

Fostering Students' Cultural Intelligence: A Social Media Experiential Project

Authors : Lorena Blasco-Arcas, Francesca Pucciarelli

Abstract : Business contexts have become globalised and digitalised, which requires that managers develop a strong sense of cross-cultural intelligence while working in geographically distant teams by means of digital technologies. How to better equip future managers on these kinds of skills has been put forward as a critical issue in Business Schools. In pursuing these goals, higher education is shifting from a passive lecture approach, to more active and experiential learning approaches that are more suitable to learn skills. For example, through the use of case studies, proposing plausible business problem to be solved by students (or teams of students), these institutions have focused for long in fostering learning by doing. Though, case studies are no longer enough as a tool to promote active teamwork and experiential learning. Moreover, digital advancements applied to educational settings have enabled augmented classrooms, expanding the learning experience beyond the class, which increase students' engagement and experiential learning. Different authors have highlighted the benefits of digital engagement in order to achieve a deeper and longer-lasting learning and comprehension of core marketing concepts. Clickers, computer-based simulations and business games have become fairly popular between instructors, but still are limited by the fact that are fictional experiences. Further exploration of real digital platforms to implement real, live projects in the classroom seem relevant for marketing and business education. Building on this, this paper describes the development of an experiential learning activity in class, in which students developed a communication campaign in teams using the BuzzFeed platform, and subsequently implementing the campaign by using other social media platforms (e.g. Facebook, Instagram, Twitter...). The article details the procedure of using the project for a marketing module in a Bachelor program with students located in France, Italy and Spain campuses working on multi-campus groups. Further, this paper describes the project outcomes in terms of students' engagement and analytics (i.e. visits achieved). the project included a survey in order to analyze and identify main aspects related to how the learning experience is influenced by the cultural competence developed through working in geographically distant and culturally diverse teamwork. Finally, some recommendations to use project-based social media tools while working with virtual teamwork in the classroom are provided.

Keywords : cultural competences, experiential learning, social media, teamwork, virtual group work

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