

Chapter 12

Exploring Business Community Engagement With Educational Institutions Supporting Future Business Graduates

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ABSTRACT

The evolution of technology enables educational institutions to provide innovative ways to support students' learning, and as a result, there is an increasing trend in adopting business innovations such as e-learning solutions and online learning platforms. An empirical study was conducted to explore the effect of using Moodle and Facebook on business students' motivation to learn. It hypothesized that students will be more motivated to use social media Facebook over Moodle as a learning tool in tertiary education. Participants were students enrolled on the first year of a business program. Participants were given access to both the Moodle online learning platform and Facebook to use throughout the first semester of 2017. Lecturers posted questions on Moodle and Facebook on a weekly basis to which participants were asked to provide responses. Findings from this study confirmed the validity of using social media in tertiary education. Implications for the business community engagement with educational institutions are discussed.

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INTRODUCTION

Developing links with the business community is fundamentally important to business programmes in tertiary education. Through such links, many businesses provide substantial and constructive support to educational institutions. In particular, such relationships can support the delivery of educational services, enrich the curriculum and enhance student learning. Indeed, in the evolving and flexible-learning tertiary environment, viable and effective practice alternatives to face-to-face teaching need to be explored.

There are many potential benefits for the interaction between educational institutions and the business community, these range from enhancing students' learning by providing a wide range of tools and resources that support quality teaching and effective curriculum management, to creating opportunities to explore innovative technology and processes for the development of students' independent learning and the enhancement of their employability in the business realm. However, it is important to note that this relationship is successful only if the services offered by the business community to educational institutions are proven useful to students. The interaction between educational institutions and the business community should be performed at the level that adopts direct communication, information exchange, and joint projects between the parties, as a result, the educational services provided by the business community to educational institutions will be more likely to equip business students with skills that meet the employer's requirements.

In our modern environment, it is necessary to find new approaches to business community engagement for educational initiatives. Educational institutions are encouraged to provide innovative ways to support students' learning and as a result, there is an increasing trend in adopting business innovations such as e-learning solutions and online learning platforms. The maturity of the internet catalyses the development of these platforms and student learning behaviour. New avenues are now available for teachers to deliver curriculum and facilitate learning, so much so that online learning platforms are becoming important in teaching and learning (Volery & Lord, 2000). Barnes, Marateo and Ferris (2007) argued that today's students report being easily bored with traditional learning methods and need more varied forms of communication. Similarly, Glenn (2000) noted that today's students flourish in interactive learning environments.

The maturity of the internet also facilitates the development of different social or community services which are widely accepted by students. Lam (2012) posits that Facebook has become part of a routine for people nowadays. Students use Facebook frequently to communicate and interact with friends and classmates (Adam, 2008), and are willing to spend hours on services such as Facebook, Instagram, and Twitter, rather than the online learning platforms (Zhao, Sherri & Jason, 2008). Although

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