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Message from the International President

Dear SIEC-ISBE Friends,

Welcome to the 153rd edition of the International Journal for Business Education, formerly known as The Review. Our journal is a peer-reviewed publication for global business educators by global business educators. This journal is published annually. SIEC-ISBE members provide in-depth research articles that can be helpful in the classroom or with administrative responsibilities. Each article, based upon research conducted by our members, adds to the body of knowledge in global business education. As in the past, a brochure for the upcoming conference is included. Additionally, a call for nominations for the office of International President is included as required by our Constitution.

I want to thank Eric Kisling, Ph.D., of the USA Chapter for taking on the task of editor for the past 4 years. I also want to take a moment to thank our reviewers. We had multiple manuscripts submitted this year. The reviewers included: Margaret Erthal, USA; Leszek Preisner, Poland; Marcia Anderson, USA; Maria Evans, Australia; Lila Waldman, USA; Gregg Whyte, USA; Katharina Stoettinger, Austria; and Michaela Stock, Austria. The experience and expertise of the reviewers was beneficial in helping improve the quality of the accepted manuscripts and offering guidance for improvement to those authors whose work was not accepted this year.

Our international conference will be located in Berlin, Germany. The conference hotel, Bonhoeffer Hotel, is famous for its role in the historic events of 1989 and the removal of the Berlin Wall. The conference theme is “Training for Societies in Change” is very appropriate for not only our organization, but also the location of our conference this year. I hope to see you at the 2013 conference and our future conferences as well. Future conferences are planned for the following locations: 2014—Helsinki, Finland, 2015—Poland, 2016—Graz, Austria. We are seeking proposals for conferences for 2017 and beyond.

With warmest SIEC-ISBE regards and until we meet again,

Tamra S. Davis, Ph.D.
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**ELECTION OF
SIEC-ISBE INTERNATIONAL PRESIDENT
2013-2015**

SIEC-ISBE is seeking nominations for the position of **International President**. Individuals interested in being a candidate for the office of International President should send their nomination to the Permanent Office no later than **31 May 2013**. Candidates for the SIEC-ISBE International President must be a member in good standing of their national chapter and have the following qualifications:

- a) knowledge and experience of SIEC-ISBE and of Business Education,
- b) active involvement in SIEC-ISBE conferences and activities,
- c) ability to relate well to members from different countries,
- d) ability to chair meetings of the Executive Committee and Board Committee effectively,
- e) willingness to devote time and energy to SIEC-ISBE,
- f) willingness to insure that the work of SIEC-ISBE continues between International Conferences, and,
- g) in all ways, be representative of the organization.

All nomination papers (maximum of two pages) must be sent to the General Secretary at the Permanent Office address by 31 May 2013. Profiles of the candidates should cover the above qualifications. Additional background information or experiences regarding qualifications for the position may be included. These nominations will be sent to the National Presidents by 20 June 2013. The National Presidents will inform their chapter members of the candidates before the election. Each nominee will make a five-minute presentation at the 1st Assembly of Delegates; the election will be held during the 2nd Assembly of Delegates in Berlin, Germany.

The Permanent Office may be contacted by either of the following methods:

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Contents

Message from the International President.....	3
Election of the SIEC-ISBE International President Announcement.....	5
Membership Information	5
SIEC Journal Co-Editors.....	5
Preface	6
SIEC Executive Committee: 2011-2012	6
Happiness and Well-Being on a Global Scale: Implications for Business Education.....	8
<i>Carol Blaszczyński</i>	
Teaching in a Multicultural Society Integrating International Issues	16
<i>Åsa Larsson and Eva Tavander</i>	
Fostering Team Building – An Example for Business Educators.....	25
<i>Elisabeth Riebenbauer and Peter Slepcevic-Zach</i>	
Playing Stakeholders: Experiencing Decision Making Procedures on National and Supranational Levels	34
<i>Georg Tafner and Verena Liszt</i>	
Skill Level of Web 2.0 Technology Applications of Certified Educators and the Link to ISTE/NETS Standards	48
<i>Elisha C. Wohleb and Christal C. Pritchett</i>	
Call for Papers.....	56

Membership Information

Membership in SIEC-ISBE is open to everyone with an interest in Business Education. SIEC-ISBE has many national chapters.

Visit <http://www.siecisbe.org> to find out if a chapter exists in your country. You can contact the national chapter from this website. If a chapter does not exist, contact the General Secretary for information to join as an international member. Contact information: Dr. Judith Olson-Sutton, secretary@siec-isbe.org.

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Preface

We would like to thank the wonderful professionals who filled the role of reviewers for this journal. Due to the number of manuscripts received, multiple reviewers were needed this year. Without their assistance, the job of editor would have been much more difficult. Thank you to all the reviewers who are SIEC/ISBE members and volunteered to help when asked. Thank you.

We hope that you find the articles included in this year's *The International Journal for Business Education* interesting and thought provoking. Thank you to everyone who submitted a manuscript for consideration. Without your submissions, we would not have had a journal.

Eric Kisling, Ph.D. and Tamra S. Davis, Ph.D.
SIEC Co-Editors 2013

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HAPPINESS AND WELL-BEING ON A GLOBAL SCALE: IMPLICATIONS FOR BUSINESS EDUCATION



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Abstract

This article presents information about happiness and well-being and their implications on business education. Focus is placed upon the workplace, social connections, blue zones, and well-being.

Introduction

In the past decade with the rise of positive psychology, the topic of happiness has become mainstream. Articles in the popular press have focused upon various aspects of happiness; in fact, Rubin's (2011) recent book *The Happiness Project* has been a best-seller. The most popular course at Harvard has been one taught by a happiness researcher and author (PBS, 2012). Friday, August 13, 2012, was designated Pursuit of Happiness Day in the United States of America (GNHUSA, n.d.c). Further, a recent conference held in Seattle in the Pacific Northwest region of the United States of America in August 2012 focused on happiness (GNHUSA, n.d.a.). Happiness has become a serious topic among academics from psychologists to economists to health scientists to business management professors.

Indices for measuring happiness have been developed. Two major indices, the Gross National Happiness and the Better Life Index, have garnered much press.

The purposes of this article are (a) to report research findings about happiness, (b) to acquaint readers with measures of happiness including the index for Gross National Happiness (GNH) and the Better Life Index (BLI), and (c) to present implications for business education.

Literature Review

The review of the literature presents information about research pertaining to happiness, which is also sometimes called well-being, and is organized by the following themes: (a) happiness in the workplace, (b) happiness and the role of social connections, (c) happiness in the Blue Zones, and (d) factors that contribute to well-being.

Happiness in the Workplace

Many people, especially in the United States of America, defer happiness until certain events occur. Examples include the following statements: “I’ll be happy when I graduate;” “I’ll be happy when I earn a certain income;” and “I’ll be happy when I retire.” Happiness experts, including Achor (2012), emphasize the fallacy of this type of thinking. Rather than success leading to happiness, being happy in itself engenders success. Positive emotion has been shown to increase workplace success (Achor, 2012). As a result, the study of happiness and well-being is critical for managing one’s self and one’s career.

Working with tax managers at KPMG, Achor (2012) asked the workers in the experimental group to perform one of five activities that are associated with positive change: exercising for ten minutes, meditating for two minutes at their desks, writing down three things for which they are grateful, sending a supportive message to a person in their social network, or devoting two minutes to journaling about their most meaningful experience from the past day. Experimental group members raised their scores after 21 days of practicing one of the five activities daily, while control group members did not practice any of the five activities daily. Further, after four months of engaging daily in one of the five activities, scores on the life satisfaction scale raised from 22.96 (out of 35 possible points) to 27.23 for the experimental group. Achor (2012) concluded that “happiness had become habitual” (n.p.).

Happiness and Social Connections

What are the commonalities, if any, among the top 10% of happiest people in the world? The one commonality is meaningful social connections (PBS, 2012). In fact, the correlation between happiness and how deeply one feels connected with others is .7 (PBS, 2012). As a result of this research finding, Achor suggested that people reconnect with their social support networks. Happier people experience 31% higher levels of energy and have creativity levels 300% higher than those who are not happy (PBS, 2012).

Happiness in the Blue Zones

Researchers, including Buettner (2008), have studied blue zones, geographical areas around the world where longevity is notable. Among the blue zone locations are Loma Linda, California; Nicoya Peninsula, Costa Rica; Okinawa, Japan; and Sardinia, Italy. Studying the lives of those living in the blue zones has yielded strategies that may be

emulated by those living outside of the blue zones to expand not only the length of their lives but also the quality of their lives. Wang (2012) reported that most people grow happier as they become more chronologically enhanced. “People who sustained a higher ratio of positive to negative feelings as they aged were more likely to live longer” (p. D2).

Factors that Contribute to Well-Being

In his continuing work involving blue zones and thriving, Buettner (2010) provided guidelines for increasing well-being and happiness by focusing on elements of community, the workplace, one’s social life, one’s financial life, one’s home, and the self. Interestingly, Buettner (2010) recommended joining the teaching profession since “teachers score higher on most aspects of well-being than people in nonteaching jobs . . . They view their lives more positively, express more optimism, and report a healthier life” (p. 223).

Seligman (2011) preferred the term well-being rather than the term happiness and asserted that well-being is based upon five elements: positive emotion, engagement, meaning, accomplishment, and positive relationships. An advocate of teaching well-being in schools, Seligman (2011) argued that,

All young people need to learn workplace skills, which has been the subject matter of the education system in place for two hundred years. In addition, we [instructors] can now teach the skills of well-being—of how to have more positive emotions, more meaning, better relationships, and more positive accomplishments. Schools at every level should teach these skills (p. 63).

A recent policy statement, developed by the Policies Commission for Business and Economic Education (PCBEE), focused upon civility in educational environments (PCBEE, 2012). The statement posited that “civility, defined as courtesy and politeness, is critical in all settings, whether educational, business, personal, or social. Lack of civility disrupts the learning environment as well as negatively impacts workplace, social, and personal interactions” (p. 1). The PCBEE as well as Seligman believe in the importance of encouraging civility, which engenders positive emotions.

This section has presented the results of recent research about happiness and discussed the link between happiness and career and life satisfaction. The next section will present information about two prominent happiness indices, the Gross National Happiness and The Better Life Index.

Indices of Happiness

While there are several happiness indices, the GNH and the BLI are among the two most frequently mentioned in the literature.

Gross National Happiness

In the past decade researchers such as Achor (2012) and Buettner (2008, 2010) have attempted to quantify the happiness levels of nations as a measurement that yields vital information about citizens globally. In fact, even the government of Bhutan gathers data that contributes toward calculating Gross National Happiness. Begun in 2008, Gross National Happiness is currently measured by these nine dimensions: (a) community vitality, (b) culture, (c) education, (d) environment, (e) governance, (f) health, (g) psychological well-being, (h) standard of living, and (i) use of time (9 Dimensions of GNH, n.d.b.). The GNH Index was devised using the Alkire-Foster method, a robust multidimensional methodology, and the 33 indicators contained in the nine dimensions are statistically reliable and “normatively important” (Centre for Bhutan Studies, n.d., n.p.). Further, Each of the nine dimensions of the GNH (GNHUSA, n.d.b.) is reported in Table 1 with respective indicators.

<i>Gross National Happiness Dimensions and Their Indicators</i>	
Dimension	Indicator
Community vitality	Level of confidence; sense of belonging; safety in the community and at home; volunteering and giving; vitality of affectionate relationships
Culture	Core values; local traditions; festivals; participation in cultural events; options to develop artistic skills; gender, race, or religious discrimination
Education	Informal and formal education; skills development; skills capabilities; values education; environmental education; participation in childhood education
Environment	Access to green space; waste management systems; perceptions of air quality, water quality, soil quality; biodiversity; forest cover
Governance	Views of the honesty, responsibility, and transparency of the media, the electoral system, the government, the judiciary, and the police; involvement of citizens in political processes and community
Health	Health policy effectiveness in terms of Disability; patterns of risk behavior; self-rated health; nutrition; exercise; sleep
Psychological well-being	Sense of competence; stress; spiritual activities; self-esteem; and the presence of negative and positive emotions
Standard of living	Family and individual income; debt level; financial security; employment security; housing quality
Use of time	Balanced time management, including time at work, in traffic jams, and in educational activities

Table 1

Source: GNHUSA, n.d.b

Recognition of the importance of the role of happiness was recently emphasized by Chairman Bernanke of the Federal Reserve when he suggested that new measures may need to be developed to measure happiness (Tseng, 2012). But how should happiness be assessed?

The Better Life Index

Calculated by the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD), the Better Life Index (BLI) is based upon 11 dimensions: (a) civic engagement, (b) community, (c) education, (d) environment, (e) health, (f) housing, (g) income, (h) jobs, (i) life satisfaction, (j) safety, and (k) work-life balance. Each of the 11 dimensions of the BLI is reported in Table 2 with respective indicators. The indicators that comprise the BLI were selected because of face validity and predictive validity, among other factors, in collaboration with countries that are OECM members (OECD, n.d.m). The BLI was developed “to support policy making to improve the quality of life” (OECD, n.d.a, n.p.).

<i>Better Life Index Dimensions and Their Indicators</i>	
Dimension	Indicator
Civic engagement	Voter turnout; consultation on rule making ^a
Community	Quality of support network ^b
Education	Educational attainment; student skills; years in education ^c
Environment	Air pollution; water quality ^d
Health	Life expectancy; self-reported health ^e
Housing	Dwellings with basic facilities; housing expenditures; rooms per person ^f
Income	Household financial wealth; household net adjusted disposable income ^g
Jobs	Dwellings with basic facilities; housing expenditures; rooms per person ^h
Life satisfaction	Self-reported life satisfaction ⁱ
Safety	Assault rate; homicide rate ^j
Work-life balance	Employees working very long hours; time devoted to leisure and personal care ^k
<i>Note.</i> All sources were gathered from the OECD. The specific references are indicated following the superscript references. ^a OECD, n.d.b ^b OECD, n.d.c ^c OECD, n.d.d ^d OECD, n.d.e ^e OECD, n.d.f ^f OECD, n.d.g ^g OECD, n.d.h ^h OECD, n.d.i ⁱ OECD, n.d.j ^j OECD, n.d.k ^k OECD, n.d.l	

Table 2.

While the differences in BLI scores between women and men are not large, women tend to score higher on the dimensions of community, education, health, and life satisfaction. Men tend to score higher on the dimensions of earnings and jobs (OECD, n.d.m). Currently, the OECD maintains profiles of the BLI for the 34 countries

that are its members plus partner countries Brazil and the Russian Federation: Australia, Austria, Belgium, Canada, Chile, Czech Republic, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Iceland, Ireland, Israel, Italy, Japan, Korea, Luxembourg, Mexico, Netherlands, New Zealand, Norway, Poland, Portugal, Slovak Republic, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, Turkey, United Kingdom, and the United States (OECD, Civic Engagement, n.d.b). Other countries will be incorporated into the BLI in the coming years, including China, India, Indonesia, and South Africa (OECD, n.d.a).

It is interesting to note that both the GNH and the BLI indices have common dimensions or indicators such as community, education, environment, health, and income or standard of living. While no index is perfect, the critical aspect is that attempts are being made to measure global happiness. Mohanty (2009, 2012) reported that income does not necessarily account for differences in levels of happiness. While avoiding poverty may contribute to happiness, for Americans any increase in income level over \$60,000 does not make a substantial contribution to a person's level of happiness. As Mohanty (2012) explained, "higher income does not necessarily guarantee higher levels of happiness" (p. 143).

This section reviewed two leading happiness indicators, the GNH and the BLI. In addition, comparisons were made between the components of the two indicators. What are the implications of these indicators for business education?

Implications for Business Educators

Based upon the content of this article, eight implications are presented for consideration.

1. Business educators as well as business students can measure their levels of happiness by completing a simple five-item online survey, accessible at <http://www.gnhusa.org/test-your-happiness/> (GNHUSA, n.d.d). Students could track their happiness at monthly intervals over the course of an academic year. Engaging in this measurement could enhance their self-awareness and could be instructive not only for student teachers enrolled in business teacher education programs but also for all practicing business educators. Adopting one or two of the happiness best practices identified by Achor (2012) and Buettner (2008, 2010) should assist students in increasing their levels of happiness. Simple steps such as keeping a record of what occurred during the day, keeping a gratitude journal, exercising, meditating, and connecting with one's social network have potential to yield substantive results in perceived well-being (Achor, 2012).

2. Business students can compare and contrast the two approaches to assessing happiness according to the GNH and the BLI. What dimensions or indicators do the indices have in common? Which dimensions or indicators differ between the two indices? What dimensions or indicators of happiness may have been overlooked or not adequately incorporated by the GNH and BLI indices? This activity helps students to comprehend the similarities and differences in the two approaches to measuring happiness and builds depth of understanding.

3. Students can form groups to discuss their answers to the following questions: What are some cultural differences in perceptions of happiness and definitions of happiness? Do the levels of social interconnectedness vary between and among cultures? If so, what contributes to the level of community or social interconnectedness? This activity enhances the depth of global cultural understanding.

4. In groups or as an entire class, students can discuss their responses to the following questions: How might the perceptions of people about happiness differ between those living in a developed economy and those living in a developing economy? Why? This activity facilitates the development of economic literacy in the global context.

5. Business educators can have students consider these four stages of life: childhood, young adulthood, mature adulthood, and elderhood. What factor(s) might be responsible for any change in the happiness of individuals during the progression through these four life stages? Why? How might perceptions of individual happiness evolve as people age? This activity helps students to cultivate an awareness of the evolving nature of happiness across the lifespan.

6. Students enrolled in courses focusing upon business communication or teamwork can discuss how positive communication practices, both verbal and nonverbal, and the practice of civility help to trigger positive emotions. Conversely, students can identify how negative communication practices, both verbal and nonverbal, and incivility contribute to negative emotions, which influence the effectiveness of team or collaborative endeavors and happiness and well-being perceptions. This activity emphasizes to students the influence that positive communications and civility have upon individual and cultural happiness and well-being.

7. Students could discuss how the terms standard of living and income are similar and different from each other and the ramifications of each. This activity contributes to student awareness that income is only one component of one's standard of living, which enhances deeper economic understanding.

8. Students can compare dimensions and indicators of happiness by country, by gender, and by other demographic variables. Learning about the dimensions and indicators of happiness in various countries deepens understanding of and appreciation for diverse cultures, an essential component of vibrant global citizenship.

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TEACHING IN A MULTICULTURAL SOCIETY INTEGRATING INTERNATIONAL ISSUES



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Abstract

This study focused on enabling students to become aware of the global society and to become prepared to be adults in this society. A description of curricular change and international issues are discussed from a historical vantage point. Quotes from the curriculum and the discrimination act will be followed by short reflections, incorporating our experience from Farsta Gymsnium, Stockholm, Sweden. Finally, a focus of discrimination of students is discussed. These multi-cultural classrooms allow for opportunities for learning about the outside world and its many challenges.

Introduction

How do we make our students aware of the world outside? How do we prepare our students for adult life in a global society? How does curriculum change over time? In this article we are going to describe our work with international issues according to curriculum and reality in a multicultural society starting with a short historical background of the educational system in Sweden. Quotes from the curriculum and the discrimination act will be followed by short reflections, incorporating our experience from Farsta Gymsnium, Stockholm, Sweden. It is not always easy to live up to the high standards in the provisions. Global economy and politics influence the thoughts of both adult and teenage citizens in a country. When you work in a school with 60% immigrants, as we do, it can be even harder when students are exposed to influences from different countries with sometimes opposite view on the course of events and history. When there is no common background there will be no common view. Nevertheless it is our mission to create that common view.

Historical Background and School Today

In Sweden we have a long tradition of education. In 1842 it was decided that all children should go to school and learn how to read, write and count. Church and

clergymen were quite powerful at that time and they thought it would be a good thing if people could read religious books to raise morality in Sweden. Everyone should get a basic education but only a few went on to secondary upper school and even fewer to university. We have changed our education system a number of times since then. The changes follow the political climate and from 1970s an integrated upper secondary school took form with two year vocational education and three year theoretical education. In 1994 we got a three year course based school that should give everyone qualification for higher education. Internationally our results dropped, in the PISA study (**OECD.org**) it shows that reading ability has dropped from above average to average, but still we have more students continuing to higher studies than ever. These results make the challenge even bigger for teachers.

Number of students participating in upper secondary education by age 2010	
Age	Number
16 years	109,281
17 years	118,861
18 years	119,087
19 years	2,598

(scb.se)

In Sweden almost every teenager goes to upper secondary school and we put a lot of money into education. We as a nation spent 2010 almost 36 billion SEK (0, 5% of state expenses) on upper secondary school, the cost for each student were 92 500 SEK, approximately 13 000 USD, according to Yearbook of Educational statistics 2012, (scb.se). The cost includes teaching, school materials, school lunches, healthcare and administration. School is free of charge and includes lunches for every student. In addition to these costs each student gets a student grant of about 1000 SEK a month, during school year. According to Education at a glance 2012, OECD indicators, (<http://www.oecd.org/edu/EAG2012%20-%20Country%20note%20-%20Sweden5.pdf>) we spend 11 400 USD per student from primary to tertiary education.

From July 1st 2011 we have a new Education Act passed by parliament. The European Commission describes the system in their Overview on national education, (eacea.ec.europa.eu)

The new structure for the upper secondary school – comprising 6 higher education preparatory programmes and 12 vocational programmes – provides apprenticeship training and the introduction of an upper secondary diploma, one for general upper secondary education and one for vocational education and training programmes. An upper secondary vocational diploma can be obtained through vocational education at school or through an apprenticeship scheme. Students in any of the 12 vocational programmes should be given the possibility to follow courses leading to the upper secondary diploma giving access to higher education.

Vocational programmes

Child and Recreation Programme (BF)
Building and Construction Programme (BA)
Electricity and Energy Programme (EE)
Vehicle and Transport Programme (FT)
Business and Administration Programme (HA)
Handicraft Programme (HV)
Hotel and Tourism Programme (HT)
Industrial Technology Programme (IN)
Natural Resource Use Programme (NB)
Restaurant Management and Food Programme (RL)
HVAC and Property Maintenance Programme (VF)
Health and Social Care Programme (VO)

Higher education preparatory programmes

Business Management and Economics Programme (EK)
Arts Programme (ES)
Humanities Programme (HU)
Natural Science Programme (NA)
Social Science Programme (SA)
Technology Programme (TE)

(www.skolverket.se, 2011)

In Sweden we need educated people since we are a small nation with comparatively few inhabitants (9, 5 millions) and we have to rely on everybody's capacity to make progress in business and international contact. The idea that everyone shall get education is a good one but it does not work out completely. Not everyone finishes upper secondary school; they drop out to work instead. According to Statistics Sweden (scb.se) 24% of our students dropped out of upper secondary school in year 2007.

The Education Act stipulates that students in upper secondary school are to embrace democratic values and respect human rights. School is also supposed to give students knowledge about Swedish culture as well as knowledge about Nordic, European and international culture to encourage international contacts and studies abroad. We as a nation depend on the economic and political development in other states. We shall discuss how nations relate to each other and how we take part in an international community without losing our Swedish inheritance. One of the questions we raise is how our students as individuals can take part in a global community either by working or studying abroad. Good and solid international contacts will help us to prosper and we, their teachers, are to make our students aware of that.

Curriculum and Reality

One of the study preparatory programmes are Business management and economics .We will comment on the suggestions from the National board of education in the light of our own work experience teaching economic and social science classes,

we will comment our quotes from the book Upper Secondary School 2011 edited by National board of education.

Economic relationships in the world are complex and changes taking place in one area can often have consequences in completely different areas. The education should thus develop students' knowledge of economic conditions in society, about the conditions countries face for trade, and about the foundations for international groupings and agreements. It should also provide knowledge about the conditions for sustainable development, not only from environmental but also economic and social viewpoints. For studies in economics, knowledge of history is central. The education should develop students' knowledge of history so that they understand the present, and can reason over causal relationships and the consequences of different decisions. ... p. 197 (www.skolverket.se, 2011)

The use of English-language sources and training in communication in English contributes to developing a language that can be used in international contexts. p. 202 (www.skolverket.se, 2011)

The diploma goals state that students should develop knowledge of history as a foundation for understanding the present. This can apply to different aspects of entrepreneurship, from long-term industrial development and different structural forms of entrepreneurship to more specific questions such as trade union cooperation and gender equality in vocational life. This can also concern questions about migration, problems in the welfare state, and the effect of globalization on people's living standards in different countries. p. 199 (www.skolverket.se, 2011)

Our school, Farsta gymnasium, is a school with a high level, 60%, of first and second generation immigrants, when we study an international issue that is a great asset. We have firsthand information on politics and conflicts throughout the world through our students and their parents. Then again many differences appear and cannot be resolved due to cultural collisions. When we study history it is from a western point of view and many of our students origin from Africa, Asia and Middle East. Those who are new immigrants in Sweden often have a good school background and they have studied history from another perspective. In history class we study economic history and we study i.e. industrialization, protectionism, trade, colonization. When a Swede is thinking of industry as prosperity an African may think of it as oppression, which often gives an animated discussion that sometimes escalate to real conflicts between students that can last for weeks. The bright side of it is the golden opportunity we get to talk about perspective, the value of different sources to knowledge. As long as the sources are in English we can compare them, see differences and similarities. We also discuss international relationships today and put it on a timeline, asking questions about trade, different wars, revolutions and UN as a guardian for peace and equality.

... All subjects in the education should contribute to students developing language skills and that modern technology is used as a tool in searching for information, presentations and communication... p. 197 (www.skolverket.se, 2011)

In Sweden we are very much influenced by Pauline Gibbons and this shows even in our curriculum *...Teaching programs in all curriculum areas must therefore aim to integrate "language" and "content"...* p. 6 (Gibbons, 2002). In Farsta Gymnasium we have emphasized the importance of language skills. All teachers have been educated about learning and developing the Swedish language so that every student regardless of background shall be able to achieve knowledge and increase their academic capacity. We have discussed how every teacher in his or her classroom can contribute to increased language skills. How does a teacher in Mathematics or Economy work to develop language skills?

All of our students have their own laptop which is a blessing and a curse. The curse is the distraction provided by all kinds of media i.e. YouTube and face book, students are more interested in funny video clips and what their friends are up to than our education. The blessing is that we easily can find new research, statistics and economic facts and use it in our teaching. We can read news from all continents and include it in any subject. We can compare the same event described in different media and different culture and political climate. Since we have students from all over the world we can get direct translations so that we can get news written in languages other than English which broaden our minds and gives a more gradated debate. Using the computers as a study tool our students not only learn to handle the internet and compare sources of knowledge, they also learn how to use the most common computer programmes - word, excel and PowerPoint for writing papers and making presentation so that they are prepared for life after school.

The diploma goals emphasize international economic relationships. This can be about the reciprocal dependence of countries, economic development and distribution of resources. It can also involve the role of the company and its actions in an international environment or with international customers. p. 199 (www.skolverket.se, 2011)

By comparing national economy, comparing national GDP, we can make students realize the difference between countries. Some countries like Qatar is very wealthy and others like Eritrea are extremely poor. We raise questions about the impact national accounts have on individuals and everyday life regarding life quality and work. We also raise questions of the impact on commercial and industrial life as well as the countries development. We look at statistics about income in different groups as well as nations. We compare the access and use of water discussing the impact on hunger, health and business. We raise questions about what you as an individual can do, what UN can do and what the countries government can do. We talk about natural resources. What will happen to a country that is depending on one natural resource i.e. oil when the resource is emptied out.

Each student is to write a paper about an issue to pass their exam. When writing students have to formulate a question, discuss and draw a conclusion. Curriculum states what students have to achieve and what topics they shall include in their paper.

The diploma goals state that students should develop knowledge of how people think, feel and act. Psychology provides a basis for understanding established theories on human behavior in areas such as marketing and leadership. This knowledge also provides support for understanding legal judgments, such as those involving questions about legal predictability, reliability and credibility. p. 198 (www.skolverket.se, 2011)

The subject psychology develops knowledge of the thinking, feelings, behavior and interaction of human beings. It is knowledge which is of importance in many economic and legal contexts. p. 203 (www.skolverket.se, 2011)

Knowledge in psychology gives everybody a tool to handle people around them. In our school with students from countries all over the world that is essential. It is a valuable knowledge for their future life as businessmen as well regardless if they are working in Sweden or elsewhere.

The upper secondary school should provide a good foundation for work and further studies and also for personal development and active participation in the life of society. The education should be organized so that it promotes a sense of social community and develops students' ability to independently and jointly with others acquire, deepen and apply knowledge. p. 8 (www.skolverket.se, 2011)

The education act stipulates that we are to give our students the tools to be part of a community, a study group or be part of a social context. Knowledge about the process taking place in a group or have people relate to each other in various situations are skills they need no matter what career they choose.

We are to give our students a good foundation for work so that they who do not want to study can contribute to society. It is hard to get a job after upper secondary school since employers expect a well-educated workforce. Unemployment among our young is relatively high. In one of Sweden's largest newspaper, Dagens Nyheter, (DN.se, 2012) you could read about statistics on unemployment amongst the young, 15-24 years, that unemployment, according to Statistics Sweden was 22, 9%. This figure include students looking for an extra income, if they were excluded the number would drop to 14, 6%. The difficulty to find work forces some students to remain in school even if they do not want to be there, which creates a difficulty for teachers trying to educate unwilling students.

We shall also prepare our students for further studies. According to Yearbook of Educational Statistics 2012 (scb.se) we can see that approximately every fourth student that completed their studies in upper secondary school 2008/09 after one year had begun their studies in higher education.

7.14 Transition rate for upper secondary school leavers. Percentage university entrants by the end of the academic year

Program i gymnasieskolan programmes in upper secondary school	Antal avgångna från gymnasieskolans program 2008/09 Students who has finished upper secondary school 2008/9			Därav andel som påbörjat högskolestudier t.o.m. 2009/10 Part of students who had started higher education 2009/10		
	Totally	Female	Male	Totally	Female	Male
All programmes	97,923	59,532	48,391	26	29	22

(scb.se)

Discrimination of Students

In Swedish Discrimination act, published on the Swedish government's website, (regeringen.se) you find a definition of discrimination, chapter 1 section 1. You can also read what school has to do in case of an act of discrimination of any kind section 5-8.

Discrimination Act

Chapter 1. Introductory provisions

The purpose of the Act

Section 1 The purpose of this Act is to combat discrimination and in other ways promote equal rights and opportunities regardless of sex, transgender identity or expression, ethnicity, religion or other belief, disability, sexual orientation or age...Section 7 If an education provider becomes aware that a child, pupil or student participating in or applying for the provider's activities considers that he or she has been subjected in connection with these activities to harassment or sexual harassment, the education provider is obliged to investigate the circumstances surrounding the alleged harassment and where appropriate take the measures that can reasonably be demanded to prevent harassment in the future.

Since Sweden is a multicultural and democratic society we do not accept discrimination of any kind. We have a law that stipulates how discrimination shall be prevented and stopped in every aspect of society. The law has a special section for education and each and every school has to have a plan how to prevent discrimination; the plan for equal treatment. When our National board of education makes their inspection they check if the school has a plan and how the work for equality shows in every day activity. Working against discrimination is easy in theory but a bit more difficult in reality since prejudice exists everywhere and within everyone. We talk a lot about prejudice and human rights in our society and globally as well as behavior in school. Our student's originating from different countries and cultures makes it easy to compare prejudice in different countries and try to figure out why it exists. Is it fear? Is it

a feeling of superiority? These discussions are to take place in every subject. One way to overcome prejudice is to help students choose partners for discussions or problem solving. We sometimes have our exams in form of “Sitting down drama”. A student has to be someone else i.e. an industrial leader and a worker somewhere in the world and they will have to try to think as them. That is easily done in social studies but it is time consuming to prepare. As well as classroom education on the matter each student has to have time to prepare and think about the person he or she is supposed to be and in what context that person is acting. They also have to prepare questions for the other character. The actual exam takes form as a round table discussion. Most students think it is a good and fun way to learn even if it is difficult to imagine being someone else.

We also have groups in our schools that are to prohibit and resolve cases of discrimination. These groups consists of adults in school, teachers, school nurse, counselor, headmaster and sometimes personal from school canteen or caretaker. If someone in school notices some kind of discrimination they report it to the group as well as deal with the matter. Students are to report to teachers for help dealing with the injustice. At first we talk to the participants one by one and if they agree we have a meeting to get both parties do listen to one another. We hope that this will increase understanding of other people and we hope to get our students understand that in a workplace, in society it is necessary to get along with others. Many of our young believe that respect and democracy means having things done their way and we have to help them see that respect is a two way street. Democracy is not one persons will it is the will of the majority.

Conclusion

Education in Sweden has changed over time from being a school for acquiring basic skills to an investigating school preparing students for a life in a global society. We utilize modern technology in our education. We compare news in different countries and discuss why there sometimes are discrepancies in the news report. We discuss different matters in an attempt to get our students to realize that we all are depending on one another for prosperity. We talk a lot about prejudice and through different methods i.e. pairing students up for to solve a task we will accomplish an insight about the necessity of being able to communicate with others. We debate cultural differences to make students aware of different ways of life and make them prepared for meeting other cultural. Since we work in a globalized environment the discussions sometimes are animated due to cultural collision. On the other hand we achieve better understanding of different ways having students from all over the world

The challenges we meet are closely connected to the fact that our school is a melting pot for students with different origin, culture, religion and mother tongue. The awareness of the outside world is both wide and narrow i.e. many students have their feet in two cultures and understand similarities and differences. The greatest challenge we meet is to create a study climate making students respect one another. We have to deal with prejudice from various countries not only our own. It is a difficult task but our students at least get several “eye-opening” experiences that they are likely to gain from in future work life. In a global community it is essential with an international network.

By using “old” school contacts our students get an opportunity that others, from mono cultural schools lack.

Even though we use a variety of methods and discuss global matters in our education the questions remains as long as the world is changing:

- How do we make our students aware of the world outside?
- How do we prepare our students for adult life in a global society?

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FOSTERING TEAM BUILDING AN EXAMPLE FOR BUSINESS EDUCATORS



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Abstract

The rising importance of teamwork is indisputable in any kind of business field. Developing students' ability to work in a team as well as their leadership skills is therefore a persistent challenge in business education. This paper analyses different theories for team development processes and introduces possibilities for integrating team building in business education programs. The method "Teams in Maze" will then be presented and discussed concerning its planning, instruction, realization, reflection and its benefit for teamwork.

Introduction

What is a team without a goal? A bunch of people. To build a team it is necessary to consider group development and resulting changes in the performance curve of teamwork. There are many different team building methods available to create an effective team, but which methods are effective and why? The ability to build and guide a team is a very important leadership skill, especially in international teams with different cultures. Leaders need to focus on group development and performance levels during team building processes. Reasons for team building (or team training) are for example improving communication, motivating team members, getting to know each other or improving team productivity. Depending on the targeted reason, there are many types of team building exercises to choose. Communication exercises should improve team members' communication skills. Problem solving exercises focus on decision-making and teams working together to solve difficult problems. Planning exercises focus on aspects of planning and being adaptable to change. Trust exercises engage team members in a way that should increase trust among them. Business teachers should be aware of the impact of productive communication, cooperation and

trust; not only because they want to foster their students' ability to work on teams but also because they want to work together with their students as a team in the classroom.

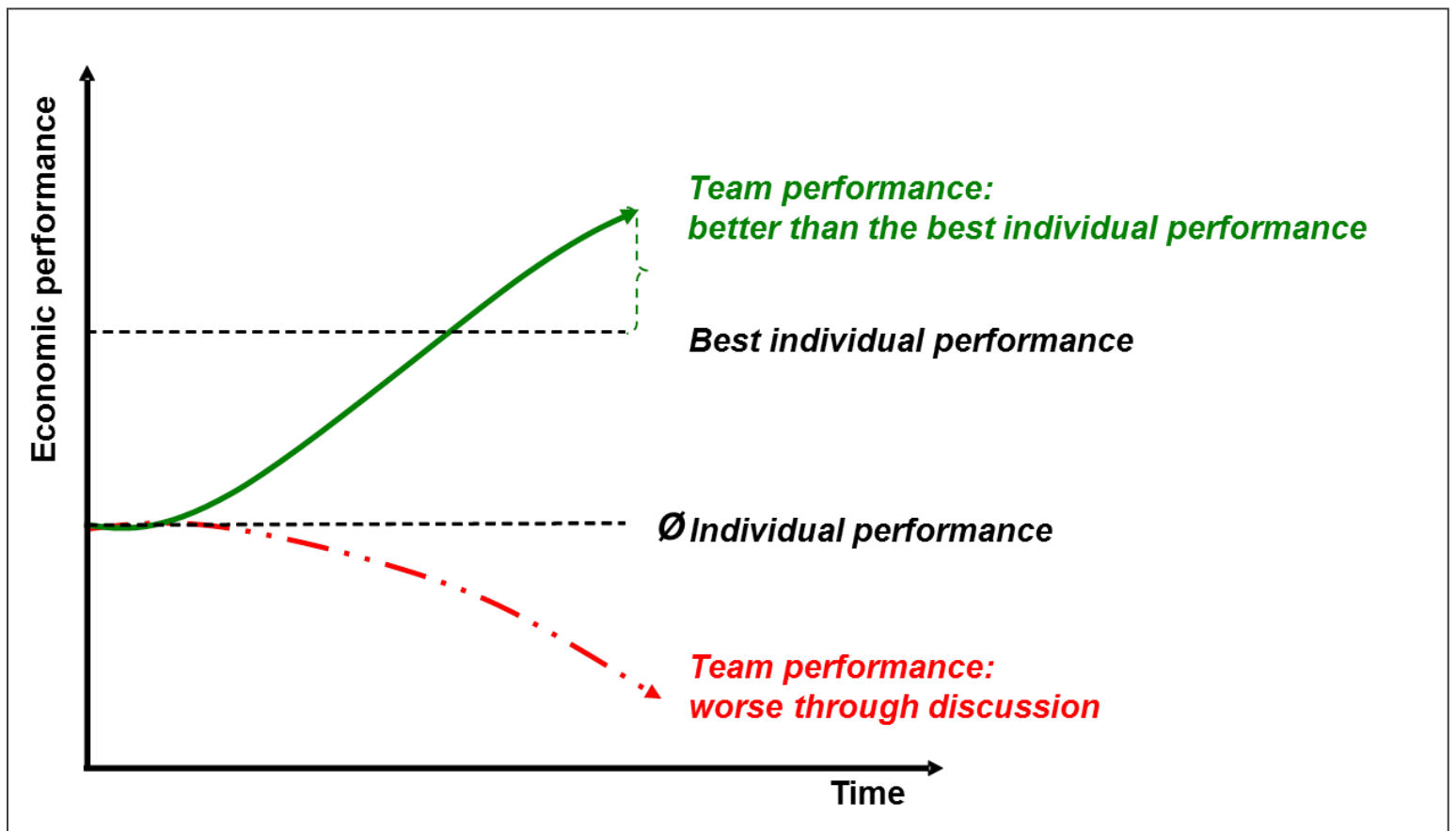
Characteristics of Teams and Teamwork

In business a team is a “group of people with a full set of complementary skills, required to complete a task, job or project” (BusinessDirectory, 2012). Those work teams are integral to organizational success in our global economy (Sundstrom, 1999). There are other types of teams (e.g. sport teams, research teams), but this article will focus on teams in business education. These teams can also be distinguished by different criteria: some teams exist only for a specific period of time, some teams are assembled for longterm cooperation; some teams have official leaders and some teams are self-managed; some teams meet face-to-face and some are virtual. But all these teams can have the same goals and will follow the same team building process. The question is: What does it take for groups to develop into teams? (Levasseur, 2011).

As mentioned, a team is characterized by several features. Team members interact regularly with each other in order to achieve a common goal. The team exists over a longer period of time and consists of a small number of persons, best between two and twelve depending on the task. Members find a collaborative way of work and team spirit can be observed. Teamwork is based upon a certain structure with appropriate roles and accepted working rules. Good teams share common values, interests and a performance-oriented attitude to work. (Comelli & Von Rosenstiel, 2009; Katzenbach & Smith, 2003).

Mutual accepted objectives of the team are the basic prerequisites and the key to success. These objectives must be ambitious and challenging in order to justify the teamwork itself. It must be clear that the objectives cannot be achieved without the complementary performance of all individual members. To meet expectations regarding teamwork, the team performance must be higher than the performance of the best individual member. Teamwork is not efficient when the team reaches only an average performance, as shown in figure 1 (Comelli & Von Rosenstiel, 2009).

Figure 1. Demands on Teamwork



To develop the capacity for teamwork, teachers need to focus on cooperative working techniques, an effective communication including feedback, social and leadership skills, especially for teamwork in heterogeneous or international teams. As a consequence teamwork has to be implemented in business education programs, theoretically as well as practically.

Team Building and Development

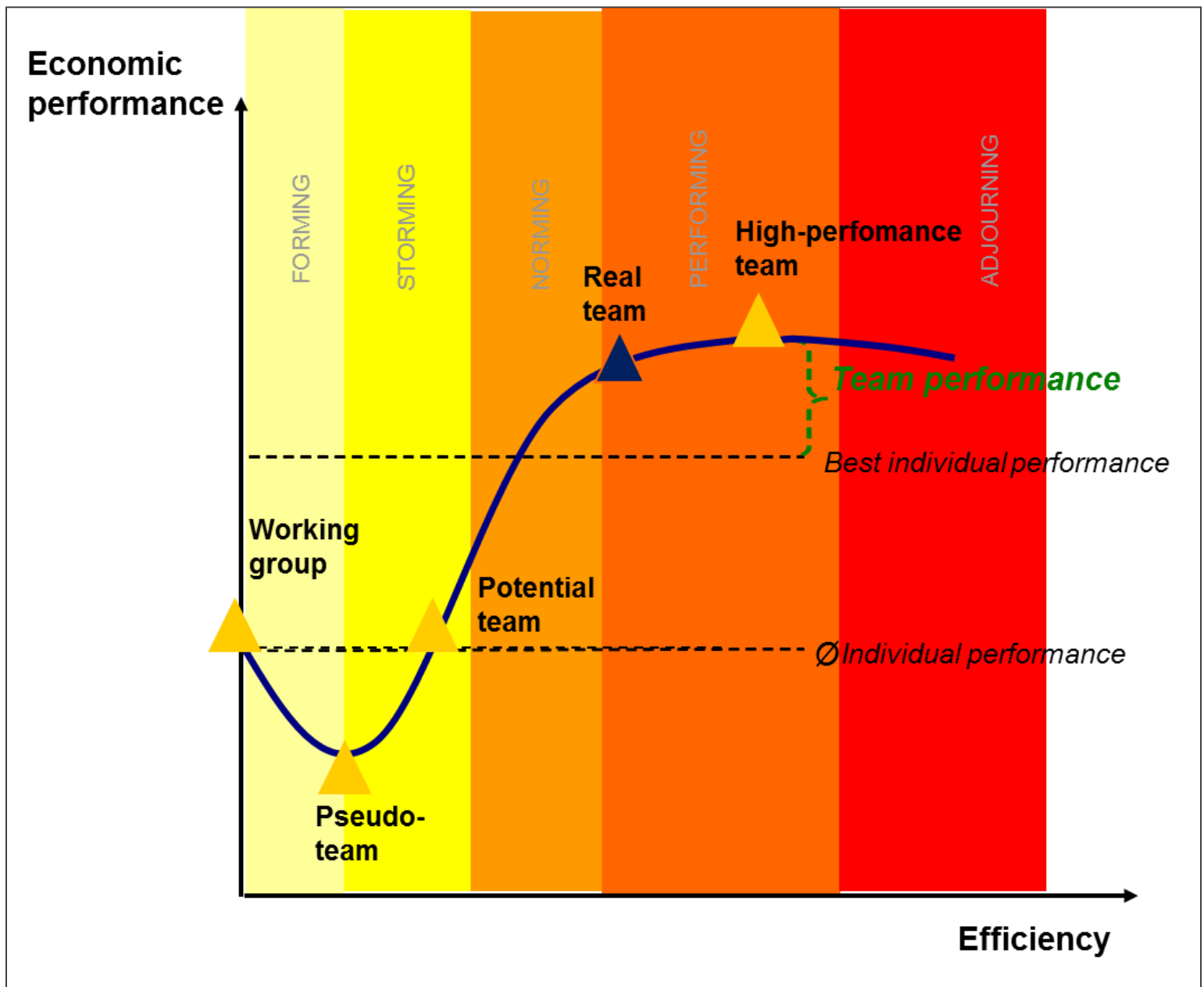
An efficient team is not built by chance. It emerges at the end of a common, often very difficult, group dynamic developing process. New but also existing teams go together through learning processes to develop an efficient approach to their teamwork. Tuckman defines these processes with a four-stage developmental model in 1965. Together with Jensen he included a fifth stage in 1977 in order to acknowledge the separation of a team after completion of its goals. Figure 2 describes these five stages of a team building process with special focus on the several roles of team members and the team leader (Tuckman, 1965; Tuckman & Jensen, 1977).

Figure 2. Team Development Model

Tuckman's team development model					
	Forming ⇨	Storming ⇨	Norming ⇨	Performing ⇨	Adjourning ⇨
Team members	Orientation	Conflicts, different opinions	Development of in-group feeling	Shared vision	Completing of tasks
	Identification of boundaries	Tension	Clarification of goals and roles	Focus on over-achieving goals	Breaking up the team
	Exploration of dependences	Power struggle	Acceptance of norms	Self-monitoring	Mourning about the dissolution
	Uninformed about goals and plans of the team	Need of tolerance and patience	Increased openness	High degree of autonomy	
Team leader	Directing style	Coaching style	Participative style	Delegative style	Disassembling style

It is necessary to complete the forming, storming and norming stage first, before a team can grow and work well in the performing stage (Tuckman, 1965). Some teams run through the forming, storming and norming very quickly. For others it takes longer and it can occur that they have to go through these stages more than once, especially when new members enter the team or a new leader is nominated. Katzenbach and Smith (1993) distinguish among several forms of teams depending on their performance. Working groups and pseudo-teams do not function as a team yet. Potential teams however show intention and effort towards improving teamwork, whereas real teams already act in an efficient way to reach the accepted team objective. The highest level on the team performance curve is achieved by a high-performing team that places additional emphasis on the personal development and success of all individual team members (Katzenbach & Smith, 1993). Figure 3 illustrates a combination of the three theories for team building and development presented in this paper (Winkelbauer & Riebenbauer, 2010).

Figure 3. Synthesis of Team Development Theories



The consolidation of these concepts makes sense, because team developing processes run parallel, they complement each other and they define contiguous aspects of team building and developing. The synthesis enables a holistic perspective for the integration of team developing process in business education programs (Winkelbauer & Riebenbauer, 2010). While it is certainly important to discuss team theories with the students, it is also profitable for students to experience these group dynamic processes intensively in a common project including the attendance in team leader meetings or the participation in special team building methods.

Methods for Team Building and Training

There are many different methods for team building. Some of them are related to traditional teaching-methods, others are adapted from games used in sports. The goal is always to achieve a higher efficiency. Group dynamic games are one way to build a team. Of course a good team needs more skills than just team skills. For example the team members need expertise in their field and good communication skills. If there is a team with brilliant people who cannot work together, the team will fail. Typical objectives of group dynamic games are:

- Getting to know and motivating team members
- Improving team productivity: communication, problem solving, decision-making
- Increasing trust and ability to change

As usual when teaching a method, the typical course of a group dynamic game is:

- Instruction: goal, task
- Action: procedure of the exercise, assignment of observing roles for communication, leadership, quality/rules
- Reflection and feedback

Usually a method tries to develop more than one competence or skill. Communication or feedback skills are often included in methods for team building.

Team Building Method: “Teams in Maze”

This article presents a team building method, which is easy to perform, does not need too much time but provides many opportunities to work on the team building process. The objective is that the team must find its way through a labyrinth or maze.

Instruction and how to play

The instructor creates a labyrinth in form of a checkerboard pattern (typically 5x5 or 6x6 fields) at the floor, using tape or chalk. The participants receive the following instructions as a handout (Dürschmidt et al., 2005):

- The group’s aim is to reach the maze’s opposing side with as few errors as possible.
- The time available is 45 minutes.
- Each error reduces the starting capital, which amounts to 1000 USD, by 100 USD.
- Your objective is to find the only possible way through the maze.
- The areas making up the correct path can only be found by trial and error.
- First, you search for the starting area, from which the correct way originates. Wait for the result, which the trainer discloses. If you have found the correct area, you may proceed to the next area of your choice. Again, wait for the trainer’s feedback.
- Only an adjacent area can be entered (foreward, backward, sideways, diagonal).
- If you enter a wrong area, it costs you nothing at first. You must leave the maze however. You may reenter the maze and take the same path back to where you had to leave the maze. Entering a wrong area cost you 100 USD.
- If a group member enters an area already identified as being wrong, it costs you 100 USD.

- As the correct path may feature “curves”, it is possible that an area is wrong when entered from one adjacent area, yet correct when entered from another adjacent area.
- There is a specific order of movement among the participants. If you violate this order you pay 100 USD.
- There may be only one person within the maze. All other participants have to wait behind the starting line (later this is the finishing line). Violations cost 100 USD.
- It counts as movement, if you touch an area with your feet.
- Your preparation time is 15 minutes. You pay 100 USD for each additional minute.
- It is strictly forbidden to take any notes or mark any areas during the exercise.
- During the planning phase you are allowed to talk to each other. In the execution phase it is forbidden to talk or make any noises. Each infraction is fined by 100 USD.

The instructor must ensure that the rules of this method are clear to all participants. During the game it is necessary that these rules are strictly observed.

Analysis, Problems and Outcome

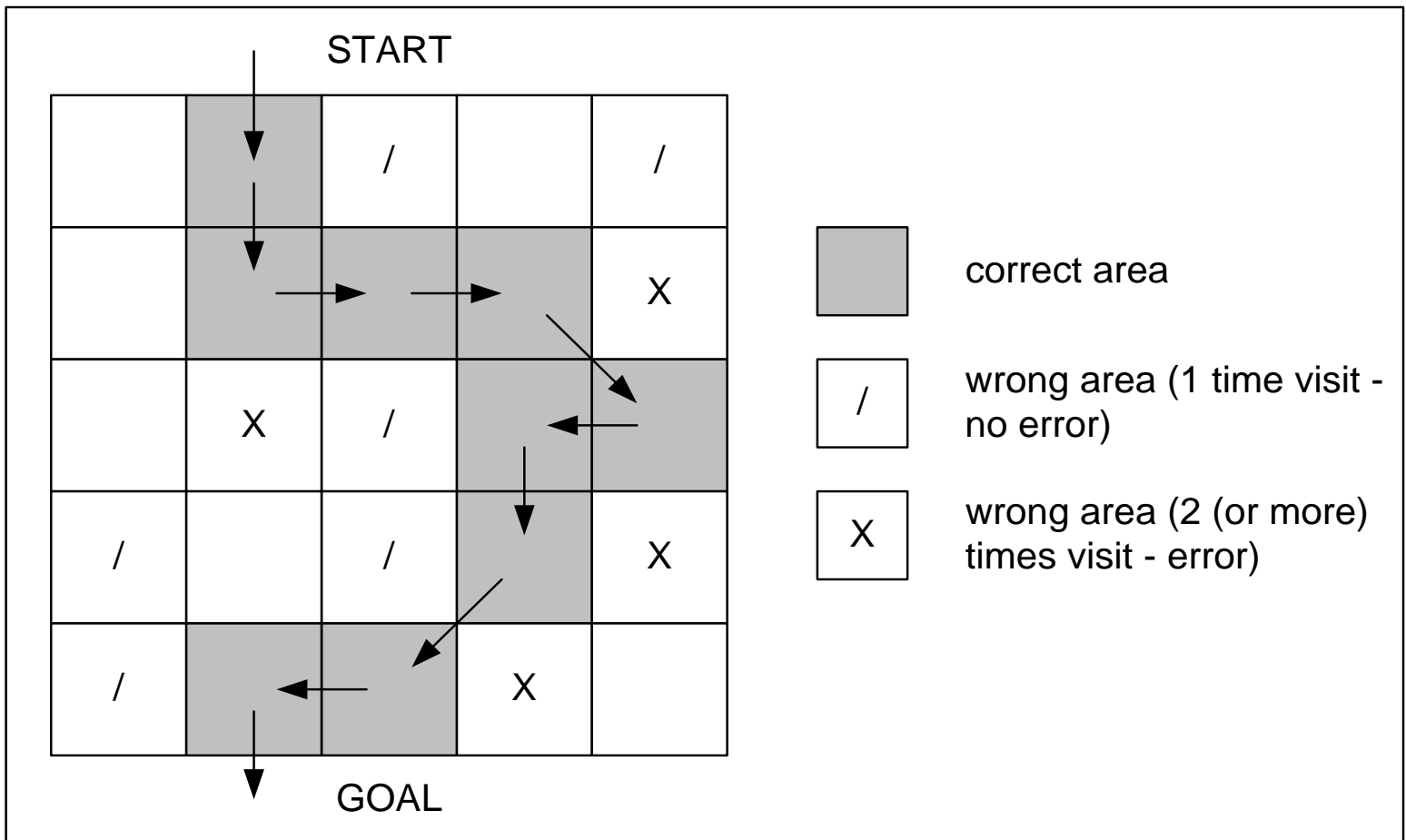
The method Teams in Maze can be implemented with various groups in different stages of team development. It is especially suited for teams in the forming or norming stage. Caution is advised with regard to teams in the storming stage: This stage is often fraught with potential conflicts, which might be escalated by this method. Performing and adjourning stages of team development are also less well suited for this method, as team members are already well attuned to each other, which only allows for a marginal learning effect. The size of the group can vary to a certain degree – a group size of at least six members is recommended. In groups of more than 25 members, however, the method is no longer feasible. As with all methods, variations from the recommended group size can make sense in certain situations.

The size of the labyrinth depends on several factors. The larger the labyrinth, the more time has to be allocated to this task. The labyrinth should not be too small either (4x5 at least), as a smaller labyrinth does not allow the observation of group processes. A larger labyrinth provides a greater challenge for decision-making in larger groups. It is the instructor’s responsibility to determine which processes should be observed in the group. In case of larger groups it is often useful to assign one or more people the role of observers and have them report their impression of the team development at the end of the game.

When implementing the method, the instructor has to keep an eye on the observation of general rules, the labyrinth and the already explored paths. For this purpose, it is useful to mark the right path, the wrong areas visited for the first time and the wrong areas which are visited repeatedly (and are therefore classified as mistakes)

in a sketch of the labyrinth (figure 4). The order of team members should also be documented for larger groups.

Figure 4. Example for the Instructor’s View



Experience has shown that the implementation of this method takes a similar shape in most groups. Preparation time is rarely used completely. Usually there is no one to take on the role of team leader in these stages. The first group members to enter the labyrinth tend to act as lone wolves, while the rest of the group takes on the role of observers. Only when the game is in full swing, group members gradually begin to support each other. It also takes a while for the people within the labyrinth to become aware that their teammates can provide support from outside. This change of group dynamics can be used as a point of connection for the subsequent reflection.

Often, teams are well aware that the method is intended as a team building exercise. This might lead to certain group members not taking the method entirely seriously. In order to prevent this, the formation of two teams who compete against each other is recommended. The competitive elements ensure that the method is taken more seriously and add more urgency and conflict potential. The competitive version of this method should only be used when a group is relatively free of conflict, or when conflicts within the group should be triggered on purpose. In this case more time has to be spent on reflection and processing the experience. A similar urgency can be achieved when group members only get a short amount of time for accomplishing their task. If desired, the instructor can also send the team back to the start of the labyrinth after the task has been successfully dealt with. The group members then have to retrace their steps in reverse. This version of the method is useful, when the reflection has been particularly intense or when the game has led to the revelation of major conflicts within

the group. As groups usually have fewer difficulties to accomplish this task, this version of the method can contribute to the reduction of tensions within the team.

Most groups have a lot of fun with this method. A lot of importance should be attached to reflection, in order to ensure that the experience leaves a lasting impact on group members. Participants, observing persons and instructors reflect together while sharing their experiences during the game and discussing their learning outcomes – individual and for the teamwork.

Conclusion

There are two reasons why business educators have to focus on team building. On the one hand they act as teachers and must be team players themselves. On the other hand they must develop the team competences of their students. When business educators accompany team developing processes, they ensure team efficiency and provide their students with adequate tools for their future jobs as team members as well as team leaders. If a business educator wants to develop these competences with team developing methods, clear aims, a good instruction and, most importantly, sessions for reflection and feedback are needed. If there is not enough time for reflection, the method will just be a little game for fun but it will not help students increase their targeted learning outcomes; neither will it help them develop their ability to work in teams.

In this field further research is needed, for example concerning the effective benefit of several team building methods. Another future research question is how to foster team building with international teams who are located at different areas and virtually linked.

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PLAYING STAKEHOLDERS: EXPERIENCING DECISION MAKING PROCEDURES ON NATIONAL AND SUPRANATIONAL LEVELS



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Abstract

The European Union is a unique “postnational construction” (Habermas 1998) which is much more integrated than other international institutions. Nevertheless, it is not a country with some sort of nation-wide history or culture. In its core, it is a union of different member states serving as a platform for common decisions. Citizens of the EU are both citizens of the national state and of the European Union. Its uniqueness and complexity makes the EU to a didactic and pedagogical challenge (Tafner 2012): Firstly, introductory lessons usually present the topic EU from a legal perspective. But legal topics can be boring or at least confusing for nonexperts. Secondly, these introductions are very cognitive and completely ignoring the affective element although discussions about the EU are very emotional. The simulation game “Building Blocks of Democracy: My Country. Your Country. Our Union.”, which was created by young students in a project cofinanced by the European Union, provides a different approach for introducing the idea of supranationalism, focusing on dealing with different cultures, interests, and identities, thereby promoting competences that are necessary to deal efficiently and effectively with those differences when they occur. In this simulation game students experience how even fictitious cultures they have created on their own have an influence on the decision making process and undergo democratic decision making procedures on different levels. This article delivers an insight into the simulation game and explains performative pedagogy as a way to foster competences individually. After the theoretical part selected results of a research project financed by the State of Styria (Austria) carried out in the school year 2011/12 in 12 different schools at 16 different playing dates with 289 students involved are presented. The results were quite positive and the simulation game is now ready for regular usage in schools.

Introduction

The European Union as the center of the European integration is neither a new state nor a traditional international organization. Supranationality is a quite new, complex and abstract phenomenon. Teachers prefer to teach this topic in a very traditional way but the students' demand is higher than the teachers' supply (Tafner/Sorko 2010). Complexity and abstractness are the challenges – experiential learning and performative pedagogy are potential answers. This article builds on performative pedagogy and presents a simulation game as a successful new approach to experience and reflect the idea of supranationalism. An evaluation of the game simulation delivers positive results.

Performative Pedagogy

The main objective of simulation games is the acquirement of competences through the training of the ability to make decisions (Seeber 2007, p. 155) in order to achieve cognitive and affective objectives (Rebmann 2001). The correlation of pedagogical input and individual output in a given situation is not always clear. Education is something that also occurs inside an individual (Slepcevic-Zach & Tafner 2011, p. 177): “The human being is no trivial machine (Heinz von Foerster), in which the input is converted to output with a given rule. The human being is always a non-trivial machine because s/he reacts on inputs with self-reference. The instructor can never be sure how the student is really processing the input. Positively formulated, one could say that the learner's reaction to input is self-determined. Negatively formulated, the learner's reaction to input could be described as unreliable. The transformation from input to output is contingent” (Luhmann 2004, p. 14f). With Robinsohn's (1967) curriculum theory and the operationalization of learning outcomes (Bloom 1976), didactic approaches and processes are sometimes misunderstood as pure technological procedures (Zabeck 2004, p. 135). Even activity-oriented didactics, which focuses on case studies, projects, and simulation games can lead to the temptation to describe learning as a clear correlation of input and output (Zabeck 2004, p. 106).

Students and instructors do have different perceptions of situations and the solution of problems. Their strategies depend on enculturation, socialization and personalization (Slepcevic-Zach & Tafner 2011, p. 177–179). Situations are not objectively given and, therefore, individual interpretation is needed (Esser 2005). Competence oriented instruction should not be misunderstood as a return to the operationalization of learning outcomes (Dubs 2006, Slepcevic-Zach & Tafner 2012, p. 33f). With performative pedagogy, the personal behavior and the unique handling of a given situation is getting more important. Not only “what is represented in the representation” is important for pedagogy but also “the way in which the representation is handled, and the practices of representing respectively. [...] A performative view refuses a general and total method and understanding of reality but opens a relative and contextual interpretation which shows a plurality of idiomatic gestures and contextual types of phenomenology.” (Wulf & Zirfas 2007, p. 9, translation by the authors) Performative pedagogy is a result of the performative and cultural turn which took root in sociology, cultural studies and pedagogy. In this approach, culture is

understood as knowledge- and meaning-oriented. Artifacts, processes and ideas are carriers of culture. Culture has an influence on all parts of life and on individually and collectively thinking and acting. (Moebius 2010, p. 77–80 and p. 123–126) The pluralism of methods, interdisciplinarity and unorthodoxy is getting more and more important (Bachmann-Medick 2009). The simulation game is a pedagogical method, which can be used within the framework of performative pedagogy. Performative pedagogy replaces a general method of reality with a relatively context-oriented interpretation. (Wulf & Zirfas 2007, p. 9) There are four arguments backing the importance of performative pedagogy (Wulf & Zirfas 2007, p. 10–12):

1. Self-development gains importance in society; pedagogy as a kind of activity-oriented science needs to be up to date and follows this trend.
2. Methods like phenomenology and constructivism gain relevance for describing rituals, situations, and activities.
3. Social and pedagogical activities can be described in a performative way.
4. This leads to a complex theory of education which focuses on the individual.

Every human being takes over different roles and carries them out. A politician or a manager of a company plays his/her role. In this sense, game and reality cannot be separated and game is always a part of reality. People can never leave the so-called “Lebenswelt” (lifeworld) which refers to shared cultural meanings and social dimensions as a basis for mutual understanding (Habermas 1987a and 1987b). The consequence: What students experience in game simulations can be helpful in their future private and professional lives.

Contents and Objectives of the Simulation Game

In the simulation game the students are stakeholders (citizens and ministers) of four different democratic countries. Four groups of students represent four countries which are situated on the fictitious Planet XY and are members of the newly-created Union.

The objectives of the game are threefold (Ferstl, Füzi, Tafner & Wunsch-Grafton, 2010, p. 4):

1. to do their best for their own country and for the Union in creating a socio-economic environment which best supports the life of the citizens,
2. to collect as many „Building Blocks of Democracy“ as possible for their own country and the Union, and
3. to keep the countries’ budgets and the Union’s budget balanced.

The game proceeds in six phases (Ferstl et al., 2010, p. 8–25):

Phase 1 – Theoretical introduction: Before the game starts the participants should be able to conceptualize general procedures of democracy and group decisions. Complex pedagogical methods, in which group works play a decisive role, can fail if essential core competences like the basics of communication, emotional intelligence, or

team building are not given (Gueldenzoph Snyder, 2010). Teachers playing simulation games must be fully aware of these prerequisites. The simulation game focuses on three bunches of competences: cooperation and negotiation competence, transcultural competence, and democratic supranational competence. The arrangement of this phase depends on the pedagogical focus of the simulation game and the previous knowledge of the players. Necessary terms and definitions of democracy should be explained to make sure that these terms do not cause any difficulties, once they enter the debate.

Phase 2 – Group dynamic exercises: The participants should be activated with group dynamic games in advance to strengthen their capacity for teamwork. The quantity and the sort of games should be adapted for the group members.

Phase 3 – Introduction to the simulation game: The rules and the process of the simulation game should be explained. Materials and a PowerPoint presentation are available for this phase.

Phase 4 – Identification: This essential phase represents the start of the game. The players receive the descriptions of their countries and their tasks. The participants have to create the history, culture and traditions of their own country, as well as design their national flag. They create the topography of their state with materials available. Using so called Job Cards each group has to decide on the president and ministers. This phase ends with the foundation ceremony of the Union and the players present their countries to the other groups in a short ceremony accompanied with the Union's anthem and the ceremonial signing of the Union's Treaty.

Phase 5 – Playing the game: This phase can be repeated twelve times. At the beginning of every turn the instructor assigns Trigger Event Cards to each group explaining a specific situation of conflicts of interests. The topics of the events trigger personal involvement. Decisions are made under budget constraints because all measures taken must be paid for. Group decisions have an influence on the other countries and the following events.

If all states have found a solution strategy, the responsible ministers of each country sit down at the Council's table to find a common solution for the Union. After the discussion ministers have to vote. They can vote unanimously or their decisions are determined by a majority of votes (three ministers out of four). If the ministers voted on a majority vote, each minister gets one Building Block of Democracy in the color of the country. If they voted unanimously, each minister gets three blocks. Afterwards all ministers return to their states and each state has to discuss and to decide whether they will receive the blocks on behalf of their own country or of the Union depending on how they feel about the outcome of their negotiation: If they feel the outcome mainly benefitted the Union, the Building Block(s) should be located on the field for the Union. If the outcome mainly benefitted their home-country, the Building Block(s) should be placed on the field for their own country. The Building Blocks of Democracy which are assigned to their own country should be situated on one field of the paper which is called "on behalf of the country" and the blocks which are assigned to the Union should be situated on the other field of the paper which is called "on behalf of the Union". In the course of the game – the towers on both sides of the paper – are getting higher and higher.

The towers that are generated with these blocks play an important role in the reflection of the simulation game because they visually reveal how often the groups have decided either for the Union or their own country (see phase 6 – Debriefing and Reflection). At the end of phase 5 the groups present their towers on behalf of/in the interests of the country on one side, and on the behalf of/in the interests of the Union on the other side, and they give a short explanation about their decisions.

Phase 6 – Debriefing and Reflection: The starting point is the reflection about the distribution of the Building Bricks of Democracy and how they were assigned to the fields of interests. Then all the bricks on behalf of the Union are placed on each. As every country has its own color, the colors of the bricks reveal how much each group thinks that they have invested for the Union. Hereafter, all towers on behalf of/in the interests of the country are put on top of each other. Again, the colors show how much each group believed they have invested but this time for their own country. The heights of the towers show how often the countries have decided for their own and how often for the Union. There is no right and wrong only a good starting point for a deeper reflection about different interests, trade-offs, and conflicts of interests.

Following this discussion, each group has to brainstorm which factors were helpful and which were detrimental in the decision making process. The two most helpful and most detrimental ones are presented to the plenum where the eight most important factors are collected and discussed. The instructor should sum up and close the discussion by drawing an analogy to the decision making process of the European Union and the democratic decision procedure in general.

Fostering Competences

There are many definitions of competences and “there is no basis for a theoretically grounded definition or classification from the seemingly endless inventory of the ways the term competence is used” (Weinert, 2001, p. 46). Weinert (2001) defines competence as "a roughly specialized system of abilities, proficiencies, or skills that are necessary to reach a specific goal. This can be applied to individual dispositions or to the distribution of such dispositions within a social group or an institution".

According to Kaufhold (2006, p. 22–24), there are four characteristics of competence-orientation: First, competence always refers to a particular context, to a specific situation. Second, acting occurs in this situation and part of the competence is observable and visible. Third, competence is always related to an individual. Fourth, competences are learnable and teachable and are considered to be relatively stable over a period of time but nevertheless changeable. The second characteristic states that part of the competence is observable and visible. Competence can be described as an individual asset which can be used by the acting person. Performance is the process and the output generated by applying competence. Therefore, only the performance is measurable not the competence (Slepcevic-Zach & Tafner, 2011, p. 180). If a performance is good, one can assume that it is based on acquired competences. But one can never be sure. To sum up: “Competence is a hypothetical asset of knowledge and skills which can be used by a person in a concrete situation to responsibly solve a

problem. Competence as such is not observable but performance is the visible output of competence.” (Tafner, 2011, p. 140, authors’ translation)

Cooperation and Negotiation Competence

The term cooperation competence is applied differently and is often used as an umbrella term for different competences that relate to the micro, meso, and macro level. The simulation game focuses on the micro and the meso level. On the micro level, individual performances like communication and emotional competences are fostered. On the meso level, the focus lies on teamwork and the competence of the whole team. Part of the team’s competence is the group’s decision making competence. Important decisions are rarely made alone. In the ideal case, discourse ethics serve as the basic principle of discussions (Oelsnitz & Graf, 2006, p. 88–91). Tetems (2010, p. 161–170) defined the most important moral principle of discourse ethics in order to make decisions fair and rational:

- Define and clarify the problem, questions and issues.
- Opinions must be clearly and comprehensively stated.
- Each statement should be uttered to the best of one’s knowledge.
- Each member of the group is free to say his/her opinion and can express his/her concerns.
- Each opinion should be equally verified.
- Opinions of stakeholders who cannot participate should be considered as well.
- At the end of the discussion each group member should adopt the group’s opinion because it is legitimated by discourse ethics.

Often, negotiating is necessary in discussions. But people do not like to negotiate and they find themselves in a situation where they have to choose between the soft or hard way of negotiating. The Harvard method of negotiating follows a different way: “The method of principled negotiation is hard on the merits, soft on the people. It employs no tricks and no posturing” (Fisher, Ury & Patton, 1999, XIII–XIV). There should be no winners or losers after a negotiation but a wise agreement (if an agreement is possible). The relationship between the negotiators should not be hurt and the process should be efficient. Focusing on the following principles helps to make negotiating successful (Fisher et al., 1999, p. 11):

- “People: separate the people from the problem.
- Interests: focus on interests, not positions.
- Options: Generate a variety of possibilities before deciding what to do.
- Criteria: Insist that the result must be based on some objective standards.”

When playing the simulation game cooperation and decision making are decisive on the micro and meso level. Good decisions can only be made if the team is able to cooperate. Cooperation performance is visible in the country and on the supranational level of the simulation game.

Transcultural Competence

According to Berger (1973, p. 7) everything that men create is culture („Totalität des menschlichen Hervorbringens“) and can be understood as their second nature. In general, culture is like water for the fish, a matter of course but indefinable. Habermas (1981, p. 449–551) talked about the human environment (“Lebenswelt“) which is so evident that the human being cannot easily talk about it. Gibson (2000, p. 16) referred to an iceberg when he explains culture. Cultural phenomena like clothes, music, food, or language are perceivable, which means they are over the water in terms of the iceberg analogy. But the values, world views, beliefs, and perceptions are not directly accessible, which means that they are under the water in terms of the iceberg analogy.

Hofstede (2009, p. 5) defined culture as a catchword for mental software that influences our thinking, acting, and feeling. This mental program distinguishes groups.

Nations are one of these many groups. Nations do have an influence on the citizens, but today’s nations are not as homogenous as they once were. “In research on cultural differences, nationality – the passport one holds – should therefore be used with care” (Hofstede, Hofstede & Minkov, 2010, p. 21). Nevertheless, Hofstede’s research mainly focused on nationality. Understanding nations as homogenous cultures is normative and can lead to ethnocentrism (Bennett 1993). Culture is a collective phenomenon on different levels. Business culture, family culture, youth culture etc. are important topics in scientific community (Moebius 2010, p. 7). When people get in contact, worlds are colliding. This is the case in one and the same culture because everyone has an own personal mental system which makes everyone somehow a Robinson Crusoe (Kumbier & Schulz von Thun, 2010, p. 9). Therefore, everyone is entitled to human rights, a life in dignity and freedom: “All human beings are born free and equal in dignity and universal human rights. They are endowed with reason and conscience and should act towards one another in a spirit of brotherhood“ (UN, 1948, Art. 1).

To sum up: “Every man is, in certain respects, (a) like all other men, (b) like some other men, (c) like no other man” (Kluckhohn & Murray, 1948, p. 35). First of all, everyone is a human being. All are entitled to the same dignity, freedom, and universal human rights. Second, human beings are like “some other men”. The common culture can be one reason for this, but it must not be understood normatively or in an ethnocentric way and cannot be restricted to the national origin. Third, everyone is unique. Labeling people is inhuman insofar as it undermines their dignity through inadequate categorizing. “Multi- and intercultural theories stick to the idea that cultures are homogenous entities and therefore are inherently normative. Transculturality assumes that cultures are open for mutual exchange and cultures can be described as hybrid, interlinked, and heterogeneous” (Tafner, 2011, authors’ translation). Globalization, Europeanization, pluralisms and individualisms make people more similar and culture is getting more hybrid (Welsch, 1999, p. 4). Transcultural competence is built on tolerance. Respect, openness, and a tolerance for ambiguity are necessary attitudes. Cultural self-awareness, cultural knowledge, and sociolinguistic awareness can lead to an effective and appropriate communication and behavior in an intercultural situation (Deardorff, 2009, p. 480).

The simulation game is transcultural: In general, the students share a quite similar cultural environment but play different roles in the game. Therefore, all players have somehow similar cultural backgrounds. Nevertheless, there are differences because the self-invented culture is getting powerful and creates its own identity. The participants experience old and new, familiar and unfamiliar behaviors. Tolerating ambiguity and other transcultural competences must be applied.

Democratic Supranational Competence

In general, all democratic decisions follow the same procedures: in schools, enterprises, the community, in countries and in the European Union. The best way to learn democratic decision making is participating. Students participate as citizens and ministers in the game, and so they can experience being or not being successful in cooperating, negotiating, and making decisions. They feel what it means to represent a country and its ideas. “It is important to emphasize that a temporary role is not necessarily one that a person regards as unimportant or enacts lightly” (Ashfort 2001, p. 42–43). Therefore, the players identify themselves with their self-created cultures and the interests of their countries. They experience how difficult and how important cooperation is and how powerful different interests and cultures can be.

As young people do not have any experience with supranational activities at all, they have no idea about the pitfalls and possibilities of this kind of cooperation. Without having any experiences, it makes no sense to talk about the EU and other forms of less integrated international organizations. Everyone who has experienced supranational democratic decision process – even in a simulation game – has acquired more procedural knowledge than someone who has studied international and European law. The simulation game cannot substitute theoretical knowledge but can definitively promote a better understanding of the supranational idea and can be a starting point for deeper theoretical and practical insights.

Evaluating the Performative Outcome

Because of their complexity, simulation games are not easy to evaluate (Rebmann 2011, p. 29). In this simulation game, roles and situations can be quite freely arranged and individual behavior and solutions are supported and welcomed. Therefore, a competence model that explains the content and the behavior on different levels of learning outcomes as a clear cause-and-effect-chain is not available. A mixed-methods-approach primarily composed of qualitative methods and triangulation was used in order to find out answers to the following three research questions:

1. Does the simulation game work as a method in school and can it be recommended for schools?
2. What are the individual and collective effects of the simulation game in the class room?
3. Is the simulation game appropriate for competence oriented education?

The methods of the evaluation

The following methods were applied for the evaluation of the simulation game:

M 1: Questionnaires for the teachers before the simulation game started

In order to find out how the teachers of the classes involved in the project think about simulation games, statements on a Likert scale from “strongly agree” to “strongly disagree” were given. Beyond that, they had to assess the students’ competences as discussed above on a grading scale.

M 2: Analysis of the results of the reflection in the simulation game

In the reflection (phase 6) of the simulation game, the students had to collect supporting and hindering factors for cooperation and decision making. The eight most important ones were written on a flipchart, photographed and categorized with a qualitative content analysis according to Mayring (2010).

M 3: Observations of the teachers and the instructors of the simulation game

The teachers and the instructors were asked to write down their observations on one page. They did not get any further guidelines about the observation and the report. The triangulation taking place enabled a change of perspectives in order to reveal similarities and differences in the observations. There were only two instructors but they had seen 289 students playing in 16 different settings. The reports were categorized with the qualitative content analysis (Mayring 2010).

M 4: Questionnaires distributed to the students directly after having played the simulation game

The first question was an open one: “Please write down what you think about the simulation game right now.” The analysis was done with the qualitative content analysis (Mayring 2010). Beyond that, 15 statements on a four-point Likert scale about embedding, personal, democratic and supranational perceptions were asked.

M 5: Questionnaires for the students several weeks later

Statements concerning democratic and supranational perceptions were asked again some weeks later in order to compare them with the results after the game.

M 6: Qualitative e-mail-questionnaire six months after the game

Students of two schools got three open questions: Firstly, if you remember the simulation game, which situation comes to your mind first? Please describe the situation or picture. Secondly, when you think about your daily life routine, have you experienced situations in which you were thinking about the simulation game? Please describe a situation. Thirdly, imagine a student from your neighbor class asks you about the simulation game. What would you tell him/her?

M 7: Focus group with the teachers

At the end of the school year, the teachers participated in a focus group. At the beginning they got a questionnaire in order to assess the students’ competences again. Afterwards, the three research questions were asked and discussed in groups and in the plenum. After this, the results of the research project so far were presented and discussed in groups and in the plenum for a communicative validation.

The Summarized Interpreted Results

M 1: Questionnaires for the teachers before the simulation game started

The majority of teachers were female (9 out of 14), teaching in business colleges (10 out of 14), longer than five years in schools (13 out of 14) and have already used simulation games in the class room (9 out of 14). Their attitudes towards the European Union are quite positive. Although, they believe that simulation games are a very good method for competence-oriented education they rarely apply it in the class room.

The competences of the students were assessed on a five-point Likert scale with a mean of 2.7 by their teachers. At the end of the school year the question was repeated and the competences were assessed with a mean of 1.7 (see also M 7). Apart from social expectations and teachers' positive self-assessment of the learning outcomes, this could be interpreted as a positive effect of the simulation game.

M 2: Analysis of the results of the reflection in the simulation game

The students recognize without needing to be prompted that competences are decisive for successful discourses: 24% of the supporting factors can be summarized in the category "importance of negotiation and cooperation competences". This bunch of competences was indicated as the most important helpful factor. Its absence was described as the most hindering factor.

M 3: Observations of the teachers and the instructors of the simulation game

The students worked "with joy", in a "serious" manner and "with enthusiasm" on the assignments, so that all students were involved: They identified themselves with the country and their roles. One teacher wrote: "It was good for me to see their creative side." Another teacher describes: The students "experienced how different the interests of the participants are and how difficult and time-consuming it is to convince others or to find a solution that fits for everyone." The mixture of performance and supranational topics is emphasized by another teacher: "As observer I think that this simulation game is very useful for the students because they could experience the problem of finding consensus in the group, in the own country, and in a common entity. And they recognized how complicated the decision making process between 27 member states is, in which you have to decide on behalf of the respective country and on behalf of the EU as a community." The instructors stated that it was not always easy for the teachers to confine themselves to observation. Teachers tend to intervene and to participate in the game. A teacher self critically wrote: "For me it was not easy to stay in the background. Sometimes I would have liked to participate in the discussions and to give some hints and suggestions." Though, the students were told that the teachers do not grade the participation in the simulation game, the instructors indicated that they sometimes felt a kind of pressure to perform. The instructors also noticed a difference in the performance of the students of business colleges and the other high schools: Students of business colleges tend to be less creative than the others. They more often ask if something is allowed or not.

M 4 and M 5: Questionnaires distributed to the students directly after having played the simulation game and several weeks later

The students indicated that they better understood national and supranational democracy after the simulation game. This was the case directly after the game and also several weeks later. The following table shows the statements and the arithmetic mean of the agreement with these statements. The four-point items were accompanied by visual analog scale (from 1 = strongly agree to 4 = strongly disagree) clearly indicating equal spacing of response levels.

Table 1. Testing the results of debriefing and reflection.

Statements	Mean, N = 290, directly after the game	Mean, N = 179, several weeks after the game
Now I understand how democratic decisions are made.	1.5	1.7
I think that in reality democratic decisions are taken in a similar way to the game.	2.1	2.2
I think that in the real European Union different opinions are heavily discussed.	1.3	1.5
I think that in the real European Union the proposals for solutions differ among the Member States.	1.5	1.4
The game helped me to understand “democracy”.	1.7	1.9
I can imagine what happens in the European Union.	1.7	1.9
In future I will think more positive about participation, negotiation and democracy.	2.0	2.0

The results at two different points in time are reliable and show only marginal differences.

M 6: Qualitative e-mail-questionnaire six months after the game

Fun is a very important factor of simulation games. Answering question number 1, a student wrote: “I remember that I had so much fun. Especially, I remember the situation that the ministers were sitting at the table and discussing. This helped me to better understand the situation of politicians, especially with regard to the problem of trying to meet everyone’s demands. I believe that it is much more complicated in the EU because the wellbeing of many people depends on these decisions.” Another student wrote: “I remember the very intense discussions in the middle of the classroom because I found them very amusing and educational. I was minister of environment and because I am very much interested in environment in real life I got caught-up in the topic and could well represent my opinion! It was a lot of fun!” The answers to the second question show that it was much more than just pure fun: 16 out of 21 students stated

that they made quite a lot experiences. The topics were politics and democratic decisions as well as the European Union. Students also wrote that they overcame prejudices and gained a new understanding of politics. A student wrote: “My family was listening to the news at home and heard that a decision concerning EU-related issues could not be agreed upon. My parents said that the politicians were too incompetent to make decisions. I mentioned that it was so difficult already for my class to find common solutions and that it is therefore even harder for politicians who do not speak a common language to make difficult and important decisions.” Another student remarked that they are allowed to vote at the age of 16 and that they should therefore discuss politics.

M 7: Focus group with the teachers

At the end of the school year the competences of the students were assessed with a mean of 1.7. This can be interpreted as a positive effect of the game simulation (see also M 1). The results of the evaluation were discussed and the teachers agreed to the findings. All teachers underlined that the success of the simulation game depends on the successful embedding of the method into the pedagogical concept. One teacher said: “The simulation game is [...] one brick of many bricks in education. It is the sum of methods. It is a brick – an important one.”

Conclusion

Regarding the first research question it must be stressed that this evaluation refers to the simulation games played in the research project. Statements about the effect of the simulation game cannot be understood as a one dimensional cause-and-effect-chain. The results show that all evaluated games were successful and the participants, observers and instructors assessed them very positively. The embedding of the method into the pedagogical concept, the professional instructors and a coherent sequence consisting of introduction, identification, playing and reflection are the key factors for the positive results. It is recommended that additional creative and performative elements are implemented into the game to make it even more performative. It was also recommended that teachers who want to play the game either have to attend a specific training program or should be supported by professional instructors who play with the students (as was the case in this project).

The answer to the second research question can also be found in the context of performative pedagogy: The success and effects of the simulation game depends on the group dynamic and individual processes and conditions. The results of the research project show that there are real effects not only during but also after the game on the group and the individuals.

As an answer for the third question, it can be stated that all participants stated that competences are applied in the simulation game and can be fostered with this method.

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SKILL LEVEL OF WEB 2.0 TECHNOLOGY APPLICATIONS OF CERTIFIED EDUCATORS AND THE LINK TO ISTE/NETS STANDARDS



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Abstract

The research study was designed to examine the degree of perceived skill level of utilizing Web 2.0 technology applications among certified education professionals. In addition, this research study was designed to examine differences among various groups as well as reasons for these differences. Furthermore, the Web 2.0 applications presented in the survey were linked to the International Society for Technology in Education's National Educational Technology Standards and presented to participants to increase knowledge of Web 2.0 technology applications. The population included all certified education personnel at 34 schools. The perceived skill level of business educators as compared to all educators was significant and the overall sum score mean was one of the highest reported in this study. All educators reported a higher skill level for events and social networks. Business educators perceived a higher skill level for cloud computing; whereas cloud computing was a reported lower skill level for overall certified participants.

Introduction and Background Information

Web 2.0 can be described as an array of socially oriented Web-based tools that are free, or nearly free, and has led a movement from institutionally provided to freely available technology tools (Diaz, 2010). Web 2.0 has grown into the phenomenon of the 21st century. Educators have the accessibility to utilize interactive tools, but do they? The International Society for Technology in Education (ISTE) promotes the effective integration of technology by teachers, students, and administrators. ISTE is a not-for-profit organization devoted to supporting the use of information technology to assist in

improving teaching and learning of K-12 students and teacher education (International Society for Technology in Education [ISTE], 1997). The main goal of ISTE was to develop national standards for educational uses of technology to enhance educational and literacy improvements in school (Lam, 2007).

Ertmer and Ottenbreit-Leftwich (2010) suggested that professionals of the 21st century have a different philosophy than those in previous centuries, partly due to the many different technology tools used to perform their jobs. Technology has changed our society, and educators need to reflect this change in their classrooms. In today's world, educators must commit to being life-long learners and embrace technology and the rapidly changing technological environment. Our responsibility as educators is to prepare our students to thrive in the world when they leave our classrooms. Utilizing technology and having appropriate skills to integrate this technology will allow our students to succeed in any environment.

Statement of the Problem/Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this research study was to examine the degree of perceived skill level among certified education professionals when utilizing Web 2.0 technology applications. This study also linked those applications with the International Society for Technology in Education's National Educational Technology Standards (ISTE-NETS) and was presented to participants to increase knowledge of Web 2.0 technology applications. Furthermore, this study researched if there was a significant difference between the groups based on demographic data. The research problem of this study was to determine the degree of perceived skill level of Web 2.0 technology applications by certified education professionals and examine differences, if any, among various groups.

Research Questions

1. To what degree do certified education professionals, including business educators, perceive their skill level of interactive online technology applications?
2. To what extent are there statistical differences in the skill level of Web 2.0 applications among all sub groups (certification areas) of education professionals?
3. What are the differences among various demographic groups in relation to their skill level of interactive online technology tools?
4. To what degree do school administrators implement and model the use of technology based on technology standards?

Review of Related Literature

Solomon and Schrum (2007) discussed that in the beginning of the 21st century, the Internet transitioned from linking and clicking to creating and sharing. This

transformation was designated as Web 2.0 in which the user can not only research information, but can also create and share thoughts and ideas. Asselin and Moayeri (2011) suggested that many of our youth are utilizing interactive web, or Web 2.0, in their everyday lives. Education professionals should also commit to learning and utilizing Web 2.0 technologies to increase their skill level. Hosler and Meggison (2008) reported that business education has evolved from a discipline that taught typewriting, shorthand, and bookkeeping at the secondary level in the 20th century to a multi-level discipline that embraces technology beginning at the elementary school level in the 21st century. Bruett (2006) suggested that it is vital that teachers utilize technology in the classroom to prepare students to be competitive in the global economy, an economy that would not be possible without current technology.

Brush, Glazewski, and Khe Foon (2008) suggested that “specific technology skills have been identified as a major factor affecting the integration of technology” (p. 114). The lack of technology skills results in teachers not integrating technology, and teachers with technology skills are more likely to integrate technology. Hur (2011) suggested that there are many educational benefits to integrating Web 2.0 technology into the classroom, which indicates a critical need for educating teachers on how to integrate this technology effectively. Holden and Rada (2011) identified that “user acceptance, satisfaction, and perceived usability of innovative technologies are crucial to the diffusion of those technologies” (p. 343). The interactive 21st century demands that educators have the skill level, knowledge, and ability to effectively implement these technologies into their teaching practices.

Methods and Procedures

Participants

Superintendents and/or school principals from various school systems across a state in the southeast were contacted to obtain permission to survey participants during faculty/in-service meetings at the beginning of the school year. Upon granted permission, a survey administrator attended in-service sessions at designated school systems. The survey administrator was provided by the research team in this study. The population for this study included all certified education personnel at each of the participating schools. A brief introduction/overview of the research was provided to participants. By completing the survey and returning to the researcher, respondents were granting their consent. All surveys (842) were returned to the researchers and entered for data analysis. Technology training and professional development in the area of implementing Web 2.0 tools in the classroom as well as linking those Web 2.0 tools to the ISTE-NETS standards were provided to participating schools and school systems. The technology training was individualized based on the results of their data by the researchers who conducted this study.

Research Design

A quantitative survey instrument, Interactive Technology Applications Survey, was developed by the researchers in this study to gather demographic information and data

from certified education professionals in regards to their perceptions about Web 2.0 applications. The basis for the items on the survey was derived from the review of literature and the research objectives of this study. To ensure the validity of the scores and the usability of the survey instrument, a panel of expert university faculty members was asked to evaluate the content. Panel comments, input and recommendations were considered and incorporated into the final instrument. Cronbach's alpha was calculated to measure homogeneity of items. The coefficient alpha of .938 among the 13 items assessing participants' skill level of Web 2.0 applications indicated very high instrument reliability.

The respondents were asked various demographic and background questions in the first section of the survey instrument. Next, participants were asked to rate their skill level of Web 2.0 technology applications using the following four-point Likert-type scale, with 1 = No Skill, 2 = Low Level of Skill, 3 = Moderate Level of Skill, and 4 = High Level of Skill. Finally, participants were asked to rank their administrator's implementation of technology standards in the last section of the survey. The review of current literature provided a basis for topics that were evaluated in the survey.

Data Analysis, Findings and Results

Descriptive statistics were used to organize, summarize and describe collected data. Analysis of variance (ANOVA), t-test and Pearson product-moment correlation were the statistical procedures used to examine the data.

Eight hundred forty-two (N=842) education professionals participated in this study. Of the respondents who completed the survey, the majority 749 (89%) were teachers; 37 (4.4%) were administrators; 23 (2.7%) were counselors and 33 (3.9%) were media specialists. The education professionals included in this study were certified in the following areas: administration (n=69); language arts (n=157); counseling (n=24); career and technical (n=47); business (n=25); elementary (n=377); math (n=131); PE/health (n=68); social studies (n=135); science (n=129) special needs (n=85); foreign language (n=9) and fine arts (n=26). Of the population that participated in the study, 168 (20%) were male and 673 (80%) were female. Thirty-four schools within seven school systems in one state in the southeastern United States were included in this research study.

Research Question 1: To what degree do certified education professionals, including business educators, perceive their skill level of interactive online technology applications?

The participants were asked to rank their perceived skill level of 13 categories of Web 2.0 technology applications using the following four-point Likert-type scale: (1) No Skill; (2) Low Level of Skill; (3) Moderate Level of Skill and (4) High Level of Skill. Business educators felt they had the highest skill level with events, social networks, and cloud computing; whereas, they reported the lowest skill level with social bookmarks, blogs, and podcasts. Overall, certified education professionals reported the highest skill level with events, social networks, social news networks, and music; while, they indicated the lowest skill level with social bookmarks, cloud computing, and podcasts. Table 1 reflects

the percentages of degrees of participants' perceived importance of Web 2.0 applications as reported by all educators in this research study.

Table 1.

Percentages of Perceived Skill Level of Web 2.0 Technology Applications

Web 2.0 Application ^a	High Level (%)	Moderate Level (%)	Low Level (%)	No Skill (%)
Blogs	8.0	34.6	34.4	23.0
Cloud Computing	9.3	29.7	31.8	29.2
Events	18.2	46.7	24.0	11.1
Music	18.2	39.6	28.7	13.5
Pictures	15.2	40.3	28.5	16.0
Podcasts	10.5	30.8	33.8	24.9
Question/Reviews/Ratings/Polling/Surveys	11.2	37.0	32.9	18.9
Social Bookmarks	7.9	27.3	35.1	29.7
Social Networks	23.3	38.7	24.1	13.9
Social News Networks	19.7	38.7	28.0	13.6
Video Sharing	12.4	34.4	32.6	20.6
Virtual Learning Network	13.6	32.6	32.3	21.5
Wiki	13.1	31.2	32.3	23.4

^a $n = 842$ for each Web 2.0 Application.

Research Question 2: To what extent are there statistical differences in the skill level of Web 2.0 applications among all sub groups (certification areas) of education professionals?

A Pearson product-moment correlation design was utilized for each of the 13 Web 2.0 applications and the 13 different certification areas of education professionals. A significant positive relationship was indicated between business educators and cloud computing [$r(841) = .139, p < .01$]; events [$r(841) = .084, p < .05$]; podcasts [$r(841) = .070, p < .05$]; virtual learning network [$r(841) = .090, p < .01$]; and wiki [$r(841) = .077, p < .05$]. A significant positive relationship was indicated between career and technical educators and cloud computing [$r(842) = .084, p < .05$]. A significant positive relationship was indicated between language arts educators and music [$r(842) = .070, p < .05$]; social networks [$r(842) = .075, p < .05$]; video sharing [$r(842) = .072, p < .05$]; and virtual learning networks [$r(842) = .091, p < .01$]. A significant positive relationship was indicated between special needs educators and social news networks [$r(841) = .077, p < .05$]. A significant positive relationship was indicated between foreign language educators and pictures [$r(842) = .077, p < .05$]; podcasts [$r(842) = .072, p < .05$]; social networks [$r(842) = .068, p < .05$]; and video sharing [$r(842) = .071, p < .05$]. A significant negative relationship was indicated between physical/health educators and blogs [$r(842) = -.069, p < .05$]; music [$r(842) = -.083, p < .05$]; pictures [$r(842) = -.081, p < .05$];

reviews/polling/surveys [$r(842) = -.068, p < .05$]; social networks [$r(842) = -.110, p < .01$]; social news network [$r(842) = -.103, p < .01$]; video sharing [$r(842) = -.079, p < .05$]; and virtual learning networks [$r(842) = -.088, p < .01$].

A sum score was calculated for the overall perceived level of skill as ranked by all certified education professionals. The overall sum score could range from 13 to 52. An ANOVA was conducted and found that the overall sum score for the perceived level of skill for the Web 2.0 applications by business educators as compared to all educators was significant at the .05 level, $F(1, 841) = 6.024, p = .014$; by foreign language educators as compared to all educators was significant at the .05 level, $F(1, 842) = 4.082, p = .044$; and by physical/health educators as compared to all educators was significant at the .05 level, $F(1, 842) = 6.521, p = .011$.

The overall sum score for perceived level of skill for the Web 2.0 technology applications by administrators as compared to all educators was analyzed utilizing an ANOVA design and was not significant at the .05 level, $F(1, 842) = .220, p = .639$; by counselors as compared to all educators was analyzed utilizing an ANOVA design and was not significant at the .05 level, $F(1, 842) = .466, p = .495$; by career and technical educators as compared to all educators was analyzed utilizing an ANOVA design and was not significant at the .05 level, $F(1, 842) = 1.639, p = .201$; by elementary educators as compared to all educators was analyzed utilizing an ANOVA design and was not significant at the .05 level, $F(1, 842) = .232, p = .630$; by math educators as compared to all educators was analyzed utilizing an ANOVA design and was not significant at the .05 level, $F(1, 842) = .085, p = .771$; by language arts educators as compared to all educators was analyzed utilizing an ANOVA design and was not significant at the .05 level, $F(1, 842) = 2.626, p = .105$; by social studies educators as compared to all educators was analyzed utilizing an ANOVA design and was not significant at the .05 level, $F(1, 840) = .025, p = .874$; by special needs educators as compared to all educators was analyzed utilizing an ANOVA design and was not significant at the .05 level, $F(1, 841) = .722, p = .396$; by science educators as compared to all educators was analyzed utilizing an ANOVA design and was not significant at the .05 level, $F(1, 842) = .445, p = .505$; and by fine arts educators as compared to all educators was analyzed utilizing an ANOVA design and was not significant at the .05 level, $F(1, 841) = .010, p = .922$. No further tests were necessary. The means and standard deviations of perceived skill level of Web 2.0 technology applications for all educators and for all sub groups (certification areas) are reported in Table 2.

Table 2

Mean and Standard Deviation for Perceived Skill Level of Web 2.0 Technology Applications (Sum Score)

Educator	<i>n</i>	<i>M</i> ^a	<i>SD</i>
Foreign Language Educators	9	37.67	7.416
Business Educators	25	35.72	10.922
Career & Technical Educators	47	32.55	10.622
Language Arts Educators	157	31.87	10.028
Special Needs Educators	85	31.56	9.301
Administrators	69	31.22	9.933
Science Educators	129	31.22	10.596
Social Studies Educators	135	30.77	10.258
All Educators	842	30.65	10.494
Elementary Educators	377	30.46	9.793
Fine Arts Educators	26	30.46	10.085
Math Educators	131	30.40	10.345
Counselors	24	29.21	10.608
Physical/Health Educators	68	27.54	11.020

^a Means are based on the sum score for perceived skill level of the 13 categories of Web 2.0 applications and could range from 13-52.

Research Question 3: What are the differences among various demographic groups in relation to their skill level of interactive online technology tools?

The overall sum score for the perceived level of skill of the 13 Web 2.0 applications was compared to various demographic groups. An analysis of variance (ANOVA), t-test, or Pearson product-moment correlation was conducted to find the subsequent results. With an alpha level of .05, type of school (city, county) [$t(840) = 3.599, p < .001$]; title I school (yes, no) [$t(840) = 2.847, p = .005$]; years in education [$r(828) = -.313, p < .001$]; and age [$r(797) = -.356, p < .001$] were all significant. However, current position (administrator, teacher, counselor, media specialist) [$F(4, 842) = 1.834, p = .120$]; highest degree (bachelors, masters, specialist, doctorate) [$F(3, 836) = 1.407, p = .239$]; and gender (male, female) [$t(839) = .333, p = .739$] were not significant. No further tests were necessary. The participant data for these various demographic groups is reported in Table 3. The mean age for all educators was 40.69 years, whereas the mean number of years in education was 13.58 years.

Table 3.

Participant Data of Demographic Groups

Groups ^a	<i>n</i>	Percent
Current Position		
Administrator	32	3.8
Teacher	746	88.6
Counselor	18	2.1
Media Specialist	46	5.5
Gender		
Male	168	20
Female	673	80
School Type		
City	275	32.7
County	567	67.3
Highest Degree		
Bachelor	314	37.6
Master	435	52.0
Specialist	77	9.2
Doctorate	10	1.2
Title I School		
Yes	328	39.0
No	514	61.0

^a All educators

Conclusions

All educators reported a higher skill level for events and social networks. This is reassuring because these are likely technology tools used on a regularly basis, which supports the idea that using technology frequently increases perceived skill level. Second, business educators perceived a higher skill level for cloud computing; whereas cloud computing was a reported lower skill level for overall certified participants. This is encouraging because business educators reported being current with innovative technology. Third, both business educators and overall certified educators perceived skill level of social bookmarks and podcasts were the lowest. The perceived skill level of business educators as compared to all educators was significant and the overall sum score mean was one of the highest reported in this study. Respondents in city school systems reported higher perceived skill levels for Web 2.0 applications than did respondents in county school systems. Years in education and age reported by the participants were significant in relation to the overall sum score for perceived skill level. In Title 1 school systems respondents reported higher perceived skill levels for Web 2.0 applications.

Recommendations

Since business educators reported being current with innovative technology, they should facilitate instruction to other faculty members wishing to learn new technology. Professional development should be planned to increase perceived skill level of social bookmarks and podcasts because these were ranked the lowest by both business educators and all certified educators. Given that the perceived skill level of business educators as compared to all educators was significant and the overall sum score mean was one of the highest reported in this study was reassuring since business educators should be the trailblazers in the field of technology. Steps need to be taken to ensure that county school systems have the necessary resources and training to implement Web 2.0 applications seeing as respondents in city school systems reported higher perceived skill levels for Web 2.0 applications than did respondents in county school systems. Further research is needed to determine the reasons why years in education and age reported by the participants were significant in relation to the overall sum score for perceived skill level. It is inspiring that Title 1 school system respondents reported higher perceived skill levels for Web 2.0 applications because Title 1 funding can be used for technology purposes.

Additional research is needed to determine the reasons for various differences regarding the perceived skill level of Web 2.0 technologies. Possible areas for additional scientific study include professional development opportunities, effectiveness of professional development, and training and funding for professional development for educators. It is further recommended that this study be repeated in future years and in other K-12 schools across a wider geographic area.

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