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ABOUT:

The Journal for Advancing Business Education is a practitioner and scholarly journal that publishes the best work in the field of business education to enhance teaching, achieve student learning outcomes, and meet program goals. The Journal follows the general IACBE theme of “Moving. Forward. Together.” All submissions are subject to a double-blind peer review process. The Journal is an online journal and accessible on the IACBE Web page. The Journal for Advancing Business Education is a biannual publication.

MISSION:

The mission of the Journal for Advancing Business Education is to publish best practices and scholarship in business and business-related fields to improve business education and society.

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FROM THE EDITOR

Dear Journal Reader

Welcome to the first issue of the Journal for Advancing Business Education. This issue shows how multi-faceted the Journal and the realm of business education are. The Journal is a home for both, practitioner and scholarly pieces. It also welcomes contributions from around the world. We strive to improve, with this work, business education and teaching.

As an editorial team, we genuinely hope that you enjoy reading the contributions of your peers to business education and recognize their dedication to the business education discipline and the IACBE organization. In a broader sense, it also echoes some of the successes and challenges of the business education community. We see the Journal for Advancing Business Education as an opportunity for the IACBE community to publish and disseminate business knowledge.

In this context the editorial team envisions the following for the near future of the Journal for Advancing Business Education: (1) Have a healthy pipeline of articles under review and in publication; (2) publish quality practices and scholarship in business and business-related fields to improve business education; (3) have a sizable percentage of the articles in the journal come from outside the United States in order to reflect the global nature of the IACBE; (4) promote and accept work that uses various research methods, ranging from quantitative to qualitative to mixed-method pieces; and (5) encourage articles that are readable across business and business-related disciplines while keeping the Journal's audience in mind.

We also want to extend a thank you to the reviewers, board members, and especially authors and the greater IACBE community for their contributions and relentless efforts to make this publication a reality. Without their support the Journal for Advancing Business Education would not be possible.

Thank you!

Christian Gilde
Managing Editor

Journal for Advancing Business Education

VOLUME 1, ISSUE 1

UTILIZATION OF WRITING INTENSIVE CLASSES TO IMPROVE WRITTEN COMMUNICATION SKILLS OF BUSINESS STUDENTS

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ABSTRACT

Writing has been reported by companies as being an integral skill for personal and career success, with studies demonstrating that the writing skills of college graduates do not meet the expectations of organizations (Hora, 2017; Jones, Baldi, Philips, & Waikar, 2013; Lucas, 2016; Sarpparaje, 2016). Methods of improving students' written communication skills and career preparation continue to be an important priority of business programs worldwide. The initial research will focus on business students' preparedness at entrance to their program of study, intervention with writing intensive courses, and development of writing skills.

INTRODUCTION

Employers are continuing to express their concerns regarding the written communication skills of new hires who have recently graduated from institutions of higher education (Carnes, Awang, & Smith, 2015; Suvedi, Ghimire, & Millenbah, 2016). As far as soft skills are concerned, writing continues to be a sought after proficiency for organizations; in addition to critical thinking, reasoning, and problem solving (Carnes, Awang, & Smith, 2015). According to a study conducted by the National Association of Colleges and Employers in 2014 (White, 2015), “over 70% of employers rank writing skills as paramount in their hiring process” (p. 73). Hiring personnel are looking to recruit individuals with strong soft skills and give grades and grade point average less consideration (Jones, Baldi, Philips & Waikar, 2016). Employers expect that written communications skills are taught in colleges, in order to prepare students for the workforce.

As employees do not have strong writing abilities, employers are spending approximately 2.9 billion on remedial training to address the issue (White, 2015). Consequently, a goal of colleges and universities should be to educate the students for the workforce so they are prepared for the rigors and expectations of today’s organizations. Effective business communication requires employees to express themselves with accuracy and clarity. Individuals in the field of business are expected to be professionals and possess a high level of communication skills. As organizations continue to change, it has become increasingly clear that institutions of higher education need to re-evaluate and implement strategies leading to better prepared candidates for the job market. Complicating the issue of proficient written communication is the “global English” that is constantly evolving due to the multinational environment of management (Smith, 2011). This paper introduces the issues entering business students face regarding written communication, the challenges of creating and assessing writing intensive classes for business majors, and the expected improvement in written skills in the final capstone course.

The study was conducted in a private, non-profit, post-secondary school with approximately 3,000 undergraduate and graduate students in the Northeastern United States. This research focuses on business students. This is a longitudinal study of student writing samples over the course of their business program. The Business Department of the institution is committed to equip students with skills for the 21st century in critical thinking, information literacy, interpersonal communication, and, most importantly, written communication. The institution is developing a new college core that includes written communication as an integral skillset for preparing graduates for future endeavors. The remainder of this paper is organized as follows: First, the literature review examines prior studies and information related to writing skills of business students. Second, the methodology section describes the data used and the research design utilized for this study. Third, following the methodology section is the discussion of the results. Finally, the last section presents the conclusions, contributions, and implications of the study.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Suved, Ghimire, and Millenbah (2016) note that an undergraduate education plays a significant role in determining an individual’s view of the world, their career choices, and decisions. “Today’s fast-paced, highly competitive, knowledge-based global economy puts pressure on students to master subject matter knowledge and competencies...they need skills, knowledge, attitudes and behaviors with which they can pursue their work and their careers”

(Suved, Ghimire, and Millenbah, 2016, p. 13). The researchers' institutions' Business Department Advisory Board (personal correspondence, September 2016) provided feedback supporting the lack of writing readiness of college graduates. The seven members of the Board representing manufacturing, banking, health care, consulting, and non-profit agencies unanimously agreed that their new hires were lacking written communication skills, such as writing basic letters, developing executive summaries, and writing reports. Each member believed that the undergraduate education did not adequately prepare the prospective employees for entering the workforce and that the institutions of higher education were not meeting the needs of the students nor those of the hiring organizations.

Feedback from the faculty of the researchers' Business Department supported these findings: the students were entering college without the expected writing skills, and that providing these skills were being left to colleges and universities in order to close this skill gap. However, many instructors are not teaching or reinforcing these skills in their courses (Business faculty members, personal communication). According to Nelson and Weatherald (2014), in some instances faculty believe, "that it is not their responsibility to teach or correct grammar and spelling, but to assess student competency in practice" (p. 105). A question to be asked is, "Whose job is it to improve student written communication skills?" This is a challenge for institutions and departments. Written communication skills are an important skill for college graduates to possess when entering the workforce. Employers have the expectation of proficiency for their new hires and are not supportive of a situation that would create a problem.

According to White (2015), positions require employees to write succinctly and unambiguously. It is also important that employees present technical information and results to upper level administration in a professional and consequential manner. However, Bodnar and Petrucelli (2016) report that thirty-four percent of all entering college students need at least one developmental course to assist them in improving their writing skills and thereby increasing confidence in their abilities and future potential. This shortfall continues to have an impact not only on scholastic endeavors but also on career advancement. Suvedi, et al., ask the question: "Are undergraduates ready for careers after graduation and do they have the qualities that employers are looking for?" (p. 13). Following the initial review of the literature (Hora, 2017; Jones, Baldi, Philips & Waikar, 2013; Lucas, 2016; Sarpparaje, 2016) and the comments of the Advisory Board and the Business Department instructors, the researchers determined that further examination of the issue was necessary. The goals of this research study and the interventions being initiated are to improve students written communication skills.

Learning outcomes, in addition to the accrediting institutions and programs, routinely incorporate requirements for meeting criteria related to student verbal and non-verbal communication skills. The value of written communication skills of students graduating is an important aspect. Faculty and program administrators need to understand that curriculum and course changes could help graduates be more successful in the workplace (White, 2015). As business people often produce documents under time pressure and seldom have the opportunity for reflection and review prior to submission, critical thinking and proficiency in writing are vital. A Wall Street Journal article noted that "grammar skills are so bad that 45% of 430 companies surveyed by the Society for Human Resource Management and AARP reported implementing some sort of remedial grammar training for their workers; ...the idea that attention to detail and competency in other areas of an employees work would be impacted" (Lentz, 2013, p. 474). In written communication, proficiency can be indicative of professionalism and intelligence in an organization (Lentz, 2013).

Lentz (2013) reported that results from a survey of accounting firms regarding new graduates found that, “in rank order, employers expect but are only ‘marginally satisfied with’ the following writing skills: (a) effectively organizing sentences and paragraphs; (b) writing clearly and precisely; (c) spelling correctly; (d) preparing concise, accurate, and supportive documents; (e) documenting work completely and accurately; (f) using correct grammar; (g) conscientiously editing and revising documents; and (h) effectively using email. Clear writing and outlining were identified as the skills employers were least satisfied with in new graduates” (p. 475). Data support the need for constant review of student learning to meet the requirements of organizations by departments, institutions, and faculty. This is true for all institutional programs, not just for business studies. Preparing students for entrance to the workplace and their careers is paramount to the mission of higher education.

Colleges and universities provide support to assist students in improving writing with resources such as Writing Centers, tutors, library support, instructional videos, and faculty office hours (Smith, 2011). Computer software provide spellcheck, grammar check, proofing, and a thesaurus to assist students in written communication. With all of these methods to assist in improving writing, there are no set standards. One method to eliminate this would be for department faculty to devise standards that are expected for every class, unifying different expectations by individual faculty. Building on entering writing skills with specific learning outcomes each subsequent academic year should promote proficiency in written communication. Smith (2011) presents instructional strategies to assist faculty in improving student writing. Examples include:

- Faculty communicating to students that excellent writing is expected
- Time needs to be spent in class related to writing
- Provide examples of good writing for student review from academic literature
- Inclusion of vocabulary words on tests
- Use of rubrics

Improving student writing throughout the program of study requires time spent by faculty to teach and evaluate written communication; but with a strong base to build on, upper level faculty can concentrate on some of the finer points of writing. When faculty assist business students to improve writing skills, not only is written communication improved, graduates are better prepared for career success.

DATA AND METHODOLOGY

This study employs the evaluation of student writing samples throughout the course of study (Sigmar & Hynes, 2011). The study was submitted and received full approval by the Institutional Review Board (IRB) on the use of human subjects by the researcher’s institution.

Writing samples were collected for year one of this study in the Principles of Management (MGT 305) class. The samples were evaluated independently by each of the researchers using a writing rubric developed by ReadWriteThing.org (Appendix A). Year one participants numbered 10. The data reported in this study is for year one. As this study is longitudinal, writing samples will be collected and analyzed over a four- to six-year time period. Each student was given a randomly assigned number to maintain confidentiality and decrease researcher bias. The data were entered into an Excel spreadsheet. An analysis was completed for each of the participants using a rubric. The areas evaluated include: Content/Ideas, Organization, Vocabulary/Word Choice,

Voice, Sentence Fluency, and Conventions. The rubric evaluated students numerically from one to six, with one as “Does Not Meet the Standard”, two as “Partially Meets Standard”, three as “Does Not Fully Meet Standard”, four as “Meets standard”, five as “More than Meets Standard”, and six as “Exceeds the Standard”.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

In the first year of the study, students were provided the topic, “What I like to Do in my Free Time”. MGT 305 is the first management class business students enroll. The topic provided a sample of three to five written pages. Upon review, the researchers assessed that all 10 writing samples met the criteria to be assessed. An average of the researchers’ results was used to evaluate samples.

The data analysis of the 10 writing samples provided the following results. The rubric evaluated students numerically from one to six; with one as “Does Not Meet the Standard”, two as Partially Meets Standard”, Three as “Does Not Fully Meet Standard”, four was “Meets standard”, five as “More than Meets Standard”, and six “Exceeds the Standard”. Results for Content/Ideas ranged from 2 to 5 of a possible total of 6, Organization ranged from 1.5 to 4.5, Vocabulary/Word Choice ranged from 2.0 to 4, Voice ranged from 2 to 4, Sentence Fluency ranged from a low score of 2.5 to high of 4, and Conventions ranged from 1.5 to 4. Evaluating these data utilizing percentages, 63 percent did not demonstrate the ability to write related, quality paragraphs. 55 percent did not know how to organize papers in general. 55 percent did not demonstrate mastery of vocabulary and correct word choice. 54 percent of the students did not provide a voice or point of view for a specific audience. 55 percent of the papers did not meet the requirement for sentence fluency, and 53 percent of the papers had significant errors with conventions (errors with mechanics, spelling, and agreement between the parts of speech).

Based on an analysis of the content, students performed most poorly in the following areas: writing complicated sentences, punctuation, improper subject-verb agreement, incorrect or poorly chosen word usage, and spelling mistakes. Many of the papers demonstrated that students were ineffective in editing their work for errors or did not know how to write grammatically correct sentences. Strengths exhibited in the writing samples analyzed included writing complete sentences, properly capitalizing sentences, and formatting paragraphs (although many paragraphs were only one or two sentences in length).

It is important that, if organizations expect employees to have proficiency in writing, they have to communicate their expectations and criteria effectively and cultivate organizational cultures where time spent writing is seen as a productive use of work hours and employees are held accountable for their writing (Lentz, 2013). Training in the workplace indicates that the organizations valued proficient writing skills. Incentives, such as promotions, raises, and bonuses, will also increase the value employees obtaining and utilizing these skills.

Addressing the errors early in the first semester of the program showed that students were less likely to repeat the errors throughout the semester. Lentz (2013) noted evidence to “suggest that students who encounter writing at several places across their curriculum or within courses of their discipline do make gains in their writing skills, their general learning, their ability to use the vocabulary of their discipline, and their understanding of effective writing in their field” (p 486).

Initiatives are being put in place to remedy the deficiency in the research institutions students’ written communication skills. Initial research is being completed to ascertain the major

problem areas (syntax, grammar, vocabulary), implement additional instructional practices (writing intensive courses), and measure outcomes. Improved preparation for entering the workplace and achieving career success with stronger written communication skills are the objectives.

CONCLUDING COMMENTS

The primary goal of this study was to determine if current methods of teaching writing are meeting the objectives of employers, accreditors, and students. Initial research, review of the related literature, as well as discussions with the researchers' Business Department Advisory Board and various faculty provided data showing that many graduating students were not meeting this objective. According to Sigmar & Hynes (2011), "educators must acknowledge the fact that students are not performing to expectations; resisting the urge to lay blame elsewhere. And most importantly, teach students how to write" (p. 133). The results of these data are being used by the Business faculty who teach writing intensive courses in order to implement new initiatives and improve student writing. The researchers' institutions' core curriculum requires that all undergraduate students complete two Writing Intensive Program (WIP) courses to meet graduation requirements. The Business Department has developed course requirements to include these two courses (Business Communications MGT 304 and Organizational Behavior MGT 401).

The researchers, in cooperation with the Writing Intensive Program (WIP) Business instructors, the institutions Learning Center, and WIP Director provided suggestions to assist in obtaining materials for writing improvement and grading rubrics. Course materials are being updated to support areas that students are especially lacking, such as worksheets reviewing homophones (you are, your, you're), word choice, usage errors (farther vs. further, prejudice vs. prejudiced), and usage of transition words and phrases. Also, additional assignments for drafting and peer review are being incorporated in courses, assignments related to grammar and basic writing were incorporated in the WIP courses (MGT 304 and MGT 401), the Learning Center Writing staff developed a series of four videos for student reference, and instructors stressed the use of the Writing Center for student assistance.

Additional initiatives under consideration for improving writing include offering certificate programs specific to business communication/writing, minors in business communication, internship requirements to include a writing component, and a requirement that students apply the skills they learned in one course in other business courses or contexts (Lentz, 2014). A consideration for implementing the initiatives to improve writing is one of the changes in the college core curriculum requirements. Feedback is currently being solicited by the college's work group charged with recommending a new core curriculum. The expectation is that the requirement for strengthening the students' written communication skills will be incorporated in the new curriculum.

This initial research provides evidence that first year students are entering college with limited proficiency in written communication. This research confirms the need for continued evaluation of student writing skills for initiatives to meet the requirements of the skillsets necessary in organizations.

APPENDIX A

ReadWriteThing.Org Rubric

Rubric for _____			Student Name _____			
	Does Not Meet 1	Partially Meets 2	Does Not Fully Meet 3	Meets 4	More Than Meets 5	Exceeds 6
Content/Ideas	Writing is extremely limited in communicating knowledge, with no central theme	Writing is limited in communicating knowledge. Length is not adequate for development.	Writing does not clearly communicate knowledge. The reader is left with questions.	Writes related, quality paragraphs, with little or no details.	Writing is purposeful and focused. Piece contains some details	Writing is confident and clearly focused. It holds the reader's attention. Relevant details enrich writing.
Organization	Writing is disorganized and underdeveloped with no transitions or closure.	Writing is brief and underdeveloped with very weak transitions and closure.	Writing is confused and loosely organized. Transitions are weak and closure is ineffective.	Uses correct writing format. Incorporates a coherent closure.	Writing includes a strong beginning, middle, and end, with some transitions and good closure.	Writing includes a strong beginning, middle, and end, with clear transitions and a focused closure.
Vocabulary/Word Choice	Careless or inaccurate word choice, which obscures meaning.	Language is trite, vague, or flat.	Shows some use of varied word choice.	Uses a variety of word choices to make writing interesting.	Purposeful use of word choice.	Effective and engaging use of word choice.
Voice	Writer's voice/point of view shows no sense of audience.	Writer's voice/point of view shows little sense of audience.	Writer's voice/point of view shows a vague sense of audience.	Writer uses voice/point of view. Writes with an understanding of a specific audience.	Writer has strong voice/point of view. Writing engages the audience.	Writes with a distinct, unique voice/point of view. Writing is skillfully adapted to the audience.
Sentence Fluency	Frequent run-ons or fragments, with no variety in sentence structure.	Many run-ons or fragments. Little variety in sentence structure.	Some run-ons or fragments. Limited variety in sentence structure.	Uses simple, compound, and complex sentences.	Frequently varied sentence structure.	Consistent variety of sentence structure throughout.
Conventions	Parts of speech show lack of agreement. Frequent errors in mechanics. Little or no evidence of spelling strategies	Inconsistent agreement between parts of speech. Many errors in mechanics. Little evidence of spelling strategies.	Occasional errors in agreement between parts of speech. Some errors in mechanics. Some evidence of spelling strategies.	Maintains agreement between parts of speech, Few errors in mechanics. Applies basic grade-level spelling	Consistent agreement between parts of speech. Uses correct punctuation, capitalization, and so on. Consistent use of spelling strategies.	Uses consistent agreement between parts of speech. No errors in mechanics. Creative and effective use of spelling strategies.
This rubric is provided by ReadWriteThing.org						

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**LEARNING IN A COHORT:
ADAPTING CONTENT TO WOMEN'S LEARNING STYLES**

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ABSTRACT

Do educational cohorts help or hurt learning? The cohort structure is an academic and social support system designed to improve the teaching and learning process (Greenlee & Karanxha, 2010). While economically desirable as an educational delivery model, a debate exists as to whether cohorts improve the learning process or diminish the learning outcomes (Pemberton & Akkary, 2010). This qualitative research examined sixteen non-traditional aged female college students who were enrolled in an intensive 20-month bachelor's degree completion program. Semi-structured, in-depth interviews and surveys were utilized to gather data about the women's perceptions of their experience in the cohort program.

INTRODUCTION

The United States economy has shifted from a manufacturing to a service economy, and is now shifting again from a service economy to a knowledge economy (Collins, 2013; Williams, 2010). This fundamental shift influences the type of training required for many of the fastest growing jobs in the U.S. (Carpenter, Bauer, Erdogan, & Short, 2014; Cohen & Kisker, 2010). There is an increased demand for more college-educated workers and more informed and engaged citizens in the twenty-first century (Association of American Colleges and Universities, 2015; Carey, 2015). The national goal of the U.S. having 60% of all adults earning college degrees by 2020 is influenced by the country's population growing increasingly diverse every year (Lamb, Hair, & McDaniel, 2013; Sandoval-Lucero, Maes, & Chopra, 2011).

The overall rate of bachelor's degree completion in the U.S. is about 59 percent in six years (National Center for Education Statistics, 2014). College completion rates have remained about 50 percent over the last century, despite significant changes in who attends college (Bean & Bean, 2007). One hundred years ago most college students were male and attended full time; today 40 percent of students attend college part time and most are female (Bean & Bean, 2007; Cohen & Kisker, 2010; National Center for Education Statistics, 2014).

Delivery Models Adapt to Changing Student Population

The U.S. Department of Education calls for the increased use of learning communities to reach large populations of students with support needs (Sandoval-Lucero, Maes, & Chopra, 2011). Many schools and colleges are pressured for increased accountability during an era of decreased funding. These institutional facts leave faculty with the challenge of measuring student outcomes and taking corrective action when needed in order to appease stakeholders (Barnett & Muth, 2008).

In response to criticism and calls for reform in educational leadership, the cohort model reemerged in the 1980s and early 1990s as a model created to train leaders more effectively (McCarthy, Trenga, & Weiner, 2015; Paredes Scribner & Donaldson, 2001). By 1995 half of UCEA member institutions were using cohorts at the master's level and by 2000 63% were using cohorts. Despite the renewed popularity of the cohort very little data exists on this instructional method of delivery (McCarthy, Trenga, & Weiner, 2015).

The cohort is a model of instructional delivery that groups students together according to when they enroll in a particular program and processes them through a degree program through the same sequence of courses (Barnett, Basom, Yerkes, & Norris, 2000). Members of a cohort identify as being an interdependent group that is distinct from non-cohort members (Greenlee & Karanxha, 2010). In recent years the definition of a cohort has been expanded to include students working together on collaborative projects and a network of academic and social support (McCarthy, Trenga, & Weiner, 2015).

Cohorts are considered dynamic and adaptive entities because their main characteristic is the same members interact with each other over a period of time (Greenlee & Karanxha, 2010). Interaction between group members shapes both the individual learning and the group learning (Barnett, Basom, Yerkes, & Norris, 2000; Greenlee & Karanxha, 2010). Overall, the cohort structure is an academic and social support system designed to improve the teaching and learning process (Greenlee & Karanxha, 2010).

Cohort delivery models follow three basic designs: closed (or pure), open (or mixed), and fluid (course-by-course) (Greenlee & Karanxha, 2010; Yerkes, et al., 1995). Closed cohorts require students to complete their courses together in a specific sequence (Greenlee & Karanxha,

2010). The open cohort begins with students taking core courses together then allows students to take courses outside the program to fulfill personal requirements (Greenlee & Karanxha, 2010). The fluid cohort is the most flexible in that students can enter at different times and select courses based on their own needs (Greenlee & Karanxha, 2010).

At the time of inquiry a quarter of universities utilized more than one style of cohort in their program; over 70% used the closed cohort model and over 60% reported using open cohorts (McCarthy, Trenga, & Weiner, 2015).

Women Learning in Cohorts

The structure of programs is reported as the primary reason for student non-completion (Barnett & Muth, 2008). Prescribed cohorts that are relatively rigid or “closed” do not work as well for women as naturally emergent cohorts (Pemberton & Akkary, 2010). A significant amount of learning for women takes place outside of a traditional classroom, learning from relationships and from dealing with families and communities (Belenky, Clinchy, Goldberger, & Tarule, 1986; Jaeger, Hudson, Pasque, & Ampaw, 2017). Knowledge of how women learn broadens the definition of education and the concept and how, when, and where education takes place for women (Belenky, Clinchy, Goldberger, & Tarule, 1986; Jaeger, Hudson, Pasque, & Ampaw, 2017).

Support from other students and feeling a sense of fitting in is probably the most important social factor in student retention, especially for women, because it is consistent with the way they have been socialized to learn (Bean & Bean, 2007; Belenky, Clinchy, Goldberger, & Tarule, 1986; Frenzel, A., Pekrun, R., Goetz, T., & Ludtke, O., 2018). Not surprisingly, unsatisfying relationships at school are one reason women leave college (Bean & Bean, 2007). Cohort learning addresses the needs of female learners by deliberately inviting them in to a learning community.

One of the main benefits of cohort learning is that being assigned to a cohort group of peer students creates a framework for communicative learning for the student. They do not have to spend time looking for other students to engage with as the students who are in a cohort are expected to reach out to each other and communicate on a regular basis. This understanding and acceptance of the group norms of cohort membership may help introverted students with the perceived daunting task of finding other students to study with in the beginning of a program. The established structure of the cohort learners sets the stage for communicative learning to begin.

Communicative learning, a process that involves at least two people who work together to understand each other’s values, purpose, beliefs, and feelings is essential for current educational environments in order to train leaders who have the skills to unite diverse interests (Rusch & Brunner, 2013). Relying on instruction that only requires students to read books, write papers, attend class, and earn a grade is not enough to train future leaders who will need nimble habits of mind to lead ever-evolving communities of people (Rusch & Brunner, 2013). The cohort delivery model of education is based on communicative learning by organizing students into groups with at least two students, and often many more students creating a substantial opportunity for communicative learning (Barnett, Basom, Yerkes, & Norris, 2000; Greenlee & Karanxha, 2010). Many adult women learners may find communicative learning is consistent with their learning style (Belenky, Clinchy, Goldberger, & Tarule, 1986), a fact which was substantiated during a previous focus group conducted in March, 2014.

Women's Ways of Learning

Do women learn differently than men? The prevailing mindset in the 18th, 19th, and early 20th century was that intellectual activity was unfeminine and harmful to women's health and reproductive ability (Astin & Lindholm, 2001; Belenky, Clinchy, Goldberger, & Tarule, 1986). During this time there was also a belief that women were less intelligent than men and therefore incapable of advanced education (Astin & Lindholm, 2001). The assumption that mental inferiority is a natural defect, rather than socially constructed, could never be justified until women got an education equal to men's through a national system of coeducational schools (Laird, 1996).

Today it is taken for granted that both males and females have equal access to education (Astin & Lindholm, 2001). However, traditional gender roles are still present in workplace with men earning more money and women taking primary responsibility for the household (Boeren, 2011). In many industries a glass ceiling still exists that prevents women from reaching positions of top leadership in many companies (Boeren, 2011). The attitude toward gender roles creates a vicious cycle for women in the workplace. Because of gender perceptions women are not promoted to better jobs, and subsequently receive less training. Lack of training negatively influences women's ability to achieve leadership positions (Boeren, 2011).

Some researchers posit that women are not drawn to more technically oriented science fields, such as engineering, because they perceive those fields as having less opportunity for social interaction (Cavanagh, 2005). Despite receiving high grades in math and science many girls have less confidence in their abilities and enjoy these subjects less than their male classmates (Cavanagh, 2005). Lack of assertiveness may be considered one reason why girls do not perceive themselves to be good at subjects they can master. Girls tend to not take as many risks in the classroom; boys will raise their hands even if they don't know the answer (Cavanagh, 2005).

Cohorts can provide the safe place to take risks during learning and the design of the cohort is consistent with the view that women's learning as a narrative process (Belenky, Clinchy, Goldberger, & Tarule, 1986; Bridwell, 2012). Group activities that are incorporated into the learning is one approach that is more likely to appeal to females (Belenky, Clinchy, Goldberger, & Tarule, 1986; Cavanagh, 2005).

Adults construct knowledge through different ways of knowing based on their attitude toward education (Bridwell, 2012). Instrumental knowers who believe education is pursued to acquire something tend to ask "What's in it for me?" Socializing knowers pursue education to be someone, typically ask "What do you think I should know?" Self-authoring knowers, who also pursue education to be someone, ask "What do I want and need to know and learn? What is important for me to know to keep learning and growing?" (Bridwell, 2012).

Intuitive knowledge is generally assumed to be less valuable, due to its primitive nature, than objective knowledge that is learned in traditional settings (Belenky, Clinchy, Goldberger, & Tarule, 1986). Women tend to learn through socialization and through communicative learning, so they may not even know how or when they learned something. Because of these women may feel that their knowledge is somehow less valuable (Belenky, Clinchy, Goldberger, & Tarule, 1986). The authors of *Women's Ways of Knowing* and other feminists posit that there is a masculine bias at the foundation of every educational structure, discipline, and research method (Belenky, Clinchy, Goldberger, & Tarule, 1986).

Students Learning Styles Within Cohort Models

Belonging to a cohort may offer students with various learning styles more opportunities to understand and retain the material. Designed to teach analytic learners, the traditional education

system may ignore the needs of the global learner (Filipczak, 1995). Global learners want an overview of the subject first, and then will add particular facts to complete a big picture idea of a concept (Filipczak, 1995). Analytic learners are comfortable with being presented with individual facts first, and then will create the overall concept (Filipczak, 1995). The cohort model of delivery may help students who are naturally global learners because they can construct the overall big picture concept with the help of other members in the cohort.

The structure of cohort learning also provides the framework for students to engage in transformative learning because of the interaction between students. Transformative learning requires students to undergo a process during which they become emotionally open to changing frames of references that were previously taken for granted (Belenky, Clinchy, Goldberger, & Tarule, 1986; Bridwell, 2012). When students in a cohort engage in group activities over a long period of time they have the opportunity to learn more from each other and understand each other's opinions on more than a cursory level. This deeper level of interaction and connection allows students the time to engage in self-reflection, which may be prompted by cohort members who now feel comfortable enough with each other to challenge each other's viewpoints, stereotypes, and long held beliefs (Scribner & Donaldson, 2001).

The phenomenon of transformative learning was revealed by members of the previously held focus group. Students who had planned at the time of enrollment that they were merely going to come to class, sit through it, do the required work, and get a grade were pleasantly surprised at the amount of personal growth they went through during the program. Several students reported that their changed way of thinking, their personal transformative learning was not confined to the academic world as they now viewed other areas of their lives through a different lens.

Transformative learning requires the student to engage in a form of self-reflection that results in rejecting a habit of mind, modifying a personal paradigm, or rejecting assumptions (Belenky, Clinchy, Goldberger, & Tarule, 1986; Bridwell, 2012; Rusch & Brunner, 2013). Transformative learning is of paramount importance given the rapidly changing population of the United States (Lamb, Hair, & McDaniel, 2013). Adults make meaning of their experiences in diverse ways and the cohort provides the learning environment that supports transformative learning (Bridwell, 2012).

The central goal of transformative learning is to help students evolve toward increased epistemological complexity (Belenky, Clinchy, Goldberger, & Tarule, 1986; Bridwell, 2012). Citizens with more complex systems for making meaning are more able to challenge dominant ideologies (Belenky, Clinchy, Goldberger, & Tarule, 1986; Bridwell, 2012). For example, many women interviewed by authors while researching *Women's Ways of Knowing* did not think they could think (Belenky, Clinchy, Goldberger, & Tarule, 1986; Bridwell, 2012).

Cohort Impact on Workplace Leadership Practices After Graduation

The debate over incorporating cohort models is increasingly critical as some industries, education for example, are facing a shortage of trained researchers who are skilled in solving today's problems (Barnett & Muth, 2008; Greenlee & Karanxha, 2010). Ironically, even faculty who did not use a cohort delivery method of instruction perceive that students who spend time learning in cohort models are better prepared for leadership positions in the workplace (Barnett, Basom, Yerkes, & Norris, 2000).

Students who learned in cohorts increased their teambuilding and collaboration skills, learned to cooperate for the purpose of achieving a team goal, and improved their use of reflective feedback (Barnett, Basom, Yerkes, & Norris, 2000; Greenlee & Karanxha, 2010). Being able to

work effectively in teams is becoming more important for organizations of all sizes and sectors (Carpenter, M., Bauer, T., Erdogan, B., & Short, J., 2014; Williams, 2010). Faculty were not able to comment on how the cohort experience impacted the job performance of students, which presents a gap in the literature on cohort delivery models feedback (Barnett, Basom, Yerkes, & Norris, 2000).

There is currently a need for new leadership in almost every sector, including education, healthcare, and management (Carpenter, Bauer, Erdogan, & Short, 2014). Historically regarded as a masculine role in most cultures, women remain significantly underrepresented in both political and business leadership today (Gender and leadership, 2015). Women comprise only about 16 percent of both directors of Fortune 500 companies and delegates to the 2013 World Economic Forum (Gender and leadership, 2015).

Ironically, even in the enlightened field of higher education women still lag far behind men in leadership positions (Guramathanhu-Mudiwa, 2008; Murphy, 2007). Although the candidate pool from which most educational administrators are drawn from is 75 percent female, only 18 to 20 percent of superintendents are women (Brunner & Kim, 2010). Exclusion from powerful social networks, gender-based role expectations, and hitting the glass ceiling are experiences that are still being reported by women administrators (Rusch, 2004).

During the last thirty years women have become a stronger presence in the workforce, resulting in the issue of gender and leadership to become and remain an important topic (O'Leary & Flanagan, 2001). More females will be in positions of leadership in almost every industry sector during the next decade (Collins, 2013). There is no evidence to support that women are less effective business leaders; on the contrary, female CEOs of Fortune 500 companies outperformed their male counterparts by returning an average of 103.4 percent compared to 69.5 percent on the S&P 500 (Gender and leadership, 2015).

The first pioneering group of female executives tended to adopt men's leadership styles because they were breaking new ground. Subsequent groups of female leaders now tend to draw on skills and attitudes that they've developed as shared experiences with other women, such as collaboration, listening, and teamwork (Lee, 1994). In the sector of education many researchers suggest that women are naturally able to lead with a participatory and democratic style of leadership, which is currently favored in educational reform (Brunner & Kim, 2010). Female leaders display more transformational leadership behaviors than men, which utilizes women's innate collaborative abilities to transform workplace cultures (Belenky, Clinchy, Goldberger, & Tarule, 1986; Brunner & Kim, 2010).

One of the first heuristic models to explain the absence of women in leadership was proposed by Virginia E. O'Leary in 1974 (O'Leary & Flanagan, 2001). O'Leary identified two kinds of barriers to women's advancement as being either external or internal. External barriers included the male managerial model, sex stereotypes, and attitudes about women's competence (O'Leary & Flanagan, 2001). Internal barriers to women's advancement included role conflict, low self-esteem, fear of failure and fear of success (O'Leary & Flanagan, 2001).

Aletha H. Stein and Margaret M. Bailey argued in 1973 that internal barriers were perpetuated by a lack of female role models and socialization pressures that resulted in women's achievement motivation be expressed in terms of affiliation (O'Leary & Flanagan, 2001). Many of the internal barriers identified by O'Leary's model have not withstood the test of empirical research. On the other hand, most of the external barriers have been substantiated by further research and have continued to impede women's progress in leadership (O'Leary & Flanagan, 2001) including institutionalized cultural assumptions (Murphy, 2007).

Within the education industry growing pressure for reform and accountability is coming from many external stakeholders, including licensing agencies, state legislatures, and professional associations (Barnett, Basom, Yerkes, & Norris, 2000). Many accrediting agencies now specify programmatic outcomes (Higher Learning Commission, 2003). In some cases entire programs need to be redesigned to meet society's needs for effective leadership as program outcomes are under scrutiny from policymakers and practitioners (Greenlee & Karanxha, 2010; Paredes Scribner & Donaldson, 2001).

Effective leadership in today's society requires understanding a variety of viewpoints and working together to solve problems (Carpenter, Bauer, Erdogan, & Short, 2014; Williams, 2010). There is an increased need for education to teach students how to engage in complex problem solving through social learning, as opposed to presenting students with solutions (Collins, 2013; Hong, Hwang, Wong, Lin, & Yau, 2012). Cohorts provide the framework for students to engage in transformative learning in a safe environment learning (Barnett, Basom, Yerkes, & Norris, 2000; Greenlee & Karanxha, 2010). When transformative learning takes place it changes the focus from what do the students know to how do the students know (Belenky, Clinchy, Goldberger, & Tarule, 1986; Bridwell, 2012).

Knowledge about how to train effective leaders could be shared across disciplines. Improving a cohort model of delivery to increase leadership practices in the workplace may influence program design for a variety of disciplines and reverse the socially constructed gender disparities in leadership. The overall proportion of women employed in a workplace affect's women's perceptions of their own self-efficacy and performance (O'Leary and Flanagan, 2001). O'Leary and Flanagan (2001) suggest a model in which there is a simple solution to overcoming barriers to women's leadership: alter the gender composition of organizations and the number of women who lead them will also change.

Cohort Use in a Completion Program

Founded in 1928, Mulberry College is a small, Catholic liberal arts college located in New England. Originally created as a normal school, nursing and social work programs were introduced in 1978. Mulberry College has evolved into a coed institution that offers over 30 degree programs, including business and social science degrees. Enrollment is approximately 1,400 undergraduate and 300 graduate students. In recent years the primary enrollment growth has come from partnerships with community colleges to form off-site degree programs and the growth of graduate degree programs. The bachelor's degree completion program partnership with HCC is a successful example of how Mulberry has increased its undergraduate enrollment by forming a partnership with the local community.

A review of the literature reveals that cohorts are an effective education delivery model but there is not clear consensus on whether naturally emergent models are more effective than rigid or closed models (Barnett & Muth, 2008; Pemberton & Akkary, 2010; Rusch & Brunner, 2013). There is little data on cohorts since they have enjoyed a revival since the 1980s and early 1990s (Greenlee & Karanxha, 2010; Pemberton & Akkary, 2010). A gap exists in the literature on the long-term effects of cohort membership on the workplace and its effects on leadership and communication (Barnett, Bason, Yerkes, & Norris, 2000; Greenlee & Karanxha, 2010; McCarthy, Trenga, & Weiner, 2015). This study includes qualitative research on sixteen women in a closed cohort and an investigation on the effects of cohort membership on their learning style, communication, and leadership in their workplaces. The data collected from this study will

help administrators design programs that incorporate the effective use of cohorts. The results of this study may be applied to both educational and non-educational institutions.

Data was collected from sixteen participants in two ways: a personal, in-depth interview and a brief survey. All sixteen participants completed a demographic survey before their scheduled interview. The following table (Table 1) includes the participants' pseudonym, age, occupation, minority status and major course of study in the Mulberry-HCC bachelor's degree completion program.

Table 1: Participants Demographic Information

Participant Name	Age	Occupation	Minority Status	Major
Alexandra	52	Fiscal assistant	No	Healthcare Management
Barbara	55	Accounting	Yes	Accounting & Business Mgmt
Carly	27	Operations coordinator	Yes	Healthcare Management
Diana	31	Director of community relations	Yes	Management & Marketing
Emily	49	Accounting manager	No	Accounting & Business Mgmt
Fiona	43	Director of finance and administration	No	Accounting
Grace	50	Administrative assistant	No	Business Management
Holly	49	Financial institute specialist	No	Accounting
Isabella	33	Audit and accounting associate	No	Accounting
Joelle	45	Assistant town administrator	No	Management & Marketing
Katie	49	Underwriter	Yes	Management
Lauren	43	Human resource specialist	No	Management & Marketing
Monica	26	Practice coordinator	Yes	Healthcare Management
Nicole	36	Accountant	No	Accounting
Olivia	35	Business office manager	No	Healthcare Management
Patty	54	Staff accountant	No	Accounting

EFFECTS OF COHORT MODELS OF EDUCATION ON FEMALE STUDENTS

Program design at many colleges needs to be revisited because of widespread changing demographics of college students (Carey, 2015). The basic structure of higher education in the United States was created by men for males and some institutions have not changed in response to contemporary society (Cohen & Kisker, 2010). This study was designed to investigate the phenomenon of cohort models of education and its influences on learning style, leadership, and personal development of women. Knowledge about these areas will inform the creation of future bachelor's degree completion programs and other organizational training programs.

As enrollment numbers continue to rise along with the cost of higher education administrators are challenged with designing programs that meet the needs of students and employers without an unnecessary raise in tuition. The Mulberry-HCC bachelor's degree completion program was created to fill a demand in the local economy for students who need to finish their bachelor's degree in a condensed timeframe for a reasonable amount of tuition. The Mulberry-HCC adopted a cohort model in order to deliver a bachelor's degree within a twenty-month timeframe. Keeping the students together for a scheduled rotation of classes is economically desirable.

Researchers of cohort models of education agree on the many positive effects of cohort programs, including providing a framework for communicative learning; providing a framework for transformative learning; an opportunity to establish long-term connections and networking; a framework for enhancing grit; and a forum within which to practice leadership skills and improve communication skills (Barnett, Bason, Yerkes, & Norris, 2000; Barnett & Muth, 2008; Greenlee & Karanxha, 2010; McCarthy, Trenga, & Weiner, 2015; Pemberton & Akkary, 2010). This study was designed to reveal both the positive and negative effects of cohort programs specifically from female students' perspectives. Gathering information from students during in-depth interviews provides more robust data than the exit survey currently being utilized.

A generally held perception is that the students are the main beneficiaries of cohort programs (Barnett, Bason, Yerkes, & Norris, 2000; Barnett & Muth, 2008; Greenlee & Karanxha, 2010; McCarthy, Trenga, & Weiner, 2015; Pemberton & Akkary, 2010). Data collected from the students' perspective will help administrators revise the current program and help them to create new programs in the future. Knowledge about students' perceptions of cohort models of education will also help programs to be marketed more effectively to specific target markets.

There is a general consensus on how women learn better in groups and when they are given the opportunity to direct their own learning (Bean & Bean, 2007; Belenky, Clinchy, Goldberger, & Tarule, 1997; Kasworm, 2003; McCarthy, Trenga, & Weiner, 2015; Pemberton & Akkary, 2010). This study looked at how women learned together in cohort groups and the degree to which they directed their own learning and the influence that had on their leadership potential in the workplace.

The main source of debate or non-consensus surrounds the design of cohort program, open or closed, and whether or not cohorts are here for the long term. Barnett and Muth (2008) maintain that cohorts are too rigid and are the primary reason for student non-completion. Pemberton and Akkary (2010) posit that rigid or closed cohorts do not work as well for women as naturally emergent cohorts. This research was designed to examine the overall effectiveness of closed cohorts, and the influence that cohorts have on women's learning styles, leadership, and personal development. Retention of current students is a perennial concern for every institution of higher

education. This data may help improve the target marketing efforts of future programs, which may increase the retention rate over time.

Rusch and Brunner (2013) state that affective feelings influence sensemaking, a process of giving meaning to concepts, therefore affective distinctions influence learning, which would make closed or rigid cohorts inherently less conducive to learning. Conducting personal, in-depth private interviews, as opposed to a focus group, allowed the incorporation of the degree of affinity for other cohort members and whether or not that influenced learning outcomes. According to Rusch and Brunner (2013) it would be unlikely to document an extremely successful closed cohort program. However, the following research reveals how effective a closed cohort program can be for all of the participants who were assigned a cohort according to when they enrolled in the program.

The Mulberry-HCC bachelor's degree completion program is an example of purposefully creating and maintaining a positive environment that supports connected knowing and crystallized intelligence. It is significant to note that this group was socially constructed after the participants were assigned to a cohort. The Mulberry-HCC cohort participants' experience was consistent with the traditional steps of group formation identified as forming, storming, norming, and performing. These steps were developed by Bruce Tuckman in his seminal work on group formation theory in the 1960s (Hitt, Miller, & Colella, 2011).

A fifth step of adjourning was added by Hitt, Miller, and Colella (2011) to address the group's final stage of task completion, dissolution, and termination of roles (Hitt, Miller, & Colella, 2011). This study included a look at what happens to participants after they finish an intensive cohort model of education, or during the fifth step of adjourning. The final and fifth step of adjourning could be addressed within the Mulberry-HCC cohort program with the creation of bridge programs that allows cohort members to stay involved in the program but with less intensity.

Having been designed by men a century ago, traditional college courses are inherently more objective and rational, which worked when the courses were designed for men entering an all male workforce and working in traditional masculine roles (Cohen & Kisker, 2010). Cohort programs are more subjective and feminine in their approach to learning. The cohort approach is more effective at teaching and measuring the skills needed by a contemporary workplace, for example, teamwork, listening, communication, and collaboration (Collins, 2013). One of the driving questions of this research was the influence of cohort members on women's leadership practices in the workplace. Knowledge about how cohort membership influences women in the workplace may help organizations that wish to develop more female leaders.

Lectures, the mainstay of the traditional college course, are static, and are characterized by one-way communication originating from the instructor and directed at the students. This style of teaching was consistent with historical methods of management that favored authoritarian leadership (Cohen & Kisker, 2010). The teaching methodologies of the cohort model are adaptable and interactive, which is more consistent with training managers for contemporary styles of leadership that involve participatory decision making and more democratic and egalitarian organizational structures. This research gathered detailed descriptions of how women learn more effectively with the communicative style learning fostered by the cohort, rather than traditional lectures. One of the major areas of inquiry of this research is the pedagogy within the structure of the cohort. Knowledge about how students learn from each other, both in and out of the classroom, will be helpful to educators who are tasked with creating programs in the future.

The structure and philosophy of the cohort program differs from a traditional college course in several ways that influence learning outcomes (Cohen & Kisker, 2010). In a traditional college classroom, the unit of analysis is an individual; whereas in the cohort program the unit of analysis is the cohort. All sixteen of the participants felt that being identified as a member of a group positively influenced their attitude and orientation toward learning, effort expended on learning, and goal commitment. Students personally identified as feeling like they belonged to their particular cohort by the end of the second 8-week session. This knowledge may fundamentally change how programs are assessed in the future based on shared learning outcomes, shared assessments, and more comprehensive rubrics tied to assessments.

Although cohort models of education have been around since the 1980s, bachelor's degree completion programs are still relatively new and are a growing trend among higher education (Greenlee & Karanxha, 2010; Higher Learning Commission, 2015). This research was designed to initiate an in-depth, personal look at female students who completed their bachelor's degree within a cohort model of education. Questions were designed to gather data about the complexities of time spent in a cohort and the influence on women's learning styles, leadership, and personal development. As the research method utilized personal, in-depth interviews from the participants, all data was from the participant's perspective. One weakness of the study may be that questions related to workplace communication skills and leadership are answered from the participant's perspective, and may or may not be an accurate representation of how they are perceived in their actual place of employment.

Most of the scholarly work on cohort models of education has been conducted on educational leadership programs. This research broadens the body of literature on cohorts by focusing on a bachelor's degree completion program in business management. Data was collected on the women's perception of how cohort membership influenced their leadership in the workplace. This study was not able to capture any long-term influences of cohort membership in the workplace. For that reason, a follow up study is planned for 2020 that will revisit the same 16 participants and continue to track their career development.

RESEARCH FINDINGS

Learning in the context of a cohort had a profound effect on the participants, changing the way they learned, the methods they used to learn, the depth of exposure to different worldviews, an increase in overall confidence, and an increase in leadership skills. The participants acknowledged that they cared more about learning and about how other students in the cohort were learning. All sixteen participants agreed that it was a more positive experience to learn in a cohort as compared to a traditional classroom structure.

Participants' perceptions of how their experience in a cohort model influenced their personal development fell in to five major themes: Cohorts provide an opportunity for long-term relationships and networking; Cohorts provide a framework for communicative learning; Cohorts provide a framework for transformative learning; Cohorts provide a framework for enhancing grit and self-efficacy; and Cohorts provide a framework for improving communication skills and increasing leadership skills.

Theme #1: Cohorts provide an opportunity for long-term relationships and networking.

While the program did present many challenges it also presented opportunities for the women to give and receive support from each other as they shared their struggles to balance everything in their lives. The opportunity and ability to give and receive support in this program built confidence in the women as they found a community of learners who were all motivated and goal oriented. Determination to finish the program was a universal theme as was amazing support.

The group camaraderie that they enjoyed has had lasting effects beyond the end of the program. Many of the students have stayed connected and get together for social events. This has allowed the women to maintain the relationships that they've established during the program and continue networking as many of them move in to different positions of increasingly higher responsibility. Having helped each other personally they were poised to help each other professionally. The commonality of being working adults in a bachelor's degree completion program was just the beginning of their network. Several of the women shared the same concerns about industry, in particular the healthcare industry, which had prompted them to finish their degrees so they could make a difference. They were intrinsically motivated to learn more about the current problems in their industry and brainstorm within their cohort.

The fact that the participants became so connected so quickly within the cohort stands in contrast to Rusch and Brunner's findings that affective distinctions influence learning (2013). The women in the cohort were learning from each other, even if they didn't exactly like each other. Most of the women in the cohort did genuinely like each other, but not all of them. They were focused on the goal of learning, which superseded their reliance on affective feelings to produce sensemaking, a process of giving meaning to concepts. This may have been because the research focused on a cohort model of business students, who are known for being task-oriented. Affective distinctions may have influenced the learning outcomes had this been a cohort of social work students.

The end of the program did not mean the end of their cohort. Social media has made it easier for the participants to stay connected and keep each other informed about their lives. While they were sad at the end of the program, they also knew that technology would help keep track of everyone. All sixteen of the participants acknowledged that being enrolled in the program and attending classes on Friday nights and Saturdays for a twenty-month period of time was an intense experience. Several of the women felt that there needed to be some kind of decompression period during which they are still active in the program, but not as all-encompassing as they were when they were enrolled. Completing the program felt like it was too abrupt of an end for most of the women. Creating a structured bridge program that eases the student who just graduated from the completion program back into civilian life is the next priority for this successful program.

Theme #2: Cohorts provide a framework for communicative learning.

Students enrolled in the cohort developed a long-term orientation to learning, which influenced their progress in a variety of positive ways. They knew they would be in class with the same people for the next 20 months, so there was a strong initial incentive to make the effort to get to know their classmates and understand how they approach learning. At first this was somewhat of a forced act on behalf of many students who were not naturally oriented to group work.

A second fundamental influence of cohort membership on learning is the phenomenon of a shared interest in learning outcomes. The cohort model fostered a culture of support, rather than competition. While the students did regularly engage in friendly competition during classes in the form of debates and other class activities, the overall attitude was of helping each other so that all could succeed and finish the program. The students quickly learned each other's strengths and weaknesses in an effort to complete coursework, developing more patience with differing opinions and perspectives along the way. In this way the cohort became a motivating agent for doing homework, sharing notes, and helping each other study and learn the material. This finding was consistent with Greenlee and Karanxha's position that highly cohesive groups have a greater commitment to group goals (2010).

Learning different ways of doing things that could be applied to how you learn was also an influence of the cohort on the participants' learning styles. By the time they took business strategy at the end of the program they were completely comfortable asking each other for help. Most of the students said they were always available to their cohort no matter what because they all understood how much support was needed and appreciated. This data is consistent with Barnett, Bason, Yerkes, and Norris's work that maintains that students are the main beneficiaries of cohorts (2000).

Knowledge about the power of communicative learning and the corresponding shift from personal to group learning outcomes, and from short to long-term learning goals may significantly influence the design and evaluation for a wide variety of programs in the future.

Theme #3: Cohorts provide a framework for transformative learning.

A more subconscious theme throughout the cohort experience was a change in the ways of knowing, which was consistent with Scribner and Donaldson's finding that cohorts provide a framework for transformative learning (2001). For the five women who began the program as subjective knowers this influence was more significant than an improvement in the communication and interpersonal skills because it influenced the fundamental message and content of their communication. One woman identified the change in herself as accepting the fact that there is more gray area in knowledge and life in general. Participants described the cohort as a learning environment that was transformative and themselves as being in a state of constant improvement.

The seven women who began the program as procedural knowers were overwhelmed with learning new frameworks for solving problems and new tools to work with. Figuring out what tools to use and when was a main part of the cohort's group discussions. The four women who began the program as constructivists did not experience a change in their stage of knowing, but they enjoyed the camaraderie of the cohort model and appreciated the opportunity to brainstorm with other members.

Cohort membership having the power to transform the epistemological state of women is the most significant finding of the study. Data from this study adds to the significant work of Belenky, Clinchy, Goldberger, and Tarule (1997) who interviewed 135 women in nine different states. This research focuses on 16 women in a highly concentrated program of twenty months duration. The fact that 12 of the women in the study experienced a change in epistemological state underscores the long-term value of cohort membership. Knowledge about the fundamental changes that are possible with cohort membership may influence program design in a variety of settings.

Theme #4: Cohorts provide a framework for enhancing grit and self-efficacy.

An overt theme of the program was the challenge it presented and the opportunity it provided for the women to show how resilient and determined they can be when they set out to achieve a goal. Cohorts acting as a framework that enhances grit and self-efficacy was a theme that was shared by Barnett and Muth (2008) who also stated that cohorts increase academic rigor. This study found that the students all wanted to maximize their experience in the program; therefore, they set higher standards for themselves and other cohort members. As they got to know each other better, it meant more for them to increase their effort on coursework in a friendly camaraderie of helping each other maintain a quality program. This may have been influenced by the fact that the participants were enrolled in a business program, as Barnett and Muth (2008) studied educational leadership cohorts.

The fact the women were so invested in their learning goals and finishing the program, sometimes in spite of serious obstacles, contradicts the position of Barnett and Muth (2008) that closed cohorts are too rigid and a source of non-completion. However, Barnett and Muth's study (2008) was on educational leadership programs, which may account for the difference. Knowledge that closed cohorts can be created and become a significant source of grit and self-efficacy may have implications for future program design.

Theme #5: Cohorts provide a framework for improving communication skills and increasing leadership skills.

The most significant influence the cohort had on the women's personal development was an improvement in communication and interpersonal skills. Responding to McCarthy, Trenga, and Weiner's call for more evidence documenting the effects of cohorts on workplace practices, including leadership and communication (2015), the results of this study included all sixteen of the participants' description of how spending time in the cohort allowed them to develop a more nuanced way of thinking and communicating, which resulted in an increase in leadership skills for many of the women.

Learning ways to respectfully disagree was important, as they were assigned many group projects throughout the program. Hearing other people's perspectives allowed them to develop more patience and more empathy as they were relating to people of different backgrounds. Learning to listen more and be more open minded was a positive influence on the students. Pemberton and Akkary's position that the benefits of cohort membership extend beyond the classroom (2010) was substantiated by the data related to this theme.

The most significant future influence cohort membership had on the participants was in the competency of leadership potential in the workplace. Many women discovered they had latent leadership skills, brought out by being leaders of their cohort and taking leadership roles in group projects. Gaining confidence in themselves as leaders helped several of the participants learn how to interact with superiors at their own organizations. For example, several of the women mentioned that they now felt they had more overall professionalism and a strengthened sense of professional integrity. These enhanced areas of self-image gave the women more confidence to stand up for themselves in the workplace.

Analysis of Themes

Providing the framework that allowed women to progress from one epistemological category to the next was the most important value-added offering embedded in the Mulberry-HCC bachelor's degree completion program. The participants gained much more than their bachelor's degree, which was their original goal, in terms of communication skills, leadership skills, and technical skills. The completion program changed their fundamental way of thinking and learning, and sometimes their whole outlook on life.

The second most significant influence of the program was on the development of the participant's leadership and communication skills. Some women entered the program with fully developed leadership skills while others discovered latent leadership skills as a result of spending time in the cohort program. All of the women noted an improvement in their communication skills, most notably an increase in patience and empathy.

Recommendations for Future Research

The participants in this study were all female. It would be interesting and useful to conduct this same study on a cohort that was both male and female and compare the same driving questions. Conducting the same study on a mixed gender cohort would provide data that is applicable to more settings, as most settings are mixed gender. Studies that investigate cohort models of education in organizational training programs would also provide more insight into the effectiveness of cohorts. The utilization of cohort models in different settings and applications beyond education would broaden the general knowledge about cohorts and the opportunities for utilizing them in different industries.

It would also add to the body of knowledge to conduct the same study on an all male cohort. Particular consideration could be given to comparison of shared interest in learning outcomes as it relates to gender. All male cohorts may not experience the same benefits as the all female cohorts realized, for example, an increase in leadership skills. It would be interesting to know if an all male cohort would produce the same changes in epistemological stages as the all female cohort. In order to conduct this research on the influence of cohort membership on male epistemological stage it would first have to be determined if men follow the same stages of knowing as outlined by Belenky, Clinchy, Goldberger, and Tarule (1997).

A group of studies that increased the number of males enrolled in the cohort might reveal when the masculine influence reaches a critical point and begins to shift the learning goals from shared to individual. For example, the first cohort would be all women; the second cohort would include one male; the third cohort would include two males; and so on. This type of study design would attempt to discover at what point a male presence in the cohort begins to significantly influence the learning goals from shared to individual. Knowing this point could have profound effects on program design in certain circumstances of enrolling people in training for academic or other purposes.

Longitudinal studies could trace the long-term workplace influences of cohort leadership experience on both men and women. This could help document the long-term value of cohort membership for women in the workplace. A controlled study should be included that documents non-cohort men and women along with men and women who have spent time in cohorts. Then the differences between gender and cohort membership could be documented and analyzed.

Other longitudinal studies could trace the long-term effects and outcomes of networking, the origins of which began in a cohort model. Virtually all of the students utilize social networking

and many have made significant life changes based on contacts maintained in this manner. The long-term effects of networking should be studied as the use of Linked In and Facebook and other social media sites have reached critical mass. It would be interesting to document how long these social networking sites remain relevant to participants in a study.

As this study involved a range of ages, future studies might focus specifically on one generation, for example generation Y, to discover if there is a correlation between generation and outcomes to the same driving questions. One of the significant findings of this study was how having one singular goal unified women of any age and background to work together. A study of a cohort comprising of participants from the same age range may produce similar or dissimilar results, which would add to our understanding of generational influences on shared learning goals.

SUMMARY

Leaders in education should consider creative ways to harness the power of cohorts by adopting a cohort model when designing new programs. The positive effects of cohorts outweigh the amount of time and minimal amount of money spent creating a cohort, as compared to enrolling students in traditional courses. Management skills that are increasingly valued in today's organizations include the traditional female skills of listening, communication, and teamwork (Caproni, 2012; Collins, 2013; McKee, 2011). These are precisely the skills that are enhanced during the cohort model of education. Utilizing cohort models is a relatively inexpensive way to develop new leaders in any organization. Top managers at organizations should consider using a cohort model when designing professional programs such as company orientation, diversity and sensitivity training, and technical training. Bridge programs that allow associates to become mentors could be added to the end of professional programs that utilize cohorts.

The United States is part of a global economy and our society's workforce is increasingly diverse (Canas & Sondak, 2011). Historically, one of the missions of higher education has been to benefit society by promoting a more egalitarian community structure. Adopting more cohort models within the structure of higher education will help to effectively serve the needs of both men and women in the future.

The overall trend in management is working in groups and teams (McKee, 2011; Robbins, Decenzo, & Coulter, 201). More women will be in leadership positions in the future (Canas & Sondak, 2011; Pierce & Newstrom, 2011). It is crucial to the economy and society that more women are trained in leadership skills and have the confidence to move forward in to leadership positions. Supporting more women to be successful in higher education is an important part of training the next generation of leaders (McKee, 2011). During the first half of the twentieth century women who were admitted to male dominated colleges were forced to adapt to masculine ways of learning (Cohen & Kisker, 2010). It is time to make changes to the structure of higher education in order to benefit both genders.

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**GAMIFICATION OF LOWER-DIVISION ACCOUNTING CONCEPTS IN THE POST-
SECONDARY CLASSROOM USING “MONOPOLY EMPIRE®”**

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ABSTRACT

If students can be engaged in the learning of accounting from the earliest stages of their business education, perhaps retention occurs, and skills better applied after the student graduates. Traditional accounting teaching methods (e.g. rote and drill, lecture) cannot be replaced. However, basic accounting education needs to engage students and promote more than quickly forgotten surface learning. To encourage retention of basic skills and recognition of the importance of those skills, gamification should be a tool in the basic accounting education pedagogy.

INTRODUCTION

There are several challenges to overcome in a higher education classroom when presenting lower-division accounting concepts. Student engagement is primary among these. Couple the initial challenge of student engagement with the diversity of a post-secondary student body in the business/accounting discipline, and alternate presentations of challenging material become a primary focus for the professor. On the best of days in the classroom, the idea of repetition of debits and credits applied to different account types becomes monotonous for even the most driven of students. This paper explores gamification of basic accounting concepts in the form of student participation in the game Monopoly Empire®. The game may be a useful supplemental tool in reinforcement of accounting concepts presented during classroom lecture.

PURPOSE OF RESEARCH

Student motivation is a major challenge in the higher education accounting classroom (Needles, 2011). The student diversity in introductory principles of accounting classes makes it necessary to present subject matter that will arouse their interest because motivating them to want to learn accounting is always a major challenge (Needles, 2011). Basic accounting skills are vital for all business students, not just accounting majors. Students need to grasp the terminology and fundamentals of the discipline quickly in order to understand and apply concepts successfully (Moncada & Moncada, 2014). Thus, instructors of introductory accounting courses face significant challenges in capturing students' attention and interest early in the accounting course (Mastilak, 2012).

Knowing how to apply the accounting rules appropriately is a necessary part of accounting. The traditional pedagogy in accounting education does help students to memorize the rules and procedures required to record business events in a particular manner (Fowler, 2006). Therefore, the traditional teaching method does have a place in today's educational environment, but should not be the only method used (Fowler, 2006). It is recommended that professors, when possible, break from the traditional lecture format and develop a creative pedagogy that engages the learning styles of various students, thus motivating them to take an active role in their learning (Azriel, Erthal, & Starr, 2005).

Accounting students appear to favor surface learning approaches over deep learning approaches. If correct, this is likely to be of concern to accounting educators (Hall, et al., 2004). The essential difference between surface and deep approaches to learning lie in student motivation. With deep learning, students seek meaning. Surface learning is motivated only by the intent to acquire sufficient knowledge to complete a task (Hall et al., 2004). Overall, games are better suited for promoting deep learning (Crocco et al., 2016). Accounting is a fundamental skill for business students, therefore, encouraging deep learning approaches makes sense to influence retention and application of learned material after graduation.

Further, there has been a call from employers to change the accounting education landscape. The themes are common: providing more active learning experiences, improving communications and teamwork skills, and exercising a broader range of cognitive abilities (Wyer, 1993).

This would suggest that a supplemental tool is needed to enhance traditional teaching methods that can address the many aspects of business student body diversity. Azriel (2005) states,

“In the face of increasing diversity, some types of pedagogy, including the use of games in the classroom, cut across racial, ethnic, cultural, gender and age differences. Like stories, literature, and lectures, games are ubiquitous in our society. Therefore, they serve as an effective and acceptable means of instruction for a wide range of learners,” (Azriel et al., 2005, pg. 12).

The question presents itself: “Does a tool exist that can make accounting education fun, that addresses student diversity, while also enhancing deep learning, critical thinking, and teamwork skills?” Games, play, and learning have enjoyed a symbiotic relationship throughout recorded history (Huizinga, 1955). The game Monopoly® can motivate the discovery of the need for financial accounting information. That is, the students themselves figure out why accounting is important and useful (Mastilak, 2012).

Gamification in this case, using the game Monopoly Empire®, seems to be a potential answer. Gamification is becoming recognized as a valid tool for learning in the higher education classroom.

LITERATURE REVIEW

There is only a limited body of literature available for the application of gamification in higher education. Many studies have focused on game-based learning in primary and secondary education, but few have researched its use at the post-secondary level (Wiggins, 2016). Even less research exists with gamification applied to the higher education accounting classroom.

The research that does exist, however, seems to support that gamification is a valid tool for use in the higher education classroom. Game-based learning is the intentional use of digital or non-digital games or simulations for the purpose of fulfilling one or more specific learning objectives (Wiggins, 2016). Gamification and game-based learning are not only areas worthy of further inquiry but may reveal a way for higher education to combat declining enrollments through the innovative use of interactive games and simulations within the classroom and the overall tertiary educational experience (Wiggins, 2016).

Students of all ages enjoy games. Classroom games have multiple advantages, including increased active learner participation; learning, knowledge retention, and motivation; and insights about links between theory and practice (Billings & Halstead, 2005). In situations where student confidence is low and anxiety is high, games help to greatly reduce anxiety by increasing enjoyment of the learning process. Therefore, by improving enjoyment, games offer one significant way to help improve deep learning (Crocco, Offenholley, & Hernandez, 2016). Motivation is the most important factor that drives learning. When motivation dies, learning dies and playing stops. Cognitive science has had a hard time defining motivation, though one definition is a learner’s willingness to make an extended commitment to engage in a new area of learning (diSessa, 2000).

One way to motivate students, even at the college level, seems to be exploiting the creativity and inventiveness associated with the gamification of learning. When designed and effectively structured, using gamification activities to supplement accounting instruction can provide not only a viable alternative, but also occasional relief to the classroom lecture (Moncada & Moncada, 2014).

Meta-analyses reveal a much more consistent and positive correlation between games and engagement (Crocco et al., 2016). Further, if educators pay attention to the accordance of particular

game mechanics and design curricula that integrate games with learning outcomes and assessment cycles, the results will be more positive and consistent (Crocco et al., 2016). Student motivation and engagement have crucial impact on students' development of complex problem-solving competencies in game-based learning (Eseryel, Ifenthaler, Ge, & Miller, 2014).

Each discipline has its own specific needs, and games must be designed and implemented in a way that meets those needs. Ultimately, it takes time and skill to design a good learning game because the game objectives must overlap with the learning objectives. However, when done correctly, the results can be meaningful and significant (Crocco et al., 2016).

With the demand for changes in accounting education approaches, gamification may provide an alternative. Gamification of learning provides an opportunity for accounting faculty to experiment with another teaching strategy (Moncada & Moncada, 2014). Gamification would seem to address the need to teach the standard accounting curriculum while refreshing it at the same time. A challenge for accounting faculty perhaps is to discover that play, after all, is the highest form of inquiry (Moncada & Moncada, 2014).

METHOD

A purposive sampling method was deemed to be the most useful for analysis. Leedy and Ormrod (2016) suggest that purposive sampling is chosen when the researcher has decided certain people are "typical" of a group (p. 165). A preliminary sample of students (three from both groups, 18 students in total) was selected over three different terms during the school year. Students were chosen based upon observations of classroom interaction and categorized into two different groups, "Difficult to Engage," and "Highly Engaged" (see Table 1). Characteristics of "Difficult to Engage" students included lack of participation during classroom discussion and little or no note taking activities. "Highly Engaged" students included those who actively participated in classroom discussion with responses demonstrating subject matter understanding and copious note taking. Ledgers from the first and last game sessions in both groups were collected, graded, and compared.

During an 11-week term, the game is introduced the first week, and is always played on the final day of the week. In Week One, the material being studied includes financial statements and the basic accounting equation. Students are familiar with the different account types but have not been introduced to debits and credits. This week is used to familiarize students with the Monopoly Empire® game rules, which differ quite significantly from traditional Monopoly®. House rules are also included that differ slightly from the published rules.

Week Two requires team members to begin recording the transactions resulting from each turn. During this week, the different account types and debits and credits are the learning focus. Transactions must then be recorded for the remainder of the term. All transactions are to be recorded on provided columnar paper in pencil. All team members must do their own recording and submit their ledgers at the end of the period. Team members may assist one another with the mechanics of transactions, and the instructor is also available to answer questions. The Chart of Accounts includes Cash, Brands, Owner's Equity, Gain/Loss, Notes Payable, Income, and Expenses.

The following highlights some of the Monopoly Empire® rules/features that differ from traditional Monopoly® and make the game more exciting and engaging.

- Teams start with \$4,000 cash and income is earned in several ways: from opposing teams landing on an owned brand and paying royalties, passing “GO,” and from the results of “Empire” and “Chance” cards. A loan from the Bank may be obtained if a team goes bankrupt.
- Monopoly Empire® has adopted modern brands in place of the traditional properties. Players build the value of a company by purchasing these brands. Brands are generally well-known and include popular ones like “Candy Crush,” “Beats by Dr. Dre,” and “Xbox.”
- There are six office spaces available that can be purchased by any team during its turn for \$500 from the Bank. There are multiple utilities for purchase as well. The office spaces, along with brands and utilities, are the basis for a team’s total company value. This determines how much is collected when a team passes “Go.”
- One of the dice has a “secret swap” feature. This allows the rolling team to swap the topmost brand in one’s own tower (representing the company) with that of another team. The swap is optional and can be utilized at any point during the team’s turn.
- Each team begins with two “Empire” cards, which are kept secret from other teams. These cards have beneficial results for a team, including reversing the rent if one lands on an owned space and “Just Say No,” which can stop an opposing team’s current action. “Chance” cards are still available and have varying associated results.
- Free parking has a new rule. Teams may pay \$100 to “take a trip” to any space on the board within one revolution. This includes passing “GO” and landing on an “Empire Card” space.
- There are two spaces on the board labeled “Tower Tax” and “Rival Tower Tax.” “Tower Tax” requires the landing team to pay \$200 to the Bank. “Rival Tower Tax” allows the landing team to pick an opposing team to pay \$200 to the Bank.
- Individually negotiated contracts amongst teams are allowed. For example, a team that builds a monopoly by purchasing a brand from another team may offer in return a freedom from paying rent if the selling team lands on a monopolized space. Teams are required to record the terms of the agreement in simplified form and to notify the instructor of the agreement.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

Table 1: Comparing the two groups shows that scores are not as disparate as might be expected.

Student Category	Average Score
Difficult to Engage	90.4%
Highly Engaged	96.6%

At the small, rural university in the Northwest where this research was undertaken, the students in the lower-division accounting classroom may or may not have an accounting focus. As a required part of the curriculum, basic financial accounting includes both majors and non-majors. Students come from a wide range of socio-economic backgrounds. Many are first-generation college students or are underprepared for college work. Most are digitally literate, but some are returning students who find technology intimidating.

Learning styles are as diverse as student backgrounds. It seems that in the accounting classroom, many need frequent interaction with the professor and feedback on concepts they do not understand, while others are able to master the basic skills with little to no intervention.

The retention of learned accounting skills is usually poor, especially for non-majors. Once non-major business students pass Financial and Managerial accounting, they do not usually take another accounting class. Some concepts may be seen in Finance classes, but the mechanics of accounting generally are not seen again until the student reaches the capstone assessment. If there is a way to promote deep learning of accounting concepts, there is a better chance that the knowledge will be retained past graduation.

Direct classroom observation has revealed the benefits of gamification of basic accounting concepts. "Monopoly Days" have provided positive engagement results. "Difficult to Engage Students" tend to become more interactive during class, and their attendance is better. At the very least, they attend class on Monopoly Days and show enthusiasm for the game. Further, the use of a game promotes a general atmosphere of fun in the classroom. As a result, the classroom is still formal in its setting, but students seem more willing to relax and interact during lecture.

The intimidation factor of accounting looms large. Removal of the perception of difficulty seems to improve student learning and retention. If a student perceives that the initial material is accessible and learnable, that can extend to more complex concepts presented later in the term. Taking the seemingly complex concepts and placing them in an alternative context has been beneficial.

Many on-campus students are athletes, and as a group tend to be more competitive than other students. The game causes those students to look forward to the times when those competitive tendencies can be exercised, and the games often become very animated and noisy. It has been remarked by other faculty that students are heard planning strategies in classes outside of accounting.

Requiring students to play as teams encourages the development of required skills. If team members disagree on a strategy, they must figure out how to arrive at a decision. They must also work collaboratively on the strategy during the game as conditions change. The game has forced several introverted students to become better at interacting with teammates.

Peer tutoring occurs frequently during the game. Teams usually include at least one student who has stronger skills than the others, and who renders assistance. There are many transactions that become complex and require team members to assist one another in recording them properly.

One of the unforeseen benefits of the game has been the use of columnar paper. Many of the younger students have never seen or utilized it, and it reinforces the double-entry system structure. Talking about “T-Accounts” is theoretical for many students until they see the columnar paper. Further, rote and drill become a part of the game, as there are roughly twenty transactions recorded by a team. These are twenty extra practice problems that would likely not otherwise have happened.

The use of the game has been a great way to reinforce the differences between assets and income and expenses and liabilities. These concepts have been difficult to apply for some students, but seeing income earned and expenses paid during the game has been good for reinforcement.

Monopoly Empire is superior to other games/simulations, especially higher-tech options, for those students who tend to be less tech-savvy (returning students sometimes demonstrate these tendencies). There is also the element of simplicity; the game itself is perceived as simple, while the accounting is “hard.” Therefore, students do not feel that they are being overburdened with having to learn a difficult game while simultaneously working difficult accounting problems.

Monopoly Empire® is more interesting than traditional Monopoly®. The Monopoly Empire® rules change the dynamics of the game, and the game is less dependent on pure luck. “Empire” cards can influence a team’s strategy as to when certain actions are performed, and the classroom “house” rules, allowing teams to make outside deals with one another in the form of simple contracts, give teams more control over the game’s outcome. These activities also increase the complexity of the accounting transactions required within the game, which serves as further application/critical thinking practice.

Other games, such as Jeopardy, have deficiencies. Observation has shown that many students react to that type of game in the same way they do the Socratic education method: they freeze up and do not fully engage in the game. It seems that they are afraid to look bad in front of their peers by answering incorrectly. Monopoly removes that fear factor from the equation.

FUTURE RESEARCH

Much of the evidence demonstrating the effectiveness of gamification in the accounting classroom is anecdotal. The sample size of this research is small, but larger samples will be collected in the future to ensure statistically significant results. To begin quantifying the anecdotal results, a questionnaire will be developed for both the beginning and the end of the term to assess student attitudes toward the game and perceived engagement in the accounting subject. It is hoped that the questionnaire results will demonstrate a statistically significant relationship between playing the game and engagement in the subject matter. If the results of a larger data set and administered questionnaires continue to support the idea of gamification as an engagement tool, its use should become a best practice in a modern post-secondary accounting classroom. Future opportunities in this research include development of other game theory applications in accounting that further enhance deep learning of concepts and encourage business students to apply those concepts in new ways to “real world” problems after graduation.

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**THE HACKMAN AND OLDHAM MODEL WITH AN EMPHASIS ON
HOFSTEDE'S CULTURAL DIMENSION THEORY**

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ABSTRACT

This study of the Job Characteristics Model centers on companies in both manufacturing and service industries in all countries, and government (in Mexico only) located in North America (U.S.), Central, and South America. It appears that cross-cultural differences may help to explain the findings. The researchers have suggested there should be a consideration of Hofstede's Cultural Dimension Theory as a possible explanation for the variation of the U.S. and Non-U.S. results.

INTRODUCTION

In today's increasingly competitive, global environment, aggressive strategies by companies to lower costs and increase margins often result in unintended consequences in terms of employee motivation and morale. Hackman and Oldham (1976) developed the Job Characteristics Model (also known as the Hackman and Oldham Model) to determine how job characteristics and individual differences interact to affect the overall satisfaction, motivation, and productivity of individuals at work. The model is helpful in planning and carrying out changes in the design of jobs. In developing the Model, Hackman and Oldham built upon the foundation of Herzberg's two-factor theory (Herzberg, Mausner, & Snyderman, 1959) with some theoretical foundations based on the expectancy theory (Evans, Kiggundu, & House, 1979).

What does it take to motivate an individual to perform at his or her best? This question has intrigued management and inspired much research and interest. For Hackman and Oldham, the answer to the above question focused on job design and its interaction with the motivation of the individual. The Hackman and Oldham model was developed to specify how job characteristics and individual differences interact to affect the satisfaction, motivation, and the productivity of individuals at work. The model is specifically used in planning and carrying out changes in the design of work.

Several studies (e.g., Ford, 1969; Lawler, 1973; Maher, 1971; Meyers, 1970; Special Task Force, HEW, 1973; Vroom, 1964) have supported the theory of motivation through job redesign. Studies of job redesign have found that this technique is able to (1) significantly reduce turnover and absenteeism, (2) improve job satisfaction, (3) improve quality of products, and (4) improve productivity and output rates (Steers & Porter, 1987).

This study centers on companies in manufacturing, service industries, and government located in North America, Central America, and South America. Results of United States companies were compared to those of Non-U.S. firms. Scores were calculated for each of the five dimensions of the model and the motivation potential score. For comparison purposes, scores for all companies studied were compared to those in the Hackman and Oldham database.

The researchers have included a review of the literature that covers the Hackman and Oldham Model, as well as Hofstede's Cultural Dimension Theory.

REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

Several researchers (Davis, 1957; Herzberg, 1966; Herzberg, Mausner, & Snyderman, 1959; Walker, & Guest, 1952) started the job redesign movement. Job redesign has become a useful tool in developing ergonomic programs, resulting in increased motivation and fewer injuries (Mier, 1992). Using job redesign to introduce technology into the workplace will be very important in the future as organizations shift from a tightly controlled management structure with narrowly defined jobs to a style that gives employees greater satisfaction, thus increasing motivation (Iadipaolo, 1992).

Work redesign is a unique approach to motivation and company reorganization for four reasons: (1) work redesign alters the basic relationship between a person and what he or she does on the job; (2) work redesign directly changes behavior, which tends to stay changed; (3) work redesign offers and sometimes forces into one's hands numerous opportunities for initiating other organizational changes; and (4) work redesign, in the long-term, can result in organizations that re-

humanize rather than dehumanize the people who work in them (Hackman, 1977). The entire concept of job redesign is based upon the theories of motivation and the motivation literature.

Recent studies of the Job Characteristics Model (JCM), presented in Appendix 1, have tended to focus on two general questions: (1) does the model apply to non-manufacturing jobs (e.g., service, sales, health care)? and (2) Are there mitigating factors which may apply to work settings outside the United States? Some studies have explored these questions simultaneously.

Several recent studies have explored the first question alone. In the United States, the usefulness of the JCM has been validated in studies of information technology professionals (Brown, 2002), public school teachers (Fernandez, 2002), and hospital workers (Casey & Robbins, 2009). Other studies have been conducted outside the U.S., albeit in areas with a similar culture and society. One researcher administered the Job Diagnostic Survey (JDS) to hotel workers in the United Kingdom (Lee-Ross, 1998) and to hospital chefs in Australia (Lee-Ross, 2002). In both cases, the results indicated that the JCM was valid in a service setting.

Other studies have been conducted using the Job Characteristics Model in international settings. A study in Belgium of public service workers found that administrative tasks (more routine and clerical in nature) held less motivating potential than commercial tasks (those tasks more closely associated with accomplishing the mission of the organization). This was due to lower levels of the core job characteristics (Buelens & Van den Broeck, 2007).

A study in Malta focused on the level of motivation of public service workers (PSM). This study found that employees who experience positive job characteristics, as measured by the JDS, have a higher PSM level (Camilleri, 2005; Elanain (2008). A study of both manufacturing and service companies, indicated that employees are impacted by increasing the provision of the critical job characteristics, while employee satisfaction and commitment can increase, and turnover can decrease as a result.

A Netherlands study in the financial services and educational areas found support for the hypothesis that work characteristics are a direct cause of job motivation and satisfaction (Houkes, Janssen, Jonge, & Bakker, 2003). Another study proposed that critical job dimensions would be lower for Mauritian workers than for Australian workers, i.e., work content would be perceived differently due to cultural differences (Lee-Ross, 2005). Using the JDS to measure work content, the author found that Mauritian workers scored lower on all five of the critical job dimensions.

Michailidis and Dracou (2011) studied Cyprus sales representatives and found the MPS score was significantly related to three characteristics—educational level, age, and tenure. Educational level and age were inversely related, while tenure was directly related. Millette and Gagné (2008) found support for the hypothesis that the MPS (job satisfaction) was positively associated with autonomous motivation (defined as internal motivation) among volunteers in a health care organization.

The authors also found support for the hypothesis that MPS was positively associated with volunteer work satisfaction. Sadler-Smith, El-Kot and Leat (2003) found that work criterion and autonomy were associated with job satisfaction in a Non-Western context (Egypt) through a manufacturing facility study.

A study of educational institutions in Germany (Schermuly, Schermuly and Meyer, 2011) found that job satisfaction was highly and inversely related to emotional exhaustion. The authors also found that satisfaction was predicted best by perceived competence of the subjects (in this case, vice-principals of the institution).

Among various service workers in Canada, Mexico, and the Netherlands, researchers found that job satisfaction is affected by external factors such as cultural influences (Sledge, Miles, & van Sambeek, 2011). Wong, Hui and Law (1998) found that overall and intrinsic job satisfaction are reciprocally related to job perception among service workers in China.

Ali, Said, Yumus, Kader, Latif, and Munap (2014) studied job motivation and satisfaction in the fast food industry. This article relates to the fast food industry while Ayandele and Nnamseh (2014) studied the model in the civil service field. Moloji and Thapelo (2014) utilized the model to study 11 and 12 educators in 14 selected secondary schools.

The researchers next step was to review the Hofstede Cultural Dimension Theory.

HOFSTEDE POSSIBLE IMPLICATIONS

Geert Hofstede is the master of culture research. Based upon a lifetime of experience and research conducted beginning in the 1960s he has authored a plethora of publications related to culture. According to Claus, Callahan, and Sandlin (2013), Hofstede addressed culture through the formulation of cultural dimensions. These dimensions evolved from the original four to the current six:

Individualism/Collectivism

Masculinity/Femininity

Power Distance

Uncertainty Avoidance

Long-term Orientation/Short-term Orientation

Indulgence/Restraint

Individualism focuses on a manner of independence and pride in one's accomplishments (Claus et al., 2013). This dimension purports a strong sense of personal responsibility and self focus. Individualism can result in ambition and an inner drive to succeed that many societies view as selfishness or self-centeredness. Capitalism supports individualism as it sustains competition and innovation.

Collectivism holds that people thrive better in groups (Claus et al., 2013). Protection of others and loyalty without question is the basis for collectivism. A socialist society is often the result of collectionism, whereas, individuals depend upon the group cohesiveness to bring about the betterment of the unit.

The dimension regarding femininity and masculinity focuses on the contrast between feelings and facts (Claus et al., 2013). Femininity embraces the emotional aspects of traits and characteristics supposing that individuals should be conscious of others' feelings and act with tenderness and compassion. For some these traits may be viewed as weakness.

Masculinity discerns that individuals should be strong and confident displaying a front of sternness and perseverance (Claus et al., 2013). Cultures that embrace masculinity expect to be in the forefront and often play a leader role in society. Achievement, award, and success are expected, which may be interpreted as strength.

Hofstede (1998) purported that these roles were generated by constraints in societies but were generally universal. The concept of femininity and masculinity are often conceived as gender

specific given past roles of males and females; however, these roles have shifted and blended across societies in the past decades. The defining line of stereotypical roles is no longer definite.

Power distance defines the unequal distribution of power and one's willingness or reluctance to accept another's power position (Claus et al., 2013). Members of some societies are very respectful of position and power; whereas, others consider all individuals to be on the same level. These acknowledgments affect communications and negotiations.

According to Claus et al. (2013) uncertainty avoidance affects how an individual accepts and perceives ambiguity. The concept of uncertainty can be unsettling or motivating depending upon the individual's perception.

Long-term versus short-term orientation refers to the length of time for one's expectation of goal attainment. While cultures with short term orientation focus on instantaneous gratification, cultures with long term orientation focuses on future results and rewards (Claus et al., 2013).

Claus, et al (2013) suggest that the indulgence dimension needs further research for solid validation. Hofstede's theory is unique in that additional dimensions have been added. This suggests that Hofstede's perspective allows for adaptation for a changing global environment.

Even though these six dimensions form the foundation for cultural traits, it is important to note that these dimensions are not exhaustive (Claus et al., 2013). Each culture often contains a combination of traits and characteristics that is not easily confined in a vacuum. The amalgamation of probabilities is vast, and interactions and exposures due to globalization have impacted cultural results.

Goldstein (1981) challenged the premise that Hofstede's theory holds true for all nations and cultures. He believed that Hofstede's theory was only applicable to cultures that share the same values and norms as the United States, and to purport the theory is applicable in all cultures makes American theorists "guilty of cultural imperialism" (Goldstein, 1981, p. 52). Goldstein argued that one theory could not be applied globally, but that each culture was subject to situational circumstances and relativity. Ailon (2008) purported that additional research was needed to examine reflexivity in order to surpass Hofstede's dimensions that imply cultural relativism (p. 885). Stultz and Williamson (2003) proposed that language and religion are also necessary dimensions for assessing cultural impact. Notwithstanding, the researchers propose that Hofstede's theory provides a firm foundation from which to build assumptions pertaining to motivation within the Hackman and Oldham model encompassing differing cultures.

Nabar and Boonlert-U-Thai (2007) used Hofstede's variables of individualism, uncertainty avoidance, masculinity, and power distance to conclude that financial and accounting practices are impacted by culture. Achim (2016) used Hofstede's dimensions of individualism, power distance, and long-term versus short-term orientation to determine that national culture contributes to the level of corruption in a country. Additionally, culture is "the most common factor for showing the moral dimension of economic behavior" (p. 334). Lund, Scheer, and Kozlenkova (2013) found that the concept of the importance of fairness is impacted by culture, as evidenced through uncertainty avoidance. Griffith and Hoppner (2013) purported that managerial soft skills are increasingly important for developing and maintaining cross-cultural relationships, and these relationships "must be strategically managed according to the cultural dynamic between partners" (Lund, et al, 2013, p. 37).

According to DeCieri and Dowling (1995) Hofstede's cultural dimensions were used across 60 countries, and included collaboration of researchers from five countries. Yet, the methodology and validation have been questioned (Orr & Hauser, 2008). Hofstede's research has

been used for decades as the benchmark for cross-cultural studies, however, due to increasing globalization, Orr and Hauser (2008) suggest that the constructs be re-examined and re-defined to allow adaptation for a globally and culturally changing environment.

Many researchers suggest the outcomes of firms are affected by culture from both a national and organizational nature (Desphande & Farley, 2004; Eisend, Evanschitzky, & Gilliland, 2016; Evanschitzky, Eisend, Calantone, & Jian, 2012; Leidner & Kayworth, 2006; Ouchi, 1979; Wuyts & Geyskens, 2005). Organizational culture consists of four types including market, adhocracy, clan, and hierarchy (Buschgens, Bausch, & Balkin, 2013). According to Glazer and Beehr (2002), the better the cultural fit between organizational culture and national culture, the better the performance.

Notwithstanding the differences of opinion regarding Hofstede's research, there is little, if any, argument that Hofstede developed a foundational framework upon which cultures can be assessed. One redeeming aspect of his research is the ability to add dimensions, which allows for consideration of differing characteristics and values across countries.

Based upon these precepts the researchers developed the following research question and hypothesis.

RESEARCH QUESTION

Is there a significant difference between the U.S. and Non-U.S. countries in terms of cultural influence on companies and organizations based on data generated from the JDS short form results?

HYPOTHESES

This study utilized the Job Diagnostic Survey (JDS) for the U.S. companies and the Non-U.S. countries. The researchers developed the following hypotheses to determine if a significant difference exists between U.S. and Non-U.S. companies, and organizations in terms of cultural influences on companies and organizations in surveyed countries.

H₀: There are no significant differences between the U.S. and Non-U.S. countries in terms of cultural influences on companies and organizations in both samples based on data generated from JDS short form results.

H₁: There are significant differences between the U.S. and Non-U.S. countries in terms of cultural influences on companies and organizations in both samples based on data generated from JDS short form results.

Next, the researchers reviewed the methodology used in this research project.

METHODOLOGY

Survey Instrument

The Job Diagnostic Survey (JDS) is an instrument designed to measure the key elements of the job characteristics theory. The survey measures several job characteristics, employees' experienced psychological states, employees' satisfaction with their jobs and work context, and the growth need strength of respondents. The instrument has a variety of scales depending on the section. The short form uses a 5-point scale with 23 questions.

The JDS (short form) is designed to be completed by the incumbents of a job or jobs in question-not by individuals outside the job. An instrument designed for the latter purpose is entitled the Job Rating Form (JRF) and is completed only by management personnel. The Job Rating Form uses a 5-point scale for all three sections.

The JDS is not copyrighted and, therefore, may be used without the author's permission. However, the researcher did send letters to the authors asking for permission to use the instrument and purchased a copy of the instrument from the Educational Testing Service in Princeton, New Jersey. A short form of the JDS has also been developed. It excludes measures of the experienced psychological states and uses fewer items to measure other key variables in the job characteristics theory. The short form was used for this research.

In each case, the researchers obtained the permission of the companies to conduct the surveys. For the sites in the Non-U.S., the researchers translated the surveys into Spanish and developed a letter explaining the survey and letting the employees know that individual responses would remain anonymous. The survey instrument translation and letter were certified for both the translation of the survey questions as well as the implied intent.

Next, the researchers reviewed the sample and data collection.

Sample and Data Collection

This study consists of 2,291 total responses, with 661 in the United States and 1,630 internationals. Convenience samples of the U.S. and nine Non-U.S. countries (Nicaragua, Guatemala, Mexico, Costa Rica, Belize, Honduras, Ecuador, El Salvador, and Panama) were also selected for study.

A convenience sample of six U.S. companies was selected for study. Also included, were the results Hackman and Oldham found in their research for the sales and manufacturing sectors. The sample for the first study conducted by the researchers was derived from a manufacturing plant in northwest Arkansas, where a total of 192 employees from a plant population of 1,000 completed the questionnaire on location. A large retail company in Arkansas comprised the second study, where 89 stores were randomly selected from a population of 1,953 stores. For this study, 534 employees were surveyed, with a response rate of 62 percent or 330 employees completing the survey. The researchers next conducted a study in the service industry in the U.S. The survey was conducted in a hospital with 300 employees, with 89 employees responding. This represented a 30 percent response rate. The next study was in the Public sector. For this study, the researchers distributed 26 surveys. The researchers received 21 completed for an 81 percent response rate. Another study in the non-profit sector surveyed 26 people with 18 completed surveys for a 69 percent response rate.

The researchers conducted another study of 21 employees working in the retail sector. The researchers received 11 completed surveys for a 52 percent response rate. This was a study in the banking industry.

The researchers conducted a study of a multi-national manufacturing company located in Guatemala, 62 completed the survey with a 48 percent response rate.

The next study was a bank in Nicaragua has a population of 600 with 233 responding. This represented a 39 percent response rate, and a Guatemala bank with a population of 380 employees was surveyed. In the survey 152 employees returned the survey representing a 40 percent response rate.

The food service company in Nicaragua was surveyed. The company had 108 surveys completed out of a total of 150. This response rate was high due to the encouragement of the owner, who communicated to the employees that individual responses would be kept confidential.

In the survey of 274 small service business owners in Mexico, 175 completed the survey for a 64 percent response rate followed by a study in Costa Rica of a bank. The survey consisted of 52 employees with 28 responding for a response rate of 54 percent.

The next study was in Belize. This study consisted of 36 employees surveyed with 15 responding for a response rate of 42 percent.

In El Salvador a study of 786 employees in the retail industry was conducted. The survey resulted in 354 responding or a 45 percent response rate.

The researchers conducted the next study in Honduras of a retail company. The study surveyed 385 employees with 158 responding for a response rate of 41 percent.

The researchers wanted to go outside Central America. This study was a retail company in Ecuador. For the study, 402 employees were surveyed with 157 responding for a response rate of 39 percent.

The researchers wanted to survey something other than the for-profit sector. For this research a survey of government operations in Mexico was conducted. In this study, 356 were surveyed with 134 responding for a response rate of 38 percent.

Next a survey was completed in Panama. In this study, 125 employees were surveyed with 54 completing the survey for a 43 percent response rate. The company surveyed in Panama is in the retail sector.

All studies above utilized the Job Diagnostic Survey (JDS). Employees completed the Job Diagnostic Survey (JDS) instruments, which were sealed in envelopes, then collected at a central location and returned to the researchers. The survey instrument was scored, with results compared to each other and to the Hackman and Oldham database.

Two additional studies included 21 members of a police department and 18 employees of an assisted living center. These two studies gave the research a unique sample that added to the variety of entities studied.

In each case, the researchers obtained the permission of the companies to conduct the surveys. For the sites in the Non-U.S., the researchers translated the surveys into Spanish and developed a letter explaining the survey and informing the employees that the individual responses would remain anonymous. The survey instrument translation and letter were certified for both the translation of the survey questions as well as the implied intent.

The researchers included a discussion of the reliability of the instruments used in the study.

RELIABILITY OF THE INSTRUMENTS

The Job Diagnostic Survey is intended for use in (1) diagnostic activities to determine whether and how existing jobs can be improved to increase employee motivation, performance, and satisfaction; and (2) evaluation studies of the effects of work design. Since the JDS was originally published (Hackman and Oldham, 1974 and 1975), the instrument has been used in many organizations and subjected to several empirical tests (Barr and Aldag, 1978; Cathcart, Goddard, & Youngblood, 1978; Dunham, 1976; Dunham, Aldag, & Brief, 1977; Oldham, Hackman, & Stepina, 1979; Pierce & Dunham, 1978; Stone, Ganster, Woodman, & Fuslier, n.d.; Stone & Porter, 1977).

Experience with the JDS and studies of its properties have highlighted a few limitations and suggest several cautions in using the JDS survey instrument (Hackman & Oldham, 1980). The Job Characteristics, as measured by the JDS, are not independent of one another. When a job is high on one characteristic (such as skill variety), it also tends to be high on one or more other characteristics (such as autonomy and/or feedback). The positive intercorrelations among the job characteristics may reflect problems in how they are measured in the JDS.

A detailed review of the results of the study was the next step the researchers included in the study.

RESULTS OF THIS STUDY

Table 1 compares five studies conducted by the researchers in the United States in the manufacturing, retailing, public service, and non-profit sectors. Table 1 also reflects the means of the research for the manufacturing and sales industries in the United States as calculated by Hackman and Oldham.

Table 2 reflects eleven Non-U.S. studies in three banks (service industry in Nicaragua, Guatemala, and Costa Rica), a food service company in Nicaragua, several small businesses in Mexico, and retail outlets in Honduras, El Salvador, Ecuador, and Belize. The study also included a government operation in Mexico. Table 1 and Table 2 display the scores for the core job characteristic of the model. Those core characteristics include the following properties: skill variety, task identity, task significance, autonomy, feedback, and motivating potential score. The table also reflects the motivating potential score (MPS) for each of the research studies.

Table 1: Means for the Studies in the Service, Manufacturing and Retail Industries United States

Dimensions	Hackman & Oldham Mean for Sales Industry	Hackman & Oldham Mean for Manufacturing Industry	United States Study #1 Manufacturing Company	United States Study #2 Major Retailing Company Multi-National	United States Study #3 Hospital (Service)	United States Study #4 Public Service Police Dept.	United States Study #5 Non-Profit Organization Assisted living Facility	United States Study #6 Retail Sector Banking
			n=192	n=330	n=89	n=21	n=18	n=11
Skill Variety	4.80	4.20	4.89	4.46	4.05	4.51	3.84	4.00
Task Identity	4.40	4.30	3.94	5.25	3.89	3.83	3.69	3.13
Task Significance	5.50	5.30	5.31	5.59	4.48	4.5	4.48	4.34
Autonomy	4.80	4.50	4.67	5.30	3.56	3.8	3.56	3.59
Feedback	4.44	4.70	4.07	4.05	3.36	3.78	3.36	3.80
Motivating Potential Score	104.52	97.29	89.59	109.47	49.52	61.47	59.86	52.21

Table 2: Means for the Studies in the Service, Manufacturing and Retail Industries Non-U.S.

Dimensions	Non-US Study #1 Bank in Nicaragua (Service)	Non-US Study #2 Bank in Guatemala (Service)	Non-US Study #3 Food Service Nicaragua	Non-US Study #4 Small Service Businesses in Mexico	Non-US Study #5 Bank in Costa Rica	Non-US Study #6 Retail in Belize	Non-US Study #7 Retail in Honduras	Non-US Study #8 Retail in El Salvador	Non-US Study #9 Retail in Ecuador	Non-US Study #10 Government in Mexico	Non-US Study #11 Retail in Panama	Non-US Study #12 Manufacturing in Guatemala Multi-National
	n=233	n=152	n=108	n=175	n=28	n=15	n=158	n=354	n=157	n=134	n=54	n=62
Skill Variety	3.77	3.71	3.70	3.77	4.03	3.52	3.72	3.74	3.87	3.56	3.50	3.916
Task Identity	3.01	3.35	3.62	3.95	4.21	3.72	4.07	3.27	3.44	3.38	3.57	4.069
Task Significance	2.50	3.10	3.17	3.70	3.35	4.01	4.32	3.29	3.44	3.34	3.44	3.609
Autonomy	2.86	2.72	3.88	3.70	3.85	3.70	3.68	3.13	3.32	3.23	3.22	3.887
Feedback	3.50	3.48	3.95	3.70	3.24	3.31	3.17	3.12	3.72	3.36	3.51	3.747
Motivating Potential Score	31.79	32.05	53.53	52.05	48.20	45.93	47.09	33.53	44.26	37.19	39.58	59.291

A formula was utilized to compute each of the scores. Potential motivating potential scores range from 1 to 125. The MPS provides a good indication of those job characteristics that could be enhanced to improve motivation. The MPS for the manufacturing company and the retailing company in this research are comparable to the means in the Hackman and Oldham database. The MPS for the hospital does not have a comparable mean in the Hackman and Oldham database. In addition, the MPS for the Central American banks, the food service company in Nicaragua, as well as the small service businesses in Mexico, are comparable to the hospital, but significantly below the Hackman and Oldham mean for the sales industry. In addition, the studies in the public sector and non-profit organization were higher than the results found in the international samples.

Table 3 reflects the mean scores for the United States versus Non-United States companies in this sample. The researchers found that the overall MPS for U.S. companies was 70.35 versus 42.38 resulting in a variance of 27.97. The two dimensions that had significant differences were task significance and autonomy.

Table 3: Means for the United States versus Non-U.S. Studies

Dimension	Average for US Companies	Average for Non-US Companies	Variance
Skill Variety	4.29	3.734	.404
Task Identity	3.96	3.638	.156
Task Significance	4.77	3.479	.833
Autonomy	4.17	3.432	.541
Feedback	3.79	3.484	.296
Motivating Potential Score	70.35	43.539	23.891

The researchers concluded their research paper with a discussion of the results and the conclusion.

Table 2 reflects eleven Non-U.S. studies in three banks (service industry in Nicaragua, Guatemala, and Costa Rica), a food service company in Nicaragua, several small businesses in Mexico, and retail outlets in Honduras, El Salvador, Ecuador, and Belize. The study also included a government operation in Mexico. Table 1 and Table 2 display the scores for the core job characteristic of the model. Those core characteristics include the following properties: skill variety, task identity, task significance, autonomy, feedback, and motivating potential score. The table also reflects the motivating potential score (MPS) for each of the research studies.

DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSIONS

The null hypothesis proposed, “there are no significant differences between the U.S. and Non-U.S. countries in terms of cultural influences on companies in both samples based on data generated from JDS results”. To test this hypothesis, the researchers performed a one-factor ANOVA to determine the variation between the subgroups. The results are shown in Table 4. Since the analysis the F value of 7.669 was larger than the F critical of 1.766, the researchers rejected the null hypothesis and concluded there is a statistically significant difference between the U.S. and Non-U.S. companies.

The alternative hypothesis proposed, “there are significant differences between the U.S. and Non-U.S. countries in terms of cultural influences on companies in both samples based on data generated from JDS results”. To test this hypothesis, the researchers then performed an

analysis of variance for both the U.S. and Non-U.S. companies; the results for the U.S. companies are displayed in Table 5 and for the Non-U.S. companies in Table 6. The researchers found there was a significant difference in the two groups. The largest variance was between the retail company in the U.S. and the bank in Nicaragua. The test of the independent groups found the F score was significant. The overall variance for the U.S. was 1.18 and Non-U.S. was 1.06 The F score was $1.18/1.06=1.113$, meaning there is a statistically significant difference between the U.S. and Non-U.S. companies, allowing validation for the theory that culture or possible gender is the reason for the variances. Therefore, the alternative hypothesis was accepted.

Figure 1: Discussion of Two Multi-National Companies

	US	Non-US	VARIANCE
Skill Variety	4.460	3.916	.544
Task Identity	4.250	4.069	.181
Task Significance	4.590	3.609	.981
Autonomy	4.300	3.887	.413
Feedback	4.050	3.747	.303
MPS	109.472	56.291	53.181

Figure 1 evaluated two different multi-national companies. One survey was completed in the United States, and the other one was done in Guatemala. The US Company was a retail company, and the non-US was a manufacturing company. The researchers thought it would be interesting to look at two multi-national companies, and survey one operation in the United States and the other one outside the US. Even though, both are based in the United States, the researchers found statistically significance difference in the scores. Once again, the researchers believe these are due to culture.

Table 5: ANOVA: ONE-Factor Test for US Companies

SUMMARY

<i>Groups</i>	<i>Count</i>	<i>Sum</i>	<i>Average</i>	<i>Variance</i>
Bank	5	18.8617	3.77234	0.206293
Police	5	20.42	4.084	0.14803
Easy Living	5	19.69	3.938	0.09197
Hospital	5	19.34	3.868	0.19027
Retail	5	24.65	4.93	0.41755
Manufacturing	5	22.88	4.576	0.32668
				1.380793

ANOVA

<i>Source of Variation</i>	<i>SS</i>	<i>df</i>	<i>MS</i>	<i>F</i>	<i>P-value</i>	<i>F crit</i>
Between Groups	5.24663	5	1.049326	4.559667	0.004595	2.620654
Within Groups	5.523172	24	0.230132			
Total	10.7698	29				

Table 6: ANOVA: ONE-Factor Test for Non-US Companies

ANOVA: Single Factor

SUMMARY

<i>Groups</i>	<i>Count</i>	<i>Sum</i>	<i>Average</i>	<i>Variance</i>
Column 1	5	15.89	3.178	0.19167
Column 2	5	16.35769	3.271538	0.144535
Column 3	5	18.35	3.67	0.08925
Column 4	5	18.82	3.764	0.01173
Column 5	5	18.68	3.736	0.17978
Column 6	5	18.26	3.652	0.06737
Column 7	5	18.96	3.792	0.19017
Column 8	5	16.55	3.31	0.06385
Column 9	5	17.79	3.558	0.05202
Column 10	5	17.07004	3.414008	0.018229
Column 11	5	17.23742	3.447483	0.018587
Column 12	5	19.22796	3.845591	0.030526
				1.057717

ANOVA

<i>Source of Variation</i>	<i>SS</i>	<i>df</i>	<i>MS</i>	<i>F</i>	<i>P-value</i>	<i>F crit</i>
Between Groups	2.768011	11	0.251637	2.854874	0.005887	1.99458
Within Groups	4.230868	48	0.088143			
Total	6.998879	59				

The researchers concluded their research work with suggestions for future research and policy implications.

SUGGESTIONS FOR FUTURE RESEARCH

The present study could be replicated in other countries for comparative purposes. Cultural variables or gender may contribute to the variations in the MPS scores for United States' companies and those in other countries. Of particular interest is the role that task significance may play in determining the overall MPS. It is suggested that additional research be conducted in other countries as a way to help companies redesign work in today's increasingly competitive, global environment. In addition, research could also be conducted in more professional job categories at both for-profit and not-for-profit organizations.

Another suggestion is to include Hofstede's Cultural Dimension theory (Hofstede, 1979) in this research. The six dimensions are power distance, individualism versus collectivism, masculinity versus femininity, uncertainty avoidance, long-term orientation versus short-term orientation and indulgence versus restraint (Hofstede, 1979). The statistically significant relationship found in this research between the U.S. and Non-U.S. samples may have a relationship to what Hofstede found in his research. This would be one suggestion for future research. Additionally, future research for the indulgence dimension is recommended, as well as, research regarding generational differences in varying geographical and organizational cultures.

IMPLICATIONS

The researchers had several policy implications derived from their research. As motivation goes up, productivity increases, error rates go down, tardiness, absenteeism, and turnover are all reduced. The researchers have, in each study, determined that with the international scores on the motivation factors there is a statically significant difference. In each case, international scores were lower on all dimensions than domestic scores. If international companies can determine the reason for these lower scores, motivation can be greatly improved, and all of the factors mentioned above will improve, along with increased profits. The researchers do believe the differences in international and non-international scores are due to culture, and Hofstede's Cultural Dimensions Theory appears to explain this difference.

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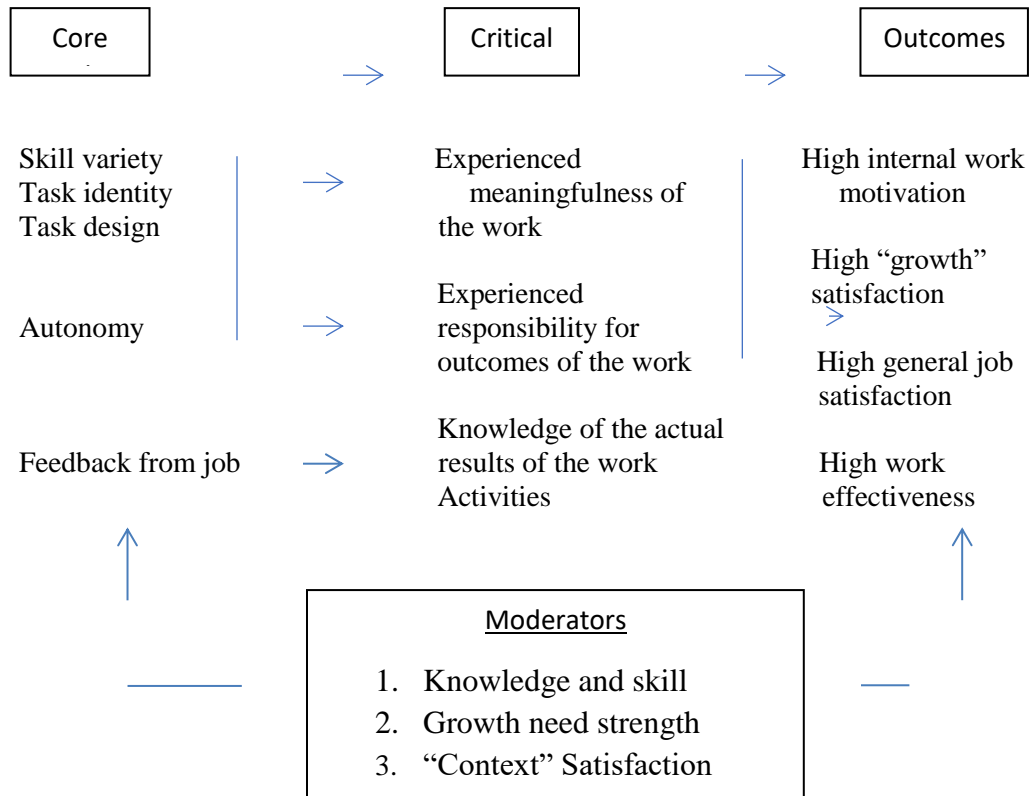
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APPENDIX I

The Hackman and Oldham Model of Job Redesign and Motivation



Motivating potential score (MPS) =

$$\left[\frac{\text{Skill variety} + \text{Task identity} + \text{Task significance}}{3} \right] \times \text{Autonomy} \times \text{Feedback}.$$

CRITICAL THINKING IN THE INTERNATIONAL WESTERN CLASSROOM: CROSS-CULTURAL DILEMMAS

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ABSTRACT

This paper is an attempt to sensitize staff and faculty to the importance of understanding the cross-cultural dilemmas for international students and their teachers in business studies which involve critical thinking. Critical thinking is often presented as a generic skill, crucial to success at the undergraduate and postgraduate level at universities; however, definitions of the concept vary. Critical thinking can therefore only be understood by placing it back into the context in which it is used. This disadvantages many international students, who often have not yet acquired the cultural competencies necessary to read the context, and who are unfamiliar with the concept of critical thinking as a learning experience.

INTRODUCTION

This paper is an attempt to sensitize staff to the importance of understanding the cross-cultural dilemmas for international students and their teachers in both undergraduate and postgraduate studies which involve critical thinking. Some partial solutions are discussed, such as a better comparative cross-cultural approach. On this basis, new insights from previously ‘silent voices’ can generate new theories and possibly ‘paradigms’ from all over the global world. Crucial in this process remains the ongoing dialogue between self-critical participants in a circle of continuous interpretation and re-interpretation of their own understandings.

Critical thinking is often presented as a generic skill, crucial to success at the undergraduate and postgraduate level at universities; however, definitions of the concept vary. Critical thinking can therefore only be understood by placing it back into the context in which it is used. This disadvantages many international students, who often have not yet acquired the cultural competencies necessary to read the context, and who are unfamiliar with the concept of critical thinking as a learning experience. There are various cross-cultural issues to absorb to balance and match the expectations of the Western educators and the non-Western students so that the context of enhanced performance is fair to the students and faithful to the standards for which they are striving. As we shall see, the neglect of these issues can contribute to a lost opportunity for all parties.

This paper then seeks to highlight key aspects of the cross-cultural dilemma of teaching critical thinking in the international classroom. Therefore, the following questions arise:

- Is it appropriate that Western paradigms dominate international studies?
- How does the predominant theoretical and practical knowledge apply to non-Western contexts?
- How can there be a genuine two-way flow of cultural exchange?
- What do the items addressed in the previous questions mean for international curricula?

PARADIGMS

In Europe, positivists continue a materialistic approach to natural phenomena and universal logic, a heritage from the European Enlightenment. Hemmingway (1999) adds the aspect of ‘values’ to the paradigm concept. Values result from the belief sets of a society. In this respect, paradigms are not neutral and values are a post-Enlightenment commodification often confused with virtues (Beson, 2018).

Whereas cultural differences might be seen as a rich and colorful source of information which needs to be scrutinized very carefully, the instrumental attitude reduces them to problems to be solved for people who are made victims in advance. There is a sense in which a new type of ‘professionalism’ is needed. As Featherstone (1990) indicates: “This [professionalism], plus the necessity of moving backwards and forwards between different cultures, various imperfect proto-‘third cultures’ necessitate new types of flexible, personal controls, dispositions and means of orientation, in effect a new type of habitus” (p. 3).

Of more immediate interest is how these paradigms affect concepts of critical thinking. Table 1 sets out some of the key issues in a taxonomy modified form (Davies, Martin, Ronald, & Barnett (2015). It is set out in this way so that readers can relate some of the major issues to the

cross-cultural context and some familiar educational terms, rather than try to define critical thinking in any depth.

Table 1: Critical Thinking Taxonomy

Lower Level	Higher Level	Complex	Deep
Interpreting	Analyzing	Evaluating	Meta-cognition
Identifying	Synthesizing	Verbal Reasoning	Self-regulation
Clarifying	Predicting	Inferring	Applied Epistemology
Functional Literacy 1-3 Galeazzi, Mchael,,Krawcyk-Bernotas, and Shannon (2017)	Functional Literacy 4-6 Galeazzi, Mchael,,Krawcyk-Bernotas, and Shannon (2017)	Problem Solving	Critical Reflection

OME NON-WESTERN COMPARISONS?

Whether in academic science, professional knowledge, or fields of discourse, Western outlooks dominate the landscape, but are there non-Western cultural approaches that can reframe our trusted paradigms? As this question raises the issue of Western dominance and pretensions, it is particularly provoking. Are there any opposing or additional non-Western approaches coming from the old cultural systems of India, China, Japan, or from Africa, or South and Central America? The task of answering this question requires extensive research, which has not yet been conducted. We must instead be content with a first superficial overview (Bor & Van der Leeuw, 2013), outlined in the following paragraphs.

In India and Pakistan there have been several influential thinkers. Aurobindo (1872-1950) wrote about evolution and cyclic dynamic change according to a Hegelian model while building upon the Hindu tradition. Mohammed Iqbal (1876-1938) wrote about the development of metaphysics. Much of this work is embedded in a politically changing society and redefining the individual self within a changing cultural and religious context. The same can be found in the work of thinkers from the Arabic Islamic world, such as Sayyid Qoetb (1903-1966) on religious sovereignty and Ali Sjari'atie (1933-1977), who wrestled with new perspectives on religion and the state.

From India comes a 'Vedantic perspective', which builds upon traditional Hindu philosophy (Chanradhar, 2007). In it, leisure is not a teleological concept to be striven for, but rather is found here and now, within ourselves. Leisure is the freedom from the limitations and

anxiety felt when we find ourselves back in a ‘consumptive society in which nothing is meaningful’ (Chanradhar, 2007). Leisure in the ‘Vedantic vision’ can only be understood in terms of individual bliss and joy, or pleasurable, favorable space (Chanradhar, 2007). The message of this viewpoint seems to be: tourists stay home and visit the unknown areas of your own true self.

China’s long-standing totalitarian regime has pervaded and restricted scientific thinking. The philosopher Kang Youwei (1858-1927) was a Confucianist who promoted radical equality, and a global State without differences in class, races and gender. Today he is only a silenced voice.

In Japan, under the influence of German philosophy, Nakamura Hajime (1921-1999) developed a comparative philosophy on parallels between Eastern and Western traditions in logic while Nishida (1870-1945) showed a strong influence of William James. Nishida tried to give a rational basis to Zen when he promoted that one could view the historic world as a creative world of individuals. Kuki Shuzo (1888-1941) who attended lectures of Rickert, Heidegger, Husserl, Sartre, did a lot of work on Japanese aesthetics and phenomenology.

To Western thinkers, the influence of Eastern thinking on Western perspectives from a paradigmatic viewpoint or with regard to social theories, which enable different approaches to the cross-cultural confrontations in knowledge, is often not convincing. The main topics of non-Western thinkers, who were prominent during the change from traditional to modern societies, revolve around topics such as political and individual emancipation, new religion, the Self versus the State, and new conceptions of the State. There seems to be a gap between the different worlds of thinking. Nevertheless, the challenge is to analyze the tenets of Eastern thinking to discover how these paradigmatic perspectives can help us to better understand the changes that have taken place within these other societies and explain their consumer behavior patterns.

The non-Western scientific and philosophical fields represent societies and religions in the face of global modernization and decolonization. Hence, the distinction between modernity and the post-modernism paradigm seems extremely relevant if the host institution is to benefit from the cultural perspectives of the international student. Notwithstanding an often-uttered claim that ‘oriental thinking is less logical, less linear, and less teleological’ than Western thinking, it can be assumed that contemporary non-Western societies are now predominantly occupied with a simple, modernity paradigm. An intriguing issue for further study is whether the post-modern perspective has any foundation in non-Western thinking.

FROM KNOWLEDGE TO POWER

The gap between non-Western and Western knowledge is not a neutral one. Foucault states that power is inherent in knowledge (Wearing, 1998). It is not so much that we suppose that only Western-based power dominates non-Western regions, but that Western-based, non-Western modernity thinking also dominates indigenous groups of non-Western people. The paradigms adopted create power relations by non-Western experts for non-Western citizens.

Said designed the concept of ‘orientalism’, to highlight the effects of this power-knowledge field of the West on the non-Western world and the subsequent non-Western resistance to this stigma (Edward, 2003). Decades ago, Stuart Hall also related this resistance in our globalizing world with its varying and often de-territorialized networks to a new discursive field he called ‘post-colonialism’, where all parties go through the phases of colonial relationships, are awakened by their frustrations, and build up a new way of understanding the gradually-developing cultural

networks around them. Hall pleaded for an 'internationalisation' of cultural studies due to its apparent Anglo-Saxon domination (Hall & du Gay, 1996). The Birmingham Centre for Cultural Studies confirmed this image during its initial phase by claiming a 'universal,' but mainly British, approach to cultural studies. Accordingly, when speaking of the internationalization of cultural studies, it is important to integrate the different academic traditions into a dialogical situation as per Gadamer Grondin, Jean, (2003). From within the varying networks that cross the globe, this internationalized dialogue might generate various forms of (self-reflexive) knowledge from different traditions but within the limits of their more frequent, but still partially understood, encounters.

EMIC AND ETIC

Awareness of fundamental differences between an etic (outsider) perspective on local cultures and the emic (insider) perspective of the locals, has been a goal of Western scientists since anthropology unveiled the concept of cultural relativism. However, the etic perspective is not only the eye of the outsider, but also the paradigm-trained eye of the scientist studying other humans as objects. In this debate, much of the non-Western world has been accused of a lack of care for environmental consequences in business practices focusing on the use of natural resources and profit maximization.

One such example is Bali where the whole organization of its temples, compounds and other buildings has been built with a holy distinction between the kaja-side and the kelod-side. The kaja-side is the centre of the holy Balinese world, which is the Gunung Agung in the north-east. This mountain is the highest and holiest mountain in Bali and all buildings have their most important areas such as their private temples or their living rooms situated in this direction. Conversely, the toilet and the garbage-rooms are situated at the kelod-side, which is the seaside. The consequence of this is that on some Balinese beaches tourists will find garbage. This is not because the Balinese do not care about nature, but because they are less concerned about the beauty of the seaside. For Balinese people, the mountains at the kaja-side are much more beautiful. The problem has emerged since Western tourists arrived on the island and the character of the garbage changed from organic garbage to beer tins and plastic products. The Balinese did not have the appropriate means to deal with this kind of Western garbage, despite the fact that they revel in their nature more than most Westerners could imagine.

How do we find a way to consider this type of knowledge in a post-colonial context? Is there a non-Western scientific 'outsider' perspective or theory? There is no conclusive answer. One way to access this type of knowledge, however, is to enter a dialogue where all parties involved participate. This provides an alternative to the monologue of the nostalgic anthropologist who searched to gratify his colonial needs by idealizing faraway, agrarian, non-Western cultures, untouched by modern alienation.

Beginning with a Western perspective poses the problem of interpreting non-Western knowledge in Western scientific terms. This can only be done by first using an emic approach to understand the non-Western knowledge in all its richness. Only then can this translate into understanding from an etic approach in Western categories. The same holds true of the non-Western perspective. How is Western business knowledge in its full richness understood (emic) and translated in non-Western categories? The hermeneutic circle can be closed when Westerners

and non-Westerners are involved in a serious game of self-reflexive, mutual interpretations in this 'hall of mirrors' where they are reflecting each other's understandings. Fortunately, the school where these issues are being investigated is blessed by the presence of staff who are engaged in research on the practical consequences of these very issues, some of which flow from questions in the next section.

THE CLASSROOM: TEACHERS AND STUDENTS

The classroom can be a metaphor for the entire academic community. How, then, do we as teachers take into account the relevance of Western and non-Western perspectives? How do we mobilize non-Western expertise to share insights? The first step is to provide a means to exchange backgrounds and perspectives. The next step is to utilize international students so that there is a genuine cultural exchange for mutual enrichment. For many international students, an important motivation for getting a degree is to acquire status in the administrative political system. A problem when training non-Western students, however, lies in the variety of their educational backgrounds. Depending on, for example, previous colonial histories or other political conditions, the students may perceive enormous power distances between teachers and students (Hofstede, Pedersen, 2002). and instructors may perceive (through Western eyes) a lack of critical analysis.

Within the framework of the international classroom, it seems relevant to look for intensive experiences of foreign students and teachers that would make some of the self-evident background assumptions of their life-world debatable. From psychological research, expatriate instructors recognize how intense the culture shock can be and how many questions it raises. However, for our purposes the psychological consequences are less interesting than the earthquake of a life-world that shakes loose some firmly anchored knowledge from different (cultural) perspectives.

The translation of gender-relations, as discussed in Western, feminist science, would be inadequate in a non-Western world. What is required is an entrance to the hall of mirrors, in which a pre-understanding of each other's life-world could be interpreted and re-interpreted until better understandings replace the original notions. The exploration of these 'life-world-shocks' is a good starting point for discovering points of conflict between cultural images, such as these different conceptions of men and women. In a self-reflexive way, all parties involved can combine an emic with an etic approach, imagining what it means to take the role of the other person and relate the conclusions to existing discussions in scientific communities. Bringing these observations forward in the ongoing dialogue between equal partners might improve our post-colonial episteme in the specific business study-area. The international classroom, therefore, can be used to generalize this ongoing dialogical process on a global scale, providing insight between various voices that react constantly in a reflective manner.

CONCLUSION

When researchers enter the world of cross-cultural understanding, there can only be a process of growing cultural insights when all the partners involved in the dialogue speak back. In business metaphors, the polyphonic model of Clifford, in which there is not one (logocentric) megaphone which dictates the possibility of any knowledge, but where each voice is integrated into a composition, provides a structure for this dialogue (Clifford, 1988).

The original silent voices in international education can lead us to the embrace of knowledge from non-Western cultures in today's global world (Appadurai, 2001). Crucial in this process remains the ongoing dialogue between self-critical participants who enter a circle of interpretation to include continuous interpretation and re-interpretation of their own understandings. Research is needed to investigate the experiences of a cross-life-world-shock and its consequences for business knowledge within the international community of business and management students and its applications in actual classrooms (Carroll & Ryan, 2005).

The critical depth of business and management education involves not only specific skills but also an enrichment of human relationships and interactions with the understanding of others through their language, history and culture. The school where these issues are being investigated encourages creative thinking to deal critically with subjective, complex and imperfect information. The presence of international students can add an extra layer through understanding other cultures. This shows up in a nuanced appreciation of effective communication, a realisation of the ramifications of history, analytic empathy for human behaviour, so that graduates of a comprehensive education in and through the performing arts have a range of skills demanded by employers in many fields not limited to the business and management industries (Terras, Priego, Liu, Rockwellm Sinclair, Hensler, & Thomas, 2013).

RECOMMENDATIONS

Institutions of higher education need to understand the critical importance and need to provide culturally inclusive learning environments. These can be described as classrooms, physical or online learning spaces, where both staff, faculty and students appreciate, recognise and embrace diversity as a means to enrich and add additional value to the learning experience for all.

Recommended approached could include the active discouragement of class incivilities, encouragement of open, honest and respectful class exchanges and discussions that are not subject to gender, ethnicity, religious, socio-economic, sexual orientation or political beliefs. These could be used as a means to develop personal contact and facilitation of starting an effective cross-cultural dialogue. Faculty and staff could take the lead by introducing students with some information on their teaching style and instructional methods by introducing students to their respective cultural backgrounds and share some stories of previous experiences, successes or failiures, of cross-cultural experiences and what are the lessons learned from that experience.

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