

SEGMENTING BUSINESS EDUCATION: ACADEMIC AND PROFESSIONAL MODELS

Stuart Van Auken, Department of Finance and Marketing, California State University, Chico, CA 95929-051
(916-898-5666)

John F. McKenna, Department of Management, California State University, Chico, CA 95929-031
(916-898-5663)

Chester C. Cotton, Department of Management, California State University, Chico, CA 95929-031
(916-898-5666)

ABSTRACT

This study sought to determine the extent to which academic and professional issues confronting business education were segmented according to a school's emphasis on teaching and research. The results of surveying deans from AACSB accredited and nonaccredited schools indicated that there were unique beliefs and values associated with deans from research-oriented schools, as well as with deans from teaching-oriented schools. Thus, an operational segmentation of business education was found to exist. Issues and implications of the study's findings were advanced and discussed.

INTRODUCTION

While segmentation theory has been amply applied in marketing, the application of the tenets of segmentation to business education has been an infrequent occurrence. Recently, a number of studies have specifically addressed the segmentation uniqueness of business education. These studies have been prompted by the new accreditation criteria of the American Assembly of Collegiate Schools of Business (AACSB) (see Final Report, 1991), which is now focusing on mission and uniqueness, as well as continuous improvement. For the most part, these studies have sought to determine whether deans from AACSB accredited schools featuring a teaching emphasis have different academic and professional beliefs and values when contrasted to deans from research-oriented schools (Van Auken, 1992) and whether deans from Porter and Kibben's (1988) category one, two, and three schools also have unique beliefs and values when contrasts are made between them (Cotton, et al., 1993). Surprisingly, these studies have not revealed an operational segmentation of the market for business education. Even a study of deans' perceptions of business research revealed that school characteristics were not predictive (Van Auken, et al., 1993).

Given that the new AACSB accreditation guidelines provide a mission framework for future accreditation assessments which relate to Cheit's (1985) academic

and professional models of business education, changes in the structure of business education among AACSB accredited schools and those desirous of accreditation should be accelerating. With respect to this mission framework, the AACSB accreditation guidelines state the following:

Generally, schools with greater emphasis on graduate instruction relative to undergraduate instruction should place greater emphasis on intellectual contributions. Schools with a strong emphasis on graduate programs, in particular those with a strong commitment to doctoral programs, should have a substantial emphasis on basic scholarship. Schools with a predominant emphasis on undergraduate degree programs may have the emphasis of their intellectual contributions in applied scholarship and instructional development. Schools with a mix of undergraduate and graduate programs, but without doctoral programs, may have a balance among basic scholarship, applied scholarship, and instructional development (Final Report, 1991, p. 31).

In essence, this new framework indicated that a school's infrastructure of characteristics should serve to operationalize the academic and professional models of business education. Writing before the new accreditation guidelines were adopted, Cheit (1985) noted that the academic model regarded business as a science, and as such, it had as its goal not the training of students to solve present-day problems, but to develop the habits of mind and analytic competence needed to solve future business problems, as yet unknown. In turn, Cheit noted that the professional model tended to view business education as more of an art than a science, and that it had as its primary goal the development of judgment in the solution of complex and unstructured problems. To summarize, in the professional model the focus of research was

on solving problems of current concern to managers, and in the academic model the focus of research was on theory building.

Of course, Cheit (1985) felt that every business school employed aspects of both the academic and professional models and, consciously or not, developed its own approach in following each of these models. However, it is clear that the AACSB, through its new standards, has now made these models operational.

THE STUDY

This study sought to determine the extent that the academic and professional issues confronting business education, as perceived by deans, were segmented according to a school's teaching versus research emphasis. The study was built on the earlier work of Van Auken (1992) which involved a survey of deans on this issue during the Spring of 1990. Basically, this study sought to develop a *constructive* replication of the Van Auken study, yet it offered advantages over Van Auken's earlier work through the addition of deans from nonaccredited schools, a more precise dependent variable measurement, as well as the inclusion of beliefs and values relating to Total Quality Management (TQM). Additionally, this study assessed the extent of change in deans' perceptions in the ensuing two plus years since the original Van Auken report. By so doing, another longitudinal coordinate will be developed as to the continuing evolution of business education during a time of self-assessment and renewal for all.

The study involved presenting deans of both AACSB accredited and nonaccredited schools with a questionnaire which asked them to assign percentage weightings to the extent of emphasis given to teaching, research, and service at their respective schools. The total of these weightings was designed to sum to 100%. Deans were also presented with 28 academic and professional belief and value variables that were designed to capture the inherent trade-offs between the two models of business education and which otherwise denoted either an academic or professional model focus. These variables were scored on a seven-point Likert scale with very strong agreement denoting a scale value of seven.

Population Surveyed

Earlier investigations of accreditation matters and of future directions for business schools have utilized the views of deans as predictive (Cotton, et al., 1993; Van Auken, et al., 1993). Consistent with this emphasis

and a constructive replication of the 1990 Van Auken work (1992), all deans of AACSB accredited schools (n=272), and all deans of nonaccredited schools who were associate members of the AACSB (n=292), were surveyed.

Data Collection Process

During the summer of 1992, all deans in the population were mailed a package containing a cover letter, the above described questionnaire, and a postage-paid return envelope. This survey and a follow-up survey of nonresponding deans yielded 268 usable questionnaire returns for a respectable 47.5% return rate. Of this number, 133 deans were from accredited schools and 135 deans were from nonaccredited schools, thus the sample yielded a balanced and substantial rate of return, 48.9% and 46.2%, respectively. While the return rate was impressive, a concern existed regarding the representativeness of the AACSB respondent group with respect to the AACSB universe, especially with regard to research-oriented schools. Therefore, a comparison was made between the number of doctoral programs within the AACSB respondent group sample (n=41) and the number of doctoral granting programs in business (n=100) within the AACSB universe. A subsequent Chi Square Analysis revealed that the sample and the universe did not differ significantly as to doctoral program coverage ($X^2 = 1.39, 1 \text{ d.f.}, p > .05$).

ACADEMIC AND PROFESSIONAL BELIEFS AND VALUES

The 28 belief and value statements included in the questionnaire were founded on issues that have been subject to debate and controversy within business schools. Each selected variable had a strong rationale for inclusion in the study. These variables are presented in Table 1 and they were drawn from the following categories of interest: research (4 issues); teaching (3); curriculum (12); the business community (2); the AACSB (4); and mission concerns (3). Of course, many of the items related to more than one of the delineated categories and categorical assignments were based on an item's primary orientation.

DATA ANALYSIS AND FINDINGS

The Criterion Measure

To develop the criterion measure, all business school deans who scored equal or above the median position (50.0%) for the teaching emphasis variable and who

scored below the median (30.0%) on the research emphasis variable were placed in a "predominately" teaching-oriented group (n=90). Alternatively, all deans who scored equal to or in excess of the median position on research (30.0%) and below the median on teaching (50.0%) were placed in a "predominately" research-oriented group (n=88). This latter group represented the heaviest weighting given to research relative to teaching in the entire sample. With the development of these two groups, which are viewed as being analogous to Cheit's (1985) academic and professional models, a basis has been established to assess whether academic and professional model beliefs and values will differ between the two groups. The presence of differences and the extent of differences will reveal insights into the extent of segmentation of business education and whether a school's infrastructure (i.e., teaching versus research) is impacting the perception of deans. Moreover, the presence of differences may serve as a useful guide as to the state of business education for those schools pursuing AACSB reaccreditation or initial accreditation.

The criterion variable in this study was unique, as contrasted to the earlier Van Auken (1992) study. In the earlier study, deans were asked to indicate their school's emphasis (i.e., teaching over research, or research over teaching). In the present study the median position on teaching and research was utilized to categorize deans. This study therefore deleted deans who either scored above or below the median on both teaching and research. This was necessary in developing an academic and professional model beliefs and values segmentation, as these deleted deans should share both an academic and professional model orientation.

Factor Analysis

To reduce the 28 belief and value variables to a more manageable number and to handle the problem of intercorrelated predictors, these variables were subjected to a factor analysis with varimax rotation. The results revealed the presence of nine factors with eigenvalues greater than 1.0. These nine factors accounted for 60.7% of the variance within the sample data set.

ANOVA Application

To assess whether the nine factors would discriminate between the two deans' groupings (i.e., the "predominately" research group and the "predominately" teaching group), a one-way analysis of variance (ANOVA) was run on the factor scores for each of the nine factors (see Table 1). These factor scores revealed how each dean scored on each

factor. For example, positive factor scores indicated that the dean in question scored above the sample average on a given factor, while negative factor scores indicated the reverse. Since the factor scores have been standardized to a mean of zero and unit variance, the higher the absolute magnitude of the factor score the greater the above/below average response; conditioned, of course by the scores' directional sign.

Insert Table 1

The ANOVA results in Table 1 revealed three factors that varied significantly between the two deans' groupings, with two other factors that came close to qualifying at the .05 alpha level. Of the three statistically significant factors, two directly related to the academic and professional models. In this regard, the "predominately" teaching-oriented deans' grouping scored above the sample average (.17) on the "managerial focus" factor, while the "predominately" research-oriented deans' grouping scored below the sample average (-.18). Moreover, the latter group scored above the sample average on the "scientific model" (.17), while the teaching group, as expected, scored below the sample average (-.17). Not surprising, research oriented deans scored below the sample average on "TQM acceptance" (-.17), and teaching-oriented deans scored above the sample average (.16) on this statistically significant factor. This finding can be partially explained by the observation that there is often a gap between the best of theory and current practice (Miles, 198).5). Also, not unexpected, was the near statistical miss on the "pragmatism" factor ($p < .0697$). In this regard, the average "pragmatism" factor score was lower for the research group (-.14) and was higher for the teaching group (.13). Also, "experiential learning" was a near statistical miss ($p < .0554$); the research-emphasis deans' grouping scored below the sample average (-.15), while the teaching-oriented deans' grouping scored beyond the sample average (.14).

DISCUSSION

On balance, the study results stand in contrast to the earlier reported Van Auken (1992) study. In that work, the key "inward academic orientation" factor failed to discriminate between the research/teaching versus the teaching/research deans' groupings. It was this factor that most personified the academic model.

In the ensuing two years since the initial Van Auken study, a "managerial focus" factor and a "scientific

model" factor have emerged from essentially the same variable set (three additional questions relating to TQM were the sole exceptions) and these factors did discriminate. Apparently, the AACSBs operationalization of the academic and professional models of business education has taken root. Basically, deans have come to see their schools differently as a function of their research and teaching emphases and an operational segmentation of business education has apparently taken place.

NOTE: The references may be attained from the first author.

TABLE 1
MEAN PROFILING AND UNIVARIATE F ANALYSIS OF FACTOR SCORES AS APPLIED TO
RESEARCH/TEACHING AND TEACHING/
RESEARCH EMPHASES

FACTORS	Mean Scores		Univariate F*	Probability
	R/T n=88	T/R n=90		
1. Pragmatism	-.14	.13	3.33	.0697
2. Managerial Focus	-.18	.17	5.49	.0203
3. Academic Breadth	-.07	.06	0.77	.3826
4. Scientific Model	.17	-.17	5.19	.0239
5. Research Benefits	.11	-.11	2.03	.1559
6. TQM Support	-.01	.01	0.03	.8538
7. Integrative Core	.05	-.05	0.46	.4999
8. Experiential Learning	-.15	.14	3.72	.0554
9. TQM Acceptance	-.17	.16	4.96	.0272

* d.f. in numerator = 1; d.f. in denominator = 176.