

# THE EFFECTS OF NON-TRADITIONAL PEDAGOGIES ON STUDENT MOTIVATED BEHAVIOR

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## ABSTRACT

*This research assesses student perceptions of newer pedagogies within the business curriculum. The purpose of this study is to advise business faculty regarding potential student behavioral responses to these newer pedagogies. Because different students will experience these instructional changes differently, it is important that the business faculty understand the potential behavioral responses on the part of the students. This is particularly important so that the business instructor can take steps to anticipate and mitigate adverse responses on the part of some students which would otherwise limit the effectiveness of the newer pedagogies in achieving their stated goals. Thus, this research endeavors to facilitate the introduction of non-traditional pedagogies and increase their effectiveness by providing business faculty with a better understanding of the behavioral implications of less traditional instructional approaches.*

**JEL:** M19

**KEYWORDS:** need strength and perceptions of instructional method; student manifest needs; implications for instruction

## INTRODUCTION

Despite the long-standing criticism that business schools need to revise their curricula and employ newer and more engaging pedagogical strategies that are better suited toward developing the necessary professional skills essential for today's business students (Jenkins & Reizenstein, 1984; American Accounting Association, 1986; Porter & McKibbin, 1988; Buckley, Peach, & Weitzel, 1989; Commission on Admission to Graduate Management Education, 1990; Linder & Smith, 1992; Dulek & Fielden, 1992; Elliott, Goodwin & Goodwin, 1994; Pfeffer & Fong, 2002), there is little evidence that instructional methodology has changed over time (Pfeffer & Fong, 2002; Richardson, 2003). Although the curriculum has changed to incorporate new knowledge, the course structures and basic concepts taught have remained the same (Pfeffer & Fong, 2002).

If business schools are to respond to these criticisms, more non-traditional pedagogical strategies (i.e., interactive and experiential, student-centered strategies) must be employed within the business curriculum. All things considered, these strategies are superior not only in reaching the more complex educational outcomes of application, analysis, synthesis and evaluation (McKeachie, 1963; Chickering, 1977; Weston & Cranton, 1986), but also in developing the necessary professional skills essential for today's business students: oral communication skills, interpersonal skills, leadership skills, critical-thinking abilities, teamwork, decision making abilities, and written communication skills.

However, despite the potential benefits afforded by these more non-traditional pedagogical approaches, many business faculty members continue to rely upon more traditional (i.e., instructor-centered and individual-based) teaching strategies for a variety of reasons. Some have argued that the faculty-reward structure is too oriented toward research and publication, paying only lip service to teaching effectiveness (Richardson, 2003; Elliott, et al., 1994; Linder & Smith, 1992; Dulek & Fielden, 1992). Others assert that business faculty may not be adequately trained to teach business (Benke & Hermanson, 1990; Elliott et al., 1994; Linder & Smith, 1992; Leavitt, 1991). Unless training in different pedagogical strategies are

provided, business-education instructors tend to rely upon the methods and materials with which they are most familiar, often the traditional methods that they experienced as students (Done, 1979; Weston & Cranton, 1986). To complicate matters, many faculty members have spent years honing their skills in these traditional instructor-centered strategies and have thus become quite proficient in their use and perhaps resistant to change in technique.

Finally, due to the breadth of the required business curriculum, undergraduate business students take many introductory courses where the classes are larger, the focus of instruction is on the lower levels of the cognitive domain (knowledge and comprehension), and the more traditional instructor-centered and individual-level learning strategies are particularly efficient and effective. As such, undergraduate business students become quite familiar with these traditional teaching strategies and understand clearly what is expected of them when these strategies are employed in the classroom. For all of these reasons, it is not surprising that business schools are resistant to adopting the more non-traditional, interactive and experiential instructional strategies.

Therefore, the purpose of this paper is to facilitate the successful introduction of newer pedagogies and increase their effectiveness by providing business faculty with a better understanding of the implications of utilizing non-traditional instructional approaches in terms of student perceptions and behavior. This research endeavors to develop a greater understanding of the potential student behavioral responses to the non-traditional pedagogies. It is important that business faculty be aware of students' potential behavioral responses so they can anticipate and take steps to mitigate adverse reactions on the part of some students that would otherwise limit the effectiveness of non-traditional pedagogies.

## LITERATURE REVIEW

Research in the area of improving business education by incorporating non-traditional instructional techniques is important for several reasons. First, today's business educators are too focused on delivering the knowledge-based content of the business curriculum and, as a result, are neglecting the wider array of educational processes by which business-related content and skills can be learned. Traditional pedagogical strategies often limit the scope of knowledge acquisition and comprehension, due both to the passivity of the student and the theoretical nature of the material. These traditional approaches do not reach for the more complex outcomes that are concerned with application, analysis, synthesis, and evaluation (Chickering, 1977; Needles and Anderson, 1991). Nor do these traditional approaches address and develop the essential skills deemed as necessary for success in the business professions. The consequences of this misplaced focus on the acquisition of knowledge are business graduates who are technically competent but who lack the judgment and other skills necessary for long-term success in the business professions.

Second, many of today's business curricula focus more on teaching and less on student learning. Teaching emphasizes inputs and the teacher, while learning emphasizes outcomes and the student (Boyatzis, Cowen, & Kolb, 1995). Consequently, a learning approach places greater attention on the students and how they respond to the educational process. This paper focuses attention on the latter half of the teaching-learning equation by surveying undergraduate business students on how they perceive various pedagogical strategies (both traditional and non-traditional) in terms of their ability to facilitate student learning. Since students experience the curriculum, it is important that business faculty understand how curricular changes might be perceived by students.

Third, since many business schools have not changed their curricula on their own, AACSB International, the international accrediting body for schools of business, has revised their Business Accreditation Standards in 2003 to require business schools to modify their curricula. As a first step, AACSB International is putting greater emphasis on interactions between students and faculty members. For instance, AACSB's revised Standard 13 outlines the teaching responsibilities of individual faculty members to include actively involving

students in the learning process, encouraging collaboration and cooperation among the students in the learning process, and ensuring prompt feedback on student performance. Previously, Standard 13 only called for *effective instruction*. Likewise, Standard 14 is an entirely new standard, spelling out students' responsibilities in the learning process. According to this new AACSB Standard, students are *not* to be passive recipients of education. Rather, they are expected to be active participants, and the accrediting review teams will "look for instances of what is called active learning, where students are involved in problem solving or where students are involved with either real or practice-field examples which illustrate the ideas they are learning about, and are not simply listening to lectures" (Thompson, 2004, p. 435). To facilitate this, business faculty members must begin to incorporate more non-traditional instructional techniques in the classroom.

The following section provides a brief overview of pedagogical strategies that are the focus of this study. This is followed by a discussion of the behavioral implications of the differing pedagogical strategies. Next, the research method employed is described, and the research results are presented. Finally, the study's findings are discussed and suggested approaches for successfully implementing non-traditional pedagogical strategies into the business school curricula are outlined.

### Pedagogical Strategies

While not all-inclusive, the instructional strategies used in this research represent some of the more popular strategies used in higher education. Weston and Cranton (1986) provide an overall perspective of pedagogical strategies and factors important in the selection of instructional strategies. Thus, employing the delineation described by Weston and Cranton (1986), the pedagogical strategies used in this paper are grouped into four general categories: instructor-centered strategies, individual-learning strategies, interactive strategies, and experiential-learning strategies. These strategies are further differentiated by classifying the two former strategies as traditional and the latter two strategies as non-traditional in nature.

In the case of instructor-centered strategies, communication is one-way, from the instructor to students. The focus is on the instructor, who is responsible for imparting information to the students who are passive recipients (Weston & Cranton, 1986). The most common form of instructor-centered strategies is the lecture. Lectures are particularly efficient and effective for large class sizes and for instruction at lower levels of learning (i.e., knowledge acquisition and comprehension; Weston & Cranton, 1986). In this research we examined perceptions of both applied lectures and theory lectures.

Individual-learning strategies permit students to learn at their own pace, and therefore require regular immediate feedback so students can assess their progress (Weston & Cranton, 1986). One individual-learning strategy considered in this research is programmed instruction. Programmed instruction involves breaking instructional information down into a series of smaller, sequential units. Each unit contains a stimulus-response pattern that allows the student to progressively learn concepts and skills. For example, students are presented with material in a series of units which they cover at their own rate. At the conclusion of each unit, students are presented with questions that will test their comprehension of the material. The students answer the questions, receive immediate feedback about the correctness of each response, and can only move on only after demonstrating their learning through correct responses. Many instructional technologies now utilize programmed instruction via online quizzes. Additional individual-learning strategies considered in this research are: homework, examinations, required readings, and term papers.

Interactive strategies involve two-way communication between the instructor and students as well as communication among students. With these approaches, students have an opportunity to actively participate in the learning and teaching process (Weston & Cranton, 1986). A commonly used interactive strategy is class discussion, in which students talk with one another about their individual opinions or arguments on given topics or questions. This methodology is effective in small classes, and works well to facilitate higher

levels of cognition (i.e., analysis, synthesis, and evaluation of information; Weston & Cranton, 1986), better than lecture strategies (McKeachie, 1963). For larger classes, small-group discussions can be used to the same ends. A more structured interactive strategy is cooperative learning, in which students who have mastered the material accept the role of instructor and teach the material to other students. This is a particularly useful technique when there is a high degree of variability in students' abilities or experiences (Weston & Cranton, 1986). Finally, the use of group projects is an interactive instructional strategy which allows students to actively engage each other, while the instructor serves as a facilitator and resource (Weston & Cranton, 1986). This group project strategy could prove highly beneficial for business students, as it is becoming increasingly more likely that entry-level business graduates will work in a group environment (Avolio, Jung, Murrey, & Sivasubramaniam, 1996). In addition to immersing students in the learning process, group projects are recommended when higher learning outcomes concerned with application, analysis, synthesis, and evaluation are desired (Weston & Cranton, 1986). The interactive strategies considered in this research include: cooperative learning, group projects, seminars, small-group discussion, large-class discussion, and argumentative discussion.

The basis of experiential-learning strategies, in either real or simulated-work settings, is active learning in which the student actually performs a task or uses a skill. Because the student takes an active role, these strategies are more effective than the traditional educational approaches in reaching the more complex educational outcomes of application, analysis, synthesis, and evaluation (Chickering, 1977). The active participation on the part of students allows them to reflect on their experiences and develop hypotheses based on these learning experiences, which can be further tested with additional active learning exercises. In a sense, the students are taught how to learn (Kolb, 1976). May, Windal, and Sylvestre (1995) report that 63.6% of accounting educators believe that the objective of the accounting curriculum should be to teach students how to learn on their own. Students who experience these more active strategies are more likely to maintain their interest in education and learning. Successful learning experiences tend to beget a desire for more; as a result, lifelong learning, which is so vital in the business professions, is fostered. The experiential-learning strategies considered in this research include: internships, case analyses, management simulations, structured-experiential exercises, and role-playing.

### Motivated Behavior

If we consider business education as a training program for students' professional business careers, then we must attend not only to their learning of the material, but also to the transfer of that knowledge to the work setting (Baldwin & Ford, 1988; Goldstein & Ford, 2002). It is certainly necessary for students to learn the material presented to them in their business curricula. However, that increase in knowledge and skill is irrelevant if students are unable to maintain that knowledge over time and use it on the job. Although traditional pedagogical strategies (i.e., instructor-centered and individual-learning strategies) may be successful for attaining temporary acquisition of knowledge, non-traditional approaches will likely be necessary for facilitating the transfer of that knowledge to the job. The more interactive and hands-on nature of these non-traditional pedagogical strategies is more likely to result in a deeper level of learning on the part of the students than the more passive traditional strategies because the newer strategies should be better able to meet students' motivational needs, resulting in more motivated learning.

To test this proposition, this research will employ needs theory to investigate the behavioral implications of utilizing non-traditional pedagogies. A general theory of human needs and the environmental pressures that affect them was first developed by Murray (1938), who proposed that motivated behavior was a function of the relative strength of multiple different needs (Murray suggested 19 different needs). Needs theory predicts that people will be motivated to seek out and perform well in assignments that match their needs. For this reason, McClelland (1980) suggested that organizations should match employees to jobs that would allow them to satisfy their needs. In the same way, needs theory has implications for instructional strategy, suggesting that students will be motivated to perform well in educational environments that allow for the

fulfillment of their needs. Thus, understanding need patterns among students may help to explain resistance from some students when assignments fail to address and satisfy their needs. Also, recognizing individual student needs may help educators to use a student's talents in a manner consistent with his or her underlying needs. This research focuses on four widely investigated needs within needs theory: (1) need for achievement (*nAch*), (2) need for affiliation (*nAff*), (3) need for dominance (*nDom*), and (4) need for autonomy (*nAut*).

A high *nAch* is characterized by an aspiration to accomplish difficult tasks and maintain high standards, and a willingness to work toward long-term, challenging goals. A high *nAch* individual responds positively to competition and is willing to put forth effort to attain excellence (McClelland, 1985b). Students who are high in *nAch* are concerned with improving their own performance or bettering that of others, not for the purpose of pleasing others but because it is intrinsically satisfying (James & Mazerolle, 2002). These students also have a preference for situations in which personal responsibility can be taken for outcomes, a strong desire for performance feedback, and a tendency to set moderately difficult goals that provide for calculated risks (Steers, 1987).

Given the competitive, challenge-seeking, success-driven nature of the high *nAch* student, we propose that these students will find the experiential learning strategies very helpful. These pedagogical strategies are complex and comprehensive and are likely to pose a challenge to students. Furthermore, because high *nAch* students desire performance feedback and individual accountability, they will likely find some of the individual-learning strategies useful to their learning as well. In particular, exams, term papers, and homework are areas in which high *nAch* students can challenge themselves to improve upon their own performance and receive fairly immediate feedback regarding their success. Therefore:

*Hypotheses 1: nAch will be positively related to the perceived helpfulness of experiential learning strategies (internships, case analyses, management simulation, experiential exercises, and role playing) and select, feedback-oriented individual learning strategies (homework, exams, and term papers).*

A high *nAff* is characterized by the enjoyment of being with friends and people in general, the ready acceptance of people, and a desire to achieve friendships and maintain associations with people (Murray, 1938). Students who have a high *nAff* have a strong desire to establish and maintain friendly, compatible interpersonal relationships; they like to like others, and they want others to like them. Additionally, they have a facility to learn social networks quickly and a proclivity to communicate often with others. They prefer to avoid controversy and competition and sometimes exhibit strong conformity to the wishes of their friends. Students with a high *nAff* tend to be more concerned with developing and maintaining relationships than with assignments and decision-making (McClelland, 1965). These students may be perceived as ineffective helpers, perhaps because they are not task-oriented enough.

Because of the strong desire to relate to and interact with people, it is plausible that students with a high *nAff* will perceive interactive strategies which require them to work collaboratively with others as very helpful to their learning process, and therefore be quite motivated to learn in such situations. Likewise, many of the experiential learning strategies typically involve a high degree of interdependence among students or between students and work colleagues. Therefore, high *nAff* students will excel in these strategies as well. Thus, we propose:

*Hypothesis 2: nAff will be positively related to perceived helpfulness of interactive learning strategies (cooperative learning, group projects, seminars, small-group discussions, large-class discussion, and argumentative discussion) as well as those experiential learning strategies that typically involve interaction with others (internships, management simulation, experiential exercises, and role playing).*

A high *nDom* is characterized by attempts to control the environment and to influence or direct other people. Individuals with a high *nDom* express opinions forcefully and enjoy the role of leader, often assuming it spontaneously (Murray, 1938). Students who are high in *nDom* strongly desire to make a significant impact or impression on others, seek out social settings in which they can be influential, and act in an attention-getting manner in groups. Also, some people who are high in *nDom* have a tendency to be talkative and occasionally argumentative (McClelland, 1985b)

Therefore, like high *nAff* students, high *nDom* students will likely benefit (i.e., have their needs met) when they are able to interact with others. The only way a person with a high *nDom* can assume a leadership role is if there are others around whom they can influence and impress. Thus, although the reasons are different, high *nDom* students should prefer the same learning strategies as high *nAff* students:

*Hypothesis 3: nDom will be positively related to perceived helpfulness of interactive learning strategies (cooperative learning, group projects, seminars, small-group discussions, large-class discussion, and argumentative discussion) as well as those experiential learning strategies that typically involve interaction with others (internships, management simulation, experiential exercises, and role playing).*

A high *nAut* is characterized by attempts to break away from restraints, confinement, or restrictions of any kind and by the enjoyment of being unattached to people, places, or obligations (Murray, 1938). Students who are high in *nAut* have a strong desire to work independently, tend not to work well in teams, and do not enjoy participating in discussions. More specifically, they have a preference for going it alone and tend to be less successful when working with other students.

Therefore, we propose that unlike students with a high *nAff* who desire to be liked in social interactions and high *nDom* students who desire to be influential in social interactions, high *nAut* students will prefer to avoid interactive learning strategies. They will likely have a negative reaction to being placed in interactive situations and consequently demonstrate a lower learning motivation when forced in them. Specifically:

*Hypothesis 4: nAut will be negatively related to perceived helpfulness of interactive learning strategies (cooperative learning, group projects, seminars, small-group discussions, large-class discussion, and argumentative discussion) as well as those experiential learning strategies that typically involve interaction with others (internships, management simulation, experiential exercises, and role playing).*

## METHODOLOGY

*Sample:* Participants were senior undergraduate business students ( $n = 371$ ) from two AACSB accredited institutions, one private and one regional state university, both located in the Northeastern United States.

*Measures:* Participants were provided with the list of the 18 pedagogical strategies employed in this research and indicated on a 5-point Likert scale (1 = *unhelpful*; 5 = *most helpful*) the extent to which each strategy facilitated their acquisition of knowledge or learning.

In addition, needs for achievement, affiliation, dominance, and autonomy were measured using the 20-item Manifest Needs Questionnaire (Steers & Braunstein, 1976). Each need was assessed with a five items designed to measure the behaviors individuals perform to satisfy these needs. Participants indicated the extent to which they agree with the behaviors on a 7-point Likert scale (1 = *always*; 7 = *never*). Sample items include: “I try very hard to improve on my past performance at work” (*nAch*); “When I have a choice, I try to work in a group rather than by myself” (*nAff*); “I find myself organizing and directing the activities of others” (*nDom*); and “In my work projects, I try to be my own boss” (*nAut*).

RESULTS

Hypotheses 1-4 were tested by correlating each of the four psychological needs (*nAch*, *nAff*, *nDom*, and *nAut*) with the perceived helpfulness of the pedagogical strategies. These correlations are presented in Table 1.

Table 1: Correlation Coefficients for the Relationship between Psychological Needs and Perceived Helpfulness of Pedagogical Strategies

Pedagogical Strategy	Manifest Needs					
	M	SD	nAch	nAff	nDom	nAut
<b>Instructor-centered strategies</b>						
Applied lectures	4.51	0.76	0.05	0.02	-0.03	-0.10*
Theory lectures	3.50	1.04	-0.07	0.01	-0.03	0.05
<b>Individual-learning strategies</b>						
Homework	4.38	0.80	0.06	0.04	-0.00	-0.08
Exams	3.80	1.01	0.10*	-0.03	0.01	-0.05
Programmed instruction	3.81	0.92	0.04	0.05	0.01	-0.06
Required readings	3.91	1.00	0.02	-0.05	-0.09	0.02
Term papers	3.29	1.10	0.10*	0.04	0.02	0.05
<b>Interactive strategies</b>						
Cooperative learning	4.07	0.95	0.10*	0.09*	0.01	-0.05
Group projects	4.07	0.99	0.24**	0.09*	0.12*	-0.08
Seminars	3.68	1.08	0.08	0.12*	0.04	-0.08
Small-group discussion	4.10	1.01	0.08	0.26**	0.15**	-0.20**
Large-class discussion	3.47	1.04	0.06	0.09*	0.08	-0.03
Argumentative discussion	4.07	1.06	0.10*	0.07	0.16**	0.03
<b>Experiential learning strategies</b>						
Internships	4.10	1.02	0.25**	0.13*	0.10*	-0.01
Case analyses	4.04	1.00	0.24**	-0.00	0.13**	0.06
Management simulations	4.01	1.02	0.24**	0.16**	0.23**	-0.04
Experiential exercises	3.75	0.99	0.18**	0.11*	0.13**	0.02
Role playing	3.70	1.16	0.12*	0.17**	0.25**	-0.11*
<b>M</b>			5.11	3.97	4.50	4.06
<b>SD</b>			3.97	0.56	0.82	0.60

This table reports Pearson correlations between the perceived helpfulness of different pedagogical strategies and the four psychological needs. \*\* and \* indicate significance at the 1 percent and 5 percent levels, respectively.

Hypothesis 1 proposed that *nAch* would be positively related to the perceived helpfulness of the experiential learning strategies and the feedback-oriented individual-learning strategies. Need for achievement was positively and significantly related to helpfulness ratings of all five of the experiential learning strategies (*r*'s ranged from .12 to .25). In addition, *nAch* was also positively related to helpfulness ratings for two of the three hypothesized individual learning strategies (exams and term papers; *r* = .10 for both); contrary to expectations, *nAch* was unrelated to the perceived helpfulness of homework. Overall, however, Hypothesis 1 was generally supported (see Table 1).

Hypothesis 2 proposed that *nAff* would be positively related to the perceived helpfulness of the interactive learning strategies and the experiential learning strategies that involve interaction with others. As can be seen in Table 1, *nAff* was positively related to perceived helpfulness of all but one of the interactive strategies (*r*'s ranged from .09 to .26 for cooperative learning, group projects, seminars, small-group discussion, and large-class discussion; *nAff* was unrelated to perceptions of argumentative discussion). Likewise, *nAff* was positively related to helpfulness ratings for all four of the hypothesized experiential learning strategies (*r*'s ranged from .11 to .17 for internships, management simulations, experiential exercises, and role playing). Therefore, Hypothesis 2 was generally supported.

Hypothesis 3 proposed that *nDom* would be positively related to perceived helpfulness of all of the interactive learning strategies as well as those select experiential learning strategies that typically involve interaction with others. Table 1 shows that *nAff* was positively related to helpfulness ratings of all of the hypothesized experiential learning strategies (*r*'s ranged from .10 to .25) and three of the six interactive learning strategies

(group projects, small-group discussion, and argumentative discussion;  $r = .12, .15, .16$ , respectively). Thus, overall, Hypothesis 3 was generally supported.

Hypothesis 4 proposed that  $nAut$  will be negatively related to the perceived helpfulness of the interactive learning strategies as well as those experiential learning strategies that typically involve interaction with others. However, Table 1 reveals that Hypothesis 4 was largely unsupported. Need for autonomy was only significantly negatively related to the perceived helpfulness of one of the six hypothesized interactive strategies (small-group discussion,  $r = -.20$ ) and one of the hypothesized experiential learning strategies (role playing,  $r = -.11$ ). Although many of the remaining relationships were in the hypothesized direction, only the two correlations mentioned above reached statistical significance. Thus, all in all, Hypothesis 4 remains unsupported.

## DISCUSSION

The purpose of the current study was to compare the motivational potential of traditional teaching strategies with that of non-traditional strategies. We proposed that non-traditional instructional approaches were more likely to fulfill students' needs than traditional instructional approaches, and students should therefore find these non-traditional, more interactive learning environments more motivational.

As hypothesized, need for achievement was positively related to perceptions of all of the experiential learning strategies and two of the three feedback-oriented individual-learning strategies (exams and term papers) which provide the student with an opportunity to excel and compete. Perceptions of the other feedback-oriented individual-learning strategy (homework) were unrelated to  $nAch$ . Often, homework assignments are not graded formally or are only "spot-checked," so, perhaps the competitive nature of homework assignments is not as salient to the high  $nAch$  student.

Need for affiliation and need for dominance were both, albeit for different reasons, proposed to be positively related to the perceived helpfulness of all six of the interactive learning strategies as well as the experiential strategies that offer significant interaction. For  $nAff$ , nine of the ten hypothesized relationships were significant. Only perceptions of argumentative discussion were unrelated to  $nAff$ . In hindsight, the high  $nAff$  student's desire to avoid controversy and competition with others likely makes this form of interaction unappealing.

Likewise, seven of the ten hypothesized relationships with  $nDom$  were significant. Three of the interactive strategies (cooperative learning, seminars, and large-class discussion) were unrelated to  $nDom$ , suggesting that students with a high need for dominance may not perceive that there is much opportunity to influence their classmates in large class environments. Furthermore, students with a high need for dominance may not perceive that teaching other students is not the same as influencing them or making an impression on them. However, a student's need for dominance may be met in small group projects and small group discussion, particularly if that discussion is argumentative in nature.

In addition, although not hypothesized, case analysis (an experiential learning strategy that is more individual in nature) was positively and significantly correlated with  $nDom$ , suggesting that this strategy provides the high  $nDom$  student with opportunities to express and elaborate on his opinion in a persuasive manner. Furthermore, it is possible that students associate case analysis with case discussion that often occurs in class, which would afford the high  $nDom$  student with an opportunity to convince others of his position on the case.

Need for autonomy was hypothesized to be negatively related to perceptions of all six of the interactive strategies and the four experiential strategies that are interactive in nature. However, only two of the ten hypothesized negative relationships were significant. Both small-group discussion and role-playing were significantly, negatively correlated with  $nAut$ . This reflects the desire that students with a high need for



autonomy have to avoid participating in discussions and interacting closely with others. Of the remaining non-significant, hypothesized relationships, six demonstrated a relationship in the hypothesized negative direction, although they were not statistically significant. The weaker relationships exhibited by the need for autonomy may be due to the high *nAut* student's realization that his or her autonomy needs must be subjugated within the formal educational environment. However, although the student with a high need for autonomy may realize that some interaction with others is a necessary component of higher education, they still may be the most likely to resist non-traditional instructional techniques that push them to interact closely with others, such as in role-plays and small group discussion.

Given the passive nature of the student in instructor-centered strategies and the lack of social interaction in individual-learning strategies, opportunities for students to satisfy their psychological needs in these teaching environments are restricted. With the exception of the hypothesized relationships between *nAch* and perceptions of two of the individual-learning strategies (exams and term papers), we found only one additional relationship between perceptions of a traditional instructional strategy (applied lectures) and a psychological need (*nAut*). Furthermore, as discussed above, student perceptions of most of the non-traditional pedagogies were not significantly negatively related to *nAut*, and *nAut* was unrelated to traditional individual-learning strategies which typically involve less social interaction with others.

These results suggest that overall, non-traditional instructional strategies allow for need fulfillment to a greater extent than do traditional instructional strategies. Thus, traditional instructor-centered and individual-learning strategies do not have the ability to motivate students to the extent that non-traditional interactive and experiential-learning strategies do. These latter instructional strategies provide opportunities to satisfy students' needs for achievement, affiliation, and dominance, and students should therefore be motivated to engage in these learning opportunities. This is important because motivation is crucial to education. Terrel Bell, former Secretary of Education, expressed this point compellingly: "There are three things to remember about education. The first is motivation. The second is motivation. The third is motivation" (Maehr & Meyer, 1997, p. 372).

### Teaching Implications

Instructors who have excelled in using traditional strategies may experience student frustration when they first attempt a non-traditional teaching strategy in the classroom. Consequently, they may be unsatisfied with their results and abandon the new approach in favor of the traditional strategies with which they feel more comfortable. This student frustration is likely due to students' inexperience and unfamiliarity with different instructional approaches. However, by making business faculty aware of the potential student responses to the more non-traditional methods, they may anticipate problems that might occur and undertake strategies to mitigate any adverse responses. Thus, the effectiveness of non-traditional instructional strategies will be improved by understanding different responses from different types of students. Accordingly, the purpose of this paper was to increase instructors' awareness and knowledge with respect to needs-based motivated behavior within educational settings so as to facilitate more successful implementation of the newer pedagogical strategies.

Needs theory provides insights into student behavior and an understanding of the need patterns among students. This knowledge may help explain dissension among students when assignments fail to address and satisfy their needs. Also, recognizing individual student needs may help educators to use a student's talents in a manner consistent with his or her underlying motives. Therefore, an instructor may wish to administer the Manifest Needs Questionnaire (Steers & Braunstein, 1976) to students in order to identify students who might likely experience difficulty with and who will most likely excel in an instructional strategy. Likewise, when a student is not performing as expected, knowledge of that student's needs should provide insight into what sort of trouble the student may be experiencing and allow the instructor to provide appropriate guidance, thereby improving the effectiveness of the instructional strategy.

For example, high *nAut* students prefer working independently and may not to work well within teams. The current study demonstrated that these students might demonstrate the most resistance to non-traditional pedagogies, which require more interaction and engagement with others, even if they have come to accept some level of interaction as necessary in higher education. For example, students with a high need for autonomy are likely to have a bias against instructional methods involving small-group discussion or role-play activities. These students are therefore more likely to disengage in situations involving others, and consequently risk being ostracized by team members. These students need to be reminded of their team responsibilities early on so as not to be blindsided with unexpected low performance ratings from team members.

Conversely, the current study suggests that high *nAff* students will likely be the most receptive to the interactive nature of non-traditional instructional methods. They are natural team players and enjoy communicating with others. Thus, these students should be provided with opportunity to interact cooperatively with others in order to satisfy this need (Keller, 1983). However, instructors will likely have to prompt these students to remain task focused when contributing their ideas and perspectives, as they tend to be more concerned with relationship-building than with task accomplishment (McClelland, 1965).

Additionally, high *nAch* students have a strong desire for responsibility and performance feedback. Thus, the instructor should put these students in situations where they can demonstrate their excellence (e.g., experiential learning activities, exams and papers, group projects and argumentative discussion). Furthermore, these students will be motivated to excel when they are kept apprised as to their performance in the course and receive feedback on specific assignments.

Finally, high *nDom* students like to direct other people and express their opinions forcefully, so the instructor might look to these students to take over leadership roles in group exercises. Additionally, an instructor who is aware that these students might exhibit frustration when they have to take a followership role in class will be able to use such situations to teach the student about the importance of collaboration with others.

In addition to facilitating and understanding classroom interactions, prior knowledge of students' need orientations may be useful in creating team diversity. Not only will students learn to work with individuals who are different from themselves, but by doing so the instructor can facilitate team performance and mitigate potential problems. For example, prior research has suggested that students with a high *nDom* make excellent team leaders, particularly if they also have a low *nAff* (McClelland & Boyatzis, 1982). Given their enjoyment of a leadership role, being able to place high *nDom* students among all teams mitigates the potential problem of leaderless teams. However, too many high *nDom* students on a team could lead to a clash among students for the leadership role and a quelling of expressions of other team members. Additionally, because of the high *nAff* student's desire to maintain friendly relationships, distributing these students among teams may facilitate the social interaction of teams. These students are effective communicators, and they want to ensure that people get along; having this presence within teams should help the social atmosphere and cohesion among teams. However, the high *nAff* student prefers to avoid controversy and may put the team's harmony and social relationships ahead of task accomplishments (McClelland, 1965). For this reason, too many high *nAff* students in a team might present problems of groupthink and lack of task focus. Having a high *nAch* student on each team is helpful in keeping students on task as these students wish to succeed. However, high *nAch* students may become too individualistic and competitive to be successful in group situations, especially if they perceive the team is not performing as it should. Finally, a team made up of many students with a high *nAut* may find it difficult to work together and communicate effectively. Distributing high *nAut* students among diverse teams may force these students to develop their teamwork skills while working with students to whom these skills come naturally, particularly the high *nAff* students.

Thus, a prior understanding of students' needs may facilitate team diversity and help mitigate some adverse responses to non-traditional instructional strategies. Nonetheless, one must also realize that there is not a one-to-one correspondence between a student's need structure and his or her behavior. Needs are only one determinant of behavior; one's values, habits, and skills, as well as environmental opportunities, are also influential (McClelland 1985a).

### Suggestions for Overcoming Resistance

When an instructor switches from traditional teaching practices to non-traditional methods, the uncertainty with regard to expectations can be unsettling for students. The challenge for the instructor is to mitigate this anxiety. Role ambiguity, a perceived lack of information about one's job or uncertainty about expectations (Breugh & Colihan, 1994), is likely to be a particular problem when business educators start adopting more non-traditional instructional strategies. The effects of role ambiguity are increased tension, dissatisfaction with school, distrust, and poor relationships with others. Thus, some of the very skills that the new curriculum is trying to develop could be devastated for some students if appropriate actions to mitigate role ambiguity are not recognized and undertaken.

Role ambiguity has multiple facets. Work method ambiguity is uncertainty about what a person should do and how to accomplish goals (Breugh & Colihan, 1994). This form of role ambiguity is likely to be less of a problem when using traditional instructional methods than when using non-traditional pedagogies. The traditional strategies have more precise task definition due to the narrowness of the assignments and the student's familiarity with what is required. Non-traditional techniques, on the other hand, are more vague in terms of the activities required to achieve an objective or complete a project. Performance criteria ambiguity is uncertainty about the standards used to evaluate one's performance (Breugh & Colihan, 1994). Non-traditional instructional strategies may engender more uncertainty on the part of the student through the use of non-traditional performance standards. Thus, when using non-traditional instructional strategies, it is to be expected that students will initially be concerned with the subjective appearance of their performance evaluation.

There are a number of strategies business instructors can undertake to reduce role ambiguity when employing non-traditional instructional methods. First, the instructor should define expected work behavior for students so they know what they should be doing. Second, the instructor has the responsibility of insuring clarity of the relationship between the goal (expected results) and the path to achieving those results (i.e., how it should be done). Third, the instructor should reach agreement with the students on how their performance is going to be measured. The instructor's challenge is in establishing the validity of the performance evaluation process. Fourth, continual feedback to the student is an integral part of becoming comfortable with non-traditional teaching methods.

Finally, it is important at the start of implementing a non-traditional instructional strategy to bring the students onboard so that they buy in to the process of change. While business instructors may come to understand that the newer instructional strategies are superior in developing professional skills, their students may not come to this understanding as readily. Therefore, business educators have a responsibility to inform their students of the importance of developing business skills. Students equipped with this realization should be more responsive to and more likely to embrace non-traditional instructional strategies. One way to impress upon students that the curriculum change is for the better might be to invite business professionals from organizations that recruit on campus to discuss the skills that they will expect students to have upon graduation.

### **CONCLUSION**

In the current study, we aimed to advise faculty members about the potential student responses to a change in

business curricula to include more non-traditional, active learning pedagogies. Non-traditional instructional strategies require the instructor to become a learning facilitator and the student to be a more active participant in his or her learning. Although many business educators have been reluctant to move away from the more familiar traditional, instructor centered teaching strategies, AACSB and employers have begun to recognize the need to focus on developing students' professional skills as well as their technical knowledge. However, making these changes in business curricula may mean uncertainty and anxiety and therefore resistance from students. This research discussed ways in which students' motivated behavior might be affected by these non-traditional pedagogies. Therefore, the instructor's planning should consider the effects of any proposed action on the needs of the students. With the newer pedagogies the instructor must develop an appreciation for diversity. No longer can an instructor adhere to the unfounded stereotypes about the needs of the "typical" student and naive assumptions about the universality of need satisfaction, as these will surely reduce the effectiveness of implementing the newer pedagogies.

It should also be noted that, although this research has focused on the benefits that accrue to the student, non-traditional instructional strategies present opportunities for the faculty as well. Perhaps the greatest reward for faculty who use these educational methodologies is their sense of increased effectiveness and the satisfaction with their relationships with students.

#### Limitations and Future Research Implications

While the generalizability of the findings of this research was improved by utilizing students from multiple institutions, one limitation of this research was that student exposure to the different pedagogical strategies was not controlled either across or within institutions. The extent of students' prior experiences with different instructional techniques may be related to their preferences for varying pedagogies. Therefore, future research should control for students' prior exposure to instructional strategies.

Likewise, in this research, we did not collect demographic data (e.g., age, gender) to examine as control variables. The institutions used in the research were comprised of primarily traditional students, and thus the sample was likely homogenous with respect to age. Nonetheless, age and gender might be significantly related to psychological needs and/or preference for certain instructional strategies. Thus, future research should examine these demographic characteristics as potential control variables in the relationship between psychological needs and preference for pedagogical strategies.

Finally, future research should utilize more qualitative research methodologies to capture how the psychological needs manifest themselves in the various instructional strategies. For instance, open-ended student feedback and peer evaluation feedback surveys could be utilized to gather qualitative data on what behaviors occurred during a group exercise or what a student felt during a discussion activity. This research would provide additional information regarding team dynamics and student motivation.

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