



SURVEY OF BUSINESS FIELD CREATIVITY AND BUSINESS INNOVATIONS STUDY PROGRAM STUDENTS

Introduction:

The purpose of this study is to explore the overall students' experiences, motivation and challenges during their study at VIKO Faculty of Business Management, we are focussing on Creativity and Business Innovations CI19E group here.

Following four dimensions will be studied by the group.

1. Overall association of studies at the Business Management Faculty
2. Students motivation during the studies
3. Challenges during the studies
4. Challenges during and placement & thesis

The survey was conducted by lecturers of Business Innovation department Aušra Turčinskaitė-Balčiūnienė, Vaiva Chockevičiūtė, data was analyzed and the report prepared by Muhammad Sohail, lecturer of International Business department.

Due to COVID 19, this specific group had spent a lot of studies time online, and according to Jagers and Xu 2016 studies, online classes on average demonstrate lower retention and success rate compared to traditional classes. New digital skills and technology played key role to transform traditional classrooms into a Hybrid mode of study (Kristen et. al. 2021).

The literature makes it clear that students largely build their perceptions of faculty engagement from communication of faculty through email and course learning management system (Jagers and Xu 2016).

The literature regarding online class design has identified several course features that benefit students, including clear expectations, instructor-created materials and a predictable course structure (Evans, Robertson, and Dyer, 2017).

Study Design:

Improving module education outcomes is a complex and ongoing process. An important component in addressing the needs of and challenges faced by education students is understanding their behaviors, motivations, and experiences. To gather this experiential information, focus group was conducted face to face in June 2022 by the Faculty of Business Management.

Recordings and transcriptions of the focus groups were reviewed and coded for common themes and used MAXQDA software for analysis purpose.

Software used: MS Teams, MAXQDA (Ver. 22.2.0)

Research Questions:

1. What associates for students with studies in the faculty of Business Management?
2. What motivated students the most during study years?
3. What was student internship experience?
4. What was graduation thesis preparation experience?



Research Methodology:

This was a qualitative study that used focus groups to explore students' perceptions of the overall studies experience. Focus groups provide participants the opportunity to reflect on their experiences, and they provide richer data than can be gathered through a survey or student outcomes. Focus groups can reveal experiences and possibilities previously unidentified by researchers; for this reason, they are an excellent place to establish a line of inquiry or contextualize existing data.

Target Group:

Final year students from Creativity and Business Innovation group. Who are meeting following requirements.

1. Nearly completion of their studies and completed final thesis too
2. Having valid students' enrolment on faculty's Academic Information Systems AIS

Focus Group Key Findings:

1. For participants, over all studies process was "fairly active and good". Though, COVID 19 (global pandemic) itself was a big shift of studies from campus to online. Participants enrolled in this studies group after completion of secondary schools. Participants observed that in some courses, faculty offered them well resources material or equipment's.

"I'd say the faculty did the best with what was available"

Participants were down with the COVID 19 situation when they supposed to travel to the Portugal but due to travelling restrictions, they could not.

2. For participants, problem solving and knowledgeable discussion during the lectures are core motivated factors. But also, participants realized that students should take their responsibility too. Other than that, what "actual skills" learned during the studies time. Due to COVID 19 restrictions and online lectures, participants are also de motivated.

"that was very difficult at the beginning to kind of motivation again to keep studying"

Participants are also highlighted more interesting ideas in the classrooms but for future point of view, participants are not planned anything yet ideas into reality, idea execution will be once graduated. Some subjects, CSR or Business Ethics gave a better understanding but Sales or Creativity... confused them, for example, in Creativity subject, they refer specific exercises to study corruption in their home countries.

3. Taught courses could be more dynamics and engaged centric with students, but students admitted that course participants can be more motivated themselves to engage positively in the courses.

4. In relation with internship, both professional and final internships are highlighted a good asset for course participants, but course participants had missing the correct information on time, especially, when students had practices abroad.

Though, professional practice was done during the lockdown time but it was a bit hard to find a good place for practice.



“And let's say this internship overall was good”

5. Performing final internship and writing up a graduate thesis was challenging for participants, especially when performing a full-time internship. It shows that students need more understanding and knowledge on thesis data analysis and project part. How to design a good questionnaire or participants got first time come interaction with sample size calculation during the thesis analysis chapter. Other than that, graduate students are looking for extra time to choose the thesis theme.

“Because we had to choose our field business as well before we even knew where placements would be, so that it's I just didn't understand how can I choose what you want to write my decision if I don't know what internship will want to do and then as well choosing the topic before I can start at the internships is again”

6. Instead, to visiting faculty every day, participants are interested to actually do something with every day, full fill some tasks and feel progress too.

“Most the best part is when you really feel like you have actually something to consider. And where you feel that you definitely did learn something new, or that's your perception of things was changed in some way.”

7. During the module study, rather a group work, participants perception is to work individually, such work could be more motivated for students as compare to team work, when especially some students are not so much motivated or contributing the team work. Individual student can visit library and take part in all assignments.

“We never have problems with meeting deadlines and getting together and working, but sometimes when I've had to work with people which is not really talk. Finding the time to work, it's very difficult, especially as ... said, the other person is not as motivated to perform well.”

8. Overall, participants were generally candid about instances when they weren't motivated, and some participants directly linked that lack of motivation to not being successful in classes. Good communication between lecturer, class fellow and punctuality could help them to be more success.

“Students to be communicative, talk to your course mates. Make connections. It's important and talk to your lecturers. Also, important.”

Suggestions.

1. **Support faculty communications with students.** Participants often perceived lack of information; this perception grew when their questions were met with brief responses from relevant department(s) or professors, comprehensive course guidelines could help to more engaged with study/ practice process.
2. **Foster student communications with professors.** In case if course participants missed the classes, course participants can benefit from member of staff if engaged online actively, the study suggests that Moodle discussion boards can serve as forums for students to resolve logistical or technical issues in the course (Alturki and Ahmed, 2021).



3. **Encourage course structures with weekly assignment deadlines.** Small team assignment with concrete tasks could help students to work to gather and well learn individually for future preparation. This could help them to have experience for final year thesis.
4. **Marketing Research course offer.** For better research and thesis writing up, Marketing Research subject is suggested to offer Creativity and Business Innovation students. Such course could help them to understand the research process, research design, data collection methodology, and analysis process.
5. **Diversity and inclusiveness.** Regarding the success of students' study process and future, faculty could explore different groups' experiences. Students may have varying experiences, challenges, and assets based on age, educational goal, ethnicity, and employment status.

Limitation of this study:

Due to small sample size, focus groups do not necessarily reveal experiences representative of the student population. While they can identify a range of experiences, further inquiry (such as surveys) should be conducted to determine the prevalence of the experiences of focus group participants. This is especially important because focus group participants are more likely to represent extreme viewpoints.

Secondly, Student 1 was occupied most of the conversation, ratio between student 1 and 2 is 51% and 29% respectively.

Reference:

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What's next?

Few points of improvement were noticed after Focus group research. First and for most, the group of students were highly affected by COVID-19 restrictions and sudden shift to online learning. Even though all technical opportunities were provided, student engagement and social interaction during online courses will be discussed as ongoing issue during departmental and interinstitutional meetings. As an additional issue stressful Graduation Thesis preparation period was mentioned. While students named graduation thesis structure and requirements as an additional challenge, bigger attention will be brought in order to incorporate graduation thesis academical requirements into study process during every module.