in teaching embedded entrepreneurship in emerging markets. We argue educators should focus on the broader institutional environment in which entrepreneurs operate. Against the background of the debate about institutional entrepreneurship and embedded agency in organizational sociology (Garud, Hardy, & Maguire, 2007) and institutional theory (Battilana et al., 2009), we use the term "embedded entrepreneurship" to emphasize the managerial consequences of entrepreneurs operating within multiple competing logics (Battilana, 2006) and to locate entrepreneurship in specific geographic (McKeever, Jack, & Anderson, 2015), social (Pache & Chowdhury, 2012) and policy (McMullen, Wood, & Kier, 2016) contexts. Battilana et al. (Battilana et al., 2009) directed attention to the multiple embeddedness and collective dimension of entrepreneurship. This theoretical discussion gains practical relevance when entrepreneurs operating across different institutional environments need to resolve the tension between disruption and institutional continuity.

This framework informs the design of two in-country China courses for the two top-ranked management programs at the University of Sydney Business School. The pre-experience Master of Management (MMGT) and the post-experience part-time Master of Business Administration (MBA) courses are taught in intensive mode in China and have been running for four and five years, respectively. In this chapter, we first present the theoretical background of our conceptual approach for these courses. Next, we explain how we implement this approach through differentiated experiential learning to account for the students' different experience and skill sets. Following, we detail the elements, procedures and practical aspects of the teaching process. We conclude by considering the transferability of our approach to other emerging markets and institutional environments.

Theoretical Aspects of Embedded Entrepreneurship in Emerging Market Contexts

Entrepreneurship education for emerging market contexts is on the rise in universities around the world and mirrors interests in emerging markets at large. Following Hoskisson et al. (2000), we define emerging markets as "low-income, rapid-growth countries using economic liberalization as their

primary engine of growth". These markets are extremely important, because "approximately 75% of the world's population lives in emerging economies … [and] the population growth rates of emerging economies are the highest of all countries" (Cavusgil, Knight, Riesenberger, Rammal, & Rose, 2014). Yet, entrepreneurs face unique challenges and opportunities when entering and operating business in emerging markets (Meyer, 2001; Peng, 2003).

A notable feature of emerging markets is that the institutions that underpin developed market economies and their basic services are often unstable and underdeveloped. Indeed, "[t]he essence of economic transition is the replacement of one coordination mechanism by another. Yet efficient markets depend on supporting institutions that can provide … the formal and informal rules of the game of a market economy" (Meyer, 2001, p. 358). This process of institutional transformation can produce significant changes over relatively short periods (Peng, 2003). Distinctive institutional challenges faced by entrepreneurs and firms operating in emerging market contexts have been identified as the absence of dominant formal institutions, such as well-codified and enforceable laws, strategic factor markets and stable political structures, often referred to as institutional voids (Khanna & Palepu, 2005). In addition, the prevalence of deeply embedded networks and personalized exchanges make it difficult for "outsiders" to engage in any commercial activity (Peng & Luo, 2000). Finally, a lack of physical infrastructure (e.g. roads, telecommunications, sanitation and power) and access to key resources (e.g. labor, bank loans and technology) often represent major barriers for entrepreneurs in emerging markets.

Given the distinctive institutional challenges faced by entrepreneurs and firms, an important question is how to represent this institutional embeddedness in entrepreneurship education. Following Garud and Karnøe (2003), we conceptualize entrepreneurship as an agency within institutional structures and focus on the interactions between institutions and entrepreneurs. Consequently, embedding structures do not simply generate constraints on agency but, instead, provide a platform for the unfolding of entrepreneurial activities (Garud et al., 2007).

In order to operationalize embedded entrepreneurship for teaching purposes in management education, we use Peng, Sun, Pinkham and Chen's (2009) and Peng, Nguyen, Wang, Hasenhüttl and Shay's (2018) framework of the strategy tripod to link entrepreneurship to the three strategic perspectives of firm/resources, market/industry and institutions. The strategy tripod perspective suggests that the firm (resource) and the market (industry) based views of the firm alone, while powerful, are not sufficient to explain the complexity of entrepreneurship. Instead, the combination of the three legs of

the strategy tripod (firm, markets and institutions) provide a better understanding of firm strategies (Peng et al., 2009; Yamakawa, Peng, & Deeds, 2008). The rise of the institution-based view as an influential theoretical tool is an outcome of Kiggundu, Jørgensen, and Hafsi's (1983) call for new theoretical tools to capture the complex and rapid change in the organization–environment relationships in emerging economies. We use the "strategy tripod" (i.e. resource-, institution- and industry-based) perspective to structure the different environments and logics when teaching entrepreneurship in the context of China and Chinese business culture.

We introduce Chinese business culture from an economic perspective by focusing on business networks. China shares many characteristics with other emerging markets; among them is the involvement of local governments in business with some unique characteristics. Continuous economic liberalization has led to frequently changing rules of the game, formal and informal, so domestic and foreign firms must figure out how to play the game (Peng & Heath, 1996). This means firms are linked to their external environment not only through formal institutional ties with the government hierarchy (Park & Luo, 2001), but also through informal institutions. These firm–government networks enable bottom-up endogenous construction of institutions (Krug & Hendrischke, 2007; Nee & Opper, 2012). Consequently, local governments play a significant role in firm-level economic activities because of the degree of autonomy they have in implementing decisions made by higher level governments (Nee, 1992).

We apply this conceptual framework in our design of an experiential learning process that bridges the distinct and competing logics arising for entrepreneurs through their multiple embeddedness and dynamically changing corporate environment: the institutional logic, the firm capabilities logic and the market/industry logic. While Peng et al. (2018) called for bringing institutions into strategy teaching, we focus our teaching on how entrepreneurs create hybrid strategies to integrate the three aspects of the strategy tripod in the emerging market context of China. Through scaffolding and partially unbuffered interaction with local partners, we challenge students to negotiate these different logics by themselves and create their own hybrid strategies. This project-based learning tends to be deep and develop skills to deal with ambiguity and uncertainty. The experience of interacting in an emerging market environment contextualizes the study of theory and puts students in a better position to recognize the institutional challenges and opportunities faced by entrepreneurs and firms.

Objectives and Stages of the Experiential Learning Cycle

In 2014, the International Project (China) course was launched at the University of Sydney Business School for part-time Master of Business Administration (MBA) students. In 2015, the Doing Business in China course was launched for Master of Management (MMGT) students. Designed and coordinated by the authors who act as instructors, the two courses are both elective courses taught in an intensive mode in China every year in July/August for approximately two weeks. The MBA China course is limited to 24 students and the MMGT China course to 20 students each year. Having 20–24 students in the two courses ensures diversity while still allowing for a tailored learning experience and extensive experiential learning. The courses count as equivalent to a one semester course for the Master of Management students and a two-semester course for the MBA students.

Unlike some international courses that consist of visits to multiple locations to give students a wider perspective on China, experiential teaching is designed to create deep and differentiated experiential learning which takes into account different backgrounds and skill sets of our students. Experiential learning theory (ELT) defines learning as a process of knowledge creation through grasping and transforming experience (Gonzalez-Perez & Taras, 2014; Kolb, 1984). The curricular core of these in-country programs is the concrete learning through interaction with institutional and corporate stakeholders which is preceded by scaffolding teaching to guide students toward reflective observation and abstract conceptualization and further rounds of interaction with stakeholders. Each of these rounds of interaction with local counterparts is followed by further reflection and conceptualization. These cumulative experiences enable students to observe and analyze entrepreneurship in its formal and informal institutional context, its industry and market context and finally in corporate practice. To help structure external experiences, it is crucial that learning be focused. We incorporate real-life projects into the course design so that "students are thinking and so solving problems" (Wurdinger, 2005) while still involved in the experiences.

For the pre-experience Master of Management program, we introduce the institutional perspective through a combination of meetings with government and official institutions, guest lectures and reflective components, and the market/industry perspective through meetings with state-owned and private enterprises, followed by interpretative and reflective teaching (illustrated in Fig. 23.1). This process concludes with the case project that requires students

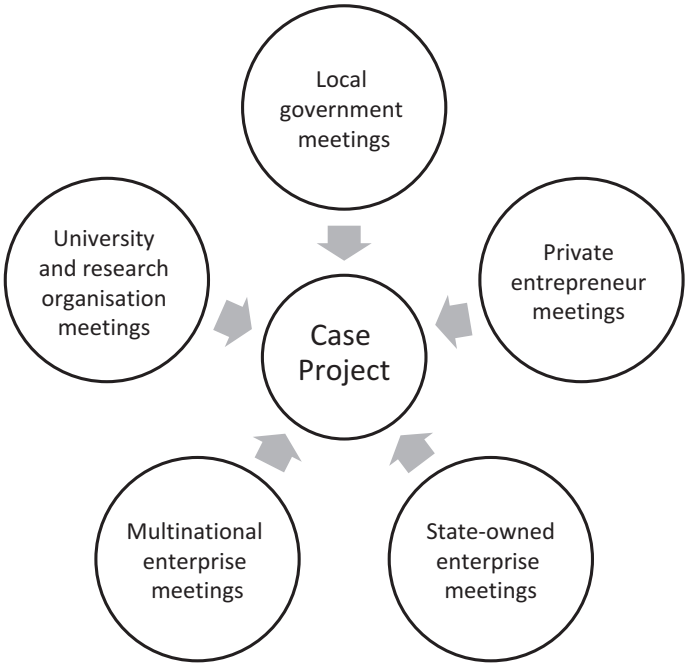

Fig. 23.1 Structure of the Master of Management doing business in China course

to draw institutional and industry experience together in a group report analyzing China's market environment from the perspective of an Australian firm.

For each course, we cooperate with different local partners. For the Master of Management course, we partner with the municipal government of one of the manufacturing hubs in Jiangsu province. Students have discussion meetings with local government officials in charge of different aspects of economic planning and administration. Separately, students visit local firms where they can ask questions to the management. Students prepare for these meetings the day before through scaffolding classes where the relevant topic areas are covered and students prepare their questions. These class sessions are used to explain the local institutional settings and market environment in which their hosts operate. Students prepare topics and questions in small teams of five. The same routine applies when students move to one of the provincial capitals where similar meetings take place with higher level government officials and larger enterprises in different sectors. In the provincial level locations we work with university partners who provide guest lectures to contribute a diversity of viewpoints.

The course assignments are designed to balance practical outcomes and self-reflection. Students write team reports on their company case and individual reflective essays.

The Master of Business Administration Course

The MBA students are professionals generally in their thirties with at least five years management experience, some with considerable industry experience. Most of the MBA students are domestic Australian students, often with overseas experience in developed economies. They come from different industries, including finance, professional and other services, engineering and the not-for-profit sector. The Master of Management students require a general understanding of management and commercial background knowledge. Pre-requisites for the MBA students are leadership and strategic management courses to ensure that students can work in teams under stress and understand the strategic and entrepreneurial dimension of their learning. The learning objectives of the post-experience MBA course are to enable students to:

1. apply critical problem-solving skills to identify issues that affect entrepreneurship in the context of China;
2. build trust with Chinese companies to understand their firm resources;
3. engage with team members to develop project proposals;
4. interact with Chinese business partners to negotiate project outcomes;
5. critically evaluate their own effectiveness as a team and identify lessons for their own professional development as managers and entrepreneurs.

The post-experience Master of Business Administration program centers around a corporate consultancy project with a Chinese partner firm. A sample of the project brief is shown in Table 23.1. The project work consists of stu-

Table 23.1 MBA project brief: sample content

1. Host company description
Company name (website and address for meeting and mail)
• Name and details
Company contact person (name, phone and email contact)
• Name and details
2. Project description
Project title
• Two-way investment in agribusiness
Background (Brief description of the focus of the project):
• Direct investment in selected areas of agribusiness
Objectives (what questions you want answered by the project):
• Regulatory and business challenges for the host company in entering overseas markets
Scope (geographic, products, operations, timing, etc.)
• Opportunities to work with overseas partners in investment and technological cooperation in agribusiness
Expertise (any particular expertise that would be desirable for the students working on the project)
• Expertise in agriculture and international investment

dents meeting face to face with a responsible Chinese management team and experiencing the working environment of a Chinese company. These meetings are unbuffered with instructors participating in an introductory session and only intervening if specifically requested. Students are required to build relationship networks within the host company and familiarize themselves with the firm resources, capabilities and market fit. An analysis of the institutional context is done from an applied corporate perspective.

The MBA teams start liaising with their corporate partner firms one month ahead of their China trip to gain initial familiarity with the project topic and to conduct desktop research while they have full internet access to research resources. Topics for the MBA students generally revolve around entry strategies of Chinese firms into global markets. Once in China, the MBA students have several preparatory days of scaffolding teaching with guest lectures and industry speakers before they meet with their host companies. They spend two or three days with leading managers of their host companies during which they negotiate the scope of their projects and assess the firm resources, market situation and institutional constraints. At the conclusion of their China visit, the teams formally present their project plans to their host companies and to faculty. After their return, they have one month to produce a project report which after evaluation by faculty is sent in full or part to the host company. The structure of the MBA International Business—China course is illustrated in Fig. 23.2.

The experiential learning cycle constitutes a continuous feedback loop through each of the two courses. In addition, the two courses are interlinked as the corporate experience of the post-experience MBA students is integrated

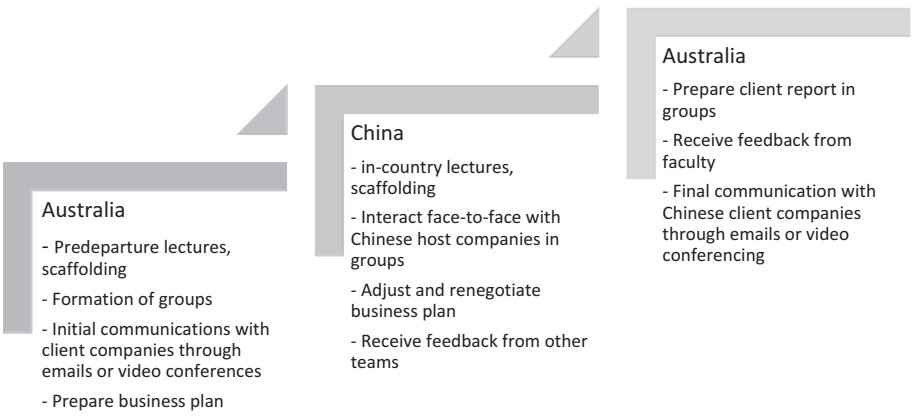

Fig. 23.2 Structure of the master of business administration international business China course

in the teaching content and study material for the pre-experience students, for example, as case studies or in form of animated videos. In turn, institutional insights from the interaction of the Master of Management students with local governments and other organizations contribute to the teaching content for the MBA students. This way, the two programs form a platform from which instructors can draw content elements for different teaching purposes.

Challenges and Best Practice

Our experiential learning approach requires different settings for pre-experience and post-experience students. It is important for instructors to select conducive environments and partner organization willing to devote time and cooperate with pre-experience or post-experience students, depending on the structure of the courses, the background of students and the expected learning outcomes.

Students went through Kolb's experiential learning cycle in several stages. To support learning, we created a library of hands-on activities with local partner organizations to increase students' interest and learning outcomes for both courses. These hands-on activities usually consist of step-by-step instructions to guide students through challenging tasks based on an inquiry-based framework rather than a cookbook approach. Reflective activities in groups such as discussion and reflective questions that require students to reflect on their hands-on experiences are included to foster student-to-student interaction in order to achieve a higher level of reflection. Social media platform WeChat is used to increase communications. Students are also expected to make short presentations in groups during their trips in China to connect the learning experience to the overall theory. At this stage, the learners are expected to plan and try out new concrete experience.

Local Partner Organizations

In preparation of the projects, the two coordinators and instructors of the two courses visit potential government and corporate partners in the Shanghai region to discuss course requirements and the benefits and expectations of each partner. An agreement is made listing the kinds of activities that the students will be undertaking and expectations from the partner institutions. In the case of local governments, we discuss the teaching contents and areas of questioning by students. Chinese host companies draw up a project outline to

guide the consultancy work of the students. The host companies commit to providing the necessary information about the project and their own capabilities to the students. The partner institutions are sourced through multiple channels: personal networks of the co-authors through years of research on China business, university partnerships and professional networks in China, the Australian Government trade promotion agency Austrade, industry representatives for Australian businesses in China, that is, AustCham, as well as snowball effects through word of mouth.

For each Chinese host company, all students and faculty involved in any way with the project sign a non-disclosure agreement to ensure the company's intellectual property and commercial interests made available during the course of the project are protected.

Chinese Business Culture

For student interaction with local partner organizations and individuals, we use personal business networks to frame the numerous cultural elements of Chinese business. In particular, we introduce the concepts of personal relations (*guanxi*) and face to enable students to act as participatory observers. We differentiate the anthropological concept of face (Zhu, 2009; Zhu, Nel, & Bhat, 2006) from that in a business environment where one's potential economic contribution gives access to resources to impress on them the need to build business relationships through mutual support and obligations (Yang, 1994) and to use *guanxi* for personal or organizational benefits (Luo, 1997; Park & Luo, 2001) in pursuing their projects.

Part of our scaffolding teaching is to advise students on how to build their own relationships with the stakeholders and host firm managers they meet in China and to be aware of their place in the hierarchies they face and the concomitant obligations. This includes awareness of the importance of being able to present as a coherent team.

Teamwork

Students need to understand the importance of working in heterogenous teams. For both courses, we follow Kayes, Kayes and Kolb (2005) and use experiential learning theory (ELT) (Kolb, 1984) to integrate teamwork design in managing the way students learn from their experience. Team membership

is built based on the learning objectives. The MMGT program has four groups of five students; the MBA program has six groups of four students. From our experience, these are effective sizes for the purpose of team work and course aims (Hackman, 2002). As both projects simulate real-life projects, we assign students to groups based on a pre-designed survey to learn about students' background and previous experience. We use a survey with ten multiple choice questions during one of our pre-departure sessions to identify individual motivations and backgrounds including technical skills and education, personality traits and personal, cultural and diversity backgrounds (age, gender, language skills and ethnicity). Teams are then put together using this information. As far as possible, the teams have a diverse and balanced membership in terms of gender, cultural background, language, professional experience, age and (sometimes) field of knowledge, for example, various industry backgrounds for MBA students.

To work on their group projects, students are meeting stakeholders and companies in real-life business environments over a period of ten days in China. Students may find their group projects are not going as well as planned, due to a range of reasons. It is important for students to receive intensive mentoring from faculty staff and coaches and have multiple access to information and stakeholders within the partner organizations. Ongoing group feedback is provided on an informal basis during and after the trips.

Students often complain about the lack of information that they expect to be available based on their experience with Western corporate culture. We found that interaction and communication among teams is crucial in reflecting and overcoming the frustration by understanding that this is not an individual or team problem but part of business culture and based on institutions. Communication among students and teams plays a crucial role in devising strategies to overcome or compensate for these constraints.

Communication

We want students to take control of their own learning and integrate their life and learning experience. The inclusion of internet and social media technologies meets their needs and makes them active producers of knowledge (Klamma, Cao, & Spaniol, 2007; Prensky, 2005). According to Dewey (1938), conversation can trigger learning. Social media platforms, such as Twitter, blogs, Facebook and YouTube, have proven to be excellent tools to foster conversation with real-life data (Alon & Herath, 2014). They make it easy to contribute ideas and content, placing the power of media creation and

distribution into the hands of "the people formerly known as the audience" (Rosen, 2006). Therefore, these social media tools are very convenient to practice many of the experiential learning activities previously suggested by Lee and Caffarella (1994).

In China, students are encouraged to use the local social media platform WeChat to communicate with each other, host companies and other stakeholders. The adoption of mobile technologies helps students to be more explorative in their learning as they demonstrate their flexibility and design thinking. WeChat is a Chinese multi-purpose messaging, social media and mobile payment app developed by Tencent. First released in 2011, it has changed the way Chinese people communicate, with over 1 billion monthly active users by 2018. The sheer ubiquity of WeChat in China helps students to break down communication barriers with Chinese partners/client companies. Furthermore, the ubiquity of WeChat also promotes social interaction and experience sharing among students that goes well beyond the university learning management platforms such as Canvas. This creates trust among team members as well as psychological safety. Table 23.2 shows the analysis of WeChat usage during the 2017 MBA International Business China course. During the course period, more than 1000 messages were exchanged among students and faculty members. A large amount of student communications is in the form of photos and stickers, around one-third of all messages were work/study related and over one half of all messages were life related.

Social software tools can be effectively integrated into both face-to-face and online environments; the most promising settings for a pedagogy that capitalizes on the capabilities of these tools are fully online or blended so that students can engage with peers, instructors and the community in creating and sharing ideas. Figure 23.3 shows work- and life-related messages coordinated with each other, especially for the time when MBA students were in China, that is, between 9 August and 25 August 2017. Work-related messages concerned project progress and interaction with host companies that students wanted to share with each other. Life-related messages concerned students' extra-curricular activities and cultural experience. In their use of the social

Table 23.2 WeChat usage during 2017 MBA international business: China course

	Work-/study-related messages	Life-related messages	Total messages
Text	252	414	666
Photos/videos	92	221	313
Stickers	10	42	52
Total	354	677	1031

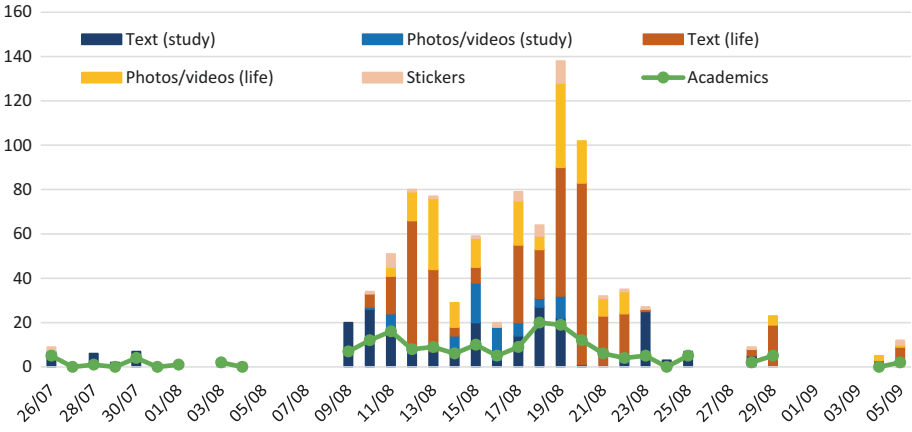

Fig. 23.3 More work and more contacts (academics plays a facilitating role), number of messages

media to share experience, students become active producers of knowledge (Klamma et al., 2007). The roles of coordinators are no longer to teach knowledge, but to guide, facilitate and support learning experience and to provide resources.

Language is a communication issue that needs to be managed in advance. One way to resolve language barriers is to allocate one or more Mandarin-speaking students to each team, provided there are enough Chinese speakers in the cohort. For the MBA teams, we rely on agreements with local Chinese universities to provide volunteers from among their own MBA students to accompany our MBA teams to their companies. For life-related purposes, students also used translation and interpreting apps.

Teaching Material

The shortage of well-documented case studies and visual material on Chinese companies is a drawback when trying to cover in detail corporate or institutional issues that government or company representatives are reluctant to talk about in a public forum. If there is sufficient trust in a long-term relationship, this is not normally an issue. If it comes to informal practices, one way to cover these is through animated videos which can be used to illustrate complex situation with a degree of authenticity. To overcome this problem, we have designed a series of animated videos that reflect typical situations encountered by host companies in dealing with varies stakeholders which students can use as reference tools to ask informed questions.

Social media has increasingly become a component of our teaching strategy. Using the popular local software has enabled multidirectional communication among the students themselves who are able to use a variety of chatrooms for internal communication and liaising with faculty. More importantly, this ubiquitous software can be used to liaise with corporate partners and local stakeholders, in addition to being a medium for payments and other purposes. The software has improved the flow of information across the course to the degree that we could do a quantitative analysis of the flow of communication, including visual material and videos.

Travel and Costing

Guidelines for travel, personal safety, internet privacy and respect of local cultures are recommended before departure. For the MMGT China course, the university arranges flights and local in-country travel expenditure with students, making a modest contribution. MBA students contribute the full costs of the China trip. For the MBA China course, host companies arrange travel plans for interviews and site visits. In cases where host companies do not have the facilities to arrange transport, we will arrange taxis for students for travel purposes. Additionally, the university provides appropriate travel insurance for participating students and faculty members, including contact details in case of any eventuality or emergency. The University provides one week of cover before and after the in-country programs. This applies if students are traveling directly to their exchange destination and is not intended for additional personal travel.

The student cohorts are accompanied by two academics who share responsibilities for teaching, student support and contacts with local stakeholders. Instructors in addition to delivering the courses need to maintain contacts with Chinese institutions and firm to secure partnerships for the following year. This is a process that can be quite time-consuming, but once established can have a snowball effect. Both authors are fluent Mandarin speakers.

Evaluation of Learning Effectiveness

All participating students are asked to give multidirectional feedback before, during and after the in-country trips, as part of teaching strategies in line with the school policies. This includes

1. survey information collected before and after the trips, collective briefing and reflection sessions during visits in China;
2. individual reflective journals that students keep daily during their time in China to document cross-cultural experience and socio-cultural adjustment in China;
3. in-country group presentations to communicate the progress of individual teams to their peers and receive feedback from peers and instructors;
4. group client reports in the form of consultancy reports with actionable recommendations on problems the student teams have agreed to investigate with the host company;
5. individual reflective essay through which students identify key themes that emerged from the unit of study and to explore and explain how these key themes are of relevance to their professional and personal development.
6. ongoing oral and written feedback.

Results from evaluations across the two courses and over the years show a sustained ability to engage students and provide high-quality learning experiences. Most students state in their self-assessment that the knowledge and skills they gain from these real-life entrepreneurial projects can be transferred to any other strategic management topics. This is also confirmed by staff who teach the students in other courses. For example, according to one Master of Management Unit of Study Evaluation survey, the course received 4.85 out of 5 overall mean. Below is an extract of one student's feedback from the university's course survey:

> *The unit (course) provided a fantastic opportunity to learn theoretical and management ideas through lectures, group work and seminars, and then view it in practice, try to put our learning into practice and finally reflect on it afterwards. Without a doubt this has been the most engaging university unit I have done in 8 years at universities in New Zealand and Australia. The support that was provided throughout the unit was phenomenal, and the range of resources we had access to meant that we were continuously learning and wanted to engage more in the unit. This is the sort of experience that I imagine I will be able to draw from for the next 5–10 years of my working life, while the perspective that it has provided will only improve the way that I interact with people and businesses in China and surprisingly also in Australia.*

One MBA course evaluation received 4.27 out of 5 overall mean and included the following quantitative student feedback:

The incredibly immersive experience and the tangible entrepreneurial nature of the course delivery, which to date, have not been achieved in any other subject. I think the skills taught in this subject are the core competencies of any successful entrepreneur—laterally thinking, relationship building and the synthesis of disparate businesses and concept for an improved mutually beneficial end goal.

Contribution and Transferability

One implication of teaching embedded entrepreneurship in emerging market context to MBA students in developed markets is that students gain insights on the corporate entrepreneurship perspective of strategic management. In emerging market contexts, entrepreneurship is not just for start-ups and small enterprises. Large and established companies in emerging markets rely more on entrepreneurship than large and established companies in developed economies. Successful Chinese firms must ensure that they do not become complacent but instead look to renew themselves through entrepreneurship. This corporate entrepreneurship perspective can be related to strategic management in a Western context. It shows how company resources are reconfigured into radically different innovations that change the competition and give the company the upper hand, bringing disruptions to the markets.

The experience of embedded entrepreneurship for the student teams emerges from interaction with institutional stakeholders and the host companies as students explain their business plans from their professional perspective and the host companies' management teams explain the constraints and opportunities posed by their firm resources and capabilities and by their institutional environment. This interactive process requires continuous adjustment from both sides over the whole period of the project work. Students learn during this process that their Chinese counterparts operate in a dense network for formal and informal linkages that can only be appreciated in its complexity by dealing with specific situations.

Having experienced positive feedback from participants of both courses in addition to growing demand from future participants, the authors recommend including experiential learning sessions in teaching embedded entrepreneurship in the context of emerging markets like China, as it enhances the experience and capabilities of students in working creatively. The two courses demonstrate the theoretical framework from organizational sociology and neo-institutional economics is able to provide a theory-based grounding for teaching as well as a guidance to experiential learning.

In our view, the two courses show that the complexity of China business in its emerging market context can be taught in-country using an elaborate theoretical framework as scaffolding for the student experience without having to take recourse to anecdotal cultural explanations or to open-ended theories of cultural difference which by their very nature cannot answer the specific questions involved in flexible entrepreneurial practice. As stated above, the Chinese experience is not unique among developing market economies. By adjusting the course content and the selection of local stakeholders and partners to specific local circumstances and in line with local institutions, the course can equally be taught in other settings as long as faculty members have the support from their home university in establishing the necessary local networks. The transferability of the courses will be enhanced if there is local administration support on the ground in the host country.

Faculty members are a core component of these courses and their success. The courses require subject matter expertise as well as excellent personal connections; developed organizational, communicational, counseling, risk-management, crisis-management and cross-cultural skills; devotion to the mission and a vision of entrepreneurship education. For instructors, the two courses are relatively labor intensive as the experiential components require continuous interaction with students, stakeholders and host companies.

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Part IX

Arts, Culture, and Experiential Learning in International Business

24

Global Leadership Education: Integrating Dance as an Experiential Teaching Tool

Secil Bayraktar

Introduction

The value of experiential learning approach in education has been well documented (Kolb & Kolb, 2005). Referring to the importance of learning by doing, Bird (2015) states that experiences are at the center of all of our learning. Studies have also referred to the particular importance of experiential learning in the international management field (e.g. Gonzalez-Perez & Taras, 2015; Jimenez & Palmero, 2015). Taras et al. (2013) suggest that experiential projects have the potential to aid learning and should be incorporated in business school curricula. Indeed, a greater number of business schools are updating their curricula and devising new educational tools that can better prepare their graduates for the increasingly global business environment (Rehg, Gundlach, & Grigorian, 2012). In today's international business programs, developing global leaders of the future should go beyond depending merely on books and theory and further be supported by "learning by doing."

Among such tools, "dance and movement" can be effectively incorporated into the curricula to investigate leaders' competencies in a global world. Dance is a powerful method to comprehend the non-quantifiable elements of leadership and its true nature, which is tacit knowledge, asserting that leadership requires not only cognitive knowledge like rules and technique but also kinesthetic knowledge (Alred, Garvey, & Smith, 1998; Ehrich & English, 2013).

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M. A. Gonzalez-Perez et al. (eds.), *The Palgrave Handbook of Learning and Teaching International Business and Management*, https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-030-20415-0_24

The goal of this chapter is to introduce dance and movement as a tool in global leadership education and to provide a new and original perspective to leadership education. In this exercise, leaders, followers, their connection, and the elements surrounding them in today's highly turbulent environment are analyzed through movement. This exercise has been successfully used both for undergraduate and graduate classes as well as in corporate leadership training programs to analyze leadership concepts through a different lens.

According to Johnson (2005), in a dance experience there are three choices: To lead, to follow, and to co-create the dance. In other words, leaders and followers co-create a harmonious dance on the dance floor. The same applies to leader-follower relations in business life. In line with this focus, dance and movement exercises aim to carry the metaphor of dance beyond words to illustrate the leader-follower connection through dance. Through simple movement exercises, the elements of leader-follower relationship are examined through lessons from the kinesthetic experience. Furthermore, as leaders and followers do not exist in a vacuum on the dance floor, contextual elements in the dance are examined and bridged to real-life leadership examples.

This chapter aims to share insights and challenges regarding a fun and interactive experiential tool—dance and movement—in cross-cultural management education with the purpose of enhancing education on global leadership and benefiting both management educators and researchers.

The Basics of the Exercise

- **Keywords:** Dance, movement, leadership, connection
- **Most suitable audience:** Undergraduate and MBA students, corporate training (e.g. leadership development) participants
- **Time required:** 90 minutes
- **Optimal group size:** 10–50 people
- **Materials and technologies required:** A laptop, projector, an audio system (speakers), and blindfolds
- **Cost**: There is no cost associated with this exercise

Learning Objectives

One cannot learn how to dance just by reading about it, just as one cannot learn how to be an effective manager only by reading books (Stumpf & Dutton, 1990). Ropo and Sauer (2008) suggest that experiential leadership knowledge is hard to transfer by using only words. Dance, as an aesthetic

knowledge which is visual, gestural, and intuitive and as a powerful metaphor for leadership, provides a perfect experiential tool to understand what is written in words through practice on the dance floor. Accordingly, this exercise aims to achieve the following learning objectives:

- To translate the metaphor of dance into a practice, or in other words to move from abstractions and conceptualizations to experiential and bodily feeling of dance-leadership connection;
- To comprehend the linkages between global leadership and dance;
- To analyze and discuss ways to perceive leader-follower relationship from a different perspective;
- To apply six levels of connected leadership framework[1] from the perspective of movement and dance;
- To evaluate the potential avenues for connecting dance and organizational studies; and
- To engage in a fun and interactive exercise.

Purpose and Description of the Exercise

In the twenty-first-century business world, the word "connection" or "being connected" has become more and more crucial for all positions of leadership (Dastmalchian et al., 2016). Today's global business world requires leaders who are "connected" at numerous levels. In leadership context, the concept of connection has been referred to the relational aspect of leadership. Being connected to others in the sense of supporting, trusting, and reciprocal exchanging is a crucial asset for a leader (Burt, 2000). As leadership requires the management of social relationships, the success of leaders depends on the extent to which they develop trusting relationships with various stakeholders and maintain these interactions (Balkundi & Kinduff, 2006; Brass & Krackhardt, 1999; Burt, 2000; Javidan & Dastmalchian, 1993).

This exercise takes the "connection" concept in the context of leadership to a different level through using dance as a metaphor for leadership in today's global environment. In partner dancing, connection refers to the non-verbal communication realized by physical contact between the dancers to facilitate harmony in moving together. Dance is about leading and following, when we

[1] The six levels of connection framework have been generated by the author in 2014. The background of this exercise stems from the author's experience in both dance and leadership theories. The framework has been generated through working with dancers and managers in leadership development trainings.

think typically about "dance for two" (Hujala, Laulainen, & Kokkonen, 2014). The leader-follower relationship on the dance floor has many similarities to leading in business life (Biehl-Missal & Springborg, 2016). Although couple dances involve a leader and a follower, it is not enough to examine the relationship between leaders and followers since leaders and followers do not exist in isolation on the dance floor. There are other elements that shape the dance such as the dance floor, the music and rhythm, the other dancers in the room, and the audience. These contextual elements are similar to the elements that have an impact on leadership in organizational settings. Therefore, going one step beyond, in this exercise, connection refers to the leaders (in dance and in business) being connected to multiple variables, referring to being well aware of them and actively linked to them.

This exercise proposes that leaders should be simultaneously connected to these various elements in order to perform well on and off the dance floor. A successful dance requires that the leader is connected to six different levels—oneself, the dance floor or the room, music, partner, other couples, and the audience. Similarly, leaders in business life should be connected to various personal, dyadic, and contextual elements in an organizational setting. Therefore, it is proposed that six different aspects of connection and their synchronous combination are needed to reach a full model of a connected and effective leader.

In order to illustrate the six levels of connection, this exercise follows the structure below:

Module 1: Introduction and the Walking Exercise (30–40 Minutes)

This module starts by an introduction where the instructor makes a brief presentation on the dance-leadership connection. The participants are informed that they will do a simple exercise by only walking around the room and the instructor will describe the following steps or procedures building on this walk. The participants are encouraged that they can easily engage in the exercises and they are assured that the exercise does not involve any complicated moves that need talent or dance experience and is composed of mainly simple walking steps. They are also explained that participation in exercises is voluntary, but it is highly suggested to get the essence.

Once everyone is ready, participants take any free space in the room and as the instructor turns on background music, they are instructed to walk freely around the room. There are six different levels introduced to the participants while they are walking, different instructions given at each level by the instructor. The instructions for each level adding up to six levels are described as follows:

Step 1: Connecting with Oneself: Self-Awareness

In the first level, while participants walk around the room, the instructor tells them to connect to their own bodies, recognize their bodily presence, be aware of their posture, the flow of their movements, every step they take, and every muscle they use. The instructor asks some questions for the participants to reflect on while walking. Some examples are: "How is your posture? What are your arms doing? Is there any tense part in your body? How are your movements, are they smooth, sharp? How do you walk, how are your steps?" (The questions may be extended on the theme of connecting to oneself or one's body). They are asked to connect well to themselves and themselves only. This level takes about 2–3 minutes of walking.

Debrief: Connecting to oneself on the dance floor is associated with leaders' self-awareness in business life. The instructor may make connections to important concepts that are required from global leaders such as emotional intelligence (EQ) (Goleman, 2006), authentic leadership (Shamir & Eliam, 2005), and being aware of their own values to lead others and draw a vision for the organization.

Step 2: Connecting with the Room/Dance Floor: External Environment

While participants keep walking, the instructor says that they now will go one level higher. The instructor also asks them to start paying attention now to the floor they are walking on and the room they are in. Furthermore, the participants are asked to maintain their bodily awareness and stay connected to themselves while also recognizing the floor or the room. The instructor asks questions like: "What is the size of the room? What is the shape? What does the floor feel like? Is it slippery or not? Is it dark or light? What are the colors inside? Are there any obstacles in the room such as columns? Can you move well? Do you feel good?" (The questions may be extended on the theme of connecting to the floor and the room.) They are reminded a few times, while they pay attention to the room and the floor, they should maintain connection to their bodies described in the first level. This level takes about 2–3 minutes of walking.

Debrief: Connecting to the dance floor or the room is associated with the external environment. The shape, size, the constraints, and the conditions represent the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and limitations in the environment. The instructor may make connections to the importance of

being well connected to the external environment as a global leadership skill. In business, just like on the dance floor, leaders must be aware of the outside world with an open mind and strong vision, while being connected to themselves at the same time. Moreover, if required by the conditions, they should be able to modify their steps to adjust to the environment. If the students are familiar with strategy, Porter's (2008) Five Forces Model may constitute the basis of discussion about the external environment in this section.

Step 3: Connecting with the Beat: Organizational Dynamics

While participants keep walking, the instructor tells that they will go one more level higher. The instructor asks them to now listen to the music more carefully while they are walking. Again, the participants are asked to still maintain their bodily awareness and stay connected to themselves and to the dance floor and the room, while also recognizing music and the rhythm. In other words, every time another level of connection is added, the previous connections must be maintained. While the participants move with the music, the instructor asks reflection questions like: "What's the music like- is it fast or slow or energetic or sad? Do you move according to music? Are you on the right beat? How does walking with the music feel like?" (The questions may be extended on the theme of connecting to the music and the rhythm).

In the second half of this part, the instructor changes the music. The new song may be much faster or slower, or it can be a different style or mood (e.g. changing from a Tango to a Rock 'n' Roll). The participants are asked to continue their walking, but still maintaining their connection to the beat. The instructor asks "Do you still dance in harmony when the music changes? When the music changes can you adjust your steps accordingly? Do you take faster (or slower), shorter (or longer) steps if needed? Can you adapt to the new style of music?" This level takes about 3–4 minutes of walking including the change of music.

Debrief: Rhythm in the context of business leadership is associated with organizational or industrial dynamics. Global leaders are expected to be well connected to the rhythm of the organization and adjust steps accordingly. Moreover, leaders must be well connected to the changes in the rhythm to be able to adapt to the changes with agility and flexibility. In this section, change management theories or leading in the VUCA (volatility, uncertainty, complexity, and ambiguity) world may constitute some possible topics of discussion.

Step 4: Connecting with the Other Couples: Stakeholders

In the fourth level, the instructor asks the participants to pay attention to the other participants on the same floor with them, and while still staying connected to themselves, to the dance floor (room), and to the music. The instructor further asks them to greet the other participants with a head nod or smile or any other gesture they prefer, while they keep walking, and staying connected to all these elements. After the participants walk and greet each other for a while, the instructor adds reflection questions such as "Do you recognize who are the other participants on the floor with you? Do you respect them? Do you share your space with them? Can you manoeuvre between them? Are you flexible enough to adjust to their existence to change your steps or direction when needed? Does their existence constrain you?" (The questions may be extended on the theme of connecting to the other participants.) This level takes about 1–2 minutes of walking.

Debrief: Other people in the room refer to the stakeholders in business life that the leader exists together with in the same sector. The instructor may make connections such as the need for global leaders to not only compete but collaborate with stakeholders and seeing them as business partners. Moreover, the instructor may talk about being aware of competitors' strengths and weaknesses for the leader to bring out the strengths to shine among them or to know how to deal with the constraints caused by them.

Step 5: Connecting with the Partner: Followers

In the fifth level, the instructor asks the participants to stop their walk and pair up with another participant. While it is suggested that pairs consist of opposite genders, in cases where there is an imbalance of genders, same genders may also pair up. Alternatively, the instructor may prefer to assign the pairs.

In that turn, one person takes the role of the leader whereas the other of the follower. The pairs are asked to hold each other from the elbows with both hands or to connect palm-to-palm. The instructor tells that the followers should always be walking backward and the leaders should be walking forward so that they can move together in the same direction. For the couple to move more easily, the instructor may tell that the partners have to start with the opposite feet (e.g. leader starts the walk with the left foot and the follower starts with the right foot) so that they do not step onto each other's feet and can move more in harmony. The leaders are told that they should lead the

follower to a backward walk with using their connection on the elbow or on the palm, but without using any verbal directions. The leaders are further told that they can use only three types of movement: Forward steps (backward for the follower), side steps, or full stops where they can hold the follower to stop and then continue the walk at some points and continue with the walk.

The couples are told that the challenge is to be able to walk together in harmony, with the leader deciding the direction and pace while giving the right lead, and to be able to walk without bumping onto other couples. In the meantime, the instructor uses background music to set a pace for the couples. The instructor may decide to assign a certain direction of movement for all couples to be coordinated on the room (e.g. counter-clock direction around the room) or alternatively the instructor may let the couples move freely and thus they face more challenges walking with no coordination arrangements.

Change of roles: When the first round of walking together is completed, in order to experience the duality of roles, shift of leader-follower roles takes place. In organizational settings, leaders may generally take both roles such that a middle manager may be a leader and a follower at the same time. Roles can change anytime in organizations such that leadership may shift, requiring people to take on leadership or followership roles when necessary. Moreover, in order to understand the needs, expectancies, and feelings of followers, it is vital to experience the other role. Therefore, roles are switched so that all participants experience the leader and the follower and their challenges.

Blind walk: After the change of roles is practiced, as a new challenge, participants are distributed blindfolds. Each pair takes only one blindfold. The followers' eyes are blindfolded before the walk starts. The challenge includes that the couple should not bump into any other couple or any constraints in the room. During this stage, to increase the complexity of the task of the leaders, the instructor may put some extra obstacles in the room such as chairs. The leaders are supposed to lead the followers into different directions and in the pace that they prefer. They may play with the music (using quick-quick-slow or only slow or only quick moves) as well as change of directions. Leaders must only use their elbow-to-elbow or palm-to-palm connection to lead the followers in the room among other couples. Leaders must not give any directions verbally. Followers are expected to follow the lead with their eyes closed. After a round of walking, the roles of leader and follower are switched again. The new follower puts on the blindfold and the walk is repeated. (Before this section starts, the instructor may show the dance scene taken from the movie *Scent of a Woman*, where Al Pacino plays the role of a visually impaired man and dances with a woman. Or alternatively, the instructor may play the theme song of the dance scene in that movie.)

This level with the partners takes about 20–25 minutes with the change of roles and blindfolded walk.

Debrief: First, leadership and followership experience on the dance floor is connected to the business contexts by discussing what it means to be an effective leader and an effective follower. The participants are asked how they experienced their roles as a leader and as a follower, the challenges and requirements of leader and follower roles and in each case what went well and what didn't go well. They are asked the requirements to create a harmonious dance together and what kind of responsibilities both the leader and the follower needs to take. They further discuss how a leader may be well connected to the follower and how a good relationship should be between a leader and follower on the dance floor and in business life. The instructor may refer to concepts like high-quality leader-member exchange (LMX) (Bauer & Green, 1996) involving mutual trust, interdependence, high-quality communication, and support. Depending on the extent of discussion, the instructor may refer to various leadership-oriented theories to emphasize the roles of the leader and follower. For the change of roles, they discuss whether it was easier to be a follower or leader and why. Finally, blindfolded experience is assessed considering the advantages and disadvantages. The participants discuss how a blindfold changes the leadership and followership roles and how it is related to the concept of trust between the leader and follower as well as being more sensitive to taking directions and following the lead by being more present.

Step 6: Connecting with the Audience: The Society

In the final level, the participants are asked to move around the floor with their partners and now pay attention to whoever may be watching them, while still being connected to themselves, the floor or the room, the music, to the partner, and the other couples in the room. In some cases, the audience may consist of the instructor(s) or any moderators. In other cases, it can be some of the participants who remain watching the rest of the couples by taking the role of the observers or audience in the exercise. Any participant who does not want to or is not able to participate in the exercise may take on this role. The instructor asks reflection questions such as "Do you recognize the audience watching you? Do you have any responsibility for the audience to perform a harmonious dance? How does the existence of the audience impact your moves?" (The questions may be extended on the theme of connecting to the audience.) This level takes about 1–2 minutes of walking.

Debrief: Audience in the business context refers to the society watching the actions of the organization. Twenty-first-century leaders need to also be aware of the impact of their actions on the society. The instructor may make connections to the broader society that leaders operate in and to the concepts of social responsibility or corporate citizenship, emphasizing the crucial role of leaders in being role models in their actions.

Module 2: Debriefing and Discussion (40–45 Minutes)

After each six level of connection is practiced by the walking exercise on the dance floor, the instructor fades out the music and asks the participants to clap themselves for their engagement and corporation. Then, the participants take their seats (when applicable). The instructor facilitates a discussion among participants for debriefing what leadership lessons they got out of the experiential exercise. Following the debriefing themes for each of the six levels of connection described above, they discuss what each level of the exercise refers to in real-life leadership (please see the debriefing notes under each step of connection). They bridge their dance-related experience on these aspects to real-life business settings and leadership in organizations to find out the similarities. The room or the dance floor, the music and rhythm, the other dancers on the floor, and the audience are discussed as contextual elements, which are assessed as elements that have an impact on leadership in organizational settings. Then, the participants dig deeper into the connection between the leader and the follower and their relationship. They examine the impact of each element on the leader-follower relationship through discussing the lessons from their movement experience as a pair. Six levels of connections are linked to the global leadership skills and to the need to be actively connected to multiple variables to be an effective leader in today's business world. The instructor may also start a discussion on whether it is easy to stay simultaneously connected to all variables and what it takes to be able to achieve that complexity of connectedness. Table 24.1 summarizes the main points in debriefing for each level of connection.

(The discussion may take place in small groups in round tables first, before leading to a general discussion in the class).

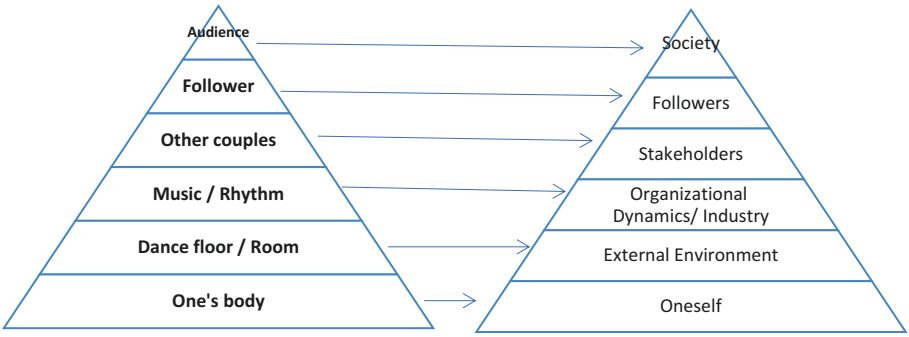
Table 24.1 Debrief of six levels of connection

	In dance	In business
Level 1: Self-awareness	• Being aware of the self, body, steps, posture • Self-awareness as the first requirement for leading the dance	• Being aware of values of the self (authentic leadership) • Self-awareness being a pivotal predictor of the level of emotional intelligence (EQ) • Self-awareness as the first step to be able to lead others
Level 2: External environment	• Being aware of and well connected to the room and the dance floor • Being aware of the limitations	• Being aware of environmental factors • Porter's (2008) Five Forces Model can be used in the discussion
Level 3: Organizational dynamics	• Staying in tune with the music • Adopting to the changing music	• Adopting to the changing dynamics • Change management and VUCA world can be discussed
Level 4: Stakeholders	• Recognizing other dancers or couples on the dance floor • Sharing the floor with them	• Collaborating with stakeholders • Acknowledging competitors' strengths and weaknesses
Level 5: Followers	• Connecting to the followers • Being a good leader in dance • Being a good follower in dance • Experiencing both roles • Blind walk	• Being a good leader in business • Being a good follower in business • Relationship between leader and follower • Leader-member exchange (LMX) theory can be discussed to analyze leader-follower relationship • Trust
Level 6: Society	• Dancing acknowledging the existence of an audience	• Being responsible to the society • Leaders' and companies' role in corporate citizenship

Source: Generated by the author

Module 3: Closure (5 Minutes)

The instructor makes a summary of the leadership lessons learned through this exercise. The instructor may show Fig. 24.1 on a slide for summarizing the "Six Levels of Connection Framework©." Concluding remarks are made as to how dance can contribute to management. The instructor thanks the participants for their engagement and closes the session with final music.



Source: Generated by the author

Fig. 24.1 Six levels of connection framework©: Linking elements of dance to business leadership

Optional Modules in the Exercise

Option 1: Integrating More Dance Steps

If the instructor is familiar with couple dances such as Tango or Salsa, he or she may prefer to integrate simple dance moves into the exercise to make it more fun. The instructor must remember that the participants may not have any previous dance experience. Therefore, the dance moves must be simple and easy to learn and apply. Basic steps or turns from a couple dance may be implemented in this section. If the instructor prefers to include dancing, a portion of the exercise (in the section where the participants pair up) can be used for the brief dance lecture before proceeding with the couple part.

Option 2: Dance and Leadership Styles

Different styles of dance require diverse styles of leadership and each dance can teach a unique aspect of leadership (Bell & Shea, 1998; Ropo & Sauer, 2008). Partner dances (e.g. waltz, tango), team dances (e.g. African dance, square dance), individual dances (e.g. ballet, Flamenco), and improvisational dances (e.g. modern dance) each have different styles, rhythms, moods, and connections. Even partner dances differ enormously from each other in terms of their technique, partnership, and leading/following styles. As an additional option, the instructor may present several dance styles through videos in order to demonstrate how different dance characteristics can give lessons from dif-

ferent leadership styles. In such a module, situational leadership theory (Hersey & Blanchard, 1977) may constitute the basis of the connection between different dances and leadership styles.

Experiential Learning Cycle

Through this exercise, effective learning and the transfer of learning are accomplished following Kolb's four-stage experiential theory. In the first stage, Concrete Experience, the participant actively experiences an activity by fully being involved in the walking exercise (dance and movement). In the second stage, Reflective Observation, learner reflects on the dance movement experience about what happened, what went well or wrong, how the experience was, and so on. In the third stage, Abstract Conceptualizations, the "Six Levels of Connection Framework©" is introduced as a theoretical background to link the elements on the dance floor and in business leadership based on what they have experienced and observed. Through debriefing session, the participant analyzes the linkages to business life. Finally, in the last stage, Active Experimentation, the participant makes the connection to "being a better connected global leader" and plans to improve leadership skills by setting goals as to improve one's skills based on the lessons from the exercise. Consequently, the participant touches all four bases described by Kolb going through a cycle of experiencing, reflecting, thinking, and acting on it.

Skills and Competencies

According to Adler (2006), the changing world of business can no longer be merely mechanistic and it must become more creative. She argues that we need to design more innovative options for MBA programs going beyond the traditional ways of thinking and decision making, and that is only possible by introducing the skills that creative arts have always used. This exercise introduces an innovative way of thinking where the participant can have the opportunity to see leadership through the lens of a dancer, creatively seeing the bridge between leadership in two different contexts of art and business. Through analyzing leadership on the dance floor, the participant can kinesthetically experience leadership skills required for the twenty-first century such as adaptability, flexibility, the importance of self-awareness, importance of contextual cues in the environment, and the need to connect to multiple variables at the same time.

Evaluation of Learning Effectiveness

During numerous applications of this activity, I have evaluated the learning effectiveness by using Kirkpatrick's model of training evaluation (1975) at four levels. To assess the reactions of the participants, namely, how they feel about the training or learning experience, they fill out a reflection paper at the end of the training to give their feedback. Quotes from the feedback forms showed that participants found the exercise fun and engaging. Verbal reactions of participants also showed that they were positive about their experience. Moreover, their comments showed that they could make linkages between how they experienced leadership on the dance floor and how it really applies in business life. In the debrief session, learning effectiveness was assessed verbally regarding the application of leadership concepts learned from the exercise onto business contexts. Instructor's observation and student's active involvement in the discussion showing their increased knowledge provide evidence that the learning objectives are met. The last two levels of assessing learning effectiveness in Kirkpatrick's model consist of behavioral evaluation and results evaluation. For a classroom setting, these levels are more difficult to assess. However, if the exercise is used in a leadership training in a corporate setting, the measurement of behavioral change or results can be achieved by the cooperation of line managers and follow-up observations, interviews, or other assessment tools to evaluate the trainee.

In simplest terms, student feedback and discussion of real-life examples using the learned concepts on connected leaders provide good evidence that the exercise reaches its intended goals in undergraduate and graduate classes. Furthermore, in corporate trainings, follow-up assessments have shown that the lessons learned from the exercise are transferred to business life. Below are several examples of student feedback and participant quotes after trainings:

> *This has been one of the most interesting classes I have had. I normally do not like dancing, so when our professor asked us to get up from our seats and join a walking activity, I was first uneasy about what we would do. But it was clear and easy to follow. Moreover, my whole view of a standard leadership lesson changed.* (Fourth-year undergraduate student—International Management major)

> *I really liked how we analyzed leadership so creatively and uniquely. When we changed roles of leading and following, I had a good reflection of the things I do right as well as things that my subordinates may not really like. It was a pretty vivid metaphor. And the professor did a smart job positioning this activity after lunch in the program. It was a good strategy to keep us awake and well engaged!* (Senior purchasing manager—private insurance company)

> *I enjoyed most that we were all out of our comfort zones. We are a public company. Our jobs, our culture have sometimes too much structure to allow us to do these kind of activities, especially in front of our managers—with our managers. Everyone in the department was moving, laughing, dancing with the music regardless of the rank. And we shared fun without feeling constrained*. (Account executive—public bank)

> *I have been teaching leadership for years, but this was a very unique way. It was definitely a different perspective I had not thought about. We analyzed concepts of business that we experienced while moving on the floor. Group debriefs were effective to make the connections*. (Professor—academic conference participant)

Moreover, Stumpf and Dutton (1990) define their use of dance in a management education program as follows. This quote summarizes the expected outcome of this exercise in very vivid and accurate terms: "*It is a Multimedia Event: Doing, Thinking, Feeling. The learning is behaviourally based. One just had the experience. It was concrete, not abstract. It was practical, not irrelevant. Participants know what the behaviours look like, sound like, feel like. The intangible has been made tangible—if only for a day. They feel empowered to control more of their behaviours in the future so as to become more effective*."

> *Participants and facilitators often leave the educational program on an emotional high. The participants are excited about the insights they obtained through their own efforts. What were previously just words about how to be more effective in various business situations is now better understood at a cognitive and emotional level. They are also quite satisfied with the personal relationships that developed.*

Challenges and Best Practices to Deal with Them

There are certain challenges associated with this exercise. The most commonly anticipated challenges and the possible ways to overcome them are discussed in this section.

"I don't Want to/I Can't Dance" Participants

The exercise is not positioned as dancing; rather it is positioned as a walking or movement exercise. Therefore, such a dance-related hesitation would be unnecessary. However, there may still be participants who are not willing to attend. While attending the exercise is highly encouraged in order to get the bodily experience, it is not a must. In that case, participants who do not wish

to join the exercise may be observers and still contribute to the debriefing or they will be given some other roles such as observers, rhythm maker or changers with the music or maybe with an instrument, or as judges.

Space Needs

An empty space in a room is needed to freely move around. Size can be determined depending on the number of participants, but in case of small rooms with chairs, I suggest removing chairs completely and conducting the debrief session in a different room with seating arrangement. Where it is not applicable to find enough space, I have conducted the exercise in halls or outside in a free space and coming back to the classroom for the debrief and lecture part.

Paired Exercises

While partnered exercises (based on random or instructor assigned partnering) are used, exercises involve arm distance (holding from elbows) or palm-to-palm connections rather than closed dance connections to make sure all participants can feel comfortable.

Non-equal Gender Situations

I have experienced situations where men walked with their male colleagues and women with their female colleagues when they had an opposite sex they could pair up with. Therefore, it does not constitute a main issue as long as participants voluntarily choose such a partner.

However, there may be cultural contexts or constraining situations may exist where the pairing-up process has to be with the opposite gender. In such cases, a possible way of dealing with this is to give males some colorful papers and the females, papers of another color. Therefore, everyone pairs up with someone from a different color and those who have been left out (more number on either side) will rotate in the next tour so that they can change each dance as well. As another option, if the number of genders is very imbalanced, the instructor may use rotations in the couple part of the exercise where people may take turns.

Instructors Who Have No Previous Dance Experience

As much as the exercise may seem to require instructors with dance experience, depending on the complexity of movement or dance involved, such a requirement may be void. If the exercise is applied exactly as described in this chapter (i.e. through simple walking and without any additional dance figures involved in the couple part), there is no need for instructors' dance experience. Very simple movement exercises such as basic walks, change of directions and rhythm, and basic turns are used for the purposes of demonstrating the elements of leadership and followership and their relationship. Eventually, the aim is to keep it simple for both the participants and the instructor. However, it would be beneficial that the instructor is familiar with couple dancing in general, even at the level of being an audience of dance, to be able to give examples or to understand why leadership on the dance floor and in business share commonalities.

Transferability/Replication

I have been using this exercise in both undergraduate and graduate classes (organizational behavior, leadership, cross-cultural management—global leadership) as well as leadership training programs in executive trainings. Further requirements and logistic details of the exercise are as follows:

1. **Context:** The exercise works well in undergraduate and MBA classes, corporate trainings and leadership development programs. I have used the exercise in different countries including Turkey, Canada, and the USA. I have not faced any regional or cultural differences across different contexts or encountered any culture-specific challenges in these countries.
2. **Class size**: All class sizes are possible; however, the size of the space should be arranged according to the number of students involved. Optimal size varies between 10 and 50 participants.
3. **Equipment**: A laptop, projector, and an audio system (speakers) that will make it possible to hear the music and videos displayed on the laptop, a microphone (if possible). Also, blindfolds are used for the part where the couples conduct a trust walk exercise. However, in the absence of such blindfolds, it is also possible to ask the participants to close their eyes.

4. **Suggested music:** Songs with beats that can be easily identified are suggested. Tango songs that are not too fast or slow are ideally used for this exercise as the rhythm is easy to hear.
5. **Room:** A large room with chairs (and round tables, if room size allows) and enough space to move. Roundtable or chair seating can be arranged at the periphery of the room or in the U shape leaving enough space to move in the middle. Empty space will be used for walking around the room, whereas the chairs will be used for the debriefing and discussion module following the exercise.
6. **Timing:** Considering that this is an experiential exercise, a very early morning session may not be a very appropriate time slot. I suggest an afternoon session.
7. **Total time for the exercise:** Time dedicated to this exercise can range from one and a half to four hours, depending on the level of complexity involved as well as adding the optional levels of complexity (please see the optional modules).

Contributions/Implications

Integrating dance in management education and managerial development has multiple practical contributions. Adler (2006) argues that it is the right time for the cross-fertilization of the arts and leadership, referring to the importance of using arts-based methods in management education and stating that managers and businesses benefit from the lessons to be learned from arts. According to Nissley (2002), arts-based learning is an excellent supplement to traditional instructional strategies in management education. Art provides a fundamentally different way to approach and see things that cannot be seen through words alone (Taylor & Ladkin, 2009). It has benefits such as enabling skills transfer, illustrating the essence of a concept, allowing projection of thoughts and feelings, and providing an experience of personal connection.

As Taylor and Ladkin (2009) bring up, a wide range of arts-based interventions are being increasingly used in management education and managerial development. For example, art (Adler, 2006), movies (Champoux, 1999), jazz music (Barrett, 1998), theater (Corsun, Young, McManus, & Erdem, 2006), poetry (Grisham, 2006), and dance (Denhardt & Denhardt, 2006). Dance is an instructional strategy that allows the instructor to tap cognitive, affective, and conative parts of the brain (Peterson & Williams, 2004). Nissley (2002) argues that learning through movement provides a complete experience such

that analyzing the leader-follower relation appeals to cognition, accomplishing the dance appeals to affect, and thinking, feeling, and acting provide a complete understanding of the concept. Schlie and Young (2008) suggest that dance should be employed in education and training as it is one of the most accessible forms of experiential learning. Accordingly, dance, movement, and rhythm can serve as an experiential metaphor for leadership and followership. Foster (2011) argues that through dance, leading and following are performed to increase the kinesthetic empathy.

Referring to the need to utilize insights from the arts, aesthetics, and the humanities to expand our understanding of leadership, Ehrich and English (2013) address this need by exploring the metaphor of dance. They argue that learning the language of dance is like learning the language of leadership. Moreover, they suggest that dance is a powerful method to comprehend the non-quantifiable elements of leadership and its true nature, which is tacit knowledge, asserting that leadership requires not only cognitive knowledge like rules and technique but also kinesthetic knowledge. In line with the summarized benefits, the exercise aims to show how global leadership lessons can be understood experientially and kinesthetically through movement and dance.

This exercise is expected to be interesting and appealing for a wide range of audience. Dance is a universal language which crosses boundaries, nations, and disciplines. People from all around the world enjoy movement and dance in response to music, even if they use different styles of dance. Combining the theory of leadership with practice of dance is anticipated to provide a fun and engaging learning climate for the participants. An arts (dance) based methodology in application provides an alternative teaching and learning strategy as well as insight for managerial development for leadership skills. Participants analyze global leadership aspects through a perspective of connected leadership framework by examining leadership and followership concepts through their own experience on the dance floor.

As for theoretical contributions, this exercise introduces the "Six Levels of Connection Framework©" (Fig. 24.1) to use in global leadership education. In today's globalized world, leaders need to stay connected to multiple aspects: To themselves, to their followers, to the external environment, to the organizational dynamics, and to all stakeholders including the society. This exercise illustrates how a leader can stay connected to all these aspects on and off the dance floor with the aim to emphasize that not only it is a must for a leader to be simultaneously connected to multiple elements to be an effective leader in today's business context but also it is a challenging task to perform a harmonious dance while being simultaneously connected to all elements.

Background Information About the Exercise

Taylor and Ladkin (2009) suggest that arts-based methods in managerial development training require facilitators with sufficient experience and understanding of both the organizational contexts and the artistic world. The background of this exercise stems from my experience in both dance and leadership theories. My relevant experience has accumulated in years through an academic and practitioner perspective as well as a dancer's.

Regarding my academic background, I am currently an Associate Professor of Management at Toulouse Business School. My research interests and publications focus on leadership, cross-cultural management, organizational change, and emotions at the workplace.

Besides my academic role, I am the co-founder and trainer of an executive training and consultancy company, Smart Steps, which I established in 2007 with my (business and dance) partner. Smart Steps has the motto "on the move training" and is a unique and innovative training company which uses dance-, movement-, and rhythm-based exercises in executive trainings such as leadership, communication, teamwork, organizational change, and creativity. My experience in designing and delivering these experiential trainings has been accumulated through working with dozens of national and multinational firms, NGOs, and educational institutions, with small and large groups. While designing and delivering trainings in Smart Steps, I combine my skills as a dancer and a scholar of organizational studies to deliver highly impactful, fun, and experiential workshops.

Finally, a propos my dancer profile; I have been dancing since 1995. Dance has been my co-profession since 2000 as a dance instructor, choreographer, and a national dance sport competitor. I have taught dance to thousands of students aged from 5 to 70 in educational institutions and in my dance school in Istanbul. I have coached and choreographed many university dance performance groups, I have competed in national and international dance competitions, and I have trained many dancers.

I am inspired to be able to use my greatest passion, dance, as an effective tool in both my professor role at the university, integrating some pieces of dance exercises into my teaching organizational and leadership contexts, and in my trainer role, using dance and movement in management development trainings. With this exercise, I aim to show what dance feels like in relation to leadership, not only in terms of words, but also in terms of movement. Based on the years of experience I have had in this profession, I can confidently apply this exercise in my classes and leadership training programs as a fun and effective workshop for the participants.

Acknowledgments I would like to express my deepest gratitude to Erdinc Kazozcu, with whom I developed the idea behind this experiential learning project, invested years of effort into designing and polishing the content, and conducted numerous dance trainings together.

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Part X

Simulations, Media and Information Technology in Experiential Learning

25

Overcoming Knowledge Stickiness in International Business Simulation Games

Amonrat Thoumrungroje, Olimpia C. Racela, and Asda Chintakananda

Introduction

Thailand's skilled workforce is the lowest proportion compared to those of other nations in Southeast Asia (*World Bank*, 2016). The education system in Thailand has for several decades been undergoing reform for failing to equip students with critical skills in thinking, problem-solving, and foreign language proficiency as a result of its educational culture (Mala, 2017). Different learning and teaching methodologies, such as lectures, problem-based learning, and reflective learning have varying impacts on learning outcomes and transfer of learning, with some studies reporting greater impacts from self-directed learning compared to that of lecture-based formats (e.g. Serdá & Alsina, 2017). Thailand governments have launched various national policies to enable schools to become more student-centered by shifting from rote-learning to

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M. A. Gonzalez-Perez et al. (eds.), *The Palgrave Handbook of Learning and Teaching International Business and Management*, https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-030-20415-0_25

problem-solving experiential learning (*Office of the National Education Commission*, 2003). Experiential learning essentially involves various methods of learning-by-doing, whereby the learner directly engages in the realities being studied (Keeton & Tate, 1978). Such active engagement provides learners more opportunities to acquire knowledge that serves as the bases for observation and reflection (Kolb, 1984). An increasing number of institutions of higher education in Thailand have been more open to experimenting with various experiential learning methods, such as internships, study abroad, case studies, and simulations.

Business simulation games allow participants to make management decisions in a real-world setting and have been adopted by Thailand business schools for quite some time (e.g. Hallinger, Lu, & Showanasai, 2010; Pongpanich, Krabuanrat, & Tan, 2009). In 2009, the penetration of business simulation games by Master of Business Administration (MBA) programs in Thailand was around 25 percent (Pongpanich et al., 2009). This relatively low adoption rate has been attributed to faculty members' lack of information about simulation games and inadequate knowledge of how the games could be integrated into courses. Another initial barrier for the adoption of business simulation games by higher education in Thailand may have been language, as the more well-developed games were available in English instruction. By 2018, the presence in Thailand of numerous business simulation game representatives for well-established global business simulation providers, such as Silega (Thailand) and Capsim, as well as the establishment of local business simulation game designers (e.g. MonsoonSIM Thailand) demonstrated the untapped market potential. With business simulation game vendors seeking out and educating prospective faculty, an increasing number of Thailand universities have adopted business simulation games at the undergraduate and/or MBA level. However, little is known about the efficacy of such games in enhancing student learning and workplace competencies. Despite the overwhelming benefits claimed to be derived from business simulation game participation, research in a Thailand context has yet to address the question of whether students actually transfer their learned experience and knowledge to the workplace. We attempted to answer this question by employing a qualitative study to gain insights on learners' opinions and perceptions of drivers and inhibitors of learning and transfer of knowledge to the workplace among a sample of former business simulation game participants. Specifically, we aim to explore how the application of business simulation game as an experiential learning tool can enhance knowledge transfer from the classroom to the workplace. The teaching-learning goals from the implementation of our unique pedagogy of student-driven classroom activities and presentations include

strategic and critical thinking, articulation, simplification of information, and creative thinking. The findings from our study are meaningful for individual learners, employers, and national policymakers to understand how to fully capitalize on the adoption of business simulation games in educating and preparing future graduates to be ready for the job market.

Review of Literature

Business Simulation Games in Education

Business simulation games are becoming increasingly popular as learning tools at various business programs as a means to enhance students' motivation for learning (Rogmans, 2016; Zantow, Knowlton, & Sharp, 2005). Not only do business simulation games provide the key attributes for effective learning according to experiential learning theory—experimentation, experience, observation, and conceptualization (Kolb, 1984), they also help bridge the gap between the learnings in the classroom and real-world issues by providing students with exposure to a broad range of challenging scenarios (Rogmans, 2016; Shah & Cragin, 2015; Zantow, Knowlton, & Sharp, 2005). And more importantly, business simulation games help foster critical thinking in students and train them to draw on their cognitive reservoir for decision-making under different business situations. However, the efficacy of such games is contingent upon the learner's ability to apply the acquired knowledge and skills during the business simulation game to an actual work setting. Some educators have found that the extent of real-world application of knowledge gained through students' direct engagement in business simulation games can be obstructed (Avramenko, 2012). This inability to fully resort to the acquired knowledge and skills is referred to as knowledge stickiness, which can be generally defined as the difficulty that students encounter in transferring knowledge obtained through their business simulation experience conducted within their student teams to their actual work setting (Szulanski, 1996; von Hippel, 1994). The degree of knowledge stickiness is determined by the cost of encoding and embedding knowledge, in particular, tacit knowledge; the higher these costs, the higher the stickiness of knowledge. In order to reduce the degree of knowledge stickiness, it is important to understand the various kinds of contextual factors that help reduce the cost of encoding and embedding knowledge. Given the significant amount of time and effort that is required to change instructional and pedagogical strategies to effectively

implement a business simulation game as a means to attain higher-level learning goals, it is crucial for administrators and instructors to know which corresponding activities reduce knowledge stickiness (or enhance the effectiveness of knowledge transfer). In addition, it will equip instructors with a well-formed understanding of the context to which the knowledge is to be transferred.

The adoption of business simulation games in higher education has been popular across business schools and has reached a mature stage in some markets such as the U.S. and several countries in Europe (Chang, 2003; McKenna, 1991; Muramatsu, Krabuanrat, Pongpanich, & Fujioka, 2013). The primary justification for the pervasive application of business simulation games in business schools is mainly due to their capacity to provide valid representations of the practical issues confronting managers and to the real business environment that they bring to a classroom setting (Wolfe & Luethge, 2003). Simulations have the potential to offer a conducive context where student motivation, team collaboration, individual accountability, and experiential learning can thrive, and they reflect many of the arduous issues that firms and managers encounter. As an experiential learning tool, business simulation games can serve to reduce gaps in learning between what is expected to excel in organizations today and the current business education practices (Weldy, 2009).

Recent systematic reviews of the effect of simulation games across a broad range of academic disciplines and subjects (e.g. Science, Business, Nursing, Engineering, etc.) on student learning outcomes provide some evidence of enhanced transfer of learning (e.g. Vlachopoulos & Makri, 2017). Gegenfurtner, Quesada-Pallarés, and Knogler (2014) conducted a meta-analysis from 15 prior studies comprising a total sample size of 2274 learners and discovered that higher self-efficacy and learning transfer estimates are augmented when feedback is gathered post-training, as opposed to during the simulation. As such, one of the outcomes of applying business simulation in teaching is 'learning transfer,' which can be referred to as "an extraordinarily narrow and barren account of how knowledgeable persons make their way among multiple interrelated settings" (Lave, 1996, p. 151). Following this definition, we adopted Hager and Hodkinson's (2009) view, which focuses on learning transfer across boundaries. In our study, our particular interest is on 'learning transfer' between the boundary of education and work. We specifically investigated how graduates resort to the skills and knowledge learned through participation in business simulation games at their workplace.

With respect to research focusing on the effect of business simulation games on learning outcomes, numerous studies have shown that such games provide the benefits of stimulating motivation (Fripp, 1997), building teamwork skills

(King & Newman, 2009), enhancing critical thinking skills (Martin & McEvoy, 2003), improving strategy development and negotiation skills, developing time management skills (Doyle & Brown, 2000), and fostering experiential learning (Adobor & Daneshfar, 2006; Musselwhite, 2006). These learning outcomes reflect the capability to apply knowledge in different areas, including strategic management, human resource management, communication, and negotiation. More recent studies have examined specific elements of business simulation games that foster learning. For instance, Lacruz and Américo (2018) implemented a quasi-experimental study involving a treatment group of learners exposed to post-business simulation game debriefings and a control group not exposed to the debriefings and found that the former tends to engage in greater reflections that encourage learners to learn.

Despite the evidence of these studies that advocate the positive outcomes of simulation application as an effective learning tool, a prominent concern for educators is whether the knowledge acquired from direct experience with business simulation games can be transferred to the learners' subsequent occupation and work environment. Prior studies on business simulation games have reported that learning transfer is enhanced when the game is more challenging (e.g. Gold, 2016). Mayer, Dale, Fraccastoro, and Moss (2011) found that learners perceive higher transfer of learning when they spend more time on making decisions as well as spend time learning from the business simulation game student manual and their peers. Prince, Burns, Lu and Winsor (2015) reported that transfer of learning is positively related to the perceived utility of the business simulation game and the learning motivation of MBA students. However, not all claimed factors influence transfer. For instance, advocates of business simulation games in the classroom claim that the instructor plays an important role in learning transfer (e.g. Vlachopoulos & Makri, 2017), but empirical evidence suggests otherwise (e.g. Mayer et al., 2011). As such, one may postulate that the extent to which a business simulation game influences learning transfer could be context-specific.

For this reason, the present study aims to draw from the extant literature on the efficacy of business simulation games on enhancing learning transfer. While the general mechanisms involved in the execution of simulation games in a course that leads to learning transfer have been identified in several systematic reviews, the corresponding mechanisms from business simulation games have been less studied in business education. Additionally, there are a relatively fewer number of published studies on the topic of business simulation games and transfer of learning in Asian countries (see Vlachopoulos & Makri, 2017). Since the adoption of simulation games for education in Asia and other emerging economies has not reached a mature stage like those in

America and Europe, Asia and other emerging markets are expected to provide the fastest growth in adopting simulation games in higher education. Therefore, an investigation on an Asian context with a particular focus on Thailand as proposed by this study is deemed warranted.

Research Methodology

This study was exploratory in nature and implemented a qualitative research design using an unstructured questionnaire for data collection. Qualitative research methods were used to reveal the target group of learners' range of opinions and perceptions that drive specific behaviors related to their transfer of learning. Measuring the actual transfer of knowledge to the work setting is challenging. Thus, we applied similar approaches adopted in other studies that relied on learners' self-reporting on the application of the acquired knowledge to their work contexts (e.g. Brauner, Philipse, & Ziefle, 2016; Gardner & Korth, 1997).

Course Context

This study involved learners who had completed, within the past 12 months, a strategy course that employed an experiential learning design that was developed around an international strategy business simulation game. We found two strategy courses, one at the undergraduate and the other at the graduate level, that were offered at two different universities in Thailand, one state and the other private. The courses were facilitated by two different instructors who received similar training from the business simulation game provider. Therefore, the design and implementation of the courses were quite similar in terms of learning objectives (e.g. to familiarize students with the competitive dynamics of international business), course structure, and course activities, for example, debriefings, team-based presentations reflecting their decisions, and so on.

Both strategy courses were taught over a 15-week period with one weekly three-hour class and utilized the same strategic management textbook to guide strategy-related theories, models, and frameworks for general class discussion. The first two weeks of the course mainly covered an overview of core strategy concepts, models, and frameworks. The third week involved introducing students to the business simulation game mechanics and 'rules of the game'. Weeks four and five were spent on allowing students to engage in four

practice rounds to familiarize them with the simulation interface and the output of decision results. During these practice rounds, instructor-led debriefings were conducted. The remaining weeks were committed to putting the simulation into full-effect competition rounds, with student teams making autonomous decisions and being fully accountable for their strategic choices. During competition rounds, student team-led debriefings guided class discussion. These strategy courses were intended to be mostly student-directed, with about half of the class time dedicated to team-based activities such as leading a 'shareholder's meeting' to communicate a summary of a company's year-end results along with future plans and reflecting process and tools applied in making various decisions.

In terms of class composition, most of the students use English as their second language but attained a minimum level of English proficiency test to be admitted to their respective business program that uses English as the medium of instruction. Thus, language was not deemed to pose any barrier or problems in the application of the international strategy business simulation game in which English is used as the means of communication. Class enrollment was culturally diverse, comprising mostly of Thai students, but also included students from Europe (e.g. France, Sweden, Switzerland) and other Asian countries (e.g. Malaysia, Japan, Nepal). Furthermore, the classes were also academically diverse, with students from different areas of study (i.e. Finance, Marketing, International Business, Arts, etc.). To form teams of 5–6 members for the business simulation game, a random assignment procedure was employed by both instructors.

The International Business Simulation Game: GlobalDNA

The GlobalDNA (Capsim 2015) is a web-based international business strategy simulation, which constitutes a major course component that provides learners with opportunities to manage the activities of a consumer goods designer, manufacturer, and distributor in a dynamic international business environment over several rounds, each of which is equivalent to one year of operations. It structures the virtual company into four major functions including research and development (R&D), marketing, production, and finance. However, participants make critical decisions on a broad number of strategic issues such as organizational structure, job descriptions, product design, product line management, demand forecasting, foreign market entry, market-

ing program standardization and adaptation, in-house versus outsourcing, and financing strategies and budget allocations. Given that GlobalDNA offers a dynamic international environment with different regional demand preferences, taxes, tariffs, exchange rates, and shipping costs over successive years of decision rounds, strategic decisions are made periodically and often necessitate a change in strategic direction.

Sample and Data Collection

The study population was former GlobalDNA participants who were enrolled in the international business program in one of the two Thailand universities described earlier. The inclusion criterion for this study was that the participant should have experienced the GlobalDNA simulation game within the previous year. Since we utilized qualitative methods, we could apply a common approach of in-depth responses involving a relatively small number of participants. As such, the two instructors of the courses were asked to list their five best course performers and their five poorest course performers with the aim of obtaining a diverse and unbiased range of opinions and responses to six primary open-ended questions:

1. What is the first thing that comes to your mind when talking about 'business simulation'?
2. When you were told by your instructor that you would be engaging in a business simulation as part of the course, what were your initial feelings and concerns?
3. What was your level of motivation to do well in the course? What factors motivated you and what factors demotivated you to perform during the course?
4. What key features and/or activities of the business simulation experience were (1) unproductive to your learning and (2) beneficial to your learning?
5. What key features and/or activities of the business simulation course helped your learning?
6. What specific business habits, knowledge, and/or skills did you acquire and were able to use in other courses or practical work settings?

The 20 students were sent an email containing the list of questions that were formatted on Google Forms, along with several optional questions regarding age and occupation. The saturation principle was adopted and was achieved after 17 returned responses. In examining this type of data, we

adopted a thematic analysis procedure discussed in Braun and Clarke (2006). This analysis follows six steps, involving (1) familiarization with data, (2) initial code generation, (3) search for themes, (4) reviewing themes, (5) defining and naming themes, and (6) producing the report.

Data Analysis

A thematic analysis was conducted to generate insights and understanding of how GlobalDNA participants endured and reflected on the events of the simulation game according to the procedures suggested by Braun and Clarke (2006). The first step of familiarization with data began with the researchers working independently to become accustomed to the data by engaging in repeated read-throughs of the participants' typed responses. Then, the qualitative data were compiled using the study aims as a reference guide. The second step involves the generation of initial codes, whereby researchers identified the most substantial parts of the participants' manifest responses and sorted them into different categories. The data were also abridged, whereby participant responses were condensed to highlight the most salient mentions. Idea units, which refer to the collection of words related to one central meaning, were then coded with one or two keywords that emphasized their essence. The codes could be concrete or abstract but needed to foster greater understanding and to compare the idea units signifying equivalent interpretations of the phenomenon. The third step is to search for themes. Here, researchers linked codes into common themes that may include numerous coded idea units. The themes were analyzed at the semantic level, that is, explicit meaning. Then, the fourth step of reviewing themes took place. At this point, the themes were reviewed and revised if deemed necessary. The fifth step included defining and naming themes by which the researchers labeled the themes emerged by using an explanatory word or sentence. At the end of this stage, a number of latent codes or themes were generated, reviewed, consolidated, and revised among the researchers to provide the themes and their subthemes.

In the final step of the thematic analysis, researchers reviewed the literature and searched for theories that could aid in structuring the concluding part. Theoretical concepts were introduced to identify links between elements of the learners' perceptions and cognitive processes. Finally, the initial results from the thematic analysis were discussed for a subset of the participants, comments were documented, and revisions were made according to the comments among the researchers.

Results

Data from 17 learners (6 male and 11 female) aged from 24 to 38 years were collected. These learners represent diverse occupational profiles, including business and financial consultants, marketing and sales executives, entrepreneurs, research associates, and so on. All of the learners who participated in our study had already graduated and work full time. Some of them work for local Thai firms while others work for multinational companies, both in Thailand and overseas. Some of them also attend a part-time MBA program. Table 25.1 provides details of our sample.

The reported perceptions of GlobalDNA experiences represented a broad variety of opinions and sentiment about what was learned and the particular content that learners transferred to subsequent contexts. During the initial familiarization with the data, it was found that learners expressed both concerns and enthusiasm (see Fig. 25.1 for the initial thematic analysis network). The initial codes manifested in the respondents' own words were shown in the square boxes in the map and subsequently connected to one another based on their underlying central meanings a.k.a. 'idea units' which are highlighted in the ellipses. These unit codes were then further scrutinized by researchers to identify common themes. Themes were reviewed and revised to ensure that they demonstrate explicit meanings. This process continued until the researchers agreed upon the finalized themes that accurately reflect the manifest responses and their relationships with one another.

Table 25.1 Participant profiles

Respondent	Gender	Nationality	Job description	Organization	Work location
1	Female	Non-Thai	Marketing-Sales	Local	Asian
2	Female	Non-Thai	Entrepreneur	Local	Asian
3	Female	Thai	Marketing-Sales	Multinational	Thailand
4	Female	Thai	Marketing-Sales	Local	Thailand
5	Male	Thai	Entrepreneur	Local	Thailand
6	Male	Non-Thai	Consultant	Multinational	Thailand
7	Female	Thai	Research Analyst	Multinational	Thailand
8	Female	Non-Thai	Entrepreneur	Local	Asian
9	Male	Non-Thai	Financial Analyst	Multinational	Europe
10	Female	Non-Thai	Marketing-Sales	Local	Asian
11	Female	Non-Thai	Marketing-Sales	Multinational	Asian
12	Female	Non-Thai	Marketing-Sales	Multinational	Asian
13	Male	Thai	Consultant	Multinational	Thailand
14	Female	Thai	Marketing-Sales	Local	Thailand
15	Female	Thai	Marketing-Sales	Local	Thailand
16	Male	Thai	Marketing-Sales	Local	Thailand
17	Male	Thai	Marketing-Sales	Local	Thailand

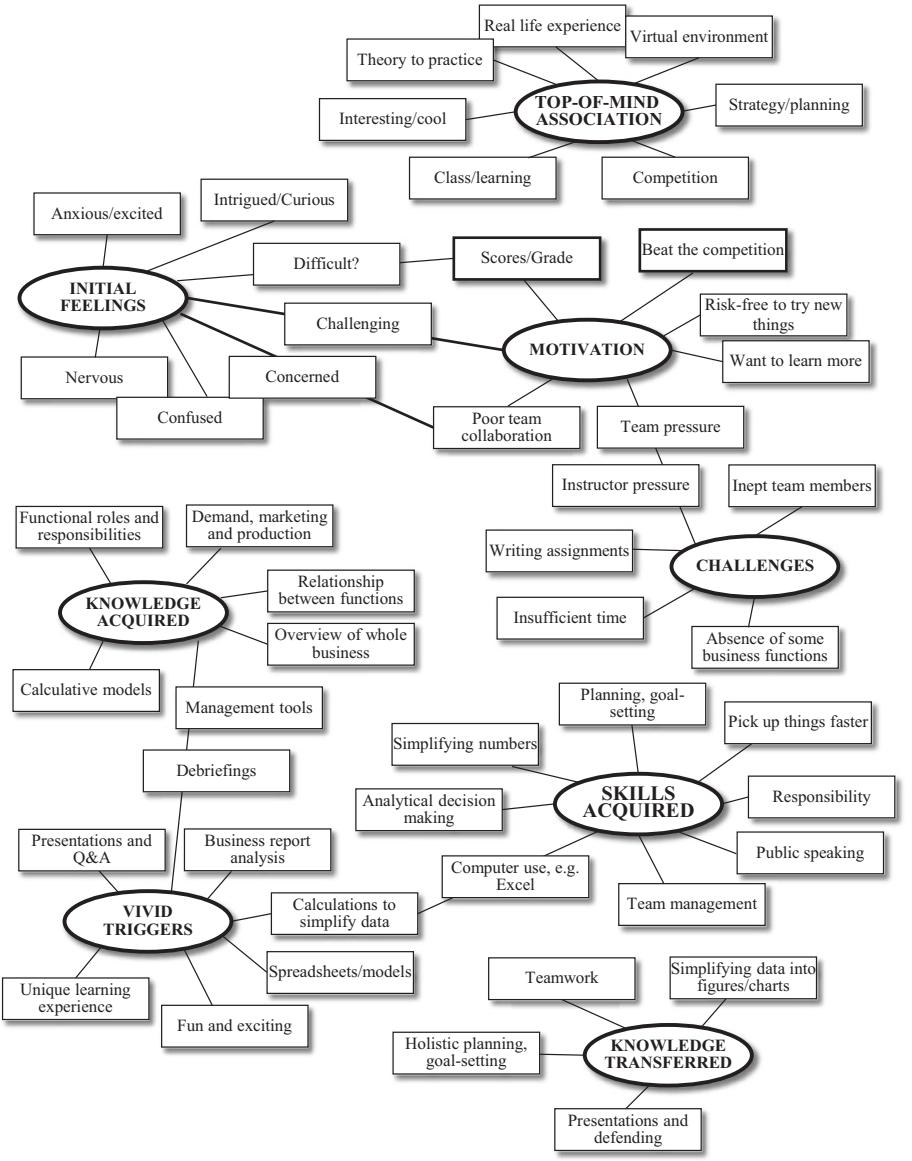

Fig. 25.1 Initial thematic analysis network. Note: Manifest codes are in the square boxes and the unit codes are highlighted in the ellipses

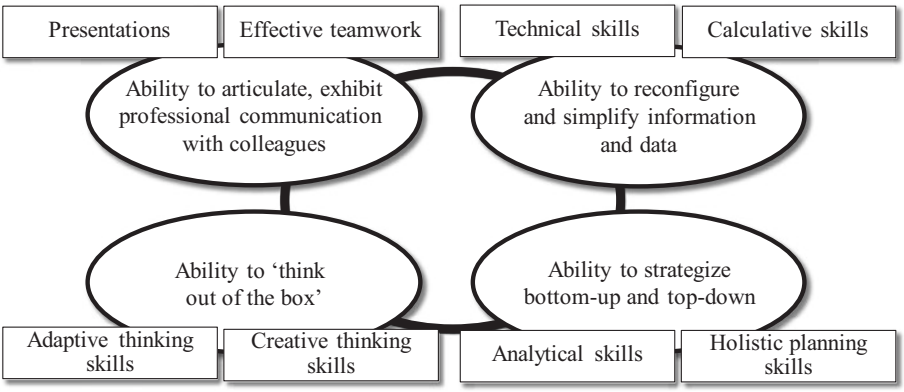

Fig. 25.2 Thematic analysis of transferred learned outcomes

In this latter part of our thematic analyses, learning was indicated in terms of the cognitive judgments provided by the learners when they tried to describe and explain what they had recalled from engaging in GlobalDNA. Our thematic analysis of the responses revealed four final themes, as shown in Fig. 25.2.

These final underlying themes of knowledge transferred are as follows: (1) ability to articulate and exhibit professional communication interactions with colleagues; (2) ability to reconfigure and simplify information and data; (3) ability to 'think out of the box'; and (4) ability to strategize bottom-up and top-down. In the last step of the thematic analyses, researchers conducted a literature review and identified a relevant theoretical perspective that aids in the interpretation of the findings that are shown in Fig. 25.2. During this final stage, we found that the learning pattern that emerged from our results resemble Kolb's learning cycle, that is, concrete experience—abstract conceptualization—reflective observation—active experimentation (Kolb, 1984). According to Kolb (1984, p. 38), "learning is the process whereby knowledge is created through the transformation of experience." Moreover, our results also indicate Kirkpatrick's four levels of evaluations (Kirkpatrick & Kirkpatrick, 2016). Participants mentioned a high degree of engagement, satisfaction, learning, and application of knowledge earned from business simulation games. The subsequent sections elaborate on this identified learning process with excerpts from our participant responses.

Concrete Experience and Reflective Observation

The actual experience gained through using simulation in the class represents a concrete experience of learners. In our case, a semester-long utilization of GlobalDNA provided participants with direct hands-on experience to conduct group meetings, discuss their company and team objectives and strategies, and reach their final strategic and tactical decisions. As noted by one participant, "This simulation provided me the knowledge of how to make decisions carefully for work. I realized that the wrong decision can have a high negative impact, which is not good for the company and it would take a long time to recover." Another stated, "I was nervous at first due to the result during the first half of a business simulation, then I really motivated myself to learn more from the mistakes that my team did and find out how to improve the result in each week as well as other teams made me challenge myself even more." As such, the participants grasped and appropriated knowledge via this 'experiential learning' cycle that integrates apprehension of knowledge and transformation of experience into a cycle. This represents an intertwining process of concrete experience (action taken during the simulation course) and abstract conceptualization (knowledge obtained through such endeavors). This is consistent with what Crookall and Thorngate (2009) and Ben-Zvi and Carton (2008) had argued about the benefit of simulation in linking action to knowledge.

Reflective Observation and Abstract Conceptualization

Overwhelmingly, learners were sufficiently driven to exploit the learning possibilities from the course. Learners enhanced their understanding from performing behavioral activities rather than cognitive exercises. For instance, there were numerous mentions of weekly in-class activities, including presentations, discussions, and results report analysis that 'helped the team to think critically.' Specifically, instructor-led debriefings served as a 'wrap-up' of team decisions and consequent outcomes were intense and enriching session of self-awareness. As described by a participant, "Productive to my learning were the discussions and critique and feedback that was constant. Also the ability to stand up in front of people when things did not go as planned and to defend the reasoning behind those decisions," while another stated, "The weekly meetings and preparation with the teammates enabled me to think holistically. As every decision was interrelated and had an impact on the performance of the company, we

learned to express our opinions and made the decisions that were best during that point of time." In such practices, participants of the GlobalDNA not only served as actors who actively engaged in decision-making and discussion but also as observers who reflect other actions by peers and the instructor. These active and reflective roles of participants helped enable them to transform actions into knowledge, which constitutes the essence of "learning," according to Kolb (1984).

Active Experimentation

The quadric learning cycle of concrete/abstract-active/reflective is repeated until the underlying teaching objectives and principles are understood by the participants. At this point, active experimentation can take place. As stated by some participants, they have applied several skills and knowledge from their business simulation in other courses or practical work settings. This provides evidence of a continually renewing learning cycle. From our study, the four thematic learning outcomes illustrated in Fig. 25.2 substantiate the knowledge transfer that took place from the application of business simulation games, according to Kolb's learning cycle. Participants were very specific in terms of what they learned and used on the job. For instance, one participant now working and also pursuing a master's degree in finance stated, "What I learned and now use at work are my analytical skills and how to use different tools in a more practical setting as well as public speaking and defending which I have used countless of times since." Likewise, another participant currently working as a product executive at a fast-moving consumer goods firm claimed, "I picked up the habit of simplifying complicated numbers shown in reports and convert them into simple tables/charts/diagrams to present in my presentations at work. I was also able to pick up things faster when learning at my job because I was exposed to the simulation beforehand." Overall, our analyses and findings suggest that participants were able to (1) articulate and exhibit professional communication interactions with colleagues, (2) reconfigure and simplify information and data, (3) 'think out of the box,' and (4) strategize bottom-up and top-down.

Discussion and Conclusion

To the best of our knowledge, this is the first qualitative study that set out to gain insights on the value of business simulation games in Thailand. Our research context involved undergraduate and graduate students of two dif-

ferent instructors at different institutions teaching international strategy courses. The initial responses gained from our participants are promising and provide evidence of the positive and favorable outcomes learners perceive from engaging in the business simulation game. In particular, our findings provide some insights that might be of interest to other educators, in Thailand and other emerging markets throughout Asia, who already use or plan to adopt business simulation games in their international business courses. When integrating business simulation games into an international business course, ensure that the curriculum allows for (1) repetition of tasks (e.g. weekly report analyses, team meetings, public presentations, etc.), (2) reflection of outcomes (i.e. student-led debriefings), (3) team conflict (i.e. problem-solving), and (4) an enthusiastic classroom environment (i.e. positive reinforcement) in order to maximize learning transfer. The following learning rubrics should be incorporated into the course to increase the perceived transfer of learning to the workplace: (1) the ability to articulate, (2) the ability to simplify information, (3) the ability to strategize, and (4) the ability to 'think out of the box.' However, it is important to avoid too many practices or written assignments. These findings are of utmost significance to Thailand policymakers, both at the national and institutional levels, since the enrichment of students' problem-solving skills has been placed as a top priority in the country's goals to enhance its labor pool and to improve its global competitiveness.

Despite the efficacy of the business simulation game in developing students' business acumen, the main challenge or concern of participants' pertained to having to work in teams for the simulation game. While many participants felt that they developed their professional communication ability, some of them had initial concerns regarding teamwork, for example, having to work with poor quality team members and lack of team collaboration. In addition, within these teams, there were also students from various cultural backgrounds that may have contributed to the efficiency of team dynamics. Our current study was not able to expose the mechanisms by which students overcame those inhibitions and the extent to which problems in teamwork affected team member interactions, decision-making, business simulation performance, and individual motivation and learning. Given the importance of the group decision-making process for real-world executive success, future studies on business simulation game team dynamics, the efficacy of role-playing, and conflict resolution approaches within a diverse cultural setting would be fruitful.

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26

Simulating Global Strategic Challenges: A Teamwork Perspective

Joan Lofgren, Elyssebeth Leigh, and Andres Ramirez

Introduction

Experiential learning in business education has offered an important link between the classroom and the workplace—the "next-best thing" compared to on-the-job learning. Business simulations in particular are used increasingly as a form of experiential learning to challenge students to integrate previous learning into simulated management decision-making. They can also help students to learn to deal with uncertainty. Such simulations often involve students working in teams—but what is the value of working in a team in a business simulation? How do students view team dynamics in this type of experiential learning?

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M. A. Gonzalez-Perez et al. (eds.), *The Palgrave Handbook of Learning and Teaching International Business and Management*, https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-030-20415-0_26

In this chapter, we explore the importance of teamwork in business simulations through a comparison of two integrative courses in undergraduate programs in international business at Aalto University in Finland and Bryant University in the USA. The literature on business simulations suggests that they can contribute to strengthening teamwork, and that in turn effective teamwork often contributes to success in simulations. Our goal, however, was to delve deeper into the student experience of teamwork in a simulation. We analyzed the aspects of teamwork highlighted by students in the two universities using quantitative and qualitative data. We asked students to rate five variables related to team dynamics and found that students from both universities ranked "having team chemistry" and being "comfortable with teammates" as the most important variables in team dynamics. Similarly, students from both universities rated "having clear roles" as the least important. Using open-ended questions, we found that there is also great similarity in the outcomes. The most commonly cited outcomes for students from both schools were "learning" and "teamwork". We concluded that in spite of great variations in the context for learning, students report valuing the atmosphere and team dynamics over specific roles in the team, and the method of team selection matters less than the reflection itself on teamwork. In fact, despite the differences in duration and delivery methods, we found no statistical difference in how much students like the experience nor in their sense of performance.

The remainder of this chapter is structured as follows: we discuss online business simulations in a broader experiential learning context and then focus on the teamwork dimension of those simulations followed by descriptions of the two cases and research methods. We summarize our quantitative and qualitative data from the two contexts and suggest takeaways for the reader to apply to other educational settings.

Online Business Simulations as Learning Processes

Simulations are based on abstractions of real-world events where the effects of decisions can be shown to have potential real-world parallels. "Business simulations" are technically "game-based simulations used as case studies" (Leigh, 2003) involving both competitive decision-making and real-world scenarios.

The use of computer-based simulations in business programs worldwide is growing (see Vlachopoulos & Makri, 2017).[1] For example, the Australian project on Enhancing Student Learning Outcomes with Simulation-based Pedagogies (Benckendorff et al., 2014) listed 34 business simulations in use in academic contexts around Australia. Business simulations usually replicate "real life" by involving teams in completing a series of decision-making rounds. Each set of decisions is subjected to an algorithm-based analysis to assess their impact on markets. Their value lies in providing "safe to fail" (Appelo, 2016) learning environments in which participants know the "cost" of failure is limited to the timeframe of the game. Those environments are reasonably realistic with sufficient detail and pressures applied to ensure that participants become immersed in the drama of the experience and often learn more from analyzing the results of temporary failures than from celebrating sudden successes.

Business simulations are a subset of the wider field of simulation and games for learning (Leigh, 2003) and their use involves a small number of key variables that combine to create an active learning "container" (Carrera et al., 2018) allowing participants to engage with factors abstracted from the wider world within which the learning outcomes are located. The key variables constructing a simulation are the rules of play, the roles to be enacted, a scenario within which events occur, and the process of recording actions, decisions, and outcomes. In addition, participants are challenged to integrate information from various sources, consider the consequences of their decisions, and anticipate competitor moves. Although these factors are found in all simulations, our focus here is on the specific genre of online business simulations.

All simulations begin with a briefing, led by the educator/simulation manager to set the scene and introduce any circumscribing parameters. In the action phase, participants take charge of decisions and shape the process. During the debriefing phase, educators and participants reflect collaboratively on events, analyze outcomes, and identify lessons for future application in real contexts.

Our cases are simulations used in integrative or capstone courses, which have been promoted by the Association to Advance Collegiate Schools of Business (AACSB) as a way of encouraging active student learning and for development of real-world-oriented skills. The call by AACSB for more project-

[1] In regard to the scale and scope of business simulation usage three excellent websites providing extensive research and practical resources concerning the use of business simulations are https://www.bizsims.edu.au; https://absel.org; and https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Business_simulation

based experiential learning (PBEL) has strengthened interest in simulations and games. Capstone courses are usually chosen as a means of integrating previous learning and occur toward the end of a degree program. In addition, strategy is a key component of undergraduate international business programs, and simulations help mimic strategic decision-making. As Vlachopoulus and Makri (2017, p. 3) note, strategy games are "recreating historical scenarios, in which players must devise an appropriate strategy to achieve a goal".

Understanding Simulations in the Kolb Learning Cycle Framework

Simulations are, by their very nature, experience-based. The Kolb learning cycle is especially helpful in understanding the learning as it occurs through the sequence of a simulation. At first, a simulation engages participants in a shared experience for some duration, then it shifts the learning focus to reflection on, and analysis of, that experience before finalizing the process with an examination of pragmatic and practical applications. As devised by Kolb, Rubin, and McIntyre (1979), the concept of a cycle of learning was initially located within general management education. It employs Kolb's conceptualization of learning as a process of creating knowledge, skills, and attitude through planned exposure to experiences followed by individually focused activities for transforming such experiences into personal learning outcomes.

Exploring how people learn led Kolb to conclude that (a) there is a recognizable cycle of steps that everyone follows, (b) individuals enter this cycle at different points, moving through it at different speeds, and (c) both entry point and speed of movement through the cycle are driven by personal preferences acting as a form of motivational compass for learning. Thus, Kolb's Experiential Learning Theory emphasizes the importance of being aware of the unique perspectives that influence each of us as learners, as well as the shared nature of the pathways to learning that we all eventually tread.

Individual uniqueness lies in personal preferences for where to begin and where to spend our energy through the cycle. Thus, some learners need "to have an experience (feel)" before becoming aware of any need "to think about" its implications, a process known as the "perception continuum". Conversely, some learners value "observing (watching)" before taking action—positioning their learning preference somewhere along the "processing continuum" (McLeod, 2017). Business simulations create a complete learning cycle, as long as educators ensure that action, reflection, analysis, and considerations about application are all addressed.

A well-managed simulation creates a series of such learning cycles allowing participants to experience each stage and to explore how its particular features influence and inform all the information acquisitions that precede and follow it. In the simulations described here, student teams are required to establish team norms and discuss strategies for achieving a shared understanding of how their decision processes will work in the days and weeks ahead. They must establish a preliminary understanding of the manufacturing process being replicated in each instance, the operations of the simulated marketplaces, as well as mastering the technicalities of entering their decisions, once made, into the simulation workspace. These are practical tasks requiring a focus on thoughtful preparation for future action. A practice round (in Kolb's terms, a period of active experimentation) opens the simulation. Collective decisions in each "universe" create a market and teams must form coherent theories (abstract conceptualizing) about how their particular decisions contribute to the state of the market as well as how market dynamics affect decisions in subsequent rounds, before entering the next round of decision-making. Students report that anticipating the moves of key competitors is challenging, and a valuable takeaway.

For some students, the task of attending to Reflective Observation may be the most difficult aspect of the experiential learning cycle to implement since the simulations employ time-limited cycles for decisions and analyses and reflection requires time to develop. To address this potential problem in our courses, class time is allocated for teams to analyze their behaviors, making use of critical thinking skills, especially the effect of biases on decision-making. Students are encouraged to consider *how* they are working both as a team, and as team members. This leads to discussion of ways to improve team decision-making. Paying attention to the Concrete Experience phase encourages teams to play with ideas before committing to decisions. Conversely, shifting attention to Reflective Observation (to determine "what do we know/need to know") generates understanding of the need to analyze available data before committing to action. Then, orienting themselves to Abstract Conceptualization ("how do we configure future decisions to benefit from our improving understanding of market operations") allows for considered decision-making (Fig. 26.1).

Finally, accepting that each decision is—in effect—enough for a round of "Active Experimentation" ("we know this much now, we must consider how to use this knowledge in the next round"), the cycles proceed, with each new round of decision-making shaping the market's performance. It is useful for learners to know the nature of the learning cycle so that they can track their own progress, and to this end we recommend introducing it as part of the introductory sessions briefing students for what lies ahead. Having this

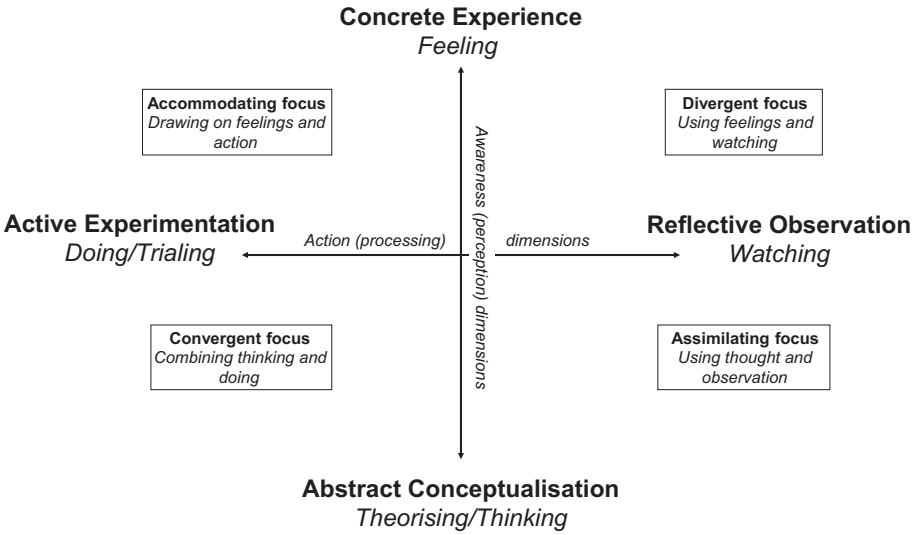

Fig. 26.1 Phases in Kolb's experiential learning cycle showing perception and processing continua

knowledge as part of their activity can enable teams to more clearly comprehend how the act of "learning" can influence their individual and collective acquisition of knowledge.

Teamwork in Simulations

While the "learning cycle" is often considered applicable to individual preferences, it is equally applicable to describing team activity. Since business simulations are usually team-based, paying attention to teamwork factors is important. There is, moreover, a strong consensus prevailing in business life and business schools that teamwork matters. As McEwan et al. (2017, p. 1) note:

> Bringing a group of highly-skilled individuals together is not sufficient for teams to be effective. Rather, team members need to be able to work well together in order for the team to successfully achieve its purposes.

Paying attention to both individual learning processes and team-based situations is an important part of achieving the learning outcomes in a business simulation. Both educators and students are reminded to pay specific attention to several questions as follows: How well is this team working, right now?

What am I contributing positively and negatively to our operations as a team? And how is this affecting the team's overall success? Students who complete the simulation-based course believing they only need to pay attention to the game mechanics and don't need to consider the impact of their own or others' behaviors, miss a vital opportunity for understanding how individual contributions affect the whole team.

In his fable on leadership, Lencioni (2010) identifies five human behavioral tendencies that can corrupt teams. These begin to emerge in the absence of trust and are nurtured by fear of conflict and fueled by a lack of commitment. Together, they create a tendency to avoid accountability, leading to inattention to results and, if not checked, eventual disaster. In the context of university study, student teams may focus too much on simulation results as the only relevant measure of performance, and thus miss the impact of their behaviors on the team's performance. This is less likely to be possible in their future workplaces, as Lencioni's cautionary tale tells us, and as companies like Geneca (2017) advise their employees (see http://www.geneca.com):

> Teams are composed of individuals impacted by their own organization's culture, which can prove to be a challenge if you don't account for this at the start of a project. … Ultimately, taking the time to mindfully shape a product team's culture can have a significant effect on the fate of a product launch.

Our experiences in the simulation-based capstones at Aalto and Bryant indicate that individual performance as well as teamwork activity have an impact on the overall learning experience. A recent study of enterprise resource planning simulation (ERPsim) games (Hwang, 2018, p. 157) concludes that "good teamwork will likely result in higher team performance and satisfaction". Hwang also concludes that "because students work in teams while playing the game, it represents a good vehicle to help students develop their teamwork skills" (Ibid.) In addition, Lohmann et al. (2019, p. 455) found that online business simulations provide an authentic team-based learning environment, which "contributes to learner satisfaction by supporting the development of management-related learning outcomes through socially constructed meaning". Such studies have focused on the impact of a simulation on student abilities to work in a team. In our research to date, we have focused on the impact of teamwork on student experience of the simulation; in effect, we are studying the student experience in the opposite causal direction as simulations provide contexts for extending and enhancing the social nature of learning.

The socializing context of teamwork interacts with individual learning experiences in ways that are examined in Activity Theory (Engeström, Miettinen, & Punamäki, 1999; Vygotsky, 1980), which proposes that a wide range of dynamic factors affect the learning process and that merely imparting content information is not enough to ensure that knowledge is integrated in a manner making it usable in future contexts. The social context of the learning environment, the effect of peer behavior, feedback on decisions made, and opportunities to impact future market trend, are all factors influencing how knowledge is engaged with and absorbed. In effect, game-specific content (business strategy, financial management, etc.) is simply a part, but not necessarily the core, of a panoply of socially oriented factors shaping individual responses.

The majority of research about business simulations has explored the validity of the algorithms used, and the benefits of the mode of learning for modern workplaces and knowledge of business concepts acquired as a result of participation (ABSEL, 2018). We are finding that there is a significance in the team-based nature of the activity that requires further research.

The Contexts

Aalto University, Mikkeli Campus, Finland

Aalto University is a modern public-private university formed by merging three Finnish universities specializing in technology, business, and art/design; approximately 12,000 students are currently enrolled. Most of its operations have been centralized on the Otaniemi Campus in the city of Espoo near Helsinki. The Business School, formerly known as the Helsinki School of Economics, was the first in the Nordic region to gain triple-crown accreditation (AACSB, EQUIS, and AMBA). One of the School's programs, the bachelor's program in international business (BScBA), founded in 1989, has continued its operations in the small city of Mikkeli, located about three hours northeast of Helsinki. This is a unique program structured around three-week intensive courses offered in English year-round and taught by visiting faculty from around the world. Students are required to study abroad for a term in the third year of the program. The Aalto Mikkeli program hosts around 250 students, about one-third of whom are foreign degree students and one-fourth are exchange students.

This flagship program, one of the first undergraduate programs to be taught in English in Finland, is well known for its innovative teaching methods. However, as with all academic programs, it is also regularly reviewed to maintain its currency in a changing educational market. The 2014 review process led to the introduction of a capstone course to be completed by each cohort of about 80 second-year students. It uses a business simulation as its core learning tool, and student teams are assigned to one of two or three "universes" (i.e. parallel markets) to collaborate in formulating and implementing company strategies through seven or eight rounds of the simulation. Additional course work addresses financial dimensions of business, teamwork in business contexts, communication skills, and critical thinking.

Bryant University, Rhode Island, USA

Bryant University is a private university located in Rhode Island, USA. Founded in 1863, it has a rich tradition in educating business leaders. The university has about 3200 undergraduate students and 400 graduate level students in three schools. About 80% of these are in the business school. Bryant's international business program was launched in 2004 and in this short time has achieved national recognition with high rankings by US News & World report, Bloomberg, and College Factual.

Bryant students majoring in international business are required to choose a functional concentration (i.e. finance, marketing), learn a second language, complete a semester and an internship abroad, participate in a business simulation, and conduct a real international business consulting project. Currently, there are about 400 students in the program. Close to 80 third-year students participate in an integrative block of four courses every spring semester, namely International Marketing, International Finance, International Accounting, and International Management. The integrative study block at Bryant has used a business simulation for the last 10 years.

Cesim Global Challenge

In the curriculum reform at Aalto Mikkeli carried out in 2014, the program director considered whether to base the new capstone course on a simulation. One of the Bryant faculty in the integrative block was teaching in Mikkeli and

was involved in developing the capstone course there and teaching it for several years. In spite of this link between the two programs, they are different enough to still provide a stark contrast between educational contexts.

Introducing a capstone in Mikkeli also met the AACSB call for greater use of experiential learning activities. The program director chose Cesim's Global Challenge (Cesim, 2018) as the business simulation for the capstone. Cesim, a Finnish company with an extensive international reach and a wide range of customizable business simulations, provides simulations suitable for students in programs from undergraduate to executive MBAs. More than 500,000 people from various cultures and backgrounds around the world have used Cesim Business Simulation Games (Cesim, 2018). Participants have played the role of managers working in the ICT business, for example, producing and marketing mobile phones or tablets for regional and/or global markets. Working in teams, they make decisions on a range of matters, including what to produce, where to produce it, how to finance production schedules, and which market segments to target. The simulation was chosen for its suitability to international business students and its customer support (e.g. Cesim's CEO conducts the orientation for Mikkeli students).

Strategy Game (BSG)

The Bryant integrative block program was designed from scratch and drew on best practices in industry. The Business Strategy Game (Thompson, Stappenbeck, Reidenbach, Thrasher, & Harms, 2019) was chosen because of its functionality and customer support. It has solid assurance of learning benefits, as indicated by thousands of its users. According to their website, between March 2018 and March 2019, BSG was used by roughly 511 universities and 50,342 students in 52 countries (https://www.bsg-online.com/stats/adoption-list.html).

As with the Aalto program, teams do not compete beyond Bryant, although BSG processes do allow teams to compare their performance with worldwide data. The product (sport shoes) is tangible and easy to relate to, from the point of view of supply chain and manufacturing procedures, and is easy to understand. There is also a long tradition of shoe making in New England, so that Bryant is able to take advantage of local executives and factories (New Balance, Reebok). In the next section, we examine how teamwork is managed in both contexts.

Teamwork in Our Two Simulation Cases

In both our contexts, students are members of a tight-knit community, which serves as a backdrop to their work in the business simulation teams. While the geographic contexts differ, the learning processes are similar as are the expectations about teamwork performance.

The intense nature of the Mikkeli program, with students in the classroom for three hours daily, contributes to the "Mikkeli spirit". Most students know each other, so assigning team membership can be challenging. In 2016, faculty assigned students to teams. In 2017, faculty invited applications for team leader roles and teams self-selected around the 18 who applied, without further faculty intervention. In 2018, the cohort completed a self-assessment questionnaire indicating levels of competence in relevant content topics, team role (Belbin, 2018), and learning style (Honey & Mumford, 1986) preferences. All participants received an invitation to apply for a team leader role—18 leaders were needed and 12 responded. All 12 were interviewed and assigned randomly to 1 of 12 teams created by the faculty relying on the self-reported data. The remaining six teams chose to be designated as "self-directed", although most developed a degree of formal leadership structure as the task progressed. Thus, three different approaches have been used, with the 2017 and 2018 cohorts completing assessment tasks that specifically required reflection on the team experience. In 2018, one student noted in their individual reflection report (an assessment task):

> On teamwork, I am the only [nationality] in the team and I can tell clearly the differences in the way we think. While the [nationality] are really optimistic, I am rather more skeptical and attentive to problems. In the beginning, I hesitated to disagree … However, keeping in mind that my contribution will be valuable to the team, I do my analysis and based on that, speak up. The result is open discussions. We [have] friendly debate about our views and after considering all aspects, reach conclusion as a team. I think knowing how to express my opinions and convince others is one of the most crucial skills I strengthened after Capstone. (Aalto, 2018)

This student seems to be describing the kind of cohesive team experience where members, as Lencioni suggests:

- Trust one another
- Engage in unfiltered conflict around ideas
- Commit to decisions and plans of action
- Hold one another accountable for delivering against those plans
- Focus on the achievement of collective results

At Bryant, prior to commencing the integrative block, students are assigned to their groups and perform a variety of other classwork in the same teams (case analysis, presentations, projects, etc.). They are typically second-semester juniors returning from a study abroad semester. Students are not required to assign functions to members. The group has been a cohort since freshman year, so there is generally a high sense of camaraderie and competition. Teams are assigned by the instructor/s at random, and this practice has been in place since the beginning of the integrative block. Students are assigned to teams by a faculty member who serves as the coordinator. Teams have (as much as possible) functional, gender, and nationality balance.

In the Bryant IB program, there are a number of instances where discussion about team experience occurs. First, every team has a faculty consultant. Second, there is a midterm private presentation with the four members of faculty. Third, there are mandatory peer evaluations. Fourth, students make their final presentation in front of the four faculty (acting as a board of directors). Finally, on their final exam, students are given a survey in which they are asked to express their comfort/mastery in a series of areas, one of which is teamwork.

After comparing the two cases, and after three years of outcomes for teams and individual students, we have considered whether the *method* of selecting teams is less important and has less impact on results than the fact that the *team experience is itself* a matter for attention throughout the learning experience. Our approach involves placing a spotlight on dynamics within a team as an important dimension of performance, in addition to other measures built into the simulation.

The Role of Teamwork in the Outcomes of the Simulations

An online business simulation provides many opportunities for immediate and regular evaluation of the outcomes of team-based decisions. However, the actual impact of team dynamics may not be readily observable to team members until sometime after the events have ended. We have been observing the quality of decision-making trends over time, and note that, in the Aalto case, for example, compared to all teams completing the Global Challenge in the same year—the Mikkeli 2017 results saw three teams rank higher than the 80th percentile, with 7 teams ranking in the 60th percentile or less. In 2018, the results were markedly better since 13 teams were in the 80th percentile or more, and only one team was in the 60th percentile or less, representing a clear improvement in performance. In 2018, in debriefing sessions and final reflection assignments, students speculated on the reasons for their success,

with some focusing on teamwork and others on the specific nature of the simulation. Some students thought they might have been given an easier set of tasks than in past years, but Cesim's CEO, Veijo Kyösti, affirmed that the algorithms were in no way changed. He indicated that the focus on the quality of team actions more likely promoted the quality of the work leading to growth and stability in their universes, while the short time period could also be a key factor in promoting focused and intensive teamwork.

Our research on student experience of simulations includes a survey conducted each year for the past three years, of both Aalto University and Bryant University students. The survey focused on a range of issues, and the following section summarizes the findings related to teamwork.

Survey Sample

Our sample comprises over 300 responses from Bryant and Aalto students compiled over a three-year period (2016–2018). Both universities have a similar gender ratio and proportion of foreign students. Students were asked about these elements (Table 26.1):

- Team chemistry
- Knowledge of team members
- Clear team roles
- Diversity in my team
- I am comfortable working with my team

Table 26.1 Sample description

	Number of students	Percentage of students
Aalto	**118**	**38**
Domestic	79	25
Male	30	10
Female	49	16
Foreigner	39	13
Male	19	6
Female	20	6
Bryant	**193**	**62**
Domestic	149	48
Male	74	24
Female	75	24
Foreigner	44	14
Male	18	6
Female	26	8
Grand total	**311**	**100**

In the survey, we asked students about their experience, their learning, and about a number of team dynamics-related questions. First, we wanted to know if students' learning was simply a product of their performance in the game. Students that did not do well could "tune out" and not benefit from the experience. For this reason, we asked students to rate their perceived performance. Both simulations provide objective performance metrics, such as investor return, market share, and ROE. Students are encouraged in class to look at other metrics as well, such as relative performance (i.e. compared to last year or compared to a particular competitor), reactions to competitor's moves, and changes in the environment. Students were not instructed to use any specific metric for this question. We then asked students to rate how much they enjoyed the experience. We also asked students to rate how much they agreed to a number of statements about team dynamics dealing with diversity, roles, comfort, chemistry, and knowledge of team members. Table 26.2 shows the basic descriptive statistics for these variables in our survey. We note that regardless of the differences in the way the classes are delivered, there are no significant differences in the way students at both universities like the experience of participating in the simulation and their reported levels of performance. In fact, results of a t-test suggest that the null hypothesis of equal means cannot be rejected for either variable. We also note other similarities; team dynamics, team chemistry, and being comfortable with teammates are the most important areas of concern for students of both universities. At the same time, both universities rate having clear roles as the least important of the team factors. We do note that students from Bryant University assign statistically higher levels of importance to four of the five team dynamics, the exception being "I am comfortable working with my team".

Given how similar the ratings are for our two universities, we explored this further by looking at the correlations between perceived performance, liking the simulation, and our team dynamic variables. Table 26.3 shows the correlations among our variables. We first noted that correlations are generally low and second that the highest correlation seems to be between having clear team roles and knowledge of team members (0.35), while the lowest is between feeling comfortable with their teams and clear roles (−0.06). There are several interesting findings. First, students are able to separate their performance from their enjoyment of the learning experience; the correlation is below 30%. Students from both universities rated chemistry as the most important team dynamics variable; however, this importance does not translate on performance or liking the experience since their correlations are all below 10%. Being comfortable and diversity, on the other hand, score higher on correlations with performance and liking the game. While we

Table 26.2 Descriptive statistics

	1 = very well; 5 = poorly	1 = very much; 5 = not at all	Your team: Please rate how much you agree with the following statements. 1 = strongly agree 5 = strongly disagree				
Row labels	How do you rate your team's performance in the simulation?[a]	How much did you like the experience of participating in the simulation?	Diversity in my team helped us	I am comfortable working with my team	Team chemistry is very important	Knowledge of team members is very important	Clear team roles is very important
Aalto	**1.97**	**2.29**	**2.72**	**1.61**	**1.59**	**1.90**	**2.92**
Male	1.98	1.86	2.76	1.55	1.65	2.04	2.94
Female	1.96	2.59	2.70	1.65	1.55	1.80	2.90
Bryant	**2.11**[b]	**2.31**[b]	**2.22**[c]	**1.59**[b]	**1.31**[c]	**1.62**[c]	**2.31**[c]
Male	2.08	2.17	2.23	1.49	1.42	1.59	2.42
Female	2.15	2.43	2.21	1.67	1.20	1.64	2.21
Grand total	**2.06**	**2.30**	**2.41**	**1.59**	**1.41**	**1.72**	**2.54**

Note: Students from both universities were given the same questionnaire with questions about specific aspects of their team dynamics. Responses reflect their perception

[a]Simulations offer periodic and cumulative absolute metrics of performance, such as investor return and market share. During debriefing sessions, students also reflect on relative aspects, such as their reaction to competitors, overcoming difficulties, and mistakes. Students were not instructed to use any one of these

[b]*T*-test comparing means cannot reject null hypothesis μBryant = μAalto

[c]*T*-test comparing means rejects null hypothesis $p < 0.01$ μBryant $\neq$ μAalto

Table 26.3 Pearson correlations

	How do you rate your team's performance in the simulation?	How much did you like the experience of participating in the simulation?	Team chemistry is very important	Knowledge of team members is very important	Clear team roles is very important	Diversity in my team helped us	I am comfortable working with my team
How do you rate your team's performance in the simulation?	1						
How much did you like the experience of participating in the simulation?	0.27	1					
Team chemistry is very important	0.04	0.07	1				
Knowledge of team members is very important	0.06	0.07	0.32	1			
Clear team roles is very important	−0.02	0.10	0.22	0.35	1		
Diversity in my team helped us	0.20	0.18	0.29	0.15	0.30	1	
I am comfortable working with my team	0.30	0.23	0.11	−0.02	−0.06	0.31	1

cannot establish causality, the data supports the notion that those students that feel comfortable and those that value diversity, report a better experience and performance.

Despite the differences in class settings, students at the two universities seemed to value the experience of the simulation. As an outcome of the process, we wanted to better understand the "why" of their responses. We asked our students to answer the question: "Name three benefits of learning via a simulation like this one". Out of 311 participants, 161 students responded to this question. An analysis of their responses to this open-ended question can be seen in Table 26.4. It shows that there are three areas that the students value. These are the real-world appeal of the simulation, the teamwork it requires, and the overall learning resulting from the process. Learning is the most cited benefit of the simulation by students, 81 (26%) responses allude to it. Teamwork follows closely as an important learning benefit with 70 (22.5%) responses mentioning it. The realistic feeling or dimension that the simulation brings is the third most cited benefit with 62 (20%) students referring to it. To put things in perspective, we looked into other often cited benefits, such as Finance (12 responses), Strategy (20 responses), and Marketing (11 responses), that fail to reach 5% of students' responses.

The experience and the comments made by students show that they realized how team dynamics would work in real life and got a taste of how to deal with it; they also realized the limitations of a simulation. The way in which students do, or do not, understand the importance of group dynamics and group formation is illustrated in this comment:

> In my opinion, even though it was nice and easy to work with friends, it doesn't reflect real life. If the capstone is meant to reflect real life business running, it would be reasonable to think that the teams were divided by considering everyone's personal skills set and not who we are friends with. For example, the teams could be constructed by first asking each student what are their special skills (e.g. what courses have they chosen for their electives). Based on those, more diverse teams would be assigned by the professors (board of directors), quite like in real life when management team is constructed. (Aalto, 2016)

While making a valid point about the need to balance teams in some specific ways, this writer missed the point of the vital nature of collaborative understanding of the full range of business functions in the real world. However, in 2017 and 2018—as a result of considering the issues raised by this and other

Table 26.4 Summary of selected comment clusters

Concept	Count total	Count and percentage of Aalto	Aalto examples	Count and percentage of Bryant	Bryant examples
Team/ team working	70	27 (23%)	• "It promotes teamwork and team decisions" 2017 • "…helps to work as a team more efficiently and understand each other better". 2017	43 (22%)	• "Team-based skills and endurance" 2016 • "…you are able to get more than one opinion or perspective because your team members may be able to help you further understand a concept you don't" 2018
Learn/ learning/ learned	81	37 (31%)	• "…To learn by doing" Aalto 2017 • "…many of the things we have learned during the two years of studying come together and we can combine the knowledge" 2017 • "…learning to deal with uncertain decisions" 2018 • "…learning that studying can be fun, getting a bigger picture of everything that goes on in a company" 2018	44 (23%)	• "…real life exposure, not just book learning" 2017 • "…learning that every group you work with will not be great" 2018
Real	62	14 (12%)	• "…It's more like real world than usual teaching methods" 2017 • "…interesting way to learn and apply previous knowledge into 'real world' situation" 2017	48 (25%)	• "…real world practice—approach" 2017 • "…a real world setting" 2018
Learn + team	22	8 (7%)	• "…People learn to collaborate and work effectively in a group" 2016	14 (7%)	• "…learning how to deal with team members" 2018 • "…the team setting helps people learn to collaborate and work effectively in a group" 2018

related feedback—teams were created that more explicitly and obviously balanced differing study orientations and personal preferences. The results were less obviously different than might have been expected. Thus, as educators, while still attending to team arrangements, we are reminding students of the real-world complexity which the simulation replicates and inviting them to heed the reality of needing to "find (and assert) their place" in business teams.

Students also understand what is at stake regarding team members' performance, as is clearly stated in the following comments:

> It was a great experience, but one thing that bothered me was carrying one team member. The quality of his work was poor and he did not participate in the decision making. I would have loved to have the possibility to fire him, like a real CEO would. (Aalto, 2017)

> …you learn how teams work or don't work and that free-riding can be hard to prevent but someone has to take the responsibility. (Bryant, 2018)

Peer evaluation instruments are built into both business simulation platforms and provide opportunities for students to give direct feedback to their peers. And, of course, the students are frequently reminded of the importance of managing their team by contributing fairly and "calling out" lapses in effort. As with workplaces, so with student teams, it is not always going to be the case that this will occur, so every year, we are slightly more forceful in providing initial admonitions about "free-riding" and exercise of personal responsibility.

Comments provided at the end of the course show that after completing it, students realize that the benefits of simulation learning come not only from the functional areas (finance, strategy, marketing, etc.) but to a great extent also from teamwork, a realistic environment, and a better learning experience. They realize that dealing with unpredictable and ambiguous situations, along with the stress related to team dynamics, is integral to the experience. They express an understanding that unlike other courses, effort does not necessarily translate into performance but it does transform learning.

Table 26.4 above shows clusters of student comments related to teamwork. The comments make it clear that our students value learning by doing but might lack experiences of applying concepts and theories previously learned to "real live" cases. This relates to the Abstract Conceptualization part of Kolb's framework. However, working in teams facilitates combining strengths, as also in conceptualization. As one student put it: "you are able to get more than one opinion or perspective because your team members may be able to help you further understand a concept you don't". Simulations also provide a

means of active experimentation, although students seem well aware of the stylized decision-making setting. And although this student remarked on the value of sharing of strengths, we found that students in both contexts are reluctant to assign specific roles in the simulation teams. Finally, links with "real-world" activity are identified and appreciated, indicating a valuing of the opportunity to operate "as if" real for a time.

Conclusions

Is using a simulation-based strategy to support and extend learning intrinsically more effective than other teaching methods? Our experiences as instructors in integrative courses, together with our concurrent research, suggest that it is particularly useful in encouraging students to focus on practical applications of theory and knowledge-based understanding of concepts such as market forces, global movements in manufacturing, the effects of strategy and planning in pressure situations, and financial decision-making.

We have highlighted the striking similarities encountered in the use of two different simulations run in integrative courses on different sides of the Atlantic. In particular, we conclude:

- Capstone courses, due to their inherently integrative nature, call for innovative approaches that challenge students to use knowledge and skills from several functional areas in simulated decision-making in teams. Online simulations match these expectations very well, but instructors face many choices as to how to use them.
- Many simulations are team-based, so instructors will need to choose whether students self-select their teams or are assigned to them. The evidence so far is not conclusive. Various methods of team selection have all proved to be adequate to the task of shaping effective team performance and generating required learning outcomes. One important factor is ensuring that teams have an adequate balance of relevant skills and interests (finance, marketing, etc.).
- Having students play professional roles (e.g. the "finance specialist") has not been explored in depth in our study, but it seems that roles within teams have not been important to students.
- Reflection on one's own biases and their impact on team dynamics has been introduced particularly at Aalto Mikkeli. For example, students were made aware of the pitfalls of "group think". Several other types of reflection

assignments have been used, with overall success. This aspect of learning in a simulation could be expanded in future iterations.

- In both contexts, the instructors were transparent with students about what a simulation can and cannot do, for example, explaining that the decision-making process is designed to mimic (but is never actually intended to be) real-world strategic management, moving somewhat out of the classroom and into the business environment. Both IB programs are highly respected for their academic rigor, but the students enrolled in them are also eager to get as close to "real life" as possible.
- Business simulations, of the kind examined here, provide a powerful context for making explicit the importance of understanding that learning is a cyclic process, which has different points of focus at each step in the cycle. Kolb and Kolb (2017) note that such experientially oriented learning spaces are multilevel and can describe learning and development in commensurate ways at the level of the individual, group, and organization.

Integrating previously acquired knowledge and skills into a single decision-making process provides clear, added value to programs such as ours, but also poses some challenges.

Returning to the challenge of allocating students to teams in a simulation, a future extension of this project will explore the extent to which self-selected teams may be more or less effective than those set up by instructors. Ongoing analysis of available data will examine whether randomly assigned teams have a greater or lesser impact on satisfaction with team environments and on the quality of decision-making, as evidenced in simulation results. Thus far, no strong correlation has emerged, but we do anticipate finding some interesting variations emerging from the different modes of team creation.

The results of our research to date do confirm, however, that the role of teams in experiential learning is significant, not least because of the manner in which they contribute to providing students with an opportunity to experience "first hand" the complexities of real-time managerial decision-making. Online business simulations like Global Challenge and BSG show what can be possible when building an integrative course around use of a business simulation. The opportunities for innovative international business education make the challenges of implementation well worth it.

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27

Help: What Do I Do Now? Practical Approaches to Introducing a Computer-Based Experiential Simulation into the IB Curriculum

Elizabeth A. Alexander

Introduction

Computer simulations can be defined as 'an experiential learning activity that allows learners to visualize situations and see the results of manipulating variables in a dynamic environment' (Feinstein, Mann, & Corsun, 2002, p. 741). Simulations that seek to replicate strategic decision making in companies are able to model complexities of the competitive and international environments through repeated decision rounds, thereby enabling a dynamic and competitive interplay between teams across time, in which students simulate the decision-making processes of a company's management team. This design naturally lends itself to the experiential learning cycle (concrete experience, reflection, abstract conceptualization, and active experimentation) that provides a strong pedagogical underpinning to the curriculum design. Formally, experiential learning is a process through which participants re-examine, test, and reflect on prior learning and new experiences, while resolving differences through the immersion of the 'whole' person in a series of activities that challenges beliefs and assumptions as individuals create their own knowledge to make decisions and solve problems (Kolb & Kolb, 2009).

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M. A. Gonzalez-Perez et al. (eds.), *The Palgrave Handbook of Learning and Teaching International Business and Management*, https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-030-20415-0_27

Simulations have risen in importance as pedagogic devices since institutions seek to demonstrate transparency in assessing a range of practice-based skills and graduate attributes, such as the ability to work in teams, displaying self-reliance, or professional ethical practice, especially for accreditation and quality assurance (Wheeling, Miller, & Slocombe, 2015). In a survey of Association to Advance Collegiate Schools of Business (AACSB), Kelley, Tong, and Choi (2010) highlighted that 22% of institutions use simulations as a mechanism to assess business skills and 26% systematically assess team working. However, a perceived lack of knowledge by faculty members (44%) to design and undertake this assessment represents a major blockage to its effective utilization. These insights are worrying since, in the UK for example, the Quality Assurance Agency for Higher Education (QAA) expects all master's students graduating from generalist master's degrees in business and management to have 'strongly developed interpersonal and team working skills' that include demonstrating empathy toward others, negotiation and persuasion in a team environment (QAA, 2015, p. 10) through a curriculum that enables 'authentic assessment' and real-world learning. For master's degrees targeted at students with no or little prior work experience (i.e. pre-experience master's), the QAA expects programs should develop 'theory into practice' and recognizes that one pedagogic method for this is through a business simulation. The AACSB's Standard 8 (AACSB, 2018) mandate for assurance of learning (AoL) provides further challenges to institutions in ensuring that individual learning objectives are assessed in courses that utilize some form of team-based experiential learning, such as a computer-based simulation.

While computer-based simulations may be perceived as easy-to-use, off-the-shelf packages to deliver experiential learning, a range of issues needs to be addressed, especially in the planning stage, to achieve the sorts of effective learning experiences and objectives envisaged above. This chapter aims to provide guidance and models, and later suggests practical protocols for implementing a simulation in either postgraduate or undergraduate courses,[1] primarily in international business (IB) strategy. The following sections outline one such simulation and provide examples of curriculum design, learning objectives, and suggestions on how to implement this experiential learning activity.

[1] The word 'course' is used here to mean a unit of learning (a 'module' in the UK) within an overall program of study.

The Simulation in Brief

As part of the program design for both undergraduate and master's degrees in international business in a large public university in the UK, experiential learning in the form of a computer-based simulation is utilized as an integrative, problem-based international business capstone that draws together strands of learning from across the respective program. The chosen simulation, PhoneVentures, is an online simulation created by Edumundo,[2] based in the Netherlands, that integrates multiple dimensions of international business in a global hi-tech industry (the smartphone industry). The simulation assists in developing a number of skills and competencies including fostering transferable skills in team working, negotiation, conflict management, leadership, self-organization, and communication skills, as well as higher order cognitive skills associated with problem solving, all of which business schools are seeking to develop in their graduates (Levant, Coulmont, & Sandu, 2016).

Details on how the simulation can be acquired and costs are available on the provider's website, and an introductory video explains the simulation.[3] PhoneVentures is one of a number of simulations available but is most suitable for final-year undergraduate or master's students. Running the simulation requires approximately 1.5–2 hours per decision round, and 8 rounds plus a practice round are recommended as optimal (though up to 12 rounds can be run). During the simulation, students participate in teams to run a global company while competing with other teams in the industry. Experience suggests that teams should be of 4–5 students so each has a defined role in their 'virtual' company. Up to 12 companies can participate in one simulation (referred to as 'Worlds' in PhoneVentures). As the number of students increases or timetabling or room constraints impose limitations, the simulation can easily scale as it is possible to create multiple 'Worlds' of different numbers of teams in each. Access to Internet-connected computers is required (preferably in collaborative learning spaces as explained later).

All teams begin at the same point, inheriting an existing business that seeks to expand its global operations. The simulation requires students to design and implement a strategy over a period of years, make decisions in a team environment, and deal with the uncertainties of change caused by their

[2] See https://www.edumundo.nl/businessgames/managementgame/business-abroad-managementgame and information https://www.docdroid.net/3BUMhps/quick-start-phone-ventures-2019.pdf

[3] See https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=B9DKMg426q4&t=1s

competitors (other teams) and world news that will challenge team performance. Students determine their organization's values (including Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR)) and set annual targets from a balanced scorecard in line with their competitive strategy. Students practice managing all aspects of running this business, making a wide range of decisions each year regarding R&D, product development, marketing and market entry, distribution and logistics, human resource management and development, as well as the management team, structure of the organization, and the degree of autonomy for the local manager. At the end of the simulation, all teams are required to deliver an oral presentation evaluating their international strategies, implementation, and achieved results.

The online simulation provides easy-to-use menu-driven choices with help screens. After each decision round, the simulation advances and the results of the competitive decisions across the teams are processed within a few minutes. Each team sees its own results (including financial statements, inventory levels, staffing changes, market analyses, and achievements against targets set in their strategic plan), and can see an overview of competitive positions in the industry. Each year, new countries become available for firms to enter, changing the competitive context and increasing the dynamism and complexity of the simulation.

A key feature of PhoneVentures is the ability to partially tailor the simulation to your curricular needs by selecting which countries become available for entry in which decision rounds. Countries are categorized by world region with six options in Europe, three in Asia, four in the Americas, four in the Pacific/Southeast Asia, and four in the Middle East and Africa. Thus, there are options to focus the simulation on emerging market countries as well as developed economies. Country characteristics are modeled to be as realistic as possible on such factors as market and segment sizes, cost structures, and presence of local competitors as well as cultural dimensions (using Hofstede's categories).

Students are challenged in each period with news events that also affect operating and market conditions. These are updated by the provider to ensure relevance to the international context. News items in 2018 included announcements by the US president of the measures to protect smartphone companies with HQs in the USA (protecting US jobs and tax income), uncertainty caused by the investigation of fraud at a supplier, penalties relating to security breaches of personal data and privacy rules, working conditions, market uncertainty surrounding Brexit, populism in Europe, and the effect of tariffs on the trade between China and the USA.

Setting Learning Objectives[4] for the Simulation Experience

The use of PhoneVentures as a simulation in an IB strategy course provides a vehicle in the development and assessment of higher level cognitive learning objectives (Anderson & Krathwohl, 2001; Bloom, 1956) as well as those in the affective domain (Kennedy, 2006; Krathwohl, Bloom, & Masia, 1964) central to experiential learning (Kolb & Kolb, 2009). However, as noted in the introduction to this chapter, one of the practical challenges for business schools lies in setting intended learning objectives that are capable of measurement given the chosen pedagogy and in designing effective (and efficient) assurance of learning (Kelley et al., 2010). In this context, the use of PhoneVentures has to be clearly thought out against the overall program and intended program learning goals. The following sections provide selected examples of learning outcomes in both the cognitive and affective domains that can be achieved through PhoneVentures.

Setting Learning Objectives in the Cognitive Domain

Learning objectives in this domain demonstrate increasingly higher levels of complexity from the baseline of knowledge and understanding through application and analysis to evaluation and synthesis. Bloom's original work placed evaluation above synthesis but Anderson and Krathwohl (2001) reversed these, arguing that the ability to take ideas and create something new or develop new relationships (synthesis) required the ability to evaluate ideas or materials. Intended learning objectives at the master's level focus mainly on demonstrating achievement of higher order, complex cognitive skills of synthesis and evaluation, whereas the final year of an undergraduate program normally encompasses application through evaluation (see Table 27.1).

In the cognitive domain, the ability to evaluate options based on analyzing disparate data with respect to key theoretical frameworks provides the foundation upon which specific learning objectives can be developed for PhoneVentures. Depending on the program's learning goals, objectives specifying the skills and knowledge that a student will be able to demonstrate through PhoneVentures might include the ability to critically evaluate strategic choices in a global and dynamic context or to create and implement a coherent international strategy. Examples are included in Table 27.1 at different levels relevant for final-year undergraduate or master's students.

[4] The term 'learning objectives' rather than 'learning outcomes' (commonly found in the British higher education system) is used here for consistency across the Handbook.

Table 27.1 Example learning objectives in the cognitive domain associated with PhoneVentures

Cognitive Domain[a]	Descriptor	Example learning objectives	Level
Knowledge	Ability to recall facts, such as listing or defining	Not appropriate as learning objectives for final-year undergraduate or master's courses	
Comprehension	Ability to understand learned information, such as classifying or explaining		
Application	Ability to use information previously learned in new situations	• Show how appropriate tools and frameworks can be used to interpret data from the simulation to inform decision making	Final-year undergraduate
Analysis	Ability to distinguish component parts and show relationships between parts	• Analyze ambiguous management information drawn from different functional areas across the simulation • Identify performance issues for the organization • Diagnose issues for an organization operating in an international context	
Evaluation	Ability to justify and validate ideas or information against criteria	• Critically evaluate the performance of an organization through applying appropriate international business tools and frameworks • Propose solutions for creating and implementing a strategy for an organization operating in an international context • Demonstrate an advanced understanding of the complexity involved in integrating managerial decision making across business functions	Master's
Synthesis	Ability to create new meaning through drawing together separate ideas or information	• Design a strategy for an organization operating in an international context • Formulate recommendations for strategic decision making in a dynamic environment	

[a]Cognitive domain based on Bloom (1956) and Anderson and Krathwohl's (2001) revision

Setting Learning Objectives in the Affective Domain

Learning objectives in the affective domain are concerned with assessing the areas of subjective behavior related to values, personal goals, and attitudes. This might include things such as the ability to recognize perceptual differences between individuals, awareness of personal behavior, ethical awareness, and internalizing values. As with the cognitive domain, affective behavior aligns to a set of categories arranged on a continuum from low to highest (Krathwohl et al., 1964) and is based on the extent to which individuals are seen to internalize attitudes, values, or affective responses as their worldviews. These categories, shown in Table 27.2, are labeled as *receiving* (being aware of certain ideas and being willing to accept them), *responding* (showing engagement with the ideas by actively complying with the behavior), *valuing* (being seen to value certain ideas by supporting the expected behavior), *organizing* (actively integrating the ideas by discussing how they fit into existing value sets), and *internalizing* the value system (through consistently acting according to the values). Frequently, expectations abound within business schools that students develop a number of competences in this domain, but these are often unmeasured (Kelley et al., 2010). Table 27.2 provides one example of a learning objective for team working, which reflects different levels that students might demonstrate in the PhoneVentures simulation.

Table 27.2 Learning objectives in the affective domain

Level	Descriptor	Example learning objectives: *To work effectively through participating and interacting productively with others in a team to complete the simulation tasks.*
Receiving	Being aware of certain ideas and being willing to accept them	Is aware of and responds to expectations of working in a team
Responding	Showing engagement with the ideas by actively complying with the behavior	Actively complies with the requirements of working in a team
Valuing	Being seen to value certain ideas by supporting the expected behavior	Supports the process of working in a team
Organizing	Actively integrating the ideas by discussing how they fit into existing value sets	Formulates or examines how own contribution to working in a team can be developed
Internalizing	Consistently acting according to the values	Manages and resolves issues in the process of working in a team

Addressing Issues in Implementing the Simulation

Having chosen to undertake a computer-based simulation and identified the intended learning objectives, experience suggests a number of other key challenges arise in preparing to implement the simulation: devising the delivery pattern, choosing (when possible) the physical estate, preparing or developing the staffing resource, setting the context for student expectations (Auster & Wylie, 2006), deciding on the criteria for team formation, and considering how to formalize learning within the experiential learning cycle pedagogy.

Devising the Delivery Pattern and Scheduling

In planning for PhoneVentures, instructors will need to provide scheduled time to include a start-up session in which team formation and orientation are undertaken, a practice round with debriefing, and typically eight (or more) 'live' decision-making rounds. A decision round can take anywhere from 75 minutes to 2 hours, and shorter in-class delivery patterns should be supplemented with a requirement for teams to meet outside of class time (including virtually) to complete their team-based debriefing (see 'Applying the Experiential Learning Cycle' later). Students frequently comment on the need for time to be made available to process decisions and experience, and empirical work suggests that class time should be scheduled for computer-based simulations, and collaborative learning more generally, to facilitate a meeting of all team members (Kidder & Bowes-Sperry, 2012). PhoneVentures can also be run virtually for those who need to employ some form of blended or distance learning.

In setting up PhoneVentures, the delivery pattern and scheduling of class activities should be taken into account so that upon completion of a decision round, the simulation can be automatically advanced at a set time. The simulation is flexible to meet the needs of multiple delivery patterns, for example, it can be run in typical 10-, 12- or 14-week semesters or an intensive bloc as a standalone simulation or integrated into a theory course. Examples for typical US and UK delivery patterns are given in Table 27.3. If students are scheduled in different sections or workshops, but you wish them to compete in one 'World,' then the simulation can be advanced at a time suitable to both. The example schedules assume that an assessed team presentation concludes the simulation experience within a strategy course.

Table 27.3 PhoneVentures sample delivery patterns (international business strategy course)

	24-week UK 20-credit	14-week US semester	12-week UK 10-credit	10-week US quarter	One-week Bloc
Delivery pattern/model	12 × 1 hr. lecture 12 × 2 hr. workshop	2 × 1.25 hrs. weekly	6 × 1 hr. lecture 10 × 1.5 hr. workshop	2 × 1.75 hrs. weekly	5 days
Activity	Weeks	Weeks	Weeks	Weeks	Day
Core theory	1–12	1–7	1–6	1–4	1–2
Introduction to simulation team formation	13	8	7	5	2
Practice round	13	8	7	5	2
Decision rounds					
1	14	9	8	6	3
2	15	9	8	6	3
3	16	10	9	7	3
4	17	10	9	7	4
5	18	11	10	8	4
6	19	11	10	8	4
7	20	12	11	9	5
8	21	12	11	9	5
Debriefing/presentations	22	13	12	10	5
Presentations	23–24 (or assessment period)	14	12 (or assessment period)	10	Assessment period

Choosing the Physical Estate

The physical learning space can affect the effectiveness of implementing a team-based computer simulation since students require collaborative space as well as access to a large computer display so that all team members can view simultaneously. Technology-enhanced active learning or collaborative flexible-learning classrooms, which is flexible, or collaborative learning classrooms are designed to provide a superior resource for experiential learning, including team-based simulations (Stern & Etheridge, 2008). They enable students to collaborate in small groups with seating and tables arranged in clusters supported with decentralized instructional technology (large display screen computers) co-located within the clusters under the control of students. Assigning the activity to a standard computer lab is insufficient as the set-up is for individualized learning (where each student is seated in front of his or her own computer screen). Likewise, relying on the use of laptops in a standard teaching room is not optimal as, although students can work collaboratively, 'access' to the computer and visualization is limited to a few people.

Preparing the Staffing Resource

Selecting and preparing staff to effectively support experiential learning is central to its success, especially because instructors play an important role in shaping attitudes toward collaborative learning. For example, Chapman and van Auken (2001, p. 121) find that 'as the instructor becomes a more positive, proactive agent on behalf of group work, students' beliefs in the benefits of group work and their overall attitudes toward it improve' and at the same time, concerns about equity in grades decrease. Likewise, in a study assessing the effectiveness of simulations, Baker, Underwood, and Thakur (2017) highlighted the importance of the instructor having knowledge of the simulation in order to create the right learning environment (akin to the notion of 'safety') and stimulating student engagement. For staff members who have not used PhoneVentures previously, the learning curve can be partly supported through the supplier (e.g. online materials and instructor training), but also through shadowing an existing user.

The underpreparedness of many instructors to effectively engage with team-based learning (Riebe, Girardi, & Whitsed, 2016) can be problematic in situations when introducing PhoneVentures at institutions where staff members have not had prior experience of experiential learning. One approach adopted to address this in a large teaching team was through co-teaching (one

instructor who had experience and one who did not) as a means of supporting staff in developing skills and confidence to work as facilitators of the team-based experiential learning pedagogy (Kliegl & Weaver, 2013).

Preparing the Students for Active Participation

For PhoneVentures to be an effective experiential learning experience, students need to understand their roles both as independent learners and as team members. For this reason, attention to expectation setting and team formation is an important element in planning the simulation. Sample text illustrating these expectations included in a student course guide is given in Fig. 27.1. This is reiterated during the scheduled activities and linked to the assessment of learning in the course. Students often reflect in their assignments on the importance of active engagement noting, for example, that 'we discovered that PhoneVentures would require us to make a series of complex decision and that failing to prepare for each decision round prior to entering the session would be extremely foolish.'

Course Guidance Notes: Setting Expectations

A key element of your learning is linked to success achieved through preparing for and participating in the PhoneVentures simulation. Class time is an exceptionally important part of this component in the course. You will spend most of your time on team-related activities geared towards understanding the data and making informed decisions for the simulation as part of an experiential learning process. Your instructor will be available to help guide and support your independent learning (but not to make decisions for you!).

Working together with others enables you to develop and practice essential analytical and critical thinking skills. This process of analysis, critical thinking, evaluating evidence and forming judgments is not, however, something you can just 'learn and remember.' The simulation presents you with a dynamic, ever changing environment in which you are forced to confront new situations. Because of the interactive learning process, you MUST engage with the materials in order to participate effectively. To get the most out of PhoneVentures you are expected to attend each session, to review the simulation output and to participate in the team decision-making and reflection process across a number of decision rounds, each representing one year.

You will need to develop your skills in working within a team and in confronting the challenges of teamwork to actively engage with notions of organizational citizenship. In addition, you will be expected to reflect on both the results of your PhoneVentures company and the team process to promote wider learning from the course. You will need to create a constitution that sets out how your team expects each team member to operate and establishes the basic expectations of behavior and practice (or your 'ground rules'). Invariably, and perhaps especially among friends, tension is likely to build during the team simulation experience. Experience shows the best way to help you manage any such conflict is by spending time to create a sound understanding of the parameters by which you wish to manage your working relationships.

Fig. 27.1 Setting student expectations

As part of the expectations setting process, Kemery and Stickney (2014) recommend introducing a peer evaluation instrument at the beginning of the course, positioning it as the students' 'job description.' Currently, PhoneVentures does not incorporate a peer evaluation instrument but an example we have utilized is provided in Fig. 27.4.

Developing Criteria for Team Formation

In setting expectations, attention should also be given to expectations of team size and team formation. Most simulations such as PhoneVentures work best with teams typically of between four and five students so that each team member has a clear functional responsibility that helps mitigate free-rider problems (McCorkle et al., 1999). In setting up their company in PhoneVentures, students are prompted to establish functional roles for each team member, such as HR director or finance director, and this assists in setting expectations relating to personal responsibility.

Whether teams should be self-forming or assigned by instructor is a decision about which the literature provides little clear guidance. Arguments in favor of self-formation often rely on the assumptions that this will placate students and allow them to find others, often like themselves and often monocultural groups, with whom they feel they can work best and achieve the best grade. Research suggests, however, that student concerns about a negative effect on their grades from working in diverse teams is unfounded (De Vita, 2002) while experience shows that self-selection can lead to its own problems—friends become exasperated when a team member does not contribute as expected and this can spill over into a personal conflict. Self-selection can also be detrimental to encouraging diversity, including diversity of functional skills such that the performance of the team can suffer (e.g. a self-selecting group comprised only of those majoring in finance can find they lack understanding of management and HR decisions). Finally, self-selection will often leave some students who either do not have social networks with others or have, in essence, been avoided by others. These students are then usually forced to work together and often these late forming 'default' teams pose the most difficulties for instructors to manage.

A difficulty with instructor-assigned teams is deciding on the criteria for establishing teams, especially as the literature does not provide clear evidence supporting the efficacy of one set of criteria over another. One approach is to combine self-selection with instructor-determined selection criteria. An advantage of this approach is that instructors can specify criteria relating to the learning objectives, such as working effectively in diverse teams or working effectively across cultures.

Applying the Experiential Learning Cycle in Curriculum Design to Formalize Learning

Implementing a simulation such as PhoneVentures requires understanding of curriculum design for experiential learning. Experiential learning immerses participants in an experience from which they are expected to reflect in developing a set of skills or attributes (Kolb & Kolb, 2009) that encompass a range of behavioral, emotional, and cognitive elements through a four-stage cycle of learning: from concrete experience, through reflection, and abstract conceptualization to active experimentation. Classroom-based activities associated with the PhoneVentures simulation are summarized at each stage of the cycle in Table 27.4.

Since learning (both cognitive and affective) occurs within the team setting, then time and structure have to be provided to help students formalize and evidence team-based learning. As Kolb and Kolb (2009, p. 53) note, a team's capacity 'to reflect on its experience through conversations that examine and integrate differences in members' experiences' contribute directly to the team's ability to learn. Evidence from student reflections on the PhoneVentures experience suggests they understood they were engaged in a cyclical learning process:

> For the most part, team-analysis sessions were used effectively. We began to use these sessions more and more efficiently as we became used to the software and to access data. This allowed us to enter each simulation year more prepared as we went in aware of the changes we wanted to make to strategy. This was only made possible by completing in-depth decision logs.
>
> The way we anticipated planning the simulation itself was creating routine and consistency. Before every round we sat together and held a briefing reflecting on the previous day, combined with a prospect of the coming day. After the result became public, we started analyzing and planning for the next. This process cycle meant we had time to re-evaluate our current practices.
>
> During the simulation we did self-reflection and analysis of the year. We looked at the issues that emerged in the simulation and discussed their impact before talking about what decisions we would make. In the process of continuous simulation and analysis and discussion, the tacit understanding between us increased, and we became more and more proficient in operating the company.

Evidence of learning through PhoneVentures can be demonstrated through creating tangible outputs (paper copies entered into a folder in-class or an electronic portfolio on a team page in a virtual learning environment) that can

Table 27.4 Experiential learning cycle: PhoneVentures simulation

Stage	Example learning activities: start-up phase	Example learning activities: decision round 1 through remainder *Each of the four stages is repeated as a cycle in subsequent rounds of the simulation*
1. Concrete experience	Ice breaker—team process exercise	• Enter decisionsConcrete experiences at this stage include managing personal relationships, conflict, and negotiation
2. Reflective observation	Step back from team process exercise: • Review the experience and perspectives raised • Question and discuss meaning of terms and implications with team members	• Complete learning logReflective observation occurs at each decision round during the simulation deliberately built in by the instructor to encourage formal 'taking stock'
3. Abstract conceptualization	Develop team constitution: • Make sense of Steps 1 and 2 • Interpret the activity • Draw comparisons with 'known' (e.g. frameworks or theory from prior learning or assigned readings) to frame learning.	• Review simulation results against theory and expectations • Review team process against constitution, theory, and expectations
4. Active experimentation	Put learning into action: Begin first steps of simulation requiring students to relate actions taken to learning from developing the team constitution (e.g. how to engage with team members; appreciating the consequences of actions on team dynamics).	• Decide on key decisions for next round. Active experimentation: (1) setting strategy to achieve an outcome for the virtual company being managed and (2) dealing with team process issues.

be reviewed with the instructor. Useful and appropriate outputs that can help formalize learning include: a team constitution; an outline strategic plan (produced within PhoneVentures); and most importantly for the team reflective process, completed decision learning logs (one for each decision round in PhoneVentures), a sample of which is provided in Fig. 27.2.

The portfolios provide evidence to support learning but can also be used to record any issues with the team, to support the assessment process, and to contribute to quality assurance processes. Student reflections indicate they

Decision Year _____ Company Name: _____

Instructions: Please complete this Decision Learning Log in brief, bullet-point format. Submit one copy for the Team via [*e.g. VLE or in-class*] by [*e.g. the end of the meeting period*].

1. State any major change made to your strategy from your plan
2. State the major issues and/or problems to be discussed
3. State what data have been used to inform your business decisions (i.e. the sources of evidence)
4. List what the team believes to be the main competitive pressures your company faces
5. List the MAJOR decisions or changes in previous operating policy you are going to make this year and briefly give the rationale behind the decision
6. Note any dissenting views and how any such differences were handled
7. Briefly review your **Team Dynamics** against the following criteria and write any comments below as justification for your score. Score your team on a scale of 1-10 where 10 is the absolute best, 5-6 is average, and 1 is the absolute worst

Criteria	Score 1-10
How clear was the team about the objectives for the last decision round?	
How well is the team allocating tasks and responsibilities?	
How well are team members fulfilling their allocated functional roles?	
How effective is communication amongst team members?	
How effective are team members at listening to each other?	
How well does the team respect alternative points of view?	
How well is the team sharing information and opinions?	
How well are influencing skills being used within the team?	
How well does the team manage time deadlines?	
How effective is the team at setting the priorities for decision-making?	
How well does the team involve all members in the business decision-making processes?	
Agree an overall score for the EFFECTIVENESS of your team's dynamics so far:	

Note: this is only about Team Dynamics **not** the Company Performance. The information you collect through this review process will be helpful in [*e.g. completing your Reflective Reports*]

8. What types of behavior are you seeing evidenced within the team?
9. List the key learning points so far and how the team might try to develop its team dynamics

Members of the team present at this meeting at _____ (Time) on _____ (date):
1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____

Fig. 27.2 Sample decision learning log

refer to their team-generated documents frequently as part of their learning experience and that they value the structure that these provide, as these extracts indicate:

> Our team contract was a game changer for our company as we revisited it in every meeting reminding ourselves about goals, responsibilities, norms, and our agreed ways to deal with business deadlock.

> The decision logs sped up actions in subsequent simulation years, as they represented a detailed description of our choices, and crucially documented our justifications for those choices.
>
> Our ground rules determined in the contract and continuous performance tracking via the Decision Log helped us to make sense of our actions and supported the implementation of appropriate measures.
>
> We decided to include in our Team Constitution some rules about freedom of expressing opinions and concerns as well as possibilities for open discussions to make sure the good ideas are not missed. Having applied the constitution enabled us to make key decisions via group consensus.

Essentially, formalizing learning in this way not only assists students in internalizing their learning but also provides transparency in the learning and assessment process.

PhoneVentures works well as a vehicle in the assessment of student learning and while a range of summative assessments can be utilized, it is important to focus on those that capture the stated learning objectives. Given the prior discussion in this chapter of learning objectives associated with complex attributes, such as teamworking effectiveness, a reflective report supported by a peer-evaluation instrument may be appropriate (Biggs & Tang, 2011). A recent study found only one-fifth of AACSB Schools assessed student reflection (Wheeling et al., 2015) and suggested that assessing individual learning from group-based activities is best supported through a combination of a summative reflection and

Reflective Writing Task:

Prepare an individually written report [*e.g. of 1000 words maximum*] that examines your learning from team dynamics during this course. You should draw on evidence (such as your Decision Learning Logs) to support your reflection. In general reflective writing asks you to:

- **Define an action**: Briefly describe one or more 'events' that provide you with the 'stimulant' that you will reflect upon.
- **Consider your response(s):** What were your reactions and feelings? Make some reasoned value judgments about the experience - what was good and bad about the experience?
- **Provide an interpretation of that response**: What sense can you make of the situation? Were your assumptions about the situation supported or challenged, did you gain any insight about yourself? Bring in ideas from outside the experience to help you (e.g. theory).
- **Draw conclusions from it**: What can be concluded from these experiences and your analyses? What can you conclude about your own situation, or ways of working and how these might change in the future?

Further guidance on reflective writing can be obtained from library resources or texts such as Williams, K., Woolliams, M., & Spiro, J. (2012). *Reflective Writing*. Basingstoke: Palgrave MacMillan.

Fig. 27.3 Reflective writing task in experiential learning

an instrument for peer- and self-assessment. However, the quality of the individual reflection matters and the assignment task should emphasize individual learning. A reflective writing task is suggested in Fig. 27.3 that can be adapted. The assessment criteria, based for example on Hatton and Smith's (1995) four levels—from essentially non-reflective descriptive writing, through descriptive reflection, dialogic reflection to critical reflection—can be adopted if the institution does not already have an assessment protocol for reflective writing.

Addressing Challenges in Managing Student Teams

A recent thematic analysis of literature on teamwork pedagogy highlights a number of constraints associated with teamwork (Riebe et al., 2016). Several of these have been addressed in the preceding sections; however, core challenges in team-based learning relate to students' perceptions of distributive justice for team assessments (Kidder & Bowes-Sperry, 2012), social loafing, and team conflict.

Managing Social Loafing Through Curriculum Design

Team-based learning is often fraught with concerns about social loafing (Jassawalla, Sashittal, & Malshe, 2009) and may be resisted by some instructors 'because of concerns about using peer evaluations or poorly designed group assignments and grading systems that in effect reward and encourage social loafing' (Cestone, Levine, & Lane, 2008, p. 69). A key challenge in introducing simulations lies in establishing transparent assessment processes that are robust enough to deal with student concerns for fairness and can appropriately assess intended learning objectives (Kemery & Stickney, 2014).

As indicated throughout this chapter, careful design of the experiential learning approach to support both formative and summative assessment can help minimize these concerns and are in line with Cestone et al.'s (2008) recommendations for implementing peer assessment (setting expectations, using periodic formative assessments, and preparing students for feedback). To reduce the effect of social loafing and team conflict, programs need to be designed to develop student skills in team working and interventions should be in place to deal with students whose behavior is 'distractive and disruptive' to the team (Jassawalla et al., 2009). Interventions can be designed into the experiential learning cycle that require students to consider and document how they would deal with issues and using 'Incident Records' for instructors to note the arising issues and how they were resolved. The role of the instruc-

tor in generating reflective practice and surfacing team issues is paramount here since research has demonstrated that students are more likely to inform the instructor of a peer who was not contributing than to take action themselves (Underwood, 2003).

The Importance of Continuous Feedback Loops

Embedding a continuous feedback loop in the experiential learning cycle provides a mechanism through which students and instructors can easily identify more students who demonstrate tendencies toward social loafing. In the example provided in this chapter, the decision learning log serves to assist students in debriefing not only cognitive aspects of their engagement with PhoneVentures but also the affective dimensions of team working. The requirement for the team to reflect as a whole in a conversational space on how well they work against a set of effectiveness criteria, provides an opportunity for each team member to gain insight into his or her contribution and how that is valued by others. In this way the course design builds in mechanisms to capture the benefits of peer assessment (see Dochy, Segers, & Sluijsmans, 1999). Second, the use of reflective writing as a summative task deriving from these formative activities within the learning cycle contributes to mitigating concerns. Finally, the structured use of peer evaluations, through which each team member's contribution to their team can be judged (and used to adjust individual marks on team-based assessment), provides a valuable contribution to the assessment (Kidder & Bowes-Sperry, 2012). In sum, a clearly structured and integrated approach to embedding peer evaluation into the learning process should align student expectations to its importance and should address concerns of the usefulness of such evaluations (Brutus & Donia, 2010; Kemery & Stickney, 2014).

Deciding on the Peer Evaluation

Approaches to how to use peer evaluations for summative assessment purposes vary quite widely (see Ohland et al., 2012), some are more complex than others and some institutions may have group- or teamwork policies specifying principles or guidelines for the approach to be taken; hence, there is no one best way. Whatever the method adopted for using peer evaluations to derive individual marks from team-based work, this should be made explicit to students in the assessment brief.

Two common approaches to peer evaluations involve the 'sample pie' and 'performance criteria.' In the 'sample pie,' students distribute a given number of points among team members—that is shares in a pie—and the points

awarded to each person are summed to create that person's individual score. These scores can be used as a standalone assessment component (e.g. counting toward 10% of the final grade) or can be used to weight a team-based assessment (such as a presentation). In contrast, performance criteria approaches require students to rate their peers on a pre-defined set of team-based performance criteria, as shown, for example, in Fig. 27.4 (see also examples and

Instructions:
This evaluation is to be completed by you alone to evaluate your team members' contributions to your Team's performance. The results will be used IN CONFIDENCE. Please be honest in your evaluation of your team members.

For each person you should answer all questions using the scale below where a **score of '3' is the normal score** - it means the person **has performed as expected**. You may award marks of 4 or 5 for those who have exceeded expectations or marks of 1 or 2 for those below expectation as shown below. You may add any additional comments in the box provided.

Name of team: _____
Name of team member being evaluated:_____

	Had a negative impact	Unsatisfactory - needs to improve in this area	**Satisfactory - met standards expected by team**	Contribution above that expected by team	Outstanding, without this, team would have suffered
Performed tasks and responsibilities to an acceptable standard.	1	2	3	4	5
Completed work according to agreed schedule.	1	2	3	4	5
Helped to manage conflicts or worked towards constructive resolution of issues.	1	2	3	4	5
Contributed information or informed opinions to team discussions.	1	2	3	4	5
Gave positive direction or leadership to the team.	1	2	3	4	5
Showed creative thinking or problem-solving ability in addressing the team tasks.	1	2	3	4	5
Co-operated and collaborated respectfully.	1	2	3	4	5
Showed effective interpersonal skills (e.g. talking, listening to others)	1	2	3	4	5
Please add any additional comments you wish to make about this team member's contribution here:					

[Note: this peer evaluation rubric can be set up on an online platform for ease of completion and accessing final scores.]

Fig. 27.4 Sample peer evaluation rubric

discussion of scales used in AAC&U, 2009; Gueldenzoph & May, 2002; Loughry, Ohland, & Moore, 2007; Ohland et al., 2012).

In a recent iteration of PhoneVentures, the peer evaluation in Fig. 27.4 was used successfully to provide individual marks on a team-based presentation worth 50% of the course grade. Data were collected from 115 students in 24 teams. Applying a standard formula to calculate the spread revealed in half of the teams, each member contributed as expected and all were awarded the Instructor Assessed team mark for the presentation. In other teams, the peer evaluation scores were used to weight the marks and provide individual scores, with 24 individuals receiving a lower score than the team average and 24 receiving a higher score. A further 10 individuals received their team average (i.e. they contributed as expected). Students were advised about this process at the beginning of the course and during the peer evaluation and none raised any issues about the perceived equity of the process nor the resulting impact on individual student grades.

Performance criteria approaches are most suitable when individual accountability within team working is to be measured as a course learning objective or to demonstrate the achievement of program learning goals or assurance of learning. Such approaches also allow more fine-grained diagnoses of team performance issues to help design more effective support to team-based learning in the future. In the USA, the AAC&U (2009) has developed a series of rubrics including one to assess teamwork at the institutional level that can be adapted to assess learning objectives at the course level.

Evaluation and Transferability of Learning Effectiveness

The curriculum design involving PhoneVentures aimed to develop core employability skills and competencies that participants should be able to transfer to the real workplace and that are generic across higher education in many different contexts (Levant et al., 2016). PhoneVentures was used in a cohort of 75% international students drawn from 23 countries. Reflections on their experiences are positive and demonstrate that they believe the simulation has helped develop their skills and competencies, especially in team working:

> The teamwork dynamics turned out to be effective in the way decisions were made and implemented … a good opportunity to develop our personalities in an international environment in real-time practice. In fact, we gained more insights that we can bring into our future careers.

> Although this simulation gave us some insight in how to run an international business, the real benefit we realised was how to work together and develop as a team.
>
> The Simulation presented another valuable learning experience for the Team. It has been a most positive and constructive experience. We have discovered that along with important factors such as diverse skill sets, cultural variance and academic background a sense of humour and an ability to have fun is absolutely crucial when forming a high-performance team.
>
> We feel our team has improved significantly during this course. We have overcome issues such as cultural differences and language barriers, to form an efficient team, who can work together effectively to complete tasks.

Formal evaluation of this experiential learning activity occurred in three ways. First, student learning objectives and assurance of learning were measured through standard marking rubrics, revealing high levels of attainment in both cognitive and affective domains. Second, a centrally administered institutional evaluation instrument revealed that students rated the course highly and suggested the curriculum design principles were implemented effectively. Free text comments indicated students gained from the 'practical' orientation of the course, 'experience to run a real business,' the 'connection between theory and practice,' and the 'ability to work closely with a small group over a period of time that tests collaborative skills.' Students commented 'we thoroughly enjoyed the experience, particularly the opportunity to be challenged in an alternative style to the rest of our studies' and 'when looking back, all of us agreed that managing difficult situations can help a team manifest trust amongst members which improves results and team spirit. Through overcoming struggles in early stages and establishing high-performing team dynamics, the benefits were visible in the last stages of the simulation game, namely presentation and report creation.'

Finally, the annual monitoring and review process and the annual program review reflect on any changes to instructional design that underpins the success of any simulation in achieving the intended learning objectives (Baker et al., 2017) and evaluates its continued contribution to the student journey in program development. No specific follow-up study has been undertaken with graduates who have participated in this simulation to assess the transferability from education to work in the UK or other countries. However, qualitative data from an annual survey of graduates at this institution, undertaken as a part of the UK's Postgraduate Taught Experience Survey, and a component

of the annual review process, indicates that students felt they had learned from the simulation, with several noting the 'best thing' about the program was 'the business simulation,' as the capstone course 'brought all of the skills learnt together' and helped 'relate theory to practice.'

Prior studies have demonstrated the effectiveness of computer-based simulations in the business curriculum. For example, Baker et al. (2017) found a positive effect of a competitive business marketing simulation on learning effectiveness in a sample of 391 undergraduate students in a marketing course. Farrell (2005) found that students participating in an international business simulation perceived learning through the simulation to be more effective than many of the traditional pedagogical approaches relying on the use of textbooks and cases studies. Finally, Levant et al.'s (2016) study of nearly 400, mainly graduate, students from French-speaking countries in Europe and North Africa who participated in a computer-based simulation concluded that all students benefited from the simulation and no difference emerged based on gender, or ethnic or cultural origin.

Conclusion

An important rationale for adopting computer-based simulated experiences is that they provide the closest approximation to the practice of managing a company that is possible within an educational setting and are widely regarded to contribute to effective learning (Gosen & Washbush, 2004; Walters & Coalter, 1997). In such situations, computer-based simulations can be used to develop a range of so-called 'soft' skills, including the ability to work in teams, sensitivity to working across cultures, and interpersonal skills across the broader business school curricula (Levant et al., 2016), and support assurance of learning within quality processes (AACSB, 2018; QAA, 2015). Overall, the experience of designing and implementing experiential learning through a computer-based simulation in the IB curriculum, though challenging, is rewarding. With very few exceptions, students worked well in teams and were engaged in their learning, as reflected in the high quality of team presentations and reflective reports. The lessons provided in this chapter are drawn from experience, and the pedagogic literature will hopefully make a significant contribution to others who are just beginning this journey or those seeking direction.

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28

Enriching Entrepreneurship Education Through Integration of Industry-Standard Technology Tools and Software

June Y. Lee

Introduction

Entrepreneurship education has been receiving growing attention (Kuratko, 2005; Neck & Greene, 2011), yet there has been little research and reflection by entrepreneurship researchers and educators on the ways to strengthen our entrepreneurship courses. This study aims to provide an in-depth use case of what it means to develop and implement a truly experiential and learning-by-doing pedagogy through the integration of industry-standard technology tools and software into an entrepreneurship course. This proposed study was conducted on 106 undergraduates in 2018 during a semester-long new venture creation course at the University of San Francisco.

This chapter describes how an entrepreneurship course can be enriched and enhanced by incorporating industry-standard technology tools and software. The chapter begins by reviewing the literature on entrepreneurship education from the perspective of experiential learning and by analyzing the use of technology. The next section of the chapter introduces a pilot study in which relevant industry-standard technology tools and software were introduced to undergraduate students (N = 106), addressing project description, learning objectives, best practices, challenges, assessment and feedback of students,

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M. A. Gonzalez-Perez et al. (eds.), *The Palgrave Handbook of Learning and Teaching International Business and Management*, https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-030-20415-0_28

and transferability. More specifically, it describes a set of specific recommendations for successfully implementing the study. The chapter concludes by providing theoretical and pedagogical contributions from this pilot study to the greater field of entrepreneurship education.

Conceptual Framework

Is entrepreneurship teachable? This has been a central question that entrepreneurship education researchers and educators have been struggling to answer for decades. What most researchers do agree on is the value of *experience* and *practice* in entrepreneurship education (Edelman, Manolova, & Brush, 2008; Fayolle, 2013; Fiet, 2000; Naia, Baptista, Januário, & Trigo, 2014; Solomon, 2007). For instance, Fiet (2000) argues that an entrepreneurship course should cover theory but should allocate more time to put those theories into practice. This school of thought is echoed by Haase and Lautenschläger (2011) who claim that entrepreneurial soft skills (i.e., know-how) are hard to teach and rather must be experienced. Consequently, the teachability dilemma of entrepreneurship education should focus more on the experiential aspect of entrepreneurship as opposed to the learned knowledge of entrepreneurship (Baker & Henson, 2010; DeTienne & Chandler, 2004).

According to Kolb's experiential learning theory, experiential learning is a "process whereby knowledge is created through the transformation of experience" (Kolb, 1984, p. 155). This view is unique and different in that it values the *process* of learning and adaption as opposed to the contents or outcomes. In addition, knowledge is viewed as a transformation process that is continuously created and recreated. This experiential learning theory has been applied in entrepreneurship courses in various capacities. For instance, Naia et al. (2014) claim that there has not been a consistent stream of literature that provides insights and tools for putting entrepreneurship education into practice. Other scholars have proposed behavioral and situated learning (Pittaway & Cope, 2007) and computer-based simulations (Avramenko, 2012; Shepherd, 2004) to focus on the experiential learning aspect. Additionally, guest speakers and in-class discussions offer more common and frequently applied techniques than traditional lectures do (Solomon, 2007; Solomon, Duffy, & Tarabishy, 2002).

Although the use of technology has drastically increased through the adaption of online learning and distance education, a consistent body of entrepreneurship education literature that advances the students' use of technology in entrepreneurship education courses and curriculums has been lacking.

This chapter aims to provide a concrete, detailed example of how incorporating industry-standard technology tools and software can benefit students with respect to learning and engagement.

This study has several implications in the field of entrepreneurship education. Foremost, it exemplifies the application of experiential learning to an entrepreneurship course. Prior studies on entrepreneurship courses and curriculums have emphasized the importance of experience and practice (Fiet, 2000; Naia et al., 2014; Solomon, 2007); however, little discussion on concrete examples of an active, learning-by-doing, and experiential learning approach that enhances entrepreneurial practice has taken place. By providing such an example, this study proposes one way in which an entrepreneurship course can be more meaningful and relevant.

Second, this study demonstrates how students with no technical knowledge and experience can use digital technologies through team collaboration to create an e-business (i.e., online business). Prior studies that covered the use of technology have mostly been in the disciplines such as engineering or technical programs (Abdulwahed & Nagy, 2009; Margaryan, Littlejohn, & Vojt, 2011). Still, technology has profoundly transformed the way everyone consumes, interacts, and creates information and knowledge. Therefore, it is important to discuss how technology tools can be incorporated into courses that are part of non-technical disciplines.

Finally, this study highlights the value of integrating *industry-standard* technology tools and software into classrooms. For undergraduate students in particular—who are considered Generation Z (i.e., born in 1996 or after) and who grew up with technology—the approach by which entrepreneurship courses and concepts are delivered has not been re-evaluated or assessed. This study suggests ways in which what is practiced in classroom settings can be more closely aligned to what is implemented by real-life startups and entrepreneurs.

The Project

The project described in this chapter consisted of a pilot study conducted in an entrepreneurship course at the University of San Francisco in California, USA. This pilot study examined the introduction and use of *industry-standard technology tools and software* to better understand the experiential learning of students in the course. This approach of integrating industry-standard technology tools and software was piloted in four sections over the span of two semesters in 2018. Each section consists of 20–30 undergraduate students (N = 106)—mostly

juniors and seniors—from all disciplines, ranging from business majors such as finance, marketing, management, and entrepreneurship to non-business majors such as English, computer science, film studies, and design.

This particular entrepreneurship course, called *Internet Business Applications* (*BUS 370*), aims to guide student teams through a semester-long final project in which they launch an e-business. For the purpose of this course, e-business is defined very broadly. More specifically, any business that is creating and delivering values online is considered an e-business. For instance, an online store or an online community that brings together a group of users based on certain interests or topics, an online platform that connects one group of users to another group of users, and an online content site that offers information to its users would all qualify as e-businesses.

This course covered the six broad topics of launching an e-business that are shown in Table 28.1. Table 28.2 condenses various course concepts covered in this course over an entire semester. The learning outcomes of this course are summarized in Table 28.3. This course was and still is a required course for all entrepreneurship and innovation majors and minors, which is one of the fastest-growing departments within the School of Management.

This new venture creation course lasted 16 weeks during which students formed groups of two or three and launched an e-business in the field of their choice. To ensure that students were able to meet the most suitable and complementary teammates, multiple ice-breaker and team-bonding activities were introduced during every class of the first week. I intentionally varied the groups for these activities so that students could get to know as many peers as possible. Students were strongly encouraged to get to know one another because this project required intimate and intense teamwork. Therefore, selecting compatible teammates was crucial to academic success. Students self-formed project groups after the second week. The first two weeks of a semester were dedicated to an overview of the course and the final project. Students brought their laptop to every class to participate in in-class individual and/or group exercises.

Table 28.1 Fundamental topics covered in this course

	Topics
1	Brainstorming and ideation
2	User experience research and usability
3	Prototyping and web development
4	Digital marketing, including social media, online advertisements, and email campaigns
5	Web traffic and data analytics
6	Public policy issues, including security, privacy, and scalability

Table 28.2 Example of weekly course outline

Week	Module description
Week 1	Course introduction
Week 2	Brainstorming to concept generation
Week 3	User interface and user experience research
Week 4	Web development I: internet, domain, hosting services
Week 5	Web development II: functionality and appearances
Week 6	Digital marketing I: social media platforms and email campaign
Week 7	Check-in and feedback session
Week 8	Digital marketing II: search engine optimization and online ads
Week 9	Web analytics I: introduction
Week 10	Web analytics II: conversion goals and testing
Week 11	Fundraising methods and monetization
Week 12	Go-to-market strategy
Week 13	Entrepreneurial strategy
Week 14	Scaling up: privacy, security, scalability
Week 15	Public policy issues
Week 16	Showcase and final presentation

Table 28.3 List of learning outcomes

	Learning outcomes
1	Create an e-business consisting of a coherent set of activities to attract customers.
2	Provide a satisfactory online experience and achieve business objectives digitally.
3	Conduct user studies and perform basic usability tests.
4	Develop a digital marketing strategy (e.g., social media, online advertisements, email campaigns) to attract and engage customers.
5	Apply search engine optimization techniques to improve search ranking.
6	Set measurable business objectives and monitor the success of those objectives using analytics.
7	Implement multiple revenue streams and monetization methods.
8	Understand go-to-market process and scalability issues such as back-ups, user privacy, and data security.

For each topic being covered in class, student teams learned to use relevant industry-standard technology tools and software in order to gain practical experience. This learning approach contrasted with the previous offerings of this course, in which topics relevant to e-business were covered *without* using industry-standard technology tools and software. More specifically, students in previous offerings were asked to practice and apply the concepts using generic tools or non-digital means. For instance, when covering the concept of prototyping and screen mocks, the previous versions of the course taught whiteboarding and drawing methods. When covering the concept of digital marketing, students were taught to manage multiple social media accounts individually rather than being advised to learn social media management solutions.

Table 28.4 Example of industry-standard technology tools and software

Topic	Name of industry-standard technology tools and software
Project management	Trello (www.trello.com) Slack (https://slack.com/)
Communications and collaboration	Dropbox (www.dropbox.com) Google Hangout (https://hangouts.google.com/) Google Drive (https://www.google.com/drive/) Slack (https://slack.com/) Zoom (https://www.zoom.us/)
Prototyping	Sketch (https://www.sketchapp.com/) Adobe Illustrator (https://www.adobe.com/products/illustrator.html) Figma (https://www.figma.com/)
User experience and testing	Qualtrics (www.qualtrics.com/) Heatmap.me (https://heatmap.com/) UserBob (https://userbob.com/)
Web development	WordPress (https://wordpress.org/) Shopify (https://www.shopify.com/)
Digital marketing	Hootsuite (https://hootsuite.com/) Meltwater (www.meltwater.com/) Sprout Social (https://sproutsocial.com/)
Online advertisements	Facebook Pixel (https://www.facebook.com/business/learn/facebook-ads-pixel) Twitter (www.twitter.com) Instagram (www.instagram.com) Google Adwords (https://ads.google.com/home/)
Web traffic and analytics	Google Analytics (https://analytics.google.com/analytics/web/)
Monetization and fundraising	PayPal (www.paypal.com) Stripe (www.stripe.com) Kickstarter (www.kickstarter.com) Indiegogo (www.indiegogo.com/)

Table 28.4 summarizes some examples of the industry-standard technology tools and software introduced in this project. In some instances, students had prior knowledge of these tools—particularly related to project management and communication and collaboration—because they were exposed to them in other settings (e.g., courses, student organizations, social environments, personal situations).

Students were not required to utilize all of these tools but were advised to leverage them when it made the most sense, based on the type of final project their team was working on. It was also highlighted to students that the tools being introduced were commonly used by industry professionals in the respective domains.

Table 28.5 Examples of e-businesses launched by student teams

Business name	Description of e-business
ArtBay	Online community of student artists to showcase their work and events
BoardSupport	The smart white board organization
GameNight	Rental service for borrowing video and board games on campus
Kynly	Online store that sells technology accessories created using 3D printing

Note: The projects are presented in alphabetical order, and more projects are showcased on this website: https://pathbrite.com/juneylee

This entrepreneurship course also featured alumni and guest speakers from specific areas covered by the module. For example, during the first few weeks of the course, founders of Silicon Valley startups came in to share their entrepreneurial journeys. They touched on most aspects of this course from brainstorming and ideation to product launch, including multiple iterations. When the course covered user experience research, a user experience researcher came in to talk about her experience from college to leading a team of user experience researchers at a technology firm in Silicon Valley. Analogously, a data analyst came in to share his experience, including examples of his previous projects as well as presenting specific skill sets and trends in the field of data analytics. Guest speakers not only spoke about what they did as domain experts (e.g., industry trends) but also gave advice on professional development. In so doing, they provided students with a glimpse into the interview process as well as career guidance. In some instances, they explicitly commented on the importance and mastery of industry-standard technology tools and software.

At the end of the semester, all student teams gave a 15-minute presentation wherein they showcased a thorough overview of an e-business they had created. In addition to their verbal and visual presentation, they also gave a demo of their website. Refer to Table 28.5 for examples of final projects launched by student teams.

Skills and Competencies

The pilot study was designed to have student teams utilize relevant industry-standard technology tools and software in their final projects. Such use aimed to demonstrate their understanding of the course concepts and their competence in the said industry-standard technology tools and software. All teams were asked to cover all six aspects of the course topics, as shown in Table 28.1. As each course concept was introduced, tutorial videos and training manuals

of industry-standard technology tools and software were provided. High-level overviews and short demos were also offered during lectures. Students enrolled in this course were found to be generally technology-savvy and internet-friendly. Consequently, they displayed stronger interests in trying out different industry-standard technology tools and software than in browsing through the training manuals. For instance, some students discovered on their own other helpful videos or blog sites related to these industry-standard technology tools and software. They would then share such findings with other classmates. Learning by doing and learning by experimenting were crucial to students' experiential knowledge.

This experiential learning approach had direct and indirect implications on the skills and competencies of the students. First, students were indirectly exposed to different kinds of industry opportunities and associated skill sets in addition to mastering course topics. It is noteworthy that students were already familiar with more traditional disciplines (e.g., accounting, finance, marketing) and career opportunities therein. On the other hand, new industries that had emerged based on evolving technology trends were either entirely unfamiliar or not well understood. Through the experiential learning received during the course, students were either being exposed to these unfamiliar industries and roles for the first time or were gaining deeper understanding of what different roles are entailed in these industries. For instance, firms are hiring employees such as search engine optimization analysts because web search is becoming more prevalent. Such roles and opportunities were not explicitly known several years ago.

Next, students were able to develop digital proficiency in industry-standard technology tools and software within specific domains. Most students hailed from a business background with no technical experience. Others came from eclectic disciplines such as English, design, computer science, or film studies. Based on their prior knowledge, experience, and professional interests, students would be drawn to mastering certain tools while simply being familiar with others. For instance, a few design major students had strong interests in mastering prototyping and design tools such as Sketch. Their choices also tended to align with their career and professional goals. I observed as well that students developed digital proficiency related to productivity, collaboration, and communication. For instance, they strongly preferred to collaborate digitally using emails, chats, video conferencing, and cloud storage services such as Dropbox or Google Drive.

Finally, students were able to advance their digital professional skill sets (e.g., oral and written communication, team conflict management, meeting deadlines, interpersonal skills, punctuality, contributing to their team, and

giving constructive feedback). Moreover, students experienced what it was like to work in small teams with little structure and guidelines—mimicking a real-world startup environment. Although it was not the primary learning objective of the course, developing digital professional skill sets became an important aspect of the overall experiential learning of students.

Best Practices

During the pilot study, I compiled a list of best practices that can benefit the community of entrepreneurship researchers and educators.

Instructor as Facilitator

Foremost, the instructors need to prepare well in advance by researching different industry-standard technology tools and software and by making necessary arrangements. For instance, certain technology tools provide a free or affordable educational license for higher education institutions. Some of these tools require applications to be completed by faculty members in advance, and the application process could take several months. Most universities already subscribe to technology software such as Dropbox, Google Drive, Qualtrics, Zoom, Lynda.com, or Adobe Suites. Thus, it is important to understand which tools are already available and can be provisioned via the IT department versus which other ones need to be acquired. Tutorial videos or training manuals also need to be prepared. These resources are generally distributed by the firms that create the industry-standard technology tool. If this is not the case, then online resources can be found. However, it is important to assess which resources are most helpful to the students.

Technological Competency of Instructors

Although instructors do not have to master these tools perfectly, they have to be well versed enough to demonstrate the core features and to answer any questions students might have. After a yearlong pilot study, it has become apparent that some of the same questions repeatedly come up, and knowing these common questions provides an opportunity to address them during an in-class demo before they are encountered by students outside the classroom.

Flipped Classroom

It has also become apparent that hybrid and flipped classrooms can be helpful wherein students are assigned to watch tutorial videos prior to coming class. Consequently, they arrive more prepared, and class time can then be devoted to answering specific questions, getting feedback from the students, or applying certain features to a specific context. This manner of doing things is particularly helpful because students understand and internalize these tools and software at different paces. More specifically, some students need more time to learn step by step whereas other students can pick up these tools naturally. It is also helpful to have tutorial sessions and additional office hours to provide safe space for students to stop by.

Transparency and Communication

It is important to emphasize transparency and over-communication within a project team, between project teams, and between student teams and instructor. For instance, I had a one-on-one check-in with each project team at mid-semester to ensure that everyone was working collaboratively and effectively. It was not until I met with each team that the students opened up about technical struggles or challenges involving team dynamics. When there was a technical challenge a student team was trying to overcome, I shared said challenge with the entire class without revealing the student team that had encountered it. The entire class worked together to solve a specific technical question while engaging in the process of collaborative problem solving. In turn, students learned to be more open and cooperative, which enhanced the overall learning experience.

Knowledge Sharing Among Students

Similarly, knowledge sharing was another recommended best practice. I created an online document tabulating additional available resources. I also encouraged students to add any helpful resources they happened to come across, in case they were missing from this document. Oftentimes, multiple student teams wished to implement a particular feature (e.g., payment processing in an online store) to their respective final projects, and the opportunity for them to discuss and debate how to implement such a feature was important. In some cases, I stepped in to connect two or more teams and

helped organize working sessions outside the classroom so that those teams could collaborate. In other cases, I highlighted some exemplary work by students or student teams during class that best utilized various industry-standard technology tools and software so that other students could reach out to them.

Challenges

There are several challenges that are worth pointing out, but they can be overcome by planning and preparing in advance.

Team Assignment and Team Dynamics

Sufficient time is allocated at the beginning of each semester to highlight the importance of professionalism, teamwork, communication, and collaboration. Getting to know everyone and allowing them to get to know one another is crucial for the success of each project team. Project team members work very closely with their teammates throughout the entire semester and on one semester-long final project. Although there were individual assignments and in-class exercises with other classmates, this final project represented a significant portion of the final grade. As shown in Table 28.6, this course had a total of 11 assignments, and these assignments were directly related to and contributed to various pieces of the final project.

Although rare, I encountered situations where students expressed that they were not able to work with other teammates for various reasons, such as freeriding of teammates, different opinions on the next steps, or interpersonal challenges. Such obstacles can be mitigated through peer evaluation wherein every student evaluates each of his or her own teammates and by allocating sufficient time at the beginning of the semester to get to know one another well. The inclusion of peer evaluation in the course grade was transparent and explicit in the syllabus, which allowed most students to

Table 28.6 Course grade breakdown and distribution

Assignment	Grade
11 assignments (5% each)	55%
Class preparation and participation	20%
Final showcase and presentation	10%
Final individual reflection essay	10%
Teammate peer evaluation	5%
Total	100%

Table 28.7 Example of peer evaluation form questions

	Peer evaluation question
1	My teammate was prompt in attendance at team meetings.
2	My teammate met agreed-upon deadlines.
3	My teammate volunteered appropriately or delivered when tasks needed to be accomplished.
4	My teammate showed a positive attitude about team activities and fellow teammates.
5	Provide areas of improvements for your teammate.
6	Provide overall feedback and comments about your teammate. Your response will only be shared with your instructor.

have proper expectations with respect to their project team. Table 28.7 demonstrates survey questions included in the peer evaluation form. Each question was presented in Likert scales with a box for comments and specific examples.

Financial Support and Funding

Financial support and funding from the department and school is important. In aggregate for this course, each student spent no more than US$25 on average. This expense was incurred to purchase one domain name, to set up hosting services, and to pay for industry-standard technology tools and software. Students found this amount to be less costly compared to other management courses that require them to purchase a physical textbook. However, financial support from the department and school is essential in case students are unable to pay this fee—it was common to have 1 or 2 students per semester out of 50–60 students who expressed financial hardship. Many of the industry-standard technology tools and software are free or affordable with educational licenses. If not, most of the tools offer a 30-day free trial. In some cases, students signed up for 30-day free trial so that the trial period overlapped with the weeks during which the relevant topic was covered in class.

During the pilot study, weekly assignments ranged from learning a new tool and applying it to final project to writing reflection essays. In addition, I had in-class individual or pair exercises where students provided feedback on each other's work. All of their work had to be graded in a timely manner because some of these assignments were sequential and depended on others that came before them. It was very challenging to grade as the semester progressed, especially with larger class sizes. Thus, in the future, each assignment and exercise should be strategically designed so that the entrepreneurship

course can scale efficiently and effectively with limited resources. Some alternative options would be reducing the number of assignments and exercises, hiring teaching assistants, or encouraging more peer evaluation. All of these options need to be carefully assessed and evaluated.

Assessment and Feedback from Students

In order to measure the learning effectiveness, the following assessment tools were conducted: (1) pre-course survey; (2) anonymous mid-semester survey; and (3) final reflection essay. The pre-course survey focused on the demographic information (e.g., major, class year), prior knowledge from entrepreneurship courses and work experiences, familiarity with the use of technology, and professional and career goals and interests. The second anonymous survey asked students their overall learning experience: Which topics do you feel well prepared for and why? Which topics are you struggling with the most? What is your feedback on each industry-standard technology tool? What aspects of this course do you enjoy? What can be improved to advance your learning experience? The final assessment tool, which was a reflection essay, asked students to reflect on their overall learning experience from this course. It purposefully asked a high-level question so that students could freely express their thoughts and opinions.

Based on the responses from the aforementioned three assessment tools, three key findings were identified from the pilot study with respect to the students' experience: (1) increased confidence and engagement level within and outside the classroom; (2) development of entrepreneurial capabilities and digital proficiency; and (3) increased employability for internships and full-time career opportunities. These findings are further supported by the assessment of the student projects. First, students experienced increased confidence and engagement level within and outside the classroom. This was the most common theme that emerged in the final reflection essay submitted by the students. For instance, one student said, "I feel more confident with technical skills like Google Analytics and WordPress and soft skills like communication and teamwork." Although it is challenging to definitively measure how these students would have performed without the pilot study of integrating industry-standard technology tools and software, as an instructor I was able to observe the growth in student's engagement level as the semester progressed. Students' associated mentions of technology used terms such as *confident*, *empowered*, and *prepared*.

Next, students also gained a deeper understanding of entrepreneurial skill sets and capabilities. In addition, they developed digital proficiency while applying industry-standard technology tools and software to their final project. For instance, one student said:

> *I personally was not aware that tools such as Hootsuite existed in order to manage many social media accounts efficiently and strategically. Also, there was Google Analytics to analyze our website individually for the conversion goals*. (Student)

Being able to create and invent original work is considered the highest level of understanding compared to remembering or summarizing information (Anderson & Krathwohl, 2001). At the end of the semester, student teams not only critically evaluated and assessed one another's work, but they also showcased their semester-long projects to peers and other faculty members. Refer to the Appendix for more specific examples of final projects. For instance, one student team launched an e-commerce website that sold accessories for a popular wireless earbud. These accessories had been sketched, designed, and created by the students using 3D printers. These students proactively signed up for 3D printer workshops run by the university library and spent hours refining their designs and visuals to ensure the products were appealing to users. Some students went beyond the mastery of their final projects and applied the skill sets developed from them to their current internships or family businesses. One student, for example, said, "A lot of what I have learned in this course is extremely transferable to my current internship."

Finally, the experiential learning of students increased their employability. A few students found internship opportunities through guest speakers and alumni who came to class to share their experiences. These students reached out to guest speakers and kept in touch so that they could later apply for internship positions. Some students successfully found internship and post-graduation job opportunities directly related to areas covered in this course.

> *Through this class, I have discovered new career interests to pursue. Although I'm graduating soon, rather than discouraged, I'm excited for the new career path that [the class] helped me to discover*. (Student)

> *I learned some useful knowledge about launching a business, and I have applied my learning in my family business*. (Student)

In some other cases, students decided to continue working on their final projects beyond the course, transforming them into startup ideas.

Transferability and Replicability

This pilot study is highly transferable to other work settings and disciplines. Technology is increasingly becoming more important across all disciplines, and there is an opportunity to bridge the gap between classroom learning and real-world experiences. For instance, this entrepreneurship course touches on other disciplines such as web development, design, digital marketing, and analytics. Each of these disciplines can apply a similar approach. Moreover, given that these resources are readily available online and accessible through the internet, educators based in other geographical locations are able to obtain access to them and implement this type of project as well.

Conclusions

By assessing the impact of integrating industry-standard technology tools and software into an entrepreneurship course, this study makes several theoretical and pedagogical contributions to the literature of entrepreneurship education and experiential learning. First, it provides one concrete, specific use case of an experiential learning pedagogy in an entrepreneurship education setting. It emphasizes the importance of addressing the *methods* of entrepreneurship education (Fayolle, 2013). Methods in entrepreneurship education concern different teaching methods and pedagogical approaches. By presenting a detailed project description, learning objectives, best practices, challenges, and effectiveness, this study hopes to start a dialogue of what it means to adopt an active, experiential, learning-by-doing, and real-world approach.

Furthermore, this study addresses the theoretical gap between what students learn in entrepreneurship education and what entrepreneurs actually do and use, which has been a common critique of existing entrepreneurship courses (Edelman et al., 2008; Solomon et al., 2002). Table 28.4, which summarizes the list of industry-standard technology tools and software that correspond to relevant course topics, has been validated and recommended by industry professionals and thorough research. Through proficiency and knowledge about tools that are currently being used and applied in the real world, this pedagogical approach addresses the feedback that entrepreneurship education lagged.

Finally, this study makes practical contributions to the community of students and instructors by connecting theoretical entrepreneurship concepts to the hands-on, tangible professional and skill-set development of students. For instance, students were often observed including their respective course projects

on their resumes and LinkedIn profiles, hoping to showcase what they had learned and experienced to potential employers. Students also often submitted their online portfolios consisting of their course projects, along with digital evidence such as wireframes, social media campaigns, and webpages, to recruiters and prospective employers. By detailing how this pilot study was carried out step by step, the hope is to create classroom environments in which students can experience and practice entrepreneurial skill sets.

Because there has been growing attention in the value and impact of entrepreneurship education, it is important to reflect on the ways in which entrepreneurship courses and programs are designed and delivered to students. By integrating industry-standard technology tools and software into an entrepreneurship course, this study aimed to provide more hands-on and experiential learning, which leads to increased engagement, digital proficiency, and employability of students. It is the author's hope that this pilot study will inspire further pedagogical innovations that extend these benefits even more.

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29

Not Just Game Play: Enhancing the International Student Experience Through the Use of Computer-Based Simulations

Elizabeth A. Alexander and Susan Barnard

Introduction

While computer-based simulations (hereafter also referred to as CBS or 'simulations') are arguably an in-vogue mode of delivery in business schools and may be seen as an excellent method of achieving theory-based, learner-centric management education (Faria, Hutchison, Wellington, & Gold, 2009; Lu, Hallinger, & Showanasai, 2014), there is evidence in the literature to suggest that its potential value in higher education still remains underestimated (Zantow, Knowlton, & Sharp, 2005). Simulations are not new in education (Lynn, Brady, & Davis, 2009) and have a long history deriving from use in military, aeronautics and medical training among others (Faria et al., 2009; Wells, 1993). Computer-based simulations differ from the broader category of simulations that might involve role play and can be defined, in general, as 'artificial environments that are carefully created to manage individuals' experiences of reality' (Bell, Kanar, & Kozlowski, 2008, p. 1417) and can be seen as games in which 'participants are provided with a simulated environment in which to play'

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M. A. Gonzalez-Perez et al. (eds.), *The Palgrave Handbook of Learning and Teaching International Business and Management*, https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-030-20415-0_29

(Cruickshank & Telfer, 1980, p. 75). Simulations used in business schools are based on a mathematical model that emulates the decision-making process within the firm, taking into account both internal processes and interactions of the firm within the broader competitive environment (Arias-Aranda, 2007). As such, these sorts of simulations contribute to deep learning by providing opportunities for problem-solving activities in complex and rich settings.

Simulations can provide the missing link between theory and practice together with the opportunity to give students an active role to play in their learning (Avramenko, 2012), which arguably supports deeper learning than a passive classroom environment (Cross, 1987). Importantly for the contemporary university environment, CBS are real-life business scenarios offering a student-centric teaching approach that can foster greater student engagement (Cannon & Newble, 2000; Jacques & Salmon, 2007; Zantow et al., 2005), and that is a very real challenge for providers of higher education (Leach, 2016). It is also suggested that simulations promote motivation and assist peer learning (Lu et al., 2014) and can provide a risk-free environment in which to build soft skills, such as interpersonal skills, conflict resolution and negotiation, and thereby enhance employability (Avramenko, 2012; Doyle & Brown, 2000).

However, despite their advantages, because CBS represent team-based collaboration and experiential learning, there are concerns that CBS presents particular challenges when involving certain groups of students. This is especially so for those from educational systems with different cultures of learning and pedagogic traditions that are largely based on instructor transmission, lecture and memorization (Ding & Lin, 2012; Jin & Cortazzi, 2006; Ladd & Ruby, 1999) and for whom considerable additional support is required to prepare students to succeed in independent study (Tait & Godfrey, 2001) as performance is often lower than domestic students (Foster, 2012). Further, perceptions persist among domestic students that cross-cultural teams present added difficulties, which international students do not integrate effectively into team-based learning, and that these pose a potential negative effect on grades (Canto de Loura, 2014; Summers & Volet, 2008).

However, the picture is not all negative. Doyle and Brown (2000) conclude that international teams can add significant value to teaching with simulations for both students and faculty, a view echoed in a study of student experiences of working in mixed international teams (Spencer-Oatey & Dauber, 2017) while De Vita (2002) also found evidence of higher performance among culturally diverse teams. Despite assumptions that team-based learning may be problematic due to cultural differences (Walker, Bridges, & Chan, 1996), Lu et al. (2014) provide some evidence that Asian students (graduate students in Thailand) value less structured, active learning environments associated with simulations. Finally, while there is a suggestion that conflict

arising in team-based learning may detract from the learning experiences of Asian students in particular (Levant, Coulmont, & Sandu, 2016), Walker et al. (1996) found that individuals sought to portray harmony and avoid open conflict, suggesting differences in how group processes operate.

Against this backdrop, the contribution that simulations can make toward the learning experience and engagement of international students[1] has not been fully explored in the literature. Failure to understand the impact of team-based experiential learning pedagogies on this group, and to support for them to succeed, is particularly important given the impact of international students, especially from Asian countries, studying at universities in the USA, the UK, Australia and Canada among others. In 2016, 3.5 million international students were enrolled in tertiary programs across OECD countries of whom 1.9 million (or 55 percent) were from Asia, with over 860,000 from China (OECD, 2018). Two-thirds of these 1.9 million international students were enrolled in tertiary programs in just four countries: the USA (971,000), the UK (432,000), Australia (336,000) and Canada (189,000), with English-speaking countries being the most attractive overall. Indeed, 61 percent of all international students in the USA originate from Asia, as do 52 percent of international students in the UK (OECD, 2018). Importantly for business schools, the single largest subject of study of these students is Business and Administrative Studies. Although students can enroll for the duration of an undergraduate program, many Asian students enroll as advanced standing, gaining direct entry into the penultimate or final year of an honors degree program, often on the basis of joint agreements between institutions. Because these direct entry students are entering in the final year, they face particular challenges of social adjustment as well as language proficiency (Andrade, 2006; Tait & Godfrey, 2001).

Hence, it is clear to see that international students comprise an important part of the student body and can be particularly important to business schools (Zhang, Xia, Fan, & Zhu, 2016). In short, this represents a significant student body about which we should develop a greater understanding. Consequently, this study examines the use of team-based collaborative learning from CBS as a tool to support the learning and enhance the engagement of international students from Asia. Given the perceptions expressed by students and concerns highlighted in the literature, we examine whether and how conflict that is evident in team working in the process of experiential learning affects both learning and engagement and probe more fully the pedagogic potential of computer-based simulations, assisting institutions in achieving student satisfaction, as well as delivering on their employability strategies.

[1] We adopt the OECD's (2018, p. 201) broad definition of international students as 'those who left their country of origin and moved to another country for the purpose of study.'

Simulations as Experiential and Collaborative Learning

Simulations can be effective tools in teaching complex management concepts (Holman, 2000) and experiential learning can be used as a method to develop managerial skills such as communication, critical thinking and leadership ability (Crittenden & Woodside, 2007). Experiential learning may also be considered superior to more traditional passive modes of learning in terms of student engagement, performance and program satisfaction (Piercy, 2013). Indeed, Fontczak and Kelley (2000) note that many authors have highlighted the benefits of experiential learning with the evidence of an associated increase in student motivation and learning and the ability to link theory with practice.

The pedagogical underpinning of CBS is that of experiential learning (Levant et al., 2016) because, by design, students must engage in a 'process whereby knowledge is created through the transformation of experience. Knowledge results from the combination of grasping and transforming experience' (Kolb, 1984, p. 41). Importantly, the process of experiential learning involves a cycle in which participants in the team will engage in reflection and abstract conceptualization as well as concrete experience (i.e. playing the game) and active experimentation (i.e. testing out ideas). Hence, the effective functioning of the team in reflective observation (what happened) and the ability of team members to collectively make sense of this to conceptualize their learning (why it happened) and to formulate a response (active experimentation) is central to learning in team-based simulations.

Within experiential learning in team-based simulations, an important distinction should be drawn between the processes of collaborative learning and those of cooperative learning since the role of the team in each is distinctly different. Dillenbourg, Baker, Blaye, and O'Malley (1995, p. 3) define collaborative learning as a process whereby individuals work together on a 'coordinated, synchronous activity that is the result of a continued attempt to construct and maintain a shared conception of a problem' (Roschelle & Teasley, 1995). In contrast, cooperative learning refers to more distributed team tasks that are split into component parts and assigned to individuals to complete such that team members work individually and only reassemble the task outputs.

In collaborative team-based simulations, the team plays a pivotal role in the experiential learning process since it is through the social processes of collaboration and communication that a task is achieved and team members build a shared understanding and elaborate upon prior knowledge (Dillenbourg et al., 1995). The process of elaboration necessarily requires the exchange, processing

and discussion of information during which, while disagreements about the information occur, communication between team members helps build a shared understanding through the team learning process (Van den Bossche, Gijselaers, Segers, & Kirschner, 2006). Chan, Burtis, and Bereiter (1997) also identified the importance of communication and information sharing as they found that learning from working with others occurs when individuals were actively engaged in activities that involved processing new knowledge.

While prior research highlights the importance of social interactions among team members to refine and make sense of task-relevant knowledge to increase learning, social interactions can also lead to conflict within collaborative learning. Nastasi and Clements (1992) provide empirical insights into two types of conflict that can be seen in collaborative learning—social conflict (i.e. general relationship and interpersonal issues that are not related to the problem set) and cognitive conflict (i.e. conflict arising from differences in opinion about what the task entails or what solutions should be applied). In their study, they found cognitive rather than social conflict has a strong positive relationship with learning. One finding in their work of particular relevance to the current study was a mediating role of information exchange (especially information seeking behaviors) on learning—information sharing is a necessary component of collaborative experiential learning and underpins simulations.

While simulations can foster the development of critical thinking more than traditional teaching methods, Asian students, for example (who, as noted earlier, represent a significant proportion of international students within English language institutions), can struggle to adapt to independent learning (Levant et al., 2016; Soosay, 2009). Richardson (2012) further highlights that international students may also face challenges, and potential underperformance, attributable to learning approaches and perceptions of learning in higher education. Indeed, Southeast Asian students tend to be 'passive and non-verbal in class' [and in terms of past learning culture] 'students usually listened to a teacher's lecture, took notes copiously and answered teachers' questions' (Park, 2000, p. 247) and this has largely been the experience documented in a study of international direct entrant student experiences (Hewish et al., 2014). Likewise, Quan, Smailes, and Fraser (2013), in examining social and academic difficulties encountered by international direct entrant students in the UK, highlight the need for additional support in the short transition phase.

In the context of team-based work central to simulations, evidence suggests that potential issues may arise from international students who favor working with those of the same cultural background while international students working in teams with domestic peers may suffer through a lack of engagement

by the latter (Andrade, 2006). Further, as students generally perceive that they learn how to negotiate and defend their views more confidently through simulations, conflict in the learning process has been suggested to act as a detractor from the learning experience of Asian students (Levant et al., 2016).

Hence, while simulations may offer alternative ways of learning for international students (especially those who are direct entrants) that may help overcome some of the challenges faced, potential conflict may be problematic for successful team outcomes given the importance of team cohesion (Deeter-Schmelz, Kennedy, & Ramsey, 2002).

Team Process and Conflict

While the educational literature focuses on empirical settings observing student actions when faced with discrete problem-solving tasks, that are often computer-based, it has not substantially examined the issues of learning from participating in teams working on large and more complex decision-making tasks. To address this gap, we draw on literature examining the theories of task and relationship conflict in the team and small group field of study (e.g. Jehn, 1995). In particular, this literature suggests that learning through teams can be influenced through core processes associated with not only how the team processes information but also how it coordinates its activities and deals with conflict (McGrath & Argote, 2001).

Conflict in teams presents a challenge to effective learning and team outcomes but conflict operates in different ways—through an effect of social relationships that hold the team together and through an effect on actual tasks the team is required to perform. Relationship conflict can be about the differences in preferences or tastes, or about values, whereas conflicts arising from completing team tasks tend to revolve around the differences in judgments, understandings and interpretations of the task or information or about how to structure work tasks (De Dreu & Weingart, 2003). Empirical studies of the effects of the two forms of conflict (task and relationship) on outcomes from working in a team are somewhat mixed (De Dreu & Weingart, 2003).

According to Jehn's (1995) theorizing, relationship conflict is expected to be negatively correlated with the positive outcomes of working in a team, including levels of satisfaction. For example, relationship conflict is expected to have negative effects because it distracts individuals from the task at hand and instead focuses their attention and time on dealing with personal issues within the team (Simons & Peterson, 2000). Rather than engaging in data

evaluation to make a team decision, team members become embroiled in dealing with personal conflict.

In contrast, under the conditions of complex decision-making associated with non-routine tasks (as typically occurs in a CBS), task conflict is expected to be positively associated with team outcomes as it enhances the quality of decisions and learning. This positive process rests on the assumption that information is better processed and alternative viewpoints examined under the conditions of higher task conflict (Amason, 1996; Jehn, 1995), such as through constructive conflict that builds knowledge and mutually shared cognition of the task problems (van den Bossche et al., 2006). Indeed, van den Bossche et al. (2006, p. 516) argue that 'constructive conflict needs to be made in the process of reaching mutual shared cognition' as such conflict can spark negotiation. Social process, such as communication and collaboration that support information sharing (Mesmer-Magnus & DeChurch, 2009), may mediate the relationship between perceived conflict and outcomes. Importantly, individuals' perceptions of how well the team process operates to openly facilitate the exchange of ideas and information may influence their willingness to collaborate in complex decision-making tasks.

At the same time, Cronin and Weingart (2007) contend that in contributing different knowledge bases, diverse teams may experience what they term representational gaps that create potentially incompatible perspectives for problem solving and, hence, are a potential source of task conflict. Such gaps are expected to exist where individuals have a little shared understanding in common, reflecting substantially different individual mental maps and inconsistent knowledge bases that guide how the individual interprets the information. However, to the extent teams have similar goal expectations, Cronin and Weingart (2007) propose that they can develop processes or rules to support communication and information exchange that then create conditions whereby task conflict can lead to positive rather than negative outcomes.

In conclusion, conflict that might affect social relationships within a team has the potential to impact not only the willingness to engage in the process but also the outcome of the learning process. In contrast, conflict that arises from different cognitive perceptions of the task may contribute to positive outcomes. Finally, the presence of routines and processes to support information sharing can affect these relationships.

Based on this prior work in both the learning and in the team conflict literatures, we suggest that the learning outcomes and levels of engagement experienced by international students of participating in a team to accomplish the simulation tasks will vary according to the type of conflict mediated by the level of information sharing.

In the remainder of this chapter, we test these relationships through a study of international direct entrant students participating in a CBS. We first outline the study context along with the simulation used. We then describe our study methods before presenting our findings. We support our statistical approach with examples of student experiences about team-based learning processes in the simulation. Finally, we conclude with some broader discussion of the study findings and draw implications for educationalists who are implementing such simulations in teams involving international students.

The Study Setting

The context of this research is the introduction in the final year of an undergraduate business program of an off-the-shelf simulation as a capstone to learning in the business school of a large public institution in the UK. This course, positioned in the last semester, integrates learning from across their program of study. The course lasts for 12 weeks during which students have a weekly two-hour scheduled workshop session, supported by a faculty member, where team members formally come together to complete the simulation tasks. Student teams are also expected to meet outside scheduled workshop hours in order to work together on their weekly management decisions.

The selected simulation, 'Airline' (www.interpretive.com), is based on the regional airline industry in the USA and is a 'complex, computer assisted strategic management simulation in which teams function as managers of individual airlines and compete against each other in the commuter airline industry' (Michalisin, Karau, & Tangpong, 2004, p. 1110). In its application at the Business School, teams of 4 or 5 students are required to make strategic and weekly operational decisions for their firms in order to compete in an industry of up to 10 companies (each company being another team) for up to 12 simulated financial quarters. Decisions include marketing, finance, operations and human resources as students are tasked with the issues of expanding into new markets, including international, and are faced with a number of critical incidents (including ethical challenges) to which they must respond while seeking to meet the board expectations of a positive cash flow and profit for their company.

In addition to running the virtual company, students are also required to complete weekly team records of team meetings and the rationale underpinning their decisions, a non-assessed outline strategic plan and produce a team-based oral presentation of their strategy and company performance. Student learning is assessed via the presentation and an online self- and peer evaluation.

Initially, student grades are awarded based on the team presentation but adjusted to reflect the level of individual participation and contribution to the experiential learning via the simulation. Hence, failure to participate in a team can lead to severe consequences for an individual. While the simulation allows students to develop their cognitive skills in relation to the business administration curriculum, it also provides an opportunity through the experiential learning approach to develop and reflect on the affective dimensions of learning, such as building competences in team working, managing collaboration, ethical decision-making and presentation skills.

Research Methodology

Survey Design

As part of the institutional evaluation of the simulation as a learning experience, we captured student perceptions at the end of the simulation through a survey administered in class. The survey consisted of Likert style questions along with free-text space for students to write any additional explanation or other comments related to the simulation experience.

Learning and Engagement

To capture individual perceptions on the extent to which learning objectives associated with the simulation had been met, along with the extent to which student experience had been enhanced, respondents were asked to indicate, using a five-point response scale (1 = 'to a small extent' and 5 = 'to a large extent'), the extent to which a series of questions reflected their experience of the simulation. Questions ranged from helping to develop the skills of working within a team, recognizing and dealing with ethical challenges in organizations, to encouraging engagement in their course of study. A principal components analysis, undertaken in SPSS with varimax rotation (Field, 2009), reveals two factors with eigenvalues greater than 1 explaining 59 percent of the variance. The factor loadings exceed the minimum 0.51 and the Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin measure of sampling adequacy is 0.88. Both scales exceed the normal cut-off point for scale reliability (> 0.70). The first scale comprises seven items ($\alpha = 0.84$) representing a 'skills and learning' dimension. The second three-item scale ($\alpha = 0.77$) captures the perceived degree of 'engagement' fostered with the learning process as a result of participating in the simulation.

Independent and Mediator Variables

Two independent variables were the perceived levels of task and relationship conflict within the team, both measured using items from Jehn's (1995) five-point scales (1 = disagree strongly, 5 = agree strongly). We measured relationship conflict using four items (α = 0.88), such as there is a 'a lot of emotional conflict' and 'a lot of tension' among the members of our team. Task conflict was measured using four items (α = 0.82), such as there is 'frequent conflict about ideas' and 'a lot of conflict about the work we do' in our team. These measures were captured at the individual rather than the team level and measure a person's perceptions of working within the team. Information sharing, the mediator variable is a three-item five-point measure (α = 0.88), which captures the extent to which the team process supported information sharing (1 = to a small extent, 5 = to a large extent): 'co-managers willing to share information with each other,' 'information is exchanged frequently between co-managers' and 'co-managers engage in open communication.' This measure is adopted from Zellmer-Bruhn, Maloney, Bhappu, and Salvador (2008).

Control Variables

We included items in the questionnaire to collect data on both perceived similarity (Zellmer-Bruhn et al., 2008) as control variables, along with some cohort characteristics such as functional background and the amount of time devoted to the simulation outside of class time. We adopt measures of perceived similarity in preference to objective diversity because this has been shown to be more effective in influencing individual behaviors within teams as opposed to actual or objective diversity, and has been shown to significantly shape group processes and outcomes (Bodenhausen, 2010). Further, objective measures (e.g. national categories) fail to uncover the diversity within populations, especially within China (Walker et al., 1996). Two measures of perceived similarity are used as controls: perceived socio-cultural similarity and perceived work style similarity, both from Zellmer-Bruhn et al. (2008). We measured perceived social category similarity with a three-item scale (α = 0.87) using a seven-point scale (1 = disagree strongly, 7 = agree strongly) that members of my team 'come from common cultural backgrounds,' 'are from the same country,' and 'share similar ethnic backgrounds.' We measured perceived work style similarity that captures the perceptions of similarities in communication styles, work habits and interaction styles with a five-item scale (α = 0.84). Based on a principal components analysis, all items are loaded cleanly onto the two factors.

Sample

Responses were received from 271 international direct entrant participants (71 percent). The international direct entrant student body is diverse with students specializing in business and management (41 percent), marketing (35 percent), or accounting and finance (24 percent). On average, students reported spending 3.3 hours per week out of class time on making decisions for the simulation.

Findings and Analysis

The correlations for the study variables are shown in Table 29.1 revealing no relationship between the two dependent variables and the two independent variables of relationship and task conflict. The control variable of perceived work style similarity is negatively and significantly correlated with both relationship and task conflict, whereas perceived social category similarity is marginally associated with relationship conflict and positively associated with task conflict.

Tests indicated that the class or section to which students were assigned did not have an impact on the dependent variables and, hence, a nested model was not required. Baseline regression models testing the relationships between the control and the independent variables on both dependent variables are shown in Table 29.2. These results demonstrate that neither learning nor engagement is significantly influenced by the functional background of the students (i.e. whether they are majoring in business and management, marketing, or accounting and finance). However, there is a significant and positive effect ($b = 0.104$, $p < 0.001$), as might be anticipated, on the amount of time students devote to the simulation work outside of class time on the degree to which they report learning.

The effect of time spent outside of class on engagement is marginally significant ($b = 0.058$, $p < 0.10$). Perceived work style similarity is significantly and positively related to both learning ($b = 0.334$, $p < 0.001$) and engagement ($b = 0.268$, $p < 0.001$)—reflecting that students experienced more positive outcomes when working with others who shared the same commitments to work. Interestingly, the extent to which students felt that their team members shared similar cultural or ethnic backgrounds (perceived social category similarity) did not affect either learning or engagement.

Finally, the baseline regression models reveal a positive and significant relationship between task conflict and both learning ($b = 0.149$, $p < 0.05$) and engagement ($b = 0.188$, $p < 0.01$). This suggests that conflicts which arise over

Table 29.1 Correlations

		1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
1	Management										
2	Marketing	−0.613***									
3	Accounting	−0.466***	−0.414***								
4	Hours outside of class	−0.175***	0.238***	−0.066							
5	Perceived work style similarity	−0.100*	0.191***	−0.098*	0.108*						
6	Perceived social category similarity	−0.276***	0.190***	0.106*	0.160***	0.001					
7	Relationship conflict	−0.016	−0.102*	0.132**	0.053	−0.222***	0.115*				
8	Task conflict	−0.063	0.000	0.073	0.065	−0.232***	0.131**	0.672***			
9	Information sharing	−0.115*	0.200***	−0.090	0.158***	0.097	0.038	−0.045	0.233***		
10	Engagement	−0.092	0.091	0.004	0.150**	0.283***	0.034	−0.085	0.03	0.327***	
11	Learning outcomes	−0.123**	0.103*	0.027	0.248***	0.360***	−0.001	−0.049	0.023	0.261***	0.654***

*$p < 0.10$; **$p < 0.05$; ***$p < 0.01$

Table 29.2 Regression models: learning and engagement

	Learning	Engagement
Marketing functional background	0.092	0.069
Accounting functional background	0.161	0.109
Hours outside of class	0.104****	0.058*
Perceived work style similarity	0.334****	0.268****
Perceived social category similarity	−0.360	0.003
Relationship conflict	−0.074	−0.153**
Task conflict	0.149**	0.188***
R^2	0.195**	0.130**

*$p < 0.10$; **$p < 0.05$; ***$p < 0.01$; ****$p < 0.001$ (Omitted category is management functional background)

work are perceived as a benefit to both learning and engagement from working with others on the simulation. In contrast, the baseline model suggests that relationship conflict exerts a negative effect on engagement ($b = -0.153$, $p < 0.05$) but is not perceived by students to affect their level of learning.

To explore these relationships more fully and integrate information sharing as a mediator variable to explain these relationships, regression models were run for mediation analyses using the PROCESS macro in SPSS (Hayes, 2017). A summary of the results is shown in Table 29.3. All covariates from the baseline models were included as controls.

The results of the mediation analyses indicate task conflict was a significant and positive predictor of information sharing ($b = 0.48$, $p < 0.001$), and information sharing was a significant predictor of engagement ($b = 0.27$, $p < 0.001$). In contrast, relationship conflict is a significant but negative predictor of information sharing ($b = -0.37$, $p < 0.001$). For the models with learning as the dependent variable, information sharing was a significant and positive predictor of learning ($b = 0.21$, $p < 0.001$). The indirect effects were tested using a bootstrap estimation approach with 5000 samples (Hayes, 2017), revealing that the indirect coefficient was significant for all models as shown in Table 29.3 (no confidence intervals cross zero). The indirect effect of task conflict on both engagement and learning is positive and statistically significant. In contrast, the indirect effect of relationship conflict on both engagement and learning is negative and significant (though smaller for learning). These relationships are summarized in Figs. 29.1 and 29.2.

Student Experiences

As part of the survey, students were given an opportunity to include any free-text comments they wished. The responses were sorted and grouped by themes and these are used here to provide additional insights to the findings above. First, it is clear that team meetings were actively used as an arena for both

Table 29.3 Mediation analyses: information sharing

	Stage		Effect			Bootstrap indirect effects		
Independent variable	First (a)	Second (b)	Direct	Indirect	Total	Lower CI	Upper CI	SE
Dependent variable: engagement								
Task conflict	0.48***	0.27***	0.06	0.13***	0.19**	0.0749	0.2071	0.033
Relationship conflict	−0.37***	0.27***	−0.05	−0.10***	−0.15*	−0.1698	−0.0536	0.029
Dependent variable: learning								
Task conflict	0.48***	0.21***	0.05	0.10**	0.15*	0.0420	0.1754	0.033
Relationship conflict	−0.37***	0.21***	0.01	−0.08*	−0.08	−0.1405	−0.0325	0.027

*$p < 0.05$; **$p < 0.01$; ***$p < 0.001$

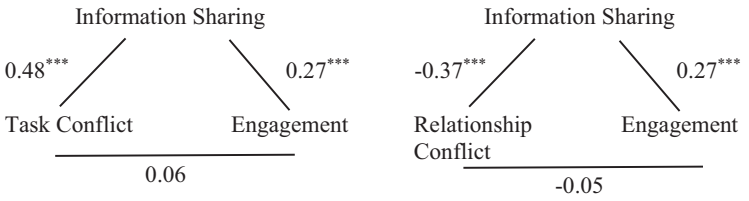

Fig. 29.1 Mediating effect of information sharing (engagement)

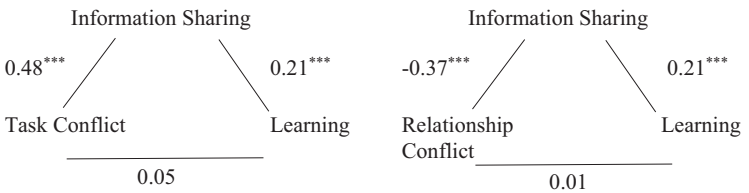

Fig. 29.2 Mediating effect of information sharing (learning)

sharing information and for sharing ideas, establishing meaning and creating support for making decisions for the next round in the simulation—that is, in preparation for active experimentation. Students illustrated their experiences, acknowledging the role of information sharing and of argument as 'communicating and sharing information with team members is something I enjoy,' 'group meeting—discussion and argument on making decisions' and 'teamwork—everybody needs to think about the strategy and company and discuss together; Difficult sometimes to achieve agreement in team. Conflict and different ideas during discussion.' Students also reveal they see this as a positive learning experience as 'arguments in the team meetings help all of us make progress' and 'working together was good—we spend most of the time on

deciding our answer so we always solve the problem without personal conflict.' Creating a positive atmosphere conducive to constructive conflict was also noted including the role of a leader in this process, 'good team leader made the teamwork easier and helped us discuss the questions' as was having open communication 'the simulation helped me to have an idea of what it is like to work as a real team in an organization. It helps me to make decisions wisely and communicate openly with group members about new ideas.'

The value of diverse opinions was also recognized as being important, 'I liked working in a team everyone brought in different information and ideas' and 'we got to work in a diverse team expressing a number of opinions.' However, while the process was generally positive, conflict sometimes spilled over into personal conflict as this comment illustrates that 'many conflicts had occurred between my group during the simulation; we had different opinions and ideas, sometimes there is disagree and unhappy with the decisions which brought loss in my group.'

In terms of working within teams, students provided unprompted positive responses such as 'how it revolved entirely around group work; even if very stressful at times' and it 'develops spirit and cohesion.' Students recognized the value of diversity, for example, 'meeting new people from different places—a social team building element,' 'a chance to work with some great personalities,' 'working with people I didn't think I could work with' and 'the challenge of working in a diverse group of people was good.' Further, they noted that 'this kind of experience helps me to know how to work with other people,' and 'we have to adapt ourselves to work with the whole team—This was a very valuable learning experience,' and finally 'I enjoyed the team work it helped me develop my communication skills and taught me the importance of working with others.'

Students understood and engaged with the experiential learning process—expressing they 'liked the practical side of the module—more exciting and hands-on,' 'learning as if real world as we are assigned specific roles,' 'good opportunity to apply some ideas I have learned,' 'we learn more than can be found in textbooks' and 'really enjoyed the simulation—offered a new way of thinking and learning especially.' In short, students recognized that this was a 'different style of learning' and that 'the simulation allowed me to engage in a different way from other classes I have done and it was very interactive.'

Finally, in terms of achieving expectations associated with experiential learning, student comments reveal that they internalized responsibility for their own learning: the simulation 'really engages you with the module because you hold personal responsibility for your performance,' 'I liked the amount of freedom we were given as there were so many decisions to be made—it felt

realistic,' and 'the responsibility given to the team to organize meetings and put in whatever amount of work you choose is completely different to other courses—so very enjoyable.'

Discussion and Contribution

Building on prior literature that suggests collaborative learning involving shared knowledge construction and elaboration is central to experiential learning (Dillenbourg et al., 1995), we sought to understand team-based mechanisms that could contribute to, or hinder, effective learning with CBS. Specifically, we examine how conflict within a team can affect both learning derived from participating in a CBS and the overall impact of the experience on engagement for a group of understudied students—international direct entrants.

Introducing collaborative team-based learning is often fraught with concerns about team conflict and the effect of this on the learning process. Although prior literature on team conflict suggests mixed findings about the effect of relational versus task conflict on team working (De Dreu & Weingart, 2003), our findings provide support for Jehn's (1995) contention that these are separate constructs operating in different ways. We proposed that relationship conflict would be detrimental to both learning and engagement while, consistent with the experiential learning literature, we proposed that task conflict would be positively associated with learning and engagement. Our reasoning rests on the assumption that task conflict induces a more cognitive rather than emotional response through strategic decision-making and, through challenging assumptions and viewpoints, students would build their understanding and knowledge (Dillenbourg et al., 1995). Further, we argue that a key team process that supports the positive effect of task conflict is through information sharing, and we see this demonstrated in our mediation model. The model reveals that higher levels of information sharing positively affect both learning and engagement and this relationship is further supported by the views of students expressed in their free-text comments.

In summary, when teams engage in information sharing as part of their collaborative learning processes, task conflict is revealed to lead to perceived higher levels of learning and engagement. However, relationship conflict is negatively associated with information sharing and engagement in particular. Hence, in designing support for international direct entrant students working in teams in a simulation, particular attention should be given to designing processes that encourage a focus on information sharing and interventions to assist in minimizing relationship conflict.

Given these findings, we contend that several important contributions emerge from this research for educationalists seeking to implement team-based CBS. Contrary to previously espoused concerns (e.g. Ding & Lin, 2012), team-based CBS is an appropriate pedagogy to apply in the education of international students—especially direct entrants from Asia. Our findings highlight that these students value the alternative approaches to learning embodied in experiential learning that underpins CBS. In particular, CBS helped these students develop and practice critical thinking, decision-making and team working skills. As such, our study is in line with recent investigations of Asian students in their home country settings (Lu et al., 2014). Further, our findings indicate that contrary to prior work, there is no association between working in perceived socio-culturally homogeneous teams and heightened levels of learning and engagement among international students in our study.

The study contributes to our understanding of how a CBS can support student engagement. We specifically focused our measure of engagement upon student perceptions of how participation in the simulation itself contributed to their emotional engagement (such as enjoyment) and physical engagement (such as encouragement to participate in the course). Our data demonstrate that engagement is enhanced especially through establishing mechanisms that contribute to sharing information and by working with others that share a similar work style. This suggests that when students are reporting higher levels of engagement (such as enjoyment and participation), this is motivated by a feeling that they are getting something worthwhile from the CBS—that is, that students do not see the CBS in terms of a 'feel-good' exercise, but as a valuable 'alternative' educational experience. It is, therefore, important for instructors to ensure the use of CBS is well conceived and integral to the learning outcomes of the course so its value is signaled. Further, the findings lend support to the recent works (e.g. Brown, Rich, & Holtham, 2014; Burch, Heller, Burch, Freed, & Steed, 2015) in developing the measures of student engagement at the level of the course that more meaningfully capture and drive innovation in pedagogy than broad, institutional measures such as the National Survey of Student Engagement in the USA.

In highlighting the contribution of information sharing to learning from participation in CBS, our findings build on prior work on experiential learning processes and team-based learning (Dillenbourg et al., 1995; Van den Bossche et al., 2006). We highlight these and draw out specific implications for instructors in the actions that they can take in the design and management of a CBS to support learners. In the first step of knowledge construction by the team, team members are expected to contribute information, knowledge

or ideas. Hence, instructors can support student learning in this stage of the experiential learning process by establishing an expectation for, and a structure or a process through which individual preparatory work is untaken prior to team meetings. This might, for example, involve individuals in analyzing data from one of the functional domains within the simulation (such as marketing, HR or operations) and creating a summary of key points that participants bring to the team meeting. The team meeting itself allows the second stage of the learning process (co-creation of knowledge) to occur whereby team members jointly process the information to create their own meaning in addressing the problem set (i.e. the decision round in the simulation).

During this collaborative process (occurring within scheduled class time), the instructor can act as a facilitator to foster negotiations and encourage students to examine meaning and outcomes from different perspectives. Such constructive criticism and discussion of differences in meaning or perspective contributes to the learning process through reconsidering ideas and integrating these more effectively as the team develops its shared meaning. The instructor's role should be to help students understand divergent perspectives by talking these through rather than encouraging a rush to a lowest common denominator, or homogeneity, in which the opportunity for learning from diverse knowledge is reduced (Cronin & Weingart, 2007). In framing discussions around the concept of meaning and outcomes or solutions, the instructor can assist teams to focus on constructive task conflict, diverting the focus away from potential relationship conflict. In particular, implications from our findings suggest an important role for the instructor in this part of the experiential learning process is to help team members differentiate between the conflict arising over tasks and conflict arising over relationships.

Aligned to each of these processes, experiential learning further requires that students reflect upon their actions. Reflexivity can formally be built into the CBS as part of the pedagogic design and run throughout the duration of the CBS. In practice, we have found that requiring students to discuss their assumptions and perceptions about effective team working provided an effective foundation, which is used to develop a shared understanding of the team. Using the output of the discussion as the foundation of a simple written agreement, or team contract, in which all members of the team formally agreed a set of governing principles helped manage expectations from the start of the simulation activity. For example, this agreement may include team collaboration processes, communication protocols or (in extremis) the process for removing a member of the team member who is failing to make a contribution. We have found this method, whereby teams establish their own ground rules and set expectations at the start of semester, effective in

self-management and fostering early engagement, and particularly so for cross-cultural teams or those where English was not the first language.

Reflective processes can be supported as the simulation progresses across the decision periods by the instructor requiring evidence that the team as a whole has considered not only the issues arising for the company (i.e. the strategy, outcomes, etc.) but also the issues relating to the effectiveness of the team process (i.e. the team's processes for open information sharing, conflict resolution, meetings management, etc.). Thus, reflexive teams consider both the cognitive dimension of the team task within the CBS and the affective dimension of team working skills. From this discussion, it is evident that the success of using a CBS in the international business curriculum rests heavily upon the role of the instructor as designer and facilitator of the learning process. The importance of this role extends to setting expectations about participation in team work including preparation for and execution of tasks related to team dynamics and team process as highlighted by Chapman and van Auken (2001). Our experience has shown that such processes have led to very few tutor interventions being required to resolve conflict within teams and has assisted teams in resolving task and relationship conflict themselves.

By focusing on supporting students as they navigate task conflict and by demonstrating the benefits to learning that accrue from this, instructors may also find that this has an effect on improving team cohesion and performance in CBS because it may trigger a side effect of bolstering team member relationships. While not measured in this study, some prior research has suggested a positive spillover effect from the benefits of task conflict so that team members are able to more accurately diagnose the nature of conflict with which they are confronted and, hence, can adopt appropriate mechanisms (Amason, 1996; Simons & Peterson, 2000). In particular, by avoiding incorrectly diagnosing task conflict as relationship conflict, teams should immediately begin to see benefits in terms of perceived engagement that should then lead to a cumulative, snowballing effect. While instructors may be more able to help students differentiate these two forms of conflict, arguably it is easier to design and manage pedagogic processes and interventions to deal with task than relationship conflict. The presence of relationship conflict is likely to be more challenging to address, however, based on our findings this is nonetheless potentially more destructive for team cohesion and performance. Further consideration should be given to where in the program of study (including the CBS course) students are introduced to team dynamics and where this is developed. Instructors will need to establish how they will monitor team dynamics and develop early warning systems to identity those that are experiencing difficulties and to differentiate causation between task and relationship conflict in developing an appropriate intervention.

Conclusion

Simulations are deemed valuable in promoting key professional skills such as decision-making, team management, leadership and critical thinking (Canto de Loura, 2014; Doyle & Brown, 2000; Jacques & Salmon, 2007) and can, as a consequence, help prepare students for the challenges of their future careers (Avramenko, 2012; Brown et al., 2014; Doyle & Brown, 2000). Our findings reveal that, contrary to some studies, these promises of simulations apply for international direct entrant students. The value of the simulation for these students is for both engagement and learning. However, such students can benefit from staff developing an appropriate environment for learning to occur (Davies, 2002) to draw out and highlight learning (Exley & Dennick, 2004) and assist in solving crises and conflict within student teams (Levant et al., 2016) through establishing clear processes for team collaboration and information sharing (Chapman & van Auken, 2001). Despite the advantages to employing a simulation, disadvantages must be addressed in order to achieve the desired learning outcomes. A simulation alone does not engage students, rather it is the way in which it is integrated into the academic delivery. The key issues highlighted above can be alleviated through academic colleagues creating an effective learning environment and assisting in solving crises and conflicts within the team.

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The Trade Barrier Game: An Experiential Approach to Understanding Political Behavior in Trade Negotiations

Carol Reade and Mark McKenna

Introduction

Students in international business (IB) courses are typically introduced to international trade theory and provided with strong arguments for the theoretical and practical benefits of free trade (e.g., Daniels, Radebaugh, & Sullivan, 2019; Hill & Hult, 2019; Morris & Oldroyd, 2019). At the same time, they learn that governments intervene in trade for a variety of economic and political reasons, such as the protection of domestic producers, and have a range of instruments for such intervention, the oldest of which is to restrict imports through the use of tariffs. While students may have a textbook understanding of the reasons for government intervention in trade, they often have a difficulty in grasping both the internal pressures that drive governments to intervene and the relational dynamics that can spiral into trade wars as trading partners engage in tit-for-tat retaliations when trade barriers are imposed.

This chapter offers an experiential learning simulation for the IB classroom called The Trade Barrier Game. The simulation is based on a multiparty, iterated, prisoner's dilemma game found in the negotiation literature

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M. A. Gonzalez-Perez et al. (eds.), *The Palgrave Handbook of Learning and Teaching International Business and Management*, https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-030-20415-0_30

(e.g., Breslin & Rubin, 1999; Brett, 2014; Lewicki, Saunders, & Barry, 2010) and adapted by the authors to enhance the discussion of government policy directed at trade. The Trade Barrier Game brings to life the politics of trade by having students serve as trade ministers engaged in both in-country deliberations and multi-government negotiations on whether to lower or raise their country's trade barriers. The game is timely, fast paced, and engaging; can be played in one class period; and offers debriefing opportunities to discuss the tension between competition and collaboration, the role of trust, and what it means to 'win' in the context of a trade war. International business professors will find this simulation of interest for enhancing classroom teaching of the politics of trade.

We begin with the experience of the Trade Barrier Game simulation, including the purpose and description, learning objectives, basic requirements for running the simulation, playing instructions, tips for debriefing, and the challenges that might be encountered. This is followed by a section on the evidence of learning effectiveness, including how the simulation fits into Kolb's experiential learning cycle and meets the learning objectives. We conclude with the contributions of the simulation.

The Simulation Experience

Purpose and Description

Simulations are considered an effective way for students to grasp the complexities of the business world (Lantis, 1998; Reade, Todd, Osland, & Osland, 2008; Teach & Govahi, 1993). The Trade Barrier Game simulation is based on a prisoner's dilemma game, which stems from the early work of John Nash who formulated the concept of equilibrium applied to economic games (Nash, 1950). Game theory, with the so-called Nash equilibrium as the centerpiece, is a way that social scientists think about human behavior and their strategic interaction (Holt & Roth, 2004). A prisoner's dilemma game can effectively model real-world situations where individuals or groups are presented with payoff schedules for cooperating with a partner, or for defecting (Holt & Roth, 2004). The fundamental questions that arise in a game-theoretic situation are 'What should I do, based on what you do? Should I trust you? And what do I do if you break that trust?' (Tong, 2018). Under conditions of incomplete information, game theory predicts that the rational choice for individuals or groups is to adhere to a self-protective,

non-cooperative stance. Game theory has long been applied to the dynamics in trade negotiations and trade wars (e.g., Harrison & Rutstrom, 1991). In recent years, the role of trust has been examined in the context of international trade (Weinhardt, 2015) and in the application of game theory to trade wars (Tong, 2018).

The Trade Barrier Game is a pedagogical tool that helps to clarify the abstract concepts of political behavior in the world of trade negotiations. Specifically, the simulation enables students to gain an experiential understanding of the tension between competitive and cooperative behavior in the face of incomplete information, and of how the presence or lack of trust is often at the heart of the political behavior that is commonly observed around negotiations on trade. The simulation enhances the discussion of the politics of trade by providing students with a direct experience of the challenge faced by governments in unilaterally lowering their trade barriers. Students are able to recognize that trade policy choices which may on the surface appear irrational or counter-productive are often motivated by powerful interest groups and environmental forces (Grossman & Helpman, 1995), leading to a deeper understanding of the importance of building strong and enduring relationships even in highly competitive business environments. Further, students come to appreciate the value of lowering trade barriers for individual countries and the world economy.

Learning Objectives

The Trade Barrier Game simulation is designed to reinforce lectures on the politics of trade by engaging the student in an experiential learning activity that brings out the issues of competition and collaboration, and the challenges of gaining and maintaining trust as well as the likelihood of escalating trade conflict when trust breaks down. The following are the key learning objectives of the game:

1. Experience the behavioral and political dynamics underlying government-level decisions on trade, and how these dynamics can lead to a trade war;
2. Understand the challenges of engaging in cooperative behavior and of establishing and maintaining trust within a competitive environment; and
3. Recognize that even when the benefits of free trade to individual countries and the global economy are evident, countries may find it difficult to unilaterally lower their trade barriers.

The Basics

- Most suitable audience: Undergraduate or MBA students
- Time required: 60–75 minutes
- Optimal group size: 20–60 people
- Materials and technologies required: Table of Outcomes, Scoring Sheet, and four sets of ten tickets, one set for each team; a whiteboard and PowerPoint (Excel optional)
- Cost: Zero cost for students

Instructions

Preparation

The instructor will need to prepare a Table of Outcomes (see below), a Scoring Sheet (see below), and four sets of ten tickets ('post-it'-sized squares of paper or 3×5 cards), one set for each of the four country teams for ten rounds of the game. The Table of Outcomes can be put on a PowerPoint slide. The Scoring Sheet can be drawn on a whiteboard before the start of class or projected onto the screen as an Excel table. For the tickets, it can be helpful to have different colored tickets for each country team and to print the numbers for each of the ten rounds of the game at the top of the ticket, for example, A1–A10 for Country A.

In Class

1. Introduce students to the Trade Barrier Game as follows. 'There are four countries, A, B, C, and D that have significant trade relationships with each other. Each country has a moderate level of trade barriers in the form of tariff and non-tariff barriers. You are the Council of Ministers in the government of your respective country. After forming into countries, your Council of Ministers will convene on a quarterly basis to decide whether to raise or reduce your trade barriers, depending on your hypothetical internal circumstances. During these deliberations there is no consulting with the ministers of the other countries. Periodically, the trade ministers of each country will have an opportunity to discuss trade with each other. There are 10 quarters or rounds in the game. The objective of the game is for each country to earn as

many "units of benefit" as possible by adjusting its trade barriers up or down in a given quarter or round. There are five possible outcomes for determining units of benefit.' At this point, show and explain the Table of Outcomes below.

2. Randomly divide students into four countries (A, B, C, and D). Give the Councils of Ministers several minutes to deliberate internally on whether to raise or lower their trade barriers in the first quarter (or round). Ensure that the members of the four Councils are not attempting to consult with each other before determining whether to raise or lower their trade barriers. Instruct students to indicate their decision on the ticket for the first round by drawing an 'upward' arrow to signify a decision to raise trade barriers or a 'downward' arrow to signify lowering trade barriers (and to fill out only one ticket per round). After announcing that time is up, collect the tickets from each Council of Ministers. Announce that the results for the first quarter are now being posted. Fill in the publicly visible Scoring Sheet (which is either drawn on a whiteboard or projected overhead as an Excel table), so that all country teams become aware of the choices of other countries and their resulting gains and losses for that round. Repeat for the second and third rounds.
3. At the start of the fourth round, make the following announcement. 'In this quarter, there is an opportunity for representatives from each country to negotiate a deal on trade barriers. Because of the importance of these negotiations, the potential gains or losses during this quarter are doubled. The Councils must make two decisions at this point: whether you want to send a representative and, if so, who to send.' Once countries have made their decisions, the representatives come forward, out of hearing range from the rest of the class (e.g., outside the classroom door), and discuss. The instructor is a silent observer of this discussion and acts as timekeeper. After 5 minutes, announce that the representatives have completed their negotiations and are returning to their countries to discuss the outcome with their respective Council of Ministers. After an interval of several minutes during which the Councils deliberate internally on their decision, collect the tickets indicating their decision to either raise or lower their trade barriers. Fill in the publicly visible score sheet, so that all teams become aware of the choices of all countries and their resulting gains and losses for this round.
4. The fifth, sixth, and seventh rounds proceed with only internal deliberations. Collect the tickets after each round and post the results on the Scoring Sheet.

5. At the start of the eighth round, make the following announcement. 'There is again an opportunity for representatives of the Councils of Ministers to negotiate trade barriers. Because of heightened tensions around the trade negotiations, potential gains and losses are tripled during this round. Countries again need to decide if they want to participate and, if so, who to send. You may choose a different representative to send.' Representatives again have 5 minutes to negotiate away from the rest of the class, with the instructor as silent observer and timekeeper. After the negotiations the Councils of Ministers are given time to deliberate internally and make their determination. The tickets are collected and the results are posted on the Scoring Sheet.
6. The ninth round proceeds with only internal deliberations, and results are posted as in the earlier rounds.
7. At the start of the tenth and final round, make the following announcement. 'In this quarter, all members of the Councils of Ministers may participate openly in negotiations with each other on whether to raise or lower their trade barriers. Because of the public nature of these negotiations, and the high political stakes involved, the potential gains and losses will be multiplied eightfold. You have 5 minutes for an open discussion and to determine your countries' decision on trade barriers.' Collect the tickets from each Council of Ministers, and post the results on the Scoring Sheet.
8. Following the final round, the net unit of benefits are calculated for each country and posted on the Scoring Sheet, and the game is debriefed (see below).

Table of Outcomes

There are five possible outcomes, each representing a combination of gains and losses (G/L), depending on the decisions made by the four countries A, B, C, and D on whether to raise or lower (↑ or ↓) their trade barriers. Potential gains and losses depend on the combination of choices that all four countries make independently in a given quarter. The possible outcomes are illustrated in Table 30.1.

1. Outcome 1 occurs when all four countries raise their trade barriers. In this situation, trade is stifled and as a result all countries lose 1000 units of benefit.
2. Outcome 2 occurs when three countries raise their trade barriers, while one lowers them. Countries that raise their trade barriers limit imports and

Table 30.1 Possible outcomes

	Country A		Country B		Country C		Country D	
Outcome	↑ or ↓	G/L	↑ or ↓	G/L	↑ or ↓	G/L	↑ or ↓	G/L
1	↑	−1000	↑	−1000	↑	−1000	↑	−1000
2	↑	+1000	↑	+1000	↑	+1000	↓	−3000
3	↑	+2000	↑	+2000	↓	−2000	↓	−2000
4	↑	+3000	↓	−1000	↓	−1000	↓	−1000
5	↓	+1000	↓	+1000	↓	+1000	↓	+1000

Gains and losses (G/L)
Raise or lower (↑ or ↓) their trade barriers

increase their exports to the country that has lowered its trade barriers. They gain 1000 units of benefit each at the expense of the fourth country which, by allowing cheap imports to flood its market, loses 3000 units of benefit.

3. Outcome 3 occurs when two countries raise and two countries lower their trade barriers. The two countries that raised their trade barriers each gain 2000 units of benefit because with higher trade barriers they are able to protect their domestic producers while flooding the markets of the countries that lowered their trade barriers with cheap exports. The countries that lowered their trade barriers each lose 2000 units of benefit.
4. Outcome 4 occurs when one country raises its trade barriers, while three lower theirs. As a result, the country that raised its barriers and floods the markets of the other three countries with its cheap exports gains 3000 units of benefit. Each of the other three countries loses 1000 units of benefit.
5. Outcome 5 occurs when all four countries lower their trade barriers. Since a reduction in trade barriers increases productivity as all countries use their resources more efficiently, the result is greater consumption and higher standards of living. All four countries gain 1000 units of benefit. Figure 30.1 illustrates a basic Scoring Sheet for the activity.

Scoring is done per round. After the four country tickets for a round have been collected, the instructor enters an up or down arrow (↑ or ↓) into the first column for each country corresponding to its trade barrier decision. The gains or losses (G/L) experienced by each country's economy during that quarter, based on the combined trade barrier decisions of all four countries, are then entered into the second column for each country. For instance, if in Round 3 all countries decide to raise their trade barriers, the instructor posts an upward arrow (↑) in the first column and −1000 in the G/L column of each country (Outcome 1 in the Table of Outcomes). Red and black markers may be useful to indicate losses and gains. After entering the results in the

	Country A		Country B		Country C		Country D	
Round	↑ or ↓	G/L	↑ or ↓	G/L	↑ or ↓	G/L	↑ or ↓	G/L
1								
2								
3								
4								
5								
6								
7								
8								
9								
10								

Gains and losses (G/L)
Raise or lower (↑ or ↓) their trade barriers

Fig. 30.1 Scoring Sheet

score sheet, the country teams are instructed to deliberate for the next round. After the final round, a 'Totals' row is added to the bottom of the Scoring Sheet, and students are asked to calculate the net gains and losses for their country. The instructor fills in the Totals row with the results. (If the Scoring Sheet is projected as an Excel table, the Totals row can be unhidden at this point, with the total values either already calculated based on entries as the game progresses or the entering of a SUM function to total each country column.)

Debriefing

Using the Scoring Sheet as a guide, the game is debriefed around the issues of motivation for decision choices, negotiation processes, relationships and trust, and economic outcomes. Students are asked to share their reasoning, experience, and feelings around these issues.

Motivation for Decision Choices

The debriefing can fruitfully begin by asking the country teams why they made the choices they did in the first round. Typically, all four countries choose to raise their trade barriers. Student decision choices in this situation reflect a motivation for playing it safe and to be in a self-protective mode given that they do not know what the other countries will choose to do.

Occasionally, one country opts to lower their trade barriers in the first round. When queried, students often express a motivation to collaborate in order for all countries to gain points (Outcome 5 in the Table of Outcomes). Students can then be asked about their decision choices in the second and third rounds. Most country teams will respond that they continued to raise their trade barriers for the same reasons expressed earlier. When a country team has lowered its trade barriers in the first round, and did so again in the second round, students tend to respond that they wanted to set an example for working together so that all countries could gain. Exploring the decision-making process of a country team that lowered their trade barriers during a round will most often reveal that after being disappointed that other countries did not follow suit, they slipped back into a protectionist mode. By the third round, it is typical for all countries to raise their trade barriers.

This pattern of behavior highlights the difficulty that countries in the real world face in attempting to signal a willingness to engage in cooperative behavior in a generally competitive environment. It also underscores the difficulties countries face in unilaterally lowering their trade barriers for fear that other countries will not reciprocate (e.g., Hill & Hult, 2019).

Multi-government Negotiation and Internal Constituencies

Next, negotiation processes are examined. Students are queried about their experience in the fourth and eighth rounds that involved opportunities for negotiation with the other countries. The fourth round, where gains and losses are doubled, was the first opportunity for country teams to send a trade representative for negotiation with representatives from the other three countries. Ask: What did the trade representatives experience in the negotiation? Was an agreement reached? If so, what determined whether the agreement was kept? It is often the case in the fourth round that the trade representatives of the four countries will agree among themselves that all four countries will lower trade barriers in that round, only to be pressured by their Council of Ministers upon their return to pursue a protectionist trade strategy. Thus, at least one country typically defects in this round and raises their trade barriers, resulting in their gaining double points while countries that abided by the agreement and lowered their trade barriers doubled their losses. Given the typical defection(s) in the fourth round, all countries tend to raise their barriers in the fifth, sixth, and seventh rounds, producing cascading losses for all

countries. Students are then asked about their experience in the eighth round, where country teams had another opportunity to send a trade representative for negotiation with representatives from the other countries. Ask: Did your country opt to participate in the negotiation? Why or why not? Was an agreement reached during the negotiation? What influence did the Council of Ministers have on the final decision to raise or lower your trade barriers? Often, one country will opt not to join the negotiation in the eighth round. This signals to the other trade representatives that even if they lower their trade barriers, the country opting out of the negotiation will not. The result is that all countries tend to raise their trade barriers in the eighth round, tripling their losses in that round.

This pattern of behavior highlights the challenge for countries in the real world to gain internal support for trade decisions that are not self-protective, further underscoring the difficulty for countries to unilaterally lower their trade barriers given pressure from home constituencies.

Relationships and Trust

Issues of 'cheating,' 'unfairness,' and 'trust' routinely come up to describe the negotiation process in reference to the countries not 'keeping their word.' By the end of the game, one of the four countries will often be identified by the others as having been particularly cut-throat or uncooperative during the game. They may even be accused of undermining efforts to foster international cooperation by their selfish actions. Students can be asked: Would you be willing to continue to play the game? Why or why not? They are likely to agree to do so only if the 'uncooperative' country is excluded. Some students may say directly that a particular country cannot be trusted, and they would not negotiate with them in the future.

Students will point to the trust-breaching behavior of the uncooperative country in the fourth and eighth rounds. Trust, fairness, and cheating issues often come up during the open negotiations in the tenth round when some teams may seek to form a cooperative alliance around collectively lowering their trade barriers, but will not trust that all teams will be willing to abide by any agreement that is reached. In addition, trade representatives and team members from countries that have fared badly during the earlier rounds of the game may in the last round of the game (or in the fourth and eighth rounds) demand that the other countries compensate them for their prior losses by, for example, lowering their trade barriers while allowing the injured countries to

raise theirs. Such demands, rather than eliciting cooperation to address 'fairness' concerns often serve to further harden positions, and can lead to no agreement to lower trade barriers being reached during the negotiations.

The experience of the breach of trust, and how it plays out in terms of hardening self-protective positions and a spiraling of tit-for-tat responses, highlights the potential long-term costs of protectionism despite its seeming benefits in the short or medium term. The instructor might also highlight how trust-building challenges in multi-government trade negotiations (Weinhardt, 2015) could be magnified when taking cross-cultural differences into account (Brett, 2014; Li, 2013; Moore & Woodrow, 2010; Salacuse, 2003).

Economic Outcomes

Having discussed motivational, procedural, and relationship issues, the debrief can conclude with an examination of potential economic outcomes, a review of the political and economic arguments for government intervention in trade, and the role of the World Trade Organization (WTO). Students become aware at the end of the game of their country's net units of benefit vis-à-vis the other countries. This often prompts one of the teams (typically the defector during the game) to proclaim that they 'won' given their relatively higher score. Often, all four countries are in the red, with the 'winning' country defined as the country that lost the least. This presents an opportunity to enquire about potential gains. Ask: What could each country have gained if all countries had lowered their trade barriers in every round? Students quickly calculate that if all four countries had lowered their trade barriers in each round (Outcome 5), each country would have gained 20,000 units of benefit over the course of the game (1000 units of benefit in 7 rounds, 2000 units of benefit in the fourth round, 3000 in the eighth round, and 8000 in the tenth round). Students are then asked to consider how close they came to achieving the goal of the game, that is, to gain the maximum units of benefit for their country. The wider implications can then be explored. Ask: If the four countries made up 'the world economy,' what would the world economy have gained? Students quickly see that the gains to the world economy would have been 80,000 units of benefit (4 countries × 20,000 units of benefit).

This experience highlights that 'protectionism' kept each country and the 'world economy' from gaining the maximum possible benefit from 'freer' trade. This is highlighted in the real world where protectionist measures may bring short-term gains at the expense of long-term gains, as countries retaliate with their own tariffs and other forms of trade barriers (e.g., Druckman,

2019). Here, it can be useful to review some of the key lecture points on the politics of trade. For instance, while many governments have recognized the value of free trade, they continue to use political and economic arguments for erecting trade barriers:

- Protecting jobs and industries (steel in the US; the Trans-Pacific Partnership negotiations, and the subsequent withdrawal from the agreement by the US)
- Protecting consumers (genetically modified foods; hormones in beef; mad cow disease)
- Protecting human rights (barriers against China following the 1989 Tiananmen Square incident)
- Protecting national security interests and intellectual property rights (defense-related: aerospace, advanced electronics; more recently, the dairy industry dispute with Canada)
- Protecting infant industry (economic argument for boosting overall wealth of a nation to benefit producers and consumers).

The debrief can conclude with a discussion of the role of the World Trade Organization in maintaining and promoting a freer and fairer global trade regime. By the end of the game, students experience how easy it is to fall into a vicious cycle of erecting trade barriers and how this translates into a loss for individual countries and for the world economy. In this context, attention can be drawn to the important role performed by the dispute resolution mechanisms of the World Trade Organization as a way to manage the tensions and conflicts around trade policy issues.

Challenges

There are a few challenges that the authors have encountered when implementing the simulation. Occasionally, for instance, a student will question the constraints of the game, particularly not being allowed to discuss trade barrier decisions with other country teams from the start. It is therefore useful to acknowledge that the game is based on game theory, consists of simple choices, constrains the interactions among parties, and, to that extent, does not represent the complexity of negotiation processes that take place in 'real world' international trade negotiations. It can be pointed out, however, that simulations based on game theory are designed to elicit in a very short time frame behaviors observed in life, including issues of cooperation, competition, and trust that occur in real-world trade negotiations.

Another potential challenge, although extremely rare, is when a country team comes close to gaining 20,000 units of benefit. This can happen if the defector team continues to raise trade barriers throughout the game, while other country teams decide to lower theirs at various points in the game. If this happens, a focus in the debriefing can be placed on the short-term versus long-term gains for the 'uncooperative' country, given reputational and trust issues that might affect the country in the future.

Larger class sizes can pose a challenge since it is more difficult to get full student engagement. With teams of more than 15 students, it can be difficult for everyone to participate or remain engaged. Some students will be less attentive to the discussions within the group and teams are more likely to break into smaller subsets, engaging in parallel conversations. To address this challenge the authors find it helpful, while the game is in progress, to walk around and listen in on the team discussions, and to encourage students to participate more fully. Larger teams can also lead to more protracted discussions. In later rounds, while some teams are likely to quickly decide on the default option of always raising their trade barriers, others may find it difficult to reach any consensus. The instructor may need to set firm deadlines and walk around the room to collect the tickets.

Student engagement might be a challenge in a classroom where students have had diverse experiences or come from different cultural backgrounds. With participants who have had prior exposure to experiential learning activities, they are likely to quickly get into the spirit of the activity. In cultural contexts where students are hesitant to speak up or actively engage in learning, more effort and attention may need to be given to ensuring that everyone participates.

Optimal Fit and Replication

The simulation can be successfully implemented in a variety of settings. It has been used effectively by the authors with undergraduate students and would be suitable for use with graduate students. The activity does not require participants to have a particular skill level; rather, the activity is designed to supplement and enhance lecture and textbook learning on the topic of politics of trade.

It is easier to conduct the activity in classrooms with flexible seating where students can gather in groups and move around, but the authors have also successfully implemented the activity in tiered lecture halls with fixed seating. With large groups of 60 or more students, it can be helpful to project the

Scoring Sheet as an Excel spreadsheet onto an overhead screen so that it can be easily seen by all students. In smaller classes, the Scoring Sheet can be easily drawn on a whiteboard.

The authors have replicated the simulation multiple times in IB courses over the past decade, with diverse groups of students. The results are consistently similar. The learning objectives for this activity are specific to understanding the political dynamics around trade negotiations and the overall politics of trade, a topic that is generally addressed in introductory IB courses, though the game might also be relevant for more specialized courses on international trade theory and practice. While engaging in the game, students are able to apply a number of more general skills, in leadership, communication, teamwork, decision making, and negotiation. These skills are relevant and transferable to a wide range of business contexts and settings.

Evidence of Learning Effectiveness

Experiential Learning Cycle

The Trade Barrier Game simulation is highly experiential and fits well into Kolb's cycle of experiential learning. The cycle of experiential learning involves active experimentation, concrete experience, reflective observation, and abstract conceptualization (Kolb & Kolb, 2009). The simulation meets the experiential learning cycle in the following ways.

Active Experimentation

Students actively engage in the topic of the politics of trade, a topic that they have studied through lecture and textbook chapter materials prior to the simulation (e.g., Hill & Hult, 2019). In determining whether to raise or lower their country's trade barriers in a given round, students have an opportunity to apply in practice what they have learned in theory that countries will generally be better off economically when they lower their trade barriers.

Concrete Experience

Students experience firsthand the tension between competition and collaboration as they discuss with their Councils whether or not to lower their country's trade barriers, see the decisions of other country Councils, and the impact

of those decisions on the results for their own country. They experience the challenge of establishing and maintaining trust, and their reactions to a breach of trust. In short, they experience firsthand the behavioral and political dynamics of trade negotiations and the downward spiral of mistrust and retaliatory action that can trigger a trade war.

Reflective Observation

As the game proceeds, students have an opportunity to observe their own reactions, and the reactions of the other members of their team to trade barrier decisions. Some may push to lower the country's trade barriers in hopes of eliciting positive responses from the other country teams or they may take a more instrumental approach, seeking to maximize their country's gains in each round (or, at least, to minimize their losses) by raising their trade barriers. Students also have an opportunity to observe the responses of the members of other country teams as each country's decision to raise or lower its trade barriers in a particular quarter is posted to the Scoring Sheet. Students have an opportunity to reflect on what could have been done differently, and what would be needed for a different, and more positive course of action.

Abstract Conceptualization

Simulations are considered an effective way for students to grasp the complexities of the business world (Lantis, 1998; Reade et al., 2008; Teach & Govahi, 1993). Through a debrief of the game, students are able to make comparisons with 'real world' political behavior surrounding trade. In doing so, they are better able to not only comprehend the lecture and textbook material on the politics of trade but also make informed judgments about the current world affairs in the arena of trade negotiations.

Meeting the Learning Objectives

The Trade Barrier Game is very effective for reinforcing an understanding of the behavioral and political dynamics inherent in the politics of trade. Students experience the challenges of cooperation and trust within a competitive global environment and gain a better understanding of the challenges face in unilaterally lowering trade barriers.

Evidence of meeting the learning objectives can be assessed during the debrief following the simulation. Students are likely to identify the following issues or lessons which map to the learning objectives:

Learning Goal 1: To experience the behavioral and political dynamics underlying government-level decisions on trade, and how these dynamics can lead to a trade war.

If the four country teams had consistently lowered their trade barriers during the game, each of the countries would have been individually better off and the global economy as a whole would have grown substantially. However, individual teams observed that they could improve their economic situation in a given round by raising their trade barriers while other teams lowered theirs. That created an incentive for teams to raise their trade barriers. As a result, in most iterations of the game, teams will engage in tit-for-tat retaliation, raising their trade barriers in a given round because other teams raised their trade barriers in a previous round. Students recognize that such actions undermine the capacity to realize potential gains and reflect the dynamics associated with trade wars in real-world contexts.

Learning Goal 2: To understand the challenges of engaging in cooperative behavior and of establishing and maintaining trust within a competitive environment.

A number of issues prevent teams from being able to cooperate effectively in lowering their trade barriers. First, there is the issue of trust. While some teams may decide to lower their trade barriers in hopes that others would do the same, other teams assume that at least one of the teams would decide to raise their trade barriers, and so to protect themselves they decide to raise their trade barriers, too. Second, since lowering trade barriers involves some risk, as the country would lose points if other teams raised their trade barriers, it is difficult to get buy-in from everyone on the team to make the riskier decision. Finally, once a team loses points due to lowering its trade barriers while other teams raised theirs, the team is more likely to raise their trade barriers in subsequent rounds in order to retaliate. During the game, one or two teams will typically try to signal their interest in cooperation by lowering their trade barriers for one or even two rounds. However, if this is not reciprocated, they are likely to switch to raising their trade barriers. At times a team that has lowered its trade barriers will raise its barriers in the next round just as other teams, in an effort to join in a more cooperate approach, decide to lower their trade barriers. This suggests the difficulty of accurately signaling cooperation and trust over the longer term following an initial self-protective and uncooperative stance. At the end of the game, students will often express antipathy toward at least one team, particularly if that team breached trust and ended the game relatively (or substantially) better off.

Learning Goal 3: To recognize that even when the benefits of free trade to individual countries and the global economy are evident, countries may find it difficult to unilaterally lower their trade barriers.

Ultimately, in the context of understanding, the political dynamics around trade negotiations and the lowering and raising of barriers to trade, students are likely to raise questions about what it means to 'win' in this situation, that is, what constitutes a successful outcome to the game. In particular, they are likely to note the tension that exists between attempting to maximize the benefits for each country in the short term, and the best way to maximize outcomes in the longer term for individual countries and the global economy. In each round of the game, the incentives are geared to encourage teams to raise their trade barriers while hoping that other countries will lower theirs, while maximizing the benefits for all countries over the course of the entire game depends upon all countries agreeing to consistently lower their trade barriers in each round and sticking by that agreement. As a result, most teams end up substantially below their potential gains. Students recognize by the end of the game the difficulty that governments face in making a unilateral decision to lower trade barriers.

Contributions

The simulation makes a valuable pedagogical contribution. It increases student engagement on an important topic in the IB classroom, the politics of trade. The simulation is educational, fun, and memorable for students. This is made clear in the student evaluations of the course, where this simulation is invariably mentioned as an activity that is engaging and enhances learning. The simulation is also timely. In the past several years, major world economies such as the United States have taken a more protectionist stance in trade, leading to retaliation by trading partners. This has raised concern among some about possible negative long-term effects on individual countries and the world economy (e.g., Druckman, 2019; Tong, 2018).

As a pedagogical tool, this simulation helps to clarify the abstract concepts of political behavior and enables students to gain an experiential understanding of the tension between collaboration and competition, and the role of trust, and the pressure of internal constituencies in trade negotiations. Because the simulation directly engages students' emotions around these issues, the simulation deepens the understanding and discussion of the politics of trade in the IB classroom. Students are able to recognize that policy choices that may on the surface appear irrational or counter-productive are often moti-

vated by the fear of acting unilaterally to lower trade barriers as well as by pressure from powerful internal constituencies. This leads to a deeper understanding of the importance of building strong and enduring relationships within constituencies and with government officials of trading partners. This is all the more valuable in highly competitive business environments.

While the Trade Barrier Game makes a pedagogical contribution by increasing student understanding of the political dynamics underlying trade negotiations (Grossman & Helpman, 1995; Harrison & Rutstrom, 1991), it also has implications for theory. As noted by Tong (2018), game theory predicts that free trade and trust are the exceptions, and that self-interested actions are the norm. This is strongly illustrated in the Trade Barrier Game, where self-protection and competition, together with the issues of fairness and trust, are shown to be dominant themes. Game theory typically focuses on the 'rational choice' behavior. It is noted in the literature, however, that people are often as concerned with issues such as fairness as they are with their own payoffs (e.g., Holt & Roth, 2004). Trust is another issue that is not adequately captured in game-theoretic models (Weinhardt, 2015). Yet, as the Trade Barrier Game illustrates, it is an important factor that can change the outcome of the game. In summary, the Trade Barrier Game demonstrates the politics of trade in a lively and engaging manner and also gives the message that cooperative behavior and trust building can enhance benefits for all.

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31

Experiential Learning Through the Use of Interaction and Multimedia in International Business Teaching

Xiaohua Yang, Ziyu Meng, and Mathew Mitchell

Introduction

Experiential learning refers to learning through practice, which is used in practical or on-site learning. Here, students learn by working while being directly involved in actual decision-making along with executives (Aithal, 2016). Experiential learning is not a new area of pedagogy; this is an international business learning method where students are exposed to real business problems and made part of the decision-making team, but we know very little about how effective it is in terms of improving student learning. Kolb's (1984) experiential learning theory describes a four-stage learning cycle, including diverging, assimilating, accommodating, and converging. Kolb (1984) states that learning is an integrated process, with each stage being mutually supportive of and feeding into the next. Effective learning only occurs when a learner executes all four stages of the module, which means that no one stage of the cycle is effective as a learning procedure on its own. Researchers utilize experimental learning as their pedagogies in many business schools around the world.

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M. A. Gonzalez-Perez et al. (eds.), *The Palgrave Handbook of Learning and Teaching International Business and Management*, https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-030-20415-0_31

This chapter discusses the effectiveness of experiential learning through the multi-phase use of classroom interaction, group collaboration, and video learning methods in an international business course at a US university. We developed a student-centered learning method to have students do classroom experiments, including video learning and group debate, so as to practice integrating thinking and decision-making skills. Instructors acted as facilitators to structure the topic and obtain interesting results, observe in the classroom, and collect students' feedback on their learning experiences.

In the first phase, by using multimedia learning and British parliamentary-style debate, we created an environment where students learned through diverse learning methods. In the second phase, we redesigned the multimedia learning materials through Screencast, software that uses video screen capture, to improve the ability of the learning materials based on feedback from the first-phase learning.

This research contributes to our understanding of how an experiential learning method could facilitate students in connecting conceptual understanding with integrated thinking and cultural intelligence through multimedia and interactive learning materials in an international business class. An experiential learning method enhances the individual-direct learning experience by combining practice with conceptual and theoretical understanding. Effective international business teaching methods are necessary to provide students with requisite general, specific, abstract, and concrete knowledge (Ashley, Schaap, & de Bruijn, 2016). Without these, learning transfer is limited. To understand international business as a domain, instructors need to give and form instances of abstract concepts from concrete examples (Ashley et al., 2016).

Literature Review

Experiential learning is deployed with different learning models in international business class interactions by many instructors. Some apply a reflective development model to improve students' intercultural competence by using a four-stage development model including awareness, experience, reflection, and assessment (e.g., Feng, 2016). It is useful to put students into foreign or international environments so they may learn to deal with international business challenges. Feng (2016) demonstrated that the in-class reflective program could be the first step to improving motivation and metacognition for intercultural interactions. International business instructors use study-abroad programs frequently, but less frequently take advantage of the full slate of in-class

pedagogies that could be available to them. Feng's (2016) four-stage development model provides a good example of how to improve the class interaction within traditional classroom contexts in order to enhance intercultural competency of undergraduate students. This model focuses on reflecting on students' personal experiences and reinforcing reflective learning strategies through class interaction.

Zhao (2016) discusses constructive misalignment in international business education as well, integrating a three-stage approach, including a threshold concept, problem-based learning, and technology-based earning, to enhance teaching and learning. By delivering this program via advanced educational technology, Zhao (2016) identified and embedded the threshold concepts in international business courses, embedded the problem-based approach in a discipline model application, and integrated a technology-based approach into the discipline model application and problem-based assessment. By analyzing the learning satisfaction and performance results of research participants, the approach brought positive results to the learning outcomes assessment. Zhao (2016) focuses on simulation games as the primary teaching technology in international business courses and suggests that researchers explore the effectiveness of new technologies in advance.

This thinking contributed to the design of technological tools for in-class interaction in international business classes with a research purpose. Classroom response systems are an effective educational technology to improve student class interaction as well. According to Wong's (2016) study that used clickers in an international business class for both local and international students in Hong Kong, the after-class survey evinced positive attitudes from students using diverse response systems. Developing a curriculum within an international business context and multimedia learning is gaining popularity worldwide.

Recent studies have discussed the multiple learning methods available in international business classes to build up the skills of professionalism and practice through class interaction. Tuleja (2017) applied an approach using the study of cultural metaphors and found that increased capacity to construct redefinitions of culture was based on students' experiences. Students were requested to contribute a tangible visual image of their impression of Chinese culture and write about it before and after the cross-cultural immersion experience. Upon their return, students were requested again to submit a different picture with an additional written explanation in order to explicate their further understanding of culture's role. By describing several types of class activity, Frank introduced a group of options that international business instructors could use in class for a situation where cultural sensitivity was an important component. Matheson and Sutcliffe (2017) stated their outcomes in terms of

adopting flexible pedagogies in a graduate-level international business class, providing recommendations on course design. They demonstrated the importance of creating belonging and trust within student groups in their learning. Graduates need to engage with complex problems and present creative solutions via their international business learning (Matheson & Sutcliffe, 2017). By using Ryan and Tilbury's flexible pedagogies framework (2013), their research exemplified practice and discussed principles for international business curricula design with an eye to technological development. Thus, there is a trend that instructors utilize various tools, such as technology and groupwork interaction, to construct the conceptual understanding of learning and practicing for students in an international business class.

Seno-Alday and Budde-Sung (2016) reviewed international business education industry journals from 1970 to 2014, looking at the types of assignment, and approaches to assignment design to close the learning loop in international business education. With a course-level concern, and seeking to examine approaches to measuring student learning outcomes through appropriate assignment designs and to allow students to demonstrate their learning, the study clarified the various roles and types of assignment, as well as describing extant approaches to ensure the validity and reliability of standard assignments (Seno-Alday & Budde-Sung, 2016). The research results show that only 92 out of 471 studies examined incorporated a discussion of issues related to the measurement of student learning outcomes.

By focusing on teaching in international business, recent researchers have contributed to research on the development of conceptual understanding, cultural intelligence, flexible pedagogies, and distinct teaching modes. Ashley et al. (2016) initiated exploratory research to develop a definition of conceptual understanding for teaching in international business using a panel of diverse subjects. Scholars and educators of international business seek powerful teaching strategies for different occupational professionals. The study utilized Oonk's concept (2009) about three levels of increasingly complex theory in a mathematics class. The research found that it was difficult to define a conceptual understanding for teaching in international business. Ashley et al. (2016) further complemented their research with the notion that integrated thinking was an essential characteristic of developing conceptual understanding and required out-of-the-box thinking to extend beyond the subjects at hand, making meaningful connections with other topics relevant to international business. Deep conceptual understanding should be knowledge specific to international business, otherwise the resulting definition could be too generic to describe a useful conceptual understanding.

The current literature suggests that teaching-related international business research is not sufficient in addressing an international business curriculum that is infused with both experiential learning and multimedia learning, but lacking

practice in class and comprehensive sample analysis. It is necessary for instructors to design their teaching and learning components to assist with a conceptual understanding of international business, integrated critical thinking, improvement of cultural intelligence, and concurrent international context enrollment. Learning materials should be deployed effectively and widely.

Experiential Learning Objectives

In this chapter, the authors have used experiential learning to introduce the module *Entering Foreign Markets* to students in two class sections. Students watched videos that were posted on a learning management system and prepared their questions in the first section. Instructors organized a British parliamentary-style debate and discussion in the second section. There was then a follow-up section in which instructors redesigned the videos and reposted them to students for feedback. The purpose was to provide students with a hands-on experience rather than simply listening and talking in class. By debating in the British parliamentary style, students had to build their theoretical frame, rebut the opposition, and provide sufficient realistic information to support their team's main points. The interaction required students to collaborate and practice understanding the learning content.

The learning objectives are to practice students' integrated thinking and decision-making skills. The interaction and multimedia method described what we used in an international business class to improve the learning experience in a traditional classroom. The learning content was *Entering Foreign Markets*, based on chapter 10 of the textbook (Peng, 2017) that students read and prepared from before class. For the interaction, the instructor organized a debate based on a topic from this textbook. For multimedia use, the instructor followed ISTE educational technology standards and created learning videos for students to utilize both in and out of the classroom.[1] Based on previous research results as well as what international business instructors did in their classrooms, one of the authors of this paper designed the video learning and debate sessions with the goal of creating more practice options to improve class interaction as well as knowledge cognition. Please refer to Fig. 31.1 for the design of learning content.

When the authors designed their teaching methods, they integrated into the course content knowledge about the development of cultural intelligence in recent years. According to Aggarwal and Goodell (2016), adaptation to cultural differences is an essential component of the global mindset for

[1] ISTE is the standard guide for educational technology specialists to design their instructional content. See https://www.iste.org/standards/ for details.

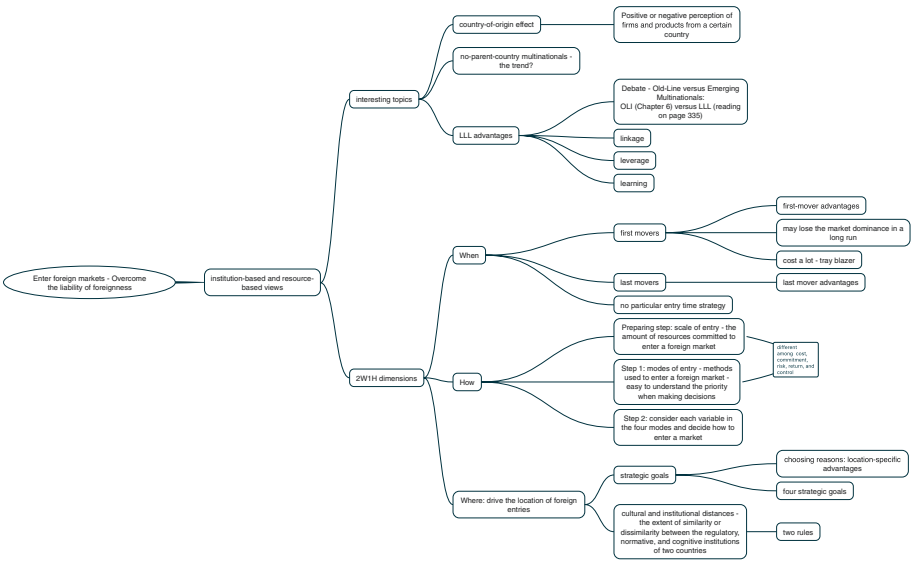

Fig. 31.1 Mind map of online videos for Peng chapter 10, *Entering Foreign Markets*

students pursuing international business in their future careers. Researchers brought in cultural intelligence, defined as the ability of an outsider to interpret someone's unfamiliar and ambiguous gestures in a similar way to the person's compatriots (Earley & Mosakowski, 2004), in their international business classrooms. Based on the findings in their research, Aggarwal and Zhan (2017) also pointed out the importance of combining the management of cultural differences with international business instruction. Robledo-Ardila, Aguilar-Barrientos, and Román-Calderón (2016) assessed 557 students in an international business undergraduate program and concluded that second language proficiency, multicultural team membership, and participation in curricular and extracurricular activities promote the development of cultural intelligence in international business classes.

Experiential Learning Cycle

In the first phase, students viewed the video and did experiential learning by carrying out a British parliamentary-style debate. The debate involved students in a decision-making environment and had them explore the outcomes of their decisions. In the second phase, the video redesign was applied, where students provided feedback on the improved video to reshape the experiential

learning cycle. The new multimedia material focused more on the experiential learning method for students to enable their cultural intelligence by tightly connecting the textbook content with current business situations in the world.

In the first phase, the study involved two class sessions. The first was an online instructional session where students watched the video via the learning management system, Canvas, and gave feedback on a discussion channel. The instructor made videos by using the multimedia including Microsoft Office, iMovie, and other necessary digital tools. The video was about the knowledge flow set out in chapter 10 of the textbook, in which the topic was divided into three parts, including when, what, and how to enter a foreign market. The second session was a discussion where the instructor facilitated an on-site British parliamentary-style debate and discussed questions students had asked on the channel. Due to the topic being about entering foreign markets, the debate concerned whether to keep the firm-specific advantages or the localization-specific advantages. Students were divided based on eight different roles, with eight students presenting in each debate according to their assigned roles. The other students participated in the free-debating after the presentations and then voted for the winner of the debate. Students had ten minutes to prepare before the debate and ten minutes for free-debating. Students posted their questions on Canvas and the instructor collected them before the second session. The detailed topic and arrangement were as below. Please refer to the Appendices 1 and 2 for video links and debate design.

Evaluation of the Learning Effectiveness

The learning effectiveness was not monitored within the experiment. In the first phase, the feedback received from students was that students wanted to learn more beyond textbook knowledge, having the desire to connect what they learn with the real international business world. In the second phase, authors provided the new materials and collected their feedback as well. The research results came from student interviews and surveys.

At the end of class, the instructor observed to what extent students understood the concepts and what questions they were still concerned about. According to the feedback from students, the instructor could create effective online instructional materials by embedding ongoing events in the international business world and limiting the knowledge exposure in each multimedia learning unit. In the second phase, the instructors redesigned the materials of learning and shared these with business major students again for their feedback.

Screencast was used to edit the learning materials. By collecting results via a Google form, the instructors received the research results from students, which showed that most understood the learning videos and were familiar with the textbook contents. For example:

> More examples could be provided to explain the concept. It feels like the first video's concept is much easier for some reason. More Analysis of stage models worldwide could be provided. The videos could talk more about the cultural difference.
>
> I personally felt the first video was more organized by having an initial overview and then discussing every point in detail. The content on the mind map needs to be clear and avoid monotony.

To evaluate the effectiveness of the videos, it was necessary to ask for student feedback. Several students pointed out that there was too much information in each video session in the first phase, even if the chapter had been divided into three parts. It was difficult to synthesize all the information in a ten-minute video. Some other students suggested that they needed to have interaction with the video; for instance, they might answer several quiz questions after watching a small part and then continue. This problem could be solved by using the online function of embedding questions in a video, but the legalities of using such a service from a video platform to perform a specific act like this are unknown. The instructor should be cautious about information selection in multimedia design. By reviewing the feedback questions from the multimedia learning, the authors of this chapter ascertained that students were more concerned about the real international business world, or how learned concepts were reflected in the current international business world, and sought practical analytical skills rather than knowledge from a textbook. International business instructional design thus has a direction for future studies to develop how students apply knowledge in their out-of-class activities and career development, especially for junior and senior undergraduates.

Challenges and Best Practices

From the results of the first phase, students came up with the view that too much information in one video session or overly long sessions were not useful in terms of overcoming the large cognitive load to be learned, which helped editing the learning materials in the second phase. The two phases did not

take place in the same class or same semester, so that the authors had to trial the experimental methods with different sample groups. It was thus hard to control the influence of extraneous variables.

According to the feedback from the second phase, students understood the videos by having an understanding of their topics first. If they had prior knowledge of the contents, such as reading the textbook before watching the video, they would pay attention to the detailed examples and considered the material more deeply than other students who did not have knowledge of the textbook contents. Students who had prior knowledge also wanted to have an analysis section in the videos to help them understand the complicated international business models. There was a technical issue in terms of generating a clear mind map picture in the videos. For future instructional designs, instructors may need extra support or practice before making instructional materials about technological tools.

Transferability

ISTE standards refers to the road map to help students, educators, and administrators to design or utilize educational technology tools (ISTE, 2018). We designed the videos by following the standards and sub-standards addressed. Please see Table 31.1 for details.

British parliamentary-style debate is a good structure for class interaction in undergraduate business classes. Students were interested in the learning method and focused on the group target. Rather than presenting one chapter in a given textbook, the debate and additional discussion provided real international business world insights. Our study indicates that developing class debate in the British parliamentary style regularly in each class module can greatly enhance the student learning experience.

Other Replications

Using appropriate teaching instruments can increase a student's in-class interaction initiative (Wong, 2016). The utility of multimedia tools in class is a topic that international business instructors engage in very frequently and continue to explore. This chapter provides support for the use of an experimental learning method through multimedia and interactive learning in an international business class.

Table 31.1 ISTE standards for educators utilized in the online video instructional design

Learner	• Apply pedagogical approaches via technology • Pursue professional interests in local and global learning networks
Leader	• Advocate for equitable access to educational technology and digital content to meet the diverse needs of all students • Model for colleagues the identification, exploration, evaluation, curation, and adoption of new digital resources and tools for learning
Citizen	• Create experiences for learners to make socially responsible contributions and have empathetic behavior online • Establish a learning culture that fosters digital literacy and media fluency • Promote management of personal data and digital identity
Collaborator	• Collaborate with colleagues to create authentic learning experiences • Co-learn with students to discover new digital resources and troubleshoot technology issues
Designer	• Use technology to create learning experiences and accommodate learner differences and needs • Design learning activities that align with content area standards and use digital tools to maximize deep learning
Facilitator	• Foster a culture where students approach their learning goals and outcomes in both independent and group settings • Manage the technology and learning strategy on digital platforms and in virtual environments • Create the expression to communicate ideas, knowledge, or connections
Analyst	• Provide alternative ways for students to demonstrate competency by using technology • Use technology to design formative and summative assessments that provide feedback and inform curricula • Use assessment data to guide process about interacting with future students and educational stakeholders

Students gave feedback to the tune that the concepts and contexts of knowledge were complicated and difficult to handle, consistent with Oonk's (2009) findings. As Ashley et al. (2016) concluded, instructors can contribute more to connecting learning of conceptual understanding with integrated thinking and multi-subject learning, especially with requiring out-of-the-box thinking to extend beyond the subject as well as making meaningful connections with various other topics. By dividing cultural intelligence into four dimensions—metacognitive, cognitive, motivational, and behavioral—the research results indicate that high motivational cultural intelligence was related to all variables. Motivation was particularly crucial for individuals who prefer to acquire the knowledge rather than seek a college degree only (Robledo-Ardila et al., 2016).

Implications

Our study suggests that instructors can use the multimedia materials and class interaction as a vehicle to improve the quality of teaching content within the frame of experimental learning. The discussion process during the debate was more organized than a general free-debate, creating clear and strong support of team targets. Class interaction development was more effective than a general discussion, intensifying the competitiveness and encouraging students to engage in the activity. The free-debating and voting sections also provided the opportunity to non-debaters in the class session to engage during the debate.

The multimedia learning screencasts provided an extra channel for students to learn lecture content outside the classroom. The three videos covered most of the chapter in question's contents, which were more comprehensive than class contents covered in a single lecture. Students had the flexibility to choose when they wanted to learn. By using mind maps, the whole chapter's content was organized, in a logical way, where both the instructor-designer and the students could avoid getting lost as they went through the videos. The discussion questions provided a good source of material to investigate with the other instructors. When the instructor shared these questions with other researchers in this field, they were able to provide their own insights and develop new opinions that the teacher could the feedback to students for them to develop their analytical skills.

The effectiveness of experiential learning through the multi-phase use of multimedia and interactive methods was helpful with creating an experiential learning experience for undergraduate students. By using the videos and a British parliamentary-style debate, we created an environment where students gained knowledge through diverse instruction methods. The new design provided effective support for experiential learning designs that helped students to gain cultural intelligence and become highly motivated to learn more than just in the first phase.

Conclusion

The study investigated how an experiential learning method could facilitate students in connecting a conceptual understanding with integrated thinking and cultural intelligence through multimedia and interactive learning materials in an undergraduate international business classroom. We contribute to the pedagogical literature by analyzing the effectiveness of experiential learning methods in international business course settings. The study results based on our experiments show that students preferred the learning method which

connected textbook materials with what was happening in the real international business world. With the multimedia learning method, students understood the concepts more easily than with lectures alone. There were many difficulties in processing the different phases of each learning module in a single classroom, such as arranging a long explanation of the class activity, collecting data through surveys, and monitoring the learning outcomes. The small sample size due to the classroom size has its limitations in terms of our ability to generalize. For future experiments, it would be necessary to extend the instructional modules to different course settings, especially to larger classes.

This study is supported by grants from the China Business Studies Initiative at the University of San Francisco and the National Natural Science Foundation of China (No. 71602180; No. 71672139). The authors are grateful to the editors and reviewers for their valuable feedback and suggestions that have helped improve the chapter greatly.

Appendix 1

Links to Videos in Phase 1

Part 1: Overview of 2WIH https://youtu.be/wLVGGjXKIas
Part 2: What and when https://youtu.be/72TPdfmoH6M
Part 3: How https://youtu.be/4_tj0hrDi0g

Links to Videos in Phase 2

Part 1: 2W1H Dimensions https://youtu.be/YxnY-Z2RQCI
Part 2: 2 strategic goals and local-specific advantages https://youtu.be/1QMCYiLQ304
Part 3: Survey link: https://goo.gl/forms/jHJOJuzwoZHZ1mLY2

Appendix 2

Debate topic: Old-line vs. Emerging multinationals

Topic: There is a developing trend from ownership advantage, location, and internalization (OLI) to a linkage leverage learning (LLL) framework. Multinationals should weaken the home country effect and enhance localization.

Gov.: support

Oppo.: be against

1. Prime Minister's speech—Provide a model for the government side. Create at least two arguments.
2. Leader of the Opposition—Refute the Prime Minister's points. Offer new arguments.
3. Deputy Prime Minister—Offer new arguments. Rebuild the partner's case, who are Members of Government & Members of the Opposition
4. Deputy Leader of the Opposition—same as above
5. Members of Government—Review top half of the debate's essential points. Refute the Opposition
6. Member of the Opposition—same as above
7. Government Whip—Distill debate into two or three arguments. Explain why your side has won
8. Opposition Whip—same as above

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The Application of Experiential Avatar-based Sales and Service Training in International Business Curriculums: A Practical Guide for Instructors

John R. Lax

Introduction

In a 1987 Harvard Business Review (HBR) article, Larry Robinson tells of his efforts to buy a pair of sunglasses at a nationally known department store. He expected a simple transaction. This was not a corporate merger, acquisition, or selling a Boeing to a global air carrier—just sunglasses. Larry knew a bit about retailing, sales, and customer service as, in his career, he guided Robinson Jewelers from one store to 95 locations in 25 cities. Larry was unsuccessful in his attempt to buy sunglasses, as none of the four, yes four, salespeople were willing to interact with a customer seeking a simple transaction (Robinson, 1987).

Jump forward a generation or so to another HBR story. Four faculty members at DePaul University write that a study involving over 100,000 corporate decision makers found that more than a third based their choice of business-to-business vendors on the salesperson rather than on other factors such as price or quality (Fogel, Hoffmeister, Rocco, & Strunk, 2012). Given this, we as educators might assume that all student-centric business schools teach their students how to sell. Regrettably, all too often, this is not the case. The four DePaul University authors write that not only are business schools often

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M. A. Gonzalez-Perez et al. (eds.), *The Palgrave Handbook of Learning and Teaching International Business and Management*, https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-030-20415-0_32

ignoring teaching sales skills, they equally ignore that the sales profession has evolved from the stereotypes of door knocking to a high-demand, well-compensated career requiring sophisticated skill sets (Fogel et al., 2012).

Jump a few more years to yet another HBR article, in this case from Frank Cespedes of Harvard Business School and Daniel Weinfurter of the Kellogg School of Management. They write that research shows that more than 50 percent of college graduates will, at some point in their careers, work in sales. This is regardless of where they attend college or their major. Yet, most universities teach little about sales or selling skills (Cespedes & Weinfurter, 2016).

Perhaps this would be less concerning were the impact of limited sales education only an American academic issue. However, there is evidence to suggest that the impact may be global in nature. Deeter-Schmelz & Kennedy (2011) found that while teaching sales in business programs is becoming more prevalent at a global level, the demand for both qualified graduates and teaching faculty outpaces supply (Deeter-Schmelz & Kennedy, 2011). As those of us who teach International Business (IB) are aware, student interest in positions with global firms has never been higher (Feng, 2016). This is true not only in the United States, but globally as well (Schworm et al., 2017).

While the pedagogies employed to teach sales classes range from the very ordinary such as lectures and guest speakers to the more advanced such as games and simulations, the most common tools are role-playing and videotaping, often used in tandem (Beuk, 2016; Deeter-Schmelz & Kennedy, 2011; Robinson, 1987). By necessity, given the resources available to instructors, role-playing most often occurs between two students or between a student and the instructor. The limitations of this are obvious—the students lack the skills to play the role of the prospective buyer effectively, and the instructor must play the same or similar roles many, many times.

This chapter introduces a new method for bringing challenging and real-world role-playing into sales and service classes. Real-time avatars, employing a combination of graphics-based technology and well-trained Simulation Specialists allow instructors to customize classroom scenarios ranging from selling that pair of sunglasses to negotiating global distribution rights. The avatars adapt in real time to not only the scenario and script chosen by the instructor but also the reactions of the student. The avatar technology, best practices, and classroom challenges are among the topics discussed.

Project Description

The Basics

One of the primary advantages of the avatar pedagogy is its adaptability to course content, audience, the time and budget available to the instructor, and the course objectives. Further, while the technology is relatively advanced, the technological proficiency required of both students and the instructor is minimal. While the techniques described in this chapter can be adapted to Master of Business Administration (MBA) students, non-traditional learners, and online courses, the focus of this chapter is upper-level undergraduate students. The time required to implement the avatar experience varies widely and can be as little as three minutes for each student participant or as much as 10–12 minutes, determined by the budget and objectives of the instructor. The technology requirements consist of a high-speed personal computer, camera, speakers, and Internet access. Costs vary and are a direct reflection of the duration and frequency of the student interaction, with $50–60 per student for multiple interactions during the semester being typical.

Learning Objectives

Employing the traditional sales or service class pedagogy of a text-based lecture followed by student or faculty role-playing is relatively effective at reaching the knowledge and comprehension stages of Bloom's taxonomy (Bloom, Engelhart, Furst, Hill, & Krathwohl, 1984) but is largely ineffective at reaching the higher levels, especially that of synthesis. The "canned" nature of the role-playing with known participants and outcomes does not allow for internalizing the desired skills. However, due to the real-world unpredictability of interacting with the avatar "customer", the students are encouraged to synthesize and evaluate the sales experience. This allows us to achieve four important objectives:

(a) Adapt the sales objectives and techniques to the product, country, culture, and specific customer in real time.
(b) Experience, and apply, cultural and national differences in both customer behavior and practices in the context of the sales cycle.
(c) Synthesize and analyze the steps in the sales or service process resulting in a successful relationship sales outcome.
(d) Evaluate student growth in sales and service expertise through the application of multiple interactions throughout the course.

These objectives can be measured by the following: (1) observing the extent to which the student adapts the sales process to the scenario, country, or culture; (2) real-time feedback on cultural awareness from the avatar "customer"; (3) how the student accurately synthesizes and applies the steps in the sales process; and (4) to what extent does the student's interaction with the avatar demonstrate additional, and more sophisticated, sales and service skills as the course progresses.

Purpose and Description

Avatars, and, by extension, virtual environment learning, have been perceived through a number of lenses and employed in both academic and practitioner environments. In describing the increasingly common use of avatars and virtual environments in medical training, Fowler et al. (2018) defined avatars as computer-generated representations of patients and patient environments that allow nursing students to become immersed in the clinic setting, leading to enhanced learning.

In academia, avatars have been perceived and applied in a number of ways, typically determined by the available technology and academic objectives (Mursion, 2017). Eschenbrenner, Nah, and Siau (2008), while discussing the use of virtual worlds employing avatars in education and drawing on the work of Conway (2007) and Dickey (2005), defined avatars as "digital personas used to represent a person's identity in a virtual world". Chini, Straub, and Thomas (2016) liken the use of avatars in the training of student teachers to that of using flight simulators to train new pilots. Much like student pilots learning how to fly an aircraft through immersion in the flight environment, student teachers can be placed in the virtual classroom with avatars representing children of any age or stage of learning.

Avid online shoppers may have encountered e-commerce sites or virtual worlds in which avatars play a key role in encouraging consumer engagement and promoting purchase intent (Hassouneh & Brengman, 2011; Peng & Ke, 2015). Online retailers have found avatars to enhance the shopping experience allowing buyers to see how clothing might appear on themselves or on an avatar with similar hair, complexion, and body type (Peng & Ke, 2015).

In a recent white paper authored by Mursion, Inc. (2017), the firm that provides the avatar technology used in this chapter, the use of avatars was found to be successful in training both students and working professionals in workplace interpersonal and communication skills.

The importance of these "soft skills" should not be underestimated. A recent series addressing the future of the workforce in *The Chronicle of Higher Education* noted that interpersonal and communication skills were among the most important skills to employers looking at new graduates (Selingo, 2017). However, despite the interest in experiential business education and the success of avatar-based training in medical, elementary education, and the humanities, a search of the literature, as well as practical experience, reveals that the application of avatars in business, sales, and service higher education courses is strikingly limited.

In preparing the pilot course that serves as the foundation for this chapter, the instructor found limited examples of other universities employing avatars in business classes. While the value of experiential business education has been extensively explored, as evidenced by the extant literature and the variety of the writings in this text, very little theoretical or practical research has been completed on the efficacy or outcomes regarding the use of avatars for business education. This chapter aims to provide readers with the tools necessary to employ avatars in internationally focused sales and service training and demonstrate the ease with which innovative faculty can implement the pedagogy in their courses. The following section provides detailed instructions for implementing the avatar pedagogy and technology.

Avatar Resources

There are two primary resources available to instructors seeking to implement avatars in their classes. The first is Mursion, Inc., the developer and primary provider of the technology, training, content, and implementation.

Powered by a blend of artificial intelligence and live human interaction, Mursion provides immersive virtual reality training for essential skills in the workplace. By using trained professionals who orchestrate the interactions between learners and avatar-based characters, Mursion simulations achieve the realism needed to deliver measurable, high-impact results. Applicable to any situation requiring high stakes interpersonal skills, the approach has demonstrated impact in areas such as leadership development, sales enablement, customer service, and diversity and inclusion, across industries. Authentic interactions simultaneously engage the emotional and cognitive faculties for learning that transforms the learner while offering a scalable and cost-effective solution for organizations. The technology is available in 2D and is lightweight, seamless, and hardware agnostic (Courtesy of Mursion, Inc.).

Fig. 32.1 Image of office setting used in sales and business simulations. Courtesy of Mursion. Interested readers may visit their website at https://mursion.com and view a video of how their applications work at https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3dpN1jhhw80&t=20s

Below is an image typical of that a student might encounter in an avatar interaction powered by the Mursion technology. Note that each of the three characters has individual roles and personalities and can be customized to fit the culture, nationality, firm, and product required by the instructor (Fig. 32.1).

A second resource for instructors are those universities currently using the technology. In many cases, these schools have existing scenarios, scripts, and Simulation Specialists.

University Resources:

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How Avatars Function in Your Classroom

Unlike the avatars the students might encounter in games or online shopping, which are often limited by the capabilities of the scripting in the game or the design of the e-commerce site, the avatars the students encounter in the busi-

ness education application discussed in this chapter are far more akin to those in the 2009 film *Avatar*.

Much like Jake Sully, the avatar portrayed by Sam Worthington in the blockbuster film, the in-class avatars are computer-generated simulations; however, there is an actor, typically referred to as a "Simulation Specialist", who provides real-time interaction with the students. As did the film's avatars, the classroom avatars adapt to the environment and feedback from those with whom the specialist is interacting.

The student might find herself interacting with an older, male client in China in a formal office setting or a young female client sitting in a coffee shop in Barcelona. The Simulation Specialist adopts the characteristics of his or her assigned role while the avatar developers provide the visual character and background. While applying avatars in your classroom is not quite as simple as adding the film to your Netflix account, it is easy and typically takes little or no more time and effort than most computer simulation games. Below is a summary of the process, followed by a step-by-step detailed explanation of the components that comprise the avatar virtual sales and service experience and how to implement them in your classroom.

Process Summary

Course Preparation

Step 1: Define the avatar interaction lesson objectives.
Step 2: Select the scenario you plan to use.
Step 3: Select an avatar character.
Step 4: Prepare your script or select one from a third-party provider.
Step 5: Provide the Simulation Specialist the scenario, avatar character, and script.

In-Class

Step 1: Provide the students with their briefing sheet.
Step 2: Launch the simulation application from the server. This is comparable in technical expertise to launching an online movie.
Step 3: Bring the student pairs or individuals into the classroom.
Step 4: Start the simulation.
Step 5: Observe and take grading/feedback notes.
Step 6: Debrief the student.

Process Details

Course Preparation

While the preparation described below may sound somewhat daunting and time-consuming, three factors are important to keep in mind. First, much of what you will need for the course is "off-the-shelf". The avatar characters, settings, and in some cases the scenarios are available for immediate use. Second, the Simulation Specialists will do most of the hard work and are quite adept at becoming the characters that best fit your class objectives. Third, as with many simulations and business course games, the first time you employ the pedagogy and technology is the most difficult. Subsequent classes require far less preparation time.

Below are step-by-step details for both preparing your class for the avatar simulations and implementing them in class.

Step 1: Lesson Objectives

Typically, the learning objectives of the avatar interaction will be drawn from your syllabus and are no more, or less, complicated than the lessons would be for other teaching modalities. In the example used throughout this chapter, the lesson objectives are (1) to observe the students adapting to the specific culture, country, and customer employed in the class and (2) demonstrate the sales skill of gathering information through the use of open probes and appropriate follow-up questions.

Step 2: Select the Scenario You Plan to Use

Next, the instructor will select the type of scenario the student will experience. This includes the product, service, the firm the students represent, and the firm to which they are selling or the customer to whom they are providing service. These, along with the setting, will align with your teaching objectives. The instructor might decide to have their students sell Server Wizard, a fictitious tablet-based, web-enabled interactive restaurant application that is used throughout Europe and the Americas to increase ticket averages, resolve language issues, and increase server efficiency. Or, the students might be tasked with handling Mr. Winston, an irate British customer in a Budapest hotel who is upset about the view from his room. As most of the "off-the-shelf" backgrounds and avatars are adaptable to many settings, the instructor has a great deal of flexibility regarding both product and setting.

The instructor has the option of developing their own scenario or selecting one already developed by Mursion or one of their university partners. It is important to note the latter option. Much as with other simulations, the instructor can minimize course preparation time by employing off-the-shelf existing scenarios, thereby making the use of the avatar technology no more time-consuming than other experiential course options.

Step 3: Select an Avatar Character

Next, the instructor will select the avatar to be the customer or business partner with whom the student will interact. The Simulation Specialist will portray the character the instructor has selected, allowing for a high degree of customization in customer behavior. Custom characters can be developed, if needed. However, it is far more cost-effective to select one from the very diverse "cast" that is already developed and ready to be used. An avatar typical of those available to instructors is Linda Hidalgo.

In the example used in the pilot class, Srta. Hidalgo is the Chief Financial Officer of a small chain of restaurants in Spain, catering primarily to tourists. She has a reputation for being a tough negotiator and being difficult with salespersons. However, she has a soft spot for cats, and an observant salesperson will notice the pictures of her cats on her desk. This seemingly minor detail is used to teach students the value of using environmental cues as icebreakers and to establish rapport with the customer (Fig. 32.2).

Fig. 32.2 Avatar character Srta. Hidalgo, Courtesy of Mursion, Inc.

One of the advantages offered by the avatar pedagogy is the flexibility and customization available to the instructor by adapting existing characters such as Srta. Hidalgo to the specific objectives of the course and the teaching style of the instructor.

Step 4: Select or Prepare a Script

This sounds more complicated than it is. As with materials you might use in other simulations or computer-based games, materials are available from Mursion and universities already using the avatar technology. Should you choose to develop your own, in many cases, it can consist of an outline for the Specialist to follow, simplifying the scripting process.

Step 5: Provide Your Materials to the Simulation Specialist

This is both the easy and fun part of the course preparation. You will provide the Specialist with the avatar you have selected, the scenario, teaching objectives, and the script or outline. Typically, the Specialist will meet virtually with the instructor to review the materials and lesson plan and rehearse the scenario.

In-Class Implementation

The process described below assumes that the instructor has covered the relevant topics in classes preceding the avatar interaction. In the case of the example used in this chapter, this includes business practices typical of the country being used (in our case, Spain) and the sales techniques of icebreaking and gathering information employing open probe questions. The process description also assumes that the use of avatars has been discussed in class, including an explanation of the technology and in-class process.

Except for the briefing sheet described in Step 1, the following instructions apply to implementing the avatar technique in class on the day of the exercise.

Step 1: Provide Students with a Briefing Sheet and Instructions

It is recommended that the students receive the briefing sheet a week or more in advance. This allows them adequate time to research the industry and country. In our example, this would be the restaurant industry and Spain.

Step 2: Launch the Application

With the students outside the classroom, launch the application and connect to the Specialist. It is very important that the students not be present when the instructor launches the application and verifies the Specialist is ready to start. This maintains the illusion of virtual reality and supports the "suspension of disbelief", a topic discussed in more detail later in this chapter. Typically, the avatar has been scheduled well in advance and will be waiting for the instructor to log in. The instructor will then verify that the Specialist is ready for the first student(s).

Step 3: Bring the Students into the Classroom

The instructor has several options regarding how the avatar interaction classes are structured and how many are in the classroom when the interaction takes place. One option is to make the interaction a strictly individual experience. In this case, the students will enter the classroom individually, interact with the avatar according to the scenario and class objectives and then exit the class. Another option is small groups of three to five students, all of whom are in the class during the interaction. In this case, the students still interact individually but are observed by the other students. This interaction allows for some peer support and feedback.

In the pilot class on which this chapter is based, the instructor opted to have the students work in pairs which allowed them to prepare and practice together outside of class. Part of the debriefing following each pair was feedback from their partner. That pair was then allowed to stay in the classroom and observe the next pair. The instructor found this method encouraged co-learning and bonding between the students and reduced anxiety levels for future interactions (note that the class had three sets of progressively more difficult interactions).

Step 4: Start the Simulation

Starting is no more complicated than the student stating "Start simulation". It is important that the student rather than the instructor start the interaction with the avatar as this provides the student with a sense of control over the exercise.

Step 5: Observe and Take Grading Notes

Grading is highly individualistic and depends entirely on the instructor's personal style and teaching methods. In some cases, the interaction can be recorded by the application or on a video camera in the classroom. This allows for more in-depth (but more time-consuming) feedback and may minimize grading disputes.

Step 6: Debrief the Students

It is strongly recommended that the instructor provide immediate feedback to the student following their simulation. If other students are present, it is important that feedback be constructive and any notes regarding grades or academic performance be reserved for one-on-one reviews. As noted above, the instructor in the pilot course also found an open discussion in subsequent classes to have value.

Experiential Learning Cycle

As noted earlier in this chapter, avatars often play a role in video games (Triberti, Durosini, Aschieri, Villani, & Riva, 2017) and in the pilot sales class the students, especially in after the fact reflection, perceived the class exercises as being game-like. In their investigation of teaching sustainability in higher education, Mercer et al. (2017) noted that while the use of games in higher education has not been fully explored, the extant research does support positive student outcomes when games are employed in the classroom. These authors further noted that the use of games in higher education, in their case sustainability coursework, is supported by the work of Kolb, Kolb, Passarelli, and Sharma (2014) by promoting the idea of "learning through doing" and aligns with the earlier work of Kolb and Kolb (2005) in cyclical experiential learning.

Among the more common techniques used in sales and service classes are various forms of role-playing (Beuk, 2016). One student will "sell" to another student or to the instructor. While not without its benefits, the value of these activities is limited by the ability of the student playing the role of the customer to realistically simulate the sales or service environment as an actual working professional would experience them.

The application of the avatar technology can, in part, address this void. In the avatar environment, a professional Simulation Specialist fulfills the role of

a buyer or disgruntled customer, allowing the student to experience a far deeper range of interaction. This, in turn, allows the instructor to build all four stages of the experiential learning cycle into the pedagogy.

In the pilot course, we began the process with Abstract Conceptualization. The students were introduced to the sales and service techniques at a theoretical or conceptual level, which was reinforced by traditional lectures and assigned readings. Following the avatar interaction, we employed aspects of the Reflective Observation phase of the cycle in three regards. First, the students worked in pairs to prepare for the avatar interaction, allowing them to learn from one another much as a sales team might prepare in the real world. Second, following the interaction, the two teams observed and reflected on one another's experience with the avatar. Finally, we incorporated reflection and bi-directional observation into the debriefing activity.

While all four steps in the process are synthesized into the pedagogy, Concrete Experience and Active Experimentation are particularly noteworthy. In the former, the student must interact with, and adapt to, the avatar's cultural, firm, and personality traits. In their investigation of the value of debriefing in business games, Lacruz and Américo (2018) discussed the benefit of business games allowing students to learn from one another as well as from the gaming experience.

In the case of Active Experimentation, the avatar interaction is by its very nature experimental. The student tries the skills taught in class, and the avatar reacts in real time. Sometimes it works, and other times the student must experiment with another tactic. Between those steps, the student must observe the avatar's response to their "pitch" and modify the concepts in real time. When successful in their experimentation, the student can reflect on that in the class discussion thus completing the cycle.

Skills and Competencies

In deciding to develop the avatar technology for business classes and specifically for sales and service training, we considered two types of skill sets. First, are those traditional skills that we would expect students to master in a conventional university sales class. Second, we explored what is often referred to as soft skills. The latter was of particular concern as most sales texts and training tools emphasize the former competencies, focusing on the standard sales cycle. The soft skills of interest include communication (both written and verbal), collaboration with co-workers, and the ability to adapt to unexpected changes in a professional work environment.

Although in the introductory pilot class we focused on integrating the sales skills and the soft skills noted above, we included as a secondary objective developing cultural awareness and the need to adapt to country and cultural differences when selling globally. Using sales training as a pedagogy for teaching cross-cultural and cultural intelligence has been found to be both effective and useful in integrating multiple skill sets (Baker & Delpechitre, 2016).

These authors also note that students completing sales courses incorporating cultural awareness components are better able to adapt to the customer's culture and behaviors and to "reserve their own judgment of different cultures" (Baker & Delpechitre, 2016). In a subsequent publication, the authors note the importance of employing role-playing in teaching these cross-cultural skills (Delpechitre & Baker, 2017). Previous research specific to global selling supports the need for integrating sales skills and an international multicultural perspective (Deeter-Schmelz & Kennedy, 2011).

Because of their adaptability, customization, and ability to react in real time, the avatars used in the coursework described in this chapter have been successful in integrating the hard skill sets of the sales cycle with the softer skills, including cultural awareness and sensitivity (Table 32.1).

Optimal Fit

As noted earlier in this chapter, we have yet to fully explore how the avatar technology can be applied to business courses generally and internationally focused courses specifically. Thus, identifying an optimal fit for either a given type of student population or modality is, at this time, somewhat premature. Rather than conforming the class, student body, or modality to the experiential tool, the avatar technology adapts easily to the instructor's course objectives, teaching preferences, and student population.

Traditional On-Ground Undergraduates

The students in the pilot course used as the foundation for this chapter were predominantly senior marketing majors, and most had completed a number of marketing classes and some core general business classes. The course enrollment included a handful of non-business majors. This diversity proved to be beneficial to the students as well as the instructor. In the case of the students, it exposed them to other disciplines much as would occur in a

Table 32.1 Summary of skills targeted in the course design and avatar interactions

Desired skill	Pedagogy	Transferability (application to other courses/internships/ employment)
Traditional sales skills		
Prospecting	Students are required to identify firms that fit the product, price point, need, and geography assigned.	Identifying and evaluating potential employers
Research	Students are required to research the prospective firm, competition, and country/culture issues.	Applicable to other business courses requiring firm or case research; critical for job/intern interview preparation.
Questioning (open/closed probes and follow-up)	Students must demonstrate appropriate questioning techniques in the avatar interaction.	Advanced sales/service coursework; useful in many corporate settings; critical to success in intern/job interviews.
Presentation	Students must present the product/service using appropriate presentation techniques—note that PowerPoint or similar tools were not allowed. The avatar was coached to challenge the student if the presentation lacked key elements.	Intended to minimize over-reliance on electronic (PowerPoint) presentations; applicable to presentations in meetings and corporate settings; transferable to other business classes.
Need fulfillment	Students are required to link product attributes to customer (avatar) needs which they discovered via questioning.	Useful in customer service settings; advanced sales and service classes; advanced interview techniques.
Managing objections	The avatar is provided with a list of probable objections typical in sales. Students are required to overcome them as presented. The avatar adapts to counter the student response as needed.	Useful in job interviews—that is, the student lacks a given job requirement.
Closing	Students are expected to select a closing technique appropriate to the prospect, scenario, and environment.	This requires the application of critical thinking and being able to evaluate a business or interview setting "on the fly" and react accordingly.

(*continued*)

Table 32.1 (continued)

Desired skill	Pedagogy	Transferability (application to other courses/internships/ employment)
Soft skills		
Written communication	Students are required to submit a sales plan and "after-action" report. They are evaluated for accurate information, language, vocabulary, and fit for a corporate setting.	Concise and accurate corporate writing is a critical employment skill.
Verbal communication	Evaluated both in the avatar interaction and in the class debrief. Students are expected to adapt to the verbal cues provided by the avatar. Typically, we use physical clues for the students to use as "icebreakers".	As students cannot fully plan for the avatar interaction this is very useful in training for job interviews.
Collaboration	Students prepare in teams of two and participate in 2×2 and class-wide debriefs. The emphasis from the instructor is collaboration, not competition.	Useful in other team-based class projects; a high-demand employment skill.
Critical thinking	Unlike traditional role-playing with predictable responses, the students must be able to adapt and analyze the scenario and avatar's feedback. Real-time critical thinking is required and evaluated.	Useful in other business classes; high demand as an entry-level job skill.
Global/multi-cultural skills		
Business practices	As part of the sales call plan, the students develop and share business practices appropriate to the scenario.	Useful in both domestic and global entry-level positions. Also important for job interviews.
Forms of address	Titles, names, formal/casual when addressing the avatar.	Similar to the business practices noted above.
Product needs/constraints	Legal, import/export constraints, and unique requirements of the product for the given scenario. Students are expected to apply this in the scenario.	Useful in students determining the options in standardization/customization in product marketing; important in students' ability to research and understand legal issues and trade restrictions.
Cultural considerations	Other cultural considerations appropriate to the scenario.	In class debriefings, this proved to be important to the students for personal traveling as well as business environments.

corporate setting. For the instructors, it allowed us to test the avatar scripts and scenarios with a more varied population. The class was culturally diverse as well, including students from several countries in Latin America and Europe.

For those instructors wishing to teach in languages other than English, it is simply a matter of selecting a Simulation Specialist conversant in the desired language. Based on our experience to date, we are very comfortable with the fit for undergraduate, on-ground business classes and at this time consider this to be our academic best fit.

MBA and Other Master-level Classes

As most instructors at the MBA level have experienced, it can be challenging to introduce many types of experiential education techniques to students in graduate courses. Fieldwork, such as internships, co-ops, and similar firm-based techniques are often impractical given the students' time constraints, employment, and family commitments. Simulation games can be appropriate for graduate coursework but may lack the desired flexibility especially for those classes focused on global sales, service, or negotiation. As the avatar scenarios and supporting scripting are customized to the class, these limitations are significantly minimized. Mursion has successfully deployed the technology in corporate settings to conduct sales and hospitality service training. As the target population for corporate employees is often very similar to those students enrolled in MBA programs, we expect that the technology and resulting pedagogy will be equally successful in graduate business education.

Online Education

Although largely yet unexplored, the use of avatars in online education may prove to be the most far-reaching and significantly impacted academic modality. Those teaching or developing online courses are familiar with the challenges of implementing experiential education techniques to online populations, many of whom are geographically distributed non-traditional students with complicated professional and personal schedules. While some practices, such as X-Culture, can be independent of spatial and temporal concerns, many experiential techniques lack this flexibility. Consequently, the adaptability and customization offered by the avatar pedagogy suggest some intriguing opportunities to bring experiential education to an audience yet to be commonly reached.

Challenges and Best Practices

Despite both the avatar technology and pedagogy being relatively new to academia generally, and schools of business specifically, in the pilot classes, we found the challenges to implementing them to be relatively minor and quite manageable.

Costs and Faculty Development Time

As with any technology solution, funding may be an issue for some institutions. However, there are ways to minimize this concern and to pilot the program with minimal risk or upfront capital costs. As with developing scenarios and scripting, the most cost-effective method for a school's initial avatar class is to use those that are available from institutions already using the pedagogy or from Mursion.

The use of existing content can also minimize the cost of implementing the avatars. Typical costs for a class of 25 students incorporating three interactions of 10 minutes each is approximately $60 per student. Costs may be reduced by volume agreements with the content provider.

Student Acceptance

Most of the students were very accepting of the technology, and those who struggled the most were those who would equally struggle with peer-to-peer role-playing. In many cases, they viewed the avatar exercises as somewhat game-like and reacted positively.

The most common challenge is what we describe at Saint Leo University as a suspension of disbelief. The students need to be willing to accept that the avatar on the screen is actually a person and behave accordingly. In most cases, this can be addressed by setting appropriate expectations and coaching. We found that by treating the interactions as a routine, but cool and unique, part of the course resolved most student reservations. Positioning the avatars as game-like and placing an emphasis on interaction was instrumental in student acceptance.

Grading

As with any new course activity or pedagogy, instructors may find challenges in how to fairly and accurately evaluate students, while at the same time provide suitable feedback and preparation for more advanced assessments.

The grading challenges may be exacerbated in the case of the avatar interactions as they are likely to be different than previous assessments with which both students and faculty are familiar. Employing very precise rubrics, preparing the students for the interactions, and including the rubrics in the debrief all contributed minimizing grading issues. A sample rubric can be found in Appendix.

Learning Effectiveness

In evaluating the efficacy of the avatar technology in sales and other global business classes, the most important benchmark for those involved in the pilot classes is, regrettably, the one for which we mostly lack empirical data. While theory regarding sales and salespeople, and how theory influences practitioner success is abundant (Rana, 2018), the literature offers little in the way of guidance to empirically evaluate if, and how, employing avatars has a positive impact on business education. Given that the use of avatars in education generally, and business education specifically, is very new and used in only a handful of institutions, we have yet to accrue enough hard data to make substantive evaluations of student outcomes.

The wealth of literature on sales notwithstanding, our motivation for implementing avatars had little to do with theory or abstract course objectives as we are far more interested in a practitioner perspective. Simply, are students who are exposed to the technology and class exercises more successful in careers requiring expertise in sales and service than students lacking those class experiences. To effectively answer this requires a longitudinal study of students taking such classes as compared with those who do not have such class experiences. One of our primary motivations for contributing this chapter and sharing our avatar experiences with other institutions and business faculty is the expectation that more data will become available, and we can therefore collaborate on addressing this question.

The Kirkpatrick model, arguably among the most widely accepted methods for evaluating professional training (Kurt, 2016), is primarily focused on practitioners and their organizational success (Kirkpatrick, 2006; Kurt, 2016), and his model provides some guidance for evaluating the success to date of employing avatars in business education. Despite the limited data and course results, we have gained some insights into the first three levels of the Kirkpatrick model (Kirkpatrick, 2006).

Students have expressed positive reactions (Level 1) to the training, most notably when compared to student-to-student role-playing and more traditional forms of instruction. A graduate research assistant assigned to interview students who had participated in avatar interactions reported consistently positive attitudes toward the method and that students viewed the classes as being applicable to their future careers.

Level 2 of Kirkpatrick's model, learning, also showed promising results. In his 2006 article on keys to success in implementing his model, the author advises measuring skills before and after the training (Kirkpatrick, 2006). The primary method for accomplishing this in the pilot sales class was the employment of a consistent rubric (see Appendix).

Results were far more difficult to evaluate in Level 3 of the model. Characterized as "behavior" by Kirkpatrick (2006) and alternatively as "transfer" (Kurt, 2016) this stage measures if, and to what extent, the trainee's (student's) behavior changes in the workplace as a result of the training. While the sample is far too small to draw any definitive conclusions, students did demonstrate improved attitudes toward the avatar interactions, in their regard for sales as a career and improved knowledge of the role sales plays in business on a global scale.

Kurt (2016) notes that Kirkpatrick's fourth level is the most important objective of applying the model, a conclusion that is hard to argue with from a practitioner perspective. At this level, the firm investing in the training might examine return on investment, improved sales results, and profitability (Kurt, 2016). Academically, our corollary would be improved outcomes for the students. Did they perform better in the workplace or are they more actively recruited? A primary motivation for sharing this project is the hope that other business schools will implement avatars in their classes and contribute to the body of knowledge.

Transferability

The avatar technology and pedagogy are primarily focused on two elements. First, the applicability to the workplace, enabling the student to become successfully employed. Second, extending the course materials to other classes and becoming institution "neutral"—the avatar pedagogy can be applied in any business school regardless of language or location. Three factors support this:

First, as those of us in higher education are all too aware, fads in "best practices" come and go, often driven by the preferences of the institution's leadership and funding. However, the evidence suggests that experiential education, notably in business schools, has genuine outcomes for not only for a superior education but also enhances employment opportunities for our students (DeSimone & Buzza, 2013).

Second, employers are increasingly emphasizing the importance of business schools developing interns or new graduates that have real-world or practical skills (Selingo, 2017). In an employment market in which virtually every candidate has a least an undergraduate degree and many possess an advanced degree, the need to differentiate those with traditional classroom training from those with practical "ready to work" skill sets is vital to the success of not only the students but also the business school itself (DeSimone & Buzza, 2013).

Finally, the technology itself and the pedagogy can be transferred to modalities beyond undergraduate IB classes, including online platforms and non-traditional students. Beyond the sales and service coursework that is the focus on this chapter, we are currently developing avatar scenarios for courses in non-profit management, employment interviewing, and preparation to manage a student-run enterprise in our local community.

Debriefing

As has been discussed elsewhere in this chapter, debriefing is a vital part of the avatar experience for both students and faculty. Immediately following each interaction, the students are debriefed individually and with their interaction partner. In the individual and team debriefing, the students receive immediate feedback with a focus on the learning objectives for the lesson (i.e. overcoming objections) and on soft skills such as communication and their ability to adapt to the challenges raised by the Simulation Specialist in the role of the prospective buyer.

In the class meeting following each interaction session, we conduct a debriefing involving the entire class. While the instructor facilitates the meeting, the students provide essentially all of the discussion and feedback. The focus of the debrief is two-fold. First, what can individual students share with the class about their interaction and what takeaways will make the next interaction more meaningful? Second, how can the students use this outside of class or in the real world.

From a faculty perspective, this in-class debrief has proven to be very helpful in designing future interactions not only for the sales and service classes but also for extending the avatar pedagogy to other classes. The key element for maximizing the value to the instructor is allowing the students to self-manage the discussion.

This two-stage debriefing technique, first individually and later as a group in class, has proven to be as valuable as the interaction itself and its impact is a crucial part in achieving the course learning objectives.

Implications

One challenge we all face as a business faculty, regardless of the specific course, is taking the course from the theoretical to the practical. For most students (and their parents), the most important benchmark is not if the students understand purchase price parity (PPP) or cross-border spillover effects, but rather if the student gets a job and is successful. While we believe that, based on the use of the avatar pedagogy, there are theoretical implications that will lead to publications and inter-institution collaboration, the primary objective of this technology is to better prepare students for the workplace. While this chapter focuses on multi-national sales training, the technology and resulting pedagogy can be adapted to any number of courses across the curriculum.

The lesson learned we would most like readers to take from this chapter is that the avatar technology is not difficult to deploy and will become yet easier as more business schools develop scenarios and scripts that can be shared with their colleagues at other schools, much as we share data and experiences gained through participation in X-Culture. The application of avatars in the classroom is limited only by the imagination of the faculty and their course development colleagues, and we have only begun to explore how to employ this tool.

This is very cutting-edge technology and pedagogy. However, the students who have been exposed to it have demonstrated both an increased satisfaction with the course (as evidenced by course evaluations) and improved classroom skill sets. While the latter is entirely subjective, this instructor has the insights provided by over 20 years of practical experience and several years of teaching sales. We at Saint Leo believe this is an important part of the future of training students in any number of disciplines, and this chapter can provide the foundation for sharing our experience.

Pedagogical and Theoretical Contributions

While experiential learning—both as a practical pedagogical tool (Eckhaus, Klein, & Kantor, 2017) and as a theoretical construct (Kolb, 1984)—has been explored in depth, the application of avatars to either of those domains is far too recent to offer any definitive conclusions regarding its influence on learning theory. The application of avatars in elementary education has a far greater pool of experience, and data, on which to draw and the results in that domain has made contributions to learning theory as well as to positive pedagogical outcomes for the participating students (Chini et al., 2016; Dawson & Lignugaris/Kraft, 2017). Although business education does differ in many ways from elementary education, the primary target remains traditional undergraduates and we anticipate that similar theories of learning will be applicable. Consequently, we expect that contributions to learning theory will emerge as we gain experience in business classes.

Our primary focus for the immediate future is on expanding our use of avatars in classes and gaining more experience with avatars as a pedagogical tool. As noted in this chapter, our primary benchmark is to what extent we send our students into the workforce better able to compete for the best internships and jobs. Although our experience is limited, we believe that our preliminary application of the technology supports that objective. The students that participated in the avatar interactions demonstrated a far greater command of fundamental sales skills than in previous classes employing traditional role-playing. In the final course debriefings, attitudes regarding sales as a career were more positive as were attitudes regarding sales as part of organizations. We anticipate that the students, and their employers, will provide qualitative data we can use to both enhance the pedagogical efficacy of the avatar technology and to make some preliminary contributions to learning theory.

In closing this chapter, we hope that other business faculty will make use of the avatar technology and share their experiences. Interested faculty are encouraged to contact us for assistance with the technology as well as course materials.

Appendix: Sample grading rubric

MKT308 avatar interaction rubric						
Qualitative rating		Excellent	Very good	Good	Poor	Very poor or missing
Quantitative score		9–10	7–8	4–6	2–3	0–1
Elements	Criteria					
Sales skills						
Adequately prepared	Student has reviewed the material assigned for the interaction and prepared for the simulation.					
Applies key concepts	Key concepts are applied to the interaction in a manner consistent with the course instruction and the objectives of the interaction.					
Adaptability	The student is able to note changes in the avatar's responses to the student's questions and follow-ups and adapt accordingly.					
Interaction	The student displays interaction and role-playing appropriate for the assignment and unit materials					
Behavior	The student behaves in a manner appropriate for the interaction, does not mock the simulation, and displays an appropriate attitude toward the simulation. A suspension of disbelief is demonstrated.					
Culture	Does the student demonstrate a grasp of the relevant cultural traits of the target firm and country?					

(*continued*)

(continued)

MKT308 avatar interaction rubric						
Qualitative rating		Excellent	Very good	Good	Poor	Very poor or missing
Quantitative score		9–10	7–8	4–6	2–3	0–1
Elements	Criteria					
Speaking						
Clarity	Ideas and concepts are clearly expressed, well developed and appropriate for the assignment.					
Organization	The interaction is well organized and follows a logical sequence appropriate for a sales simulation.					
Language and communication	Language and word choice are clear, used accurately, vocabulary is varied and at college level. Communication is appropriate and the correct terminology is used. Diction is clear and vocal tone is appropriate.					

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Part XI

Online Collaborative Platforms and Global Virtual Teams

33

Learning Experientially for Corporate Contribution to Global Sustainable Development: International Applications of the WikiRate Project

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Introduction

This chapter outlines how a group of teachers in business disciplines from around the world have embedded an innovative pedagogical platform called WikiRate into their curricula to enhance teaching and learning for sustainability and corporate social responsibility (CSR). The WikiRate platform allows students to explore organisational practices and reporting of sustainability and in doing so, learn about the United Nation (UN)'s Sustainable Development

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M. A. Gonzalez-Perez et al. (eds.), *The Palgrave Handbook of Learning and Teaching International Business and Management*, https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-030-20415-0_33

Goals (SDGs). WikiRate is a crowd-sourced online public platform and research tool developed in partnership with the UN Principles for Responsible Management Education (PRME) network. Use of the WikiRate platform enables students to learn about the SDGs and how companies respond to challenges of sustainable development by providing a hands-on learning experience using technology and real-life data.

This chapter provides an overview of WikiRate, different ways it has been used in business schools around the world and reports on the experiences of teachers who have introduced the WikiRate project into their classrooms. WikiRate can be used with both undergraduate and postgraduate students and designed for use in different discipline areas. In this chapter, we report on the use of WikiRate in courses with between 14 and 700 students in first- to final-year undergraduate programmes, as well with postgraduates, covering general business, accounting, management and CSR-focused offerings.

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The aim of this chapter is to present the benefits and challenges of the WikiRate project for students and teachers, practical uses and recommendations for future use in higher education curricula. This chapter will be of interest for academics and programme developers who want to explore opportunities for embedding experiential learning in their classrooms and provide students with a unique and hands-on experience for learning about sustainability, CSR and the SDGs.

About WikiRate

Let's make companies better, together. (WikiRate moto)

WikiRate is an online database and research tool for asking questions and providing answers on corporate environmental, social and governance (ESG) impacts. In its ability as a higher education experiential learning tool, WikiRate offers students the opportunity to experience participation in a collective project that uses an open alternative approach to understanding and tracking corporate sustainability. In other words, WikiRate is about building an inclusive and collaborative global community dedicated to understanding and improving corporate sustainability outcomes (WikiRate, 2019).

WikiRate, launched in 2013, is not-for-profit, relying on donations and grants to stay free and independent. The organisation has received two European Commission grants, the first aimed at building the software and platform on which it is based, and the second, part of the European Union's Horizon 2020 research and innovation CAPS initiative (Collective Awareness Platforms for Sustainability and Social Innovation) for its role in ChainReact. The WikiRate platform is organised around sustainability metrics/indicators. The idea is to fill the type of data for every researched company and input the data in the platform for each field (in the same metric unit) with source citations. Existing and new metrics could be categorical, numerical, monetary or qualitative statements (free text answers). WikiRate is also based on wiki principles, in that the site uses a creative commons licence and users can edit others' contributions. It is also possible for individuals to exercise control over the specific questions they want to ask of companies through the created metrics. Most metrics are open for community research.

WikiRate aims to engage all stakeholders in a shared public online space. The open nature of the platform allows students to participate alongside professionals and policymakers, working to make sense of real data and adding to this public resource. The students' activities of defining metrics and extracting sustainability data from company reports (i.e. the Global Reporting Initiative (GRI), UN

Global Compact and annual corporate sustainability reports) are set up through varying projects, and these are fundamental for use/decision making by external actors like sustainability consultancy firms and for benchmarking initiatives. Critical reflection on *what* data is being reported, and *how* it is being reported (unit of measurement) is part of the role of sustainability and CSR leaders within companies, and of the specialists who work on reporting standards.

Projects on WikiRate combine a set of companies with a set of metrics, and it can specify a range of years in which the data are being sought. They also offer online discussion spaces for talking about the project and generating insights about the data. For each metric, WikiRate participants can provide only one piece of data for a given company in a given year. The comments section for each metric provides space for participants to record information about the source of the data used and how the participant/researcher interpreted it. The platform also incorporates a checking feature which allows users to note when they have double-checked input data, or to ask another user to check one of their data. The WikiRate platform allows participants to use "researched metrics" (where data cite external sources) and "calculated metrics" (where data for each field are calculated using Researched Metric data). Classroom projects tend to use only "researched metrics" at this stage. The platform also offers a set of calculated metrics for performing analyses of the data (see Fig. 33.1 for an example of a research metric on the WikiRate platform).

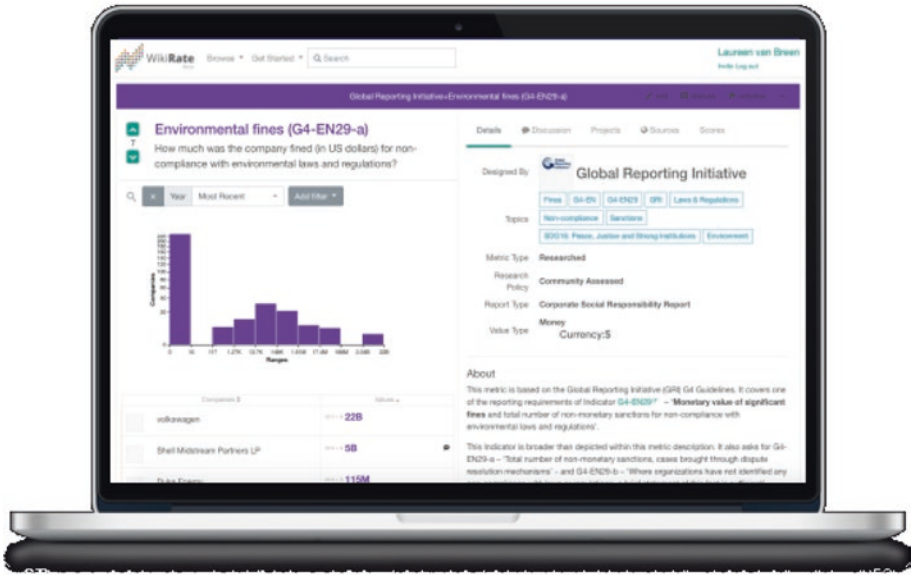

Fig. 33.1 Example of a research metric on WikiRate

Fig. 33.2 Example of company disclosure metrics on SDG14

Researching companies' performance and disclosure in the context of the SDGs is one of WikiRate's major programmes. It began in 2016. The programme was co-developed by WikiRate and PRME to engage students in practical learning and to equip them with the skills needed to balance economic, social and environmental goals, while using the framework of the SDGs. Student projects are generally set up according to some or all of the 17 global SDGs, their indicators and specific research metrics, and company ESG data (see Fig. 33.2, for an example).

The subject matter and approach ties to a number of key players working in the corporate sustainability and reporting space. These include, notably, the UN Global Compact, the UN entity working with companies to achieve the SDGs, and the GRI, which created the first global standards for sustainability reporting. Each approaches sustainability and corporate responsibility from different angles. Nevertheless, they both have an interest in improved corporate contribution to sustainable development and reporting practices that increase awareness and understanding of company impacts. WikiRate works with these organisations, alongside civil society organisations, to set up projects that achieve classroom aims, while improving data availability and bringing insights on company reporting to a range of company stakeholders including policy makers, advocacy organisations and consumers.

Subject matter varies depending on the partner organisations' projects and aims, but always connects to company sustainability and transparency issues. Work with the Walk Free Foundation, for example, has led to the development of new metrics to track company reporting and performance in line with the United Kingdom's Modern Slavery Act, which requires companies to make statements on slavery in their operations and supply chains. Within the SDG research, insights can be brought directly to companies and their network organisations to feed into improved approaches to reporting, and closer connections to stakeholders in new communities from which they typically have little feed-in—a wide range of students from all corners of the globe.

As global initiatives, WikiRate and PRME approach universities around the world to find educators interested in using a "live" and practically applicable assignment in their classrooms, or as volunteer projects. The outreach for this particular research project happens two or three times a year, and by the end of 2018 it had recruited 12 universities in nine countries, with around 2000 students participating.

WikiRate Student Engagement Project

The WikiRate Student Engagement project contributes to the WikiRate platform through partnership with university teachers to engage students to use and create open data. It enables students to work with real organisational sustainability information, to grow an understanding of issues related to reporting, measuring and disclosure. The project combines the missions and objectives of educators with PRME and engages higher education institutions in integrating sustainability education into curriculum (Dean, Gibbons, & Perkiss, 2019). It aims at empowering students to help overcome the challenge of achieving the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development by embedding it in the minds of the next generation of leaders. Knowledge of sustainability and sustainable development is vital for the long-term success of business students (Botes, Low, & Chapman, 2014). And, prior research on CSR and sustainability education indicates the positive impact on increasing students' moral and ethical awareness, and their critical and interdisciplinary/soft skills (see Mangion, 2006; Saravanamuthu, 2015; Dean, Perkiss, Simic Misic, & Luzia, 2018, for examples).

The WikiRate Student Engagement project seeks to improve awareness for students as they learn about issues of data transparency and comparability as well as sustainability reporting practices. In this sense, students are encouraged

to critically think about company performance on different issue areas and topics through the process of gathering, comparing and structuring company sustainability metrics. In the WikiRate projects, students work individually or in groups to research and analyse company sustainability reports and Communication on Progress (COPs) reports submitted annually either by UN Global Compact company participants, sustainability reports submitted to GRI, or corporate annual ESG reports. Having students assess company ESG information helps to push companies to increase the transparency and accuracy of their data. Students can be seen as stakeholders screening and understanding how companies tackle pressing challenges such as climate change. For instance, the first pilot of the project showed that 84% of the companies analysed disclose information about Scope 1 and 2 greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions (WikiRate, 2017).

At the same time, the WikiRate project is useful for students as it helps achieve a wide range of learning goals. For some teachers, the project is a means to introduce the topics of social and environmental accountability, reporting or sustainable development and the SGDs into the curriculum. It can be a means for engaging group work, or aiding in the development of soft skills such as critical thinking. For others, WikiRate offers an opportunity to access aggregated real-life data:

> *It is a nice platform to show how information relating to the sustainable development goals could be aggregated and compared because at the moment the only opportunity for that to take place is by shuffling through thousands of CSR reports that are all produced with different metrics, different disclosures, different frameworks and it's too difficult*. (Teacher 6, 2018)

The student engagement project has been introduced through specific courses in accounting, CSR, sustainability and international business. It has been offered at both undergraduate and postgraduate study levels in business and management schools. Students are usually allocated companies and conduct a research-like project that seeks to develop analytical skills using different project-design approaches. In terms of the scope of the projects, some teachers choose to focus on multiple metrics from one single company for each student, for example, metrics or questions around the SDGs, 169 specific indicators or their targets. Others work around one or many of the 17 SDGs and give one company to a group of students. Others choose different years and work using a longitudinal approach for one single company. In terms of analysis, the focus can be on topics (e.g. climate action), on companies or on whole industries.

In general, student projects use questions to drive the gathering of data and perform the analysis. Some use general questions such as: "*How do companies contribute to the SDGs?*" "*Is there hard evidence to support company claims of being a good corporate citizen?*" "*Does use of GRI metrics refute or suggest 'greenwashing'?*" (Teacher 1, 2018). Others ask students to assess company performance by comparing current disclosure to the ideal types for corporate sustainability reporting for each industry. For instance, one teacher asked students to answer the question: "*What essential aspects of this industry are important to contribute to the SDG but are not reported?*" (Teacher 7, 2018). Some educators do not give specific questions but a general topic such as human rights, SDG 6 (Clean Water and Sanitation) or SDG 10 (Reduced Inequalities). Once students gather the information, teachers work with them to help them analyse the data and ask specific questions:

> *I had given that question as a very broad kind of focus, umbrella kind of question so to say and students once they had actually dug into their research and the data from their companies were then asked to produce a sub research questions. So if a student for example, found that all three of their companies in their teams did not disclose anything relating to the environment, their sub question might be something like, how do corporations address the sustainable development goals? And the sub question might be why do they not address the environment within their disclosure? They would use their three cases as a means to start their conversation.* (Teacher 6, 2018)

Importantly, students are supported through their use of the platform by the WikiRate team and by the university educator, most of whom allocate time to work during class. Help is also provided through face-to-face gatherings with educators or teaching assistants and by the WikiRate team.

Experiential Learning and Its Applications to WikiRate

Experiential learning describes a pedagogical approach whereby learning is developed through experience (Lewis & Williams, 1994). Epistemologically, experiential learning is underpinned by constructivist theory, which considers the sociohistorical origins of knowledge and its appropriation through social mediation (Vygotsky, 1980, 1987). The social context plays a critical role in bringing about knowledge development within individuals. Learners construct knowledge through activities, building on what they already know, in processes driven by social interaction with the outside world (Wertsch, 1985).

Historically, the first theories of experiential learning arose in the mid-nineteenth century as attempts to teaching away from theoretical concept towards more applied teaching methods. Most will argue that seminal work in experiential learning can be attributed to educational and social philosopher John Dewey (1933, 1938). Dewey's contention was that a person can only learn through experience in the world, espousing the general principle that "experience is the best teacher." He viewed learning as a social and interactive process whereby educational institutions act as catalysts for social reform and learners can realise their potential for social good. Through experience, a person can better him/herself.

Stemming from Dewey's philosophies, most understandings of experiential learning in education derive or align with David Kolb's (1984) articulation of a four staged cycle of experiential learning—concrete experience, reflective observation, abstract conceptualisation and active experimentation. Kolb (1984, p. 38) proposes "learning is the process whereby knowledge is created through the transformation of experience," in other words, simply participating in an experience is not enough for the development of learning. Learning occurs when we make sense of an experience and use this meaning to guide future decision-making or action (Mezirow, 1990). It involves engaged activity, cognition and meaning-making processes, and not just the experience itself to be deemed "learning" (Lewis & Williams, 1994; Mezirow, 1990).

Experiential learning opposes traditional teaching methodologies in tertiary education that, for example, begin by placing a large number of students in a room with a single speaker. In this room, students are expected to be quiet, take notes and listen as the "expert" delivers packaged information that necessarily translates into canonical knowledge. This method is devoid of the effective learning processes needed for experiential learning in two main ways: first, the social and interactive processes advocated by Dewey (1933) are overlooked, instead positioning students as passive recipients of information; and, second, Kolb's (1984) emphasis on reflection is omitted, a process that permits the cognitive function of making sense of and integrating new information into memory.

When employed in tertiary education, in small classrooms to large lecture theatres, experiential learning can lead to powerful academic, personal and social learning (Eyler, 2009). Successful experiential learners are able to reorder, interpret or critique existing conceptions of a topic (Moon, 2004). They have more critical awareness of their presuppositions and biases and understand "not only how to do things, but why they work the way they do, and what ethical principles are at stake as they engage in real-world activity" (Moore, 2010, p. 11). Experiential learning therefore has the potential to

increase students' ethical and professional awareness as responsible citizens by developing reflective skills, critical abilities and habits of mind that will serve them beyond their studies. The WikiRate project is one example of experiential learning in higher education that encompasses hands-on learning, analysis, reflection and action on sustainable development (see Dean et al., 2019).

The WikiRate project offers students the possibility of learning by doing. By interacting individually or in teams directly with corporate sustainability reports, and with a platform in where metrics and indicators of ESG and financial performance of the company is requested, students gain familiarity with corporate sustainability reporting, and metrics on measuring contributions of business to the SDGs.

When participating in a WikiRate project, students get deeply involved in sustainability datamining. Individuals or teams are assigned with specific tasks to illustrate and measure with specific metrics how a company, or a group of companies are contributing to the SDGs. From datamining, interpretation of reported information, assessing data to be used as metrics and inputting data in specific fields in the system, new collective knowledge is built in an online public wiki platform.

In the case of WikiRate, participating students go through Kolb's (1984) experiential learning cycle. The students received from their teacher the assignment and immediately realised they were exposed to several **concrete** challenges amongst them: where to find the information (datamining); how to make sense of what is included in the report (gain familiarity ESG reporting); how to identify specific contributions of business to the SDGs (applying CSR and sustainability concepts to the report); how to input data into WikiRate platform (digital competences); how long would it take and when to do it (time management); and who does what (team work).

Once the students recognise the challenges and understand the given task, they enter in the second stage of the cycle: **reflective observation**. In this stage, students try to gain familiarity with both the WikiRate platform to learn via observation how other students have contributed to the project, and also on how sustainability and CSR officers in companies report of firm's sustainability performance.

In the next stage of **abstract conceptualisation** students begin to make sense of the given assignment and this implies the interpretation of the tasks. They begin to realise the relationship between what they have read or learnt in the classroom on corporate social responsibility, business ethics and sustainability. Students here compare what they have to do, with what they have already done.

Finally, the stage of **active experimentation** occurs in a WikiRate project when the students gain familiarity with corporate sustainability reports, are able to extract the required data and transform it into a specific metric, then, input the data in the system, write the report, and validate each other contribution to the overall WikiRate project. The learning process is complete when the students, based on their experience in the WikiRate project, are able to answer with specific examples and concrete data to the question: **How do businesses contribute to global sustainable development**?

By participating in a WikiRate project, students gain experience in corporate sustainability reporting, interacting with the reports, the platform and their peers. This complements their lecturers' teaching and course reading material and facilitates real-life immersion in sustainability reporting.

The Diverse Applications of WikiRate Student Engagement Project

To review the effectiveness of the WikiRate project, an international and interdisciplinary partnership was formed. The teachers who used the platform and are included in the global partnership[1] provided feedback on the use, benefits and challenges of WikiRate. The University of Wollongong (UOW) in Australia leads the partnership and other partners are from universities in Austria (University of Applied Science), Australia (University of New England; and UOW), Colombia (Universidad EAFIT; and Universidad ICESI), South Korea (Ewha Womans University) and the United Kingdom (University of Cambridge; Royal Holloway, University of London; and Glasgow Caledonian University).

WikiRate was embedded as an activity and/or assessment (see Table 33.1) in several different courses. The courses included a: large-first year, undergraduate accounting course; mandatory second-year undergraduate ethics and CSR course for management students; final-year undergraduate sustainability and corporate responsibility and ethics course; and final-year undergraduate business capstone and business administration courses. The project was also used in the postgraduate space, including a mandatory project work for manager's course and special topics in an international business course.

[1] The research was funded by the University Internationalisation Committee International Links Grant (2018) of the University of Wollongong in Australia for the project titled *Evaluating Global Students and Teachers' Experiences of WikiRate Classroom Engagement*, Perkiss, Gibbons and Dean, 2018.

Table 33.1 The global case study partners, the courses that used WikiRate and the number of participating students in 2018

University, country	Course description, level	Number of students
University of Wollongong, Australia	Business capstone, final year, undergraduate	42
	Introductory accounting, first year, undergraduate	760
Glasgow Caledonian University, UK	Sustainability, corporate responsibility and ethics, final year, undergraduate	220
Universidad ICESI, Colombia	CSR course, final year, undergraduate	27
IMC University of Applied Science Krems, Austria	Case studies in business and sustainability, final year, undergraduate	82
Universidad EAFIT, Colombia	Ethics and CSR, final year, undergraduate	300
Royal Holloway, University of London, UK	Project work for managers—sustainability and society, postgraduate	130
Ewha Womans University, South Korea	Special topics in international business, postgraduate	14
Total students		1575

The design of the WikiRate activity was largely dependent on the course's learning outcomes and what knowledge and skills the teacher wanted their students to develop. In each instance, the WikiRate Programme Manager set up a "project" page. For most courses, students were first invited to research company sustainability information, via CSR, sustainability and COP reports, according to a specific SDG, country or industry—depending on the institutions assigned "project." Depending on the activity, students, either individually or in groups, extracted data according to their project metrics and relevant questions from the company reports and uploaded this information onto WikiRate.

Once the information was sourced and made public, comparisons, analysis and reflection took place. Depending on the project, students were asked to analyse, review and evaluate company action towards sustainable development, including potential challenges and disclosure practices. For example, some projects required students to analyse an industry, "Sustainable consumption in the clothing industry," or phenomenon such as "Modern Slavery" or "Climate Action". WikiRate was used as an in-class or in-session activity, and as a summative assessment. Many teachers asked students to submit group work reports on their findings and present their findings to an audience. Others tested students' understanding of company sustainability information through in-class exam-style questions. For individual case studies and

information on the kind of projects implemented, including their learning outcomes, see Perkiss et al.'s (2018) "WikiRate Student Engagement Report: International Case Studies" at https://ro.uow.edu.au/buspapers/1503/.

Teachers who had recently used the WikiRate project in their course(s) were invited to participate in an interview to explore the utility and value of the WikiRate project as a pedagogical activity. In total, seven teachers were interviewed, for which global Human Research Ethics approval was obtained. The researchers recruited participants through email invitation. Given the global nature of the study, interviews were conducted both face-to-face and via Skype or Zoom online telecommunications software. Interviews lasted between 30 minutes and 2 hours and covered questions such as what was the motivation for embedding WikiRate into your course? What were the benefits, limitations and challenges for the students and yourself? What support did you receive? Would you do it again? And what advice could you offer others looking at using WikiRate in their courses? Interviews were transcribed, sent to the participants for review and confirmation and then read and analysed by the researchers.

Benefits of WikiRate: Teacher's Perspectives

Participating teachers identified numerous benefits, relating to enhancing student's knowledge, skill development and independent learning. Other benefits of the tool included the affordances of WikiRate as an experiential learning opportunity as well its flexibility in curriculum design.

Teachers agreed that one of the greatest benefits of the WikiRate project was the ability for students to gain a deeper understanding and knowledge of sustainability and responsibility. This included knowledge and awareness of the SDGs, as the following example illustrates:

> *Students go about their everyday lives without having to think about, for example, today's climate, the challenges of society and business, and how they can be more sustainable. It opened up an opportunity to understand the SDGs and reflect on their own actions, which is important for the future.* (Teacher 6, 2018)

Creating this awareness and building this knowledge is essential for making connections between the discipline knowledge and its applications. This is important as it inspires a shift in mind-set. For example:

> *The more you talk about something [i.e. the SDGs], the more it just becomes a little bit more familiar. So if you go and do something that isn't sustainable, then it's in the back of your mind. The more people that think, then it becomes a change of consciousness.* (Teacher 3, 2018)

The way the activity was framed also came through as an important feature in the interviews. Teachers linked the activity to the overall course learning outcomes and embedded it around workshops, lectures or discussions about, for example, sustainable and responsible business, organisational transparency or reporting. Using this project as the impetus for discussion was not always easy, teachers said, but taught students these concepts in a unique way. As one respondent put it:

> *There must be something working with WikiRate… It may not necessarily be the platform, but the knowledge and awareness and the processes that the students are going through that actually helps capture the data … there are some really great benefits pedagogically for the students learning about transparency, CSR and reporting.* (Teacher 5, 2018)

The development of skills was a second benefit of the use of the WikiRate project in courses. Despite the diversity of the project's applications, all teachers appreciated the skill development among participating students, including research, critical thinking, analysis and communication. As one summarises, "*It doesn't matter where you are, whether you're in the UK, Australia or Korea everyone is trying to teach these diverse skills*" (Teacher 3, 2018). For another, the WikiRate project met a need that was underdeveloped in their course curriculum:

> *I feel that accounting and business students as a whole do not get enough exposure to critical thinking, on the SDGs, working outside a textbook, and actually doing. I knew WikiRate was going to be something different and useful as corporations are going to be engaging in CSR, and it will be useful for investment and decision-making.* (Teacher 5, 2018)

Another teacher agreed that the project addressed a means of developing real-world skills in their discipline:

> *Accounting is predominantly known to be technical. But with the changing nature of accounting graduates and the need for critical thinking, problem solving, and knowledge on the SDGs, WikiRate produced an activity where students could actually think beyond what was written.* (Teacher 6, 2018)

As another teacher put it, when asked what they wanted students to get out of using WikiRate: "*problem solving, critical thinking, and essentially bullshit detection [of CSR disclosures]. Also group working ability*" (Teacher 7, 2018). While group working skills may have been reported by those who taught

using students in teams, others recognised the importance of the project for developing independent learning skills. One teacher tells their students, "*part of the assignment is you have to teach yourself*" (Teacher 2, 2018), that is, to learn the WikiRate platform. Another considers this independence to be a crucial skill for working in industry, "*In the students' professional lives, they're going to get introduced to different online platforms, different databases and their bosses are going to expect that they can access and navigate around them efficiently*" (Teacher 6, 2018).

In addition to the knowledge and skill development students learnt through their engagement in the WikiRate project, teachers unequivocally agreed the WikiRate project works because it is a hands-on, practical and real-world activity. One teacher appraising their students said "*I think the students did a great job, they were really excited to have more of a hands-on applied approach*" (Teacher 3, 2018). It also aided awareness and professional development as students relied on real-life data. For example, reflections were made on its utility for linking students with industry:

> *Great opportunity to link industry as well as research within the curriculum … linking the practical experience and the research aspect, and to really test what's going on in the market and how we can contribute to that.* (Teacher 3, 2018)

Another reports a willingness to experiment with new teaching approaches:

> *What I wanted to do was not something ultra-traditional. I really tried to pass on [practical business experience] to the students and engage them in a way which is closely related to practice… I really wanted to give them a feel for how practitioners deal with issues of CSR, reporting and sustainability, how do they talk about it? How do they write about it? What evidence is there? Is it just a load of talk?* (Teacher 1, 2018)

Finally, teachers valued WikiRate's flexibility. All were able to adapt the WikiRate project to suit their own purposes, learning objectives, size of class and discipline context. On the curriculum design, for example:

> *The greatest part about teaming up with WikiRate was there was a lot of flexibility in terms of how to shape the curriculum … because we had a smaller class base, and because it's at a graduate level, we wanted to do something that was maybe a bit more challenging.* (Teacher 3, 2018)

The range of benefits reported by teachers indicates the usefulness of the WikiRate project as an adaptable, real-world, experiential learning activity.

Challenges of WikiRate: Teacher's Perspectives

Although WikiRate has numerous substantial benefits, it is not a simple exercise to run. Teachers faced several challenges in implementing the WikiRate project, though none proved insurmountable. There were broadly two types of challenge: those relating to the curriculum and design and those associated with practical implementation.

There were several challenges associated with curriculum activity design and research. Firstly, educators had to overcome student concerns and complaints. For example, *one* student objected that "*we are doing this for free. We are slaves. We are monkeys*" (reported by Teacher 2, 2018). Other students reportedly expressed concerns over the researched metrics and company data: "*A lot of accounting students struggled because they wanted a right or wrong answer, which wasn't always available in voluntary reporting*" (Teacher 6, 2018) and "*A challenge is just understanding that the number of metrics a company responds to does not determine whether a company is doing it well or badly. The challenge is to help students to understand the reasons why companies may be reporting on less or more metrics. That's a pedagogic, educational think, challenge for us [teachers]*" (Teacher 1, 2018).

Teachers need to establish clear learning outcomes and motivations for WikiRate and students' role as researchers and make these transparent to students. For instance, a critical appreciation that accounting and sustainability information is not solely objective, does not have regulatory framework, universal benchmark or based only on numbers, and reporting comes with biases which impact decision making. The motivation and aim of WikiRate, to make company ESG information transparent, needs to be effectively communicated. Thus, students do not engage the project as a slave labour activity, but rather as an activity framed as a social service that will help drive support and action for the SDGs.

"*I think that lecturers, teachers, whoever is developing the curriculum really needs to know their cohort. WikiRate could be used in accounting, business, social sciences, but it does require a lot of thinking and planning in light of how many students you have, the students' capabilities and overall learning outcomes*" (Teacher 6, 2018). Higher education comprises extensive diversity in students—their age, maturity, ethnicity, discipline and general knowledge. Teachers need to know their cohort and plan effectively:

> *There are some students who were quite good and they got it and got something out of it, but they were also working individually. But then there was a bigger group of students who hadn't chosen to do this subject and are completely general. A lot of them don't give a stuff about anything to do with sustainability or business beyond simply making money.* (Teacher 7, 2018)

In most cases, teachers utilising WikiRate provided space in the lectures and tutorials to go over the background, aims and use of WikiRate. Allocating class-time was seen as an effective way of overcoming student concerns because space and time was provided for group work, questions and practice: "*Students can feel overwhelmed because it can seem very complex… It took a lot of time, but when everyone saw it being done in practice, a very hands-on demonstration, that actually made a lot of sense*" (Teacher 7, 2018). Many teachers mentioned that using WikiRate effectively in class relied heavily on a motivated teaching team, especially those with large student numbers: "*A challenge will be who is on the teaching team, because unless you have an engaged member of staff, it could raise issues*" (Teacher 1, 2018). However, the benefits and opportunity for learning using WikiRate were stressed where a good and motivated teaching team was available and established.

The cohort structure can also pose challenges because of the international makeup of universities today. In using WikiRate the "*standard of ability to communicate is difficult*" (Teacher 7, 2018), that is, between local and international students, and language can be "*a barrier and particular understanding what the precise indicators meant*" (Teacher 4, 2018). To overcome this challenge and help international students, teachers can choose or allocate students companies to research that correspond with their ethnicity, native language and/or are well known in their culture.

The second set of practical challenges relates to the project's implementation. These covered resources, time and efforts to set up the WikiRate activity, support students through its use and assessment. "*You need a lot of time, it can be a bit confusing … there's a learning curve, it's not a very steep learning curve though, but it's a little bump. It's not like using an Apple device or something*" (Teacher 7, 2018). And, "*in the first year, I wanted to make sure WikiRate wasn't bombarded with emails, I asked students "if you have any issues, send it to me", then I learned my lesson because there's quite a bit of traffic going out there*" (Teacher 3, 2018). Setting up a new activity, especially where IT is used is always a bit of a learning curve. It requires a lot of thinking and preparation from the teacher: for example, what do you want the students to achieve from the activity? Do all students have access to a computer? What type of assessment can be designed for 15 students or 500 students? Is there a backup plan if the technology or platform crashes? In one case, students were advised to save their company information and reports and metric information in a separate folder on their computer, just in case.

The challenges discussed by teachers were often counteracted by the value to student learning obtained from using WikiRate: "*Overall the experience was challenging. It was something new, and the platform was a bit difficult to access at first and get familiar with. But as I got to know the students, and engage more, the*

feedback was really positive. Even just the ability for students to use technology and input different values" (Teacher 6, 2018). And, "*I think for at least some of the students you can see that they really actually are benefiting and getting the problem solving, critical thinking input or outcome that I'm hoping they would, Its quite rewarding*" (Teacher 7, 2018). Each educator involved in the global project has chosen to use the WikiRate Student Engagement project more than once, indicating that they see overall value in the tool. Each iteration of WikiRate in the curriculum becomes easier and results in new innovative classroom activities and assessment design.

Technical Challenges: Using the WikiRate Platform

Using WikiRate requires learning a new technological tool and thus can present quite a learning curve for both teachers and students. This learning curve can be in a number of different areas including using the site itself, overcoming barriers to sourcing information, what to do in the absence of information and interpreting different uses of terminology.

As noted above, there is a period of time where the user needs to become familiar with the software interface. They need to learn where things are, how to find certain things and how to access what they need. As the WikiRate software is bespoke and crafted for this purpose only, it is an unfamiliar platform for all first-time users.

The WikiRate software is still in its infancy, and there are several limitations that are still being addressed. Teachers utilising the project need to be aware of the possibilities for technical bugs (and of the options for resolving issues), and areas where students may need support. The WikiRate team supports teachers by preparing guidance materials, step-by-step instructions and tutorial videos, and being on call when courses encounter technical issues. As more institutions come on board and there is greater innovation in peer-production and crowdsourcing, WikiRate is expected to experience improvement and ease of use. In the meantime, all educators pointed to their experience of receiving good support from the WikiRate team, which is experienced in setting up new projects and which is highly responsive to educators' and students' questions and concerns.

There also may be some perceived barriers to engagement when it comes to sourcing company reports in order to find the metric under investigation. For example, while there are sources for aggregated ESG data on companies, they

are not publically available, rather behind paywalls that make the data difficult to access and often impossible to verify. Thus, researchers (students) must spend significant time to aggregate comparable, analysable corporate sustainability data from different public sources. The challenges that students and researchers encounter include simply finding out whether or where the data is reported, interpreting terminology, converting units, conducting calculations (sometimes complicated, but more often, merely time consuming), and determining whether a particular scope of research is viable given the data found or, indeed, not found.

Users may find it confronting or confusing in the absence of information, that is, when a company fails to report on a specific metric. There are some legitimate reasons for a company not to report certain information. Nevertheless, it is difficult to track where companies are not reporting for a reason, and where they are not, but should be. Disclosure analysis can be done as the primary analysis; performance analysis can be much more difficult to do given gaps in the data. Discussing this with students and re-framing missing information in the content of the organisation's industry, size and scope will help students make sense of this.

Another tricky area to navigate is the diverse use of terms in company reports and aligning these with the metrics specified on the WikiRate platform. For example, "Total energy consumption" is often reported by companies as "Total fuel consumption," or in countless other murky ways. Unless a student is an expert, or can get a hold of the company directly, it becomes difficult to interpret with confidence. WikiRate has online resources to help the quality of reporting. For example, the SDG Compass provides an outline of the SDGs and the metrics associated with each goal. WikiRate also offers links to convert currency and unit/measures. It is important students are aware of these links and report in the correct metric unit, for example, US dollars or percentages.

Practical Advice and Future Prospects

Feedback from teachers using WikiRate has identified some recommendations to implement student engagement projects in curriculum. First, teachers who want to implement a WikiRate project should start by clearly defining the learning goals. For example, "*Your role as a teacher, as instructor, as lecture professor, whatever of this course is not to be in the system. It's like your role there, you are learning something that you will have to do in real life*" (Teacher 2, 2018). It is important that the learning goals, motivations and broader aims

of the project are communicated with the students. WikiRate requires time and commitment from both teachers and students, so it is vital that motivation and guidance is established early in a course. This requires good planning.

Second, discussions with teachers showed that no matter the classroom size there are different learning strategies to create projects for students based on using WikiRate. It is important that, regardless of student level, teachers provide a demonstration in class of the WikiRate activity, and that students have a space to ask questions. Further, especially in big cohorts that require teaching teams, each teacher is trained on the platform prior to class and is supported throughout the activity by the course coordinator.

Feedback and research on the WikiRate project shows that the use of teams seems to help improve engagement with the WikiRate platform. For example, "*groups work better, not least because students can have more fun that way; and the more they enjoy the exercise, the more likely they are to learn*" (Teacher 7, 2018). Working in teams is also particularly useful to overcome the technical challenges of the platform.

Third, teachers wanting to use WikiRate should start by approaching the WikiRate team, or other academics who have used WikiRate, to seek practical advice and guidance on best-practice. They should expect students to be engaged and questioning and to increase their knowledge and become critical of company ESG information and impact.

There are several future prospects of the WikiRate platform. Firstly, it could be seen as an opportunity for companies to get insights on how others are understanding and analysing their performance, encouraging them to make positive ESG contributions. In this sense, WikiRate could to some extent provide companies with feedback on how civil society and other stakeholders make sense of their ESG information, thus informing company decision making. This could have implications on (for instance) purchasing or supply chain decisions. Secondly, companies can engage in the platform and add or correct the data displayed on the platform. Thirdly, companies could also become involved by using the data as a means of comparing their performance with other companies in the same industry, or of gaining insights into how companies are measuring performance in one particular SDG.

Overall, the platform can be seen as a benchmarking tool to compare performance, but also to identify potential partnerships with other actors to achieve the SDG targets. All of this begins with the contribution of sustainability related information that is uploaded onto WikiRate through effective student engagement projects.

Final Thoughts: The WikiRate Project as Experiential Learning

Business and management students are demanding to be prepared to lead competitive and meaningful organisations, and to be able to respond to present and future needs in society. It therefore follows that our students need to learn how to maximise the contribution of business to global sustainable development, to ensure they are equipped to be citizens and business leaders with a well-developed sustainability mind-set. Experiential learning provides an opportunity to analyse, interpret, critique and build data beyond abstract conceptualisations and understandings.

To get involved and/or design a WikiRate Student Engagement Project, further information can be accessed at: wikirate.org, or via email: info@wikirate.org.

Glossary

COPs Communication on Progress reports
CSR Corporate Social Responsibility
ESG Environmental, social and governance
GRI Global Reporting Initiative
PRME UN Principles for Responsible Management Education
SDGs UN Sustainable Development Goals
UN United Nations
UN Global Compact A non-binding UN pact to encourage businesses to adopt, and report on, sustainable and socially responsible policies.
WikiRate An online database and research tool for asking questions and providing answers on corporate environmental, social and governance impacts.

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34

Collaborative Online International Learning (COIL): An Innovative Strategy for Experiential Learning and Internationalization at Home

Karla Maria Nava-Aguirre, Brenda Ivonne Garcia-Portillo, and Jose Satsumi Lopez-Morales

Introduction

Collaborative Online International Learning (COIL) activities have become an important element to internationalize the curriculum of the Business School at Universidad de Monterrey (UDEM) in Mexico. It is through intentionally designed international activities under David Kolb's experiential learning theory (1984) that UDEM is fostering the development of intercultural competences among students. The project includes four courses in international business that have been modified in order to integrate COIL activities, results of these experiences, and their applicability in other disciplines or contexts.

Nowadays, as the world becomes smaller, technology is an important tool to bring people and products from remote distances together. Globalization as a process to create a global economy, more integrated and interdependent, is one of the factors to reduce barriers and obstacles in the world (Hill, 2015). Global education is not the exception, and technology also contributes to students' experiential learning, if it is well applied and used. This chapter describes an innovative strategy to foster experiential international learning

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M. A. Gonzalez-Perez et al. (eds.), *The Palgrave Handbook of Learning and Teaching International Business and Management*, https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-030-20415-0_34

through the use of technology at Universidad de Monterrey (UDEM) Business School, in Mexico. It is by redesigning international business courses with collaborative online international learning activities that students from two or more countries can get together, interact, learn, and collaborate in different activities, in order to increase their knowledge in business and develop intercultural competences through virtual interactions. It is through this pedagogical approach that internationalization, intercultural competence, and experiential learning come together and contribute to a new learning experience for business students and faculty. The authors are sharing these experiences and their future applicability in other disciplines or contexts.

Internationalization of Education at Universidad de Monterrey

UDEM Business School is transforming regular courses with collaborative online international activities to facilitate virtual interaction with students from other countries. Indeed, four courses at UDEM Business School have been redesigned in order to promote interactions with students from abroad. This experience is creating new knowledge and developing intercultural sensitivity. The courses International Negotiations, Organizational Behavior, Business Opportunities at Global Markets, and Economy and Business at Asian Markets include international activities that foster experiential learning among students from Mexico, the Netherlands, and the United States.

The term COIL (Collaborative Online International Learning) was coined in 2006 by the State University of New York, and now it is widely used internationally. Other terminology has been used to refer to virtual international activities (O'Dowd, 2018), such as telecollaboration (Chun, 2015), online intercultural exchange (Akbar, 2015), virtual mobility (European Commission, 2013), among others. COIL activities began at UDEM in 2011 through the participation in two consortiums: The Global Partners in Education consortium, coordinated by East Carolina University (ECU), and later, in 2013, the SUNY-COIL Center, coordinated by the State University of New York. The main purpose of these two programs was to use technology or online courses to provide an international dimension and to develop intercultural competences among their students. Both programs have evolved over the years, and now they have a wide range of international members involved. UDEM was among the first Mexican universities to join both programs as a mean to internationalize its curriculum and follow up on the internationalization-at-home

(IatH) strategy. After having acquired some expertise in COIL through the above-mentioned programs, UDEM invited some of its bilateral partner institutions to engage in COIL in its different schools.

At UDEM, approximately 2800 students have benefited from COIL activities from 2011 to 2018, and more than 600 students at the Business School[1] have experienced this international learning through virtual collaboration. A special operative budget has been approved for COIL activities, which are administered by the director of Internationalization-at-Home Projects. This allows to support professors who implement COIL in their courses with grants for workshops and webinars, or with travel grants to attend conferences where they can present and share their experiences.

So far, UDEM has had bilateral COIL courses with partners in Colombia, Finland, Germany, Japan, Peru, South Africa, Spain, the United Kingdom, and the United States, among others, in disciplines such as business, design, engineering, fine art, humanities, and the social sciences. In this particular chapter, the authors will focus on UDEM Business School and the interactions with four different courses, as they mentioned earlier. The partner schools in these interactions are Amsterdam University of Applied Sciences in Europe and Drexel University, Genesee Community College, and ECU in the United States.

According to UDEM's educational model, the university strives to provide its students with an international education based on humanistic ideals and to graduate professionals with a global vision, excellent analytical skills, and the ability to perform with ease in international and intercultural contexts. UDEM's strategic plan of internationalization (Andrew Heiskell Award 2009 for innovation) includes projects that foster student and faculty mobility and also encourages internationalization at home (IatH). This allows the development of intercultural competencies, besides experiential learning, according to the specific field of study. International strategic relations with other institutions and consortia worldwide with more than 750 institutions in 69 countries support both kinds of projects (Dirección de Programas Internacionales, 2017).

Internationalization has become an important strategy at UDEM. The term "internationalization at home" was introduced by Nilsson (2003) in the 1990s. He argued that it was important to develop and offer international experiences for the domestic students who would not have the opportunity to study abroad. The term "internationalization at home" has been re-described

[1] UDEM Business School comprises ten bachelor degrees. For purpose of this study, we are focusing on Bachelor in Global Business, since it is the only program completely related to international business and trade.

by Beelen and Jones (2015) as the "purposeful integration of international and intercultural dimensions into the formal and informal curriculum for all students within domestic learning environments" (p. 69). Through this project, the Business School is integrating an intercultural experience for domestic students at the formal curriculum, by redesigning the courses and including COIL activities within them. It is imperative that higher education institutions integrate international experiences through the curriculum at both the formal and informal levels (Leask, 2015). It is through COIL experiential activities that UDEM could provide real international experiences for domestic students.

The COIL Project at UDEM Business School

As the authors mentioned before, the specific COIL project for UDEM Business School consisted in redesigning the curriculum of four undergraduate courses in Global Business. These four courses included international activities that foster experiential learning among students from Mexico, Europe (one group), and the United States (three groups). Together, professors from each university were responsible for designing activities for students, including a final project. UDEM's group size for each course consisted of 30 students approximately. In order to form an international team, groups of five members were created with the partner university. Each professor decided grades for the COIL project.

The COIL project was scheduled for just 4 weeks (class-hour) from the 16 total weeks per semester. Activities are both synchronized and asynchronized. They are synchronized because most activities take place at the same time, no matter in which location or country (e.g., a debate or presenting the final project in real time). Activities are asynchronized because different time zones (e.g., Europe) let students and professor communicate through social networks, technology, or online platforms at different hours. Activities require communication in English[2] (oral and written) and also technological basic skills to collaborate using tools and social networks such as Facebook, Skype, WhatsApp, Hangouts, Google Drive, Zoom, and FeedbackFruits. Since COIL activities are included in a regular course, there are no extra charges or costs for students. COIL is a strategy to improve the process of teaching-

[2] UDEM students used to take courses in English language, and most of them are bilingual, so language is not a real problem for students or professors. They must accredit TOEFL test to enter college.

learning inside each course participating in this new project. Each course is obligatory for the Global Business Program and students must be accredited.

Through learning objectives and activities (experience), participants can identify cultural differences with foreign students, in order to understand and interpret (observation) different cultural contexts. It is through COIL activities that students learn how to do business in the global market, adapt to different situations, and take decisions based on knowledge, but most importantly, on experience.

COIL's learning objectives are as follows:

1. Identify and recognize concepts and business terminology in different cultural contexts (remembering). The importance of this objective is understanding several technical business terms that can be applied and used in several contexts and commercial operations so that companies reach their financial aims.
2. Explain cultural differences and business practices through comparison among international scenarios (understanding). The analysis of scenarios is very useful for taking business decisions; the right understanding of the business scenario represents an advantage for the companies.
3. Develop abilities and skills to communicate in different business contexts or scenarios, in order to get information that can be useful for the decision-making process in international organizations (applying). This learning objective is related to the development of useful tools that permit a suitable processing of the information gathered in the environment.
4. Promote the understanding of international business throughout discussion and successful implementation of strategies to improve business in global markets (analyze). The analysis of international business encompasses an important issue for carrying out strategies, but mainly to implement them efficiently.

The purpose of the project was to provide students with the alternative of having international learning experiences within their courses during each semester. COIL methodology, with the support of professors, provides the didactic, pedagogical, and technological tools to bring together students from different countries to collaborate, dialogue, and discuss common issues from different cultural perspectives.

The project consisted in implementing COIL methodology in obligatory Global Business Courses at UDEM. The objective was to improve the understanding of business in a global context, considering how culture and technology could impact the real world. The aim was to allow students improve their

negotiation skills and intercultural competences through synchronous and asynchronous communication and collaborative work among learners from different countries.

The COIL project at UDEM Business School began with the interest of some professors to participate in this initiative. Then, the International Programs Office searched for possible partners in other institutions that belong to the COIL consortium. Once the candidates were matched, the next step was to send them an invitation in order to develop joined activities and projects with UDEM. In this case, UDEM received the response from four universities, one located in Europe and three more in the United States. Once foreign institutions accepted the invitation, the next step was to establish the objectives, activities, and final projects that would be developed in working teams through COIL during a semester. This dynamic of communication between professors was via email and Skype a semester before the beginning of the classes. In virtual sessions, the professors discussed the objectives of COIL for each course and designed a working plan for students. Table 34.1 shows the main issues that the designers considered for COIL project.

Table 34.1 gives an overview of COIL in UDEM Business School. Once classes start, professors describe and explain to their students the objective, activities, deliveries, and final project. At the beginning of each course, professors must explain the schedule and deadline for COIL activities. Professors also create groups of four to five members each; these teams will be mixed later with partner teams. As the authors mentioned before, the project takes 4 weeks from the regular course (UDEM has 16 weeks of classes per semester), but sometimes it is not continuous, so it lets students extra time to prepare activities and reports on-site and online during the semester.

The COIL project includes four main activities for each course. However, other activities could be included, depending of the subject. The first session offers two types of activities. The *icebreaker* is one of the first activities students (by teams) have prior classes start. This activity allows informal interactions and allows students to get to know each other (Crose, 2011). For this session, UDEM students must answers a list of questions elaborated by the professors and related to ordinary issues, such as traditions, culture, arts, and business. Once one team responds to the questionnaire, the other teams in turn must continue and answer the same questions, until all teams respond. This information is shared by Google Drive, so it is available for all the class. Additional information, such as a selfie and a short individual video with general information, must be included in this activity. Professors describe specifications and technical characteristics for photos and videos. This activity before classes is fundamental to "meet" each other and get something to com-

Table 34.1 Brief description of the COIL project at UDEM Business School

Country	Subject	Main business topics and concepts addressed in syllabus	No. students	Activities	Platform and technology	Sessions	Final project	Assessment
Mexico/ Netherlands	Business Opportunities at Global Markets/ Intercultural Communication Skills.	• Business plan. • Structure of Asian, European, and Latin American markets. • Strategies for business opportunities	44/34	• Icebreaker. • Mindmap. • Infographic. • Learning diary.	• Zoom. • Skype. • Facebook. • Face Time. • WhatsApp. • Google Drive. • Feedback fruits.	2 sessions per week during 4 weeks each semester and additional hours outside classroom.	Oral presentation and written report.	Survey
Mexico/ United States	International Business Negotiation/ Marketing the Art Internationally.	• International business environment. • Political, economic, cultural, and social systems in global business. • Business strategy.	42/19	• Icebreaker. • Q&A from lectures. • Power point presentation. • Reflections.	• Zoom. • Skype. • Facebook. • Face Time. • WhatsApp. • Google Drive. • Feedback fruits.	2 sessions per week during 4 weeks each semester and additional hours outside classroom.	Oral presentation and written report.	Survey

(*continued*)

Table 34.1 (continued)

Country	Subject	Main business topics and concepts addressed in syllabus	No. students	Activities	Platform and technology	Sessions	Final project	Assessment
Mexico/United States	Business Opportunities in Asian Markets/International Law.	• Methods and models for analysis. • Demography, geography, and cultural aspects. • Political and economic systems in Asia. • Legal system for business.	7/6	• Icebreaker. • Q&A from lectures. • Debates. • Learning diary.	• Zoom. • Skype. • Facebook. • Face Time. • WhatsApp. • Google Drive. • Feedback fruits.	2 sessions per week during 4 weeks each semester and additional hours outside classroom.	Oral presentationand written report.	Survey
Mexico/United States	International Organizational Behavior/International Marketing.	• Globalization and organizational behavior at multinational firms. • Foundations for motivations and needs at work. • Ethics, values, and emotions at multinational firms. • Communication and negotiation.	43/33	• Icebreaker • Mindmap • Infographic • Learning diary	• Zoom. • Skype. • Facebook. • Face Time. • WhatsApp. • Google Drive. • Feedback fruits.	2 sessions per week during 4 weeks each semester and additional hours outside classroom.	Oral presentation and written report.	Survey

ment at first class. *Getting to know you* is also used before class to exchange photos of where students live and what their life looks like (e.g., school, work, and fun).

The second type of activity for the first session is the pre-knowledge exercise *Mindmap*. It consists of making a first mindmap with team members and discussing by Skype what pre-existing knowledge students have about each other's business culture. Prior to the virtual meeting, it is suggested that each member writes down some working styles needed to come to a good virtual working relationship. Then, it is recommended to have a second mindmap of the outcomes of the discussion of the entire team, for example, answering the following questions: How will you work together as a team? What are your strengths and challenges? What tools will you use? What are your expectations for this project?

Depending on the class, the second session offers two kinds of activities. One of these activities is the document called *Questions and Answers* for lectures related with culture and negotiation processes and world business skills. In this case, students from the partner university would make questions about the lecture and UDEM students should respond. This activity is online and written in a Drive document, in order to share with all the students prior second session. According to the partner institution, UDEM students must read a document (Drive document) and also ask questions. The main idea is to have a real feedback and discussion on specific topics from different cultural perspectives. After this discussion, every group should save the conversation in a document and send it to the professor by email.

Another activity for the second session is to use graphic information or *infographic* to communicate and inform quickly. It is a way to make data easily understandable and see patterns and relationships among figures and graphics. It is a simple way to describe messages or understand them. In this case, infographic is useful to analyze online presence of international brands in the global market and how students can understand and interpret from different cultural perspectives. It is a tool to make comparisons between countries and also to see the best practices in other countries. This activity is a virtual one, and teams must search about some brands and create an infographic for their assignment. Findings and conclusions about this assignment should be shared on Feedback Fruits.

The third session provides three kinds of activities. *Learning diary* is a reflection document based on the international collaboration between two universities. This reflection must focus on time managed and time orientation, trust building and relationship, leadership styles, communication styles, and project management. It is important to note that each working team is com-

pounded by students from all partner universities. This assignment promotes collaboration and analysis from different cultural context. It is a written document that must be delivered to each professor by email. Another kind of activity within this session is mostly related to the previous one and consists in preparing a *PowerPoint presentation* answering the following questions: How can you create collaborative business negotiation across cultures? How cultural differences can influence international negotiations in the process of drafting, designing, implementing, and evaluating a global business negotiation contract across cultures? Another activity for this session is *debates* among students on areas such as business management, culture, and globalization. At the end, as an assignment, students must prepare an individually written report and Power Point presentation in group, based on their learning experience.

During the last session, each UDEM team will prepare the final Power Point presentation and a written report, based on their learning experience, including benefits and obstacles during the COIL project. This assignment describes a multinational company and the influence of culture in business. This assignment should be presented by some of the learners and uploaded in Google Drive. After last class, a representative of the International Programs office at UDEM visits students for a feedback session and a survey.

In sum, it is possible to say that these experiential learning activities in business classes are more likely to develop interpersonal and communications skills, understand concepts from different cultural perspectives, and promote teamwork and critical thinking in students. COIL projects are supported by the home institution (UDEM), but they are structured and managed by each professor at each institution. It is a big opportunity to face cultural differences, when analyzing international business cases or multinational companies in ordinary business classes at home.

Experiential Learning Cycle, International Business, and COIL

Experiential learning is the process where knowledge is created through the transformation of experience. It is important to point out that experiential learning encourages the students to engage in higher order learning as they personalize content, thus develop the understanding of a situation (Anselmi & Frankel, 2004). Agreeably, IatH refers to internationalization that goes beyond global mobility and to an emphasis on learning and teaching in

culturally diverse settings (Wächter, 2003). In this regard, the process of IatH is conceived as a process that fosters the experiential learning process, which means that the learner experiences the four stages proposed for Kolb (1984). The model of experiential learning is one of the most accepted in the literature (Leung, Carlson, Kwong, Idvall, & Kumlien, 2016; Robson, 2017).

According to this model, knowledge is the result of the combination of grasping and transforming experience (Kolb, 1984). This model of experiential learning (Leung et al., 2016; Robson, 2017) is based on three classic mainstreams of learning as Dewey, Lewin, and Piaget (Gonzalez-Perez & Taras, 2015; McCarthy, 2010) stated. The experiential learning model portrays two dialectically related modes of grasping experience—concrete experience and abstract conceptualization—and two dialectically related modes of transforming experience—reflective observation and active experimentation.

The experiential process is an idealized learning cycle where the learner "touches all the bases"—experiencing, reflecting, thinking, and acting—in a recursive process that is responsive to the learning situation and what is being learned.

In this regard, the use of COIL as a strategy of IatH is important for the development of intercultural competences, first, and business, later. COIL develops several activities that help in the development of the participants' intercultural competences to the participants through experiential activities.

The COIL model proposes collaboration across disciplines, departments, and colleges, and sets an example for collaboration across diverse environments and circumstances.

Figure 34.1 explains the relationship between COIL and the experiential learning model (Kolb, 1984). This includes the following activities, which comprise Kolb's (1984) experiential learning cycle:

1. Concrete experience: COIL is a new teaching and learning paradigm that promotes the development of intercultural competences across shared mutual learning environments. In this regard, the activities such as *ice-breaker* and *Q&A lectures* contribute to this stage of the experiential learning mode.
2. Reflective observation: This stage of the model is given through interactions among international peers. These interactions are presented in the specific activities of the COIL teaching, such as pre-knowledge exercise *Mindmap*, *infographic* and *learning diary*, and *Power Point presentations*. These activities contribute in enhancing students' critical analysis about specific situations (business) they analyze during the development of COIL.

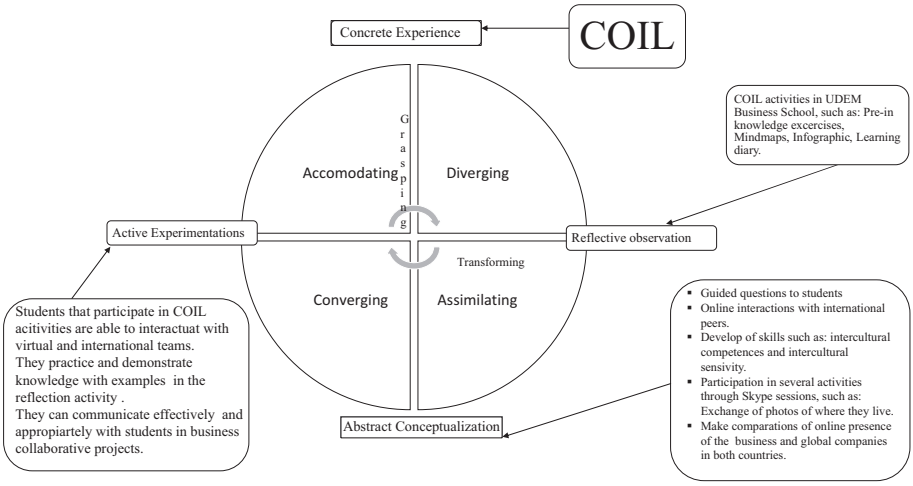

Fig. 34.1 The relationship between COIL and experiential learning. Source: Adapted from Kolb (1984)

3. Abstract conceptualization: Guided questions to students, so they can analyze what happens through interactions with others. Students learn about themselves and others while interacting online with international peers. They develop new skills, such as intercultural competences and communication, and intercultural sensitivity. At UDEM, the students participate in diverse activities throughout Skype or Zoom sessions with counterparts in other countries, exchange photos of where they live and what their life looks like, and make comparison of online presence of the business and global companies in both countries.
4. Active experimentation: Once students participate at COIL, they are able to interact and be culturally sensitive with virtual and international teams, they practice and demonstrate knowledge with examples in the reflection activity, and they can communicate effectively and appropriately with students in business collaborative projects. In the COIL project at UDEM, it is possible to catch several evidences of this stage, for example, the students' oral presentations during the course. This activity implies the application of the knowledge and competences the students acquired during COIL activities.

As the authors stated before, the COIL project was implemented to increase students' knowledge in business and to develop intercultural competences through virtual interactions. It is through COIL activities that students enhance their understanding of international business and can become more interculturally sensitive. These COIL activities were designed with the experiential education model, "in order to increase knowledge, develop skills, clarify

values, and develop people's capacity to contribute to their communities" (Association for Experiential Education, n.d.). As students engage in collaborative activities with international peers, their knowledge of other cultures increases and they develop new skills to interact effectively with others. While interacting internationally, students are learning to accept differences and celebrate similarities (Byram & Flemming, 1998).

The COIL project is related with the experiential learning theory (Kolb, 1984) through the transformation of experience (virtual interactions) into knowledge (Passarelli & Kolb, 2012). By working with an unfamiliar culture, students are continuously challenged by new knowledge and ambiguity, and therefore they discover new ways of relating to the world around them (Passarelli & Kolb, 2012). Through the COIL project at UDEM Business School, students were learning and collaborating with different cultures, and relating a different approach to do business in Mexico, the Netherlands, and the United States. In their virtual activities with international peers, students were dialoguing, adapting, arguing, discovering, and creating new meaning through intercultural interactions. The virtual collaboration allowed students from different countries to learn about business practices and terminology in different cultural contexts.

Through the COIL project students are developing intercultural competences. Despite the lack of consensus on the definition of intercultural competence (Fantini & Tirmizi, 2006; Van de Vijver & Leung, 2009) and the lack of clarity in its meaning (Leask, 2015), the definition of intercultural competence that the authors will use in this chapter is the following: "A dynamic, ongoing, interactive self-reflective learning process that transforms attitudes, skills, and knowledge for effective communication and interaction across cultures and contexts" (Freeman et al., 2009, p. 13).

The COIL project promotes interactive learning among international students and transforms these interactions into new knowledge. It also contributes to a better communication and understanding among people from different cultures.

Best Practices and Challenges for COIL Projects

Even though there is not a "one size fits all" formula in this COIL project, certain recommendations worked better under this endeavor at UDEM. One of the most important recommendations is the combination of a top down-bottom up approach, in order to make it possible. According to O'Donovan and Mikelonis (2005), higher education institutions' efforts to international-

ize the curriculum with the purpose of increasing students' intercultural competence are entrusted to faculty and staff. The strategy of internationalization of the curriculum that institutional leaders established at UDEM set the path to follow. The synergy among the International Programs Office administrative staff and faculty of the Business School to work together in a COIL project has been a key factor for its success. At UDEM, this binomial formula has produced positive outcomes, such as the contribution to the development of intercultural competences among the students with projects such as COIL. The international office at UDEM has developed a support structure for faculty development related to COIL implementation. This support consists of COIL online training through UDEM's consortial partners, such as the COIL center, or on-site workshops UDEM provides. In the past two years, faculty response increased and institutional support was the driving force.

UDEM has developed trainings for faculty who would like to begin a COIL project. A one-day training workshop is available on-site. The workshop illustrates the basis for a COIL project. It provides an overview of the internationalization of the curriculum and how activities such as COIL can enhance international learning and prompt the development of intercultural competences among international business students. Also, the workshop explains the meaning, characteristics, and benefits of COIL. Later on, the faculty practice with their own course the design of five COIL activities and international learning outcomes related to intercultural learning and international business. The workshop also allows to discuss the profile of a COIL professor in as an important trigger for the success of a COIL course. The profile of a COIL professor in business is the following:

- Intercultural sensitivity. The professor must have previous experience working with people from another culture (e.g., studying in another culture or doing international research and collaboration).
- English language proficiency. Most of the COIL agreements have English as the lingua franca; therefore, the faculty must be proficient in the English language.
- Technological savvy. Educators must adopt technology as an ally to improve quality education and to connect students from different parts of the globe to collaborate and learn from each other.
- Commitment and creativity. An additional effort and commitment is required to design and implement COIL activities in any course, and the faculty must be aware of the endeavor when engaging with COIL activities in their course.

Not all faculty members and courses can be suitable for COIL activities, but international business courses are the ideal platform to embrace COIL activities and their benefits in adding quality to the course.

Another factor that is crucial for the success of the COIL project is the commitment of the participants. Professors at UDEM and abroad must work hand in hand in order to work together in the design and implementation of the COIL activities. If one of the parties lacks in commitment, the project might not work properly. Both parties must work together in designing the learning outcomes and the collaborative learning activities under a shared objective. According to Deardorff (2009), the development of intercultural competence does not come natural, but it must be intentional through intentional development and adequate preparation. An adequate preparation and design of COIL activities allow to foster intercultural competences.

It is advisable that the group size in each participating institution's course should be similar in order to create similar group sizes and allow the students to work in pairs or in triads. Often, when the size of the working groups is dissimilar, the collaboration is also inequitative. Studies (Monks & Schmidt, 2010) showed that the class size is related to the students' performance, and an institution should put special attention in this matter when designing a COIL project. The ideal number of students working in a COIL project is about 15–20 from each institution, but this is unlikely to happen due to the different contexts of each institution, among other factors. It is difficult to work with despair numbers of students, because the teams are not equally formed. This was the case of the international business and Negotiation course, where 42 students were from one institution and 19 students from the other institution (see Table 34.1).

The effective use of technology is another pivotal factor for the implementation of a COIL project. Wang (2008) suggests that the use of technology is a key element when collaborating online and should be given prime consideration. Professors should begin working at a COIL project with the technology with which they are familiar, in order to better facilitate collaborative activities. In COIL projects at UDEM Business School, the professors and the students knew the technological tools (e.g., Skype, Facebook, Zoom, and Google Drive), and this contributed to the well functioning of the collaborative activities.

The implementation of a COIL project requires several factors that contribute to guarantee its success. Institutional support, teamwork among International Programs Office and the faculty, the commitment of the parties involved, and, finally, the adequate use of technology are the basis for the success of the COIL project. Once these elements are fulfilled, the core of the

COIL project will be the creative design of experiential learning activities, in order to enhance the knowledge of international business and develop intercultural competences. By establishing intercultural links through the use of technology, the COIL project can increase students' global awareness and cross-cultural development without studying abroad (Rubin & Guth, 2015).

In the process of redesigning a course at UDEM Business School with a COIL methodology, a series of challenges related to timing, communication, technology, and intercultural sensitivity were present. Each institution has different academic calendars and different time zones; therefore, it is necessary to find the adequate time to implement COIL activities among the institutions. This process needs to be clarified and well planned since the beginning of the collaboration, otherwise the project might fail. Both institutions need to commit in respecting the times or nature of the sessions (synchronic or asynchronic) they agreed during the design phase. Also, a special time should be dedicated to prepare the faculty and students on topics of intercultural sensitivity, intercultural communications, and virtual collaboration. Over the course of this COIL experience at the Business School at UDEM, the authors have learned of the importance of saving time to talk about these topics and to prepare students and professors before embarking in the COIL activities. They are planning on implementing a new introduction module on these topics.

One of the most relevant challenges in this journey is the communication process among the professors involved and among the students working together. Constant communication is the key to a successful project. Professors need to be continuously communicating with each other not only in the design phase, but also in the implementation phase, in order to overcome the possible misunderstandings among students and to clarify any questions or doubt in the activities.

Another important challenge for a COIL project is the compatibility of disciplines between partner institutions. Thus, it is imperative authorities from UDEM approve the COIL project that better fits the objectives of the School of Business before it starts. It is a good alternative to create more interesting projects, in order to reach the learning objectives easily. Even though students in this century have been categorized as digital natives, a great range of students is still struggling when dealing with technology. According to Scanlon (2009), these students should be called "digital refugees," instead of digital natives, since no one has showed them or trained them on how to use technology. Most of the students are familiar with their mobile apps, WhatsApp, and Facebook, but the majority of them is still struggling in learning and managing new educational platforms, such as Blackboard, Canvas, or

Moodle. Some of them are recently learning how to manage all the Goggle for Education tools. The challenge in managing new technologies and new ways to communicate is still present among the faculty and the students.

Finally, challenges students noticed and mentioned in the reflection papers can be summarized as follows:

- Technology problems: Not all the students managed the suggested platforms; videoconferences were not always with a good signal.
- Not a good timing: The dates and the timing were not suitable for both groups; differences were there in the schedule of exams or classes.
- Lack of engagement: Not all the students from both universities engaged in the same manner. Some of them did not take it seriously.
- The differences in the time zone did not help interactions.

COIL Benefits for Global Business Students

The program contributes to the development of international learning outcomes. The COIL project has impacted over 1800 students in more than 60 curricular and co-curricular courses that employ COIL methodologies. The evaluations of both students and faculty have been extremely positive. Even though there is a general acceptance of COIL and it improves the internationalization of UDEM, the evaluation of learning effectiveness is in process.

At the end of the COIL project at UDEM Business School, global business students must work on a reflection paper about their experience with COIL. The analysis of 64 reflection papers highlighted that 58 students enjoyed the COIL experience in their business course and 6 students did not like the experience.[3]

Some of the most mentioned learning experience or benefits the authors found in the reflection papers are the following:

- The opportunity to interact with people from different cultures (26 comments).
- Collaboration with students from around the world (15 comments).
- It represented a new and challenging/enlightening experience (19 comments).
- Acquired or improved negotiation skills (9 comments).
- Experienced how to do business with people from other cultures (20 comments)
- Learn about similarities and differences in other countries (5 comments).

[3] The analysis was conducted by the Internationalization at Home Projects Office in UDEM. The authors analyzed other reflections papers from classes.

The COIL project under the experiential learning method demonstrates a new and creative alternative to promote collaboration and international learning experiences at home to business students. According to the students, COIL activities are a good international learning experience in their business courses. They have improved their negotiation skills and their intercultural communication skills. They also have learned about the business topics in other parts of the world and have experienced on a first-hand basis how to collaborate with business students from around the world.

Likewise, in a general view, the aims of the COIL project in the Business School are achieved in several ways. First, the students identify terms and concepts that come from different cultural and work environments. For example, through multicultural teams and videoconferences the students got experiences and knowledge about culture and business concepts from around the world.

> *I think nowadays it's extremely important to have classes like this, because we live in a very modern world where videoconferences take place on a daily basis in large companies. Also, we get to learn different point of views that help us, in order to do business with people from the country we are taking classes with.* (Student 8, 2018)

> *The most important thing I've learned throughout this course is how important is getting to know and understand people from different cultures. Diversity is a key component in innovation and productivity in companies, especially nowadays, when workforces are usually composed of people with different nationalities and cultural backgrounds.* (Student 55, 2018)

Second, the students compared different *business environments* through collaborative activities that consisted in questions and answers of several doubts about the *business context* of each other. "Working in a team with different points of view makes it a bit challenging but it also makes the work better" (Student 39, 2018). A professor exposed:

> *In my opinion, experiences like this become enriching for the students' global education, as they have to apply what they learn during the class in a project that involves two different fields of study and different countries, and allows to exploit the potential of collaboration and learning at a different level.* (COIL professor, 2018)

Third, the students develop skills related to *intercultural competences* through speaking and writing in a foreign language (English).

> *It is important because multicultural can bring more efficiency. The minds, culture, and thoughts are different, so people can bring more varied ideas. Also, it helps to find new ways of working in teams and organizations.* (Student 33, 2018)

Fourth, the *understanding of international business* is achieved in two ways through the final project of COIL activities: As a way of evaluation for the final grade and by the interaction with students and professors from other perspectives to understand the business and the world. For example, other students affirmed:

> *Personally, I have to say that this course rarefied my negotiation skills and let me think I am well prepared for my next negotiations. For me, the courses International Negotiation with Organizational Behavior were a perfect combination and opened my mind for negotiation with other persons, other countries, and especially with other cultures.* (Student 2, 2018)

> *Through talking with them about different aspects of the business world, I realized that the way of talking to your employees or the way in which you handle a meeting is very different around the world. I also think that you sometimes have to change your leadership style when working with different cultures to try to give your employee the satisfaction of working in the company, hence, getting better results.* (Student 42, 2018)

On the other, the COIL project at UDEM Business School is easily replicable, because it includes international and intercultural activities that do not require huge investments, but rather the institutional leadership's commitment to implement them. It can readily be adapted to different contexts. UDEM itself has profited in the implementation of its COIL program from its participation in the SUNY-COIL consortium and the ECU-GPE project. UDEM is now developing new COIL activities with its bilateral partners. The program is innovative, because it uses modern technologies, confronts people with new and unknown frames of mind, and represents a viable and meaningful alternative for those students who cannot participate in exchange or study abroad programs, but can learn from an experiential learning activity. Since international business is an activity that is present in almost every country and most people face daily, the COIL methodology is a good alternative to get experience from business in a different context meanwhile at home. As a result, it is not an obstacle to learn from other cultures. If it is well applied, the COIL methodology could represent a good alternative to internationalize the curriculum. The COIL could be adapted to any higher education institution context. A constant dialogue, adaptation, and integration among the institutions involved is required. Each higher education institution around the world

varies in structure, policies, academic calendars and time zones (Rubin, 2017), and even pedagogy, so it is necessary to find a balance when designing and working together in a COIL project.

Debriefing is an important element of the COIL process. It is important to designate a particular time for the debriefing after each COIL activity in order to prompt students' reflections. In a COIL project designed with the experiential learning theory (Kolb, 1984), focused reflection is the key to learning from experience (Savicki, 2008). In UDEM Business School COIL projects, spaces for individual reflection and group reflection were given to the students through debriefing activities conducted by the professors. Most of questions and reflections are mainly related to cultural awareness because stereotypes from other cultures can affect international business.

On the other hand, a debriefing between professors is also needed in order to determine difficulties and obstacles among participants. This exercise (debriefing) is not complete at the moment, since time differences did not let professors finish on time. In fact, it is a topic than must be discussed among all participants, students, and professors.

Theoretical and Pedagogical Contributions

It is imperative that higher education institutions, particularly in Latin America, embrace IatH activities such as COIL as part of their internationalization strategies. According to De Wit (2017), if more Latin American institutions incorporate and strengthen their IatH strategies, their students and faculty intercultural competence will increase through this experiential learning education. The IatH could represent an opportunity to offer the international dimension to all of the students (Gacel-Ávila, 2012), and it is through COIL activities that students, who have no opportunity to study abroad, interact, and collaborate through experiential activities with an international component. On the other hand, through COIL, the cognitive and learning process is enhanced, since it lets students identify, organize, and interpret sensory information through collaboration online to understand and reflect about the discussion, and present information at class, which will finally help students to solve problems or take the best decisions at business according to their experiential learning.

Likewise, an important contribution of COIL for the experiential learning theory is the inclusion of technology as a factor that boosts the development of international competences. Through technology, students can easily interact with other students that are located around the world. Moreover, COIL

helps to students without the chance to study abroad to improve several skills, such as a second language, knowledge about other cultures, and learning about different ways of work and how to face reality of business in different cultures and scenarios.

Also, the implementation of COIL activities in Mexico is an important contribution. COIL in Mexico is a new tool for students to learn and know new ways to understand the international arena. Hence, the way by which these activities will be carried out for different universities will improve its impact.

Besides, COIL as a way of IatH is relevant for the practice in education. First, decision-makers in Mexican universities can consider COIL as a good way to improve the indicators of efficiency. Second, as the authors described in this chapter, it is only necessary to become a member in a consortium of universities (the Global Partners in Education and SUNY-COIL). Third, this chapter shows that COIL as IatH is an easy, replicable, and successful activity in Mexico.

This project is an important advancement for the model of experiential learning Kolb (1984) proposed. Indeed, COIL in UDEM is an important tool to diminish the difficulties of the global mobility. When Kolb proposed his model, he did not consider the international aspect of experiential learning and the development of intercultural competences (through the COIL). In addition, the use of technology to catch knowledge is an important matter. Currently, technology is an important factor for the process of learning-teaching.

The COIL not only is an innovative way to develop intercultural competences through experiential learning. The use of COIL is also an important advancement in Kolb's model of experiential learning through the "golden trilogy."

Figure 34.2 shows a "golden trilogy." The combination of three factors the authors documented and used in this project in students' experiential learning is the main theory advancement. This figure represents the interaction of three elements: Intercultural competences (trough IatH), experiential learning, and technology. A suitable interaction between these elements contributes to a better understanding of the reality and to get a better knowledge of a specific topic. Likewise, technology plays an important role for the "golden trilogy." Technology contributes to a better and unique interaction between students' intercultural competences and experiential learning. Students are the center of this process, because they are the receivers of the results of the interaction among the factors of the "golden trilogy." The importance of the "golden trilogy" is that it is replicable with other technologies and ways of teaching for the students' benefit.

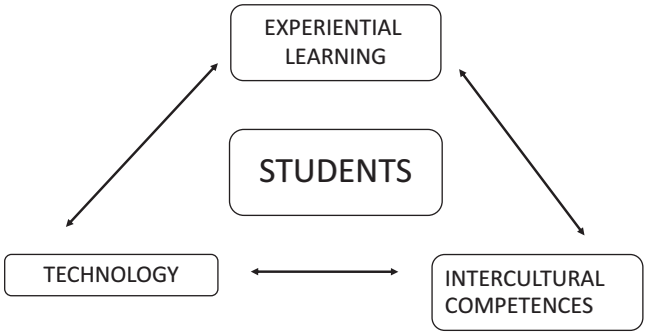

Fig. 34.2 Golden trilogy

The main findings of this project suggest an important advancement for the experiential learning theory. The main finding suggests that the essence of experiential learning is "learning by doing" (Beard, 2018; Chavan, 2015). Through the COIL project, it is possible to take advantage of experiential learning benefits without physical presence. This assertion seems a contradiction, because the classical paradigm of learning requires the physical presence and formal instruction (Erselcan, 2015). However, the advancement of science and technology allows us to benefit from a distant learning process.

Likewise, COIL can be an important social tool for learning. One of the most important problems to develop intercultural competences is the lack of financial resources to study abroad (Agnew & Khan, 2014). COIL can play a disruptive role for students who cannot afford to study abroad and allows to develop intercultural competences for the students.

As the authors highlighted along this chapter, COIL is an important tool for the development of intercultural and business competences. In this regard, the main contributions of COIL at UDEM Business School are pedagogical. These contributions can see explained from two perspectives:

(a) Student perspectives: The use of technology in international activities is an important contribution. Currently, the companies that have international operations carry out meetings using several technological tools. COIL familiarizes the students with these activities.
(b) Professor perspective: The professors who participate in COIL also increase their international exposure and update their knowledge with the interactions with other students and colleagues around the world. These activities improve professors' pedagogical performance; further, professors might use them in their other courses.

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35

Virtual Business Projects in the Classroom: Enhancing Intercultural and Business Skills of Students

Jürgen Bleicher, Paul Forrester, Andrea Honal, and Emil Velinov

Introduction

Changed circumstances in the higher education field, new technological trends, and global labor market requirements for graduates have prompted universities to rethink and redesign their curricula to develop innovative teaching and learn-

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M. A. Gonzalez-Perez et al. (eds.), *The Palgrave Handbook of Learning and Teaching International Business and Management*, https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-030-20415-0_35

ing concepts to prepare students for the global business world (Becker et al., 2017). The internationalization of business relationships offers companies, managers, and employees tremendous opportunities for cross-cultural working, while exposing them to ambitious challenges at the same time. To manage organizations successfully in contemporary business, decision makers need to develop experience of international working at an early stage (Davis, 2015). Human resource managers need to attend to attracting, motivating, developing, and retaining qualified employees and to providing appropriate working conditions and stimuli for such working (Schuchow & Gutmann, 2014). Intercultural competence, professional skills, and digital literacy are not unique characteristics, but a precondition for firms and individuals participating in the global labor market. Courses at universities to enable students to acquire cross-cultural competences in an international environment have become an important component for the managers of tomorrow and can increase the attractiveness of particular business schools in the eyes of potential applicants (Luethge, Raska, Greer, & O'Connor, 2016). A fitting example and the basis for this chapter is the Blended Learning International Cooperation (BLIC) program which originated and is being further developed at the Baden-Württemberg Cooperative State University in Germany (DHBW). Enabling students to experience realistic international business settings and to prepare them for future employment is an essential motivation of the BLIC program.

A common idea together with pioneering spirit, motivation, and open-mindedness energizes BLIC members to develop and implement an innovative new learning approach. Partners strive for long-term and enriching relationships to strengthen the BLIC network. The network welcomes new members from other universities. Within the program, students from different countries (Germany, the UK, the Czech Republic, and Iceland in 2018) worked in a virtual business setting in mixed teams for one semester. They were asked to develop innovative management strategies for entry of products and services into new markets. Important goals of the program were the preparation of students for the global workplace, their exposure to a technology-rich learning environment, and the acquisition of intercultural experiences at an early stage in their studies. A network of participating universities who share a common vision for developing cross-cultural competences and the willingness to cooperate have facilitated the implementation of innovative new learning approaches. Challenges, such as synchronizing work across different academic calendars and working together despite each partner's special curricula and course specifications, were developed as synergetic strengths in the BLIC program work as these reflected and simulated constraints frequently encountered when international businesses work together.

Lecturers from the four universities supported the students during the projects in the role of coaches. In tandem, an empirical research study was conducted to

analyze the effects of the BLIC program, focusing not only on the reinforcement of students' intercultural and business-related competencies, but also to gauge the impact of new technologies and social media tools employed during the projects. The survey sample consisted of 111 student respondents from a total population of around 200 from the Baden-Württemberg Cooperative State University in Germany, Keele University in the UK and Skoda Auto University in the Czech Republic. The key findings confirmed that the program benefitted all participants in strengthening their technical, methodological, personal, social, and intercultural skills in virtual teamworking activities. Moreover, the students enjoyed the teamwork, even during demanding high-pace periods and the many challenging moments. The use of new technologies, social media, and virtual learning portals such as Moodle were crucial instruments for a successful collaboration and prepared the students for future business life.

The Project Experience

The Basics

Megatrends such as globalization and digitalization have considerable effects on the forms of education demanded within business schools. Regalado (2013) analyzed how online course innovations disrupt education and explored the question of whether online learning might be the most significant innovation influencing the education system in the last decade. The BLIC approach has been recognized as an advanced pedagogical concept. It is based on a case study scenario and is designed to foster competencies in the fields of international business, intercultural management, and technology rich-learning environments. Collaboration among participating universities builds upon the strengths and preferences of partners. Teams from different cultural backgrounds and nationalities, located spatially across the participating universities, contribute to the task with complementary know-how and skills and act as consultants to the German student teams who act as their clients. The growing BLIC network and associated research activities have the potential to provide extensive and valuable insights to make technology-based teamwork and active learning more effective, efficient, exciting, and meaningful.

Key Numbers and Descriptors of the Project/Activity

The underlying pedagogical concept of BLIC was originally designed in 2013; the BLIC program was initiated at the Baden-Württemberg Cooperative State University in Villingen-Schwenningen. Up to the end of 2018, eight universities

from eight different countries, comprising 1100 students from 25 different national backgrounds, have participated in the program. Longstanding partners are Keele University in Great Britain, Reykjavik University in Iceland, and ŠKODA Auto University in the Czech Republic. Teams from Iceland, the Czech Republic, and the UK were allocated to one of the twenty German teams and worked closely together throughout the Fall 2018 semester, and particularly intensively during the first six to seven weeks. The German student teams were the clients, and the consultant teams in the other countries provided specialist advice. The German teams at DHBW developed a business plan as part of their studies and identified a country for market entry for their business. They produced a presentation the other country teams in advance of the consultative exercise. Based on a modular concept, BLIC is an attractive learning experience for both Bachelor and Master students. In courses such as strategic management or marketing, team contributions might be based on Political Economic Social Technological Legal Environmental (PESTLE) analyses, market research studies, or a cultural analysis. The collaboration phase amongst international teams spans over three to five weeks. An ideal seminar class cohort consists of five teams with three to five members each. All lecturers and students are enrolled on the DHBW Moodle platform but may use their locally provided technologies in addition.

Learning Objectives

Learning objectives are vital to focus attention and resources effectively. All BLIC activities are aligned with the following three categories of objectives. Three subordinate categories for learning objectives: Explicit objectives can be divided into the categories (a) “International Business”, (b) “Intercultural Management”, and (c) “Technology Rich Learning”.

The first category “International Business” comprises three elements. Students learn about business models and concepts in international business. A case study presents a typical problem in international business. Based on interactive lectures and team-based research efforts, participants identify and apply models and concepts that serve best to solve the specific problem. While working on their case, students are taught to analyze international value chains in regards to performance, sustainability, and growth. Team members contribute with their specific skills to solve problems, work creatively, and apply innovative approaches.

Intercultural Management is the second category. Participants acquire intercultural communication skills by sensitizing them for factors driving the

success of international communication. In addition to international communication skills, students will develop their cultural competence. A major benefit of a BLIC course is that students and faculty expand their global network, which lasts beyond the period of the course.

The third category is "Technology Rich Learning". The underlying idea is that technology supports learning, yet does not drive the concept. The exercise thus stimulates effective real-life virtual teamworking in business organizations. To enrich the learning experience, students and faculty can freely make use of technologies such as Moodle, web conference software, and email accounts provided by their university. Furthermore, student participants are encouraged to use additional mobile media such as Facebook or Skype, if this increases the motivation to collaborate, reflecting work and relationships in real business. However, work elements such as consultant reports, course materials, or assignments have to be formally posted in the provided DHBW learning management system (based on Moodle) exclusively, again stimulating formal business requirements within firms or between partners.

Learning Objectives According to Bloom's Taxonomy

Educational objectives that can be achieved through BLIC can be categorized according to Bloom's modified taxonomy and Bloom's digital taxonomy—from lower order thinking skills to higher order thinking skills. In the context of BLIC, Bloom's modified taxonomy is used to provide a visual representation of classified objectives and to align improvement efforts concerning the curriculum amongst involved lecturers (Bath & Bourke, 2010). In addition to the widely recognized advantages of Bloom's modified taxonomy, the digital taxonomy is used to acknowledge the increasing relevance of technical possibilities (Blau et al., 2017). BLIC provides and benefits from a technology-rich learning environment. Applying a digital taxonomy is a desirable opportunity to gain first experiences in this context.

Purpose and Description

The driving idea behind collaborative online international learning is to provide students with the opportunity to become acquainted with the complexity and the potential pitfalls associated with international business. The complexity associated with blended learning and virtual teams, such as overcoming cultural differences and dealing with diverse communication styles

(Köppel, 2009; O'Conner, Mortimer, & Bond, 2011), can be challenging and demanding. The case study approach using client–consultant relationships challenges students to collaborate effectively and to overcome language and cultural hurdles as well as to experience virtual teamwork and explore and apply business concepts. Upon completion of this course, students are better prepared to identify factors driving the success of international business. Based on taught theory, state-of-the-art communication technology and the case simulation, students should be better equipped to cope with international business needs and recognize and compensate the impact of cultural aspects when they enter the workforce for real. The modular concept could be extended to allow collaboration beyond business students as there is no reason this approach should not be used in fields such as social work, engineering, or even interdisciplinary studies.

Courses follow a modular and flexible structure based on the competencies of the participating universities. Factors such as different academic calendars, special curricula, grading and evaluation standards, and any limitations on technical or financial support are barriers for collaboration. A modular structure enables participating institutions to contribute their particular competence and to build a semester teaching program based on complementary strengths.

The BLIC program includes traditional teaching and learning elements as well as virtual learning and collaboration sequences. Students are taught relevant business methods such as marketing planning, or financial budgeting to develop a business plan for international expansion.

The underlying case of BLIC goes back to a Foreign Trade and Investment Campaign of the German Ministry for Economic Affairs and Energy with the aim of boosting exports of products and services. The corresponding invitation for a tender encourages organizations whose products or services promote German culture and industry in a foreign country or region. Students from participating universities build management and consulting teams to develop a comprehensive business plan and to present their business idea to the grant awarding committee. Their business cases are assessed based on their potential to enhance international awareness and an understanding of what the industry has to offer. Generous financial grants are offered to companies, which submit business propositions convincing the jury (lecturers). In all runnings of the course so far the German students have acted as the management teams and so become the clients in the BLIC exercise (Fig. 35.1).

At the same time, consulting teams from partner universities provide consulting services to the management teams. Their main responsibility is to provide expertise strengthening the business concept of the management teams.

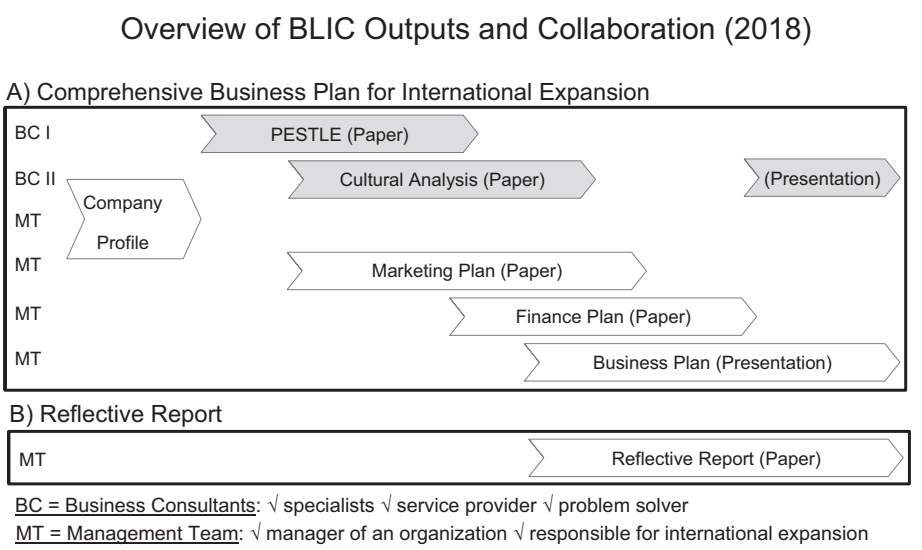

Fig. 35.1 Overview of BLIC Outputs and Collaboration (2018). Source: Authors' elaboration

The management team is responsible to merge inputs in a way that its business idea will be translated into a convincing business plan that is worth winning the tender and associated financial support (see Exhibit 1). Students learn management and business concepts such as international value chain, PESTLE analysis, marketing management tools, and financial planning, as indicated in Exhibit 1. Mandatory assignments are country profiles and status reports. However, depending on the educational level (under-/postgraduate) and competence of the consulting team, assignments can be adjusted. A team enrolled in a marketing course might provide a marketing plan, whereas a team enrolled in a finance course might serve better developing financial statements.

Because of the flexibility of the BLIC layout, clear role allocation, shared responsibilities, and task delegation become critical success factors. All parties involved need to be aware of what they can expect and of what is expected from them. Clear briefings at all participating universities instruct students on the content and the grading criteria of assignments, as to make sure they understand the overall concept.

Acting on different levels, such as program, course, cohort, team, and local team level will enrich the learning experience of participants. Each team comprises at least two nationalities and two universities. A local learning team is a cooperative team of three to five students.

Students acquire relevant competencies in traditional classes. At the same time, they use technologies such as WhatsApp, Facebook, Skype, video-conferencing tools, or Moodle virtual learning environment for collaborating in local and international teams. A technology-rich learning environment serves the underlying pedagogical concept. Besides the advantage of experiencing a realistic international business setting in the classroom, blended learning enables students and faculty to collaborate across borders and to overcome financial limitations.

Blended learning definitions in the literature emphasize the combination of face-to-face and virtual, technology-enabled communication as meaningful elements (Bonk & Graham, 2006; Le Rossignol, 2009). (Krause, 2007) best expressed the meaning of the team blended learning in the context of this paper. *"Blended learning is realized in teaching and learning environments where there is an effective integration of different modes of delivery, models of teaching and styles of learning as a result of adopting a strategic and systematic approach to the use of technology combined with the best features of face to face interaction."* (Krause, 2007, p. 2). Blau et al. (2017) suggested intensifying the combined use of asynchronous and synchronous possibilities to provide learning opportunities in order to improve student learning. Students and faculty participating in the BLIC program can make use of any technology that best serve their purposes and that have a positive overall impact on their performance and motivation. Technology is not meant to drive the curriculum, but to serve learners and lecturers by setting an innovative and unique learning environment.

Ensuring that academic requirements are met and that a certain technological standard is available, using the DHBW learning management system is strongly suggested. Course materials, assignments, and consultative reports are posted on Moodle. If students prefer other media to share ideas and to collaborate, they are welcome to do so as long as they post upload their assignments and consultants reports into folders on the DHBW learning management system by given deadlines.

Experiential Learning Cycle

The main purpose of the BLIC cooperation was to provide an active learning experience for students in the different countries. The consultant client exercise explained above mimics the real world of international cross-cultural project working. The business plan scenario is established by the German students, which sets the scene for the associated PESTLE and cultural analysis by students in the other countries.

Once the business plan scenario has laid the foundations, students in the different countries then develop concrete experience of working together using new technologies to accomplish a business outcome. An important part of the process following the exercise is the reflective observation of students in the different countries. The exercise can lead to distinctive forms of assessment. For example, in addition to more conventional forms of assessment and reflection, the UK partner uses the exercise as the basis for assessment whereby students produce posters based on their experiences and share these with staff and students alike at an end of semester poster event. This demonstrates how the experiential learning cycle occurs within the BLIC program.

BLIC therefore provides experiential cooperative learning involving several parties including students, teachers, study program directors, and others. In the BLIC program, students from Germany, the UK, Iceland, and the Czech Republic are assigned to work together in consultant–client relationships for one semester in a virtual business setting in mixed teams and develop innovative management insights for new market-entry-based business plans. The program aims to prepare students for the global workplace and collect intercultural and virtual teamwork experiences at an early stage during their studies. Lecturers from all participating universities support the students during their projects as coaches.

Skills and Competencies

Project activities are designed to enhance student skills and competencies to prepare them for the international work environment in a globalized world. A qualified labor force is a key success factor driving the future competitiveness of companies (Schültz, Strothmann, Schmitt, & Laux, 2013). The BLIC program conveys how to establish and maintain long-term international business relationships. The program also aims at encouraging students to expand their international network and to increase participation in study abroad programs. Exposing students to an international setting as early as possible allows them to discover potential future options, such as studying abroad, and serves as an icebreaker.

Students are prepared to identify factors driving the success of international business. BLIC is designed to enhance competencies such as recognizing, describing, explaining, comparing, interpreting, and applying business concepts through collaborative work. The case study requires participants to conduct research on appropriate business concepts. Students describe several theoretical models and apply them accordingly. Team efforts are focused on developing a comprehensive business plan. One element might be a finance plan calculating capital requirement for the intended expansion. Such a plan

includes information on sales, price, customers, procurement, costs of current and fixed assets, marketing expenses, profitability, or investment appraisals. Another element of the business plan might be a value chain as a systematic evaluation of all firm activities. The value chain concept should highlight unique value creation processes as key sources of competitive advantage. However, requirements change according to the complementary strengths of participating partners.

Besides management aspects, learning teams are a vital part of the learning concept. They provide manifold opportunities to gain unique learning experiences based on collaboration skills. The freedom to work in international teams will prepare students for their future careers.

Students are expected to collaborate effectively and to respect human diversity. Learners should behave in a tolerant and professional manner. They collaborate with their peers to create a new and unique international business concept building upon the strengths of each learning team. Projects enable the development of individual skills, talents, and strengths of each team member and lead to innovative and successful international business relationships. Part of the assignments is a reflective report where participants summarize their experience of collaborating with local teams and international business partners. They identify challenges such as team dynamics, cultural differences, or communication practices and provide recommendations for future projects.

With regard to the technology-rich learning environment, students are expected to find their instructions on Moodle. Furthermore, they learn how to effectively share and edit research findings, drafts, and final versions of assignments in the learning system. To complete the course successfully, participants conduct online research using different databases for concepts such as team dynamics, cultural diversity, or marketing plan. Regarding virtual collaboration, students develop a slideshow presenting a company profile with audio-narration to become acquainted with the other teams and the business idea. Also, participants are enabled to facilitate virtual team meetings and to blog comments. Finally, team members understand how to review the input from different partners and therefore how to move their collaborative work to the next level.

Optimal Fit

The international cooperation exercise is flexible enough to work in a number of different contexts. So far, BLIC has been principally used for undergraduate and bachelor sudents and master's student are now being incorporated into the process.

The most recent exercise in the Fall of 2018 involved total of nearly 200 students spread across the four countries, but could work equally well with smaller groups and, even with larger numbers, subject of course to adequate tutor resources.

There is no reason why it should not be used on MBA courses as well, where post-experience students would add considerable value to the exercise. Participants can also be from different backgrounds and at least different levels of education. For example, it is a valuable experience for bachelor students to work with more experienced participants studying on part-time courses. This serves to replicate the real world of work further still.

Challenges

The BLIC exercise is deliberately designed to be challenging for participant students, and challenging it is. The first challenge for the tutors is ensuring the groups in the different countries engage the project work from the outset. The exercise demands considerable initiative and discipline on the part of students, and some of them find this extremely demanding, having been used to more guided forms teaching and education.

Not only does the space between student teams and the use of virtual technologies present a challenge, but the practical of issue of deciding meeting times and ensuring they understand each other's time zone presents many with a challenge. These initial problems and challenges are, in fact, positively embraced by the tutors on the modules, as they replicate the complexity and confusions in real business when working in these ways. Experiences and problems provide the basis for subsequent reflection. It is clearly the objective that, having learned from the mistakes that might have been made, participants would conduct themselves differently when faced with cross-cultural and virtual team working in the future workplace.

The exercise sets a diverse range of challenges when it comes to evaluation and marking. In addition to the normal challenges of group marking and peer assessment, many aspects of the work need to be considered in the grading of student work. Grading and assessment are tackled individually in each of the participating institutions, in line with the requirements for the modules and courses being taught. For example, in Germany, students are required to produce and present their business plan, demonstrating that they have incorporated and learned from the experience with student colleagues at the other country institutions. The challenge is to identify relevant business issues they might face when developing and implementing their business plans. In the

UK, where students are undertaking a comparative business cultures module, they are asked to evaluate and reflect upon their experience of cross-cultural and virtual teamwork by producing a poster. Posters are presented to staff and students at a special event at the end of the semester, and students are provided with a marking rubric setting out the marking criteria for their work. This exercise is all subject to peer review and assessment. The exercise enabled these student consultants to explore the implications of cultural issues they had learned about when implementing business concepts in different locations of the world. In Iceland and the Czech Republic, this involved students who were assigned to deliver reports and separate PowerPoint presentations of approximately 20 slides on findings and results based on the PESTLE analyses. These two assignments addressed the syllabus learning outcomes, where group work engaged students and changed their mind-set on the given subject.

Evaluation of Learning Effectiveness

The German students gained an awareness of client–consultant relationships and virtual teamworking processes, and how these might feed into and benefit their business plan and new market entry strategies. The reports from the consultant teams from Iceland, Czech Republic, and the UK needed to be professionally presented and detailed enough to be of guidance, though concise in nature. This offered students the opportunity not just for cross-cultural and virtual teamwork experience, but also practice in working as a consultant (in some cases, this was the students' first such experience) and in professional business report writing. The teams from different countries were expected to work closely with one another and had responsibility for making initial contact and managing the relationship, albeit moderated by tutors at each institution who monitored activities and intervened occasionally when this was seen as necessary to resolve any potential problems. Students were charged with organizing meetings, ensuring all team members attended, and deciding the best means for communication with their teams in other countries. They could use whatever form of communication worked best for them, but were encouraged to use the German partner's Moodle Virtual Learning Environment (VLE) system and Adobe Connect videoconferencing to facilitate their virtual meetings in addition to Skype, social media platforms, and so on. Importantly, students had to agree the channels of communication with one another in order to avoid confusion and, as can be imagined, some team were better at doing this than others.

Regarding the learning effectiveness, BLIC had a positive impact on the students (Table 35.1). For the evaluation, a seven-point Likert scale (1 = "strongly disagree" to 7 = "strongly agree") was utilized with different

Table 35.1 Application of Bloom's classification taxonomies of educational objectives to BLIC

Bloom's modified taxonomy	Bloom's digital taxonomy	Functional levels and activities with digital tools
Remember	Do	Recognize and describe business concepts such as the value chain, marketing mix, or break-even analysis. Network with local and international team members Search for instructions on Moodle
Understand	Connect	Explain, compare, and interpret business concepts Conduct online research using different databases for concepts such as team dynamics, cultural diversity, and marketing plan
Apply	Apply	Use theoretical concepts to develop, for example, a marketing plan or a reflective report. Share, upload, and edit research findings, drafts, and final versions of assignments
Analyse	Conceptualize	Compare different concepts Outline and structure assignments such as reflective report according to underlying concepts and priorities
Evaluate	Evaluate	Critique and assess input from different teams Facilitate virtual team meetings Blog comments and review input from different teams
Create	Create	Plan and produce bidding documents Develop a slide show of a company profile with audio-narration
	Share	Collaborate on content online Make findings, documents, and reports available to all participants

statements. All students assessed the program and their specific project as important, useful as well as interesting while also communicating their overall satisfaction with the participation. German students gave a lesser rating but all evaluations were above the average of 3.5. In conclusion, the BLIC program improved the learning performance of all students.

In Table 35.2, the perceived competence improvement via BLIC participation is displayed. For the evaluation, a Likert scale was used with different statements and a ranking from 1 = "strongly disagree" to 7 = "strongly agree." The results confirm that the opportunity to work in an international team was rated positively, besides the fact that the participants could improve their English language and practical skills. The results also showed that the students

Table 35.2 Assessment of the learning effectiveness of BLIC

Evaluation of the learning effectiveness	Total sample (N = 111)		Germany (N = 59)		UK (N = 22)		Czech Republic (N = 30)	
	Mean	Std. dev.	Mean	Std. dev.	Mean	Std. dev.	Mean	Std. dev.
I believe that the learning activity is very important for me.	4135	1665	3831	1522	4864	2077	4200	1472
Overall, the learning activity is excellent.	4081	1652	3593	1391	5364	1787	4100	1561
Overall, the content of the learning activity/ project is extremely interesting.	4595	1626	4288	1532	5273	1804	4700	1557
In general, I find the learning activity is very useful.	4252	1665	3661	1538	5227	1631	4700	1489
I feel that I will continue to profit from that which I have learnt after the project has ended.	4279	1743	3831	1499	5636	1529	4167	1877

had strengthened their technical, methodological, personal, social, and intercultural skills within the project. In general, the evaluation results of the English and Czech students were on a higher level than the results of the German students. Nonetheless, all evaluations were above the average (3.5).

Additionally, the students evaluated the lecturers supporting the teams. For the assessment of the professors, a Likert scale was used with different statements and a ranking from 1 = "strongly disagree" to 7 = "strongly agree." The results are displayed in Table 35.3. In general, all students were satisfied with the provided support. They received clear instructions, had an interactive dialog, and ongoing communication with the lecturers. In summary, the students evaluated the technical and communication tools as very helpful for the global teamwork. Conclusively, the BLIC program provides a role model for enhancing internationality in curricula and for bringing didactics into line with current digitalization trends and practices (Table 35.4).

Transferability

Whole purpose of the BLIC exercise is to ensure students experience in a simulated environment the type of dynamics and issues that occur in the real workplace in terms of virtual and cross-cultural team working. Businesses and

Table 35.3 Perceived competence improvement through the BLIC participation

Evaluation of the BLIC program	Total sample (N = 111)		Germany (N = 59)		UK (N = 22)		Czech Republic (N = 30)	
	Mean	Std. dev.	Mean	Std. dev.	Mean	Std. dev.	Mean	Std. dev.
I enjoy the work in the BLIC project very much.	4045	1681	3576	1511	5409	1593	3967	1564
I would recommend participating in the BLIC program to other students at my university.	4144	1705	3542	1478	5545	1565	4300	1622
This program helps me strengthen my technical competence.	4288	1686	4051	1547	5136	1833	4133	1697
This program helps me strengthen my methodological competence.	4171	1640	3763	1331	5091	1797	4300	1822
This program helps me strengthen my personal competence.	4586	1626	4305	1643	5636	1329	4367	1520
This program helps me strengthen my social competence.	4802	1606	4559	1523	5682	1359	4633	1752
This program helps me strengthen my intercultural competence.	5072	1559	4864	1502	5727	1279	5000	1762

other not-for-profit organizations operate daily using information and communication technologies and communication between members in multiply-located teams. Students develop a set of relevant and transferable skills for such work that are relevant to the contemporary workplace.

Additionally, as already implied above, the exercise can be replicated across different fields of business and even to other disciplines. Multiple-located student teams could work together on projects involving different contents, that is, not just using a business plan as the basis. For example, this teaching method could be utilized to good effect for engineering projects, law projects, or education projects. In fact, the list is almost endless. The key point here is that student participants learn how to operate on projects, in teams, and replicate the modern world of work where international collaboration and team working is an absolute must.

The BLIC program's design, from its initiation through to the current model of delivery, is clearly aligned with the "ethos approach" to internationalization that Qiang (2003: 251) defined as one that "emphasizes creating a

Table 35.4 Assessment of the lecturers

Evaluation of the professors	Total sample (N = 111)		Germany (N = 59)		UK (N = 22)		Czech Republic (N = 30)	
	Mean	Std. dev.	Mean	Std. dev.	Mean	Std. dev.	Mean	Std. dev.
The lecturers give clear instructions.	4523	1823	3932	1680	5955	1290	4633	1866
The lecturers have good moderation skills.	5234	1420	4797	1460	6091	0.921	5467	1332
The lecturers give regular overview of the next steps.	5423	1398	5085	1317	6364	1136	5400	1453
The lecturers interact with all team members.	5649	1570	5407	1588	6273	1162	5667	1709
The lecturers are open for new ideas.	5306	1500	4780	1390	5864	1521	5933	1337
The lecturers regularly reflect on the progress of the project	5793	1308	5559	1249	6364	1177	5833	1416
The lecturers listen to the team members' issues and try to help.	5892	1377	5525	1490	6682	0.568	6033	1326
The lecturers' feedback of the responses is on a good level.	5586	1268	5203	1243	6182	0.958	5900	1296

culture or climate that values and supports international/intercultural perspectives and initiatives. This approach acknowledges that the international dimension is fundamental to the definition of a university or any other institutions of higher learning." The best practices from this program are transferrable and applicable across the business schools and universities thanks to their complex and robust structure, which involves in-demand hard and soft skills for bachelor and master students.

Debriefing

Current study results shed a positive light on global blended learning concepts such as BLIC and indicate room for further concept development and future research activities (Becker et al., 2017). The study confirmed that the main learning objectives of the BLIC program were achieved. The students were

able to improve their skills in the fields "intercultural management", "IT-/media competences", and "doing international business". By creating their own business concept for a new product or services for a foreign market, students learned what it takes to apply theoretical concepts and models toward their specific project and how to aggregate all relevant data. By acting within a diverse team, learners could increase their language and intercultural skills. The usage of different technological tools and working virtually were two core elements to keep the motivation and engagement of the participants on a high level. Moreover, it can be confirmed that Bloom's learning taxonomies, modified as well as digital, were considered in the BLIC program.

The students had to recall concepts and models from their earlier studies, for example, value chain, and retrieve such information, as well as understand newly found concepts. They needed to apply business concepts and demonstrate their use in their analyses. Concluding, participants had to evaluate and rate their milestones and results, not only within their own groups but also with other groups. In order to include Bloom's last taxonomy, they had to create bidding documents, following up their progress and results in audio- and visual formats. For example, at Skoda Auto University, the participants experienced some miscommunication with regards to their online virtual meetings with their German counterparts, who were bachelor students. The Czech and the German students have different learning processes and objectives, as each university focuses on their own specialisms and requirements. In future, each instructor/teacher should focus on how to provide more explicit and specific instructions to the participants working on BLIC projects. Special attention is needed to ensure continuous teacher support to the students throughout BLIC program, as it is vital for them to be guided and encouraged to perform through the whole lifespan of their projects. Moreover, it is necessary for each institution to organize internal debriefs in the form of workshop or roundtable after the completion of BLIC projects, to enable participants to share and provide constructive suggestions on how BLIC could be developed further.

The program and the student work had several challenging aspects. The coordination of virtual student projects with international partners is very time challenging. It requires highly motivated students and teachers to conduct their projects successfully. Furthermore, appropriate technical equipment and infrastructure has to be present and systematic preparation and continuous support are crucial to make the project realistic. Moreover, a systematic support by external stakeholder groups, for example, cooperative firms, is helpful to conduct such kind of projects. The study results may be limited due to the sample size of only 111 participants. Still, the sample was sufficient to gain deeper insights concerning the BLIC program and its

impact. Current trends and the positive effects of this alternative concept were confirmed. An ongoing evaluation of the BLIC program is essential for improving and developing the concept on long-term perspective. Due to current circumstances, the BLIC program always needs to offer flexibility with respect to its program management and structure. The collaborating project partners should be stable as well as reliable. Enriching the BLIC program with new partners is an essential step toward the future use of this novel approach. The BLIC program must be adapted to future requirements and needs of the different stakeholder groups.

Contributions/Implications

BLIC projects reflecting real-world virtual teamworking the student will meet as they enter business employment, as well as a practical insight to the nature of client/consultant relationships. Competencies of students are developed in communication technology and 'at-distance' teamwork and business management. There is substantial evidence these competences develop among students at the end of the process, as evidenced by their own reflections. BLIC project work also increases the engagement of teams and individuals within them in terms of serious group work. The BLIC project exercise provides pressures and challenges for students simulating the world of work they will soon be immersed in.

Theoretical/Conceptual Contributions

This blended learning multinational program sheds light on students' cooperation through online and offline activities as different forms of learning have been demonstrated. These activities relate to core elements in Bloom's Taxonomy, but at the same time, the use of different technological tools and working virtually were essential to maintain the motivation and engagement of student participants on a high level. Bloom's learning taxonomy, modified to digital learning (Krathwohl, 2002), was used in the design of the BLIC program. Students had to apply theoretical concepts to analyze and conceptualize their own experiences. Participants researched and analyzed concepts and models, for example, value chain and the use of cultural analysis frameworks, to transfer them into practice. They had to evaluate and rate their milestones and results, not only within their own groups but also with collaborating groups in the other countries. In order to comply with Bloom's final taxonomy, the students had to create bidding documents, following up their progress and results in audio- and visual formats.

Pedagogical Contributions

The BLIC program helped ascertain teachers' and students' readiness to implement modern and novel forms of teaching and learning by not only applying business theory, but digitalization, cross-cultural, and teamwork competencies as well. In particular, teachers and students from the UK, Iceland, and the Czech Republic had to adjust their teaching and learning styles in order to conform their mutual satisfaction and benefits from this program. Moreover, international cooperation has contributed to improving soft skills of the teachers and students as all parties had to practice such competences throughout the their whole project: providing instructions to the students, coordinating student groups, and troubleshooting with via the Internet or dealing with individual requests. The BLIC program also demonstrated the relevance of appropriate integration of new technologies and innovative ideas into the curriculum of Bachelor and Master degree students. Students should face the demands of digitalization early in their studies order to meet with the changing requirements of working life. For firms, programs, like BLIC, are very valuable. Due to societal change and increasing competition for talent, enterprises have to ensure their employer brand is attractive for future employees, especially for the 'millennial' generation. Offering international career options, the possibility to work abroad or in mixed teams, are highly attractive for the 'digital native generation'. The BLIC program directly contributes to the needs of companies wishing to attract and further develop a competent workforce. Consequently, the BLIC program facilitates contemporary and highly effective learning and knowledge sharing amongst international students and enhances their employability. Another far-reaching benefit is the modular design of BLIC, which enables it to be purposefully disseminated to other educational fields and subject areas.

Appendix: BLIC Project Report from Master Students at Skoda Auto University

Greenility, Group D3 (Czech Consultants): Report

The first contact for the BLIC project was an email on September 18. We learned more about the project in the first week of the winter semester where doctor Velinov presented the BLIC project and gave us more information. When initially contacting our Czech group, we found out that one student did not want to communicate with us at all and therefore will not cooperate with us during this project.

The first online meeting with students from Germany unfortunately did not happen because foreign students did not have time. During the week, we contacted the German group and tried to arrange an online appointment; unfortunately, we were unsuccessful. Meanwhile, in our group, we created PESTLE analysis and answers to special questions given by the German group. During the project work, we lost another team member from the project due to him quitting university.

The next week we sent our project work to the German group with all the notes and, once again, we tried to agree to an online meeting in order to present all the information. Finally, we were able to arrange a meeting during the very last week of this project and discuss all the crucial points with the German group. The communication went well, and AdobeWebconnect software was identified as user-friendly for both sides.

This project has brought both advantages and disadvantages. The advantage of this group work was the cooperation with students from foreign university. It was also interesting and sometimes challenging to work in a virtual environment without any personal contact. Also, creating a PESTLE analysis was something new for us. Our group was familiar with the theoretical background of this analysis, but we have never compiled such a document for practical purposes during our studies. Because of that, we have gained a better understanding of how the analysis should be created and why is it so important for the company to understand all the factors that may affect a functioning in a foreign market.

On the other hand, this kind of a long-distance cooperation brings some drawbacks and challenges that we have experienced. In our case, the written communication via Moodle system did not go that well; therefore, we had to set up a WhatsApp group in order to communicate more effectively. The other disadvantage that we have identified was a lack of flexibility from the German group in terms of the video conference calls. We were supposed to do three video calls during the three weeks period. Unfortunately, we managed doing only one call but not because of availability issues from our side. Cooperation within our group of consultants went very well even though one member of our team was not involved in the project at all and the other one left the project during the second week. The group work itself went smoothly and without any major issues. We had divided all the tasks evenly and completed the work on time.

To sum it all up, it was a great experience to be a part of this international project and it surely gave us a very good overview on working in international environment. However, we think that there is still a room for improvement in terms of video conference calls and communication between universities.

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36

The X-Culture Coaching Program: Learning Team Management Through Practice

Vas Taras

Introduction

The X-Culture Coaching Program stems from the X-Culture Project. A detailed description of the purpose, history, and method of X-Culture was provided by Taras and Ordeñana (2015) in *The Palgrave Handbook of Experiential Learning in International Business*. Briefly, X-Culture is a large-scale international student collaboration project. Launched in 2010, it now attracts about 5000 students from 150 universities in 40 countries on six continents every semester. The students work in global virtual teams (GVTs). The GVTs comprise six or seven team members, each in a different country. About a dozen multinational corporations present their challenges for the X-Culture competition and the students develop their solutions to these challenges. In the process, the students experience firsthand the difficulties and learn best practices of international collaboration. The students also gain practical business consulting experience.

Studies on effectiveness of learning through the X-Culture experience have shown that students who complete the project benefit from it in multiple ways (Taras et al., 2013). The program was evaluated using Kirkpatrick's model as a guide (Alliger & Janak, 1989; Kirkpatrick, 1975). In terms of reactions, the students who completed the X-Culture Project were generally more

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M. A. Gonzalez-Perez et al. (eds.), *The Palgrave Handbook of Learning and Teaching International Business and Management*, https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-030-20415-0_36

satisfied with the course that the project was part of and gave their professors higher teaching evaluations than student in control groups. In terms of learning, a significant improvement in cultural intelligence and attitude was observed from before to after the project and in comparison to control groups, and the student in the treatment group also scored higher on exams that were part of the course. In terms of behaviors, students who participated in X-Culture twice, on their second try, showed a significant change in behaviors, such as significantly more proactive palling, more communication with team members, and more leadership tendencies. Finally, in terms of results, students who participated the second time received significantly higher peer evaluations and their teams developed better solutions, reflecting their improved abilities and performance (Taras et al., 2012).

The X-Culture Coaching program provides further experiential learning opportunities for the students who have completed the project. It relies on the same principles of learning through experience, but the focus shifts on gaining team management skills. The program is particularly suitable for acquiring practical skills in mentoring and coaching global virtual teams. A detailed description of the program and analysis of its effectiveness is provided below.

Program Origin and Purpose

The X-Culture Coaching Program was not a product of deliberate strategic thinking, but rather a response to a necessity. At the end of each semester, the project organizers received many inquiries from the students who found their X-Culture to be useful and wanted to continue being involved in the project. Some wanted to participate in the project again, others asked if "next-level" training programs for X-Culture alumni were offered, and some simply inquired if there was anything they could help with. It was in response to these request that the X-Culture Coaching program was created, as a way to both acquire through experience new "next-level" skills, while also to help the program.

The X-Culture Project primarily relies on a small group of professors who volunteer their time to manage the project. Therefore, we started looking for ways to use the help of most talented former student participants, while at the same time offering them an opportunity to continue gaining experience and learn the intricacies of international business and cross-cultural collaboration. Our biggest administrative needs were addressing daily requests for feedback, calls for help with resolving conflicts within teams, dealing with coordination issues in the team, and aiding students as they work on the challenges presented by our corporate partners. The Coaching Program has evolved to address all of these needs.

The goal of the X-Culture Coaching program is to provide the most talented X-Culture alumni with an opportunity to first gain theoretical knowledge about teamwork, virtual collaboration, international business and management, and then apply this knowledge to practice. We essentially offer the trainees in the X-Culture Coaching Program an opportunity to work as a middle-level manager and perform tasks related to mentoring and managing younger colleagues, evaluating their work and providing developmental feedback, resolving conflicts and solving complex issues, developing training resources, and doing independent research—all while operating in a culturally diverse environment with people located literally around the planet. While the Coaching Program participants are gaining experience in managing and coaching teams, the students on these teams learn from their more experienced peers, receive constructive feedback and advice, and have a better learning experience as a result.

History

We started experimenting with recruiting most talented alumni to serve as coaches to the new generation of X-Culture students in 2014. At that time, several X-Culture professors taught Executive Coaching courses in various MBA and executive MBA programs. Their international business students were already participating in X-Culture and they felt their MBA/EMBA (Master's of Business Administration and Executive Master's of Business Administration) students from the Executive Coaching course could also benefit from X-Culture by participating in the project as coaches. We assigned each of the students from the Executive Coaching course to a randomly selected team and asked them to apply their knowledge from their Executive Coaching course in X-Culture.

The initial tests proved the idea had a great potential. The teams that received coaching support performed better and reported higher levels of satisfaction, while the coaches were pleased to gain practical experience. However, we also discovered several major shortcomings of relying on students in Executive Coaching courses. First, these students had no prior X-Culture experience and often had little understanding of the X-Culture process, task, and values. Second, their Executive Coaching course was running concurrently with X-Culture and they started serving as coaches before they could learn how to do it. As the semester progressed, they acquired more relevant theory and applicable experience, so their performance improved greatly toward the end of the semester. However, they were not quite efficient in the first few weeks—and those first impressions matter a lot. Finally, the Executive

Coaching courses do not always cover all the important issues and teach all the important skills. They are usually designed to prepare students for traditional corporate coaching and focus mainly on time management, executive counseling, and solving problems that commonly arise in traditional companies. The issues of cultural differences, virtual communication, globally dispersed teams, crowdsourcing, and many other topics relevant in the modern global workplace are typically omitted.

In 2016, we recruited the first group of coaches from among the highest ranked former X-Culture participants. They were assigned to review weekly deliverables completed by the current cohort of X-Culture students and provide their feedback and suggestions for improvement. The coaches were provided with the basic training in international business and evaluation and feedback giving and were asked to manage about 20 teams each. A total of 12 coaches participated in that first round, managing 240 teams. The remaining 745 teams were used as a control. As expected, the data revealed that the teams that had access to the coaches performed better on most parameters, even though the role of the Coaches was limited only to providing intermediate feedback and ratings.

Starting in 2017, we added a more rigorous pre-project training and expanded the duties and functions of the Coaches, adding conflict resolution, personal and team counseling, instructional webinars, and more. About 30 Coaches successfully completed the program in early 2017. The analysis of the data obtained from both the students and Coaches showed great improvements in learning and satisfaction among students.

The X-Culture Coaching Program is still evolving, and substantial changes are made in the workflow and program features every semester. Among the recent changes and additions are weekly "round-table" webinars among the Coaches, where they share their experiences and suggestions, instructional live webinars organized by the Coaches for the students, a requirement to submit a detailed case report each time a Coach responds to a team's request for help, to name a few.

Theoretical Foundation

The X-Culture Coaching Program is designed to offer learning through experience. It hinges on Kolb's (1984) theory of experiential learning. The theory postulates that learning through experience progresses through the following stages: Concrete experience, reflective observation, abstract conceptualization, and active experimentation. The completion of the cycle launches a new

cycle and the trainee goes through the same stages again, now with an improved understanding that is applied to new experiences, which leads to further reflections, which aid new conceptualizations and understanding.

The X-Culture Coaching program provides the trainees with ample opportunities to actively experiment with coaching, mentoring, aiding, and leading GVTs. Reflecting on this concrete experience allows for abstract conceptualization, which in turn leads to learning. Based on newly acquired understanding, the Coaches adjust and plan their actions and experiment more, observe their new experiences, reflect and learn from them, further update their understanding, and so on. As the Coaches are working in teams with their fellow Coaches and managing teams of students, the Coaches have opportunities to immerse themselves in an array of issues and situations and acquire a variety of skills and understandings, including teamwork (Kayes, Kayes, & Kolb, 2005; Kolb, Boyatzis, & Mainemelis, 2001).

To aid this virtuous cycle, the trainees receive training and guidance throughout the program. In fact, before the trainees are allowed to start their active experimentation, they first receive conceptual training. To aid learning, the trainees are expected to reflect on their experiences in weekly progress reports and the final reflection papers. They are also provided with opportunities to exchange ideas with other Coaches, such as weekly round-table webinars and discussion sessions.

Program Schedule and Structure

The X-Culture Coaching program is 16 weeks long and is split into three blocks. First, the trainees receive four weeks of theoretical training. During this time, the Coaches complete 16 training modules that cover a range of topics such as the art of effective feedback, conflict resolution, online collaboration tools, the art of organizing training webinars, team counseling, and the like. Much of the training at this stage corresponds to Kolb's (1984) abstract conceptualization stage. However, even during the theoretical training phase, the trainees are asked to complete practical tasks (e.g., try to provide feedback on deliverables from the last semester, develop training modules for students, address hypothetical cases of conflicts in teams).

Each training module concludes with a test. Coaches who successfully complete the four weeks of theoretical training advance to the practical training phase, which lasts ten weeks. During this time, the trainees in the program serve as the Coaches and learn through experience. A detailed description of this phase is provided below. During this phase, the Coaches have regular

round-table experience-sharing meetings, prepare weekly progress and reflection reports, as well as receive additional guidance and support from the professors who run the program. This way, they constantly go through Kobl's (1984) experiential learning cycle, from concrete experience, to reflective observation, to abstract conceptualization, to active experimentation.

Finally, the program concludes with a four-week reflection phase. After the global virtual teams complete the project, based on their observations and newly acquired understandings, the Coaches will write reflection reports that summarize their experiences, things they have learned, and advice they would give to international team members, managers, and coaches on how to improve the effectiveness of and training for global virtual teams.

The Coaching Models

Finding a model that would allow the Coaches gain practical experience while the students receive valuable non-intrusive help provide challenging. We tested several coaching models and some of them worked better than others. Below is a review of approaches we tried, with an analysis of their pros and cons.

Assigned Coach: We first tried assigning one or several teams to each Coach. This way, each team had a Coach assigned to it, while each Coach was responsible to about a dozen teams. It seemed like a great idea at first, but tests of this model revealed it had many limitations. Some teams did not want a Coach and felt an imposed Coach impedes their freedom and ability to move swiftly and efficiently. Some teams were doing well and had no need for coaching, or thus requested no help from the Coaches. In some cases, there was a poor match between the team and the Coach: The students needed help with issues that were outside the expertise or interests of the Coach. In a few cases, the Coaches dropped out, and the teams were left without a Couch they were counting on. Thus, while this model is least challenging from the logistics point of view, it did not provide the optimal allocation of resources and did not provide best learning opportunities.

Walk-In: This model revolves around a coaching email helpline that the students can use to contact Coaches. Under this model, the students can request coaching help by sending an email to the helpline. The Coaching Program Director monitors the email account and assigns Coaches to address the student's requests for feedback on their weekly deliverables or advice with particular personal or team issues. The Coaches are assigned to the cases in a way to ensures all Coaches handle an approximately equal workload, while handling a variety of cases, from feedback provision to conflict resolution.

This model worked much better but was somewhat hard to manage from a logistical point of view.

Walk-In Plus: This model starts as the walk-in model described in #2. However, as the Coaches develop a rapport with particular individuals or teams, they may choose to focus on coaching these particular individuals or teams on a permanent basis and communicate directly via their personal email address without the involvement of the program director. Also, as Coaches establish a positive reputation for quality and reliability of their work, they are given direct access to the Coaching Helpline email account so they can monitor the flow of questions and select on their own the question they feel they can help with the most.

Proactive Walk-In Plus: Our experience shows that sometimes the walk-in model may be a bit slow. The first few weeks, the students feel uncomfortable approaching Coaches with their questions and concerns. At the same time, we can monitor the progress in teams and well-being of individual team members by reading their weekly comments and reviewing their weekly deliverables. If peer evaluations and open comments in weekly progress reviews suggest that a particular student or a team may be experiencing a problem, we reach out to these students and ask if they would like a Coach assigned to them to help them get back on track. Usually, the students respond positively and ask for a Coach, in which case we proceed as in the walk-in plus model.

Communication and Coaching Channels

There are several channels through which the Coaches can learn about a team in need of coaching. We divide those channels into *reactive* and *proactive:*

Reactive, Coaching ***Helpline:*** Students can submit requests for coaching by sending an email to Coaching Helpline email. The email is monitored constantly. The goal is to assign requests for help (cases) to Coaches the same day. Depending on the workload, we try to assign two Coaches to each case. Working in pairs aid expediency and idea exchange; it also helps Coaches to get to know their colleagues better. The Coach(es) assigned to the case receives a message containing the request for help, the names, and contacts of all team members and their professors.

Depending on the nature of the case, the Coach(es) contacts the student who requested help and possibly other team members or their instructors to collect more information, and then proceed with resolving the issue. The Coach(es) is/are expected to respond to the person who submitted the request for help within 24 hours and start providing help immediately. Most cases can

probably be resolved in a few days, but if the situation requires more attention, the Coach(es) works on the case as long as needed. About five days after the case has been opened, the student who asked for help receives a satisfaction survey and is asked to evaluate the quality of help received from the Coach(es). If the case requires more time, additional satisfaction surveys are sent every week to monitor the progress of the case. After the case is closed, the Coach(es) writes a one-page case report that details the nature of the request, the actions taken by the Coach(es), the outcome of the intervention, and lessons learned (e.g., tips for best ways to handle cases like this in the future). The cases are then cataloged and shared with other Coaches for training and development purposes.

***Proactive, W*eekly Comments:** Every week, the Coaches receive a collection of the comments that students provide in their weekly progress surveys. The main goal of sharing the comments with the Coaches is to allow the Coaches to see and learn what is going on in the teams. The comments are effectively team member journals or diaries, not as personal but no less informative. The ability to read these journals is a unique opportunity to learn about the processes and interactions happening in the teams as they are working on the project.

Additionally, the Coaches review the weekly comments for signs of difficulties being experienced by students or teams. If a problem is identified, a Coach is assigned to the case. The goal is to assign a Coach (or a pair) to each case potentially needing help that was identified in the weekly comments the same day the case has been identified.

These cases are treated the same way as direct requests for help (see #1). The only difference is that the Coach(es) first inquires if help is needed (instead of "you requested help, let me see how I can help," the Coach says something like "in your comments, you've indicated there is a problem; would you like us try to help you?"). If help is accepted, the case proceeds exactly as #1. If help is declined, the Coach(es) still submits a case report that describes the situation and action taken and the note that help has been declined.

Proactive: Weekly and Post-Project Deliverables: Every week, the teams are submitting a "deliverable," which is basically a draft of a section of their report. At the end of the project, the report draft, and then the final report are submitted. The Coaches are asked to review a collection of these deliverables and provide feedback. The Coaches provide a few words of feedback on each submission. In recent semesters, we moved to a model where the Coaches provide more detailed general feedback. That is, instead of a few words on each of the many submissions, they review one or a few pages of more detailed feedback on the collection of submissions as a whole. The Coaches basically

say, "I have reviewed N submissions, and here are my general impressions, common strengths and weaknesses, and my recommendations." The same applies to the report drafts and final submissions.

Types of Questions for Coaches

Our experience shows that there are several major types of issues that the Coaches are asked to address:

1. **Feedback on and suggestions for report development:** Most often, students are asking the Coaches to review their work and provide feedback and suggestions. This is a very important task: Even if the Coach is not an experienced expert on an issue, just having an external person look at the work and provide comments helps a lot. The Coach is not expected to correct errors in students' work or to solve problems for the students. Rather, the Coach is expected to comment on:
   (a) *Parts that are unclear:* If the Coach does not understand something in the students' report, the client will be likely confused, too. Just pointing out which parts are unclear and need more work helps students improve their work. If possible, the Coaches provide suggestions for how the point could be clarified or better explained. Even simply pointing out areas that need more work can be a big help.
   (b) *Parts of the report that lack support or strong arguments:* Often, students may present ideas, but not provide strong supporting arguments. Again, the Coach may not know how to argue that point, but simply telling the students that an idea or argument does not seem convincing is already useful. It helps to provide directions for how the point could be supported, but just identifying the deficiency is also beneficial.
   (c) *Poor formatting:* The visual appeal of the report prepared by the students, who essentially serve as business consultants, is very important. Coaches can also comment on poor formatting, writing style, look, structure, and related issues. The students should have no difficulties correcting the problem, as long as it is brought up to their attention.
   (d) *Directions for improvement:* It is not always possible to provide actionable suggestions for improving students' work. However, often Coaches may know where relevant information could be found, what decision could be more effective, or how a decision could be supported. We encourage our Coaches to provide more detailed improvement guide-

lines, but to refrain from being imposing. Coaches are not team leaders or teachers, they only provide coaching and guidance. Coaches should not get upset if a team chooses to not follow the Coach's recommendation.

2. **Conflict resolution**: Although not very common, students occasionally ask Coaches for help with resolving conflicts. Just like in the real workplace, more often, tacit calls for help are hidden in weekly comments and correspondence. The student may not request help but would complain about the problem. Likewise, a review of the deliverables often helps identify deficiencies in the students' work. Often, when a Coach reaches out to the student and offers help, the student gladly accepts it. The most common types of interpersonal issues are:
   (a) *Free-riding/Shirking:* A team member is not doing his/her work, or not even communicating with the team.
   (b) *Coordination problems*: Team members cannot agree on who does what and when.
   (c) *Negativity:* Interpersonal conflicts.

Importantly, we ask our Coaches to inform program administrators if they become aware of any cases of bullying, sexual harassment, or serious conflicts. Student safety and well-being are our utmost concern. If there is the slightest indication of a serious problem, we involve our professors experienced in conflict resolution to ensure everybody stays safe and the situation is handled professionally. The Coaches are still expected to do most of the investigating and conflict handling, but we must also assign an experienced professor to monitor the Coach's work. This is a great learning opportunity for the Coach, but we do our best to ensure the case is supervised by an experienced professor.

Reflections Through Building a Professional Portfolio

To aid learning through reflective observation and conceptualization (Kolb, 1984), the Coaches are asked to build a professional portfolio throughout their time in the program. These portfolios also help the Coaches to stand out from the crowd of applicants when applying for jobs or graduate programs. This way, the Coaches not only gain valuable skills and experiences but also

gather materials for their future job application packages. The portfolio contains work samples such as the feedback Coaches provide to the students, text/graphics training materials developed by Coaches, recordings of the live webinars, one-on-one counseling sessions, training lectures, case reports and case studies, research papers, and more. To further aid learning, the Coaches receive feedback on each item in their portfolio.

Case reports: Each time a Coach is assigned to a case, the Coach is required to prepare a case report (see section Coaching Channels, #1 and #2). The case report summarizes the issue, details the help provided by the Coach, and explains the logic behind the Coach's decisions, and if necessary, contains recommendations for how this sort of cases should be handled in the future. It is normally about a page long and serves as a quick reference and is kept for administrative and future training purposes.

Feedback samples: One of the weekly tasks performed by the Coaches is to review the weekly deliverables and provide constructive feedback on students' work.

One-on-one counseling sessions: When students ask for help or feedback, the Coaches typically reply by email. However, the Coaches often schedule live meetings and provide feedback and suggestions in a form of a conversation. We recommend that the Coaches record these session (with students' permission) and use the recording both for reflective learning, but also for their professional portfolios.

Text-based training modules: Every Coach is asked to develop at least one text-based training resource, such as a text-based training module, guide, or manual. It is a fully finished document, professionally formatted and containing useful information for either members of global virtual teams, Coaches, instructors, or managers. These are shared with the students as optional resources this semester and are used to develop training materials for the next semester.

Pre-recorded training video lectures: While text-based training modules are usually the most efficient way to provide training, sometimes it is not enough to describe certain things with text and pictures, but it is necessary to actually show how things are done. Likewise, depending on their learning style, some people may prefer to work with text, but others may be more visual learners and thus prefer a video lecture to books or text documents. Accordingly, the Coaches are required to prepare at least one video lecture on a topic/issue of their choice. The Coach can choose any topic, from an overview of common problems in the weekly submissions to answers to commonly asked questions, to an in-depth review of a particular issue, such as a particular question in the client's challenge (e.g., pricing or marketing), aca-

demic referencing style, plagiarism, and so on. The students are the default audience. However, we are open to the idea of lectures for other Coaches or instructors, as long as the topic is deemed relevant and the content of the webinar is useful. The pre-recorded lecture allows for multiple takes of certain scenes, video effects, subtitles, embedded videos, and more, which further aid reflection and experiential learning.

Live instructional webinars: As dispersed teams are becoming commonplace in the modern global workplace, managers must increasingly rely on live webinars (as opposed to a face-to-face meeting) to provide training for their subordinates. Sometimes, pre-recording the session is just not possible, and sometimes live interaction and discussion are necessary, for the managers have to rely on live webinars rather than pre-recorded video lectures. Live webinars are a relatively new technology, and this skill is highly valued. Accordingly, every Coach is required to organize at least one live instructional webinar.

Reflection/Research papers: After completing the Theory and Practical Training phases, the Coaches are asked to write a reflection/research paper. The document essentially details what the Coach has learned and provides recommendations for the members of global virtual teams, managers, other Coaches, or instructors. The reflection paper is the most important part of reflective learning, as per Kolb's (1984) model.

To further prompt active reflection and conceptualization (Kolb, 1984), every week, the Coaches are asked to complete a short progress survey. The survey asks about the work completed last week, experienced challenges, observations, and recommendations, as well as evaluations of the support provided by the Coaching Program Director, Head Coaches, and X-Culture Admin.

Coaching Program Administration

An experiential learning course like the X-Culture Coaching program requires a complex administrative structure. Here is how the program is governed and how it fits in the larger X-Culture organization. A different organizational structure might work better for other projects. The one described here seems to be optimal for programs that are built as non-profits and primarily rely on help of volunteer professors.

Coaches

All Coaches are former X-Culture Project participants who showed excellent performance. They showed care and creativity in their comments and produced excellent-quality business proposals. Technically, they participate in the Coaching Program as trainees. However, the nature of the training is such that they effectively assume roles of middle-level managers which involve coaching, mentoring, evaluating, and guiding a new generation of X-Culture participants who work in global business consulting teams. As we strive to provide the trainees with an experience that closely resembles organizational encirclement, we treat our Coaches as full-flagged members of our organization who are in an on-the-job training program. They are issued company email addresses (First.Lastname@X-Culture.org) and business cards. During their on-the-job training, the names, bios, and video introductions (optional) will also be provided on the X-Culture Website. The Coaches are also allowed to present themselves to the external stakeholders (in their resumes, on LinkedIn and other professional networking sites) as "Global Virtual Team Coach at X-Culture, Inc."

As part of their on-the-job training, Coaches are responsible for:

- Completing the Theory Training;
- Serving and appraisers of work submitted by the project teams and providing feedback on the work;
- Reviewing weekly comments provided by the members of the consulting teams, both to better understand team dynamics and processes and to identify possible cases of conflict, hardship, frustration, and confusion and bring those cases to the attention of the Coaching Program Director;
- Coaching and assisting project participants with resolving their challenges, conflict situations, providing feedback on work samples, assisting teams with presentation rehearsals, and providing other help on a case-by-case basis as assigned by the program director;
- Submitting case reports after resolving each case;
- Preparing at least one text-based training module on a topic of relevance and interest to the project participants, GVT members, Coaches, or instructors;
- Preparing at least one pre-recorded video lecture;
- Delivering at least one live instructional webinar;
- Writing a reflection/research paper;
- Completing a "pet project" (see above for details);
- Completing weekly progress update surveys.

Head Coaches

Most Coaches who completed the Coaching Program have expressed a strong interest in remaining involved in the program, both to learn more. We have a select group of the highest ranked Coaches from the previous semester and invited them to join the Coaching Program as Head Coaches. Essentially, they serve as the Coaches of Coaches and do the following:

- Provide feedback on feedback provided by the Coaches (Coaches provide feedback to teams, Head Coaches provide feedback to Coaches);
- Review, observe, evaluate, and provide feedback on the training modules, video lectures, and live webinars prepared by the Coaches;
- Help the Coaches with presentation and webinar rehearsals;
- Provide intermediate constructive feedback on the Coaches' training materials and case reports;
- Observe the interactions among the Coaches and other program participants and stakeholders and alert the Program Director of possible problems, conflicts, or other situations that may require interventions;
- Nominate the recipients of the Best Coach Award and the travel stipends for the X-Culture Global Symposium;
- Assist with other tasks and duties around managing the X-Culture Coaching Program.

Coaching Director

One of the most experienced Coaches is selected to serve as the Coaching Program Director. The person typically stays in this role for about a year. In all cases, the rotations occurred because the Coaching Director was offered a full-time job elsewhere and no longer could volunteer his/her time to the X-Culture Coaching Program. While each time it was a big loss for the program, we were happy about the career advancement of our alumni and proud that the X-Culture Program helped them propel their careers. The responsibilities of the Coaching Director include:

- Strategic leadership and everyday management of the Coaching Program;
- Coordinating the efforts of the Coaches, Head Coaches, Students, Instructors, and the X-Culture Admin;
- Aiding with the development of the training materials;

- Assigning cases to the Coaches and Head Coaches based on personal review of the weekly comments, weekly deliverables, request for help submitted to Coaching Helpline, as well as suggestions from Coaches and Head Coaches;
- Leading round-table experience-sharing webinars for Coaches and Head Coaches;
- Final recommendation with respect to the Best Coach and Best Head Coach awards;
- Final approval of the wording of the recommendation letters for Coaches and Head Coaches;
- Final recommendation with respect to the travel stipends for Coaches to attend the X-Culture Global Symposium;
- Ultimately responsible that all planned activities happen on time, progress smoothly, and all involved parties behave professionally and in a manner that stimulates learning and professional growth.

Acquired Skills and Experiences

The Coaches who successfully complete the program typically acquire the following skills and experiences and can put on their resume the following achievements:

- Completed a series of training modules on understanding and managing people in global virtual teams and international business principles and theories;
- Served as a coach, mentor, and counsel to hundreds of global virtual teams completing a complex international business consulting project;
- Developed and organized a series of training modules, video lectures, and live training webinars for a global audience;
- Investigated and facilitated resolution of cross-cultural conflicts and misunderstandings;
- Evaluated individual and team performance;
- Provided regular constructive and developmental feedback to individuals and teams and helped them improve their work;
- Helped members of the globally dispersed teams coordinate their efforts;
- Reviewed weekly progress reports and deliverables, identified teams that are having difficulties, and helped them overcome their difficulties;
- Reviewed and analyzed a large number of business proposals and prepared executive analytic summaries for the top managers;

- Co-organized weekly experience exchange conferences with other coaches, shared personal observations, heard about the challenges experienced by other coaches, brainstormed the best solutions, and provided and received feedback and suggestions;
- Reviewed business proposals and selected winners of a large-scale consulting competition;
- Developed training materials on a range of topics related to international business and teamwork;
- Addressed concerns and responded to questions from members of global virtual teams;
- Conducted independent research on international business and global virtual teams and wrote an analytic paper and guide for managers, team members, and educators;
- Completed a "pet project" (more details to be provided depending on the nature of the project).
- Provided suggestion for training program design and management of large-scale consulting projects.
- Did all of this in a highly complex culturally diverse and technology intensive environment, working alongside people from more than 40 different countries.

Additional Information About the X-Culture Head Coach Program

Following the success of the early tests of the Coaching Program, many of the program graduates expressed interested in staying engaged in X-Culture. Almost all of them asked if they could participate in the program again as Coaches, but also noted they would be happy to take on additional or new responsibilities. After exploring the issue, we have concluded that while a repeat participation in the Coaching Program would be beneficial and would provide additional experience and growth, it would not be the optimal model. It is our strong belief that to grow, people have to be challenged to new, more complex tasks and responsibilities.

Accordingly, we have devised a Head Coach program for the most talented and motivated graduates of the X-Culture Coaching Program. They serve as "coaches of coaches" and their position description include:

- Assist the Coaching Director in managing the X-Culture Coaching Program;
- Mentor the new generation of the X-Culture Coaches;

- Provide feedback on feedback provided by the Coaches (Coaches provide feedback to teams; Head Coaches provide feedback to Coaches);
- Review, observe, evaluate, and provide feedback on the training modules, video lectures, and live webinars prepared by the Coaches;
- Help the Coaches with presentation and webinar rehearsals;
- Provide intermediate constructive feedback on the Coaches' training materials and case reports;
- Observe the interactions among the Coaches and other program participants and stakeholders and alert the Program Director of possible problems, conflicts, or other situations that may require interventions;
- Nominate the recipients of the Best Coach Award and the travel stipends for the X-Culture Global Symposium;
- Assist the Program Director with other tasks and duties around managing the X-Culture Coaching Program.

The professional portfolio of Head Coaches includes largely the same items as those in the portfolios of regular Coaches, but some items are unique, including:

Feedback samples: One of the weekly tasks performed by the Coaches is to review the weekly deliverables and provide constructive feedback on students' work. The Head Coaches review that feedback and provide their own feedback on the feedback.

Live feedback/counseling sessions: Written comments is an efficient way to provide feedback to subordinates. However, occasionally, a live meeting is needed to discuss the subordinate's performance in more detail. The Head Coaches regularly organized such counseling/feedback sessions, one on one or with groups of Coaches. Recordings of these meetings can be added to the portfolio.

Text-based training modules: Every Head Coach develops at least one text-based training resource for Coaches, such as a text-based training module, guide, or manual. It must be a fully finished document, professionally formatted and containing useful information for Coaches, or possibly for fellow Head Coaches. These are shared with the Coaches as optional resources this semester and are used to develop more professionally done training materials for the next semester.

Training lectures: While text-based training modules are usually the most efficient way to provide training, sometimes it is not enough to describe certain things with text and pictures, but it is necessary to actually show how things are done. Likewise, depending on their learning style, some people may prefer to work with text, but others may be more visual learners and thus

prefer a video lecture to books or text documents. Accordingly, the Head Coaches prepare at least one video lecture on a topic/issue of their choice.

Reflection/Research papers: After completing the program, the Head Coaches write a reflection/research paper. The document details what the Head Coach has learned and provide recommendations for the members of global virtual teams, managers, Coaches, other Head Coaches, or instructors. It is an essential step in the experiential learning cycle (Kayes et al., 2005; Kolb, 1984).

Experiences and Skills Acquired by Head Coaches

The Head Coaches who successfully complete the program typically acquire the following skills and experiences and can put on their resume the following achievements:

- Served as a head coach, mentor, and counselor to a team of coaches in a project involving hundreds of global virtual teams completing a complex international business consulting project;
- Developed and organized a series of training modules, video lectures, and live training webinars for a global audience;
- Investigated and facilitated resolution of cross-cultural conflicts and misunderstandings;
- Evaluated individual and team performance;
- Provided regular constructive and developmental feedback to junior Coaches, as well as to individuals and teams and helped them improve their work;
- Reviewed work of junior Coaches, identified cases where help of a more senior colleague was needed, and helped them overcome their difficulties;
- Co-organized weekly experience exchange conferences with other Coaches, shared personal observations, heard about the challenges experienced by other Coaches, brainstormed the best solutions, and provided and received feedback and suggestions;
- Reviewed business proposals and selected winners of a large-scale consulting competition;
- Developed training materials on a range of topics related to coaching in organizations, as well as international business and teamwork in general;
- Addressed concerns and responded to questions from members of global virtual teams;

- Conducted independent research on international business and global virtual teams and wrote an analytic paper and guide for managers, team members, and educators;
- Provided suggestion for training program design and management of large-scale consulting projects.
- Did all of this in a highly complex culturally diverse and technology intensive environment, working alongside people from more than 40 different countries.

Recommendations for Educators

Our experiments with the X-Culture Coaching Program show that it is an effective experiential learning tool. However, implementing a program of this scope and magnitude presents certain challenges. Educators and managers who seek to offer a similar program to their students or employees should be ready to make a major investment of time and resource to develop and program of this kind. Here are some observations and recommendations for those who would like to give it a try.

First, to offer an experiential learning program where the trainees can experiment with being coaches, managers, or mentors requires a group of people who need coaching, managing, or mentorship. Thus, a program like this can only be organized in an existing organization or project that involves a significant number of participants who could use this sort of help.

Second, funding could present a challenge. Managing a program of this kind requires several full-time employees. X-Culture is fortunate to have dozens of professors who are willing to volunteer their time and help with development of training resources and management of the program. However, most of them can only offer occasional help. Unfortunately, many administrative tasks require organization-specific knowledge that take months to acquire. This severely limits the range of tasks where people who can volunteer only occasionally can help and makes it necessary to have at least one or two full-time employees who have in-depth knowledge of how the program works, where information is stored, and can connect the many program participants, databases, and tools. Compensating these employees requires funding and may make it necessary to charge a participation fee for the program, or seek sponsorship or program development grants.

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X-Culture Academy: Kids Learning International Business Through Experience

Vas Taras

Program Purpose and Origin

X-Culture Academy is an experimental experiential learning program for kids aged 9–17 years. Following the success of the X-Culture program for university students, a simplified version of the program for pre-college youths has been developed. It is designed to provide the trainees first-hand experience of working with peers from other cultures, as well as help kids learn the basics of international business through business consulting experience. The kids first complete a four-month pre-project training. Then, working in global virtual teams, the kids complete a consulting project for a real-life client. This chapter provides a history of the project, explains how the program is designed, details the challenges, and shares tips for educators who seek to offer experiential learning courses in international business and cross-cultural collaboration for children.

As the world is becoming more interconnected, the value of practical international collaboration experience is increasing. In school, at work, in our personal lives, we increasingly must interact with people of different cultures. The changes are especially visible in the online domain where improvements in communication technologies have led to an unprecedented rise of global virtual collaboration at the workplace (Chudoba, Wynn, Lu, & Watson-

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M. A. Gonzalez-Perez et al. (eds.), *The Palgrave Handbook of Learning and Teaching International Business and Management*, https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-030-20415-0_37

Manheim, 2005; Martins, Gilson, & Maynard, 2004). Estimates suggest that approximately 60% of white-collar workers regularly complete tasks as members of geographically dispersed virtual teams (Hertel, Geister, & Kondradt, 2005). Experience of working with people from other cultures, including of working in global virtual teams, helps people interact more effectively and be more productive in the workplace. People with international experience are in high demand but still in low supply. Applicants with international experience are more likely to be admitted to good universities and get good jobs (Clark, 2018; GAC, 2018).

Teaching to work with people from different cultures is notoriously hard. It is not something one can learn from books or lectures. Learning in a classroom how to interact with foreigners is like learning how to swim on a football field. One must get in the water to learn how to swim. One must have a practical international experience to understand other cultures.

Unfortunately, it is not easy to find opportunities to gain international experience. International travel is costly. Even if one can afford to go overseas as a tourist, there is a big difference between being a tourist and being a co-worker. Furthermore, international work teams tend to be comprised of more than two nationalities. It is not unusual to see work teams where each team member comes from a different culture. This fundamentally changes the group dynamics. Working in a team comprised of just two cultures is not the same as working in a team where every team member is from a different culture.

Furthermore, the rapid development of online communication technologies makes it easier than ever before to work in globally dispersed teams. Most international interactions happen online. The group dynamics in virtual teams is much more complicated than in face-to-face teams. The ability to work in global *virtual* teams cannot be learned from books, by visiting other countries, or by working in traditional face-to-face teams. It can only be learned by working in *virtual* teams. Likewise, general business experience is equally important for career success, and, like international experience, business experience is hard to gain from books or lectures. It is hard to understand business theories without applying them in practice.

X-Culture Academy is an inexpensive, safe, and effective way to gain international experience and learn how to work in global virtual teams, as well as to gain business consulting experience. The program has been designed specifically for pre-college youths. Our research shows that X-Culture reduces prejudice against people of other cultures, increases interest in working with people from other cultures, and increases confidence in one's ability to complete a project with people from other cultures (Taras et al., 2013). It also increases entrepreneurial orientation and interest in business (Taras et al., 2012).

X-Culture for Kids

The X-Culture Project was launched in 2010. It was originally designed for university students as an experiential learning exercise for international business courses. About 5000 students from 130 universities in 40 countries on 6 continents participate in X-Culture every semester. As of 2018, the total number of students who have participated in X-Culture exceeds 50,000 students. Starting 2018, the program is also open to pre-college youths.

The students first receive training in areas such as online collaboration, cross-cultural communication, problem solving in teams, and the basics of international business. Then, working in international teams, they complete a business project for a real corporate client, thereby gaining international experience and online collaboration skills.

In 2013, Mercedes-Benz partnered with X-Culture and presented a real-life business challenge for our students to solve. The collaboration worked well: Mercedes-Benz received many creative solutions from the students, while students appreciated working on a real-life challenge for a real-life corporate client. Ever since, every semester, we select five to ten companies that present their challenges for the students to solve.

Originally, X-Culture was exclusively available for MBA and college students. However, requests to expand the project to other demographics have been frequent from the project's inception. Starting in 2014, X-Culture allowed corporate employees and other non-student professionals participate in the project. In 2018, a program code-named X-Culture Academy was launched for pre-college kids and teens.

The pilot-test of X-Culture for kids aged 9–17 years started in 2018. Two rounds of testing have been conducted so far, with about 100 kids in each. They completed essentially the same project that their university counterparts were working on, although younger kids received some additional pre-project training and their tasks were simplified to be suitable for younger students. The results are very encouraging. We can confidently say that kids of these ages can greatly benefit from and are able to complete complex international collaboration projects working with peers around the world.

A more detailed description of how X-Culture Project is designed and offered to university students could be found in the *Palgrave Handbook of Experiential Learning in International Business* (Taras & Ordeñana, 2015). Here is a review of some of the differences that had to be implemented to make the program suitable for younger participants.

First, the tasks that the kids would work on had to be simplified. MBA and business university students can be expected to have significant training in business, management, and marketing and be ready to tackle complex consulting projects. In contrast, kids have very limited knowledge of business, which necessities a choice of more familiar products and tasks. Thus, for the kids track, we select industries and products that are familiar and more relevant to younger populations. For example, for the 2018-1 round, we worked with a Lithuanian educational toy maker and a Colombian chocolate company. Toys and chocolate are the products that kids are very familiar with. The task was to help the clients design new toys, think of new chocolate flavors, and develop ways to promote these new products.

In the 2018-2 round, we partnered with the Finnish Schools International and the Experiential School of Greensboro, both private schools. The task that kids had to work on was to develop a dream school. If the kids had no restrictions and unlimited budget, what kind of school they would design, from curriculum to the way the building looks, to the types of teachers they would hire. Additionally, the kids had to also develop the dream school promotion strategy and think how they could convince parents to send their kids to (and pay for) the schooling.

These tasks proved to be very enjoyable for the kids. Apparently, most kids dream of designing new toys, making new foods, and changing the way their schools look and operate. Asking them to do it as a business consulting project and highlighting that there are real companies interested and willing to implement new ideas made the project only more enjoyable and developmental for the kids.

Next, unlike university students, who already have much training and are enrolled in international business courses, kids and teenagers come largely unprepared. To compensate, the kids are offered several weeks of rigorous preproject training in online collaboration, cross-cultural communication, business report writing, and the like.

Lastly, for university students, the project is designed to resemble real business consulting projects: strict deadlines, dry communication, and professional formatting of deliverables. To make it more enjoyable for the kids, we had to embed gamification elements in the program design to provide additional motivation.

X-Culture is an experiential learning project which aims to provide learning through doing. Kolb's (1984) theory of experiential learning explains how it works. We provide students with opportunities to interact with people from other cultures, as well as with their business clients. The students then reflect on this concrete experience, which allows for abstract conceptualization, bet-

ter understanding, and learning. As they acquire better understanding, the students adjust their actions when they interact with foreigners again. Then, they observe their new experiences, reflect and learn from them, further update their understanding, and then repeat again. This learning cycle can repeat many times, each time leading to new experiences, new understandings, adjustments in behaviors, and more experimentation. As the students are working in global virtual teams, they have opportunities to immerse themselves in an array of issues and situations and acquire a variety of skills and understandings (Kayes, Kayes, & Kolb, 2005).

Theoretical Foundation and Program Design

Kolb's (1976, 1984) model of experiential learning guided the design of the X-Culture Academy program. According to Kolb's model, experiential learning is an upward spiral that includes the following stages: (1) concrete experience, (2) reflective observation, (3) abstract conceptualization, and (4) active experimentation. During an experiential learning program, the student can repeat the cycle many times. After trying a new experience, reflecting on it, and drawing conclusions, the student repeats the cycle again and again, each time actively experimenting, reflecting, systemizing knowledge, and experimenting some more, now with an improved understanding that is applied to new experiences, which leads to further reflections, which aid new conceptualizations and understanding (Kayes et al., 2005; Kolb, Boyatzis, & Mainemelis, 2001).

Despite some adjustments, the program design for kids is very similar to the X-Culture program for university students. However, the version for kids has more extensive pre-project training and a post-project reflection phase. The complete program lasts four months and includes the following components:

***Pre-Project Training* (*4 weeks*)** includes a series of gamified training modules, such as:

- The X-Culture Project: purpose, history, method, vision
- Online collaboration tools (Skype, Doodle, Dropbox, Google Docs, WhatsApp, etc.)
- Cross-cultural communication
- How to be an effective global virtual team
- Effective presentation: the art of writing business proposals
- Plagiarism and academic referencing
- The basics of international business

***Practical Training* (*8 weeks*)** starts when the students work in global virtual teams. During this time, as the students are completing the project, they experience the challenges and learn best practices of working in teams, communicating online, dealing with time zones and cultural differences, and more. During this time, the students have live webinars with the CEOs of their client organizations, submit weekly deliverables, receive feedback, and make friends. In the end, the teams submit their final business proposals.

Post-Project Reflections (4 weeks) start after the reports are submitted. At this stage, the students present their work in-class and/or in a live online teleconference. The students also write reflection papers where they reflect on their experiences.

Skills and Experiences Acquired by Students

Based on the analysis of feedback and data obtained during the first two rounds, the following have been observed as benefits for the students:

International experience: the kids complete a project in a team where each team member is from a different country, which provides a valuable international experience.

Business experience: solving a real business challenge for a real client company may not be quite the same as running your own business, but it does offer certain business experience.

New knowledge and skills: as the kids complete the project, they gain new skills and knowledge in cross-cultural communication, online collaboration tools, international business, business writing and presentation, and more.

Expand personal and professional network: over the course of the project, the kids meet new people, make new friends around the world, as well as meet professors at many universities and several companies. This is particularly helpful for older teenagers who are getting ready to start applying to universities.

Benefits for Teachers

The students can enroll in X-Culture individually (parents sign up a kid) or as a school team (a group of kids from the same school supervised by a teacher). In the latter case, the teachers also receive numerous benefits from participating in X-Culture, including:

Enhanced student learning: compared to control groups (no X-Culture), students who participate in X-Culture do better in exams. We have extensive evidence of this effect at the college level (Taras et al., 2013), and the latest data suggest the same holds true at pre-college educational institutions.

Improved teaching evaluations: compared to control groups, students who have X-Culture give their teachers higher evaluations, and the effects holds true for all student ages (Taras et al., 2013).

Research and publications: X-Culture is a great research platform that provides high-quality multi-source multi-level longitudinal data. Teachers who are interested in scholarly work can find ample research collaboration and publication opportunities with their X-Culture colleagues.

Expand Professional network: X-Culture also provides ample opportunities to meet other forward-thinking and motivated educators around the world, not only among school teachers but also among university professors.

Challenge and Best Practices of Offering Experiential Learning Programs for Kids

When it comes to participation of thousands of university students in the X-Culture Project, the administration of the project is handled primarily by the professors whose students participate in the project. The project is managed not as a business, but as a collaboration among the professors who are jointly creating a practical exercise to boost learning in the business courses they are teaching at their respective universities. Thus, the professors see the project as a part of their job, just like the work they would invest in managing simulations, case studies, or discussions in their courses. Some of the professors invest much time and treat the management of the project as a part-time volunteer job. Others contribute only a few hours a week, helping with odd tasks and helping handle the workload during the busiest times. Furthermore, university students join the X-Culture Project typically toward the end of their college studies or when in a graduate program. Thus, the students have already taken several business courses and have at least basic, and often advanced, writing and presentation skills, have experience of working in teams and communicating online, and most have at least some work experience.

Offering the X-Culture program to pre-college kids presents a number of unique challenges. First, the younger participants typically sign up to participate in the project on the individual basis (signed up by parents, not by a teacher who joins with a group of students and take on the responsibility of

managing the group). Second, the kids usually completely lack business education and often have very limited writing and presentation skills and no work experience. This necessitates some changes in how the project participants are recruited, prepared before, and managed during the project.

Broader Recruitment

We have never had to advertise X-Culture beyond a single email once per semester sent via professional association mailing lists. Yet the number of applications from universities has been steadily growing since the project launch. A call for participants via the Academy of International Business is enough to inform the majority of the international business professors around the world about the opportunity. The word of mouth among the colleagues reaches many of those who may not be on the Academy of International Business mailing lists. This simple approach allowed us to attract more applicants than we could handle.

Unfortunately, there is no professional association with a mailing list like this that could reach a global population of parents, school teachers, or legal age teenagers. Thus, recruiting pre-college youths for the X-Culture Academy program requires a more active and broad recruitment, including recruitment via personal contacts, direct solicitations, and online ads. So far, most participants in the X-Culture Academy track are friends or relatives of the professors or students who have participated in X-Culture before. Others applied in response to ads on social media. This approach proved to be much more time consuming and costlier and yielded only about a hundred qualified participants in each of the two pilot rounds we have conducted so far.

More Rigorous Selection

X-Culture is a team-based project. One unprepared or unmotivated team member can spoil the experience for the entire team and have a disproportionally large negative effect on the cohort of project participants. Admitting everyone who expresses interest in the project can create serious problems and, thus, selectivity is very important. We try to recruit and select kids who (1) have the necessary English proficiency and technical skills, (2) are highly motivated to participate in the project of this kind, particularly for younger participants, and (3) have parents or guardians able and ready to provide the necessary support throughout the project.

To achieve these goals, the application process is deliberately made somewhat tedious and laborious and includes filling out a very detailed application form and providing reference letters. This barrier could repel some qualified applicants who do not wish to spend much time on the application process, but increases the chances that those who put in the necessary effort will not lack the motivation and grit to go through the project.

Further, before placed on teams, the kids complete four weeks of theoretical training, punctuated by regular theory tests. The test questions allow us to assess the applicants' skills and qualifications for the project and ability to learn. However, equally importantly, this approach also tests motivation, endurance, and ability to stay on the task for an extended period of time. About half of the applicants who pass the initial selection process drop out during the theoretical training phase. It is rare that the person takes but fails the test. More often, some trainees simply disappear after the first week or two. This could indicate that our theoretical training phase is not much fun and fails to motivate and engage the participants. However, it can also mean that the applicants simply lack the discipline and motivation to stay on the tasks for a few weeks—and if so, we cannot risk placing them on teams. If they drop out before being placed on teams, nobody is hurt. If they drop out after the teams a formed, one drop out spoils the experience for five to six team members.

Company-Like Management

As noted earlier, the X-Culture Project is viewed by participating professors as part of their courses and, thus, they are happy to volunteer their time and knowledge to the project. These are highly skilled people, mostly with terminal degrees in business, who are intimately familiar and experienced in pedagogy and business consulting. We do not have the same army of highly skilled and experienced helpers when it comes to the X-Culture Academy track. Most parents are not qualified to help with our administrative and managerial needs. As a result, we had to hire several staff who provide IT and marketing support and help with the everyday management of the program. It is a small group of like-minded individuals who receive a rather limited compensation for their time, but who nonetheless need to be managed more like a small business, rather than a large professional network of professors, as is the case with the university track. It also means that the program must find sources of funding to pay for these expenses.

Partly to raise funds, partly as a selection tool, we had to impose a small nominal application fee. Currently, it is $75 per kid for the four-month training program. Participants who cannot pay for any reason can apply for a 100% discount. Approximately half of the applicants requested the 100% discount, mostly on the grounds of low income, but some also because the banking regulations in their countries make it hard to make payment overseas. So far, we have been approving every request for the discount and make sure that anyone who is qualified and wants to participate in the program can participate, regardless of financial standing or other barriers.

Looking forward, we are very optimistic about the future of the X-Culture Academy program. The satisfaction rate (post-project satisfaction over 4.0 on a 5.0 scale) is 96%. Moreover, 72% have inquired if they can participate again. Evidently, the participants see a great value in a program of this kind. We strongly encourage educators to consider creating similar programs, but warn them that these sorts of endeavors are extremely time and resource demanding. Also, these sorts of programs for kids are extremely rare and there is even no word for it. This makes recruitment very challenging. It takes at least five minutes to explain what we are offering and how the program works. Unfortunately, people view online ads only for a second or two before moving on, and people are generally suspicious of new programs, particularly those that will require interaction with strangers around the world. Those who take the time to learn what the program is about tend to give it a try, and those who give it a try tend to find it useful and developmental. However, finding ways to get those five minutes of attention to explain what we are offering is a challenge.

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Part XII

Study Tours and Study Abroad Experiences

38

Global Competency Development in a Short-Term Study Abroad Program

Daria Panina

Introduction

Modern businesses require a global perspective and awareness from college graduates (Zhai & Scheer, 2004). Additionally, it is essential for business students to be equipped with first-hand global knowledge to be successful in their future jobs (Harder & Bruening, 2008; McGowan, 2007). Participation in experiential learning programs enables them to acquire such global knowledge and competencies (Bruening & Frick, 2004). Spending time abroad also contributes to a greater sense of self and understanding of cultural differences (Lumkes, Hallatt, & Vallade, 2012). Majority of business schools now offer a range of different international experiences that includes study, intern, research, and service abroad. They vary in the duration and the amount of student engagement with the host communities (Bandyopadhyay & Bandyopadhyay, 2015; Bender, Wright, & Lopatto, 2009). However, many business students fail to take advantage of these programs at least in part due to their high costs and long durations that postpone graduation dates (Mendenhall, Arnardottir, Oddou, & Burke, 2013).

As an alternative to reciprocal exchange and transfer credit programs, many schools are currently experimenting with shorter programs (so-called field trips) in order to make international experiences cheaper and more accessible to students. Majority of the field-trip-based experiential learning programs involve stu-

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M. A. Gonzalez-Perez et al. (eds.), *The Palgrave Handbook of Learning and Teaching International Business and Management*, https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-030-20415-0_38

dents participating in a course on their home campus and then traveling abroad with the faculty member for one to two weeks as a supplement and enhancement to the on-campus course (Houser, Brannstrom, Quiring, & Lemmons, 2011). The popularity of such programs is growing rapidly due to their lower costs and shorter time commitment (Carley, Stuart, & Dailey, 2011). During the academic year of 2001–2002, nearly 50% of U.S. students were going abroad on short-term programs (Chieffo & Griffiths, 2004). In 2014–2015, that number increased to 63.1% (Institute of International Education, 2016).

Despite their popularity, academics are still debating the student outcomes of such trips. Some research suggests that short-term international experiences that are carefully designed to immerse students in other cultures and expose them to international business activities may have the impact comparable to longer programs (Carley et al., 2011). However, there is some evidence that suggests that at least some study abroad experiences fail to equip students with the needed skills and competencies (Le & Raven, 2015; Redden, 2010).

The Project Basics

The experiential learning project described below is a short study abroad field trip combined with a consulting project with a foreign company. The ultimate goal of the project is to give students an opportunity to apply their business knowledge and global leadership competencies in a real international business setting. The project suggests that even short field trips can help students develop global competencies if they are carefully crafted to achieve this goal.

- Most suitable audience—Undergraduate Juniors/Seniors or Graduate Students
- Time required—10 days
- Optimal group size—10–40 students
- Materials and technologies required—printed instruction handouts
- Cost—$1230 per person (flight and incidentals are not included)

Learning Objectives

At the completion of the project, successful students were able to:

1. Describe how to formulate and implement global strategy
2. Explain how different facets of the international environment create strategic challenges and opportunities for the firm

3. Demonstrate competence in applying techniques and frameworks in the analysis of the multinational firm
4. Gain sensitivity to the social issues in global strategy.

The abovementioned learning outcomes were assessed using the group and individual assignments. All students in the program demonstrated satisfactory results.

Purpose and Description

As a part of the International Management course, 38 students enrolled in the MS Business program (master's degree for non-business majors) participated in a field trip to Spain. The field trip is a mandatory part of the MS Business International Management course that all students in the program have to take. The course is taught annually, with the field trip taking place during the spring break. The destination of the field trip varies from year to year based on the proposals of the third-party providers and student feedback. Being a mandatory part of the program, the trip cost is charged to the students in the tuition fees ahead of time, while the payments to the third-party providers for the travel, company, and cultural visits and activities during the trip are administered by the program.

The trip is designed to incorporate cultural visits and activities that specifically target the development of global competencies and knowledge about the local culture and business practices. For the main focus of the current trip, the students worked with a Spanish food company that is currently trying to expand in the U.S. market. The company in question makes handmade artisan "tortas"—local pastry common in Southern Spain. More specifically, the students were charged with assessing the potential of the U.S. market and developing a market entry strategy for the company, including the market analysis and the development of the product promotion and marketing strategy.

The most crucial part of the project preparation was picking the host country and the company to work with. As far as the country is concerned, the weather presents some obvious limitations. The field trips that are organized during the winter and spring ideally should take place in the countries of Southern Hemisphere, Southern Europe, and South-East Asia, while summer programs can accommodate a wider variety of countries. Additional constraint on the choice of the country is its location relative to the home

country. Since the field trip is rather short (about nine to ten days), it is unadvisable to travel too far. Air travel longer than 10–13 hours will be too difficult for the students and will make them deal with the jetlag for a considerable portion of the trip.

The selection of the company is based on its willingness to host the group of students and be open to interacting with them even after the visit is over. Additionally for the purpose of the international business class, it is ideal to pick a company that works (or plans to work) internationally and has a need to make some strategic decisions about its internationalization in the future. Most third-party providers of study abroad services have connections in companies that could meet these criteria. In the case of the current project, the chosen company was relatively small. It was on the verge of expansion in the U.S. market. Thus, the face validity of the project and the need for American students to consult the company on the best strategy of working in the U.S. market were obvious. It might be also added that the industry of the company is important to the extent that students usually find some companies more relatable than others. Students work particularly well with the companies when they can see themselves as their consumers.

The work on the project was conducted in several stages and was guided by the professor (Fig. 38.1).

First, students were divided into groups and the groups used their time before the trip to collect information about the client company and its industry. Next, during the field trip, the students spent time at the company, where they visited the factory floor, interacted with its executives and managers, and had the opportunity to interview them. Students also participated in several cultural activities and visits that aimed to give them a better understanding of the Spanish food industry (e.g., tour of the local food market, a cooking class). Upon the return from the trip, student groups worked on their final recommendations. As a final step of the project, all groups participated in the end-of-the-program case competition, where they presented their final reports to the panel of academic judges. The two winning groups of the case competition then presented their work to the company executives via Skype.

The class schedule was organized as follows: The first week of the semester included few lectures that prepared students for the trip and introduced important information needed for the project. Then, the field trip took place. Upon the return, students had another five weeks of classes that covered the textbook material in depth and used the field-trip experience as an illustration

Activities			
Preparation	**Pre - Trip**	**Field Trip**	**Post - Trip**
• Company Choice • Country Choice • Trip Itinerary & Logistics	• Company Research • Industry Research • Country Research	• Company Visit • Company Interviews • Cultural Visits & Activities	• Group Work • Case Competition • Presentations to the Company
Project Timeline			
• Company Materials • Country Information • Assignments & Evaluation Rubrics	• Company Presentation • Country Presentations • List of Questions to the Company	• Daily Blogs • Company Visit Report • Interview Transcript	• Group Reports • PPT Case Presentation • Written Group Report
Assignments and Materials			

Fig. 38.1 Project timeline, activities, and assessments

and focus for class discussions. During the final week of the semester, the group presentations took place.

The field-trip format is more effective than lectures alone due to the inclusion of all of the experiential learning cycle stages (to be discussed below). Additionally, this project is more effective than a case study or experiential group learning project led by an instructor, because it provides feedback to students not just from academics, but also from executives in the field. Thus, this project presents a unique opportunity to provide a relevant and real-life learning experience to the students.

Experiential Learning Cycle

The project was designed to cover all four stages of the experiential learning cycle in order to maximize student learning (Kolb, 1984). Students started with concrete experience, when they visited the factory of the client company as well as took part in the cooking class and toured the market in order to engage on a sensory and emotional level with the culinary traditions of Spain. Then, the students were guided by the professor through the reflective observation stage, which involved the discussion of the company business model and its current challenges with the executives of the client company (Learning Outcomes 1 and 2). Thereafter, they proceeded to abstract conceptualization when they used their experience as a context for elaborating on the theories and concepts learned in class after the trip was over (Learning Objectives 3 and 4). Finally, they engaged in the active experimentation during their work on group report and its presentation to the panel of judges and executives of the client company, where they were able to learn by doing and put their acquired knowledge to the test.

Skills and Competencies

International experiential learning programs are specifically designed to provide business students with unique opportunities to develop global leadership competencies (Montgomery & Arensdorf, 2012). International experience can facilitate the acquisition of global business expertise by broadening students' experience beyond the classroom (Litvin, 2003; Marlowe & Rivadeneyra, 2000; Sachau, Brasher, & Fee, 2010). Global exposure is expected to result in a deeper understanding of the course material due to experiential learning during corporate visits, first-hand observation, and participation in the global business environment. Another goal of study abroad programs is to help students understand the culture of the host country. Study abroad programs often involve an acquisition of country-specific knowledge, such as the knowledge of the economic, political, and legal systems of the visited country (Ang et al., 2007), as well as the knowledge pertaining to daily life, such as politeness conventions, day-to-day norms, and ways of being (Czerwinoka, Artamonova, & Barbosa, 2015).

In addition to mastering basic business knowledge and global business expertise, students involved in international experiential learning are expected to develop their intercultural competencies or global leadership competencies,

which are collectively defined as the ability to function effectively in another culture. One of the commonly used categorizations of global leadership competencies classifies them into three broad concepts: perception management, relationship management, and self-management (Bird, Mendenhall, Stevens, & Oddou, 2010; Mendenhall & Osland, 2002).

Perception management addresses cognitive approaches that people develop to cultural differences. It reflects people's interest and curiosity in other cultures, their mental flexibility and ability to manage perceptions in the face of unexpected or unfamiliar situations. Perception management includes such dimensions as non-judgmentalness, inquisitiveness, and tolerance of ambiguity. Relationship management refers to people's orientation toward the importance of relationships, their awareness of themselves and their impact on others, as well as their awareness of others, their values, and interaction styles. Relationship management includes characteristics such as relationship interest, interpersonal engagement, and emotional sensitivity. Finally, self-management focuses on a person's strength of identity and the ability to manage emotions and stress. In order to be effective in the global context, businesspeople must not only be flexible and adapt to new environments, but at the same time they need to have a stable sense of self and remain emotionally and mentally healthy. They should possess optimism, self-confidence, self-identity, emotional resilience, non-stress tendency, and stress management.

In addition to learning appropriate global knowledge and skills, the literature on study abroad outcomes often suggests various career-related outcomes of international experiences. Among professional development outcomes are the changes to career paths and an increased likelihood of working abroad upon graduation (Di Pietro, 2012; Heffron & Maresco, 2014; Wiers-Jenssen, 2008).

Therefore, a considerable body of research suggests that international learning experiences are linked to multiple individual outcomes, which are broadly divided into abovementioned three categories: global business expertise, development of intercultural competencies, and outcomes associated with professional growth and development. Ideally, short study abroad programs such as field trips should be instrumental in delivering all three types of outcomes. However, specific assignments and activities should be developed for the field trip to achieve these outcomes. In the current program, the decision was made to focus less on intercultural competencies and more on the business knowledge development, since the length of the program did not allow for unstructured interactions with host country nationals, and the client company was a perfect setting to explore international strategy decision making. Learning Objectives 1–4 were assessed using reports and assignments produced

by the student groups (see Figs. 38.2 and 38.3 for evaluation rubrics) during the field trip and upon the return. Intercultural competencies and professional growth and development of individual students may have been assessed using the daily student blogs. However, the decision was made to use the blogs as a source of general student feedback for the program, rather than as

Group _____ Date _____

Total Grade _____

Content

- Situation assessment _____pts
- Problem definition _____pts
- Use of data and facts to support the recommendation _____pts
- Recommendation _____pts
- Overall organization and clarity of logic _____pts

Oral Presentation

- Aroused attention/interest _____pts
- Effective eye contact _____pts
- Effective use of voice and gestures _____pts
- Kept to time constraints _____pts

PPT Slides

- Short and concise _____pts
- Visual aids _____pts

Q&A

- Adequately answered the questions from the audience _____pts

Fig. 38.2 Group presentation evaluation rubric

Group _____ Date _____

Total Grade _____

Content

- Situation assessment _____pts
- Problem definition _____pts
- Use of data and facts to support the recommendation _____pts
- Recommendation _____pts
- Overall organization and clarity of logic _____pts
- Adequate Summary _____pts

Fig. 38.3 Group report evaluation rubric

an assessment of the intercultural skills attainment. For the strategy formulation and strategy implementation assessment, we used the evaluations of group presentations by academic judges and company executives, respectively.

Optimal Fit

The described project can be tailored to a variety of student skill levels and educational needs. It does not necessarily need to focus on all the skills and competencies listed above, as demonstrated by the described program. Instead, the project might reinforce just the few competencies that are of particular importance for the course taught (e.g., the described project was focused primarily on international strategy knowledge). This project works best with small- to medium-sized groups containing two to four students each. These numbers are somewhat arbitrary: for smaller classes, students might work in pairs. However, when the number of students in a group gets to more than four, social loafing becomes a problem. The number of groups is more important than the number

of students per group, because comparing and contrasting different group solutions is an essential part of the project, and for that purpose at least three to four groups are necessary.

The project assumes face-to-face contact between the students and the professor, with a considerable portion of learning happening during and after the trip. The skill level of students may vary, yet it is advisable to do it with the students who already have some basic knowledge of business disciplines. Similar projects can be done even with undergraduate students, but only during their junior or senior years. For the project described here, the students were at the end of the master's program in the last semester before graduation. Managing student motivation in this context was difficult, because students were already focusing on their future outside of the program. Thus, ideally, the students participating in such a project should do it a couple semesters before graduation.

Challenges

First and foremost, a project of this kind requires a considerable amount of planning before the start. The opportunities for reflection and discussion should be built into the trip as well as in-class lectures and homework assignments. Thus, it is essential that the instructor familiarizes him/herself with the client company before the beginning of the semester and, preferably, discusses the project with company executives via Skype. As mentioned in the introduction, in contrast to longer study abroad programs, the success of short experiential learning projects overseas depends on the careful design of the learning experience and its meticulous execution.

Additionally, similar to traditional study abroad experiences, the challenges of running such a program involve behavioral issues associated with taking students overseas. The basic tool for familiarizing students with dos and don'ts of the field trip is a behavioral contract that specifically states the responsibilities of a student, explains what constitutes unacceptable behavior, and what are its consequences. Students should read and sign behavioral contracts before embarking on the field trip. The instructor should spend some time before the trip going through the contract and explaining the reasons for the rules with the examples of the problems other study abroad participants have faced in the past. Below are some of the main points that should be covered:

- Absenteeism is not tolerated. A student cannot miss any planned activity, unless it's a medical emergency. The group will not be able to wait for the students who are tardy. All activities will start on the announced time. The student who missed an activity because of tardiness will be considered absent. Absenteeism will be documented in a written warning and may lead to a lower class grade.
- Medical emergencies are handled through the faculty on the trip. Usually, all students and faculty get a medical insurance through their university that helps international travelers get in touch with clinics and doctors in the host countries that speak in their language. Professor leading the trip should be notified in case a student needs medical attention.
- Behavioral problems, such as drinking, partying, and so on, sometimes happen, especially in the countries where legal drinking age is 18, rather than 21 years old. Behavioral contract may stipulate that drinking on the trip is not allowed. Some contracts state that consumption of hard alcohol is not allowed, but social drinking is. Each program director handles this issue differently, which partly depends on the age of the traveling students and the destination of the travel.
- Students are expected to be dressed appropriately for the company visits and other activities. They should be taking notes and fully participating in all activities by paying attention and asking questions.
- During their free time, students are encouraged to never go out alone. Students who go out as a group are expected to come back as a group and not leave anyone behind.
- The curfew is set at midnight. This is a typical issue mentioned in the behavioral contract and discussed with students before the trip. Enforcement of the curfew is usually unnecessary because students can be relied on to exercise their judgment. Additionally, if some of students stay out late, they usually cannot fully participate in class activities next day, which leads to a private talk between them and the instructor. If instructor is notified by the hotel staff or other students about extreme incidents of curfew breach, the offenders get a written warning.

As mentioned above, failure to meet any of the terms of behavioral contract lead to a written warning from the professor who is directing the program. After two written warnings, the student is dismissed from the program with a fail grade for the class and has to immediately return home at his/her own expense. Usually, explanation of the behavioral norms and their consequences before the departure prevents many, if not all, of these problems.

Evaluation of Learning Effectiveness

As mentioned above, the main focus of the field trip was to reinforce the learning of international strategy. Therefore, the learning assessment was focused on the project the students had to deliver at the end of the semester along with the strategic choices they made. Intercultural competencies were not a major focus of the trip and were not assessed. However, the culture-related discussions in several lectures were designed to make students reflect on their intercultural competencies.

The business strategy part of the project was evaluated by the panel of academic judges. Each group presentation was assessed in terms of the content, oral presentation skills, and design of the PowerPoint slides.

Additionally, the finalists of the case competition were evaluated by the executives of the client company based on the perceived practicality and creativity of their proposed strategy. Apart from grades, the case competition finalists and the runner-up team received small monetary prizes.

Transferability/Replication

The described project can be easily adapted to a variety of different geographical locations, industries, and organizational contexts. For example, a similar project that will involve service-learning experience in a non-profit sector can be employed anywhere in the world.

(a) The project can be used in undergraduate classes. However, graduate students (e.g., MBAs) are more likely to produce reports that will be of interest to the client company.
(b) Cross-disciplinary student teams seem to be the best. In the described project, students had different backgrounds, but all of them were non-business majors in their undergraduate studies. This provided breadth of experiences student teams could draw upon.
(c) The class size should be relatively big to offer comparisons between team presentations. In the current project, 38 participating students were divided into 9 teams. Smaller class size might work in this context as well, but it would be ideal to have at least four or five teams working on the project, keeping in mind that two teams will be selected as finalists who will be presenting to the company.

(d) In terms of timing of the project, it is not ideal to have it before the graduation. The described project was conceived as a final experiential learning exercise to wrap up the program. This proved to be difficult, since the students were focusing on graduation, job search, and their roles in the companies that hired them. So, even though by the end of the program their knowledge and skills allowed them to do well in the project, motivational component was difficult to manage.

Debriefing

As always with experiential activities, debriefing at the end of the program is essential to reinforce project learning. A field trip provided opportunities to reflect on different issues. The main part of the project obviously centered on the business strategy choices the students made. Additionally, the topic of culture was explored in detail. Finally, it was a perfect opportunity to make students contemplate on their own skills and competencies when it comes to traveling and working abroad.

The debriefing ideally should start with a very general question of "What have we learned?" This question is rather neutral, to which no right or wrong answer exists. It allows students to voice their observations and thoughts in a somewhat random fashion, and it gives an instructor an opportunity to see what students already are thinking about, what are they missing, and steer the discussion accordingly. Below are some of the possible discussion questions that might be considered for the debriefing.

International business strategy: The objective of this discussion is to make students understand that firms make strategic decisions in the conditions of uncertainty.

- What are the most important core competencies the firm has?
- What strategy is the firm should adopt? (There will be multiple different answers to this question. Preferably, all of them to be listed on the board to be compared while discussing the next question.)
- What strategy do you think is the best in the current environment? (The objective here is to make students list drawbacks and opportunities associated with each strategic choice, compare them, and pick few "winners.")
- Do you think that the environment might change in the future? How and why?
- Which long-term trends should the firm be monitoring now? Should it invest in new core competencies? Which ones?

Culture: Although much is said and written about culture, the focus of the discussion here is to recognize cultural patterns in everyday life, and see them not only as negatives, but also as positives.

- Can you give examples of manifestation of national culture in the behaviors of people you've met during the trip?
- What is the impact of culture on international business? (Here, students usually list some cultural norms, values, and attitudes that make business practice more complicated or difficult.)
- What would be positive impacts of culture? (This is an important question that usually makes students move away from the ethnocentric view of the world, and consider cultural differences as a resource, rather than a complication.)

Personal competencies: The questions that follow should be discussed after the brief introduction of global leadership skills taxonomy, such as the one presented by Mendenhall et al. (2013). It leads to a very important professional development discussion regarding what are the important competencies a businessperson should possess to be successful internationally.

- What have you learned about yourself?
- What are some of the global leadership competencies that you already possess?
- What are some of the global leadership competencies you need to work on?
- What have you been struggling during the trip?
- What made you feel uncomfortable?
- What were you proud of?

Contributions/Implications

The project has led to a few theoretical and pedagogical contributions to the existing literature. As stated in the introduction to this chapter, the primary goal of the project was to expose the students to the international business experience. To make it possible, it had to be carefully designed keeping in mind its costs, duration, and learning outcomes. Too often, study abroad experiences, especially short ones, are accused of being superficial or even called "glorified tourism." Therefore, extreme care should be exercised to ensure that students do not just go through motions, but actually learn from the experiences they are offered. Thus, it is the responsibility of the professor leading the program to design it in the way that prepares students for the

experience. Additionally, it is important to tell students ahead of time what is expected from them on the trip, and how different parts of the trip experience will be linked to the final grade in the class. No experience, business or cultural, should be left without assignment—quiz, reflection paper, or presentation. All these mini assignments should be graded and considered for the determination of the grade for the class. Below are some theoretical and pedagogical considerations to keep in mind.

Theoretical/Conceptual Contributions

One of the intriguing observations about the Kolb's (1984) framework is that all stages of the learning cycle are important, and there is no "starting point" for the experiential learning cycle. As long as students cover all four stages, their learning experience has a higher likelihood to be successful. In the context of a short overseas trip, the decision about which stage should be a starting point seems to be a crucial one. In the described program, the project started with concrete experience, followed by reflective observation, abstract conceptualization, and, finally, active experimentation. The future programs should experiment with the sequence. For example, starting with the abstract conceptualization may better prepare students for the subsequent experience and will sensitize them to the challenges they may encounter. If this is the case, field-trip-based programs should place the field trip in the second part of the program, but leave at least few classes for debriefing at the end. The future programs will help determine the optimal sequence of experiential learning stages for a short-term study abroad program.

Multiple studies suggest that learning in study abroad programs happens differently than in the home environment (Le & Raven, 2015; Redden, 2010). One of the hypotheses is that lower levels of learning in the area of general knowledge of other countries, as well as facts and details from course material can be expected in the study abroad format. However, students that studied abroad usually did better than stay-at-home students in learning in ethical literacy and global mindset and demonstrated higher levels of more conceptual, big-picture learning. These studies suggest that learning textbook material and discipline-specific facts should happen before or after, and not during the study abroad experience, which is more conducive of contextualizing material learned in class.

Therefore, it seems that, ideally, the program should start with lectures at the home institution, then proceed to the field trip, and end with several discussion- and presentation-based classes back at home. Future studies will

undoubtedly address this issue. In the present program, the control group of students who've learned similar material but did not participate in the field trip was not feasible, since the field trip was mandatory for all students. The future field trips of the program will replicate the experience in different country and industry contexts. For the purpose of comparing learning outcomes of the programs, the cases about the visited companies will be developed and used in the similar classes (International Management), but without the field-trip component.

Pedagogical Contributions

Short field trip is particularly suitable for developing global business expertise and may also facilitate the professional development of the students. Due to short duration, the program is less instrumental in the development of intercultural competencies. However, it can be feasible to make intercultural competencies the focus of the learning experience. It can be achieved by giving students assignments that will specifically require interaction with the locals, such as interviews of local people in supermarkets or on the street. Another option is to work with the partner institution and have some local students join the group.

In the conclusion, the described project suggests that none of the experiences overseas on a short-term study abroad project can be left to chance. Every activity or situation on the trip—whether it is planned or unexpected—can and should be framed by the professor as a learning opportunity.

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39

Short-Term International Travel Experience (SITE) as a Learning Model for International Education

Margaret Arrison Nolan and Raghu Kurthakoti

Introduction

Rapid globalization has created a world in which individuals must collaborate and work interdependently across national borders (Friedman, 2007). Individuals, teams, organizations, and nations must be able to adapt in different environments or become extinct (Erez et al., 2013). Employers today expect college graduates to possess the knowledge, skills, and abilities needed to adapt and perform effectively within and across intercultural environments (Mikhaylov, 2014; Putranto, Gustomo, & Ghazali, 2015). As educators in the domain of higher education in business, it has therefore become our responsibility to provide students with curricular opportunities that develop the skills and competencies needed to adapt successfully in culturally diverse global business environments.

One pedagogical approach being used in higher education to develop students' cultural competence is the integration of short-term international travel experience (SITE) into an academic course (Mapp, 2012). SITE creates unique learning opportunities that prepare students for the challenges of twenty-first-century organizations (Clawson, 2014; Mapp, 2012; Redden, 2018; Williams, Green, & Diel, 2017). SITE has gained popularity across institutions of higher education as an alternative to full semester study abroad programs because it may fit better with students' financial resources, schedules, and/or interests (Mapp, 2012; Sjoberg & Shabalina, 2010).

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M. A. Gonzalez-Perez et al. (eds.), *The Palgrave Handbook of Learning and Teaching International Business and Management*, https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-030-20415-0_39

This chapter describes two programs offered at Arcadia University (AU) that embed SITE into semester-long credit-bearing courses: (1) the *Preview Experience* (*Preview*) and (2) the *Global Field Study* (*GFS*) *Course*. AU is a small private liberal arts university located in the mid-Atlantic region of the United States. Many students in AU's School of Global Business have participated in *Preview* and *GFS*. *Preview* and *GFS* are grounded in Kolb and Kolb's (2017) theory of experiential learning. Authentic learning occurs when students become active participants in their learning space through experiences, reflection, thinking, and acting (Kolb & Kolb, 2017). Learning is enhanced through transactions between students and the social environment (Kolb & Kolb, 2017). This chapter breaks down the experiential learning elements of the SITE programs and discusses the ways in which effectiveness is measured using Kirkpatrick and Kirkpatrick's (2006) model. Evaluation of students' shared experiences and outcomes demonstrates the transferability and replicability of these approaches. Sample course syllabi are included within this chapter to provide a framework for designing similar courses.

SITE Program Example 1: AU's *Preview* Experience

Preview is a two-credit course offered at AU to first-year and new transfer students. It is offered during the spring semester and integrates a weeklong SITE over spring break. The goals of *Preview* are to foster global engagement, student retention, community, and interest in study abroad programs. *Preview* began in 1994, and has since evolved into a two-credit course that incorporates academic content into the curriculum. To date, over 6500 AU undergraduate students have participated in *Preview*, with approximately 12 different international locations being visited each year.

The Basics of *Preview*

- Most suitable audience: Full-time first-year and new transfer undergraduate students.
- Time required: Approximately eight weeks. This timeframe includes six weeks of classes on AU's main campus, one week of immersion in a foreign country, a debriefing class upon return to the U.S., and participation in a university-wide global exposition.
- Optimal size: 22–25 students with two faculty/staff co-leaders.

- Materials: Valid passport. Some countries require visas.
- Cost: approximately $1900 per student. *Preview* is heavily subsidized by AU's administration, making it affordable to many students. Students pay $595, which includes air and ground transportation, programmed events, accommodations, and some group meals. Students are responsible for costs related to individual activities, meals, and incidentals.
- Oversight: A faculty/staff leader develops and directs the course curriculum, including SITE, with the support of a co-leader. The co-leader is an AU employee who supports the faculty/staff leader and students throughout the duration of the course and accompanies the class on SITE. AU's Office of International Programs provides significant guidance on issues related to SITE logistics, passport/visa regulations, health, safety, and other administrative concerns.
- Enrollment: Enrollment occurs through an application process in which students submit their top three *Preview* preferences and a brief personal statement explaining their interest in the course topic and international destination. Applicants must be in good academic and disciplinary standing. A GPA of 2.0 is required. A *Preview* Committee made up of AU faculty and staff determines the placement of students based on students' personal statements and space availability. Most students who meet the criteria are accepted.
- Credit: All *Preview* courses are two credits.

Learning Objectives of *Preview*

The following learning objectives were developed by an AU task force in 2011, when *Preview* evolved into a two-credit course to include academic components:

- Globalize the university by intentionally embedding global themes within the classroom and academic content
- Increase the connections between students, faculty, and staff as reflected in the university's mission to provide an integrative and personal learning experience
- Facilitate greater student engagement with the university and develop a strong affinity among the first-year class
- Inspire and enable students to gain a global perspective through study abroad
- Establish *Preview* as a pedagogical model for global engagement

Table 39.1 Sample of generic learning objectives for *Preview*

Location-specific objectives: Increase students' knowledge of, and preparedness for, SITE.	• demonstrate appropriate use of language in social contexts during SITE; • apply knowledge of prevailing cultural norms while engaging with local residents; • describe political influences in a particular region.
Discipline-specific objectives: Increase students' ability to work within the conventions of the specific discipline/topic that governs the course.	• compare/contrast the management practices used in international business settings; • describe economic concepts affecting small businesses within the international location; • explain the use of technology as a marketing tool within a certain sector.
Global learning objectives: Encourage students to understand their *Preview* experiences within a global learning context.	• evaluate connections made with local residents during students' free time during SITE; • collaborate with peers to create displays for the university global exposition to demonstrate synthesis between the course themes, global citizenship, and SITE; and • analyze the relationships formed with students from an international school during SITE.

In addition to the above overarching objectives, each individual *Preview* course includes specific learning objectives developed by the teaching faculty that incorporate Bloom's revised taxonomy (Krathwohl, 2002). Learning objectives vary by course and relate to individual academic course topics, international location, and global learning themes. A sample of generic objectives that could be used in designing a *Preview* course is included in Table 39.1.

Purpose and Description of *Preview*

Preview is a pedagogical model for experiential learning and global engagement that serves to build community, increase retention, introduce global themes, and inspire students to study abroad, while exploring academic content. AU's Office of International Programs sends out a call to faculty and staff every spring for *Preview* proposals for the following spring semester. Proposals are based on the interests, expertise, and experiences of the faculty/staff. Proposals are reviewed and approved by a *Preview* Academics Committee. AU then holds a *Preview* 'Kick-Off' event in the fall to inform students about

Table 39.2 Sample of AU *Preview* offerings

Preview course title[a]	SITE location
Made-in-Italy: The Production of Fashion, High-End Design, & Luxury Goods (Note: co-developed/taught by Margaret Arrison Nolan, the co-author of this chapter)	Brescia, Italy
Wherever Green Is Worn: Modern Ireland Through History and Tradition	Dublin, Ireland; Derry, Northern Ireland
Science, Technology, Society, and Culture: Exploring the Cities of Philadelphia and Florence	Florence, Italy
Authentic Ireland: Authentic Ireland: Exploring the Wild Atlantic Way, its Ecosystems and its Residents	Galway, Ireland
Vietnam & the United States: Then and Now	Ho Chi Minh City, Vietnam
Behind the Music Biz: Exploring the Urban Music Scene and Gentrification in London and Philadelphia	London, UK
Leadership Lessons Learned	London, UK
Explore Oman: Culture, History, and Archaeology in the Gulf Region	Muscat, Oman
Paris: Reading the City	Paris, France
Ecotourism and Sustainable Development in Costa Rica	San Jose, Costa Rica
Tale of Two Cities: Changing Urban Landscapes	Shanghai and Jiangsu, China
Sea is Not My Home: Immigration, Migration, and Social Justice in the Sicilian Context	Sicily, Italy

[a]*Preview* courses are developed and taught by different AU faculty/staff members. Course descriptions, SITE locations, and faculty information can be found at https://www.arcadia.edu/global/first-year-study-abroad/preview-first-year-and-transfer-students/preview-courses

the different *Preview* courses that will be offered in the following spring semester. This event gives students a chance to talk with course leaders and ask questions prior to submitting an application. A sample list of some of the *Previews* offered at AU is included in Table 39.2.

Preview takes place throughout the spring semester, with the international field component occurring over spring break. Classes begin during the second week of January and meet for two hours once a week for six weeks to explore course themes and various cultural aspects related to the international destination. Students then travel as a class to spend one week immersed in a foreign country, where they participate in experiential activities, tours, and events arranged by the faculty/staff leader. Free time is built into SITE to provide students with opportunities for independent exploration of the local area and to participate in events that are of a personal interest to them. After returning to the U.S., students meet as a class for a debriefing session to discuss connections made between SITE and the learning objectives of the course. *Preview* culminates in a university-wide global exposition at the end of the spring semester

where participants showcase their *Preview* experiences through individual or group projects. Examples may include poster displays, food, music, art, artifacts, or photos that demonstrate their learning in a creative, engaging environment.

Experiential Learning Cycle of *Preview*

Preview enables students to move through all four stages of the experiential learning cycle: concrete experience, reflective observation, abstract conceptualization, and active experimentation (Kolb & Kolb, 2017). Faculty utilize different teaching methods and activities based on academic topics, international destinations, pedagogical preferences, and comfort level of students. This section provides examples for each stage.

Concrete Experience. Students engage in a variety of concrete experiences throughout *Preview*. These experiences may include visits to cultural or historical sites, museums, galleries, music venues, restaurants, public parks, schools, and local businesses. In preparation for SITE, students participate in weekly classes at the AU's main campus to introduce academic content, international location, and cultural themes. Examples of pedagogy used to facilitate learning may include lectures, videos, readings, guest speakers, discussions, or in-class activities to teach about cultural differences, customs, beliefs, history, art, music, education, economic, business, and other aspects related to the country to which they will travel. Basic vocabulary and phrases are often taught to help students feel comfortable during their time abroad.

Reflective Observations. Student reflections about their experiences before, during, and after SITE are a key component of most *Preview* courses. Reflective observations are made within the context of academic topics, cultural dimensions, and other themes related to the international location. Examples may include personal journals, ethnographic studies, class discussions, and/or other reflective activities that encourage students to bring a personal perspective into their learning.

Abstract Conceptualization. Students develop new ideas or modify existing ones based on class meetings, reflections, research, and vicarious experiences during *Preview.* Examples may include analysis of cultural profiles using Hofstede's (2010) framework of cultural dimensions or through interactions with students from the host country. These activities help students gain insight into cultural differences and perspectives, as they begin to make global connections within the context of the *Preview* experience.

Active Experimentation. Students have several opportunities during the SITE component to experiment with new ways of thinking and acting in unfamiliar international environments. Students experiment with communi-

cation, interpersonal, problem-solving, and other skills they acquire throughout *Preview*. Free time is built into students' time abroad for independent experiences to further allow for active experimentation. Examples may include wandering through the streets of a culturally rich neighborhood, dining in ethnic restaurants, attending a music event or art exhibit, shopping in a local market, or navigating the local transportation system.

Skills and Competencies of *Preview*

Students often develop different levels of skills and competencies related to communication, interpersonal interactions, empathy, social, team-building, collaboration, and personal growth within a global environment through participation in *Preview*. These skills and competencies may serve as a foundation as they prepare for careers in global business or other professional environments. Group discussions, team projects, written reflections, research papers, participation in experiential activities, and interactions with classmates and local residents from the host country contribute to students' growth and skill development in different ways. *Preview* students often return to the U.S. to challenge ideas and boundaries, pursue majors or classes they had not considered, develop an interest in foreign languages, or become interested in studying abroad through AU. The *Preview* first-year program has been greatly successful due to the instructors and staff who support the program, and students who use the opportunity to learn through real-world international experiences.

Optimal Fit of *Preview*

The *Preview* program is designed specifically for full-time first-year and transfer undergraduate students at AU. *Preview* supports AU's mission of providing students with a distinctively global, integrative, and personal learning experience (www.arcadia.edu). For the vast majority of AU students, this is their first time traveling to a foreign country within a class setting. *Preview* may be replicated in other higher education environments where students face anxiety due to a lack of pre-existing knowledge about international cultures. Given the size of the university, most of these classes are small, averaging between 22 and 26 students. With proper logistical and administrative support, as well as a sufficient number of faculty/staff accompanying students during the international field component, the scale of the program can be increased without any significant impact on realization of outcomes. However, we recommend a leader: student ratio of no more than 1:13 to ensure adequate control, student safety, and insightful interactions between the leaders

and students during the entire process. Table 39.2 provides a sample list of courses and locations that have been offered as *Preview* at AU. Table 39.3 provides more detailed outline of a single *Preview* course.

Table 39.3 Sample *Preview* syllabus

Made-in-Italy *Preview* (2016): The Production of Fashion, High-end Design, & Luxury Goods—Nolan & Clewis
Margaret Arrison Nolan (co-author of this chapter) and Elisa Schwab Clewis on behalf of AU developed, taught, and facilitated the *Made-in-Italy Preview course*. The following information was taken from their 2016 course syllabus. Location: Northern Italy Course Description *Made-in-Italy Preview* focuses on the Italian business strategy that is centered on the production and export of fashion, food, high-end design, and luxury goods. The course explores the small and medium enterprises (SME) of Italy, with an emphasis on typical business tactics and management styles. Students will learn basic Italian phrases and vocabulary to help them during their travel time in Italy. The field travel component to Northern Italy allows students to visit companies that design, produce, and export high-end products, including fashion, luxury goods, motorboats, wine, and food. The courses include 12 hours of on-campus classes and 7 days travel in Italy. During the Italy component, students will engage with local businesses, visit museums, and participate in a student exchange with local students. The course culminates in a group project and presentation at the AU university-wide Global Expo. Learning Objectives • Students will articulate and compare the difference between Italian and American culture toward fashion, luxury goods, food, customs, education, and general business practices. • Students will gain a general understanding of the cultural aspects of Italian dining and food traditions, and how various goods, food, and beauty represent Italian everyday life. • Students will gain a general understanding of the structures of small and medium enterprises (SMEs) and industries typical of the Italian economy. • Students will compare/contrast the management styles in Italy to those in U.S.-based companies, with a focus on the ways in which cultural differences impact business practices. • Students will explore organizational structures, communication, and production techniques in Italy-based SMEs. • Students will distinguish the production steps during sight visits to local Italian factories. Assessments • Group research and presentations on the geographic areas and industries to be explored during the Italy travel component. • Individual weekly journals about course lectures, presentations, readings, and vicarious experiences during class meetings. • Ethnographic study of a culturally rich neighborhood. • Blog postings during students' time in Italy. • AU Global Expo project presented in mid-April. • Attendance and participation in all activities in U.S. and abroad.

SITE Program Example 2: The *Global Field Study* Course

The *Global Field Study* (*GFS*) course is a four-credit interdisciplinary upper-level course offered at AU to students across disciplines. *GFS* tends to require longer immersion in a foreign country and student workload that is appropriate for a four credit course. The typical length of immersion is 8–14 days, depending on course content, international location, and learning objectives. *GFS* frequently includes student research, group projects, and/or service learning to synthesize the academic content with the international field component.

The Basics of *GFS*

- Most suitable audience: Upper-level matriculated undergraduate students. Students should have a strong interest in the course topic and/or international location.
- Time required: *GFS* courses run a full semester (approximately 15 weeks), but may start at different times during the year. Classes typically meet once a week throughout the semester, and spend 8–14 days immersed in a foreign country. SITE occurs over winter break or at the end of the spring semester, depending on when the course runs.
- Optimal Group: 15–20 students with two faculty/staff co-leaders.
- Materials: Valid passport. Some countries require visas.
- Cost: Approximately $2500 per student. The cost may vary depending on location and length of stay. The travel fee typically includes airfare, accommodations, in-country transportation, tours, lectures, and group activities. Faculty leaders determine other cost details specific to planned SITE. These costs are paid by the students in addition to the tuition and other fees paid to the university.
- Oversight: A faculty/staff leader develops and directs course curriculum, as well as SITE. AU's Office of International Programs offers additional support to coordinate logistics, health and safety training, and related administrative issues, in conjunction with faculty leaders and their overseas contacts.
- Enrollment: Enrollment occurs on a first-come, first-served basis. Full- and part-time matriculated upper-level students who are in good academic and disciplinary standing may enroll in a *GFS*. A GPA of 2.2 is required. Transfer students who have completed at least one semester (a minimum of 12 credits) of coursework at AU are also eligible. Non-AU students may

apply as long as they meet these same requirements from a regionally accredited institution. Enrollment must be approved by the student's academic advisor and/or the *GFS* faculty leader.
- Credits: *GFS* courses are four credits.

Learning Objectives of *GFS*

Learning objectives vary by *GFS* and are developed by faculty, using Bloom's revised taxonomy (Krathwohl, 2002). Specific learning objectives reflect academic content and global themes, with assessment built in to measure student learning. The *GFS* curriculum is designed to support the specific course goals while capitalizing on the distinctive learning opportunities created by the travel component within the host environment. Student work should be an appropriate workload for a four-credit course.

Purpose and Description of *GFS*

GFS is a four-credit course offered by AU to upper-level students across disciplines. Courses run a full semester and incorporate immersion in a foreign country for 8–14 days occurring over winter break or at the end of the spring semester, depending on in which semester the course runs. *GFS* often incorporates primary and secondary student research, student projects, written reflections, and/or service learning to synthesize the academic content with students' SITE. AU's Office of International Programs sends out a call to faculty every spring for *GFS* proposals. *GFS* proposals are approved through the AU Academic Committee process used for other credit-bearing courses.

Experiential Learning Cycle of *GFS*

A well-planned *GFS* course integrates experiential learning theory to bring together classroom learning and field experience. *GFS* enables students to go through all four stages of the experiential learning cycle: concrete experience, reflective observation, abstract conceptualization, and active experimentation (Kolb & Kolb, 2017). Faculty utilize a variety of teaching methods based on their discipline, the academic content, pedagogical preferences, international destination, and the course learning outcomes. Examples for each stage are provided below.

Concrete Experience. Students have sustained cross-cultural experiences throughout *GFS* in which they integrate what is learned in the classroom into an authentic global environment. Students participate in weekly classes at AU's main campus, where information about the academic content and SITE is explored. Examples may include topical investigations and exploration of cultural, political, business, economic, historical, and/or other aspects related to the country in which they will travel. Basic vocabulary and phrases may be taught to help students assimilate during SITE.

Reflective Observations. Students have several opportunities to actively observe and reflect on their own cultural biases and beliefs, while engaging with other ways of thinking and behaving in unfamiliar cultural environments. Examples may include written reflections, personal journals, experiential exercises, ethnographic sketches, service learning, or other activities that encourage students to examine their cross-cultural experiences with an emphasis on exploring interdependencies and global connections.

Abstract Conceptualization. Students analyze and synthesize the academic content of the course with SITE through different conceptual frameworks. Connections between local and global phenomena are encouraged through the investigation of issues and areas of study that cross national boundaries. Primary and secondary research projects are often integrated throughout *GFS* as students explore and analyze various theoretical frameworks.

Active experimentation. Students have multiple opportunities to experiment with newly formed concepts and skills as they participate in local and global activities. Free time is often built into the curriculum to provide students with opportunities to actively engage with local residents, the community, and/or attend events that are of personal interest to them. Some *GFS* courses also include service learning while in the host country for further engagement, exploration, and synthesis of course topics.

Skills and Competencies of *GFS*

Students develop skills and competencies that will help them prepare for the challenges of professional careers in a dynamic global world beyond graduation. Examples include skills and competencies related to communication, interpersonal, problem-solving, social, team-building, and personal growth within a global environment. Group discussions, team projects, written reflections, research projects, participation in activities during SITE, and interactions with classmates and residents of the host country, all contribute to students' growth and skill development in unique and interesting ways.

Optimal Fit of *GFS*

Given the mission and size of the university, most *GFS* classes are small, averaging between 15 and 20 students. With proper logistical support and a sufficient number of faculty/staff accompanying students on the trips, the scale of the program can be increased without any significant impact on realization of outcomes. However, we recommend a leader: student ratio of no more than 1:10 to ensure adequate control, student safety, quality interactions, and rich experiences to enhance student learning. A sample listing of AU *GFS* courses is provided in Table 39.4. Table 39.5 provides a more detailed outline for a single GFS course.

SITE Program Challenges and Best Practices

Preview and *GFS* face similar challenges and best practices due to the nature of using SITE as a pedagogical approach of experiential learning. Table 39.6 summarizes the key challenges and recommended best practices for SITE programs.

SITE Program Evaluation of Learning Effectiveness

Assessment Based on Kirkpatrick Model

Faculty/staff leaders use a variety of assessments to measure student learning in *Preview* and *GFS*. These assessments may include personal journals, written reflections, ethnographic sketches, examinations, readings, lectures, participa-

Table 39.4 Sample of AU *GFS* offerings

GFS course title[a]	SITE location
Exploring National Identity in Central Europe	Austria
Dominica: A Developing Caribbean Nation	Dominica
Marine Biology & Cultural History of Fiji	Fiji
Inspired by the View: Beauty and Boldness of Ireland	Ireland
Spain's Pilgrimage: The Camino	Spain
Promoting Youth Leadership Development in the USA and South Africa	South Africa

[a]Each *GFS* course is developed and taught by different AU faculty members. A list of *GFS* courses with brief course descriptions being offered in spring 2019 can be retrieved at https://www.arcadia.edu/global/global-programs/global-field-study/gfs-courses

Table 39.5 Sample *GFS* syllabus

Dominica: A Developing Caribbean Nation—Brinker, 2018
Professor Tom Brinker, Jr., LLM, CPA, CFE, on behalf of AU, developed the *GFS: Dominica course*. He has taught the *Dominica GFS* for over ten years. Dr. Wayne Morra, PhD, has served as a co-leader for the past several years. Margaret Arrison Nolan (co-author of this chapter) has served as a guest co-leader since 2017. The following information was taken from the 2018 course syllabus. Location: Dominica, West Indies Course Description *GFS: Dominica: A Developing Caribbean Nation* is an interdisciplinary upper-level four-credit course offered by AU that studies the pre-history, politics, economics, ecology, and/or artistic heritage of a foreign culture. Dominica is a small island nation undergoing a massive transformation in the areas of commerce, infrastructure and politics. The course is intended for individuals with a sincere interest in learning about and interacting with people and events in another culture. The class travels to the Capitol (Roseau) and throughout Dominica for approximately eight days in January over the students' winter break. The trip to Dominica takes students out of their comfort zone and gives them the chance to really see how another culture lives in less developed regions of the world. Students have an opportunity to visit and interact with factories, business centers, organic farms, community leaders, politicians, entrepreneurs, local citizens and high-ranking civil servants. This course combines lectures, group presentations, discussion forums, paper writing, peer review, role playing, service learning and ethnographic analysis to meet the learning outcomes. The lectures are designed to be complementary to our required readings, guest lectures, travel and service learning components for this course. Students participate in two service-learning experiences (U.S. and Dominica). Learning Outcomes • Interconnections: To gain an awareness of historical, political, geological, biological, cultural and/or socioeconomic interconnections between Dominica, U.S., and the world. • Interpret: To construe aspects of other cultures in relation to their own with greater sophistication and accuracy to make interconnections. • Interdependence: To acquire a heightened sense of global interdependencies and understand the necessity to address complex global issues across national and disciplinary boundaries. • Identify and observe: To identify and observe obligations of individuals situated both inside and outside one's own national borders, and how those obligations shape relationships within community and family. • Inequity: To pose critical questions about power relations as those relations influence issues of social justice, social welfare, and economic rights within and across national boundaries. • Introspective: To avoid superficial judgments, while building introspective and creative solutions. Learning Assessments • Pre-departure examination on the material covered during the semester • Participation in U.S.-based service-learning project • Short ethnographic sketch (based on service-learning project) • Personal journal while on the island of Dominica • Service-learning project while in Dominica • Presentation while in Dominica on course-related topic • Research paper (includes primary and secondary research) and presentation

Table 39.6 Challenges and best practices for SITE programs

Challenges	Best practices
Student-related	*Student-related*
• Ability to get outside comfort zone • Food or other allergies, or illness • Mental health issues or home sickness • Alcohol, drugs, or sexual encounters • Interest, immaturity, fatigue • Language or cultural difficulties • Communication with parents while abroad • Additional program costs for *GFS* courses	• Student preparation is critical for the success of these programs • Open discussions about fears and expectations throughout the course and SITE • Safety and health training with appropriate university personnel • Proper planning of the program to alleviate students' apprehensions
Faculty/Staff Leader-related	*Faculty/Staff Leader-related*
• Familiarity with language and cultural norms of international location • Dealing professionally with a range of student issues (listed above) • Managing the laws and practices of the foreign country in relation to school policies (i.e., underage drinking, gender issues) • Balancing student safety while giving freedom to explore and discover new things • Managing budgets and unforeseen circumstances	• Support for faculty/staff from administration of the university is critical. This includes prior, during, and after the international field component • Providing 24/7 on-call support during international field component • Establishing connections with others in foreign country (i.e., relationships with local businesses, faculty, students, tour guides, and cultural excursions) • Financial support from administration (to make *Preview* accessible to all students)
University-related	*University-related*
• Safety of students and faculty/staff leaders • Quality and reputation of programs • Costs of programs	• International security support and health insurance for proper implementation of quality programs and coordination of safety training in effective and efficient ways

tion in host country activities, pre-travel field trips, research projects, presentations, and other assessment tools. Many of the assessments used by teaching faculty/staff leaders implement four-level model for evaluating training programs: reaction, learning, behavior, and results.

Reaction. Leaders assess the degree to which students find SITE to be favorable, engaging, and relevant to the course content through classroom discussions, reflections, student feedback, and similar activities. Observations by leaders of students during international field component also provide a measure of student reaction to the experience. We recommend keeping the faculty: student ratio small enough to ensure these reactions can be observed and recorded properly.

Learning. Leaders assess the degree to which students acquire intended knowledge, skills, attitude, confidence, and commitment within the context of the course through personal journals, student presentations, research, group discussions, examinations, and similar activities.

Behavior. Leaders assess the degree to which students apply what they have learned through observations of students' participation in overseas activities, interactions with local residents, peers, and free time during the international field component. This may include the ways in which students behave, communicate, and adapt in unfamiliar or culturally different situations during SITE.

Results. Leaders assess the degree to which the students meet learning outcomes of the course through post-travel debriefing discussions, reflections, student projects, assessments, and other student work. At the university level, learning and teaching effectiveness is measured through the SIRII standardized course evaluations, which measure students' self-reported perception on their learning and teacher effectiveness. *Preview* students also complete an AU post-travel survey about their satisfaction with the logistical components of the SITE, such as accommodations, transportation, meals, cultural excursions, business meetings, and other planned events.

Assessment Through Debriefing

Debriefing sessions are built into *Preview* and *GFS* courses. *Preview* classes meet upon return to the U.S. for a final debriefing session and sharing of SITE. The faculty/staff leaders typically facilitate these discussions. *Preview* participants also showcase their international experiences in relation to the academic outcomes at the university-wide global exposition held at the end of the spring semester. Debriefing sessions in *GFS* courses are determined by the faculty and may occur as a class, through peer reviews of final papers, discussions, written reflections, and/or other assessments.

Other Assessments

Periodic evaluations of outcomes by the university curricular assessment team indicate that the stated goals of the *Preview* have been consistently achieved. Given the university mission to provide a global perspective to its students (www.arcadia.edu) and that almost 75% of AU students participate in at least one of these SITE courses, some units of the university have begun to track

the cultural quotient (CQ) of its majors in a longitudinal manner. Students' level of CQ has been measured using established scales at different points of time (such as during freshman orientation, before graduation, pre- and post-travel) to track improvements in students' CQ. For example, AU's School of Global Business tracks its majors on their CQ through the use of the CQ instruments (Earley & Mosakowski, 2004; Thomas et al., 2015)) at two points during a students' tenure at AU: (1) during freshman orientation of their first year, and (2) during the capstone course of their senior year. Data collection began only two years ago, so one-to-one matching of student responses is not yet available. However, independent sample tests of the CQ scores controlling for age indicate that seniors demonstrate a higher degree of CQ than freshmen.

Research has also shown that pedagogy that integrates SITE has a positive impact on undergraduate students' CQ (Nolan & Kurthakoti, 2017). Pre- and post-travel surveys distributed to students enrolled in *Preview* and a *GFS* course in 2017 showed significant increases across attitude, knowledge, and skill associated with CQ as compared to lecture-only pedagogy (Nolan & Kurthakoti, 2017). In addition, faculty accompanying students on tours have observed that students become more comfortable interacting with local residents, engaging in unfamiliar activities, and gaining an increased appreciation for cultural differences during SITE. Observations of students' presentations and engagement with the local community during SITE demonstrate a steady increase in CQ throughout the courses.

SITE Program Transferability/Replication

As evident from the previous section, significant improvement in educational value can come with an immersive experience as short as seven days, providing rich context and opportunities to demonstrate skills of cultural competence. As Kolb (2014) states, knowledge gained through experiences are of a higher order than those gained by less experiential approaches. Evaluation of students' shared experiences in the AU's *Preview* global exposition and *GFS* student projects seems to indicate that the learning for the students is similar and consistent, regardless of the course topics or international travel location. *Preview* and *GFS* courses have been offered across AU through a variety of disciplines, major areas of study, topics, and foreign destinations. Disciplines include, but are not limited to, business, political science, literature, education, history, biology, and linguistics. This demonstrates that the benefits of

the SITE can transcend disciplines and benefit students regardless of students' major field of study or the specific international location. SITE has also been included in the university's MBA with a Global Perspective program and have seen similar results and outcomes for the students. Students in the MBA program are required to travel one week to an emerging economy at the end of their first year and to a *developed* economy during their second year. In their final capstone course, cultural and other market-based learning are synthesized through a global market analysis project.

Pedagogical Contribution and Conclusion

This chapter provides a framework of using SITE as a unique pedagogical approach of experiential learning that leads to favorable outcomes for students and the institution. SITE enables students to enhance their CQ, resulting in increased engagement (both student to instructor and student to student), cultural immersion, and global learning. Students partaking in either of the two SITE programs discussed in this chapter have been shown to develop stronger interpersonal bonds with their course leader(s), peers, and the larger university community. These bonds last beyond the life of the course and help students develop a sense of belongingness with the university. The sharing of SITE and providing of support to each other as they navigate unfamiliar situations causes strong relationships to form. Leaders have observed these friendships and sense of camaraderie carry throughout students' years at AU and beyond.

At the *Preview* level, engagement between students and faculty leaders continues beyond the travel component. The university global exposition held at the end of the spring semester is an exciting event, where *Preview* participants work in teams or individually to share with the entire AU community their experiences and gained knowledge from the experience. This demonstrates personal development of students. Examples of student work include photo collages of the people they met and places they visited during SITE, creation of visual artistic pieces that reflect SITE, and displays of posters depicting unique cultural or other aspects inherent to the international location, thus, fostering student creativity. Many of the tables include food, music, art, or other artifacts that students connected with through SITE.

From an institutional perspective, the SITE pedagogical approaches described in this chapter support and advance the mission of the university. The impact of student engagement, especially through *Preview*, has enabled

AU to maintain a retention rate (freshman to sophomore) higher than peer institutions within the region. The wide variety of courses and international travel locations demonstrates a clear transferability of the approach across academic disciplines. These pedagogical approaches have been consistently and successfully used as marketing tools to attract and retain undergraduate students.

The SITE pedagogical approach discussed in this chapter provides significant benefits to both students and the institution, and demonstrates a high degree of transferability that may be replicated at other institutions. However, for the success and growth of these programs, strong commitment from the senior administrators is critical. Commitment through financial and other resources, including faculty and staff training, is essential to ensure smooth and safe implementation of the program. It has been fortunate at AU, with its small size, that collaborative work between faculty and staff across disciplines is a far easier task. Success of the program in a larger institution would therefore depend on the ability to collaborate across disciplines and domains.

Acknowledgements The authors would like to acknowledge the following individuals at Arcadia University for their valuable input and clarifications while developing this chapter: Scott Terry, Director of Study Away, and Janice Finn, Associate Dean of International Programs. Thank you to the following faculty members for sharing their syllabi: Professor Thomas Brinker, Jr., Dr. Wayne Morra, and Elisa Schwab Clewis.

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The X-Culture Global Business Program: A Short-Term International Study-Abroad Experience

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Introduction

The X-Culture Global Business Program is a six-week intensive summer program designed to provide participating undergraduate and graduate students a unique experiential learning opportunity. Whereas traditional study-abroad programs are conducted face-to-face for a set period of time, this program is unique as it is divided into two parts: Part I is a five-week segment facilitated virtually; and Part II, the final week, takes place face-to-face at a given university.

Participants develop their international business skills working in global business teams comprising students from all over the world. The objectives are

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M. A. Gonzalez-Perez et al. (eds.), *The Palgrave Handbook of Learning and Teaching International Business and Management*, https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-030-20415-0_40

to gain cross-cultural teamwork experiences; participate in structured professional development programs through local company visits, participate in lectures and workshops from faculty representing various universities from around the world; and compete in a business challenge provided by a world-renowned business or organization from the local area. Studies show that this experience can enhance student learning and help them understand what it means to be a global citizen (Walters et al., 2017).

Launched in 2017, this annual conference accepts up to 150 of the top-performing X-Culture students from universities and colleges from around the world. Hosted by a university with a strong history of X-Culture participation and led by professors who are long-term X-Culture project facilitators, the location of X-Culture Global Business Program varies from year to year, providing students and faculty an opportunity to experience an international city. The selected university must be able to provide room and board accommodations, arrange for access to global companies and/or organizations, and offer space for conference facilitation.

As part of the program, students are placed in international teams and work on a real business challenge, thereby gaining experience in global business consulting and cross-cultural teamwork. The program also provides opportunities for visiting cultural sites and businesses to enrich the student's cultural experience of the host country's local and professional environment.

This chapter will describe the program in more detail, including its curriculum, event planning, partnering with a host university, recruiting of the challenge companies and guest speakers, selecting student participants, managing student expectations and experience, creating faculty professional development programming, and more. Special attention will be devoted to a review of the complexities of organizing programs of this kind, with recommendations for addressing these challenges. This chapter will be of particular interest to educators and higher education administrators who want to add short-term travel abroad experiences to their programs or incorporate international business consulting assignments in their classes. Similarly, it will be significant for those seeking a way to provide students with experiential learning opportunities in general.

An Experiential Learning Program: A Blended Approach

Experiential learning (Kolb, 1984) requires facing and embracing differences. These differences can be a challenge and a threat, and it requires a learning space that encourages the expression of differences and provides the psychological safety to support students in facing these challenges (Kolb & Kolb,

2005). The X-Culture Global Business Program provides such a space to challenge students through diversity, competition, and cooperation in foreign locations. More importantly, it does so in an environment of psychological safety as all the participants are aware of diversity and trained for it.

The X-Culture Global Business Program fits the definition of a short-term study-abroad experience, the most common type of undergraduate study abroad in the United States (The Forum on Education Abroad Education Abroad Glossary, 2011). In this model, students collaborate for five weeks virtually and then for one week face-to-face. Despite the proven fact that study-abroad programs can enhance students' acquisition of a foreign language, improve their knowledge of the host culture, and even transform their worldviews, still in 2005, less than 1 percent of American college students had a study-abroad experience (Lewis & Niesenbaum, 2005). According to the Institute of International Education's 2008 Open Doors report, more than half of American students who studied abroad in the 2006–07 academic year (55.4 percent) participated in short-term programs. The popularity of short-term study-abroad experiences is increasing for their economic affordability and because they do not disrupt professionally oriented educational programs, where timing and consistency are especially critical (Walters et al., 2017). The search for diversified study-abroad experiences by students, and the increasing affordability of traveling, produced a rise in the supply of short-term study-abroad programs (i.e., during the 1996–97 academic year, only 3.3 percent of students studying abroad participated in short-term programs) but little research has been carried out on the topic (Donnelly-Smith, 2009).

The X-Culture Global Business Program is also an example of a blended learning experience that combines online learning in the first stage and a short-term study abroad experience in the final stage. The benefits derived from incorporating online distance learning into short-term study-abroad programs have already emerged in the literature (Slotkin, Durie, & Eisenberg, 2012), and the X-Culture Global Business Program confirms that. The social implications are particularly relevant as blended learning facilitates the inclusion of online students, expanding study-abroad opportunities.

Purpose and Description

The X-Culture Global Business Program was designed for undergraduate and graduate students, typically, but not limited to, business and marketing majors. Students who have successfully completed the X-Culture International Collaboration Project (Taras) can apply to participate in the X-Culture Global

Business Program. The participant cap is typically a maximum of 150 students and 50 faculty. A larger group may be hard to manage, while a smaller group may not offer the necessary economies of scale to deliver an affordable yet robust experience.

The concept of the X-Culture Global Business Program originated from the regional symposia that have taken place every year since 2012. The Academy of International Business, Southeast Chapter (AIB-SE) Regional Conference, is typically a three-day event held during the month of October or November (AIB-SE). X-Culture collaborates with AIB-SE and invites 50 or so of the best X-Culture students to the annual AIB-SE Regional Conference. Given time and meeting rooms to organize the X-Culture Symposia, AIB-SE activities are scheduled in tandem to conference events so that students attend their sessions while faculty attend theirs. Initially based on hypothetical business problems, today the university invites local business partners to present real business challenges for X-Culture students. The first one was Mercedes-Benz in Istanbul, Turkey. Since then, the X-Culture Symposia have also hosted The Home Depot (Atlanta), Louis Vuitton (Miami), JCB (Savanah), and Sykes (Tampa/Cozumel), just to name a few (Taras, Global).

In 2015, during an X-Culture break-out session at the AIB-SE Regional Conference in Savannah, a small group of X-Culture faculty discussed the idea of creating an additional stand-alone X-Culture event. There was a growing demand for student participation in the X-Culture Symposia, but the AIB-SE Regional Conference understandably had a cap of 50 students per event. Increasing the number of participants would put the conference over capacity. Moreover, AIB-SE is an academic conference geared toward faculty development, research, and publication, and thus, the opportunity to offer more hands-on experiences for students was limited. In addition, the conference held its sessions concurrent with the X-Culture Symposia, which proved difficult for many faculty members to attend both sessions, as presentation and workshop schedules often conflicted.

X-Culture faculty often found that time was typically inadequate for their own discussions and collaborations. Engagement amongst each other was important to exchange experiences around teaching X-Culture, including, but not limited to, overall project facilitation, grading reports, and managing student expectations. They also wanted time to network and discover shared research interests. Thus, the concept of creating a stand-alone conference grew, which satisfied several faculty and student demands: (1) a larger acceptance rate; (2) a stand-alone event where faculty could more actively participate in X-Culture activities; (3) more hands-on activities that supported the

X-Culture competition; and (4) additional professional development opportunities for students and faculty. More importantly, a stand-alone conference would provide an opportunity to conduct the event at various locations around the world, allowing for a true global experience and a more diverse student population.

The annual AIB-SE X-Culture Symposia, organized and facilitated by Peter Magnusson, X-Culture AIB-SE Program Director and Associate Professor of International Marketing at the University of Alabama (www.culverhouse.ua.edu), continues to thrive year after year. This program partners with client organizations to create student business challenges, capping enrollment to 50 of the top-performing X-Culture students. It remains a highly attended conference.

Starting in 2017, the X-Culture Global Business Program was launched, creating two distinct opportunities for top-performing students and faculty to participate in, beyond their initial involvement on a global-virtual-team version of X-Culture. Appendix 1 clarifies the differences and similarities in the two face-to-face annual conferences. The remainder of the chapter will cover The X-Culture Global Business Program in detail.

Student Selection

The initial application process begins with inviting 10 percent of the top-performing students from X-Culture's past participants who completed the program within the past three years. Of those students, approximately 20 percent apply and from that pool about 25 percent are accepted. The remaining students are placed on a waiting list. A deadline is set for registration. This process continues until the maximum number of students for the program is met.

Students who are accepted but are unable to attend typically fall into the following three categories: insufficient funding, unable to obtain a visa, or a change in plans. Generally, this occurs when students apply without fully understanding the necessary requirements for attendance. Concerning funding, upon request, X-Culture provides students with support letters and sometimes offer stipends contingent on funds availability. Since funding is often very limited, stipends are reserved for the most promising students, or those who were past X-Culture winners.

For the first symposium, the visa acceptance process proved problematic as the US government rejected approximately 30 percent (50 students) of the student visas requested. For the second symposium, which took place in Italy,

the visa control was more liberal. Even so, students from underdeveloped countries, such as sub-Sahara African countries, experienced the most visa rejections. Some students also experienced difficult interview processes and very late decisions from the embassies, which significantly influenced the travel cost for many students.

Selecting the Event Location

Unlike the regional conference where the location is preselected and usually in the United States, the X-Culture Global Business Program is held at various locations around the world. It is critical to identify an appropriate partner university and conduct proper due diligence in order to ensure that the conference will have all the major components in place to deliver a successful event. Certain critical items must be screened prior to approving a location, and safety is on the top of the list. Due to X-Culture's relationship with the University of North Carolina at Greensboro (UNCG), approval is requested from them prior to confirming a location or initiating an agreement (www.studyabroad.uncg.edu). As with many large universities, UNCG hires a third-party vendor who specializes in conducting a feasibility check on the safety of a location for student travel purposes. Thus, an ongoing list of potential host universities is kept on file in an effort to ensure a backup location is available should the preferred establishment not meet the appropriate criteria.

At a minimum, the availability of the following facilities and resources has proven critical for the purposes of safety, cost, and logistics: dormitories and accommodations for all participants; food; classroom space; and event venues for the welcome reception, award ceremony, and gala. The host university should also have enough staff and/or faculty available to support the event and a working relationship with key businesses and governmental liaisons within the area.

A significant determinant of a host university location is the dedication of the host faculty lead. In selecting, heavy reliance is placed on the X-Culture faculty pool who participate in the AIB-SE Conference. These faculty attendees have demonstrated program commitment beyond the traditional expectations of a professor. Ideal qualities of a host faculty lead begin with a faculty member being a strong facilitator of the project in the course setting (virtual component). This is supported by data gathered during the X-Culture virtual projects, including approval ratings from students, as well as reliability and responsiveness to submissions and grading during each project term. Second, the faculty must be well-networked in the university and the local

area. Often times, it is required that the host faculty lead be able to negotiate terms involving housing, food, transportation, printing companies, and other logistical issues. Host faculty must also be able to identify and help secure challenge companies to participate in the X-Culture Global Business Program along with prominent business personnel who will serve as invited speakers at the event. Finally, as with many conferences that involve students, the host faculty's ability to acquire sponsorships from local companies is optimal to help offset expenses. For example, for the 2017 Miami Conference, the host faculty was able to acquire donations from the challenge company and other local organizations, which significantly reduced the students' cost.

The selection of talented local ambassadors, familiar with the location and its culture, is also the responsibility of the local host faculty. Ambassadors are past X-Culture students who have demonstrated excellence in management, leadership, and organizational skills. These students have often completed the Coaching Program (Taras, Global), where they train to lead current X-Culture students through the challenges of completing the X-Culture virtual program. For the local host university, ambassadors are students who have demonstrated excellence in the classroom and leadership in the university, and can help the local host faculty execute the requirements of hosting X-Culture Global Business Week. About half of the ambassadors originate from the area for several reasons. The translation of the local language, for example, is very important because the language of X-Culture is English, and everyone is required to participate in that language. However, translators in non-English-speaking locations are required to help with vendors and transportations and to conduct many outside transactions. This was the case in Italy, and the reliability of the Italian ambassadors was invaluable. The university and local area familiarization tours, designed and conducted by local ambassadors, give participants a taste of what the local student experiences. Finally, local ambassadors are the best teachers to explain cultural differences. Ambassadors are similar in age with students and can transfer the knowledge easily, even from different points of views.

To supplement the local ambassadors, additional global ambassadors are selected from the X-Culture Coaching Program. Priority is given to exceptional students who have not only completed the Coaching Program but have also attended a past X-Culture event. Top candidates receive an invitation to apply and once interviewed, the global ambassadors are selected. About three months prior, the ambassador team receives training on the local area and its culture; how to manage a large group of students; and how to execute the event in its entirety. Through the process, ambassadors learn exceptional leadership skills and advance their business communication skills.

The Curriculum

The student curriculum is designed around the following anchors: the business challenge, corporate site visits, and the student development workshops. Two other major components are given great consideration: the panel sessions and faculty lectures. In addition, the X-Culture Faculty Development Workshop and the Research "Xackathon" (X-Culture Research Hackathon) are designed exclusively for the faculty and run concurrent to the student development workshops and student "team time".

The primary curriculum component revolves around the business challenge. The local host faculty and the challenge company determine what business challenge(s) they would like to address. Then a connection is made between the local host faculty, the company challenge executives, and the business challenge lead(s). They then gather background information on the company and write the challenge so it is interesting and easily understood by the students. The business challenge lead conducts additional research on the unique nature of the company before writing the first draft. For example, when writing the Seminole Gaming Hard Rock (SGHR) International challenges, the lead researched The Seminole Tribe of Florida and industry regulations. Once the challenge company and the core X-Culture leadership team approve the final version, the challenge is released to the student teams. Teams are provided an instruction guide and a timeline of critical milestones to help frame the research process.

Part I: Five Weeks of Virtual Collaboration

The students work in global teams to complete the project. Our experience shows that the optimal team size for this project comprises five students, with each team member from a different country. Teams are formed five weeks before the event, and they communicate virtually through a number of free tools. We have found that Facebook (closed group) is the preferred way for students to communicate, WhatsApp is the preferred way to chat, and Google Docs is the preferred platform for group work. During this time, the students also have two or three live webinars with the representatives from the client company. Students are expected to have completed all background research and have at least discussed possible solutions. This is critical, as often, students have very limited team meeting time once they arrive for the on-ground program component.

Part II: One Week On Location Collaboration

Once the students arrive for the Global Business Week, they visit their client company, meet the company management team, and have a tour of the facilities. Teams continue to work on their presentations and prepare for the business challenge. The final project is presented to the executives on the last day of the event and the executives decide which project best meets their needs. Executives typically have 8–10 team presentations to choose from. Once the decision is made, the winner is announced at the award ceremony and gala, which takes place on the final evening of Global Business Week.

2017 X-Culture Global Business Program Detailed Review

The first X-Culture Global Business Program was hosted by Johnson & Wales University (JWU), North Miami, Florida, USA, in 2017. Dr Leilani Baumanis held the dual roles of conference chair and local host faculty for the purpose of piloting the program. For future events, these roles will be occupied by two different professors. As conference chair, Baumanis was responsible for the overall structure and planning of the event. In the role of local host faculty, she had the responsibilities of securing local business sponsors and participants; enlisting the resources needed from the university (housing, food, classrooms, and event venues); garnering community and industry support; arranging high-level, interesting destinations for the students to visit; and assembling a dedicated team of experienced X-Culture leaders and faculty to facilitate the program.

Once the university committed to hosting, it was scheduled as a "major event" on campus with a multi-day agenda (Appendix 2). Campus departments were assigned tasks to prepare for over 150 international visitors. Faculties made available several classrooms and venues, the library was in charge of signage, and the technology department provided technological needs in the classrooms, event venues, and student access while on campus. The meals were outsourced to a third-party vendor that had university contract. The housing department provided dorm rooms with 150 beds for students and dorms for ambassadors. This enabled students to stay on campus for a nominal price with close proximity to all site visit locations. This also eliminated the need for daily transportation to the university and students had access to amenities (library, Wi-Fi, computer labs, and housing amenities

such as the pool or exercise rooms). Faculty stayed at a local hotel at their expense (special conference rates were negotiated), and the university provided a complimentary shuttle for faculty from the hotel to the campus multiple times a day.

The X-Culture leadership team was very conscious of the price of registration and endeavored to keep the price as affordable as possible. Daily per person costs amounted to below $100 a day, which included lodging, food, transportation to all events, all conference materials, prizes, gifts, snacks and beverages, and so on. For comparison, many conferences charge $100–200 per day, and incurred additional expense on a hotel, meals, and optional tours. By utilizing the dorms, students lived on the beautiful JWU campus with a tropical setting and just a few minutes' car ride to the beach. As a courtesy, X-Culture Global sent out hundreds of support letters to potential sponsors identified by the students, and in many cases, they received sponsorship. The vast majority of the attendees received some sort of funding. In addition, many students received funding, in many cases from their universities.

Seminole Gaming Hard Rock (SGHR) Hotel & Casino served as the challenge company. The Seminole Tribe of Florida acquired the Hard Rock brand in 1997 for $965 million with the intention of growing the gaming side of the business. With the exception of the original Hard Rock Restaurant in London and the Hard Rock Hotel & Casino in Las Vegas, the Hard Rock brand belongs to the Seminole Tribe of Florida (De la Merced, 2006). Today, "Hard Rock hotels, casinos and cafes now operate in 74 countries. Venues include 177 cafes, 24 hotels and 11 casinos, plus Hard Rock Stadium in Miami" (Heroux Pounds, 2018). A new iconic Hard Rock Guitar Hotel located near Seminole Gaming Hard Rock (SGHR) Headquarters in Hollywood, Florida was scheduled to open in time to host the 2020 Super Bowl at the Hard Rock Stadium (Miami Super Bowl 2020, n.d.). These were exciting times for the company, and it was a great opportunity for X-Culture students to experience this business transformation.

The Study-Abroad Event Experience

The goal was to make the event packed with workshops, training, business competition, meetings with entrepreneurs, field trips, behind-the-scenes company tours, as well as ample sightseeing and networking opportunities. Many of the activities were scheduled spontaneously, which made it enjoyable for the ambassadors and students. For example, students in Miami wanted to learn how to dance the salsa from a local dance instructor as Miami is known

for salsa (unique cultural experience). Ambassadors searched for a local salsa instructor, and a venue was found where students could attend the session during one of the evening free events.

Overall, the week-long event was so packed that some students complained about a lack of free time. The event organizers considered this feedback. On the one hand, participants come from thousands of miles away and the leadership team wanted to provide a high impact, high content event. On the other hand, it should not be all about business and learning. Just having a quiet minute on the beach is important too, especially when you're in Miami, right on the Atlantic Ocean shore, perhaps their first time seeing an American beach. In setting the expectation, students were advised to prepare for pre- and post-conference activities and be present for the conference. However, some students didn't take this as an absolute direction and chose personal downtime, instead of attending every program activity as scheduled. Setting parameters for attendance and suggesting pre-conference and post-conference excursions will be a part of setting participant expectations going forward. The Miami 2017 Conference was considered the pilot year, where everything was tested and so much was learned. Many of these lessons were incorporated in the second X-Culture Global Business Program held at Macerata, Italy, 2018.

2018 X-Culture Global Business Program, Macerata, Italy

The University of Macerata (UNIMC) is one of the oldest universities in the world, located in one of Italy's most ancient cities. The local host faculty was Dr. Ernesto Tavoletti, Associate Professor of Management. Macerata is a walled medieval city in the Marche Region in southern Italy. For many students, it was the first time they had ever been to Europe, to Italy, and most especially, inside a medieval Italian city. Attendees were fascinated with this unique location. The conference was strategically scheduled during the famous Macerata Opera Week, offering opera festivities throughout the city during the week. Students attended an open-air opera to see Mozart's Magic Flute, in Italian (Neilson, 2018). This proved very interesting for the students as many of them had never attended an opera, much less a modern adaptation of an opera (https://www.sferisterio.it/en/macerata-opera-festival).

The organizing team followed a similar week-long itinerary as the previous year. One significant change was instead of having one challenge company,

2018 offered four distinct business challenges. Four companies were ideal because each company could only accommodate 50 people in their facilities and bus transport had a limit of 54 seats per vehicle.

This was a great opportunity for students as they were given a choice between the four business challenges, allowing them to select companies aligned with their interests and professional goals. Once students were divided into groups, the agenda followed the standard webinar process and scheduled student visits to their respective companies. The four challenge companies were as follows: (1) Sferisterio, the Open-air Opera House in Macerata; (2) Nuova Simonelli, an espresso machine manufacturer; (3) Eurosuole, a manufacturer of soles for Italian shoe companies such as Ferragamo and Dolce Gabana; and (4) Cocci Griffoni, a wine manufacturing company with a vineyard in the Italian countryside. Scheduling all the visits simultaneously proved challenging but with planning, the visits went very well. Students returned to campus for lunch and in the afternoon, they visited iGuzzini, another Italian company famous for their lighting designs. iGuizzini was the only company that could accommodate all 200 participants, and they had a very interesting interactive showroom where students could engage in lighting selections, in addition to offering a formal executive presentation and question and answer session.

Faculty lectures centered on the industries in the area. Several UNIMC faculty gave interesting lectures on the fashion industry of Marche Region and the "family-run" business culture of the area. The Mayor presented a lecture about municipality management in a historical town. It was an amazing opportunity for students to learn such a diverse set of topics from the people who live there.

The Mayor's office was a huge supporter of the X-Culture Global Business Week visit and helped with venue accommodation within the city. For example, the Mayor's office helped facilitate the use of the historic Palazzo Buonaccorsi for the welcome reception and award ceremony and gala. The Mayor encouraged scheduling the conference during the Macerata Opera Week so that conference participants could experience Macerata at its best. And when the event took place, the Mayor himself comingled with the students.

One aspect of the 2018 program that organizers found was a particularly positive outcome was staffing enough ambassadors to help manage the program and providing them the appropriate amount of autonomy to practice their leadership skills. Activities like salsa lessons, scavenger hunts (with prizes), and soccer were planned off hours to encourage intercultural participation. Ultimately, students spent a tremendous number of hours building relationships and creating memories that will last a lifetime for the participants.

Setting Student Expectations

It is the intention of X-Culture Global to avoid reproducing a US-centric business environment or western dominant culture in relation to accommodations, meals, logistics, and so on. So whenever possible, the organizers adopt the local standards with the only limits concerning safety and security. In doing so, the organizing team found that for students to be most receptive of the experience and environment, it is paramount to set the students' expectations prior to arrival. The following section will detail a few issues with students' adjustments to the host university local environment.

In Miami 2017, housing was on campus and a university vendor catered and served the food in the university dining hall. In Macerata 2018, the student housing was a 30-minute walk from the university. The historic campus was inside the medieval city and the new modern dormitories were built outside of the old city walls. Local students walked this distance without issue, but some students found this shocking and were very displeased with the requirement of having to walk such a distance. Local busses were available, but it was up to the local ambassadors to teach the students how to take the local transportation.

In Macerata 2018, the food vendor was in the piazza in front of the university, which made it not only a convenient location, but offered the perfect scene of a classical Italian bistro. However, this vendor was not affiliated with the university and did not have the same flexibilities with food choices as students experienced the previous year. Planning food is difficult, especially when there is a number of attendees who had diet requirements based on cultural or religious traditions. The safe side would be to adopt the same policy as airline companies, but the exposure to local food tradition would be missed. The compromise was to adhere to local food traditions and those with very compelling dietary requirements were given the option of vegetarian food. In the end, all students seemed appreciative, but during the conference, it was a problem. Accommodating every request proved impossible and discriminating between different requests was arbitrary and unfair.

In the future, it should be stressed that food is a way to explore different cultures and should be exploited as much as possible. The leadership team decided food selection should not be neutralized and reduced to international hotel or airlines standards. Additionally, it was agreed that timing and distribution of meals during the day should also follow local traditions, with consideration to event schedules. Going forward, the conference planners will be more explicit and illustrative of the possible dietary and environmental factors that will be offered at the event. In addition, conference organizers could consider other alternatives, such as planning for public transportation from the dorms to the schools.

Other Challenges and Lessons Learned

As with the experience in Miami 2017, there were also several lessons learned in Macerata 2018. An initial concern pointed out by the Italian host faculty lead was the strategic location of Macerata. He felt that it might be difficult to travel to the location, or that it may add to the travel costs due to its remote location. He was somewhat right as there were a few travel complications, yet the organizers were pleased to see that it was only 12–15 participants with travel complications (less than 10 percent) out of 150+ student and faculty traveling by bus, train, cars, and planes from around the world. It was incredible to see that over 90 percent of the attendees made it on time, left on time, and most importantly, there were no health or travel incidents.

Another new lesson learned was where to buy conference merchandise and printed materials. The organizing team attempted to save money by buying products from Eastern European countries and ship it to Italy. The reality was that the money saved was not worth the difficulties of getting the products accurate and on time. Having the products delivered was expensive and inconvenient, and in the end, only a few dollars were saved. Some print materials were lost in transit and had to be produced urgently on site. Moreover, the products themselves were not unique and could have been easily purchased in Italy.

Another change made in reflection of the event was to consolidate the positions of coach and ambassador under one role with the title "ambassador". Ultimately, the intention of this change is to avoid role ambiguity, remove unintended status distinctions and/or conflict, help clarify the role for other participants, and allow the ambassadors a more in-group autonomy in tackling challenges with the "right person for the right task at hand". Moreover, ambassadors structured their roles (often organically) so that someone is lead on a certain project based on his/her strengths. It was evident that empowering ambassadors to self-manage not only alleviated stress for the conference chair, but it also made a more positive leadership experience for the ambassadors.

This experience also identified a good group of potential "future ambassadors", in particular, past X-Culture Global Business Conference participants and those students who have successfully completed the X-Culture Coaching Program. It was evident that as more students became assimilated into the culture of X-Culture (redundancy intended), the quality of the ambassador pool improved.

In the case of Italy, it was also important to choose enough ambassadors who spoke the local language and could translate easily. Ambassadors were selected from all over the world with priority given to the host university students to fill at least 50 percent of the slots. This was a tactical strategy as they understand the university, country culture, and the local community best. The other 50 percent of the ambassadors were selected based on their performance on past X-Culture challenges and/or their participation in the Coaching Program. This strategy worked very well and is now the standard in selecting ambassadors moving forward.

Setting the requirements for attending the conference in its totality is also an expectation that must be set and managed. In the future, this task will be under the direct supervision of ambassadors. Absences compromise the quality of the team presentation and the experience as a whole. For 2019, the leadership team implemented a behavior contract that sets the expectations for students, which includes required participation of certain activities. In order for students to receive their certificate, all students must have attended all required activities (sans an approved, extenuating circumstance).

Student Satisfaction and Feedback Data

Every year, feedback and student satisfaction data is collected in detail. To reduce the effects of the event excitement, the survey is administered approximately two weeks after students return home and have had some time to reflect on their experience. A total of 96 students had completed the post-project survey following the Miami 2017 event, and 97 following the Macerata 2018 event. In both cases, that represented roughly 67 percent response rate. No significant difference was found in age or gender, nor there appeared a systemic variation in nationalities of those who completed the survey and those who skipped it, suggesting that the threat of non-response bias was minimal (Appendix 4).

The numbers are generally very positive, all above 4 (*very satisfied*) and 5 (*extremely satisfied*). The highest ratings are for "learning something new", "expanding professional network", and "seeing new places and cultures". In 2018, when the cost was somewhat higher for travel, there was slight drop in the students' perception of the event being worth the investment. It was still very high and above 4 (*very satisfied*), but not as high as nearly perfect ratings for other categories.

The Post-Project Satisfaction Survey Results (Appendix 4) provide the results of the students' perception of the organization of the events. As before,

the vast majority of the ratings are very high, between 4 (*very satisfied*) and 5 (*extremely satisfied*). The highest are the students' perception of safety and security, which the leadership team took very seriously. However, a few numbers are low in review of the surveys. The food received lower ratings in 2018. The restaurant served very similar food every day (lots of pasta), which had a negative effect on the students. Lower numbers were received for housing and transportation in 2018. The challenges there were that most buildings in Italy do not have air conditioning, which proved to be a challenge as the event coincided with unusually hot weather. Furthermore, many sessions were held in the historic city center, which was about 30-minute walk from the campus. Normally, it would be a very pleasant walk, but the hot weather made this commute somewhat a challenge. Again, setting expectations in the future will offset these types of disappointment (Appendix 4, Post-Project Satisfaction Survey Results).

Appendix 4 provides the results of satisfaction with different components of the program. Again, the vast majority of the program components are rated above 4 (*very satisfied*). Company visits and lectures consistently received very high evaluations. The presentations of the business reports to the client companies also consistently scored very high. The program components that scored lower were, for example, scavenger hunts and campus tours (perhaps due to walking, weather, etc.). A dance class for students in Macerata 2018 scored extremely high, although almost the same event in Miami 2017 was less popular. We will continue to explore creative and varied academic and cultural offerings throughout the event. Appendix 3 itemizes the timeline of this format, and sharing it is hoped to aid faculty and other academic conference organizers that are hosting an event of similar proportions, attended by students and faculty coming from multiple locations.

Conclusion

The X-Culture Global Business Program is an excellent way to deliver a short-term study-abroad experience. Students collaborate in global virtual teams and then have the opportunity to collaborate and complete a project and presentation face-to-face, during a week-long academic experience. Students interact with, and learn from, other students and faculty from around the world, experience company visits, interact with executives, all while experiencing a campus and environment different than their home location. Students gain experience and practice working in a global team environment and get familiar with another location and culture outside of their comfort

zone. In the end, the ultimate outcome is for students to gain confidence in travel, present to global clients while working short-term with a global team, and gain a positive outlook regarding the benefits of such ventures in international business. In lessons learned, we endeavor to capture additional data regarding student learning outcomes. While the survey covers basic outcomes, we know we can capture and measure the rich learning experiences of students completing this six-week program. Satisfaction increased in the following academic experiences: elevator pitch, resume competition, and job interview competition. We know these to be valuable exercises for students and will continue to develop them for participating students. Additionally, we saw an increase in positive response to the survey prompt: "Did it provide you with an opportunity to see new places and cultures?" (Appendix 3). It is an exceptional learning opportunity to actively study cultural values, collaborate using technology, and work through the challenges of time zones and different languages. X-Culture's overarching theme is "connecting cultures", and to this end, we look forward to continuing the journey.

Appendix 1: AIB-SE Symposium vs. X-Culture Global Business Week Formats

	AIB-SE X-Culture symposium	X-Culture global business week
Timeline	3 days	5 days
Time of year	October/November	Summer
Student participants	50	150
Location	USA	Global
Pre-conference webinars	Yes	Yes
Client challenge /business plan competition	Yes	Yes
Elevator pitch competition	Yes	Yes
Resume competition	Yes	Yes
Job interview competition	Yes	Yes
Faculty lead lectures	Limited	Multiple offerings
Student workshops	Limited	Multiple offerings
Cultural events/activities	Limited	Multiple offerings
Research Xackathon (faculty only)	No	Yes, multi-day format
Faculty training and certification (faculty only)	No	Yes,multi-day format

Appendix 2: Sample Global Business Week Agenda, Miami 2017

Saturday, July 15, 2017	• Arrive, check in at on-campus housing • Welcome dinner
Sunday, July 16, 2017	• Tour of the Johnson Wales University campus • Panel discussions: – The Economics of Miami: US Dept of Commerce, The Greater Miami Chamber of Commerce, BEACON Council – Tourism in South Florida: Port Miami, Port of Fort Lauderdale, Miami International Airport, Orlando International Airport • Seminole Gaming/Hard Rock International Executive Presentations • Meet your Challenge Directors • Work on the presentation—competition
Monday, July 17, 2017	• Career development workshops: – What it takes to have a successful career as an entrepreneur vs. corporate employee vs. public servant vs. academic – The job hunt: dos, dont's, and best strategies – The art of preparing an effective resume and cover letter – Doing business in Latin America • The Elevator Pitch mini competition, tracks: business startup funding, job hunt • Career counseling and workshop with the Career Center of Johnson Wales University • Meetings with CEOs of several multinational companies headquartered in Miami • Work on the presentation for the Seminole Gaming/Hard Rock International competition
Tuesday, July 18, 2017	• Tour of Port Miami, learn how one of the world's biggest seaports operates • Tour of the Miami International Airport, learn how one of the world's biggest airports operates • Tour of the Seminole Gaming/Hard Rock International properties, meetings and Q&A with the company representatives • Seminole Gaming/Hard Rock International social event
Wednesday, July 19, 2017	• Final work on the competition presentations • Interviews with the representatives of Seminole Gaming/Hard Rock International for those interested in jobs/internships at the company • The Seminole Gaming/Hard Rock International competition presentations • Gala dinner, award ceremony, and end of program celebration
Thursday, July 20, 2017	• Departures

Appendix 3: Recommended Timeline for Events of This Type

Preparing an event of this magnitude can be a daunting task and requires a 12-month lead time from development to delivery. Moreover, additional steps must be taken in order to select a host university, conduct a site visit of the area, and prepare the conference in locations that are often outside the United States. Finally, selected students need the lead time to raise the funds to participate when necessary and apply for their visas, as needed. Below is a recommended timeline.

Task	Timeline
Selecting a host university	9 months to (ideally) 1 year
Site visit to host University	3–6 months prior to event
Planning meeting for selecting dates and outline of activities/theme	Initially, 1 year, 6 months prior to event for the larger theme; 3–6 months prior to event to develop details
Webpage creation for event	1 year prior
Reserving/securing lodging	Down payments typically expected 6–8 months prior to the event
Selecting company partners	6–8 months prior to the event to ensure executive schedule commitment
Invitations sent to students and faculty	6–8 months prior to event
Application deadlines	One month after the invitation was sent
Registration deadlines	Initial registration 5 months prior; second round if necessary 4 months prior; all selection complete 3 months prior. Students apply for visas as needed.
Social media closed group	5 months prior, immediately after the selection of first round of students
Catering and meal arrangement deadlines	Investigate options 6 months prior; confirm 3 months prior; down payment 1–2 months prior depending on caterer
Scheduling client visits	3 months prior to allow for the company to arrange their schedule
Local transportation reservations	3 months prior
Program final draft/print ready	30 days prior, print two weeks prior to allow for corrections.
Other print materials	30 days prior, print 2 weeks prior to allow for corrections
Conference give-aways (pens, shirts, etc.) ordered	30 days prior
Event signage	30 days prior

Appendix 4

Post-Project Satisfaction Survey Results: Overall

Survey item	Miami	Macerata
Looking back, Was it worth your time and money to attend the symposium?	4.79	4.33
Would you consider attending another X-Culture symposium in the future?	4.55	4.25
Would you recommend other X-Culture students to attend a meeting like this?	4.85	4.50
Did it help you learn something new?	4.83	4.72
Did it expand your personal and professional network?	4.82	4.68
Did it provide you with an opportunity to see new places and cultures?	4.73	4.76

The responses are recorded on a 5-point scale, where 5 is *extremely happy* and 1 is *extremely unhappy*

Post-Project Satisfaction Survey-Event Organization

Satisfaction item	Miami	Macerata
From the organization and logistics point of view, how adequate were the following:		
Overall organization of the event in general	4.55	3.72
Forming teams	4.44	4.43
Housing (hotel or dormitories)	4.44	3.28
Assigning roommates	4.66	4.34
Transportation (buses)	4.68	3.13
Social and fun events	4.27	4.04
Sightseeing opportunities	3.55	3.74
Information about the location	4.08	3.73
Food: Breakfasts	4.52	2.74
Food: Lunches	4.38	2.89
Food: Dinners (when offered)	4.38	3.92
Food: Off-site receptions (Welcome and Gala)	4.21	4.41
Judging and selection of winners for various awards	4.05	4.00
Support provided by coaches	4.08	3.88
Support provided by ambassadors	4.45	4.17
Support provided with the visa applications	4.38	4.14
Support for obtaining external funding	3.27	3.70
Safety and security	4.88	4.72

Post-Project Satisfaction Survey: Overall Satisfaction

Satisfaction item	Miami	Macerata
Pre-conference: Orientation and information	4.40	3.77
Pre-conference: Webinars with client companies	4.35	3.89
Pre-conference: Webinars organized by the coaches	4.34	3.53
Day 1: Check-in and registration	4.76	4.18
Day 1: Opening ceremony at the museum	4.48	4.58
Day 2: Seminole Gaming Exec. Panel	4.79	
Day 2: Miami Business Panel	4.65	
Day 2: Seminole Gaming Challenge Tracks	4.63	
Day 2: Culture Session	4.71	
Day 2: Presentation training session	4.45	
Day 2: Pool party (students only)	4.44	
Day 2: Reception at Sole	4.75	
Day 3: Port of Miami tour	4.47	
Day 3: Miami International Airport tour	4.63	
Day 3: American Airlines luncheon	4.01	
Day 3: Reception on the Pier (professors only)	4.75	
Day 4: Panel on Tips and Techniques for your Professional Journey	4.58	
Day 4: Executive Leadership panel	4.55	
Day 4: Seminole Gaming scavenger hunt	3.24	
Day 4: Seminole Gaming cocktail reception	4.70	
Day 4: VIP tour of the Seminole Hard Rock Hotel & Casino Hollywood	4.68	
Day 1: University introduction poster session		4.11
Day 1: Opera		3.95
Day 2: Meetings with the company representatives		4.60
Day 2: Tour of the University of Macerata campus and city		3.83
Day 2: Research Xackathon		4.06
Day 2: Faculty Development session		4.18
Day 3: Trip to Eurosoule (shoes)		4.61
Day 3: Trip to Grifoni (wine)		4.69
Day 3: Trip to Opera (opera)		4.40
Day 3: Trip to iGuzzini (light)		4.50
Day 4: Lectures/workshops: The Fun Side of International Marketing		4.65
Day 4: Lectures/workshops: Giving an Interview that Lands the JOB!		4.54
Day 4: Lectures/workshops: Cover Letter and Resume		4.47
Day 4: Lectures/workshops: Giving an Interview that Lands the JOB!		4.52
Day 4: Lectures/workshops: Elevator Pitch Preparation		4.55
Day 4: Lectures/workshops: Culture		4.28
Day 4: Lectures/workshops: Fashion, Creative & Design: Benefits from Industrial Districts, Traditions and Arts		4.43
Day 4: Lectures/workshops: Enneagram		4.50
Day 4: Lectures/workshops: A Sino-European Comparative Ethics Primer		4.52
Day 5: Meeting with the city Mayor		4.44

(*continued*)

(continued)

Satisfaction item	Miami	Macerata
Day 5: Elevator Pitch competition	4.33	4.55
Day 5: Resume competition	3.95	4.20
Day 5: Job Interview competition	4.28	4.57
Day 5: Student Dance Session	3.84	4.72
Day 6: Challenge Presentations	4.67	4.58
Day 6: Gala Dinner and Awards	4.14	4.61

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Designing and Delivering the Global, Experiential Learning Opportunity: A Case Study of a Faculty-Led MBA Study Abroad Program

Mary Conran

Introduction

While much has been written on the purpose and goals of experiential learning, and even more so about developing and structuring faculty-led study-abroad programs, there are limited examples of case studies detailing the experiences in these programs.

This case study examines the process of developing, delivering, and evaluating the impact of an international immersion experience to MBA students in India, and the impact was self-reported by program participants. This chapter discusses the MBA program in which the experience is embedded, explains the process of development of the in-country and pre-departure preparation, presents an overview of a variety of the experiences offered (including relevant reflections by participants), and concludes with an analysis of the success of the program in engaging program participants in this experiential learning activity using program participant reflections as evidence of their learning and achievement of program learning outcomes.

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M. A. Gonzalez-Perez et al. (eds.), *The Palgrave Handbook of Learning and Teaching International Business and Management*, https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-030-20415-0_41

Designing and Delivering the Global, Experiential Learning Opportunity: A Case Study of a Faculty-led MBA Study Abroad Program

This case analysis explores the process of developing and structuring an MBA-level participant experience which incorporates company and organization site visits in India. The case analysis includes insights and self-reports of educational outcomes as a result of this international, experiential learning activity.

The FOX Global MBA program (MBA Program) focuses on global perspectives in contemporary management by utilizing a globally based curriculum and cases to assure participants develop, and hone, global perspectives in decision-making. Program-imbedded international experience components allow participants to both apply course concepts and develop an expanding global perspective (Mangiero, 2011). The MBA program encourages participants to experience global business through a minimum of two Global Immersions: one experience at the end of the first year, and the other in the middle of the second year of this cohort program.

Global immersions at Fox School of Business are short-term study trips (two weeks in a country) that allow participants opportunity to experience global business rather than simply learning about it in the classroom. These immersion experiences are designed to integrate academic content with corporate visits and cultural experiences in order to challenge participants to explore doing business in an unfamiliar setting and seeks to motivate them to develop the adaptive skills critical to function in today's global marketplace (Tan, 2005).

Unlike study abroad trips focused on classroom learning and sightseeing, the Fox Global Immersion experience is designed to expose program participants to the environment of business by taking them to targeted destinations that offer a robust and profound practical experience which significantly enhances student learning outcomes (Anderson, 2001). These experiences include company and site visits with a variety of businesses and organizations which expose participants to management challenges and decisions in a variety of organizational settings.

Background of the Immersion Experience

In 2018, half of the first-year Fox MBA cohort went to India while the other half of the cohort spent two weeks in China. This case analysis details the development of the strategic intent and impact of the first-year experience

during two weeks in India which included visits to organizations in Mumbai, Delhi, and Bangalore.

Successful global immersion programs for MBA students should seek to offer a variety of practical, on-location experiences (Dyer, Liebrean-Himes, & Hassan, 2009). Ideally, these experiences are designed to expose participants to a variety of professionals, in a variety of businesses, so that they begin to understand both "how" and "why" businesses work in these environments (Tuleja, 2014). These learning experiences allow students to build capacity for comparative managerial perspective, a core competence for contemporary managers (Kelley, 1981).

India was chosen as a destination for the first-year immersion program as it would allow program participants an opportunity to make direct connections with a variety of tech-related start-ups and design-thinking organizations (Glen, Suciu, Baughn, & Anson, 2015), a core theme of the MBA program. Faculty research networks, as well as previous visits by members of the university to India, resulted in a robust set of connections from which the program could be developed and delivered. The program also worked with an in-country provider to gain access to several start-up businesses as well as for logistic support for transportation, lodging, and cultural aspects of the immersion experience.

Companies agreed to host, and speakers in India agreed to present, to program participants as the experience provided an opportunity for these companies to expand their social networks, gain perspective from the MBA students on market challenges and opportunities, and provided an opportunity for the organization to showcase their achievements. A few speaker events were offered at the hotel hosting the program participants, but most presentations occurred at the companies. Transit to these company locations sometimes posed logistic challenges, but the opportunity for the participants to see operating facilities, and even office spaces in India, offered additional learning experiences.

A group of 24 student participants, along with a faculty and an administrative lead, engaged in the India Immersion program in May 2018. The group size was workable, if on the high end; at some office locations, seating all participants was a challenge, while some factory tours required splitting the group into two smaller groups.

As a result of the design and delivery of the program, participants interacted and engaged with managers at several levels in organizations visited. This program format permitted participants to ask direct questions, probe responses for better understanding, and begin to transform insights into application and learning for different situations, key objectives and outcomes of both the experience and the MBA program (Fig. 41.1).

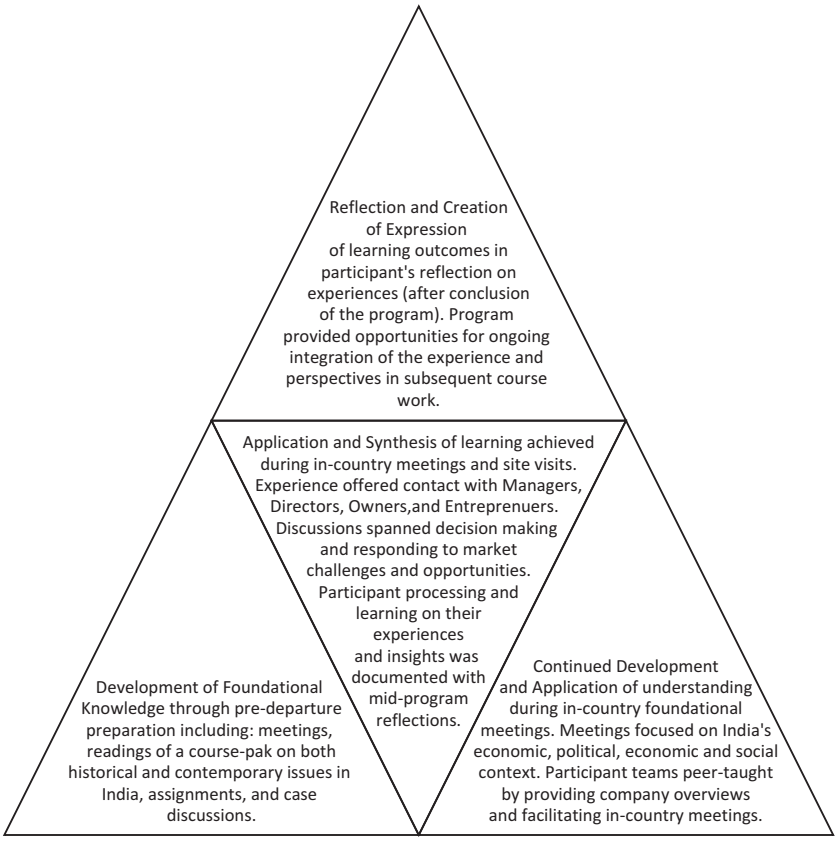

Fig. 41.1 Model of the experiential learning paradigm for the Global MBA immersion experience

Elements of the Immersion Experience

Experiential learning (Gonzalez-Perez & Taras, 2015) takes place as program participants prepare for and experience the immersion; participants meet with and interact with managers and company directors, thereby achieving deeper synthesis of program content as they identify, analyze, evaluate, and create an assessment of strategic options for organizations (Anderson, 2001).

As part of the immersion experience, participants engaged in a series of global immersion preparatory sessions which covered logistic and context issues. These meetings focused on providing participants with foundational exposure to key cultural and political economy training on India, and global

business. These objectives were achieved through review and discussion of seminal readings, current data on the country, and overviews of key industries, as well as discussion of case studies. This pre-departure experience developed a foundation which enabled participants to have more productive, valuable, and culturally competent experiences as they immersed in the foreign business environment (Faridi, 2017).

The in-country immersion allowed participants to engage in several types of learning opportunities, including meeting with a variety of business executives, touring factories or design studios, interacting with government and non-governmental organization (NGO) officials, and learning about the Indian business environment from local managers—all strong elements for global immersion experience (DiGregorio, 2015).

The assessment component of the in-country experience required participants to respond to two reflective prompts (at the end of weeks 1 and 2) to explore, and begin to apply, what they had experienced and understood. At the conclusion of the program, participants were required to develop a more detailed analysis of the experience by reacting to a prompt which required consideration of the business, social, and cultural context of the experience. Finally, participants were asked to articulate transferable business lessons from the experience and synthesize these insights by making recommendations for companies wishing to do business in India, or by recommending adaptations Indian businesses would be required to make to participate in global or US markets. These reflection and synthesis activities served as evidence of a variety of elements of active learning, development, and application (Anderson, 2001).

After returning to the US, a program participant reflected:

> *Before the immersion trip to India, I found myself trying to find an answer to the question many of my family and friends had posed to me: "Why is your business school taking you to India?" I found myself puzzling this very question. I knew India was the fastest growing economy in the world, and I knew there were supposedly great business opportunities in the emerging market; however, I wasn't fully certain what to expect from the trip in terms of my business education. Having returned to the United States, I realize how much I still need to learn about business relationships and successful business operations in an increasingly global environment. The India immersion was such an eye-opening experience and you really needed to be there in the thick of it to really grasp the culture and underlying impacts on business operations.* (Participant 1, Personal Communication: Final Course reflection, May 2018)

Developing and Delivering on the Program Theme

The theme for the immersion for the first-year MBA program was developed by the academic directors of the Fox MBA program. A focus on start-ups and tech-oriented businesses in emerging markets was selected as this theme would directly tie back to material and experiences covered in the first-year core courses in the MBA program. There was an intent to specifically find opportunities to demonstrate concepts and themes from courses on use of data and integration of design thinking while seeking to develop students' global mindset (Osland, 2012).

In-country, one participant reflected:

> *While traveling in India I had many eye-opening experiences in learning about the Indian business environment, social and cultural issues, and comparisons of doing business in India and the United States. One challenge Indian businesses face that many speakers brought up is a skills gap in local talent as a result of (the) educational style in India which offers a theoretical education which misses the practical application component prevalent in American education*. (Participant 2, Personal Communication: Course reflection, May 2018)

Once the theme of tech and start-up was determined, the in-country program was designed to provide participants with the relevant political, economic, and cultural foundations as an introduction to each market (in this case, India). The design of immersion experience for the program sought to provide program participants with more in-depth and specific market or industry-wide perspectives (Menzies, 2015). The program was conceived to start the in-country program with visits and experiences which would provide a continuing overview and insights on India's contemporary economy. By design, this foundational structure would support later participant understanding during visits focused on start-up and technology-enabled businesses.

The program itinerary included visits to companies with which the Fox School had a relationship or a connection (through research or business connection). Visits enabled participants to examine the convergence of start-ups and tech-driven businesses which would reinforce, and further develop, participants' abilities to assess and address management and market challenges (Prahalad, 2011). These globally oriented management skills are particularly critical as students' experiences in the second year of the MBA program requires a heavy focus on an experiential consulting project.

The on-the-ground program also sought to ensure that program participants had an opportunity to meet and interact with managers of multinational corporations to discuss challenges of transversality of organizational systems and human resource (HR) structures. An important component of the in-country program was several interactions with local (start-up) retailers seeking to leverage and court the booming middle class with online retail options (Kalia, Kaur, & Singh, 2018). In allowing participants to experience a variety of business models in several regions of India, participants developed an understanding and appreciation of the influence of the cultural elements, which impacts the corporate cultures experienced (Cooke, 2012).

One participant reflected:

> *Because of globalization and an increased demand of companies in search of global talents, many top schools have added immersion as requirement in their graduate program. This is a unique opportunity for students to see the world differently and to be able to market themselves more effectively.* (Participant 3, Personal Communication: Course Reflection, May 2018)

A total of fifteen visits were scheduled over the course of the two-week experience; several cultural experiences were also included, but this case analysis focuses on the business visits and the impact on student learning.

A participant reflected:

> *Businesses in India are characterized by key factors affecting their operations unique to the country … (which) leads to a major difference in costs of business operations.* (Participant 4, Personal Communication: Course reflection, May 2018)

Another component of the experience included peer-teaching (Boud, 2014). Participants self-selected into teams of two; each company or site-visit was structured to offer participant teams a chance to:

- Present the company/organization to their peers in a pre-meeting orientation.
  - Teams conducted secondary research to generate a profile of the company/organization to be visited and provided a biography of the speakers.
  - Participants presented a summary of the key markets in which the organization operates while highlighting current news or factors impacting the organization.

  - Key performance metrics, as well their implications, were to be used so that all the participants could get a sense of the size and scope of the organizations visited.
- These participants were also responsible for:
  - Formal introduction of the participant group to corporate or organization hosts
  - Presentation of information about the MBA programs and participants to the host
  - Facilitation of Q&A
  - Presentation of a thank-you gift to host(s)

By using this activity as a learning experience, each participant gained experience in researching companies, profiling executives, and facilitating group learning. All participants were encouraged to engage with our speakers and hosts through discussions and questions.

Finally, several visits were designed to provide program participants an opportunity to converse with fintech or tech-related start-ups so that participants could explore challenges created when market opportunities leapfrog.

The Program as an Active Learning Experience

The following discussion summarizes the visit experiences which allowed participants the opportunity to delve into specific, narrow segments of the Indian market. Elements of participants' reflections are included to demonstrate the connections program participants developed and articulated as they forged connections between the MBA Program curriculum, the immersion's learning experiences, and learning outcomes achieved.

Visit 1: CEO of a Professional Services Company (Top Four Auditing Company)

Presentation provided a top-level view of the Indian economic landscape for development and investment. Some challenging issues discussed included intellectual property rights, tax structures and incentives, and government demonetization activities. The complexities of change and innovation in India seem to be a direct result of India's economic structure (approximately $2.6 trillion economy growing at above 7% annually).

A participant observed:

> *India is growing at very fast pace and the government is opening India to the rest of the world to encourage investors to come to India and incite young entrepreneurs in India to "make in India" because there is now market demand in India. In the financial space—because of digitalization and the rapid spread of technology financial services—companies are moving toward mobile transactions and payment to facilitate the rapid flow of capital across the country. This ultimately incites most international banks and financial institutions to come to India because of the large demand of financial products in this region.* (Participant 3, Personal Communication: Final Course Reflection, May 2018)

Visit 2: Director and Group COO of Multinational Bank Providing Services to Companies, Governments, Institutional Investors, and Small- and Medium-sized Businesses

The presentation posited that India's growth is due to its ability to leapfrog other economies and technologies. India will continue to grow if it can continue to handle and manage discontinuous and disruptive change, but there are certainly issues in addressing scale of transformation. The influence of labor reform and government push for greenfield investments currently spurs growth in certain segments, including investment in centralized and digital payment processing which, in turn, fuels fintech growth.

In their reflection of this visit, a participant noted:

> *India's current business environment has further been jolted by rapid digitization, forcing quick adaptation from what was once a much more traditional business model. The proliferation of cheap data gives everyday consumers access to media, apps, and other tools that can empower their escape from social isolation in a business world that has historically catered only to Indian elites. Expansion of smart cities and other infrastructure will similarly allow India to continue "leap-frogging" ahead in its business developments, hopefully also serving more of the population.* (Participant 5, Personal Communication: Final Reflection Paper, May 2018)

Visit 3: CEO of a Private Investment Company

By the second day of the immersion experience, participants had begun to formulate and express curiosity about the Indian culture and impact on the economy, so, instead of a formal presentation, the CEO agreed to answer

program participant's questions on a variety of topics including cultural context given the economic conditions, gender roles and issues, pressures on infrastructure (roads, transit, sanitation and mobile, and its impact), and related urban issues.

Several participants reflected on this presentation:

> *Companies expanding into new countries must understand the inner workings of the business and cultural environment in the country of interest.* (Participant 6, Personal Communication: Course Reflection, May 2018)

> *Wages, population density, cultural norms, and government regulations are just a few macro-factors that would drastically change how businesses operate between India and the U.S. While the companies (we) encountered may have contrasting product development needs or marketing, their level of functionality and output is more globally competitive and therefore comparable with U.S. standards in those industries.* (Participant 7, Personal Communication: Course Reflection, May 2018)

> *The Indian business structure is one that has benefitted from "leap-frogging" through developmental periods, allowing the other countries to codify infrastructures that work to take cutting-edge and (then) make it functional. With such stark differences in how business works between countries, it is challenging to define benefits, though there is plenty of potential.* (Participant 8, Personal Communication: Final Course Reflection, May 2018)

Visit 4: Director, Global Consulting Company Operating in India

The speaker presented insights on the "shades of business in India" using the example of the Dabbawalla (Mason, 2017) to explain the tight operational performance achieved by Indians with low or no formal education. The education system in India has a strong impact on the skills of modern India; well-educated Indians have social and economic mobility (which is why education is a key area of government policy). Participants were introduced to the term "Jugaad" to explains the strong reliance on business relationships and the need for trust to be built and maintained (Prabhu, 2015).

Participants reflected:

> *The concept of jugaad in India was one that seemed to cross all the different cultures present in the country. The ability to create unique solutions and willingness to take risks and start companies is something that will benefit India greatly in the long run,*

and even extends to different industries and locations. (Participant 9, Personal Communication: Course Reflection, May 2018)

Cultural factors, such as customs related to negotiation and haggling, also greatly impact how a business attempting to offer uniform pricing must operate. (Participant 10, Personal Communication: Course Reflection, May 2018)

After two days of overview, participants were ready for more market- and industry-specific information and the program had been designed to transition into narrower realms of the immersion experience by offering insights into key business areas and industries as well as exposing a variety of start-up businesses.

Visit 5: President & Global HR Head, Vice President Strategy and Business Development of a Multinational Company Involved in the Development, Manufacture, and Sale of Pharmaceutical and Nutraceutical Products

Participants learned that pharma in India is experiencing double-digit market growth (15% annually in volume, 11% in value) which is good and bad. The market opportunity attracts competitors and multinational companies (MNCs), while improvement in the medical infrastructure is also impacting market opportunities. Increases in disposable income helps more consumers afford healthcare; these factors, along with increased disease awareness, increase in chronic diseases (because of lifestyle changes), and the growth of medical tourism, are fuel for India's boom in pharma.

Participants reflected:

The pharmaceutical industry is very different from in the U.S., with a larger focus on generic drugs. Our hosts mentioned the government set price caps on different medications and therapies. However, U.S. companies such as Johnson & Johnson have pulled out of the pharmaceutical industry in India because of the different pricing systems and inability to be profitable. (Participant 9, Personal Communication: Course Reflection, May 2018)

From the regulatory perspective, Indian companies (seeking global growth) will have to adapt to regulatory system in terms of different laws, tax, state VAT and more. (Participant 11, Personal Communication: Course Reflection, May 2018)

Visit 6: Multiple Managers of a Private, Leading Media Conglomerate. Presenters Included Assistant VP, Digital Marketing Lead, and Head of Programming and Strategy

Owned by a larger multinational, this Indian company faces market challenges as there are over 1000 TV channels in India due to the multi-cultural dimensions of the population; about 200 channels are paid/subscriber format all others are free or government sponsored. The company is seeking to redefine the paradigm of entertainment, the future of sports, and wants to create India's first, truly global digital platform.

Participants reflected:

> *Social and cultural differences also contribute to differences in doing business. India's middle class is estimated at about 300M people, many of which live on as little as $3 per day. In a culturally segmented country with 29 languages and cultures, there can be challenges effectively reaching the entire customer base.* (Participant 12, Personal Communication: Course Reflection, May 2018)

> *This company fights against the traditional attitudes towards women in the Indian culture. It has started to broadcast content that could not be broadcast before because of the Indian social standards … (as) the culture starts to change, the company is increasingly broadcasting more liberal content.* (Participant 11, Personal Communication: Course Reflection, May 2018)

> *(The Media company) used topics and aspects that we had learned from our strategy, marketing, and data visualization classes … we received a tour of the (Dashboard Room), a place to visually display social media data in real time.* (Participant 13, Personal Communication: Final Course Reflection, Fall 2018)

Visit 7: General Manager, Internationally Branded Mumbai Area Hotel and Convention Center

The General Manager used a very informal approach to interact with program participants as he explained, as with most service industries, people are the most critical element in a hotel business. It has become evident to management of this chain that Indians see the employer as part of their family and so the hotel must really work to provide support and development of employees.

Participants reflected:

> *A few of the speakers in our program talked about how attracting and keeping talented women was difficult because parents were skeptical of allowing their daughters*

to work. This (reality has) led a few of the businesses we met with to essentially woo families with additional perks, gifts, and tours before their daughters started. (Participant 2, Personal Communication: Final Course Reflection, May 2018)

The visit to the hotel chain in Mumbai offered important insights of paying attention to the local customs and traditions in planning of operational activities. (Participant 14, Personal Communication: Final Course Reflection, May 2018)

I learned that relationships play an important role of doing business in India. (The hotel Manager) explained that this is in part a result of the slow legal system and difficulty enforcing contracts in the country. Because there can be little legal recourse to enforce contracts, having a good relationship with those you do business becomes critical … the unique characteristics of the Indian business environment must certainly result in challenges for management. (Participant 4, Personal Communication: Final Course Reflection, May 2018)

Employee expectations in India regarding ~9-10% annual pay raises and frequent job promotions represent a much more personally ambitious and career-centered mind-set … working for a company with strong brand reputation is also just as important to many in India as it is to those in the U.S. Despite employee expectations, India's culture of trust concomitantly creates much stronger relative employee loyalty for many firms. (Participant 5, Personal Communication: Course Reflection, May 2018)

Visit 8: Various Managers, Including Associate Manager, Corporate Communications, Store Manager, Senior Manager of Promotions and Growth Initiatives, VP of Operations and Supply Chain Management, Manager of Creative & Communication, VP of Engineering, Director of Marketing, and Director of Operations of an Omni-Channel Furniture Retailer

This mature stage start-up (Paik & Woo, 2017), a five-year-old company with over 1200 employees, is moving away from an online-only retail model to offline and omni-channel model (it also sells through Amazon and Flipkart) because it encountered resistance by Indian consumers to use online only for purchase. Analytics revealed that the consumer search occurs online, and there are multiple visits to the online site before a visit to the brick-n-mortar store for purchase. Achieving sales growth would require leverage of an effective omni–channel model.

Participant reflections included the following:

Businesses in India were particularly intentional about their target market and services offered. The majority (of businesses visited) focused on the upper tiers of the middle class and above. Very few chose to focus on the lower end of the income pyramid, especially those (consumers) in rural areas or those living in slums. For example, the online furniture start-up, which is now expanding to physical locations, targets urban newly married couples or couples with young children buying their first home, those making more than 200,000 Rupees a year, thereby choosing to ignore the rest of the population. (Participant 6, Personal Communication: Course Reflection, May 2018)

Another example of the business environment was a start-up furniture company that expressed the importance of durability in a growing business environment. They realized the price sensitivity of the market, which drives competition to copy their designs at a lower cost to the consumer. While not wanting to compromise on quality, they responded to this by constantly innovating and creating new designs. The company showed me that the growing economy creates immense opportunity for new players, but with opportunity comes the need to adapt to a developing (operating) landscape including regulatory changes, increasingly digital consumers, and ultimately shifting consumer expectations. (Participant 12, Personal Communication: Final Course Reflection, May 2018)

India is also a country with a focus on providing services vs. goods; like in the U.S., many companies in India outsource manufacture to other Southeast Asian countries. For example, (the furniture company) produces most of its furniture in Vietnam or Thailand. (Participant 15, Personal Communication: Final Course Reflection, May 2018)

Visit 9: Principal and Chief Operating Officer of an Analytics Provider

This company was established five years ago and primarily works with Fortune 100 companies. The chief operating officer (COO) explained that the start-up of the company was totally bootstrapped and that the operation is now both profitable and cash positive. Key value proposition offered to client is the ability to identify and develop solutions for business problems through data and analytics. The company works on building the execution model for data analytics to get to "what to DO because of the analytics and insights generated". A key element of the presentation was the conclusion that the "Indian Migration" has subsided, and there is more retention of native talent supporting web- and analytics-based tech development.

One participant reflected:

In general, companies in India have similar goals and expectations as those in other countries; they must find a way to successfully operate with the aim to generate a profit. Data analysis is very important to leverage information and better understand consumers. (Participant 16, Personal Communication: Course Reflection, May 2018)

Visit 10: Sr VP of Operations, Head of Analytics, and the Sr Manager of Innovations for an Online Grocery Retailer

This mature start-up (Paik & Woo, 2017) grocery company operates in 25 Indian cities, carries over 40K brands and products, and fulfills 1.4 million monthly orders while maintaining an 85% customer retention rate with 3.5 million unique website visitors a month. The company sees market opportunities emerging from the log-linear transformation which is possible because of trends in communications and digital applications. Company analytics focus on reliability, scalability, and time-to-delivery to provide definitive, actionable insights. The company sees itself in the later stages of the Gartner Taxonomy (Gartner, Mitchell, & Vesper, 1989) where it seeks to leverage expertise, aggressive service, and methodical organizing.

Participants reflected:

Businesses in India can afford to be more targeted (or ignore segments of the population) because of the sheer number of people in India. A specific sub-set of their population can be as big as the total U.S. population; while in the U.S. must diversify their products or make these more affordable for lower income households to gain scale. (Participant 6, Personal Communication: Course Reflection, May 2018)

There were a few similarities between US and India business ecosystems. Both countries are seeing an increased focus on digital connectivity, resulting in a rise in e-commerce platforms. One example is a start-up Indian online grocery retailer. The US is also seeing rising e-commerce in the grocery space with platforms like Amazon Fresh. Both companies focus on using data-based decisions, streamlining the supply chain, and maximizing efficiencies. (Participant 12, Personal Communication: Course Reflection, May 2018)

The high degree of disorganization and fragmentation in many industries within India means that relatively small brands, by American standards, can leverage strong bargaining power to deliver affordable prices to consumers. The grocery delivery service, for example, capitalizes on the prevalence of small farming throughout India and the fragmentation of the produce-to-market supply chain to retain a competitive negotiating position and source produce at prices cheaper than those of grocery stores.

However, in the US context, there is significant consolidation among both produce-suppliers and grocery chains. (Participant 10, Personal Communication: Course Reflection, May 2018)

Visit 11: Head of Consulting, Global Technology Consulting Services Company

Visit included background information on the company which was funded solely with venture capital, with initial funding from both tech and larger consulting companies. The company principal detailed several "near-death" experiences but concluded that the focus on the core business/basics allowed for balance and sustained business growth.

Participants concluded:

The large and stratified population of India has kept labor costs down … this (stratification) allows companies to focus the client-facing roles in their local markets while allowing the technical expertise work to be done by cheaper, yet highly qualified, labor in India. (Participant 9, Personal Communication: Course Reflection, May 2018)

The complexity of India forces companies to develop universal or minimalist products and services, a key theme in discussions with leaders from various companies operating in India. A CSR platform developed by (this company) facilitates waste collection and separation in several major Indian cities leveraging "waste pickers" as employees. "Waste pickers" are typically uneducated or even illiterate, so to make the platform useable for this group, the company designed an app that used only basic numbers, colors, and shapes. (Participant 6, Personal Communication: Course Reflection, May 2018)

Visit 12: Senior Director, Healthcare Partnership Company

Company develops both hardware and software solutions to support health systems with three key focuses for emerging markets: cost, quality, and accuracy. Speaker discussed how innovation really comes down to a process of managing knowledge (transiting markets and dealing with healthcare challenges) and then innovation to assure quality and reliability (key drivers in design).

Participants reflected:

To make sure products perform well in the market, these products are designed to be eminently functional, durable, have a simple language-free user interface, and be able to connect consistently remotely and without regular access to power. This was a

great example of product design to localize products specifically in the Indian market. These machines are designed much differently in the U.S, where bigger machines are designed with more control options and without concerns about inconsistent connectivity and electricity. (Participant 4, Personal Communication: Final Course Reflections, May 2018)

Healthcare products incorporate the factor of safety keeping in mind geography, infrastructure challenges and product's abuse and misuse; these constraints lead to the development of products which are best in class, robust, compact, and highly durable. (Participant 17, Personal Communication: Final Course Reflection, May 2018)

Another observation was about leveraging Indian low-cost advantages for making profit and revenues. The speakers explained that they tailored product design based on the needs and realities of India, citing accessibility and affordability challenges as well as high volume and low cost. In a preparatory reading "Mastering the Make-In-India Challenge (Ram Mudambi, 2017)*" article, I read about a similar strategy. Companies thus make Indian low-cost production facilities part of their value chain to make profit in other markets*. (Participant 18, Personal Communication: Final Course Reflection, May 2018)

Visit 13: Co-Founders—CEO and COO of Mobile Financial Services Company

Company started in 2007 and no longer considers itself a start-up but recognizes it does need to remain agile in a dynamic market. The service concept came from imagining the sachet concept (Prahalad, 2011) applied to telecom. In designing the business, the company considered business models of similar companies operating in other emerging markets, specifically those operating in Kenya and Bangladesh.

Program participants reflected:

This company caters to people who migrated to cities, earn in cash and need to send money to their families back in villages and rural areas. Cultural traits also provide various business models and innovative ideas to entrepreneurs. (Participant 17, Personal Communication: Final Course Reflection, May 2018)

The large number of people living in extreme poverty and earning daily-wages—often in cash—in India drive the need for extremely low-priced products. This volume-driven business approach of taking a product of the same quality, reducing the quantity or size and selling it at a lower price to many consumers who will buy more frequently has since been replicated by foreign and local companies operating in India. (Participant 6, Personal Communication: Course Reflection, May 2018)

The Indian economy has grown by 7.5% every year for the last three years which provides high potential for businesses in India. Many companies identify the market needs to join this rapid growth. Data shared suggests 93% of the Indian people get their salaries in cash; these people have a problem transferring money to their families who live far from the big cities. As a solution, the company provides a new way to transfer cash into digital money in order to send it faster to rural areas. (Participant 11, Personal Communication: Final Course Reflection, May 2018)

In contrast to the large, multinational bank we visited earlier was this Fintech Company. Their goal was to ease money transfers in the cash-centric Indian economy. After demonetization, many players entered the mobile payment space, but this company is targeting consumers who need to transfer small amounts of money using Mom and Pop retailers as a go-between. As the country moves further away from cash payments, I'm interested in how financial service companies will take advantage of this new currency. In the United States, traditional brokers are losing out to new apps like Robinhood which offers lower fees and allows investors to purchase fractional shares to participate in the US stock market. I think a similar model would work will with a Paytm or one of its competitors. (Participant 19, Personal Communication: Course Reflection, May 2018)

Visit 14: Director/Founder, English Language Education Software Company

As program participants had seen in other businesses they visited, the founder of this company considered this company to have successfully leveraged the Bottom of the Pyramid (BOP) model to leapfrog education gaps by using digital formats and developed technology-enabled English language literacy software. Company technology allows scalability, adaptably, and agility. The software app trains students and educators in English language basics. Grants from business and NGOs (United Nations, United States Agency for International Development [USAID], and the Gates Foundation) support continued growth.

Participants noted:

The founder … is trying to help more people overcome the English (language) barrier which leads to education and job barriers too. Their programs are not only helping children learn English, but also helping teachers learn English along with the class. (Participant 6, Personal Communication: Final Course Reflection, May 2018)

The focus of the Indian government is on the digitization of economy and investment in infrastructure. Indian companies (like this company) are the perfect examples of the corporations trying to impact people lives and lift local economies by empowering people and imparting skills to the underprivileged. (Participant 17, Personal Communication: Final Course Reflection, May 2018)

The Indian society understands the importance of education for economic growth; according to company data, 70% of the people in India do not speak English yet Indian people who speak English have 34% higher salary. (Participant 11, Personal Communication: Final Course Reflection, May 2018)

Although the business is still not profitable (there is no cost for government schools to use the product), he measures "profit" and success by the influence and reach of (the company's product). Through a connection with the USAID and the Indian government, the product is being used in over 5,000 schools and is enabling the teaching of English to be more accurate, in-depth, and interactive. (Participant 13, Personal Communication: Final Course Reflection, May 2018)

Visit 15: Senior Director and Chief Growth Officer, Health Care (Hospital) Provider

Provider is a medical teaching hospital with over 600 doctors, 1000 nurses, and over 3000 people working at the location in Delhi alone. It recently acquired two hospitals for a total portfolio of 14 hospitals (NABH and JCI accredited). It sees market opportunity focused on the gap in the quality of care between government (minimal) and private (very expensive) medical services. The hospital recognizes, and is seeking to leverage, the role of analytics and AI/machine learning; there's a heavy reliance on the use of dashboards for high impact management of hospital. Clinical analytics focus on outcomes assessment (e.g., patterns and impact of aggregated data) as well as for diagnostics and outcomes (scientific analysis).

Program participants reflected:

The healthcare industry in India is changing as the country continues to grow, and it will be interesting to see if it can avoid some of the pitfalls that the U.S. has seen over time. Our visit gave great insight into the current state of a high-performing hospital. One advantage is that because labor is cheap (even in the healthcare field), it can keep costs lower for certain procedures such as organ transplants and promote medical tourism. India's population is also very young when compared to the U.S., which has a higher aging population and thus a different model for revenue generation. (Participant 9, Personal Communication: Final Course Reflection, May 2018)

This presentation (was) helpful in providing a comparison between the Indian and United States markets. This example showed me just how different it would be to manage or communicate with a team in India. (Participant 12, Personal Communication: Final Course Reflection, May 2018)

Documenting and Assessing Student Learning

At the conclusion of the program, participants returned home but were required to submit a final reflection on the key aspects of the immersion experience related to their understanding of the program goals and objectives. Specifically, participants were asked to identify differences in the economy, culture, political and social systems, and how these likely impacted businesses encountered. Additionally, participants were asked to personally reflect on the impact of the immersion experience on their understanding of management and business.

This discussion presents selections from participants' reflections which demonstrated integration of a variety of themes from hospitality to business models as well as participants' acknowledgment of personal growth through the experience.

Reflections on the Overall Experience Included:

My two-week experience in India offered a great learning opportunity for me to observe the rapidly growing economy as an outsider. Being able to compare this success with the United States allows me to draw key inferences which were sometimes bizarre, and often positively surprising. (Participant 18, Personal Communication: Final Course Reflection, May 2018)

The India Global Immersion trip and the level of exposure our class received to the various types of businesses provided great insight into the current state of business affairs in India. As the world continues to globalize, this opportunity also allowed for reflection and comparison to the current state of business in the United States. (Participant 17, Personal Communication: Final Course Reflection, May 2018)

Every country has its own unique culture, regulatory system, economy, market needs, etc. During the past few weeks, I had the chance to get a "short taste" of the very interesting business aspect in India. Using my own experiences from living and studying in both the U.S. and in Israel, I can now better compare businesses and the business environment. (Participant 11, Personal Communication: Final Course Reflection, May 2018)

I did not know much about India before this trip, so the level of development we saw in parts of the country surprised me, and the differences between rich and poor, modern and old-world, urban and rural—are what stand out in my memory the most. Overall, I had a wonderful experience in India; the setup of the program certainly allowed for that, as I would not have had the access to business leaders or have been able to curate this type of experience on my own. (Participant 9, Personal Communication: Final Course Reflection, May 2018)

During my time in India I enjoyed a multitude of experiences and emotions that helped shape my overall global immersion. The corporate visits provided insights on the business environment in India while allowing me to witness the cultural and social environment of India and create comparative learning outcomes between the United States and India. (Participant 15, Personal Communication: Final Course Reflection, May 2018)

Our Global Immersion was both a learning experience on the Indian business environment, as well as exposure to cultural and social norms which underlie it. The trip allowed for excellent comparison between India and the U.S. in both business and in everyday life. In addition to having an inside look at the business environment, we experienced firsthand the rich culture that is central to the Indian identity. (Participant 12, Personal Communication: Final Course Reflection, May 2018)

The Global Immersion to India provided an opportunity to observe the business landscape in India and provided many opportunities for me to compare practices to those in the United States. For a foreign company to successfully operate in India, agility and willingness to change in a rapidly evolving market are key. When demonetization and the push toward digital banking occurred rapidly, financial institutions (banks and investment companies as well as start-up businesses) reacted by innovating products and services. (Participant 12, Personal Communication: Final Course Reflection, May 2018)

I feel the best description of India I heard is that, "India is a country of contrasts". This best captures the dichotomy of the 2nd largest country by population in the world, with its beautiful scenery against its backdrop of pollution and poverty. The country has one of the world's youngest population, but still struggles with issues of discrimination against women and minority groups. Its GDP by purchasing power parity ranks in the top five globally, but the disparity between its top and bottom income levels are immense. (Participant 19, Personal Communication: Final Course Reflection, May 2018)

Many of the speakers that addressed us painted a very rosy picture of India but walking the streets or looking out the window of our bus painted a very different picture. Our speakers talked about the digitalization of India and how consumers are so agile to adopt new technology, but upon further questioning, it was clear that they weren't talking about the poorest of the poor living in the slums we passed; for most businesses these people are not even considered part of the market. (Participant 6, Personal Communication: Final Course Reflection, May 2018)

Reflections about the Business Markets and Market Segments Included:

India needs massive FDI, because of the structure of the economy, it is hard to raise capital internally therefore, India is eager to attract FDI as it can accelerate India's economic development. Joint ventures could be one of the best investment strategies

for India as it poses a diverse culture, complex regulations and weak law enforcement which result in high uncertainty. (Participant 26, Personal Communication: Final Course Reflection, May 2018)

From the very first day of business meetings it was clear that while both Americans and Indians used and valued the abilities of smartphones, India has incorporated smartphones more deeply into their day -to-day lives. (Participant 21, Personal Communication: Final Course Reflection, May 2018)

All our speakers mentioned the prevalence of smartphone usage and cheap data availability which has opened previously untapped markets in rural communities and provided new opportunities. I was particularly struck by someone noting that their grandmother learned how to use a smartphone to pay the milkman via mobile money transfer; as in America, proficiency with the latest tech innovation is generally consider beyond the capability of older generations. (Participant 10, Personal Communication: Final Course Reflection, May 2018)

Our classes talk about the need for disruptive innovation to move business forward, but there often seems to be reluctance to push the needle; many preferring to take the safe bet. The fact that a country about five times the size of the US was able to roll out digital identification systems as well as demonetize its currency in the past few years is incredible. While many companies we met with discussed the pain points that came with these changes, India has moved forward and adapted to the new environment. (Participant 16, Personal Communication: Final Course Reflection, May 2018)

Reflections Integrating Comparative Analysis Included:

Despite claims that India operates on something akin to "Indian stretchable time", I found these statements immensely misleading and inauthentic. This is the nature of working globally, you adapt to the different business standards around the world because there is no correct way to do things, just a lot of ways to get things done. (Participant 8, Personal Communication: Final Course Reflection, May 2018)

One of the most memorable moments of the trip was when I realized that the real Mumbai was inside, not the exterior. The first few days of driving through the city, (I noted) every building looked run down, including many of the high-rise apartment buildings we passed. On the third night, a group of us went to a restaurant in South Bombay, it was a beautiful restaurant and as we left, I turned and noticed how run-down the exterior looked. I expected the outside to reflect the inside, but that was not the case. On the drive home, I started looking past the exterior and into the windows of the high-rise apartment building and I noticed nicely painted walls, posters, and shelves that could have been in any home in America. The exterior looked run-down, but inside, where the people lived was often nice. This changed my perspective of the city and after this, I began to see beauty everywhere I went—looking past the intense poverty throughout the city. (Participant 2, Personal Communication: Final Course Reflection, May 2018)

> *The Global MBA India immersion revealed both similarities and differences in how business gets done in India versus the U.S. Analyzing the business establishment and operational strategies in both countries provides useful insights into how businesses must adapt depending on the environmental context. Ultimately, effective business strategies must be differentiated to meet the unique challenges an opportunity that exist in any market.* (Participant 5, Personal Communication: Final Course Reflection, May 2018)

Overall, program participants expressed depth and clarity in their reflections, many echoing course or program objectives, but with application of these experiences to the immersion.

Participant reflections indicated their expression of the impact of the experience in achievement of the Global MBA program objectives. These objectives seek to assure students are provided with more intimate access to managers and businesses to complement the theoretical elements of the educational experience, as well as opportunities to apply learning in a collaborative setting. These skills support identification and analysis of the real-world problems facing today's organizations.

Conclusions and Recommendations

The objective of the immersion program should assure that program participants return to their coursework—and careers—with a unique international perspective and with a firmer understanding of the process of developing cultural competence (Parhizgar, 2002).

Programs should consider the process of learning and incorporate a series of activities planned to guide student learning. These activities include predeparture assignments and discussions which go beyond trip logistics, requiring participants to reflectively respond to prompts in-country and upon return, and integrating peer-based learning activities which require participants to both engage in research and analysis and report this to their peer.

Program directors and those seeking to develop and deliver a global immersion experience should consider core educational objectives and how, and where, these objectives align with curricular objectives which can be accomplished with a global experience. An assessment of organizational networks may uncover available connections for company or site visits. Using research or business contacts is a great way to gain deeper and richer access to organizations operating in other countries.

The experiential nature of the immersion must provide contextual perspectives on organizational structures, objectives, and decision-making processes which enhance participants' cultural competence and global mind-set (Zheng & Menzies, 2015). Global immersion programs should seek to offer a variety of practical, on-location experiences (Dyer et al., 2009) which allow participants to develop valuable managerial skills, such as cultural understanding, tolerance for ambiguity, respect for diversity, adaptability, and self-confidence (Herman, 2010).

Key aspects of a transformative global immersion program should include orchestrating a variety of business visits which target established, developing, and entrepreneurial businesses and organizations in a variety of industries. The experience should allow participants to engage in several types of learning opportunities: meeting with business executives, touring factories or design studios, interacting with government and NGO officials, and learning about the business environment from local managers—all strong elements for a global immersion experience (DiGregorio, 2015).

Development of cultural understanding cannot be achieved sitting in a classroom; global immersion programs should seek to provide participants with experiences which allow development of insights as well as opportunities to transform and apply these insights. As demonstrated in this case, designing and delivering a global immersion should assure program participants understand more than merely where these foreign markets are located and key economic factors; programs must allow participants to begin to understand, and appreciate, the culture and business practices which underlie business-related decision-making challenges.

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42

Combining Formal and Informal Learning Activities to Engage Students in International Business

Rubina F. Malik and Virginie Pioche Kharé

Introduction

There is universal agreement among scholars and practitioners that learning happens with experience and can result in lasting change in knowledge, skills, or attitudes (Lawton & Gordon, 1996; Livingstone, 2001; Marsick & Watkins, 1990; Rowntree, 1981). One of the goals of higher education is to graduate an engaged workforce possessing employability skills. How do institutions engage college students in theory as well as practical application of that theory so that they are able to build competencies that will make them assets in the global workforce? College students may not be able to catalogue their learning, but they might agree that their learning is either formal or informal. Formal learning is associated with traditional forms of institutionally sponsored, classroom-led, often highly structured teaching, while informal learning takes place outside the traditional classroom setting. Marsick and Watkins (1990) established that only 20% of learning comes from formal learning, while others (e.g., Sorohan, 1993) have similarly claimed that 70%–90% of learning takes place through informal learning processes. This chapter

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M. A. Gonzalez-Perez et al. (eds.), *The Palgrave Handbook of Learning and Teaching International Business and Management*, https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-030-20415-0_42

addresses the benefits of combining formal activities (i.e., those occurring in traditional, structured, classroom setting) and informal activities (i.e., those experienced outside classrooms) in an effort to ensure students' full engagement in the learning process. Such a combination not only blends conceptual and experiential elements in support of integrated international business (IB) coursework, but also helps students build new competencies, attitudes, and skills that foster an employable global workforce.

Theoretical Framework

Experiential learning theory offers a profoundly distinct view of the learning process. Experiential learning occurs when students learn through experience. In this case, students learn conceptual theories and ideas through formal classroom instruction, but they also acquire information, attitudes, skills, and knowledge through informal learning experiences such as daily work-related, social, or leisure activities (Malik, 2015). Informal learning and experiential learning are "partnering concepts" (Bennett, 2012, p. 24), with experiential learning providing a conceptual framework. Experiential learning theory blends "experience, perception, cognition and behavior" (Kolb, 1984, p. 21). Central to experiential learning is "reflection (intention) on an experience from multiple perspectives while integrating the learning" (Bennett, 2012, p. 25). Kolb defined experiential learning as "the process whereby knowledge is created through the transformation of experience. Knowledge results from the combination of grasping and transforming experience" (Kolb, 1984, pp. 25, 41). Kolb proposed a four-stage model of experiential learning. The model suggests that the learner first experiences something, engages in reflection on the experience, develops a presumption from the reflection, and then creates an action plan in order to generate new behaviors, thus forming a new experience in the cyclical process of learning continuity (Malik, 2015).

Four qualities or skills are required in order to learn from experience: (a) an openness to involve oneself in new experiences (*concrete experience*); (b) observational and reflective skills in order to view new experiences from a variety of perspectives (*reflective observation*); (c) analytical abilities in order to integrate ideas and abstract concepts from observations (*abstract generalization*); and (d) decision-making and problem-solving skills so these ideas and concepts can be used in actual practice (*active experimentation*; Kolb, 1984, p. 31; Merriam & Brockett, 1997; Wilson & Hayes, 2000). The learning in this experiential process happens during the reflection stage, during which the learner reviews and "examines values, assumptions and beliefs that influence

how a situation or problem is framed" (Marsick & Watkins, 1999, p. 7). The skills that are learned, in addition to background learning, can be seen as formal and informal experiences that shape the individual's learning (Marsick & Watkins, 1990).

Formal vs. Informal Learning

Educators can help students expand their ability to learn using different teaching methods. When deciding which method to use, several elements of the teaching method itself should be considered: desired outcomes, approach (formal and informal), and content. This section discusses how to incorporate, manage, and assess formal or informal learning to help students learn knowledge and facts, and develop skills and attitudes. These elements are especially important for supporting the integration of international business coursework and for building competencies for an employable global workforce.

As described previously, formal learning consists of traditional forms of institutionally sponsored, classroom-based, often highly structured teaching. This form of learning is essential to acquiring knowledge, skills, or specific methodologies. Although formalized training is the most common form of instruction, it has been demonstrated that only 20% of learning occurs in a formalized environment (Marsick & Watkins, 1990).

Informal learning, on the other hand, is important for ensuring the sustainability of acquired knowledge. Additional learning happens outside of the structured classroom environment where the learning is practical, meaningful, and connects with the learner's desire to grow and develop (Malik, 2015; Tait, 2004). This conception is grounded in the idea that learning is "organized around real-life experience" (Marsick & Watkins, 1990, p. 55) and is "experienced-based, non-routine and often tacit" (p. 15). Schugurensky (2000) developed a taxonomy of three types of informal learning: "(1) self-directed learning, whereby an individual takes on learning projects without the assistance of a "resource person/educator" (intentional and conscious); (2) incidental learning, which happens without an intention of learning from an experience (i.e., there is awareness after the event that learning did take place; unintentional but conscious); and (3) socialization/tacit learning, the internalization of values, attitudes, behaviors, skills, etc., that arise for the learner during everyday life. The learning happens in a retrospective, unintentional, and unconscious manner" (Malik, 2015, p. 44), and is enhanced by critical reflection (Livingstone, 2001; Marsick & Watkins, 1990). Educators should accept that formal learning incidents need to incorporate informal learning,

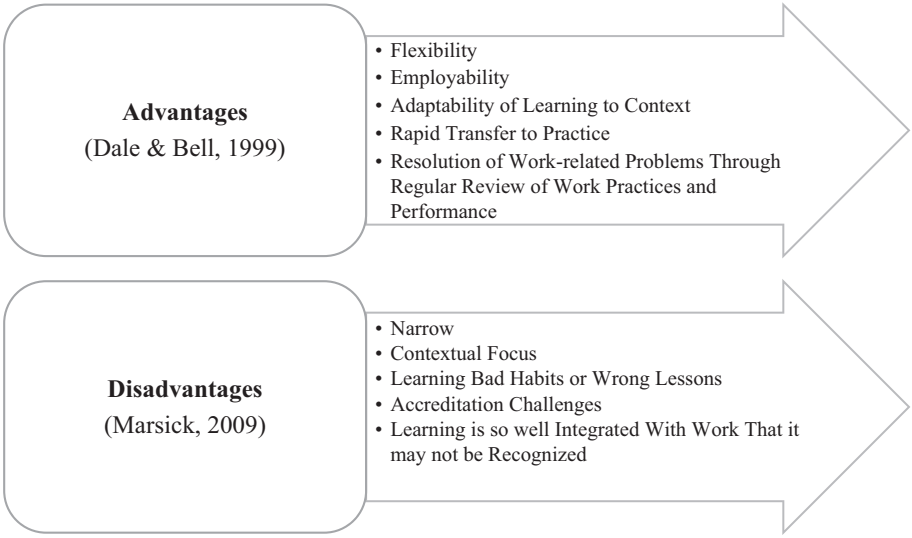

Fig. 42.1 Advantages and disadvantages of informal learning

that "the potential exists to help people learn more effectively in the workplace by focusing on real life rather than on prescriptions, examples, and simulations" (Marsick & Watkins, 1990, p. 4). While informal learning does have disadvantages, it has been proven to add to formal learning because of its adaptability (see Fig. 42.1 for a summary of advantages and disadvantages).

When students are asked where they learned something, most will state that they learned it in a formal learning situation (i.e., a classroom). However, they may also state that they learned in informal learning environments (Merriam, Caffarella, & Baumgartner, 2006), such as workshops or social and professional interactions (Lemyre, Trudel, & Durand-Bush, 2007; Werthner & Trudel, 2006). Students can use their learning from both the classroom and other outside activities to learn more about themselves in order to enhance their performance and effectiveness as they move into their chosen profession.

Learning Outcomes, Pedagogical Activities, and Learning Environment

Combining formal and informal learning allows students to go beyond a conceptual view of the world of international business to develop their own attitudes, skills, and knowledge of the global environment. This blending of learning concepts potentially leads to richer learning outcomes as students

link theory to practice based on their experiences. In the context of international business education, the authors have identified that the following learning outcomes benefit from a combination of formal and informal learning:

1. demonstrating how various concepts, principles, and theories relate to domestic and IB practices;
2. developing students' understanding and critical awareness of their cultural identities and experiences to become more effective a diverse, cross-cultural workforce;
3. instilling factual knowledge (i.e., terminology, trends, and concepts) of business concepts within an international and cross-cultural context; and,
4. aiding students in avoiding ethnocentrism when functioning in a global environment.

The activities presented in this chapter were applied by the authors using a combination of lectures, class discussions, and student participation inside and outside the classroom. Pedagogical activities for creating formal and informal learning include:

- classroom activities—lectures, videos, discussions, team exercises, and presentations;
- self-assessment tools—self-reported questionnaires for assessing particular behaviors, traits, or characteristics;
- social and professional interactions—exchanges with global business leaders outside and inside the classroom; and,
- individual performance—students are evaluated through individual assignments.

The achievement of the aforementioned learning outcomes can be accomplished in a learning environment where the students are engaged, challenged, feel safe to take risks, and are supported in their learning. When choosing instructional resources and methods, consideration was given to what would enhance the students' learning environment such as:

- theory—professor presented theoretical frameworks through classroom lectures and discussions;
- preparation—students completed individual and team homework assignments;

- participation—students attended classroom sessions and participate in discussions and classroom activities;
- practice—students applied theoretical constructs in their group project and other extracurricular activities; and,
- reflection—students were given a variety of assignments that require critical, analytical, and reflective thinking about their development experiences.

Description of Activities

Combining formal and informal learning supports students' learning by helping to clarify and define concepts and help them move beyond conceptualization to experiencing. This can be done on a semester-long basis, but also during individual class sessions, depending on the course structure and focus. This chapter presents four activities, each of which services as an example of combined formal and informal learning: (1) a short-term study-abroad program, (2) a hands-on classroom experience, (3) a project utilizing an online cultural tool, and (4) a project focusing on English Language School (ELS®) services. Table 42.1 lists the formal and informal learning elements of each of these activities.

Short-Term Study-Abroad Program

The short-term study-abroad program was created with aspects of formal and informal learning embedded in the content. One of the main objectives of this short-term program is to make study abroad accessible to students. In the authors' experience, students have often indicated that they

Table 42.1 Elements of formal and informal learning activities

Activity	Formal learning	Informal learning
Short-term study-abroad program	Presenting theoretical concepts related to topic	Conversations with locals, alumni, and expatriates
	Presenting country specifics	Cultural events
	Personality and culture assessments	Cultural site visits
		Company site visits
Hands-on exercises	Cross-cultural negotiation process	Simulation/game
Online cultural tool	Dimensions of culture	Globesmart®
Work with English Learning School (ELS®) services	Verbal and nonverbal communication theories	In-person interviews

cannot participate in long-term programs in the summer months due to conflicts with internships and that, during the school year, their course load gets in the way. This program is a three-credit-hour course that includes a short-term study abroad experience that does not impact students' internships nor their graduation timeline. Students register for the three-hour elective course Diversity and Multiculturalism in Management, which culminates with a trip abroad to Dubai (or country of choice) at the end of the semester. For the initial trip, the students requested Dubai, and this has now become a very popular destination for the program. As part of the course, the class goes abroad for ten days after exams, during the winter break (though the trip could be easily scheduled after spring semester or during spring break). In order to participate in the trip, students must complete an application process, which includes standard criteria used by the institution. Leading up to the trip, the class met once a week for lectures, group country analysis presentations, discussions of assigned readings, and review of trip information and paperwork. The authors used a third-party vendor to help plan the program on site, including company visits and cultural activities. The authors also used personal networks and school alumni who live in the host country to meet with the students to share their expatriate experience.

Students can use assessment tools to help achieve their learning outcomes and enhance their performance. To support the informal learning that leads to student engagement and competence building, the course begins with students taking assessments to help them understand themselves better in the context of a different culture as well as in the work environment. The DiSC personality assessment (https://www.discprofile.com) is a research-validated model that helps individuals identify and better understand their communication style, leading to efficiency on both individual and organizational levels. Another assessment, the Cross-Cultural Adaptability Inventory, assesses participants' effectiveness in cross-cultural interaction and communication (Davis & Finney, 2006). The students were briefed on the results of these assessments so that they have an idea of how to work best with their team members and so that they can understand and engage fully in cross-cultural interactions during the study-abroad trip.

The trip itinerary for the short-term study-abroad program was created to support the students' formal and informal learning process. It includes site visits to companies with lectures, outings to cultural centers, events with expatriates who share their experiences, as well as free time for students to explore and immerse themselves in the culture of the host city.

Hands-on Exercises

Simulations are ideal experiential tools for helping students learn concepts through decision-making and role-playing. In the field of international business, these exercises allow students to experience other cultures without leaving the campus. They can be conducted in the actual classroom if the set-up is adjusted (e.g., photos are posted, furniture is rearranged, etc.) For optimal results, however, it is best to get as "close" to the simulated place as possible. For instance, in the case of a cross-cultural negotiation exercise, students will need access to small rooms to prepare for the simulation and then to a conference room to conduct the negotiation. There are numerous simulations available either through Centers for International Business Learning and Research, such as Michigan State's globalEDGE (2018), or in various publications on IB or cross-cultural communication (Dolan & Kawamura, 2015). For example, the authors used the POGO simulation created by Dolan and Kawamura (2015) and added cultural norms instructions linked to the country of Indonesia. The combination of formal and informal learning followed the steps explained in Fig. 42.2.

In this particular example, the combination of formal and informal learning ensures that students understand the process of negotiating. This is especially important as most students will have little to no experience with business negotiation. This exercise has been used for multiple years at a small private college in a lower-level undergraduate IB class but could easily be performed in an introductory graduate course. For classes meeting more than once a week, it is best to devote two class sessions to the activity to allow for preparation. Student feedback has been overwhelmingly positive in terms of enjoyment of the activity and, most importantly, learning from the experience.

Online Cultural Tool: GlobeSmart®

Students often find it difficult to relate classroom material to actual working situations. One of the best ways to connect the two settings and to combine formal and informal learning is to utilize in the classroom software and online tools that are used in the field. These tools combine self-assessment with online training. One such tool is the GlobeSmart® Profile (GSP) developed by Aperian Global. According to the company website, the "statistically-validated" GlobeSmart is "available in 13 languages … and assesses individual work styles across five behavioral dimensions proven to impact workplace relationships, productivity and efficiency around the world" (AperianGlobal,

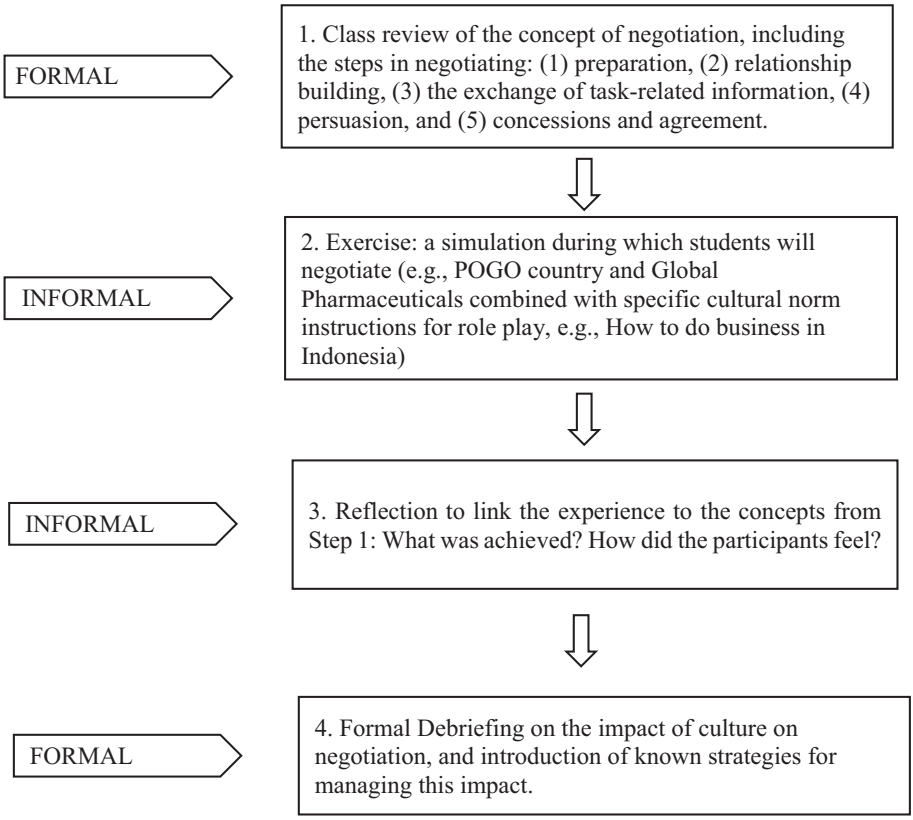

Fig. 42.2 Sequence in combining formal and informal learning in a cross-cultural negotiation exercise

2018). This cultural awareness tool is used by over 30% of Global Fortune 500 companies across all industries.

The GSP is based on a previous instrument known as the GlobeSmart Assessment Profile (GAP), which was, in turn, an adaptation of a highly reliable and valid research instrument developed by David Matsumoto, a leading cross-cultural researcher. The five behavioral dimensions comprising the GSP are: Independent–Interdependent, Egalitarianism–Status, Risk-Certainty, Direct–Indirect, and Task–Relationship. These dimensions are rooted in the theories developed by the seminal work of researchers such as Geert Hofstede, Fons Trompenaars, and Edward T. Hall (see Fig. 42.3).

The GSP permits the combination of formal and informal learning because it allows students to use the tool to analyze their own scores on cultural dimensions, usually outside the classroom and on their own time.

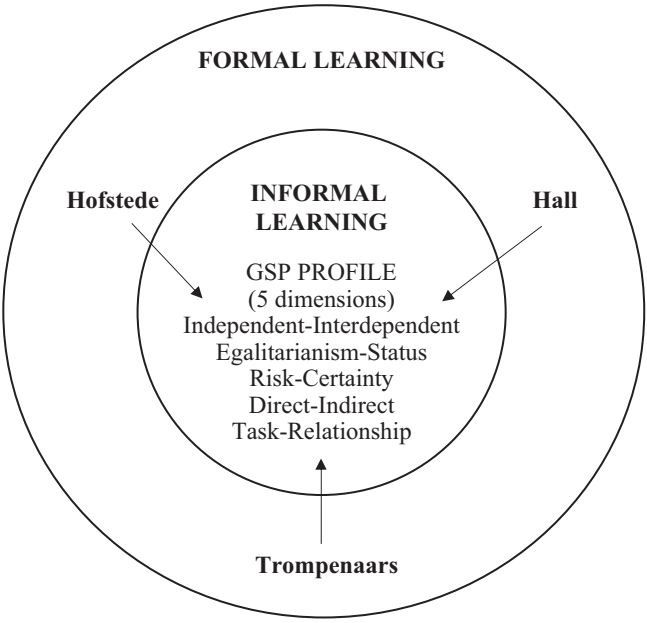

Fig. 42.3 Formal and informal learning of cultural dimensions using the GlobeSmart® profile

This is especially relevant for younger generations who have grown up with fluid schedules, useful apps, and 24/7 online access. Instructors can use various approaches to combine the two kinds of learning. One approach involves reviewing one dimension at a time formally, including seminal work in the field, and then discussing students' individual scores on that particular dimension. Another approach—preferred by the authors after several offerings—is to review the theoretical work done in the field and then focus on the GSP as a whole. The tool allows students to compare each other online, includes video case examples, and can be easily used during more than one class setting. Students have rated the GSP highly in course evaluations primarily because it is a personalized tool, yet it also helps them learn about the theory. Students also appreciate that it is a tool used by international business professionals worldwide. To ensure that the learning associated with the GSP is informal, it is best to assign individual assignments that consist of real-life examples of IB professionals facing cultural dilemmas. This simulator approach forces students to step into the shoes of real people. The GSP comes with a multitude of such examples that instructors can use to develop the exercises.

Work with English Language School (ELS®) Services

This particular project has been made possible because of the presence of an English Language School (ELS®) center on campus. Founded in 1961, ELS® is an organization with more than 80 locations around the world. In the United States, the company has 42 centers, most of which are located on university campuses but operated independently. Schools not benefiting from such a presence could also develop a similar project of partnership with on-campus international student organizations or with local English teaching schools. The learning intent is for IB students to learn about cultural differences through social interactions with people whose first language is not the same as theirs. There are several possible approaches to achieving this goal, but the following two have proven effective for the last five offerings of an Introduction to Business Culture course:

1. ELS students are present in the classroom: Students from the ELS center actually attend the regularly scheduled class. This allows the IB students to gain first-hand experience of cultural differences but also to understand theories discussed in class, thus augmenting student learning. For example, an interactive classroom discussion is held around verbal and nonverbal communications, two important elements of culture which can have significant impacts on business transactions. The instructor can lead the discussion, introducing the extensive research that has been done in the field and then invite the ELS and IB students to interact. If the visiting students are from Japan, for instance, they can teach the whole class how to perform the traditional greeting of "Meishi," when two parties exchange business cards.
2. Social interactions between ELS students and IB students outside the classroom: From coffee hours to in-person interviews, there are many opportunities for the two groups of students to interact. To ensure that this form of informal learning is connected to formal learning, it is best to link these activities to class assignments. Appendix 1 provides an example of an interview guideline.

Evaluation of Learning Effectiveness

Instructors want to know that learning has happened, but traditional learning assessments through testing are not the only ways to determine outcomes of learning, especially when formal and informal learning have been combined. Learning can also be assessed through methods that include direct observations,

written responses, oral responses, ratings by peers, and self-reports (Lawton & Gordon, 1996). These means of assessment can be used to measure both formal and informal learning results. This section reviews the best ways to assess the achievement of course outcomes using different forms of assessment. Because of the experiential element of informal learning, assessments must include personal reflection and individual behavior evaluation. Possible elements may include:

- active class participation, professionalism, and contribution to class learning;
- classroom discussions and debriefings;
- individual reflections (e.g., trip journal, narrative essay, etc.);
- team presentations; and,
- formal course evaluations.

Appendix 2 provides suggestions for evaluating course outcomes for a short-term study abroad.

Combining formal and informal learning activities can enhance long-term student learning. Support for this assertion comes from students' reflections and narratives from the various projects discussed in this chapter. With the assistance of guiding questions, these reflections and narratives help students understand their learning from the experience, not just the enjoyment of the experience. Students generally enjoy reflecting on and writing about their own experiences when prompted by the questions. Responses have varied, but a small sample of student feedback illustrates and confirms the importance of the formal and informal learning. For instance, one student in a short-term study-abroad experience shared the following:

> After spending nearly a whole week in Dubai, the most surprising thing that I found was how much my perceptions changed over the course of just the first day. Being prepped for nearly a month leading up to the trip on experiencing diversity was extremely helpful but could not compare to direct exposure [to] another culture. Beyond everything else, I learned two invaluable lessons from this trip; to always respect every culture you come across because you nearly always will automatically receive respect in return, and that it is sometimes safer to assume that another culture is closer to your own rather than farther away.

Other students on the short-term abroad trip addressed their formal learning in relation to lectures, readings, and presentations in the classroom, and how it enriched their study-abroad experience:

- Being able to learn about a culture and diversity across the globe before we went on our trip was extremely beneficial. Understanding the why behind the city of Dubai before being immersed in it gave me a full understanding of my experience and I will be forever grateful for this opportunity.
- I thought the transition from classroom learning to the trip was excellent. Prior to attending the trip, I was ignorant of the differences in the Arab and Muslim cultures. The trip fully educated me on it. Also, I did not expect the country to be as modernized as it was. The businesses there are booming. I would not mind working there once I graduate.

Students who participated in a round of negotiation were able to gain a deeper understanding of the specific objectives of a negotiation. As one student reflected:

> The negotiation really showed how long it could take when coming up with a solution everyone is happy with. It did stretch my thinking because I got to think about different cultures all around the world for the first time.

Students using GlobeSmart® also learned more using the tool:

> Yes, I believe the information was very important which sparked more interest for me. It was something I felt as if I'd actually use one day in a real-life scenario. It provided me with a lot of educational advantages that may transform to work advantages one day.

Challenges and Best Practices

This chapter has established that combining formal and informal learning methods can enhance student learning and promote long-term success. However, this combination requires more time and material resources than when an instructor focuses on one or the other. For the four activities reviewed in this chapter, the logistics of implementing both approaches constituted the biggest challenge. For instance, when organizing interviews with persons from other cultures through the ELS office, schedules needed to be coordinated, and interview locations identified. For study-abroad programs, third-party providers were a great help in ensuring the smooth operation of trips, but the faculty in charge still spent months preparing for the course.

Another challenge is convincing students to do the additional work required as a result of the combination of the two learning methods. This is best addressed by explaining to students the benefits of the approach through an open discussion or through handouts. Another potential issue relates to justifying any additional financial costs, from the thousands of dollars it costs to study abroad to the fees linked to certain activities (e.g., GlobeSmart® currently charges $40 for an academic subscription). The best approaches, in this case, are early warning and transparency, in addition to explaining the benefits.

Transferability/Replication

Some of the tools used in the projects, such as Globesmart®, have been developed for business practice, and the same approaches used in a university setting can, therefore, be applied in the professional realm. Trips and simulations are also tools commonly used in cross-cultural corporate training.

The activities reviewed in this chapter have been used with undergraduate students, but can easily be transferred to upper-level classes as well. Small class sizes (i.e., no more than 25 students) are more suitable for enhancing interactions, but variations for larger classes can be created by either adding additional faculty members (e.g., short-term study abroad) or by splitting the class into smaller groups (e.g., Globesmart® discussion or negotiation simulation).

Contributions/Implications

The premise for the activities discussed in this chapter is simple: Combining formal and informal learning approaches leads to enhanced student learning. This chapter offers a variety of transferable, easy-to-implement activities for IB coursework. The use of formal and informal learning experiences inside and outside the classroom enhances the notion of learning from "experience." The recommendations for the activities are designed to allow students to critically reflect on cultural and societal practices while learning from non-routine learning experiences. Research has emphasized the added value of informal learning through first-hand experience (Marsick, Watkins, Callahan, & Volpe, 2010), but it is important to recognize the additional benefits of adding formal learning to informal learning settings—and vice versa.

Appendix 1: Cultural Assignment—ELS Student Interview

You are to interview one foreign student in the ELS Program on campus. This student must be from a culture different from your own. It is up to you to find a way to introduce yourself. It might be a good idea to treat your interviewee to a meal or at least a drink so that you feel comfortable and have enough time to gather all the required information. Be sure to indicate your appreciation for your interviewee's time and effort.

During your interview, you will discuss three main topics: (1) American culture, (2) cross-cultural relations at XYZ College, and (3) cross-cultural errors. The first topic is light and more of an ice-breaker, the second topic is more serious, and the third topic is more action-oriented.

Use the interview questions below, and record the responses on a separate sheet of paper. Compile the responses in a typed, double-spaced, narrative-style essay, and include the following information:

- Name of interviewee
- Age
- Country
- Native Language
- Length in America

American Culture

1. What do you identify as typically American?
2. Which US restaurant do you like the most?
3. What aspect of the US has been the most different from what you are familiar with at home?
4. What has been your favorite experience so far in America?

Cross-Cultural Relations at XYZ College

1. How would you evaluate the relations between XYZ College and ELS students?
2. Is there anything that you would like to see done to improve relations between XYZ College and ELS students?

Cross-Cultural Errors

1. Can you think of any cross-cultural mistakes that someone from the US is likely to make when first visiting your country?
2. Can you think of any cross-cultural mistakes that you made when you first came to the US?

Appendix 2: Suggested Ways to Evaluate Course Outcomes

- Active Class Participation, Professional Brand, and Contribution to class learning: 30% Class and Country Analysis: 25%
  - Groups will be assigned to analyze country.
  - Each group will make an oral presentation. A copy of the slides, including comments, will be given to the instructors before the presentation.
- Individual Final Portfolio: 45% (**see below for detail)
  - Trip journal
  - Narrative Essay of learnings and objectives

Effective Professional Brand Representation is something that is a very important part of the program; students are asked to present themselves in a professional manner at all times, building their soft skills competences.

Consider this class as the transition to a successful work career. Practice the skills that will make you successful in the work place. While authenticity is valued in some settings, your personal comfort does not always lead to desired outcomes in business. Additionally, the professor expects you to consider the following as a strong statement of who you are and what you want others to take away about you, your peers, and the expectations for this course:

Your professional brand
Your communication style and skills
Your grasp of the facts to support your ideas
Your willingness to listen as oppose to your need to be heard

In the workplace, failure to adhere to the organizational expectations will, minimally, impede your advancement. In this classroom and trip, the consequences will ultimately be reflected in your grade. If you have a question

about attire or other expectations, please contact your professor. The school dress policy will be adhered to during the trip. You will be asked to dress business to business casual.

Individual Final Portfolio: The purpose of the portfolio is to relate material learned in the course (both theoretical and practical) to the students learning and life experience. The instructor's evaluation will be based mainly on their ability to relate the body of knowledge gained in the course to your career aspirations. The second criterion will be their ability to do a critical analysis of their experience, expressed through written communication.

Trip Journal: Students are required to keep a journal (from the beginning of the course to the end). It should contain notes indicating reflections gleaned from the course—classroom discussions, readings, lectures, etc.—specifically relating these to their own experiences. It is required that students to hand in the journal.

Planning for the Narrative Essay: A narrative essay is a story written about a personal experience. Writing a narrative essay provides an opportunity for the student to better understand an experience and be able to convey it with a purpose. You are writing about how you became aware of something, gained a new way of seeing the world, a new insight, or new learning. Awareness can occur most often when one encounters new ideas or have experiences that change you in some way such as the study abroad trip to Dubai and the topic of diversity. The purpose of the seven- to eight-page paper is to relate material learned in the course (both theoretical and practical) to your learning and life experience. The instructor's evaluation will be based mainly on the student's ability to relate the body of knowledge gained in the course to their career aspirations. The second criterion will be their ability to do a critical analysis of your experience and to express yourself through written communication.

A good narrative:

- Engages the reader in a story.
  - Re-create an incident (see prompts below)
  - Write in the first person. Sharing personal thoughts and details.
  - Writing is lively and interesting.
  - Add details or personal observations.
- Shares the experience in sequence.
  - Re-create an experience by setting it in a specific time and space; show, do not just tell.

- Includes well organized, detailed observations of people, places, and experience.
  - Recall sights, sounds, smells, tactile feelings, and tastes? Use actual or re-create dialogue? Provide actual names of people and places.
- Presents relevance in the experience.
  - How did the incident provide new insights or awareness?
  - Did you grow from the experience? Is there a contrast/conflict between your thinking from the past and the present?
  - How relevant is the experience today? How relevant will it be in your future?
- Communicates the larger meaning or importance of the experience.
  - Details, specific scenes, accounts of changes or conflicts, and connections between past and present should point to a single main idea or dominant impression for your paper as a whole. While not stating a flat "moral" of the story, the importance of your experience must be clear.

Use the following prompts in writing your narrative: (∗ *Everyone has to write on the first four prompts*)

- ∗What's one thing you did that you're proud of?
- ∗What's one mistake you made and the lesson(s) you learned (personally and/or culturally)?
- ∗Think about a long-held belief or assumption of traveling, study abroad, multiculturalism, and/or diversity that was shattered. Can you trace the change to one event or a series of events? Be sure to narrate an event or series of events and include specific details in your response.
- ∗What's one assumption/belief that you are ready to let go of (personally and/or culturally)?
- Think about a moment during the study abroad experience when you decided to reform or adopt a new outlook. Be sure to narrate an event or series of events and include specific details in your response.
- Think about a decision that you had to make, or a challenge or an obstacle that you faced around diversity. Be sure to narrate an event or series of events and include specific details in your response.
- Think of a particular experience that you observed that has had a profound influence and made a lasting impression on you. Write about how you came to into the situation and what that the situation impressed you. Be sure to narrate an event or series of events and include specific details in your response.

- Think about an event on the study abroad experience that you will always remember. Write a story about what happened. Be sure to narrate an event or series of events and include specific details in your response.
- Think about a time a person did something that may have seemed negative but eventually made a positive difference in your life. Write about that time. Be sure to narrate an event or series of events and include specific details in your response.
- Think about a time you did something even though it was hard for you to do. Be sure to narrate an event or series of events and include specific details in your response.
- Think about a time you witnessed an event or incident that made you think seriously about diversity. Write a story about this event or incident. Be sure to narrate an event or series of events and include specific details in your response.
- Think of a person who made a lasting impression on you regarding diversity and inclusion. Write about how you came to know that person and what that person did that impressed you. Be sure to narrate an event or series of events and include specific details in your response.

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Part XIII

Executive Education

43

Experiential Learning in the Executive Education International Business Classroom: The Importance of Context

Swati Nagar and Fiona Hurd

Introduction: Experiential Learning Styles

The benefits of action and experiential learning activities within a business school context has been well recognized for over 40 years (Certo, 1976). Experiential activities focus on the notion of students 'learning by doing' (Certo, 1976: 113) and on encouraging deep learning through the engagement of both theoretical content and behavioural and emotional (affect) aspects. Experiential activities can range from discussions of real-world case studies, to active simulations of real-world experiences, and total immersion activities such as study tours. Within the experiential classroom, the lecturer is placed as a facilitator, guiding students to engage with the context, providing follow-up questions and linking the activity to the learning goals (Guess, 2014). In this context, the focus is not on a dyadic student/teacher interaction with the purpose of content of theory-delivery, but rather on creating spaces for participative and active learning. There is a spectrum of action learning activities that ranges from case-based discussion, to problem-based scenarios and experiential activities.

As educators within the International Business (IB) classroom, we introduce students to a global context of increasingly competitive and dynamic markets (Nastase & Gligor-Cimpoieru, 2013), under which context, the ability to

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M. A. Gonzalez-Perez et al. (eds.), *The Palgrave Handbook of Learning and Teaching International Business and Management*, https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-030-20415-0_43

analyse and respond to complex issues, challenges, and consumer preferences is often a prerequisite to business survival. Moreover, although much of the International Business scholarship and curriculum has focussed on 'content', it is becoming increasingly important for our graduates to display both personal and professional development skills (Nastase & Gligor-Cimpoieru, p. 194), a global mindset, and critical reasoning skills (Pollner, 1991) to respond effectively to these challenges. Limaye (2000) highlighted the importance of exposing students to different worldviews within International Business curricula.

For many of us, International Business is not taught in isolation, and often forms part of a wider curriculum combined with other disciplines. Indeed, in our own university, our major (undergraduate and postgraduate) is International Business and Strategy. For developing a curriculum which fulfils these broader industry and learning needs in an increasingly interdisciplinary space, calls are made for examples of 'active, applied and student-centred pedagogies which foster skilled graduates with a strong skill set' (Miller & Maellaro, 2016; Warwick, Wyness, & Conway, 2017: 193). Ortiz and Huber-Heim (2017) refer to such exercises as problem-based learning strategies (p. 318) which involve action learning (Figueiró & Raufflet, 2015) requiring students to collaborate, communicate, and apply decision-making to real-world problems. Making this 'knowing-doing' connection is of particular importance in the executive education context. This is because unlike undergraduate courses, the executive education programmes are specifically designed to provide postgraduate students with a pragmatic view of academia which encourage learning through application (*'Rebalancing MBA education towards "doing" and "being": How to reduce the knowing-doing gap that results from deficiencies in skills'*, 2013). Also, given the often interdisciplinary nature of the papers taught within the executive education context, it is important to employ pedagogical strategies that best reflect a practical approach to learning. Our contention in this chapter, therefore, is that International Business teaching is not only transversal in nature due to the intersection of global processes and cultural and institutional frameworks, but also in terms of curriculum—oftentimes having to navigate the space between the mainstream International Business content and other disciplinary areas.

Martin, Heppard, and Green (2011) highlighted the relative lack of a focus on pedagogy and pedagogical research in the International Business field, with most courses focussed on a content-delivery approach. Additionally, the specific context of the executive education classroom has been well recognized as needing further understanding (Garvin, 2007; Hynes, Hill, & Johnson, 2011). Therefore, through the sharing of our experiences in the executive International Business classroom, we can learn additional insights to bring to this unique context.

In this chapter, we share our experiences introducing experiential and applied exercises within the executive education (Master of Business Administration [MBA] and professional/conversion masters) context. These experiences are not intended as an example of best practice, but rather as a prompt for a wider discussion and research agenda with the aim of improving International Business executive education student outcomes.

Overview of the New Zealand Tertiary Education Context

The context for the activities and observations in this chapter is a University in New Zealand. New Zealand's eight universities are well recognized globally and offer internationally equivalent undergraduate, postgraduate, and doctoral programmes, broadly based on the UK university system. Of these, seven have business faculties, with six having a dedicated International Business programme at an undergraduate level (major or combined major). Despite having only a small domestic population, New Zealand is a developed, open economy, and as such attracts a significant number of international students. The New Zealand university student population includes 16 percent international students, with international education constituting New Zealand's fifth largest export industry (Universities New Zealand, 2016).

Qualifications offered at New Zealand universities fall within the New Zealand qualifications framework. Generally, universities offer qualifications which start from Level 5 of this framework, with Level 5 constituting the first year of undergraduate study, and Level 8 constituting the first year of postgraduate study. Within this framework, executive masters' courses fall at Level 8. If the qualification has a research project component, this is generally considered a Level 9 component. All taught courses are at a Level 8. The research masters is also considered Level 8, with the research dissertation or thesis at Level 9 (New Zealand Qualifications Authority (NZQA), 2018).

However, despite falling at the same level of the qualifications framework, there are significant differences in intention, student cohort, and curriculum between executive/professional masters' programmes and research masters. The students who undertake an executive/a professional programme in the New Zealand context generally have an undergraduate qualification in an unrelated discipline, and hence these qualifications are sometimes referred to as 'conversion masters'. In some programmes, such as the MBA, students generally have significant management-level work experience. In contrast, in taught conversion masters' programmes, it is more common for students to have little, or no, previous work experience. Across the programmes the authors teach on, a large proportion are international students, generally from South East Asia and India. For these students, the common experience is to

arrive in New Zealand only a short time before the start of the course (often only days prior). Therefore, the first semester of study often involves not only orientation to the programme and university expectations, but also to the wider New Zealand environment.

Within a New Zealand context, all seven business faculties offer an MBA qualification, with six also offering a dedicated International Business-based conversion/professional masters' qualification (for example, Master of Global Business). These courses generally contain similar content, covering the standard areas of International Business such as International Business Environment, International Business Management, and Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs). In general, the MBA qualification is more generalized, with course across the faculty, but generally including at least one which falls within the International Business area. Some MBA qualifications include the ability to specialize in International Business as part of the qualification. Both sets of programmes include a capstone project, often including a large written report (approximately, 10,000 words) but tending to be more applied in nature than a research masters' dissertation.

It is within this context that our experiences teaching executive postgraduate International Business students is set.

Chapter Structure

The aim of this chapter is to explore the experience of bringing experiential exercises to the context of the executive classroom. In particular, we highlight our experiences teaching across both MBA and conversion masters' programmes. In section "Effectiveness of Experiential Learning: A Perspective on Postgraduate Executive Education", we outline the key concepts that underpin the use of experiential learning in the executive International Business postgraduate classroom. We follow this with a discussion of our experiences in teaching in both the MBA and conversion masters' classroom in section "Teaching Postgraduate Executive Education Programmes in the New Zealand Context". In particular, we focus on three specific examples of teaching practice (full instructions in Appendix), and our reflections on the impact of student factors on the effectiveness of these activities. These experiences highlight how both previous education context and work experience impact the way in which these activities are received in the classroom. Finally, section "Reflection: Student Engagement with Experiential Techniques" of the chapter closes with a discussion on the implications of these insights for understandings of experiential learning.

Effectiveness of Experiential Learning: A Perspective on Postgraduate Executive Education

Problematizing Experiential Learning in the Executive International Business Classroom

Research on learning especially in the context of postgraduate education has focussed on improving the learning process through application of research (Bambacas, Sanderson, Feast, & Yang, 2008; Burch et al., 2016). One stream of this research is focussed on the concept of experiential learning (Burch et al., 2016). At its core, experiential learning is a philosophy of education that considers learning as a process whereby knowledge is created through the transformation of experience. In other words, knowledge results from a combination of understanding and applying experience to concepts. This aspect is particularly important for postgraduate education as most postgraduate students respond better to practice-based teaching and learning.

It has been found that the nature of the disciplinary context will define the instructor's choice of learning activities in the classroom. Similar to Kolb's (1984) foundational work on experiential learning, Biglan (1973) found two dimensions to experiential activities, 'soft-hard' and 'pure applied' which are parallel to Kolb's concrete-reflective and abstract-active dimensions. The learning outcomes associated with a given activity can be aligned to these dimensions, and different dimensions will be emphasized in specific disciplinary contexts. For example, in the abstract and active disciplines of natural sciences, it may be difficult to design classroom activities which represent concrete experience and reflective observation. Similarly, in disciplines such as International Business, which appear to be concrete and reflective, class activities which may represent active experimentation maybe more difficult to design and execute (Milhauser & Rahschulte, 2010). Given the nature of the discipline, postgraduate teaching, particularly in the context of an International Business, is therefore strongly guided by discussion on topical issues, relevant and current analogies, and case-based teaching. Informed by Kolb's experiential learning model, such strategy helps better deliver relevant concepts while simultaneously allowing the students to apply their experience to understand the content taught.

In addition to the discipline, it is also found that the characteristics of the students are equally important in determining the appropriateness of the chosen activity. The continuum of action associated with classroom activities will

determine the student's role in the given activity. The continuum could range from activities in which the student is the actor to those in which the student is a passive receiver of information. Activities are driven largely by the instructor and where the student is an observer. For example, in the International Business discipline, classroom activities are often designed in a manner whereby the instructor may provide examples to illustrate a centre concept/theory. Such activities arguably are better used in a lecture style teaching method. Although there may be use of simulations and case studies in these settings, the use of such activities may be restricted by the nature of the student cohort. As many international students may come from very traditional instructor-based/-driven academic environments, they are less likely to respond/participate in activities that require direct engagement. Also, unfamiliarity with such teaching and learning strategies may result in the students feeling confused and disengaged with the content. By acknowledging the impact of the discipline taught and student characteristics, the experiential learning model serves as a practical framework for a systematic selection of classroom activities. Inclusion of the above-mentioned aspects allows the instructor to explore a wider range of teaching and learning activities possibilities and choose those that are most appropriate not only to the class situation but also those that can achieve maximum student engagement and outcome.

Relationship Between Environment and Student Learning: The Context of Postgraduate Learning

Much of the research conducted on student teaching and learning practices pays little systematic thought to the design of academic environment. Concentrating almost exclusively on the attributes of the instructor and students, the considerable volume of research that considers the correlation between student success and failure does not consider the possible effects of the academic environment on learning (Trigwell & Prosser, 1991). The key attributes that may constitute an academic environment include the class size, access and use of technology to deliver content, nature of interaction between instructor and students, frequency of student contributions in class, students' perceptions of their academic environments, and their approaches to learning and their learning outcomes. These attributes hold particular relevance in postgraduate learning. The academic environment in New Zealand Universities encourage greater interaction between the instructors and the students. One way to achieve this is through the use of technology to deliver content and gain student feedback, for example,

Blackboard Learn (a virtual learning environment and course management system), moodle, and cloud-based web portal (such as MindTap). Most postgraduate courses also have smaller class size in an effort to facilitate greater interaction during lectures. Smaller classes also allow the instructor to give more personalized attention to students, especially when they are new to the course and the education system.

As stated in section 1.1.1 (Overview of the New Zealand Tertiary Education Context), New Zealand's university student population comprises 16 percent of international students. Amongst other courses, postgraduate programmes tend to attract a higher enrolment of international students. Given their prior education and work experience, the differences in the academic environment between their home and host country (New Zealand) play an integral role in the learning and development of international students. International students (predominantly from China, Southeast Asia, and India) come from academic environments that focus on recall and understanding of conceptual literature, which is largely driven by the instructor. Also, the large class sizes in their home countries does not allow for greater participation between the instructor and the students. These students hence find it difficult to adjust to small classes and a democratic teaching style, consistent with experiential learning. The use of technology especially digital and cloud-based web platforms can also be particularly challenging for many international students as their home country's learning environment may not always use such platforms to deliver content. In addition to the design, student perception of their academic environment is an equally important determinant of student success or failure. Indeed, most international students struggle with class discussion and participation especially in their first semester as they are not accustomed to such teaching practice. Also, cultural differences often mean that they find it difficult to openly express their opinions as the instructor is perceived to have a higher status in the classroom. This difference in perception can prove to be particularly challenging for the instructor as this may limit the nature of activities and discussion that can be carried out in the classroom.

Teaching Postgraduate Executive Education Programmes in the New Zealand Context

As discussed above, the use of experiential teaching in the business classroom is aimed at deepening the learning experience for the student, as the approach allows the student to connect theoretical insights with practical application in

a real-life scenario. Within the context of our teaching in executive education programmes (both MBA and conversion masters'), we both have used a number of different experiential approaches in our teaching. The use of these activities has not come without challenges, however. In the following sections, we first outline examples of practice, before reflecting on the impact of student factors on the perceived success of these activities.

Examples of Practice

Within the broad remit of experiential learning, we have utilized a wide range of techniques in the executive education context. For the purposes of this chapter, we outline below examples which fall within the simulation, experiential assessment and case-based teaching approaches. Full teaching notes can be found in Appendix 1–3.

Simulation: Global Recruitment Centre (Appendix 1)

This example involves a simulation exercise, which (including debrief) encompasses a 2-hour class block.

Course Context

This exercise was introduced as a part of the conversion masters' course Global Organisational Behaviour. The course is taught over a 12-week period as part of the Master of Global Business programme. The course aims to introduce students to cross-cultural organizational behaviour concepts, blending content from standard organizational behaviour courses with International Business context. The course is organized around standard organizational behaviour topics, including motivation, groups and teams, conflict and negotiation, recruitment and retention, and leadership. The course cohort is generally 15–25 in number, and predominantly consists of international students.

Activity Aim

The aim of this activity is to allow the students to explore issues of cross-cultural teams and the impact of cultural bias in recruitment decisions. The simulation is based around the scenario of a global graduate recruitment centre programme for a fictional company. Students are asked to wait outside the

classroom at the start of the session, and as they enter, they are immediately immersed in the simulation environment. After being introduced to the session, and placed into groups, one student from each group is chosen to be the group leader. The position of the leader is important in the simulation, as this individual will be required to assess their team members in terms of performance and employability.

The teams are then set a simple task (in this case, to build a tower from bamboo skewers—but I have used other simple tasks). After the task, while the leader is performing an assessment of their team, the team is asked to discuss the performance of the team leader and make a recommendation regarding their suitability for a leadership position in the company. Once all assessments are complete, the final decision letters are given, and all those who have been successful are moved to one area of the room, distinct from those who have not been successful.

Outcome

At this point, the class breaks for a short period, and when reconvening, the debrief begins. To begin the debrief, students are asked to consider why companies may undertake assessment centre exercises in recruitment. Answers often centre around being able to observe recruits in a range of settings, including informal interactions. The question is then posed whether such exercises are appropriate/applicable in multi-cultural situations. Students, generally, at this stage, read the situation through a Hofstede framework, commenting on issues some may find with speaking up in a high/low power distance situation. Students are also prompted to consider wider reasons why some may not be comfortable in such situations, for example, religious/cultural requirements for limited contact, in particular physical contact.

At this stage, we turn the discussion to the outcomes delivered individually. The leaders are asked to reflect upon being chosen in this situation, and whether they felt comfortable being identified as such. A cultural analysis of these reflections is prompted. Team members are asked whether they felt the outcome was fair, and why/why not. During this discussion, invariably, issues of cultural difference are raised—for example, some may feel that those who acted as their leader in the activity should be ranked higher, whereas others may perceive this leadership as intrusive. A similar discussion occurs in relation to the performance of the team leader.

The activity closes with students being asked to consider what implications these insights may hold for International Businesses.

Experiential Assessment (Appendix 2)

This example outlines an assessment which incorporated an experiential aspect. This assessment was specifically a group-based international new venture (INV) proposal and pitch.

Course Context

This assessment was included as part of the assessment programme for the course 'SMEs in the Global Economy', a 12-week course which is part of the Master of Global Business programme. The aim of the course is to introduce students to the specific context of small and medium enterprises (SMEs) operating internationally, as the students have already completed a International Business fundamentals course prior to enrolling in this course. As such, students come into the course having a basic knowledge of concepts such as the Bartlett and Ghoshal strategic choices, Staged (Uppsala) model of internationalization, and Dunning's Ownership-Location-Internalisation eclectic paradigm. This course is centred on problematizing these models in the context of the SME, introducing the students to SME differences across national contexts, and strategic approaches taken by SMEs and international new ventures (INVs), including rapid internationalization and effectuation.

Activity Aim

The aim of this assessment is to provide students the opportunity to apply course concepts in a real-life context. Groups are assigned an industry and set the task of coming up with a new business proposal, including market identification, product development and manufacture, distribution, and promotion. The assessed portion of the task is a group investment pitch, 10 minutes in duration (plus Q+A with the investor panel). In addition, each student is required to act as an investor once during the course, with his/her questions demonstrating additional understanding of course concepts, and weighted at 5 percent of the allocated grade. Additionally, the reflections on the process undertaken in designing the proposal is included as an exam question.

Outcome

Although designed as an engaging way for the students to demonstrate their understanding of course concepts, an additional outcome of this assessment is that previous students have used this task to investigate business concepts

which they have gone on to implement. Additionally, as this task involves extensive research regarding the New Zealand business context, and internationalizing from New Zealand, the students also significantly improve their understanding of the wider New Zealand business context.

Case-based Teaching (Appendix 3)

Case-based learning is a core feature of business education programmes; however, it is less common in an International Business context. This particular teaching method encourages problem-solving and creative thinking. In this example, a course was designed around a case application method.

Course Context

Case-based teaching has proven to be an effective strategy in teaching in the conversations masters' course paper Business in Asia. The course is taught over a 12-week period as part of the Master of Global Business programme. The course cohort generally has 20–25 enrolments with a majority of the class being international students. Covering topics that examine the competitiveness of Asian firms, institutional differences in Asian and developed economies, and current issues in Asia, the aim of the paper is to help the students gain a better understanding of the Asia as an integral contributor to the global economy. The paper addressed a number of topics using a series of relevant short cases through the course of the semester. The final test for the paper was also based on a case study. This activity was to help students apply the concepts taught in the course to a real-world issue/topic.

Activity Aim

This case explores the viability of a change to the business model of Air India, currently, a government-owned, public venture. Set in the background of the aviation industry of India, the case unfolds how the giant airline is facing a steep financial crisis owing to its own services issues, competition from private players, and bureaucratic issues. The students were asked to read the case individually and reflect on the key issues identified within the case. Supplementary readings helped the students further grasp the nature of the Indian aviation industry. The case was given to students with the intent to review motives behind changing an existing business model as well as understanding the role of institutional factors in the privatization of a State-Owned Enterprise.

Students were given four questions as a part of the final test with the aim to answer those using the information from the case study and supplementary readings provided in class prior to the test.

Outcome

Students were expected to explore if the current business model should continue or if it is time for Air India to privatize. They were also to examine bureaucratic factors that play an important role in the decision of the business model of Air India since its privatization runs the risk of loss of the privileges that ministers and bureaucrats receive. The case helped student analyse the feasibility of a change of business model in the current economic and bureaucratic scenario of India, and attempted to make students aware of the tacit issues that may need to be considered while privatization of a public venture. The students were placed directly in the role of senior management at Air India to undertake a careful analysis of the issues that dented the image and impacted the earnings of the airline. The students were also expected to decide if it was advisable and feasible for Air India to privatize. A key expectation of the analysis was the formulation of a clear action plan in terms of the operating business model that need to be formulated with all the factors and the organization's needs considered. Students were able to deduce that the airline operates in a competitive environment which requires it to follow a strategy that will allow maximum revenue generation. They were also able to critically comment on the advantages and disadvantages of privatization. As a conclusion, the students were expected to discuss the importance of leadership and the lack of corporate governance. They were also expected to mention issues around controversial buying decisions, including the aircrafts buying process and also challenges a State-Owned Enterprise encounters compared to a private firm. Experience of using the case as a test allowed the students to focus on the reasons of the failure of the Air India, the importance of due diligence, role of institutional environment, and mismatch between organizational goals and strategy.

Reflection: Student Engagement with Experiential Techniques

Across the above three exercises, and more, there are a number of observations we have made which impact the success of these exercises in the classroom. In particular, we have noticed that factors within, and across, the cohorts seem to impact significantly on whether students accept these kinds of exercises as 'legitimate' learning experiences.

However, the challenges identified in this section notwithstanding the learning benefits for the students appear to remain intact. It is our observation that the results in assessment are similar to what is experienced with students more familiar with these classroom approaches. Therefore, it is our view that while the student perception of these activities is problematic at times, the underlying learning advantages associated with an experiential approach remain consistent. The remaining opportunity is, therefore, to better understand how to communicate these benefits to the students, so that they can reflect on the learning undertaken.

Previous Study

One set of such factors is related to the context within which the students have previously studied. As mentioned previously, many of our students are from Southeast Asia and India, with the largest proportion from China and India. In both contexts, the focus of undergraduate education tends to be on surface recall and understanding of concepts and theories, which are often times delivered in a dichotomous teacher/student context. Indeed, in a survey of 236 Chinese students studying in an Australian context, Bambacas et al. (2008) found that approximately 60 percent expressed a learning preference classified as 'dependent learner' (p. 19), preferring an environment associated with higher levels of direction by the lecturer.

As such, we have found that particularly in their first semester, students struggle to understand or legitimize a democratic classroom, consistent with experiential learning. This is perhaps due to the fact that many of the students come from traditional educational systems that tend to be more instructional than pragmatic in their teaching and learning methods. After the first semester, the students seem to be more adjusted to the discussion-based class, and find experiential exercises less disruptive.

Prior Work Experience

Another set of factors which we have found to impact the success of the exercises above is the previous work experience of the students. As Speece (2002) notes, students from Asia tend not to undertake part-time work during undergraduate study, a factor which is in contrast to some of the students who may have significant prior work experience. As the simulation-type exercises require the students to become fully immersed in the context and experience of the exercise, those students who have significant work experience tend to

display higher levels of cynicism towards such exercises, and particularly when combined with the adjustment to learning style as above, view such exercises more as 'play' rather than serious 'study'. In a couple of instances (especially in the MBA courses), student feedback does suggest that although they find such activities useful to understand and relate the concepts, they fall short of generating critical thinking.

In contrast, those who have no previous work experience need more assistance in order to relate to the real-world context. Moreover, in our experience, for students with work experience, the decision to study is made as valued time away from their established career, often at significant expense, increasing the expressed need for a perceived 'robust' learning experience. In such classrooms, exercises which fall more at the case study end of the experiential spectrum have been more accepted by our students. The case study approach allows students who have limited or no work experience a taste of 'real world' company examples. Through application, this teaching strategy also allows the students to better understand the concepts and helps them to go beyond conceptual learning.

Concluding Thoughts: Improving Student Response to Experiential Activities

Improving Student Response to Experiential Activities

Our experience above highlights that while experiential exercises can successfully be introduced into the executive education context, doing so is not without its challenges. Kolb's (1984) model upholds that experiential approaches lead the deep learning due to the combination of active experience, application of theoretical/abstract concepts, and reflection. However, some, including Dyer and Hurd (2016) found that some students are not prepared for the deep learning experience, and thus for some, the experiential classroom may be somewhat confronting. This aligns with our experience, particularly in relation to those students who are new to the discussion-based classroom common in the New Zealand education context. We are not alone in these challenges. Bambacas et al. (2008) discuseds differences in learning preference on the part of international students from China. Hynes et al. (2011) outlined the challenges faced by a lack of familiarity with the local business environment.

In light of these insights, some suggestions/opportunities for optimizing the experience for all students include:

Educate Ourselves on the Educational Context of Our Students

Experiential approaches are fundamentally designed with the student as an active participant, and as such are designed to be student-centred. Therefore, the designing/adjusting of these exercises should take into account the background of our students, rather than expecting our students to adjust wholly to a new way of learning. This process involves us, as International Business educators, to move outside the comfort of our disciplinary knowledge, and seek to understand the context our students have come from. This approach is particularly important as most of the students in such programmes are international. By understanding their educational context, we can better facilitate their learning experience in the classroom. Bambacas et al. (2008) concured, and remind us that in doing so, the aim is not to try to match students expectations in a deficit logic, but rather to 'understand students' instructional preferences so that lecturers can assist them where necessary to develop the knowledge and skills that are required to meet the learning objectives of their MBA studies' (p. 16).

Make Differences an Opportunity Within the Class

We have found it useful to dedicate part of the first class of each course to have an open discussion about the impact of differences in previous education and work experience might change the way activities are perceived. One way these differences may manifest is in differing levels of classroom participation. For example, students from some educational backgrounds may perceive it disrespectful to speak up in class, unless asked a direct question. Similarly, others may feel a deference to those classmates who have significant work experience. Hynes et al. (2011) suggested that in response, the lecturer should direct class to ensure equal participation in activities. We have found this can be confronting for some students initially; however, if this approach is outlined in the 'expectation setting' session mentioned above, the students are better prepared. It is very important to demonstrate in this first session that the class is a safe place—we often relate this to the New Zealand business environment, which is one that requires workers to show initiative and speak up if they see an opportunity for improvement. In doing so, it helps the students not only better understand the expectations around class participation but also allows them to develop an understanding of the expectations in the New Zealand business context.

Orientate Students to the Broader Business Environment

Our experience has highlighted to us that our students' study does not occur 'in a vacuum'—they are studying with us alongside adjustment to a new country, culture, and business environment. Moreover, their study occurs within the context of their (at times established) career and life plans. This may be the case for all our students; however, for this group of students—postgraduate, executive, and generally international—the impact of these wider contextual factors on their study has a significant impact. Moreover, for many, their study is not an end in itself, but a means to a career and life within New Zealand. As the executive education curriculum is largely applied in nature, it seems counterintuitive to not approach teaching with an understanding of the importance of this wider context. As such, the students' understanding of the local business context (Hynes et al., 2011), exposure to local news sources and local business leaders and practices, becomes an important part of students both contextualizing their study and achieving their wider goals. We have found that students have a greater engagement and appreciation of the experiential activities if they incorporate the opportunity to learn about the local business context, such as in the new venture pitch (please refer to Example 2 in section 3.1.1.2 (Experiential Assessment (Appendix B) and appendices for further information). Additionally, opportunities to relate class concepts back to the local business environment, and how these ideas may apply both globally and locally, bring an experiential element to class discussions.

Opportunities for Future Research

Despite the prevalence of research on experiential learning over the past 30 years, much of the focus remains in the undergraduate context. Moreover, research on postgraduate executive education business students tends to focus on the US model of MBA education. For those educators outside this context, the postgraduate executive education space can be a complex mix of abilities—ranging from those fledgling scholars on research degrees, to executive education and conversion programmes. These nuances in experience are not well understood. Moreover, although there has been significant research on the language and cultural adjustment needs of international students, again this tends to be in the undergraduate space.

As such, although the focus of this chapter is on presenting the authors experiences, there remains an opportunity to empirically explore the issues raised in this chapter. In particular, although this chapter has focussed on our experience as educators, the student voice is missing. Therefore, an important focus of future research would be to understand the executive education student experience in an experiential learning context.

Appendix 1: Exercise 1

Global Organisational Behaviour: Recruitment Centre Teaching Notes

Resources Required:

- 1× pack per team, consisting of:
  - 20 dried spaghetti sticks (or skewers)
  - Sellotape
  - String
- Copies of sheets:
  - Sheet 1: Class set
  - Sheet 2 (team leader): 1× per group
  - Sheet 3 (team leader): 1× per group
  - Sheet 4 & 5: Class set

Instructions:

1. *Start of Class*

Ask the class to wait outside the classroom until all are assembled. While still outside the class, explain to the class that they will be engaged in a simulation and ask them to comply with all requests during the class. Briefing outside the class retains the classroom as the simulation space for the first part of the class.

2. *Step 1: Introducing the Session*

When students enter the classroom, welcome them to the Global Finance Recruitment Centre. Explain that they will be observed throughout the session and assessed based on their ability to take initiative, work with others, and leadership skills. Assign students into teams, ensuring a cultural mix (if possible, given the cohort).

3. *Step 2: Choosing the Team Leaders*

Identify one member from each team, and take him/her aside to brief with the other team leaders. It is often good to not only choose those 'natural' lead-

ers in the class, but rather to include a range of students, different ethnicities, genders, and a mix of introvert/extroverts. This mix often gives rise to a deeper debrief at the end of the session and allows the inclusion of aspects of multicultural leadership, gendered roles, etc.

Brief the leaders, giving them the leaders' handout below. Emphasize the importance of them reading the instructions carefully, and thinking how they will communicate these to their team. Ask them to consider whether they will require planning, design before starting the exercise, and how they will manage roles.

While this happens, the rest of the class receive Sheet (1) and discuss the skills and abilities they bring to the recruitment centre.

4. *Step 3: Team Exercise*

When the team leaders return to their teams, they instruct the team to complete the exercise. Give the teams 20 minutes to complete the exercise. The team who has the tallest tower is awarded 'Team of the Day'.

5. *Step 4: Team-based Assessment*

Once the assignment iscompleted, team leaders are brought together and required, in silence, to complete an assessment of their team (Sheet 3). While they are completing this, the team is asked to comment on its leader's performance, and make a recommendation as to his/her suitability to undertake a leadership role in the organization. All outcomes should be recorded confidentially.

6. *Step 5: Outcomes*

Based on the recommendations above, team members and leaders are given either a 'hired' or a 'not hired' outcome letter (Sheet 4). At this stage, it's good to give the class a 5-minute break to break the simulation and give students some processing time.

7. *Step 6: Debrief*

The debrief can be tailored to bring out a range of issues relating to class concepts, as required. Some key concepts may be multicultural perceptions of leadership skills/traits, multicultural impacts on teams/roles, and gender roles. If teaching from a critical perspective, this simulation can also be used to explore issues relating to team discipline and power, the 'privilege' of leadership, etc.

Global Organisational Behaviour: Recruitment Centre Exercise Sheets

Sheet 1: Class Introduction Sheet

Team Leader Intro Sheet

Sheet 2 (Team Leader)

Global Finance

Welcome to Global Finance Ltd

You have arrived today to take part in a recruitment and selection day for a large, multinational professional services organization. You have applied for a role within the International HR Advisory team, which operates as a central call-centre for HR and management enquiries from around the world. Although it is essentially a call centre role, the organisation is known for recruiting internally, and this role is seen as the entry point for corporate-level jobs within the organisation. You are very nervous, and have been looking for such an opportunity since you graduated with your Master of Global Business.

The Task

You have been organised into teams. One person has been selected to act as Team Leader for the first exercise. This person has been chosen as they demonstrated leadership competencies in their initial screening.

Your first task, while your team leader familiarizes themselves with the task, is to introduce yourselves, and what skills you think you bring to the team. You have come from around the world to try to gain a position at Global Finance. Your team leader will join you soon, and give you further instructions.

Leader Assessment

Sheet 3 (Team Leader)

Global Finance

Welcome to Global Finance Ltd

You have arrived today to take part in a recruitment and selection day for a large, multinational professional services organization. You have applied for a role within the International HR Advisory team, which operates as a central call-centre for HR and management enquiries from around the world. Although it is essentially a call centre role, the organisation is known for recruiting internally, and this role is seen as the entry point for corporate-level jobs within the organisation. You are very nervous, and have been looking for such an opportunity since you graduated with your Master of Global Business.

Your Role: Team Leader

Congratulations – during the first round of screening, you have been identified as having leadership competencies. As such, during this session, you will act as Team Leader, and we will be watching to see whether you have the capability to be placed in a more senior role.

You are responsible for a team of 4-5 people. These individuals, like yourself, are all Master degree qualified, and have come from around the world to be part of the Global Finance team. They obviously have a range of skills and competencies, and part of your job is to rank the other team members at the end of the exercise.

The Task

This task, while simple, is designed to show how well members contribute to team effort, and how well they fit with the Global Finance teamwork culture.
During this task, your team will need to design and build a structure using basic materials:

- Dried Spaghetti
- Sellotape
- String

At the top of your structure must be a marshmallow.

Teams and members will be assessed based on the following criteria

- Teamwork and Cohesiveness
- Ability of each member to work together/with others
- Height and breadth of structure

At the end of the exercise, the team member judged to have contributed least to the effort will be asked to leave the selection process. As part of this decision, and as part of your leadership competency test, you will be asked to rank the team members in terms of effectiveness. The Spaghetti sticks have been colour coded, and at your discretion you may choose to allocate a colour to each team member, to provide a visual representation of contribution.

You now need to go and instruct your team members regarding the task. How much of the purpose or assessment criteria you communicate to them is at your discretion.

Global Finance

Team Exercise Assessment

Please rank the team members in terms of their performance in the exercise

Name	Contribution (1-6)	Teamwork (1-6)	Interpersonal Skills (1-6)	Expertise (1-6)	Overall Ranking (1-6)

Now you have made your decision, please return this form to the facilitator, and return to your team to join in the discussion

Thank you for your contribution.

Global Finance

Team Exercise Outcome

Unfortunately, we feel your combination of skills and abilities are not consistent with what we are looking for here at the Global Finance team. As such, you will not be required to participate in any further selection activities.

Thank you for your contribution, and good luck for the future.

Global Finance

Team Exercise

Well done, you have now completed the first stage in your selection process for Global Finance. We will now be assessing your performance, and will advise you of the outcome shortly.

While we deliberate, please discuss the following:

- How well do you think your team performed?
- What were the factors to your success?
- Did you all contribute equally? Who performed better than others?

Outcome Sheets

Sheet 4

Global Finance

Team Exercise Outcome

Unfortunately, we feel your combination of skills and abilities are not consistent with what we are looking for here at the Global Finance team. As such, you will not be required to participate in any further selection activities.

Thank you for your contribution, and good luck for the future.

Sheet 5

Appendix 2: Exercise 2

Instructions

International New Venture Assessment

Final weighting consists of:

- Synopsis, 5 percent (due 1 week prior to presentation)
- Format/structure/content, 10 percent
- Presentation skills (individual), 10 percent
- Individual panel questions, 5 percent

Your Task

You are required to work in groups of 4–6, to develop an international new venture business proposal for a business which falls within the assigned industry. The proposal must highlight/analyse global market potential and risks for this business. You will need to be specific about the strategy/strategies that will be useful for your start-up success and provide an analysis on international market selection and entry mode(s). You will be required to pitch to a group of investors (played by your classmates), who are potentially interested in investing in your new venture.

The Synopsis

One week prior to your pitch, you are required to submit a 1-page synopsis (brief) of your business proposal, worth 5 percent of the mark for this assessment. The synopsis should contain the key points of your proposal, and be able to serve as a reference for your panelists, in their preparation of questions.

The Presentation

The presentation will be a *maximum of 20 minutes*, after which you will be asked to stop. In the presentation, you are to present the key points of your proposal, as though pitching for funding/investment in your new venture. For the presentation, *each* member of the team should prepare to speak for *3–5 minutes*. *Prepare the presentation as a team* so that the overall presentation

is coherent, with engagement across the issues discussed by different speakers. Use visual aids as appropriate, and rehearse your presentation timings so that you can stick to the time guidelines. After the group presentation, you shall expect questions from the class.

Industries

Team 1—Agribusiness
Team 2—Hi-tech business
Team 3—Health-related business
Team 4—Leisure and lifestyle
Team 5—Food/Beverage

Some points on which you can structure your report and presentation include, but not limited to:

- What is the purpose of your business?
- A brief about key products/services offered, e.g., its key features, USPs
- A general analysis of the domestic market for the product/service
- An assessment of the potential/attractiveness of the domestic market
- An evaluation of the international markets and a decision/recommendation on which is/are the most promising
- How are you going to manage the market performance/activities, e.g., what methods are available to sell the product/service, what are the distribution challenges/opportunities in this market? Which entry mode(s) will be the most relevant for international market(s)?
- How will you measure if you have been successful? What are your Key Performance Indicators for this business?
- What assistance is available to your business that you intend to draw on? Institutions, Individuals?
- Where do you see your organisation in 3–5 years?
- Other important aspects, e.g., resources required, key competences, competitive advantages/disadvantage, and personnel

This is a business proposal, and the three keys to success are (1) specificity, (2) analysis, and (3) a well-structured and practiced presentation. Use relevant course theories, concepts, and frameworks to analyse your business opportunity and build your case for investment. You can use as many or as few as you see necessary.

Reminder: This is a group project, so please make sure that each member of the group makes (generally) equal contribution to the work.

The Individual Panel Questions

You will also be required to act as a panelist (investor) for another group's presentation, a task which is worth 5 percent of your mark for this assessment. For the assigned week, you will be required to read the group's synopsis and prepare *carefully considered* questions in advance for the group. You will sit at the front of the class during the presentation and will act as the potential investors for the presenting team. Top grades will be awarded to those who:

- Demonstrate preparation in their questions, asking carefully considered, well thought out questions
- Prompt the group to link their proposal to course content
- Act in a professional manner

Business Proposal Presentation Assessment: Individual Factors

Name: _____

Team Business:_____ **Team Presentation Date:**_____

	A+ to A-	B+ to B-	C+ to C-	D
A. Presentation				
1. Demonstrates enthusiasm and holds audience interest 2. Demonstrates knowledge and understanding of the business proposal 3. Demonstrates understanding and knowledge of the analysis of the domestic and international market				
B. Panellist 4. Asks thoughtful questions which demonstrate preparation 5. Demonstrates interest in the presenting team's proposal 6. Demonstrates understanding of course material in questioning				

Comments: (continue on the back of the page as necessary)

Business Proposal Presentation Assessment

Team: _____

Business Name :_____**Date:**_____

	A+ to A-	B+ to B-	C+ to C-	D
C. Depth of Analysis				
7. The team demonstrated knowledge and research in the domestic and international markets 8. The team presented adequate and logical support for its proposals 9. The team showed understanding of the wider course material in forming their recommendations				
D. Business Proposal 10. The team presented a proposal that was coherent and thorough 11. The proposal was supported by the analysis of the domestic market 12. The team provided a detailed plan on how it could implement the proposal 13. The team provided an international growth plan 14. The team presented evidence that supported its recommendations 15. The team made recommendations that were in scale to the size of the business 16. The team made recommendations that showed creativity and originality				
E. Practicality of Recommendations 17. The team's recommendations could be executed in 'real world' scenarios				
F. Organisation, Presentation, and Teamwork 18. The team's presentation flowed smoothly 19. Each team member contributed to the overall presentation 20. The team used audio/visual equipment and/or other technology effectively				
G. Question Answering 21. Most members of the team were involved in answering questions 22. The answers provided addressed the actual questions asked 23. The answers provided sufficient detail to address the questions				

Comments: (continue on the back of the page as necessary

Grade:_____

Appendix 3: Exercise 3

Case - Study: Privatisation of Air India
INTB 864 Business in Asia
FINAL EXAMINATION
MARKING GUIDE

Date: **Thursday 30 May 2018**
Time Allowed: **3** hours plus **10** minutes reading for the paper.

ALL UNAUTHORISED ITEMS MUST BE PLACED AT THE FRONT OF THE ROOM. THIS INCLUDES MOBILE PHONES. FAILURE TO DO SO MAY BE DEEMED A BREACH OF ACADEMIC HONESTY.

Items permitted on your desk for this examination:
· Pen and a single sheet of hand written notes

Instructions:
1. Candidates must not write during the reading time.
2. Candidates can choose to answer questions on **any one** of the two topics.
3. Use blue or black pen only.
4. No dictionaries (of any sort) are allowed.
5. The marks allocated to each part of the question are indicated in brackets.
6. Extra exam paper is available from your examination invigilator.
7. Please print your Student ID number and full name on the front page and every page of the blue answer booklet and on each additional sheet of paper used.
8. Start each question on a new page in the blue answer booklet provided.
9. Candidates should support their answers with appropriate references where possible.
10. Please follow all instructions on the blue answer booklet.
11. The exam is worth 50 percent of the total grade for the paper.

Exam Summary:

Section here is visibly an increase in religiously motivated terror attacks. Many of the radical groups identify themselves with	**Marks**	**Suggested Time**
1. Long Essay Question	25	45

2. Long Essay Question	25	45
3. Long Essay Question	25	45
4. Long Essay Question	25	45
TOTAL:	**100**	**180**

LONG ESSAY QUESTIONS (TOTAL: 100 MARKS)

The Privatisation of Air India
Using the case study answer the following questions

(25 marks)

1. What are the factors that have led to the current state of Air India?

Answer: Possible points may include

Poor Service quality has been one of the major reasons for low demand for Air India services. In particular, delay in flights, cleanliness and inefficient cabin crew services are the most important factors that have played a role in the decline of the airline. In addition, Air India is the third least safe airlines. Poor brand image and a negative consumer perception have also had an impact on the demand for the services offered by the airline. Intense competition from private low cost airlines has further swayed passengers away from airline contributing to already declining revenues. The operating cost of Air India has surged for bureaucratic reasons such as government officials getting free upgrades, overstaffing, high wage bills and employee strikes, all of which have resulted into losses accumulating to millions of dollars over the past two decades. The students could also analyse opportunities for and provide recommendations to the airline. Leadership issues in the company and inability to incorporate values, high standards of performance and ethical business conduct in the system are also some of the issues that have led to the declining brand image of the airline

(25 marks)

2. If you were the head of Air India, would you support or oppose privatisation of the airline? Give reasons for your decision.

Answer: Possible points may include

Selling off and privatisation of the airline seems to be the most appropriate course of action to ensure the survival and/or revival of Air India. Successive governments have tried to restructure the organisation and streamline the operation; however, they have failed to help the airline. Despite continuous funding, the airline has not made any improvements. Number of examples: British Airways, Japan, Lufthansa, and Qantas to name a few highlight how privatisation can help an organisation turn its fortunes. In addition, investors could buy different services of Air India, which might help the organisation achieve greater synergies and economies of scale. This can be achieved in well-formulated steps, where the profit-making subsidiaries may be sold prior to other subsidiaries. Privatisation would also help the organisation better manage the productivity of its staff. SOEs often deal with various management issues that stem from monitoring and supervision problems and lack of incentive to compete and earn profit. Poor service quality, flight delays and safety issues have hurt the organisation's image. For the organisation to work efficiently, a change in management may assist in envisioning the change that may be required. Air India currently has a culture where the civil aviation minister is at the helm of the organisation has the power to determine the fortunes of the organisation with minimal participation from the employees. In addition, employees including senior management have restrained their feedback out of fear of losing their promotion/position. Privatisation of Air India may create an environment where employees are able to participate in the running and management of the organisation. It may also introduce innovation, competitive aggressiveness and reactiveness, aspects that are currently absent in the organisation.

(25 marks)

3. What costs and risks are associated with the merger of Air India and Indian Airlines?

Answer: The common objective of M&A is to achieve synergic benefits. Other objectives are to increase market power, reduce competition, diversification and market penetration. Currently M&A's are a popular strategy used by firms to enter into a new market or to increase a firm's strategic positioning and competitiveness in an existing market. The purpose behind merging Air India and Indian Airlines was to market them large enough to bid for a membership in the Star Alliance group and avail its benefits. Although it successfully became a member in 2014, this merger did not perform well. The reason was largely due to lack of synergy in terms of work culture, different target markets, ineffective restructuring places and lack of strong leadership at the time of the merger. Prior to the merger due diligence on HR issues was very poor and no efforts were made to standardise hiring policies for the rank and file. Both the organisations had different working terms and conditions, promotion policies, creating dissatisfaction among employees and gaps in operational processes. This resulted into operating losses that were accumulated over the years along with the increased debt due to the purchase of additional 111 aircrafts.

(25 marks)

4. What role does the industry environment play in influencing the turnaround the airline?

Answer: Environmental conditions have a major influence on a firm's ability to sustain and earn above average returns. Firms are forced to alter their business models, pricing, revenue and cost structures to suit the changing environment. Recognition of such changes, trends, opportunities and threats help the firm identify the opportunities and threats well in time and take preventive actions accordingly. As seen in the case perpetual decrease in fuel prices hit AI hard. The recession also affected it. Fuel is one of the most important resources for the airlines industry. The supply uncertainty associated with it and the strategic importance of fuel in the final service demands airlines to ensure that the supply and use of fuel-efficient aircrafts. The aviation industry in India is currently booming. Airlines like IndiGo and Jet Airways have made profits out of these favourable situations, however AI has failed to properly utilise these changes to gain above-average returns. The case highlights the influence of the external environment on a firm's performance but unless the firm through a strategically aligned resources strategy is able to effectively utilise its core competences to support external change, the objective is not achieved.

---End of Exam---

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44

Experiential Learning in Executive Education: The Lagos Business School (LBS) Experience

Chris Ogbechie and Hammed Akanji

I hear, and I forget. I see, and I remember. I do, and I understand.
Ancient Chinese Proverb

Experiential Learning (EL) in Higher Education

In recent times, concerted efforts are being made to improve management education with a view to enhancing organizational performance. At the heart of an organizational practice is a learning system (*learning by doing*) and management process is perceived as a process of learning. Learning lies at the core of management practice and is holistically defined as the basic process of human adaptation (Kolb & Kolb, 2008). This broad definition encompasses broader management processes such as entrepreneurial learning, strategy formulation, creativity, problem solving, decision making, and leadership (Bevan & Kipka, 2012). Organizations are then seen as *learning, re-learning, and unlearning* entity with effective management education as an anchor to bring it about.

Traditional teaching styles are becoming less and less effective at reaching today's business practitioners. The boredom of students deters learning and management education has been challenged for not doing enough to address this concern (Jacoby, 2012). A number of learning-enhanced institutions and

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M. A. Gonzalez-Perez et al. (eds.), *The Palgrave Handbook of Learning and Teaching International Business and Management*, https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-030-20415-0_44

scholars alike have focused on improving the learning process in management education through the application of research from what has been called "the new science of learning" (Kolb & Kolb, 2005). One stream of this research is the experiential learning (EL) method.

Arguably, one of the most natural and potent ways to learn is through experience or precisely learning through reflection or by doing. One premise is that education framed by reflection and experience will lead to improvement in learning. Thus, EL has been widely acknowledged as an interdisciplinary approach in management education and it reflects a holistic process driven by the resolution of a dual dialectic of action/reflection and experience/abstraction (Bevan & Kipka, 2012; Kolb & Kolb, 2008). Professor R. Stuckey and Ogilvy (2007) defines experiential education as one in which experience "is a significant or primary method of instruction".

As learning and re-learning permeates all life experiences, effective management education is predicated on reflection such as a child learning to walk, navigating the phases of life, and so on. Through experiential learning, managers are able to learn new skills, hone their extant skills and get better at what they do. Through critical reflection, we are able to create a mental map of outcomes perhaps after undergoing a similar experience, for example, If my company takes action A, we can get outcome B.

The Lagos Business School (LBS) Experience: Experiential Learning (EL) as a Channel to Teach Our Modules

The Lagos Business School (LBS) is the graduate school arm of (The) Pan-Atlantic University, located in the city of Lagos, Nigeria. LBS offers Academic, Executive, and Short-focused Programs in management education that have been ranked among the best in Africa. The school ingrained experiential learning through her various MBA and Executive Programs. The MBA Programs are structured into Full-time MBA (MBA), Executive MBA (EMBA), and Modular EMBA (MEMBA). The Executive Programs consist of Senior Management Program (SMP), Advanced Management Program (AMP), Chief Executive Program (CEP), Owner-Managers Program (OMP), and others.

Her management education is a comprehensive one that draws on the multinational experience of the faculty and participants. Our vehement belief that the sustainability of any industry is closely linked to the manpower quality

made available to it informed our decision to adopt EL teaching methodology. The teaching method ensures that participants gain management knowledge and skill by employing a variety of experiential methods and group-work approach to learning.

The main pedagogical tool used in LBS is the case teaching (study) method. Capstone projects are used to entrench EL. Occasional lectures, discussions, videos, business games, simulations, and role-plays supplement these cases. Group sessions are key to the experiential learning process. Syndicate groups are arranged in such a way as to ensure an adequate mix of participants from varied backgrounds and industries, thereby maximizing their exposures and interactions.

The school has embedded experiential learning through the use of capstone projects. The project is aimed at showcasing all what the students and participants have learnt throughout. The projects are further broken down into different pedagogies;

- **Business Strategy Game (BSG or Simulation)**: This is an abstraction from real-life business practices by replicating it on computers or other simulators. The school organizes Business Strategy Game (BSG) sessions as part of the strategy curriculum where students learn how to chart a long-term direction for businesses, set and achieve strategic and financial objectives, craft a strategy, and adapt it to changing industry and competitive conditions. Learn how to match strategic wits with managers of rival companies, "think strategically" about their company's competitive market position, and figure out the kind of actions it will take to out-compete rivals. This is carried out by MBA, EMBA, and MEMBA students.
- **Real-Life Projects**: These are projects on local and international business opportunities and challenges. It is a multifaceted assignment that serves as a culminating academic and intellectual experience for students. The school, as a result of its strategic location, is often approached by corporations to forward students to solve business problems. The projects are usually carried out by our MBA students.

More so, as a learning experience, students further carry out the projects to hone their business skills while exposing them to international and local business opportunities. Through such projects, students are given first-hand experience of real-world happenings—their challenges, prospects, and how they can proffer solutions to them.

- **Study/Learning Tours**: With this, students and other business practitioners are given a first-hand experience of what they are taught in the classroom. The school takes the students to embark on learning or study tours to countries such as the United States, Singapore, South Africa, Spain, and China. In addition, the school also organizes excursions to industrial parks (clusters) in Nigeria for students to reflect on their experiences. For example, the school in 2018 had a tour of the proposed largest petroleum refinery in Africa, situated in Lagos, Nigeria. This is usually done by those on executive programs.

The study tours allow for a deeper understanding of business practices around the world while affording the students the chance to interact with professionals and business movers around the globe.

Contribution to International Business and Management

Effective management requires a series of skills to keep in tune with the frenetic pace of today's business needs. Hence, reflection or learning-by-doing comes into play (Poisson-de Haro & Turgut, 2012). In domesticating the teaching methodology requirement from the management education accreditation agencies, the school developed the Assurance of Learning (AOL) plan. The AOL is a continuous improvement and faculty-driven process. The AOL allows the school to implement the experiential learning through the capstone frameworks.

An irrefragable premise of experiential learning is that experiences framed by reflection will lead to effective learning (Schon, 1983; Kolb & Kolb, 2008). Business schools should thus be the preparatory ground for competent managers who are armed with required managerial arsenals and competencies in ethical and interpersonal decision-making skills needed in today's business world.

To this end, beyond the mere personal development, EL focus in LBS enhances students' ability and adaptation of their day-to-day business activities with learning at the core of successful organization and individual changes. The school often organizes what it termed 'experiential information session' for regular and executive MBA where participants bring to bear their experiences in the business world which often acts as an interactive ground to proffer business solutions to others with similar challenges.

This chapter will detail the range of experiential learning tools used in LBS for the purpose of curriculum design and teaching, for individual/personal development and the recruitment and retention of talents in a professional and commercial organization. This chapter will detail the experiential learning journey of LBS which is internalized through the identified projects above. To this end, the important contribution of this chapter will be in two-folds:

1. Demonstrate the versatility of experiential learning in management education and training using capstones.
2. Present modules and case simulations that in their gamut illustrate the in-classroom and out-of-classroom application of experiential learning as used in LBS.

As today's students are business leaders of tomorrow, effective participation in all these modules have enhanced effective and ethical business practices among our alumni. The capstone projects were designed to make the students think critically and develop great analytical skills.

The Project Experience

Successful management requires the ability to understand and apply modern management principles and techniques effectively (Elmuti, 2004). Management programs offer courses in strategy, finance, human resource, entrepreneurship, operations, and so on as a unique platform to build models of a real-world phenomenon. In LBS, the strategic management courses (titled SM I & II) are taken after the students have undergone specific training in those highlighted courses with a view to get a holistic view of business practices.

The strategy course is offered as a unique capstone that integrates prior course-works in order to have a panoramic view of business. In our MBA and Executive programs, it is believed that the initial modules would have acquainted the students/participants with how each aspect works to fits the management system, then the strategic management courses are taken to elaborate more on actual practices. The module teaches students how everything fits together and how to think and make decisions like the competent managers they aspire to be (Rapert, Smith, Velliquette, & Garretson, 2004).

While each of these modules has been taught using a variety of methods such as class lectures, seminars, syndicate group discussions, and so on, the capstone avenue affords the students the opportunity to integrate prior life

experiences into current learning outcomes. To execute this capstone, a structured activity coupled with day-to-day life experiences are undertaken by our faculty. The structured learning activity such as orientation, simulation training, and workshops plays an integral role in helping the participants articulate their experiences and relate it to their pre-existing knowledge through a series of interaction between the students and the faculty.

The Basics: Project and Activity Description

Many of the management training conducted within LBS include experiential activity elements such as role-plays, team-building sessions, and team-bonding activities and simulations. But the tools to be examined here are real-life projects, BSG, and study tours.

Real-Life Projects

This is a course component under the strategy modules for MBA students. These are real-life projects of local and international business opportunities. The projects give them a real-life scenario of likely business problems and by immersing themselves into those organizations can help in proffering workable solutions to them.

The project brings together teams of MBA students to develop recommendations that can help organizations run by LBS alumni solve critical challenges such as major growth or expansion plans, organization turnaround strategies, and entering new ventures for those in need of a strategic plan. Using the analogy of red and blue ocean (the red segment signaling danger and the blue segment signaling opportunities), the purpose is to see how the students can intuitively and realistically map out thoughts in helping the prospective organization(s) swam to the blue segment.

The rationale for coming up with this project stems from the increasing rate of collapse of many upcoming businesses in Nigeria which do not have the required strength to engage established consultants but which can use the experience of upcoming business consultants, that is, MBA students. The school, through the faculty-in-charge, makes contact with the school's alumni who are now business owners to request for current MBA students visit their entity for a month for the purpose of getting involved. Armed with all the business skills needed, the aim is to help in paddling the organizations from the red to the blue segment and to further help retain them in that section.

The faculty coordinator divides the students numbering 25–30 students into a group of about 4–5 members. These members will embark on site visit to the entity concern, interact with the organization involved and present reports on likely solutions to help the entity concerned.

In 2019, in line with Association of MBAs (AMBA) requirements, the school decided to make capstone a stand-alone within the strategy module with an extended duration of four months. For the typical real-life project milestones, check (Appendix 1).

Most suitable audience: The most suitable audience for real-life project is the MBA students.

Time required: The projects require in-class and out-class experience. For the in-class, a total of 5 sessions of 75 minutes are required to effectively harp on the content. While out-class experience is spread over a period of four months.

Optimal group size: The optimal class size for the MBA is 30 and the class is split into a group of 4 to 5 for effectiveness and well-execution of the task.

Material and technologies required: At the outset, the interested organizations prepare a three- to five-page "written case" detailing their challenge(s) which will serve as a guide to the team members. At the completion, the school provides to the companies the following documents; copies of strategic plan detailing the group's strategic analysis and recommendation, detailed design, and plans and one- to two-page comprehensive executive summary of their work after the final presentation. The cost has been built into their tuition.

Business Strategy Game (BSG)

Most strategy courses can be taught effectively with the aid of simulations as it will put the students in the shoes of real managers and be able to think a posteriori and a priori about what decisions or recommendation could be given or made (Dean & Fornaciari, 2002). With BSG, the students can understand the complexity of decision making since they are exposed to a simulated environment that reflects real-life experiences (Parks & Lindstrom, 1995). Built on a computer-based platform, BSG is a powerful teaching tool in motivating students (Thomas, 1998), since they convey a sense of enjoyment in a game-like computer environment. Thought-provoking games help instructors stimulate students' interests in the learning objectives and generate involvement and enthusiasm in the learning process.

The BSG in this sense is very appropriate for teaching strategic management courses. The BSG is a PC-based exercise, modeled to reflect the

real-world character of the globally competitive industry (athletic footwear as a case study). It is structured in a way such that the participants run a company in a head-to-head competition with companies run by other class members over a period of ten years.

- The most suitable audiences for BSG in LBS are the regular (full-time) MBA as well as EMBA and MEMBA students. The reason being the rigor and extensive time required to plan a ten-year business project. SMP and OMP participants also partake in it.
- The time required is about 10 sessions of 75 minutes each for modules spanning 4 weeks for MBA students. The limited time available for the executive participants requires the session be spread over a course of three to four sessions. While the EMBA and MEMBA may require less than three months of five to six sessions. Each group is expected to present the decision report at the end of every session.
- The practice in LBS is to divide the class into groups of at least five to eight members who will simulate a business concern and run it in competition with other group members for a ten-year business period. The optimal class fit from our experience has been a maximum of 50–60 participants for effective delineation and adequate supervision. At the end of the game, each group is expected to present the report of their yearly decisions for evaluation.
- The material required for effective delivery of BSG is a printed reading material (BSG player's guide) and computer-enhanced software for "playing" the game. The cost of providing the materials has been built into the participants' tuitions.

Study Tour

The school organizes study tours as part of the learning points for the EMBA and Executive programs. The participants accompanied by faculty travel to international destinations of economic and cultural significance. The students can pick from destinations such as South Africa, Singapore, Spain, USA, UK, and so on. It affords them the opportunities to meet business executives and to experience other cultures first-hand. The program involves company visits, semi-formal discussion, training sessions, case studies, lectures, and cultural visits. Upon arrival, the combinations of classroom learning, and on-field observations were brought up for discussion in the class with which the students are assessed.

- The most suitable audience is the Executive MBA students. This is because they are business managers with more than seven years of cognate business experience who have crisscrossed the length and breadth of business world.
- The suitable time required to execute the tour is days if not months. The reason being that to further entrench the appropriate learning point, the school organizes a local and international educational tour to allow for intercountry comparison of business opportunities. The actual tour experience is about eight days for overseas' visit.
- The optimal class size for the tour is between 20 and 30 students for effective planning and ease of concentration on the participants. This is because it takes months of planning and contact establishment to be put in place.
- The reason for restricting it to Executive MBA is because of the huge cost and preparation expenses involved (for confidential purpose, the amount is not mentioned). More so, the cognate post-qualification years of experience (seven years and above) means that those managers at the top cadre should be targeted.

Learning Objectives

The learning process to be included in this chapter will help see how the projects mentioned above have been seamlessly used to integrate experiential practices into management education and how it can be used to enhance sustainable business practices as evident from our participants. The intended learning objectives for the students are to develop and enhance their entrepreneurial skills, refreshed them to face real-world challenges and opportunities and leverage on their knowledge to exploit emerging business opportunities. For the readers, it is believed that

– they can learn how to translate skill-sets into actions.
– students, faculties, and practitioners can learn how to develop leadership capabilities and demonstrate the versatility of experiential learning as used in LBS programs.
– it will enhance easy transfer and monitoring of knowledge, skills, and development as well as implement whole person learning through sustainable practices
– readers can learn how to support active contributions in the workplace.
– readers can also understand and develop strategies that will sustain their businesses and ensure growth.

Purpose and Description of the Projects

Research confirms that students learn most effectively from active engagement with information and ideas (Jacoby, 2012). They tend to do better when they are made to take initiatives, apply concepts to practice, solve problems, make decisions as well as reflect on consequences. While conventional pedagogy viewed EL primarily as an activity that takes place outside of the classroom, we believe that it can also work well *in-classrooms*—as experience with our management students have shown.

As part of the entry-level curriculum, students benefit from the LBS experiential information session where they benefit from real-life business exhibition and likely challenges in Lagos, Nigeria. These projects enable faculty members to pose questions and see how the students go about solving them, facilitate learning, and observe learning as it occurs and help the students make meaning of their experiences.

In an environment of experiential learning, the participants' analysis and reflection on the subject of emphasis lead to learning. Therefore with EL, students are able to bring their previously accumulated knowledge to recently acquired knowledge allowing them re-shape and re-jig prior knowledge while conducting the exercise (Poisson-de Haro & Turgut, 2012; Walter & Marks, 1981). Hence, learning through experience is critical in management education, given that numerous MBA programs accept their students based on their accumulated business experience along with other criteria and it is on that premise that the school uses capstone projects to hone students' skills.

The following are the purposes of those modules:

- Help in understanding and implementing sustainable business practices and strategies.
- Help students and participants understand the project life cycle (PLC) and the inherent industry to industry peculiarities regardless of the students' area of focus
- Translate skill-sets into action plans to exploit opportunities and challenges.

The real-life project is an on-site business visitation journey where our MBA students are giving a feel of real-world business challenges and how they can intuitively and collaboratively come up with workable solutions to them. Through such avenues, the students have not only been able to help proffer imaginative and long-lasting solutions but have also facilitated the continuous request of such from those organizations. In some instances, our executive participants (primarily Chief Executive Officers and Business owners) bring

forth real-life challenges they face in their businesses together with tentative solutions. They are subsequently attached to a faculty or business coach who provides guidance and practical business solutions from the tentative solutions they provided. Some of the successful capstone projects implemented include understanding Africa's business opportunities, authentic leadership, and meandering through Nigeria's VUCA (Volatile, Uncertainty, Complex, and Ambiguous) environment.

The project is highly collaborative between the students, the organizations, and the faculty involved. To operationalize the project experience, the organization concerned writes a three- to five-page "case" that provides details about the business challenges in the organization. This serves as a starting point for the students who are expected to develop comprehensive strategic solutions to the identified problems following a template design by the school. During the task, a faculty supervises and guides the student teams and is also in regular contact with the organization(s) throughout the duration to facilitate a satisfactory experience and good outcome for the students and the organizations concerned. The capstone instruction and step-by-step progress with the organization are specified in the school curriculum.

For BSG, the purpose is to provide a truly powerful learning experience that thrust the students squarely into an active, hands-on managerial role. Through the in-built features, students can make strategic business decisions which can be used to carry out a wide range of functions such as responding to actions of the competitors, forging a long-term direction, and strategy for the company, forecasting upcoming sales volumes and making decisions relating to workforce compensation and plant operation, capacity expansion, pricing and marketing, finance, and corporate social responsibilities.

In addition, the BSG has aroused in our students' positive energy and has revved up the tempo of the strategic management course in one notch or two. This is because the healthy rivalry that emerges among the management teams (the group members) of competing companies stirs competitive wits and fully spurs class members to exercise their strategic prowess, analytical skills, and decision-making dexterity.

The study tour was designed to offer the participants international exposure in the area of business management, international trade, and global business opportunities and trends as well as international networking within the participants' business interest. The participants were able to gain perspectives from alumni, industry, and other leaders with workshop, lectures, company visits, panels, and guest speakers.

Meeting the Experiential Learning Cycle

The three modules follow the ELT pedagogical themes (Kolb & Lingham 2002), which maintain that, one, learning should be perceived as a process, and not only in terms of results. Two, that all learning is an unlearning and re-learning process. Three, that learning involves the resolution of the conflict between form of adaptation and the dialectical opposition to real-world situation, that is, learning is a synergetic transaction between self and the surrounding. Four, that learning is a knowledge creation process.

The learning modules employed by the school are in tune with the EL cycle as follows:

1. **Active experimentation**: The first two capstone projects namely real-life project and BSG require active experimentation through the modeling of real-life business application using computer simulation and/or through hands-on experience.

   In the real-life project, the student teams are made to interact with the organization throughout the semester. The initial interaction (orientation) lasted for about one hour to allow familiarization and adequately inform the students on the challenges at hand. This is done in the presence of the faculty member who establishes the contact and let each group get in touch with their assigned organization. The experimental guide will enable the students to understand the nature of the tasks at hand.

   For the BSG, about five to seven class members are assigned to operate an athletic footwear company that produces and markets both branded and private labeled footwear. Each group competes with other companies run by other class members.

   For the study tour, the planning and execution processes are done in collaboration with the students to ensure active participation. The participants travel their chosen spot and work in a small group to execute projects relevant to the area.
2. **Concrete Experience**: These projects evoke an emotional dimension to the learning experience. For example, in BSG, students are made to plan, play, and put in practice the game-theoretic model studied in class. In our MBA and executive programs, executive challenges in the society or in corporate entities are modeled in a simulation game with decisions being made over a ten-year business period with a view to ensuring long-term sustainability. The school at regular interval plan sustainability journey to give a first-hand experience of on-site sustainable practices.

While the BSG allows the students to compete on a global scale using the simulation, the capstone gives them the real-life feelings of business challenges and opportunities. The study tour further complemented their knowledge through physical contact with the quintessence of the business world.

3. **Reflective Observation**: At the core of these experiential learning projects is a deep reflection of what is being done. As reflection on what is learnt makes learning fun, peer-to-peer engagement, mapping out of possible cause and effect scenarios have helped to impact the learners positively.
4. **Abstract Conceptualization**: This further sharpens the students' training as new ideas and concepts are applied to new situations, problems, and experience.

Skills and Competencies

Managers are expected to have in-depth knowledge of models, theories, and techniques, and management education is designed to meet these needs. The education is beneficial in that it allows educated managers to create competitive advantages using their strategic human assets. The concerns as to which skills and competencies are needed to be an efficient manager and choosing the right method to achieve the objective (Boyatzis, 2008) informed the school's decision. Business management and strategy professors can impart the needed managerial skills by deploying a combination of different teaching methods to build the skills (Poisson-de Haro & Turgut, 2012).

To gain a competitive advantage in today's talent-driven economy, organizations need, and business schools must build, a sustainable talent pipeline. The future success of the organization depends on its ability to obtain from business schools promising professionals to handle challenges associated with increasingly complex organizations and market terrain. As managers/practitioners make decisions in multiple areas—those stemming from issues relating to firm's operations (direct business issues) to those deriving from firm's stakeholders (indirect business issues)—the different project modules were geared toward EL acquisition (Poisson-de Haro & Turgut, 2012).

While BSG is useful in developing analytical skills (Wolfe, 1997), it does not prepare students to handle other issues such as ethical decision-making skills and other soft skills (Kachra & Schnietz, 2008). The school decided to use the real-life project and study tour to complement the BSG for effective learning. So far, we observed that these three capstones apart from engender-

ing managerial skills in our students have also helped to increase their level of self-confidence through problem-solving and relational skills. In addition, it allows them especially the business-owner participants to think differently about their business situations, a task that was heretofore assigned to external consultants.

To this end, the school's curriculum committee established six experiential learning skills for the programs in our BSG adoption, namely analytical and problem-solving skills, ethical and social responsibility skills, global perspective skills, leadership skills, and good communication (both oral and written) skills (see Appendix 2 for specific skill description).

For the real-life project, the competencies aimed at achieving are to sharpen their relational and managerial skills and develop their interpersonal and ethical decision-making skills and soft skills. By realizing that cooperative learning models augment students understanding (Harton et al., 2002) and the fact that learners build greater confidence in knowledge gained through active engagement rather than those passively conveyed, the project was introduced to bridge those gaps BSG cannot provide. The realistic application of theoretical skills our students garnered in the class has helped a lot of business organizations in Nigeria and beyond to solve critical managerial and strategic issues. The program has enhanced our student's ability to develop rich and detailed strategic recommendations adopted by firms. The other competencies the project executions are aimed at include networking skills, presentation skills and business analytics, and evaluation skills.

The study tour was designed to, in addition to above, strengthen their skills in international business management issues and its challenges as well as creativity and innovation in managing the issues. At the end of the tour, the participants were able to relate taught theories and management techniques/lessons in their programs to real-life practices experienced on the tour. More generally, these projects have enhanced the transferability skills of our students with effective application of their aptitudes and temperaments at the workplace.

Finally, contemporary management education is incomplete without soft skills (Elmuti, 2004). Competent managers need to have a deep understanding of human beings, especially their employees, customers, and stakeholders (Mintzberg, 1992). The soft (or people) skills help us to understand what a manager can do in indirect business issues (i.e. social knowledge), how a manager can handle them (i.e. group process), and why a manager feels the need to manage them (i.e. emotional intelligence). Unlike the lecturing method which relies heavily on the controlled setting, we observed that these projects provide free choice for students to express their cognitive and evaluative abilities.

Evaluation of Learning Objectives

To ensure that the students realize the requisite objectives of these capstones, it is imperative to get feedback from them. One medium for this is through regular evaluation using both in-class and out-class assessments as well as constant engagement with our alumni to monitor the progress.

One method of evaluation is the Learning Assurance Report which provides us with solid empirical data regarding the business skills and decision-making capabilities of our students relative to the other business schools across the globe. Through these modules, we are able to obtain concrete evidence of the business proficiencies of our students on each of the nine (9) measures contained in our Assurance of Learning Implementation plan (Appendixes 2 and 3). The measures relating to "Leadership; Collaboration & Teamwork and; Financial Skills" are based on each students' individual performance on quizzes set for them in class. The other measures are all based on data relating to the performance of each member in the group. On the BSG dashboard, a percentile is shown which enable us to assess our students' progress relative to the rest of other players (students) worldwide.

The learning of assurance report has provided us a clear overview of how our MBA students rank relative to the rest of the students from other schools that have gone through the competition-based simulation. It has also allowed us to have credible evidence regarding the understanding and decision-making prowess of the students. This has allowed the fine-tuning of the academic curriculum to further provide the student with the desired degree of business understanding and decision-making acumen.

For the real-life project, the need for effectiveness makes the school to partner with the Association of MBAs (AMBA) to make it a stand-alone course to be graded using criteria such as participation, quality of presentation, realism of proposed solutions, and level of engagements with the attached organization. The score is pegged at 100%.

Challenges and Best Practice

While simulation games and life projects have been used to drive experiential learning in LBS, there are important challenges encountered in the process of using them. Instructors in some of our other modules have used role-plays and case notes in teaching strategic management courses. Nevertheless, these methods were rife with significant drawbacks as well. For case notes, they offer

only a static view of the firm by giving a snapshot of a particular event taking place at a point in time which is in stark contrast to the dynamic environments and continuous changes a firm faces (Thomas, 1998). Role-play, on the other hand, is criticized for being an effective method only in highlighting social interactions in interpersonal business transactions (Wagner & Moffett, 2000). To this end, the best practice to incorporate EL in our MBA and executive MBA programs is through the strategy simulation games and real-life projects complemented with study tours.

These projects have been able to provide a means to our students for real-life learning by exposing them to complex managerial decisions, first, in a simulated environment; and then in the exact reality. With hands-on experiences and opportunities to practice integral decision making, these projects afford them the opportunities to learn both from their own mistakes—the simulated environment—and from those of others—through life projects and tours. They are seen to be the most effective methods, with their superior ability to enable students to practice the necessary skills managers needed. Armed with these skills, students are expected to manage the complex integration and decision of different firm functions (Poisson-de Haro & Turgut, 2012).

In carrying out these projects, the challenges we encountered are majorly in the following areas.

Funding Challenges to Execute Some of the Projects

As the life projects require the students to do on-site visitation and series of interviews with the different strata of the organization, we often receive complaints from the out-station students as to the cost expended in executing the tasks.

The BSG package costs the school and the students extra fees built into their tuition. Simulation carries an opportunity cost also because the instructor needs additional time and effort to learn the simulation. Instructors must brief students about simulation rules, run the simulation, analyze results, debrief students about their actions, and hold added office hours to answer questions. The instructor may require extra teaching assistants and need a stipend budget.

The tours also cost the school humongous sum to execute, provide for the reservation and other logistics to and from the destination. In fact, the cost of executing the projects sometimes deters some students for taking full advantage of the myriads of learning experiences anticipated.

Limited Time Constraints

The need to learn and incorporate many things at the same time when playing the BSG often results in information overhang for some participants. As the BSG is played after undergoing several aspects of management training such as finance, entrepreneurship, marketing, and so on, all these skills are brought into bear in planning a simulated business venture (the athletic footwear) in the strategy simulation. In the process, we observed some students have challenges in playing along with the simulation as expected owing to different levels of information required.

In the real-life project, there is the tendency to bunch a whole stream of activities together within a short time frame thereby thwarting the overall goal of practical business application. In fact, our experience with most students have been not having enough time—together with their class schedules—to fittingly do what is required.

Lack of Will Power on the Part of the Participants

This, sometimes, flows from the unabated emphasis on technology. The over-attachment to or over-emphasis on simulation can disrupt the learning objectives. For instance, some students may focus their attention on achievement through decoding the simulation algorithm rather than understanding the true nature of the relationships among different elements in strategic decision making. To this end, they perceived the BSG as simply a gaming tool to outpace their peers and secure immediate adulation rather than plan long-term business sustenance. In such instances, students treat the simulation initially as a form of entertainment where developing and practicing skills related to theoretical, applied, and practical integration loses priority.

One of the challenges faced in the study tour is how well to get all participants to attend the pre- and post-orientation program. The pre-orientation program is an essential part of the academic excursion. Another challenge is the tepid attitude of some students in meeting set deadlines to aid effective planning. Some participants usually wait until the very last minute to complete the program application form thereby impeding the school's and the faculty's preparation.

For the real-life project, one major challenge borders on the lukewarm attitudes of some organizations in allowing an external person—in this case, our students—to get whiffs or have access to their internal operations. This may not be unconnected to the confidentiality and trust issues particularly the lack of confidence in callow MBA students to proffer solutions to their problems.

In addition, we experience the mis-alignment of interest of the sponsoring organization and the participants with some being nonchalant toward the learning objectives.

More so, the program so designed such that at the end of the exercise, the students can come up with pragmatic solutions to the identified challenges in the presence of the firms' management members or their representatives at an event organized at the school's auditorium but most are often absent when expected thereby making light walk of their efforts. In some case, the suggested panaceas are not even implemented by the concerned organization, hence, defeating the whole purpose. In recent times especially our MBA 2019 set had the challenge of getting the organization to absorb them. Perhaps, owing to poor understanding of the structure or the erroneous feeling that they will provide financial incentives to the students or poor contact establishment on the part of the organizations among others are responsible for this albatross.

We believe that these challenges are likely to cut across different business schools hoping to use experiential learning tools. Nevertheless, measures have been put in place to address some of these challenges such as providing appropriate motivations, emphasizing on feedbacks, and setting priorities right at the outset.

For the real-life project, we circumvent the challenge of bringing to public knowledge the organizational challenges through secured private contact between the Faculty-in-charge and the intended organization. The blue ocean strategy solutions (series of practical innovative and creative solutions) proposed by the students are mailed to them upon completion. In the similar vein, in trying to encourage equal participation of all group members, it is imperative to make all the group members involved in the group presentation with a random selection of any member to present any aspect of their reports.

On the problem of securing prospective organization to absorb our students, business schools' should target the small and medium scale enterprise with paltry financial muscles to hire consultants but have large appetites to engage MBA students. Some of these organizations have distribution, marketing, and networking problems which these students are well acquainted with in their respective courses, thereby helping these sunrise companies to sprout and meander through the challenges.

For the information-time debacle, the school with the permission of AMBA decided to extend the real-life project to four months together with the resolve to make it a stand-alone module within the strategy department. This afforded the students enough time to engage and absorb all the intended objectives set forth by the school. Furthermore, the new requirement is that the students are to give progress/situation report to the faculty-in-charge on a monthly basis before the final presentation is made after the fourth month.

Transferability/Replication

As mentioned earlier, one of the skills the modules tried to enhance is transferability and the school's method of replication is simply learning by doing and on-site assessment. The school expects the EL competencies to be transferred to the real workplace and institutional environments.

In designing our curriculum, the fundamental question we embed in the process is the ease of replication of classroom discussions and on-site experiences into actual business operations. How transferable to the business world are our modules of experiential education? Can the competencies taught through capstone projects and study tour experiences be easily replicated in different businesses? Our answer to these questions hinges on the perception of learning-by-doing and the skill-sets it involves. The most persuasive view is that if experiential learning is viewed as a mode of pedagogy that emphasizes certain learning skills, this method is eminently transferable. Actual course materials (such as books or problems) and the course content (the choice and structure of the particular experiences that comprise the course) may or may not be directly transferable, but in all likelihood, these require substantial adaptation for usability (Davies, 2009).

Experiential education is described as the prime mode of pedagogy in many courses described as clinical, legal, and engineering. With its parallel to businesses and drawing on the scholars' descriptions of the process, our curriculum design stresses the stages of learning involved, various cognitive, performance, and emotional skills required, and the opportunities that experiential programs provide students to be involved in their own education.

Hence, the students are consistently monitored through various channels to see how they are putting to use what they have learnt. The school is always in communication with all its students to continue the advocacy. Also, the school is always accessible to the students for clarifications and engagement through the School's Advancement centre. The major area of replication for most of our participants is the workplace in different geographical locations in Africa and around the world.

In our previous interaction with the students, we have got quite interesting testimonies indicating how impactful and resourceful these modules have enhanced their capabilities especially at their workplaces and in their respective businesses. Some important competencies that have been replicated include sound communication and presentation skills, good interpersonal and people-relationship skill, and analytical and problem-solving skills among others.

In addition, measuring their transferability competence was affected through constant contact with the organizations that employ them. The feedback reports on the performance of many of them have been impressive.

Having identified the holistic impact of experiential learning in propagating international business, it becomes apparent that the modes of teaching strategy and other management-related courses using capstones are certainly transferable to real-world business settings. The debate has been what aspect is desirable and this necessitated the school to provide a feedback/debriefing mechanism to elicit students' pulse on what has been taught to strengthen learning. To further enhance replication capabilities, we believe that the opportunity to discuss and debrief activities will make the capstone an effective learning experience. Without such opportunity, adult learners can become frustrated especially if they cannot see the relevance of what they are learning in their lives. Simply put, EL is the intentional combination of experience and learning so that each enhances the other.

Debriefing Process

EL is an excellent pedagogy for developing skills as well as knowledge, encouraging deep understanding of learning complex concepts, applying theory to practice, and preparing students to be critically reflective professionals (Jacoby, 2012). Having realized that it can occur either during a structured activity or in day-to-day life experiences, an essential step in the training session to ensure that knowledge is being acquired and processed is the debriefing process.

During a structured experiential learning activity such as simulations and real-life project, faculty members or the facilitators play an integral role in helping them to articulate their experiences and relate them to their pre-existing knowledge or experience through a series of open-minded questions. These questions are designed to generate a discussion to "debrief" the experience with the ultimate goal of linking their observations to theories learned in class thereby helping them to make generalization and connections that are self-evident in their own-self (McCarthy, 1981, 1987).

In the BSG, debrief is done at the end of each class to where each group will submit the report of their groups to the faculty lead for onward comparison with the rest of other groups. This allows comparison of performance of each group going into the next business year until the end of the ten-year business periods. At the end of the whole process, each group is assessed based on the performance of their companies. This goes a long way in examining their interoperability skills.

For the real-life projects, the debrief process is evident through the recommendation of strategic intents students that addresses strategic challenges seamlessly and similarly suggest multiple tactical improvement opportunities.

The debriefing process is a necessary part of the experiential learning so as to make the learning fun and make sense of their experience. The debriefing process is based on the EL cycle and its five steps mentioned in Appendix 3 have been properly fine-tuned for effective learning of management education in Lagos Business School. The debriefing process is also an essential skill facilitation technique as it enabled our students to sharpen their interpersonal and presentation skills. It requires adequate preparation from both the learners and facilitator coupled with the need to develop appropriate questions based on the learning objectives.

In framing our teaching curricula, the many business schools in Nigeria LBS understudied, we observed a teaching style that focuses only on professorial lectures, with student participation unexpected and unwelcomed. In actual fact, professorial dominance is common in many African countries, with the result that professors come to see student interactions as a threat. We try to overcome this mindset by permitting the introduction of feedback/debriefing process in implementing experiential learning as a primary mode of pedagogy.

At the end of each sessions, the students were made to rate the professors to know how resourceful and impactful the EL journey they took them fare. It is an enormous challenge which, in itself, requires skill in advocacy and persuasion that we have inculcated.

It is imperative to note that, while debriefing is an important skill-facilitating EL method, it takes time and practice to develop. Nonetheless, it helps learners to have a more in-depth learning experience.

Implication for Learning

We argued that today the business world is complex and requires managers with honed skills to deal with the tumultuous pace of changing economic fundamentals. EL using BSG capstone projects and study tours are very effective experiential learning method for management students and participants.

BSG and capstones are one of the most praised learning tools by management students. MBA administrators and strategy instructors would benefit from improved strategy simulations that take into account the social environ-

ment surrounding managers. Expanded simulations, then, might lead to better preparation of management candidates in their tasks. In addition, BSG developers may find guidance in the authors' conceptualizations to construct more effective teaching aids.

The implication of this chapter for learning has the potential to be applied to other phenomena relevant to effective management. Here we have focused on the use of EL using the three tools not only for an individual pedagogy development (personal development of a manager) but also to organizational pedagogy perspectives (sustainable business practices) in line with Poisson-de Haro and Turgut (2012).

These capstones projects have helped to synthesize and analyze information to solve complex problems, application of concepts to practice in new contexts, encourage effective communication, and foster collaborative effort. The Lagos Business School strive to enhance the learning experience by giving the students the opportunity to apply classroom learning to real-life scenarios.

Conclusion: Pedagogical Contribution

The chapter contributed to the pedagogical aspect of experiential learning through

- Enhancement of cognitive, affective, and evaluative learning process
- Competence development
- Authentic leadership skills

This pedagogic method will have consequences for a range of applications in the field of management education from curriculum design and teaching to individual/personal development and the recruitment and retention of talent in professional and commercial organizations. LBS' interest in experiential learning combined with the quest to expand and improve management education and to produce creative and innovative managers, has provided strong motivation to surmount problems of transferability of resources to the workplace.

Appendix 1: Real-Life Project Procedures

Typical Milestones

Step One: Organizational proposal and selection process	**Step Two:** Creation of a three- to five-page "case" document on the organization and the business challenge
• Consider potential projects and obtain buy-in from the leadership team and board of directors to apply the capstone project • Complete the application and project proposal form and submit. • Capstone faculty is available for consultation while developing the project proposal.	• Student teams be deployed the entity concern to draft a case with the company's input • The team is provided with adequate data to aid their case write-up

Skills and Competencies of the Capstones

Step Three: Meet the team day • Key organization leaders and board members attend a two-hour session for community organization day • The session is designed to enable the organization representatives to answer questions about their entity.	**Step Four:** Information gathering sessions • Project liaison works with students and professors, including providing additional data, facilitating interviews for students, answering follow-on questions, and so on. • Constant touch with the project professor.

Step Five: Final presentation and deliverables
- The organization leadership teams receive students' final presentation.
- The student team deliverables are sent to the organization for their review and their follow-up with the students

Appendix 2: Skills and Competencies Embed in the BSG and the Other Capstones

Leadership Skills
Assessment of the individual's leadership and independent thinking skills.
Collaboration and Teamwork
Assessment of the individual's collaborative skills, teamwork, and ability to work well with others.
Financial Analysis
Assessment of the individual's skills in analyzing financial ratios and financial statements.
Financial Management
Assessment of the group's ability to apply financial management principles. Based on the company's ROE, credit rating, and stock price performances.
Operations Management
Assessment of the group's ability to manage production operations and control production costs.
Marketing Management
Assessment of the group's ability to effectively market the company's product and control marketing costs. Based on the company's market image and marketing costs per unit sold.
Human Resources Management
Assessment of the group's proficiency in workforce management and controlling labor costs. Based on workforce compensation, workforce productivity, and labor costs per unit sold.
Strategic Analysis and Planning
Assessment of the group's strategic planning and strategic thinking skills. Based on scores achieved on the three-year strategic plan exercise.
Corporate Social Responsibility
Assessment of group's awareness of and commitment to operating the company in a socially responsible manner and being a "model corporate citizen".

Appendix 3: Evaluation and Learning Goals

Pilot test of learning goals Selected in 2015	Courses (where it is applied in LBS)
MBA program goal one: Analytical and problem-solving skills Students should be able to use appropriately analytical techniques and information to identify business problems, seek multiple perspectives, formulate, and implement possible solutions	
• Financial analysis from the Glo-bus BSG	BSG
• Written assignment in the Glo-bus simulation using standard rubrics	Strategy II (real-life projects and study tours)
Goal two: Ethical and social responsibility Students should understand ethical and social issues and how they impact on businesses	
• Learning assurance report	BSG
• Written assignment	Strategy II
Goal three: Global perspectives: Students should understand the local and global business trends and be able to apply international best practices.	
• Case examination analysis	BSG
• Written assignment	Strategy II
Goal four: Leadership: Students will demonstrate the ability to lead in a team in a group setting and exhibit interpersonal abilities.	
• Peer review results	BSG
Goal five: Communication skills-oral Students will be able to prepare and deliver effective presentations with the aid of appropriate technology.	
• Various individual presentations during each BSG period	BSG
• Final round presentation	
Goal six: Communication skill-written Students should be able to produce professional reports	
• Final case written examination using standard rubrics.	

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[1] Note: Page numbers followed by 'n' refer to notes.

M. A. Gonzalez-Perez et al. (eds.), *The Palgrave Handbook of Learning and Teaching International Business and Management*, https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-030-20415-0

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