



SEMINAR & LECTURE, 10-14 SEP, UHZ, PEJA

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STEPS

**Practices for students' engagement
Enriching the learning experience in managerial courses**

WP3.2 Open lecture

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Co-funded by the
Erasmus+ Programme
of the European Union

Project number: 598963-EPP-1-2018-1-AL-EPPKA2-CBHE-JP

Students' engagement (1)

Students' engagement contains three components (Fredricks et al., 2004):

- **Behavioral or physical engagement** – the idea of participation in an activity and includes the student completing an assignment or attending classes.
- **Emotional engagement** – refers to students' affective responses or feeling towards teachers, peers, the course and learning
- **Cognitive engagement** – refers to the task-specific thinking that a student employs while undertaking in an activity.

- All three components are dynamically interrelated within the individual.
- They are not isolated processes.



Students' engagement (2)

Zepke and Leach (2010) developed a conceptual organizer with two features:

- the main **research perspectives** in the engagement literature
- **ten proposals for action** that emerged from the synthesis of the literature

Research perspectives	Proposals for action
Motivation and agency (Engaged students are intrinsically motivated and want to exercise their agency)	1. Enhance students' self-belief 2. Enable students to work autonomously, enjoy learning relationships with others and feel they are competent to achieve their own objectives
Transactional engagement (Students and teachers engage with each other)	3. Recognize that teaching and teachers are central to engagement 4. Create learning that is active, collaborative and fosters learning relationships 5. Create educational experiences for students that are challenging, enriching and extend their academic abilities
Institutional support (Institutions provide an environment conducive to learning)	6. Ensure institutional cultures are welcoming to students from diverse backgrounds 7. Invest in a variety of support services 8. Adapt to changing student expectations
Active citizenship (Students and institutions work together to enable challenges to social beliefs and practices)	9. Enable students to become active citizens 10. Enable students to develop their social and cultural capital

Everyday engagement with digital technology in university

Henderson et al. (2015) mapped the **digital technology usefulness** in relation to students' university studies.

- Organising and managing the logistics of studying
- Flexibility of place and location
- Time saving
- Researching information
- Reviewing, replaying and revising
- Supporting basic tasks
- Communicating vs. collaborating
- Augmenting university learning materials
- Seeing information in different ways
- Cost saving
- Gauging a sense of progress



Development of effective persuasive technologies

Persuasive Technologies describe technologies that are designed for the primary purpose of **changing users' behaviour, attitude, and thoughts** about an issue, without using coercion or deception.

According to Fogg (2009), the development of effective persuasive technologies involves:

- Target a simple behavior
- Know the target audience
- Discover obstacle to target behavior
- Use technology channel familiar to users
- Identify appropriate persuasive technology examples
- Emulate effective examples
- Assess and repeat fast
- Expand on success



The role of study burnout and engagement

Salanova et al. (2010) investigated the mediating role played by students' well-being (burnout and engagement) in the relationship between perceived performance obstacles and facilitators, and future academic performance.

- **Engagement relates directly to performance**, which offers the possibility of enhancing engagement and boosting performance through increasing facilitators or decreasing obstacles.
- Success breeds success!
- There is **no evidence of effect of burnout on future performance**. However, burnout relates to the presence of more obstacles and of less facilitators.

Engagement in online courses (1)

Dixson (2010) argues that:

- online instruction can be as **effective** as traditional instruction
 - online students report learning more and spending more time on tasks
- online courses need **cooperative/collaborative (active) learning**
 - Using collaborative activities, group discussions, and other forms of student-student interaction have proven their effectiveness. Group work, regular assignments, and solid feedback are needed for success.
- online courses need **strong instructor presence**
 - The ‘social presence’ of instructors is important so that students feel connected to the instructor and other students in the course.
- Active learning assignments (e.g. discussion forums) may serve the development students’ **‘social presence’**.
- Instructors should consider learning assignments that engage students **with the content and with each other**.
- Students working together on **group projects**, doing **peer review** of one another’s papers, interacting within a **discussion forum** on a particular topic, are likely to feel more **engaged** in the course.

Engagement in online courses (2)

Factors behind the popularity of some popular MOOCs (in order of importance) and corresponding strategies: (Hew, 2016):

Factors	Strategies
Problem-centric learning with clear expositions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Focusing on problem-solving rather than teaching a topic/concept in isolation
Instructor accessibility and passion	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Instructor accessibility • Instructor enthusiasm • Instructor humor
Active learning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Projects, writing assignments • Machine-graded quiz • Peer review
Peer interaction	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Augmenting student assessments with a social approach • Live discussions
Using helpful course resources	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Catering to participants' learning needs

Every Rose Has Its Thorn (Michaels, DeVille, Dall & Rockett, 1988)

Some food for thought (tastier than Petros' food)

- The Dean of San Jose State University **attempted to integrate a MOOC version of "Justice"** (a famous course from Harvard professor Michael Sandel) into the curriculum.
- Professors in the philosophy department at San Jose State University **refused to teach the course** and wrote a letter to Sandel saying they do not want to enable what they see as a push to "replace professors, dismantle departments, and provide a diminished education for students in public universities."
- Sandel's answer: *I strongly believe that online courses are no substitute for the personal engagement of teachers with students, especially in the humanities... My goal is simply to make an educational resource freely available--a resource that faculty colleagues should be free to use in whole or in part, or not at all, as they see fit. The worry that the widespread use of online courses will damage departments in public universities facing budgetary pressures is a legitimate concern that deserves serious debate, at edX and throughout higher education. The last thing I want is for my online lectures to be used to undermine faculty colleagues at other institutions.*



Case study research (1)

Harrison et al. (2017) analysed the qualitative case study approaches developed by Yin (2014), Stake (1995) and Merriam (1998):

- **Yin: Realist-postpositivist** - Yin (2014) conceptualizes case study research as a form of social science. Postpositivism is evident in how he defines "case study as a form of empirical inquiry" Yin himself describes his approach to case study as using a "realist perspective" and focuses on maintaining objectivity in the methodological processes within the design.
- **Merriam: Pragmatic constructivist** - Merriam (1998) maintains a constructivist approach to case study research, whereby the researcher assumes that reality is constructed intersubjectively through meanings and understandings developed socially and experientially.
- **Stake: Relativist—constructivist/interpretivist** - Stake (1995, 2006) has an approach to case study research that is qualitative and closely aligned with a constructivist and interpretivist orientation. While having a disciplined approach to the process and acknowledging that case study can use quantitative methods, STAKE's approach is underpinned by a strong motivation for discovering meaning and understanding of experiences in context.

Case study research (2)

The fundamental elements of case study research (Harrison et al., 2017):

- **The case**
 - Object of the case study identified as the entity of interest or unit of analysis
 - Program, individual, group, social situation, organization, event, phenomena, or process
- **A bounded system**
 - Bounded by time, space, and activity
 - Encompasses a system of connections
 - Bounding applies frames to manage contextual variables
 - Boundaries between the case and context can be blurred
- **Studied in context**
 - Studied in its real life setting or natural environment
 - Context is significant to understanding the case
 - Contextual variables include political, economic, social, cultural, historical, and/or organizational factors

Case study research (3)

The fundamental elements of case study research (Harrison et al., 2017) (continued):

- **In-depth study**
 - Chosen for intensive analysis of an issue
 - Fieldwork is intrinsic to the process of the inquiry
 - Subjectivity a consistent thread—varies in depth and engagement depending on the philosophical orientation of the research, purpose, and methods
 - Reflexive techniques pivotal to credibility and research process
- **Selecting the case**
 - Based on the purpose and conditions of the study
 - Involves decisions about people, settings, events, phenomena, social processes
 - Scope: single, within case and multiple case sampling
 - Broad: capture ordinary, unique, varied and/or accessible aspects
 - Methods: specified criteria, methodical and purposive; replication logic: theoretical or literal replication

Case study research (4)

The fundamental elements of case study research (Harrison et al., 2017) (continued) :

- **Multiple sources of evidence**

- Multiple sources of evidence for comprehensive depth and breadth of inquiry
- Methods of data collection: interviews, observations, focus groups, artifact and document review, questionnaires and/or surveys
- Methods of analysis: vary and depend on data collection methods and cases; need to be systematic and rigorous
- Triangulation highly valued and commonly employed

- **Case study design**

- Descriptive, exploratory, explanatory, illustrative, evaluative
- Single or multiple cases
- Embedded or holistic
- Particularistic, heuristic, descriptive
- Intrinsic, instrumental, and collective

Case studies and problem-solving

He (2015) introduced an approach of 4 steps for building problem-solving skills in management classes with the use of case studies:

- **Identifying problem** - Students are asked to identify one primary problem in the case that the organization or manager needs to solve immediately
- **Diagnosing causes** - Having identified a major problem, now students need to find out what have caused the problem.
- **Prescribing alternatives** - Students subsequently need to think thoroughly about alternative solutions to the specific problem identified and its causes diagnosed.
- **Making a decision and its implementation plan** - The most critical part of the entire problem-solving process is to make a choice among alternatives and develop subsequent action plan in details, despite the ambiguity, uncertainty, and risk of the decision situation.

A final note - case studies for food and agribusiness management courses

- International Food and Agribusiness Management Review (open access) devoted a special issue on “Teaching case studies in food and agribusiness management”.
- Several web sites and other journals provide many case studies of high quality, which are publicly available.
- A good practice is to gradually develop a portfolio of case studies and link them to specific theoretical parts of the curriculum and specific learning outcomes.



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