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Collaborative learning in a marketing strategy education context

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Abstract

This study examines how a teaching team attempted to encourage collaborative learning in a fourth year competitive marketing strategy course within a business degree programme through the use of various experiential education techniques, including a "live" case study. Data gathered through student feedback and business client and tutor interviews provided insights into how the elements within the programme facilitated closer connections between the learning environment and the real world of business and co-creation of knowledge. Insights gained from the research are used as the preliminary basis for a dynamic model to guide future research into education programs that involve collaborative interactions among students, faculty and "real" clients to co-create new business knowledge. Implications for educators and researchers are discussed.

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Introduction

How to encourage multiple stakeholders to co-create value is a topical issue in marketing (e.g., Payne, Storbacka & Frow, 2008; Vargo & Lusch, 2004), strategic management (e.g. Prahalad & Ramaswamy, 2004), and corporate responsibility and social entrepreneurship (e.g. Brugmann & Prahalad, 2007). The co-creation of value also extends beyond purely commercial concerns. The challenge for marketing and management educators, then, is to replicate this trend in, and beyond, the classroom through the use of collaborative and experiential learning techniques.

This study, in line with recent research into the co-creation of learning (e.g. Runquist, Kerns, Fee, Choi & Glittenbery, 2006), as well as more established research in the fields of experiential learning (Kolb, 1984) and collaborative learning (Johnson & Johnson, 1975), explores the sometimes unexpected nature of feedback in a case study of students in a fourth-year competitive marketing strategy class at a university in New Zealand. The results confirm that learning is multi-directional and that all key actors (teachers, students and the client) benefit from learning and also help to co-create it. The practical implications include insights into how experiential learning that incorporates and facilitates collaborative interactions have advantages for management education.

Background

Biggs and Tang's (2007) description of student, teacher and contextual factors incorporate many of the ideas within Biggs' (2003) 3P model, but in an integrative way, thus addressing some concerns about the directionality and hierarchical nature of the original model. However, the 3P model, while perhaps somewhat limited in comparison with Biggs and Tang's later framework, proved to be a useful starting point for the teaching team who redeveloped a fourth year competitive marketing strategy course. The model prompted the development of more interactive learning and teaching

activities for students to experience the co-creation of learning. In this way, the redevelopment mirrored the co-creation of value idea that has been highlighted as important in the marketing, strategic management and corporate responsibility and social entrepreneurship arenas referred to above. The following review initially focuses on the three main elements of the Biggs (2003) model – presage, process and product factors – and then extends this by addressing relevant issues related to co-creation, experiential and collaborative learning.

Presage factors (student factors, teaching context)

There is evidence that student factors, particularly prior knowledge, ability and motivation, play an important role in the effectiveness of teaching and learning outcomes (Richardson, 2005). Students typically demonstrate one of three different learning approaches – a deep, surface or strategic or results-oriented approach (Richardson, 2005; Wilson & Fowler, 2005). However, the same students may use different approaches, depending on the context. There is also evidence that some students combine different learning approaches (Young, Klemz & Murphy, 2003).

It also appears that the teaching context may influence students' motivations to learn, as well as influencing their learning strategies. Superficial learning strategies tend to be linked to extrinsic motivations (such as grades for completing set tasks), while intrinsic motivations are more likely to result in the use of deep cognitive (i.e., organisation, elaboration and critical thinking) and meta-cognitive (i.e., monitoring, planning and regulating) strategies (Young, 2005).

Whereas students who report themselves as "typically deep" learners are more consistent in their approaches across different environments (e.g. conventional lectures and action-based project work), those who are "typically surface" learners are more likely to adopt deeper learning strategies if they are immersed in an action learning context (Wilson & Fowler, 2005). The teaching context or learning environment influences not only student learning preferences and expectations, and levels of satisfaction with learning outcomes, but also teaching styles and activities.

The use of thought-provoking questions suggests a Socratic teaching style: a style in which a teacher plays an important role in encouraging reflection (Huba & Freed, 2000;

Knapp, 1992), and which, in turn, facilitates critical thinking, an important component of deep approaches to learning. One way to improve student motivations to adopt deeper learning approaches is to encourage psychological ownership of activities such as group projects. According to Wood (2003), ownership affects group members' attitudes through providing greater perceived influence and control. This is achieved by allowing students to make choices and provide their own ideas and/or materials. In turn, this is likely to lead to higher levels of satisfaction and self-reported learning.

Another way to improve motivation and to encourage deeper learning is to adopt assessment practices which reward involvement, exploration and inquiry, rather than the completion of task objectives. Young (2005) warns that teachers should use rewards sparingly, though, because rewards contingent on task performance can undermine intrinsic motivation and promote ego-social goal orientation.

There appear to be strong correlations between academics' educational philosophies and assessment practices (Samuelowicz & Bain, 2002). Karns (2005) argues that academics should position themselves as "personal trainers" who guide and challenge their students to improve their performance. His research indicates that marketing students value activities that are challenging, as well as enjoyable. Using the Karns (2005) analogy, one would expect a "personal trainer" to assess student performance as much on the levels of commitment, improvement and reflection on the learning experience as the ability to complete defined tasks. There is thus some argument for experiential learning to be a central focus for tertiary business "training" programmes.

Process factors (learning-focused activities) and product factors (learning outcomes)

There has been a trend in the past decade or so towards the increasing use of experiential learning activities in university education in general (Huba & Freed, 2000; Lee, Greene, Dodom, Schechter, & Slatta, 2004; Wilson & Fowler, 2005) and in marketing and strategic management education in particular (e.g., Elam & Spotts, 2004; Henson, Kennett & Kennedy, 2003; Karns, 2005; Lopez & Lee 2005; McLoughlin, 2004; Smith & Van Doren, 2005; Wee, Kek & Kelley, 2003). The major reason for this, as implied in the earlier discussion of student factors, appears to be to encourage deeper approaches to learning (Kember, Leung, & Kwan, 2002) and, in some cases, the double

loop or generative learning that questions the learning process itself (Lizzio & Wilson, 2004). Experiential pedagogies also create more interesting, involving and memorable experiences, and facilitate more effective and durable learning (Elam & Spotts, 2004).

Student-focused, experiential learning activities have been defined in a number of ways, including inquiry-guided learning (Lee et al., 2004), problem-based learning (Wee et al., 2003), action learning (McLoughlin, 2004), reality-based learning (Smith & Van Doren, 2004) and authentic learning (Stein, Isaacs & Andrews, 2004). The main similarities among these approaches relate to the fuzzy problems that are set in and/or mimic the real world.

Experiential learning activities in management education include written and live (client and/or web-based) case studies, planning projects, product or service innovation problems, computer simulations, market research exercises, and creative advertising and promotion projects. These are usually supplemented with more traditional lecture and tutorial activities which often tend to diminish in importance as students progress through the stages of their degree programme.

A number of business education researchers are calling for greater use of case studies and client projects to improve students' motivation to develop deeper learning skills and to prepare them for the job market. These can be web-based cases (e.g., Henson, et al., 2003) or "live" cases or client projects (e.g., Elam & Spotts, 2004; Karns, 2005; Lopez & Lee, 2005; Smith & Van Doren, 2004). In live cases, teachers act as facilitators rather than instructors, learning aims will often relate to "co-responsibility" (participation in, appreciation for, and incorporation of, a variety of learning experiences), expanding student experiences, and improving the transferability of experiences. These aims are in line with Kolb's (1984) definition of learning as the creation of knowledge through the transformation of experience. The outcomes can also benefit a wide range of stakeholders, including students, professors, clients, universities, employers and wider communities (Lopez & Lee, 2005).

However, client-based case studies and projects such as these are not necessarily easy teaching options. They tend to be more difficult to organise and manage than traditional, didactic teaching and learning activities, and are more challenging for both students and teachers who have to adopt critical approaches (e.g., uncovering actual or potential

problems of companies, rather than reporting symptoms) to ill-defined questions for which there may not be any one correct answer (Henson, et al., 2003). Real world learning activities are usually more complex and ambiguous, and require more deftness on the part of teachers to help students achieve intended learning outcomes (Karns, 2005). Despite their value, many teachers still avoid client-based projects because of difficulties in finding good clients, uncertainty related to grading activities that require so much feedback, and the considerable time involved at all stages throughout the project (Lopez & Lee, 2005). Thus, cases need to be chosen carefully, objectives have to be clearly set out, activities need to be well-planned, so they are clear and well structured, but also flexible enough to cope with, and indeed encourage, unforeseen and unpredictable findings and contingencies. Facilitators need to set and manage high expectations and provide regular, periodic and productive feedback to support and encourage students to stay motivated and on track.

The major learning outcomes of an effective teaching and learning system should be quantitative (relating to facts and skills), qualitative (relating to the structure and transfer of knowledge) and affective (relating to student motivation and involvement in deep learning) (Biggs, 2003). Research by business educators confirms that students prefer to learn through experiential learning activities, such as case studies and client-based projects, even though these are more challenging and the rewards and other outcomes less certain (Ackerman, Gross & Perner, 2003; Karns, 2005; Lopez & Lee, 2005; McLoughlin, 2004; Young et al., 2003).

Encouraging students to think critically and solve challenging problems also encourages students to become co-researchers, and teachers to become co-learners, in a community of inquiry (Robertson & Bond, 2004). The nature of these types of projects and approaches means they are able to reflect authentic experiences that embed qualitative, quantitative and affective learning outcomes in a seamless way (Stein et al., 2004).

Incorporating co-creation

Biggs and Tang's (2007) recast of the 3P model strengthens the idea that learning is not uni-directional from teacher to student. In collaborative learning settings, students and teachers are co-learners; individual independence and group interdependence both play

important roles (Johnson & Johnson, 1975). This means that while individual effort is essential, no single individual can create the knowledge that is needed to solve complex problems. However, the group as a whole can, resulting in knowledge that is co-created. This idea reflects both social constructivist approaches to understanding learning (Driscoll, 1994) and the philosophy underpinning collaborative learning as described by Johnson and Johnson (1975).

In management classes that involve “live” case studies and “real” clients, it would also be logical to extend the group of co-learners to include the clients themselves. In the broader business world, with its increasing emphasis on the co-creation of value (e.g., Payne, et al, 2008; Prahalad & Ramaswamy, 2004; Vargo & Lusch, 2004), it is important that graduates who aspire to be future managers are also comfortable with collaborative learning approaches. That is because the fuzzy or ill-defined questions that are posed, and the complex interpersonal and team dynamics that are invoked, mimic real world scenarios. Innovations that are co-created by, and in turn, satisfy, multiple stakeholders are predicated on successful consultation, communication, cooperation and collaboration.

Design and methods

The current study attempted to assess the effectiveness of the teaching and learning outcomes in a fourth year competitive marketing strategy class within a business degree programme at the University of Otago, in Dunedin, New Zealand. More specifically, the study aimed to gauge *the degree to which students perceived the course to have encouraged and supported deeper learning approaches and the co-creation of knowledge.*

The research was guided by the 3P (presage, process and product) model of teaching and learning (Biggs, 2003), but with the addition of knowledge co-creation factors. In line with the collaborative and experiential teaching and learning approaches, this involved the adoption of a multiple stakeholder perspective. These stakeholders included clients of the class project, the students, and the two co-teachers responsible for the course who reflected on their teaching philosophies, practices and outcomes with two senior colleagues. A social constructivist view of learning (Driscoll, 1994) was

also adopted, which suggests that the social interaction between people plays an important role in the construction of meaning.

A case study research method, following the Yin and Campbell (2002) guidelines, was chosen as this framework enabled rich insights to be uncovered into how the presage, process, stakeholder and product factors interacted. Data sources included: (a) a brief survey of students; (b) reflections of the teachers gathered during a reflective, focus group-type interview; and (c) an interview with the client at the end of the course. The client's business was the subject of the class consulting project, which made up 50% of the course assessment.

(a) Student survey

The brief survey contained four open-ended questions asking students: to describe what they thought were the best things in the course; for suggested changes to improve the course; whether the assessment was useful for learning; and for any other comments. To avoid influencing students' opinions about deeper learning and the co-creation of knowledge, no views about these issues were explicitly sought. Instead, comments that related to these issues, along with those related to presage, process and product factors that feature in the original Biggs 3P model, were identified during the analysis.

A total of 25 students (84% of the class) took part in the survey. The students' written responses were coded into the major themes by the first author. The emergence of the themes was guided by the open-ended questions, the theoretical framework (as related to the 3P model) and other issues and observations that emerged from the student feedback. To enhance validity, the second author then rechecked the data to ensure coding and themes matched with the theoretical framework. Any new themes to emerge in the second coding procedure were then highlighted and any disagreements were discussed and resolved. Although coding of interview data by several researchers is often recommended, along with regular updating of coding books, particularly for large data sets and/or on-going research programs involving teams of collaborators (Weston et al., 2001), the initial coding for this study was done sequentially by the two lead authors rather than in parallel. This is in accordance with the principle of axial coding (Strauss & Corbin, 1998) whereby initial interview data is re-examined to focus on a particular issue or phenomenon that may have emerged in the first coding procedure. In

this case, we were interested in exploring possible elements of co-creation of learning, something not emphasized in the original Biggs 3P model.

(b) Teacher reflective interview

Notes were taken by the lead researcher (the first author) during reflective discussions between the two co-teachers and two senior colleagues. The notes and summaries of the views expressed were then checked with the two co-teachers and two senior colleagues to ensure accuracy.

(c) Client interview

At the end of the course the client was interviewed about his experiences of interacting with students as they undertook their project work. In an approach similar to the one taken for the recording of teacher reflection interview data (b), notes were made of the client comments and the summary and notes were checked with the client to ensure accuracy.

The competitive marketing strategy course

The competitive marketing strategy class was a fourth year course which was part of the undergraduate business degree Honours year. It was also for students undertaking the first year of a Masters in Marketing degree. The course incorporated a mix of teacher-led, interactive lectures and workshops, student-led seminars, literature review exercises, a live case study (a group project with a small, local business) and a web-based study. The course was designed so that traditional views of competitive strategy are reviewed in the first half of the course and applied to the live case study. This project was undertaken outside class time, with questions by students, feedback from instructors, and input from the business owner shared with the whole class. Issues were discussed in class time and a Learning Management System web site was used to communicate with the class outside meeting hours.

The advantages and disadvantages of traditional approaches, and the limitations inherent in implementing strategic concepts in a real world context (including the paradoxes involved in trying to balance rational market evaluation and strategic goals with the owner’s values, attitudes and emotional desires), were then discussed in class reflections after the project was completed. Alternative views were introduced in more

critical class discussions of alternative literatures. Insights from the literature discussions and experiences from the client project were then applied to a relatively fuzzy, open-ended, web-based business case study. In this project, students identified strategic problems or issues concerning the business that warranted further investigation. However, to help keep students motivated and their progress on track, this project was given some structure, with three distinct reporting phases included to support formative learning.

Results and discussion

As stated earlier, the major intention of the research was to gauge *the degree to which students perceived the course to have encouraged and supported deeper learning approaches and the co-creation of knowledge.* The findings were deduced by examining the comments and observations of students, teachers and the client at the centre of the live case study. The results are now discussed around presage, process, product and co-creation factors. Quotations from the various data sources are provided in italics to illustrate the key ideas which emerged.

Presage

No direct questions were asked about students' backgrounds, motivations or preferred learning styles. However, all had at least 3 years previous university experience and most were familiar with the basic learning content that had been covered in previous courses. Their comments suggested that the majority were motivated to adopt deeper learning approaches in this more advanced (4th year or 400-level) competitive strategy class, for example,

> *The best thing would be the interaction in class and although the philosophical stuff was deep at times, it was good to get a deeper understanding of the origins of the concept that went beyond 300-level*.

It also became apparent that the deeper thinkers, in line with the findings of Wilson and Fowler (2005), appeared more comfortable with a wide variety of teaching approaches, which included more conventional classroom discussions and exercises as well as more

fuzzy, real-world, action learning activities. There were those who expressed a preference for an adaptive approach:

> *The flexibility of the course structure … allowed for adaptive learning as well as the practical work involved.*

Others reflected that they were more confident about solving problems in the future: For example,

> *[The course] helped me a lot in terms of learning about strategy aspects, preparing for and writing assignments, problem solving.*

Students also appeared much more comfortable with messy problems, uncertainty and ambiguity, as in:

> *Glad I learnt more about strategy and have now accepted that you can't clearly define it; strategy viewed as a paradox etc*.

On the other hand, a minority focused on results, ease of getting through the course and 'covering content'. This comment possibly reflects students' limited experience of collaborative learning approaches, resulting in experiences of disorientation and mismatched expectations. For example,

> *Occasionally felt like I got off topic and didn't know if all things we covered were that relevant until the end of the course. Perhaps use more examples throughout, so its importance is understood. Also, the lack of structure for the assignments [was a concern].*

Student comments also highlighted factors associated with the teaching context, for example, the approaches of the teachers:

> *Dynamic interaction with class members and challenges put for lectures which were not overly structured but were adapted based on what views were brought up.*
> *The dedication and approach of [lecturer] and [lecturer] to teaching and the amount of interaction and the level of satisfaction generated by it.*

An over-crowded seminar room was considered an inhibitor by a number of students:

> *Only thing is that a bigger classroom would make it a lot more comfortable.*

The unexpected, relatively large size of the class and the inability to acquire a larger teaching space at late notice, also contributed to other frustrations:

> *The large size of the class seems to make interaction more difficult; it resulted in only the more outspoken few speaking out*.

Although the space constraints appeared to be an inhibitor, these comments supported previous studies that link teaching styles and deeper learning (e.g., (Huba & Freed, 2000; Knapp, 1992).

The majority of students felt the assessments were closely linked to the developmental stages of both the live (client-focused) case, and the more theoretical (fuzzy, student-driven) web-based case studies. For example,

> *The assessments are useful for learning because through doing the assessments we actually are getting comfortable to put our thinking and ideas into practice and getting feedback for improving our learning.*

> *The 3 stage structure of strategic analysis was particularly useful as you could see where you were going wrong throughout and learn as you go.*

However, a small number of students would have preferred more formative assessments:

> *While the [case] project was fun there was not a lot of guidance provided - would be nice to have feedback [on a draft report] before we handed in the final piece - make it more formative.*

> *[We needed] more structure to link live case with readings*.

Given Young's (2005) warning that rewards should be used sparingly, so as not to undermine intrinsic motivation, it appeared the balance between student-centered and teacher-directed learning and assessment approaches needs to be carefully considered to accommodate a variety of learning needs.

Process

The use of experiential learning activities, particularly in the live case study, the use of fuzzy problems that mirrored real life experience, as in the web-based case study, and critical discussions of the relevant literature in class appeared to have encouraged deeper learning approaches (Kember et al., 2002) among the majority of the class. In addition, the fuzzier questions and issues inherent in the web-based case also seemed to have encouraged double loop or generative learning (Lizzio & Wilson, 2004) among some students who appeared to question the learning process itself, as in:

> *It enlightens me to think about strategy from different perspectives and angles – also it encourages people to be creative by changing our thinking ways, in the way of putting us out of our comfort zones which made us even think and see more*.

> *I enjoyed reviewing articles – group discussions on implications of article concepts – it expands the mind and opens one to two sides of a perspective*).

There was some indication of "co-responsibility" (Smith & Van Doren, 2004), or an appreciation for a variety of learning experiences, for example,

> *I enjoyed internal [assessment] being comprised of a mix of group work and individual – combines two very different skill sets)*

as well as support for the contention of Elam and Spotts (2004) that enjoyable, interesting and involving experiences tend to facilitate durable learning:

> *It makes it easier to be able to apply theory to the real world – I now have a better understanding of competitive strategy*).

The downside to incorporating a wide variety of learning activities in a single course is that there is a greater onus on teachers to integrate these effectively. There is also pressure from students, especially those who take a strategic approach to their study, on teachers to provide clear guidance about links between theory and practice, as well as activities and assessment, so they feel secure about expectations and about how to

succeed in the course. Comments from some students suggested that these were areas that could be improved:

> *[We need] more structure in lectures – while have theory as it is important, as it's a practical paper maybe some more case studies e.g. of what happened in the real world*.

Product

Learning outcomes can be grouped in three ways: (a) skills developed; (b) knowledge structure and transfer; and (c) level of student involvement in deeper learning activities (Biggs, 2003; Biggs & Tang, 2007). Many of the students believed that they had developed more critical thinking skills and a comfort with handling unstructured problems. The multiple interactions that were encourages among students, lecturers and the client, resulted in a sharing of insights and knowledge and an empathy with the client's own context, aims and limitations. There was some evidence in the comments that students were thus encouraged to adopt a more critical approach to theory and practice:

> *With [case] we really had to think and couldn't just apply generic marketing theories – had to consider his business/sense, values etc*.

There were some barriers to optimising the learning outcomes, particularly for the small proportion of students. The restricted case choice, along with limited group management skills, affected some students' motivations to explore the live case study in as much depth as some of their peers, illustrated in the following:

> *I didn't enjoy the business we worked on… I think I just wasn't interested in the industry so was a bit annoying and boring. Not being able to rely on group members sometimes – when you expect all 4th years to be reliable etc*.

As mentioned earlier, a lack of time may also have inhibited knowledge creation and transfer for some students:

> *Interactive group discussions were often slow and time consuming. Useful at the same time. Lack supportive material, examples of companies.*

As a general observation, better management of expectations, including a better explanation of the reasons behind the course design (and lack of structure, in some parts) may help to improve the learning outcomes for all students in future classes.

Co-creation of learning

The data gathered in this study does provide some evidence of co-creation of knowledge. Iterative and multi-directional feedback, as highlighted by Biggs and Tang (2007), is an indicator that learning is not simply uni-directional, from teacher to student. In this study, the client provided formal and informal feedback to the students on several occasions, and explained that he, too, was learning from the exercise. This was confirmed in the follow-up interview when he revealed that the students' questions about his business, as well as their subsequent market research, made him question some of his own assumptions, objectives and strategies and the limited resources his firm had to cope with the realities of the new e-commerce era:

> *I've now employed someone to improve and manage our web site and to look at new ways of adding value to customers*.

The client's feedback to student queries at various stages of the project (students had to create strategic plans for existing and new market segments) also indicated that the interaction between all involved and the sharing of knowledge and information meant that co-learning was occurring. Students described in the survey how they enjoyed learning from each other, as well as from the lecturers:

> *Lecturers provided a very friendly and comfortable environment for us. Lecturers and students all interacted with each other. The course is actually very interesting*.

The flexible and adaptive teaching and learning approach was considered important, as in:

> *Feedback for assignments was valuable, the course was flexible and interactive which made learning and understanding more enjoyable*.

Others described the benefits of interacting with the client:

> *It was great to work with a real business and see whether the skills we have learnt are truly effective or not*.

The two lecturers also reflected, in their discussion with colleagues, that they had learned from the interaction with students and the client. Part of this related to greater appreciation of the limitations of traditional strategic marketing and management concepts in the small business context, as well as insights into how to capitalise on the strengths and address the weaknesses of the present course design.

Course improvements were subsequently adopted for the following year's class, including clearer explanation of teaching goals and better management of expectations, improved physical surroundings, more balanced workload, greater choice of cases and segments, and more frequent formative assessments. Other issues with client and web-based projects, such as careful selection of cases and ensuring there are clear learning goals (Elam & Spotts, 2004; Henson et al., 2003; Smith & Van Doren, 2004), were also noted.

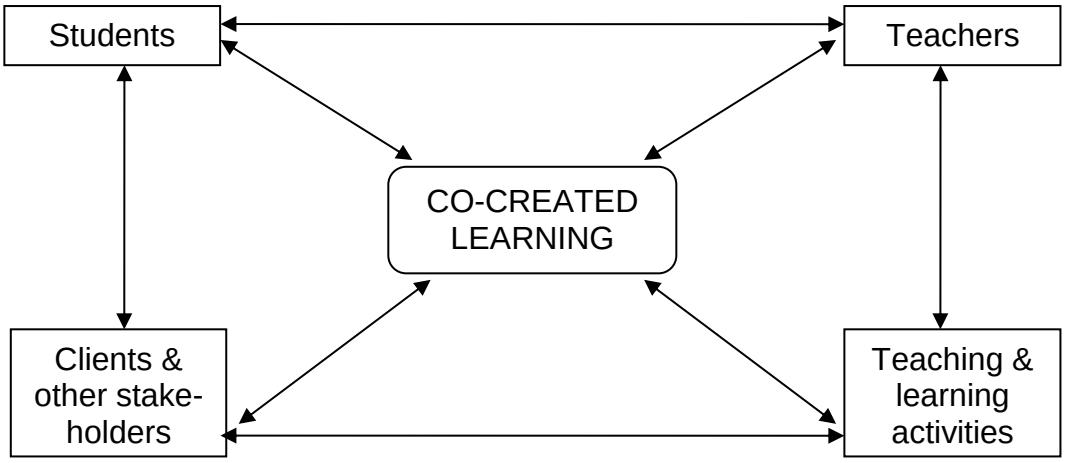
Implications and conclusions

This study demonstrated that an adaptation of the Biggs (2003) 3P model that emphasises the co-creation of learning can be used to assess the effectiveness of teaching and learning strategies in an experiential and collaborative learning context. The results suggest that antecedent, or *presage,* factors which relate to students' prior knowledge, interest and motivation, as well as the teaching context, are important precursors to encouraging and facilitating cooperation, collaboration and deeper learning. An analysis of the learning *process* also supports previous research that suggests interactive, student-focused and client-focused approaches lead to deeper learning (Kember, et al., 2002), as well as double loop or generative learning (Lizzio & Wilson, 2004) that questions the learning process itself (e.g. *Since now I know more about strategy than before I took [this course], I wish that I could change my strategy regarding my study*). The *product* included improved strategy skills and knowledge, an enhanced ability to share, debate and transfer new knowledge, and deeper understanding and questioning that resulted from the transformative and experiential learning process.

A closer analysis of the feedback factors suggests that the learning process is iterative and multi-directional. Stakeholders, such as clients in “live” case study situations, also contribute to, and benefit from, the learning process. Although seeking practitioners’ insights into curriculum design is not unusual in business education (e.g., Leisen, Tippins & Lilly, 2004), encouraging clients to be reflective about their own learning appears to be rarer.

While the study reported in this paper was a very small scale, exploratory one, it did provide the researchers with some insights as to how a more co-creative, interactive, dynamic and multi-perspective approach to teaching and learning could be used to direct and underpin future course development. The model in Figure 1 presents a suggestion for how collaborative learning could be included through “live” case studies or in interactions with “real” clients alongside other important foci (students, teachers and teaching and learning activities).

Figure 1. A collaborative learning model for experiential marketing education



In this model, co-created learning is both the driving force for and the outcome of the interactions among a variety of stakeholders, including students, teachers and clients in an experiential marketing education context. The web or network of interconnected actors adds to the richness of the learning experience. The network could be expanded to include suppliers, distributors, customers, financiers and/or the local community in more complex case study scenarios. The Biggs 3P factors are still present, but

subsumed under the other headings. For example, *presage* factors are likely to influence students, clients, teachers and other stakeholders, *process* factors are addressed under teaching and learning activities, and the *product* (deeper, more collaborative and adaptive learning) is likely to emerge from the co-created learning process.

It is worth noting that feedback can be unexpected, particularly when double-loop learning is involved, meaning that key assumptions and practices may be continually questioned. Although this uncertainty can be unsettling from pedagogical and research perspectives, this model provides a starting point from which to analyse interactive, collaborative and experiential teaching and learning processes.

At a time when business management practices are focusing more closely on the co-creation of value in both commercial contexts (e.g., Payne, et al., 2008; Prahalad & Ramaswamy, 2004; Vargo & Lusch, 2004), and social contexts (e.g., Brugmann & Prahalad, 2007), it appears appropriate to examine the co-creation of value in marketing education. The major contribution of this paper is to show how an interactive network model can be used to gain insights into the factors that influence deeper learning in a collaborative and experiential education context. The model could be used diagnostically by teachers wishing to reflect on the effectiveness their own teaching programs, as well as a conceptual aid for education researchers interested in exploring how co-creation of learning occurs in collaborative, experiential learning contexts.

This study was essentially an exploratory inquiry undertaken with one group of students in one course. It utilised qualitative research methods to analyse a single teaching case in a single university in a single country. A number of the findings do appear to support the results of previous studies, however they cannot be generalised to a wider population. Although New Zealand is an advanced country with a tertiary education system that has many similarities to those in other western, English speaking nations, future research should look at replicating the current case study in wider marketing education and cultural contexts. Further action research to gain a better understanding of the process of co-created learning would also be valuable. In time it may also be appropriate to utilise larger samples and to integrate quantitative with qualitative techniques to try to develop empirical generalisations.

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