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Currently there are over 200 EMBA programs worldwide. These programs have grown in popularity and have increased by over a third in the last three years. Overall, schools are aggressively marketing their EMBA programs, and, as a consequence, prospective EMBA participants have numerous options for EMBA program enrollment. To successfully compete in the current environment, EMBA programs must understand and market to the expectations of prospective EMBAs. This paper explores the suitability of using the Teaching Goals Inventory (TGI) developed by Angelo and Cross (1993) as an instrument to analyze the expectations of EMBA candidates in the United States and describes the results of a survey of 262 EMBA participants using the TGI.

Introduction

The Executive Master in Business Administration (EMBA) is increasingly viewed as a viable option for managers to obtain an advanced degree. The participants in these programs feel the need for advanced work in business-related topics and are seeking something other than the traditional MBA program. In reaction to this demand, schools of business worldwide have introduced EMBA programs. According to Maury Kalnitz, managing director of the Executive MBA Council, a not-for-profit international association of universities based in Atlanta, EMBA membership has increased 35% over the last three years, and the bulk of new schools are international (Tyler, 2004). EMBA council membership in October 2004 included 203 universities (EMBA Council).

Despite increasing enrollments, the pool of potential applicants for MBA programs is decreasing. The results of a survey performed in 2004 by the

Graduate Management Admission Council indicates that two years ago MBA applications peaked, and since that time applications to the nation's MBA programs have dropped for two consecutive years (Mangan 2004). According to Mangan (2004), 75% of traditional MBA programs experienced a reduction of more than 20% in applications, and the number of applications to 26% of EMBA programs decreased (Mangan 2004). As a consequence of the expansion of EMBA programs and the reduced pool of applicants, competition among business schools is increasing. This increased competition will require schools of business to effectively focus marketing efforts by developing an understanding of prospective students that match the uniqueness of most EMBA programs.

EMBA programs are unique in terms of length, subject matter coverage, and overall philosophy. Criteria for acceptance into an EMBA program typically consist of an evaluation of academic transcripts, GMAT scores, letters of recommendation, and some level of work experience. Additionally, some programs require face-to-face interviews to get a feel for the applicants' personalities and to further explore their educational and program expectations. However well intentioned or institutionalized the review and acceptance process is, and no matter how much due diligence is performed by both parties the question still remains: what are the student's expectations, and will they be a good match for program expectations? To increase the likelihood that program and student expectations are congruent, it would seem logical that some kind of additional screening or assessment of prospective EMBA students be performed. By necessity, an EMBA program must attract and recruit those students that have expectations consistent with program goals.

Despite literature replete with student demographics and graduate programs (Phillip, 1993; Lango, 1995; Grandos, 1999; King and Chepyator, 1996; Poock, and Love, 2001; Perna, 2004), research on what prospective EMBA candidates consider important is scant. This scarcity in the literature is especially notable in regards to the use of survey instruments as tools in the selection process for graduate students in general and those considering the EMBA in particular. This investigation will contribute to the understanding of what these students consider important through use of the Teaching Goals Inventory developed by Angelo and Cross (1993).

To effectively segment the EMBA market requires an in-depth knowledge of prospective students beyond basic demographics. The gathering of demographic data on prospective students is relatively easy. However, demographic information by itself does not provide the information necessary to effectively segment this competitive market. Schools of business will be required to develop a more thorough understanding of what prospective EMBA students value and expect out of a program of study. The goal of this research is to assist and further develop this required understanding.

Study Methodology

Instrument

The study utilized a survey instrument developed by Angelo and Cross to measure teaching goals (Angelo and Cross, 1993). According to Angelo and Cross (1993), the Teaching Goals Inventory (TGI) was created as a self-assessment instrument of instructional goals. The purpose of the instrument is to help university instructors accomplish individual course goals. Consequently, instructors can assess how well their teaching accomplishes the objectives they set. The effectiveness of student learning can also be analyzed from survey results. The instrument also provides value for instructor dialogue when different instructors discuss learning goals.

The TGI consists of fifty-one value/expectation related questions using a five-point Likert-type scale where five represents "essential" and two represents "unimportant." The scale value of one was used if the item was considered "not applicable." These fifty-one items are subdivided into six categories established from previous research conducted by Angelo and Cross (1993). Items 1–8 comprise the first category and are described as "Higher Order Thinking Skills." Items 9–17 comprise the second category described as "Basic Academic Success Skills." Items 18–25 comprise the third category described as "Discipline Specific Knowledge and Skills." "Liberal Arts and Academic Values" describe items 26–35 and comprise the forth category. Items 36–43 comprise the fifth category described as "Work and Career Preparation," and the last category, "Personal Development," includes items 44–51.

The business discipline importance question required the respondents to rank-order business disciplines in order of importance. The business discipline areas were listed in alphabetical order and respondents rank ordered the nine areas with one representing the "most important" and nine representing the "least important."

The survey instrument was modified to include what students considered important in their program selection process. Other additions to the instrument included items for capturing gender, age, student's perception of the role of the teacher, and years of career experience. All returned surveys were reviewed and evaluated for completeness and accuracy. The review resulted in twelve surveys being removed from the analysis.

Respondents

The respondent group participating in the current study was comprised of 134 U.S. students enrolled in an Executive Masters of Business Administration (EMBA) program of a large southeastern university. The group included forty-three females and eighty-four males with seven not reporting gender. Their age

ranged from 26 years to 62 years with a median age of 38 years. Thirty-nine different academic disciplines were represented in the respondent group. More respondents (five) cited finance than any other discipline.

Analysis

A principal components confirmatory factor analysis was conducted to identify underlying dimensions of student instructional goals. This procedure provides for data reduction and summarization helping simplify further analyses (Hair, Anderson, & Tatham, 1987). This analysis will also show whether the categories presented by Angelo and Cross (1993) for the instrument are supported.

To assess the appropriateness of the data for factor analysis, several key statistics were examined. First, a review of the commonalities derived from the factor analysis was conducted. These were all relatively large, suggesting that the data set is appropriate (Stewart, 1981). Next, the Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin (KMO) measure of sampling adequacy was computed. Based on Kaiser and Rice's (1974) evaluative criteria, the result of .862 is considered "meritorious." Finally, the statistic for Bartlett's (1950) sphericity test was 2520.8 ($p < .000$), providing further evidence that the population of variables are independent and appropriate for factor analysis. Nineteen items had low loadings across all factors indicating lack of fit with the established factors and were systematically removed according to a procedure prescribed by Comrey (1973). The resulting factor structure provided six factors of teaching goals as seen in Table 1. This structure confirms the categories identified by Angelo and Cross (1993) supporting their underlying dimensions previously identified.

The reliability of the factors was checked to support any measures of validity that might be employed. All factors were checked for internal consistency using Cronbach alphas. According to Nunnally (1978), the Cronbach alpha procedure is an estimate of reliability based on the average correlations between items within each factor where 0.6 is sufficient. All values of coefficient alpha were acceptable with three above 0.90 which are acceptably high.

Several assessments were made to determine the construct validity of the factors. An individual principal components analysis was conducted on each factor to determine if its set of variables would form a single factor independent of other variables (Nunnally, 1978). All factors were shown to be unifactorial, suggesting each was a valid construct.

Table 1.   Factor Analysis of Teaching Goal Inventory Items for all Respondents

Items	Loadings	Alpha
Factor 1: Liberal Arts and Academic Values		.9124
Develop informed understanding of science and technology	.801	
Develop an informed historical perspective	.751	
Develop an informed sense of other cultures	.698	
Develop capacity to make informed ethical choices	.672	
Develop aesthetic appreciations	.632	
Develop commitment exercising citizenship responsibilities	.627	
Develop a lifelong love of learning	.597	
Develop appreciation of liberal arts and sciences	.587	
Factor 2: Personal Development		.9149
Develop a commitment to one's own values	.744	
Develop a capacity to make wise decisions	.739	
Develop capacity to think for one's self	.714	
Improve self-esteem/self-confidence	.682	
Cultivate a sense of responsibility for one's own behavior	.665	
Develop respect for others	.651	
Cultivate an active commitment to honesty	.650	
Cultivate emotional health and well-being	.563	
Factor 3: Basic Academic Success Skills		.9110
Develop ability to concentrate	.826	
Improve skill at paying attention	.810	
Improve memory skills	.809	
Improve reading skills	.770	
Improve listening skills	.711	
Factor 4: Higher Order Thinking Skills		.7599
Develop ability to draw reasonable inferences from observations	.849	
Develop ability to synthesize and integrate information/ideas	.819	
Develop ability to distinguish between fact and opinion	.649	
Develop ability to apply principles to problems and situations	.590	
Factor 5: Discipline Specific Knowledge and Skills		.7946
Learn to evaluate methods and materials	.870	
Learn techniques and methods to gain new knowledge	.782	
Learn to appreciate important contributions	.572	
Prepare for transfer or graduate study	.563	
Factor 6: Work and Career Preparation		.7509
Improve ability to organize and use time efficiently	.777	
Develop ability to perform skillfully	.737	
Improve ability to follow directions, instructions, and plans	.663	

The KMO measure of sampling adequacy was also used to provide empirical evidence supporting the appropriateness of the data for each unifactorial determination. The KMO values are acceptable and considered primarily in the meritorious category according to Kaiser and Rice (1974). The results of the unifactorial tests, the percentage of variance in the original variables explained by the factor and the KMO statistics, are provided in Table 2.

Table 2. Unifactorial Tests of Teaching Goal Inventory Factors

Factor	KMO	Variance Explained (%)
Factor 1: Liberal Arts and Academic Values	**.884**	**59.1**
Factor 2: Personal Development	**.877**	**62.9**
Factor 3: Basic Academic Success Skills	**.851**	**73.9**
Factor 4: Higher Order Thinking Skills	**.747**	**58.6**
Factor 5: Discipline Specific Knowledge and Skills	**.733**	**62.3**
Factor 6: Work and Career Preparation	**.658**	**66.9**

ONEWAY analysis of variance procedures were used to assess whether the categorical variables of years of experience, gender, age, class type, or education type influenced the teaching goal inventory factors described earlier. Additionally, stepwise regression analyses were used to analyze if student discipline preferences influenced the selection of items encompassing the teaching goal inventory factors. The results of these analyses are presented and discussed in the next section.

Results and Discussion

Years of experience, gender, age, class type (either general public or contract with single employer), and education type were investigated to determine if they had an influence on the teaching goal inventory factors. Findings reveal that only education type was significantly influential and for only the two factors of Liberal Arts and Academic Values (Factor 1) and Higher Order Thinking Skills (Factor 4).

For Factor 1: Liberal Arts and Academic Values, results indicate a significant difference ($F = 2.668$, $p < .05$) between the four different education types identified in the study. Further investigation using Student-Newman-Keuls analyses for identifying differentiating homogenous subsets revealed that respondents with science educations were significantly higher than respondents with business, engineering/math, or liberal arts educations. This is especially interesting in that respondents with majors in the liberal arts did not identify items that would make this factor more important. Perhaps the limited exposure to liberal arts by science majors triggers responses indicating the need for such topics.

Factor 4: Higher Order Thinking Skills was also shown to have significantly differed ($F = 2.498$, $p < .05$) across education types. A Student-Newman-Keuls analysis was again used to show differentiated homogenous subsets. Results indicate that individuals with liberal arts educational backgrounds differed significantly and rated this factor lower compared with respondents with business, engineering/math, or science backgrounds. While difficult to interpret, it may be hypothesized that business, engineering/math, and science-type respondents believe that their disciplines require higher order thinking compared to respondents with liberal arts backgrounds. As some might agree, certain disciplines are not "Rocket Science."

Results of the regression analyses described earlier identified two factors that were significantly influenced by academic discipline preferences impacting on learning goals. The general model indicated that Factor 5: Discipline Specific Knowledge and Skills ($F = 5.416$, $p < .05$) varied significantly to the preferences. Further analysis revealed that of the academic preferences listed, finance ($t = 2.327$, $p < .05$) was the only significant influence on Factor 5. Again, interpretation of this result is at best speculative. While all academic disciplines require specific knowledge and skills, these results state that those considering finance important to their personal learning goals differed in their responses to items making up Factor 5. The key question unanswered in this study is why respondents who consider finance more important respond differently.

Results also indicated that ratings of the importance of academic discipline preferences on personal learning goals also influenced Factor 6: Work and Career Preparation ($f = 4.836$, $p < .05$). Further analyses revealed that Marketing ($t = -2.199$, $p < .05$) was the only academic discipline influencing Factor 6 and that the influence was negative. Although speculative, one explanation is that perhaps respondents feel that formal academic preparation in marketing is less important than the actual practice of a marketing career when compared with the other disciplines mentioned.

Conclusion

The study results support the validity of the TGI instrument in that the factor structure supported the categories that had previously been determined from the research conducted by Angelo and Cross (1993). The modifications to the TGI provided additional information for analysis. The inclusion of demographic data and business discipline ranking was intended to further develop the TGI as a predictive model of EMBA preferences. While having great intuitive appeal, the use of a modified TGI was limited in its predictive ability. The results indicate that of the demographic data gathered, only education type was significantly influential and for only two factors associated with the instrument. Results were likewise limited when the analysis of academic ranking data and factors were assessed. Again, results indicated that only two factors were influenced.

The results of this exploratory investigation suggest that inventorying EMBA student preferences, while a worthwhile endeavor, is still in need of further development and study. One approach is to examine other survey instruments that may give promise to inventorying individual attributes that help match potential EMBA students to programs. Another approach is to assess more discretely the career experiences of EMBA students to determine if attributes not captured in the current study might be more predictive of the TGI factors. Despite the lack of an abundance of findings, this study has furthered the understanding of influences of student backgrounds and perceptions on program qualities directly and indirectly on program selection.

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