CALIFORNIA STATE UNIVERSITY, NORTHRIDGE

EXPLORING EXPERIENTIAL LEARNING IN FULLY EMPLOYED (FEMBA) PROGRAMS

A Dissertation submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements

For the degree of Doctor of Education in Educational Leadership

By

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Dedication

I dedicate this dissertation to my wife Alka, son Chetan , daughter Shivani and my brother Gulshan for providing encouragement, support, and love throughout the process of completing my Ed.D.

I also dedicate this dissertation to my friends who have supported me throughout the process, especially Michael Gittelman and Eric McLaughlin. I appreciate their understanding and the encouragement they provided which kept me going.

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ABSTRACT

EXPLORING EXPERIENTIAL LEARNING IN FULLY EMPLOYED (FEMBA) PROGRAMS

By

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Doctorate of Education in Educational Leadership

The literature is replete with studies of student satisfaction of experiential learning strategies employed in learning practical skills in preparation for the business world. This qualitative study explored a) faculty perceptions of experiential learning, b) administrators' expectations for use of experiential learning in Fully Employed MBA (FEMBA) programs, and c) barriers to its use in graduate business classrooms and courses. This study further explored ways administrators can increase implementation of experiential learning in graduate business programs. Data was collected by a) interviewing faculty and administrators, b) observing classroom instruction, and c) analyzing course syllabi. Findings indicate that both faculty and administrators positively perceived experiential learning techniques and administrators had high expectations for its use in the classroom. Administrators and faculty also identified barriers to its implementation in graduate business courses. Lastly, findings from this study provide implications that can be applied by administrators and faculty to provide mentoring, shadowing, and training within FEMBA programs.

Chapter 1: Introduction

"I hear and I forget. I see and I remember. I do and I understand."

Confucius, ~450 B.C.

Prologue

Experiential learning refers to the process of learning by doing or by actual experience and using interactive techniques in the classroom. Experiential education is "a philosophy that informs many methodologies, in which educators purposefully engage with learners in direct experience and focused reflection in order to increase knowledge, develop skills, clarify values, and develop people's capacity to contribute to their communities." (Association for Experiential Education, 2014). Examples of experiential learning include internships, consulting with for-profit or not-for-profit organizations, case studies, computer-assisted simulations, survey research projects with a local business, etc. This study will explore the use of experiential learning by faculty members in higher education in Business and specifically within the context of three Fully-Employed MBA (FEMBA) programs at three different research sites. In this dissertation the term "fully employed" will be used to refer to adult MBA students who are concurrently working in the private/public sector while attaining their MBA degrees.

Background and Educational Concerns

There has been a fundamental and a system-wide concern in the U.S. since the 1980s about the quality of education, both at the secondary and post-secondary school level. In a landmark study by Hudson Institute in 2000 called "21st Century Workforce" (Johnston, 1987), the author found a gap between skills required by entry-level job

entrants and the skills likely to be possessed by graduates of different educational programs. This publication supports the outlook that a highly literate workforce is necessary to develop problem solving, technical, and collaborative skills to function in the 21st century. Arum (2011) claims that four year students at U.S. campuses are under-going through a very limited learning experience in-spite of very high tuition dollars. Moreover, at the global level, according to a report by the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD, 2013), American adults that have graduated from high schools lack in many important skills, compared to adults that are out of school in many countries. Research contends that one of the important goals of education should be not only to disseminate relevant information, but to also prepare students for professions in the industry and the job market (Johnston, 1987). Business administration programs experience an ongoing onus to meet demands from businesses and accreditation bodies to use innovative techniques in the classrooms, so that students can use the skills learnt in their classrooms and readily apply them in the workplace.

The federal government is equally concerned that students receive a quality education, can find jobs quickly, and are able to repay their loans. There are approximately 37 million student borrowers with loans owed to the federal government (Student Loan Servicing Center, 2013). The "federal student-loan debt now sits at $1.2 trillion" for outstanding debt, according to estimates of the Consumer Financial Protection Bureau (Weinberg, 2013), and more than 40% of the students are not making payments (Mitchell, 2016). The main reason for this debt is that is that there is high drop-out rate of students from colleges and universities, and a secondary reason is that students graduating from for-profit-institutions can obtain only low paying jobs or are still

struggling to find jobs resulting in their inability to pay the loans (Matlin, 2013). In either of the two cases, the underlying reasons are that graduates did not accumulate the right skills for well-paying jobs in their educational program. Experiential learning models can help address these concerns, resulting in better retention rates of students and development of better learning outcomes, as will be later discussed in the literature search.

In addition, accrediting bodies, both regional, such as the Western Association of Schools and Colleges and national, such as the Accrediting Council of Independent Schools and Colleges, have started emphasizing quality of education as an issue more than ever. The Association of Advance Collegiate Schools of Business (AACSB International, 2013), is requiring institutions to provide evidence of ongoing improvement in innovation, impact, and engagement in the classroom to earn re-accreditation. This is in essence a requirement of evidence of active learning or experiential learning.

Problem Statement

While the value of experiential learning has been well established in the research, the issue is that experiential learning methodology is not widely nor systematically used in higher education (Kuh, 2008). In business programs, an experiential learning model such as internships, according to Templeton (2012, p. 30), was required for less than 3.7 percent of business programs which clearly indicates very low use of one of the most useful experiential learning techniques. The lecture approach is still dominant in the MBA programs. However, team approach and experiential learning techniques are gaining ground and constitute 25 percent of the program in some MBA schools (Byme,

2012). This situation can result in business programs having less practical value, in terms of preparation for employment and entrepreneurship, as well as payment of loans, with which government, accrediting agencies, and the students are concerned.

The problem statement of this research study is as follows: This study will investigate why experiential learning pedagogy is not used or minimally-used by some of the faculty. Specifically, this dissertation research will examine various factors that may or may not keep faculty from using experiential learning pedagogy in their own practice. Study of this issue will help address the gap in the knowledge in the literature relating to this subject. This study will also consider common barriers that give rise to non-acceptance or minimal use of experiential learning in the field of higher education and explore ways faculty can be encouraged to use experiential learning pedagogy.

Purpose and Significance

The purpose of this study is to explore experiential learning and examine its acceptance in higher education, specifically in the part-time FEMBA programs. To support this purpose the multiple case study or collective case study will be utilized, and the faculty and administrators will be interviewed at Advanced Management Institute (AMI), a not-for-profit graduate institution, and two well established public universities, Agricultural State University (ASU), and Valley State University (VSU), all located in a large metropolitan city of the western part of United States. Data sources used to conduct this research will be drawn from: a) semi-structured interviews with faculty and administrators, b) class observations of faculty teaching practices, and c) document review of course syllabi.

The significance of this study includes many stakeholders that may benefit from reading and using this study. These stakeholders include the author, students, faculty, administrators, businesses, universities, accreditation, government, and society at large. The benefits involving each group of stakeholders will be discussed below. The researcher will benefit from this study, since it will inform practices to better encourage the experiential learning pedagogies, which have been fully implemented in one of the institutions site under study. Based on anecdotal data and the author's observation as an educator, students give faculty higher evaluations, and when experiential learning techniques are adopted in business programs, graduates have better preparation for industry and entrepreneurship.

Moreover, the literature supports the efficacy of experiential learning methodologies for students, as will be discussed in the literature review. Students expect practical experiences and appreciate internships to prepare themselves for success in their profession or business. Mingun (2013) found that there is a significant interaction effect between participatory activities and learning, when students' satisfaction is considered. Students as consumers also expect a return on their investment in tuition fees, loan payments, time and effort.

This qualitative multiple cases or collective case research study, in its contribution to the literature, would benefit other stakeholders. The government could expect a lower default rate if the student retention rate increases and students graduate with better learning skills as a result of findings arising out of this research study on experiential learning methodologies. The student loan debt default to the federal government can

decrease if the unemployment rate goes down and graduate students with higher skills earn higher paying income from greater exposure to experiential learning.

Businesses and corporations can benefit as the pool of available graduate students has more highly developed skills as a result of greater implementation of experiential learning methodologies, which this study can inform. Graduates with higher-level skills would require less training by the companies and better performance of new hires, as well as the prospect of higher survival rates of entrepreneurs who start new ventures. The undergraduate and graduates programs at Babson College are good examples in the use of experiential learning techniques. One of the illustrations of these techniques is that the students are given $3000 loan to start a business and liquidate it at the end of the year. Profits, if any are donated to charities. This way, the students are required to go through a whole cycle of creating a new business. Half of the graduates end up starting their own businesses. U.S. News has rated its MBA for its entrepreneurship program as # 1 for the last 22 consecutive years.

The accreditation agencies overseeing institutions of higher learning can benefit as well, as they need their members to do well and meet or exceed their standards and criteria, in order to maintain a body of members in their association. Member colleges and universities can experience and document greater institutional effectiveness and performance, when experiential learning methodology is used, as indicated in the literature, which has been considered and interpreted in this dissertation.

Since experiential learning methodologies can benefit students and the many other stakeholders, the significance of this study will be to reach some findings concerning why some of the faculty members do not use experiential learning or make minimal use of

experiential learning methodology. This study aims to throw some light on ways experiential learning can be more extensively implemented in institutions of higher learning.

Research Questions

The research questions in this study explore various aspects of business professors' use of experiential learning techniques. The research questions will examine knowledge and awareness among administrators and faculty of the use of experiential learning techniques at Advanced Management Institute (AMI), a not-for-profit graduate institution, and two well established public universities, Agricultural State University (ASU), and Valley State University (VSU) all located in a large metropolitan city in Southern California. The research questions will explore the extent of experiential learning techniques used in the FEMBA programs at these three institutions in order to examine some of the perceptions, expectations, barriers, and motivations of administrators and faculty members toward the use of experiential learning methodology. Furthermore, this study will examine perceptions, expectations, barriers, and motivations of administrators and faculty members who don't use or minimally use this methodology in their practice. An additional outcome of conducting research to answer the research questions shall also address the issue concerning how faculty members using little or no experiential learning methodology in higher education can be encouraged to utilize it effectively in their courses. The following research questions will be investigated:

1. What are the perceptions of the graduate faculty members and administrators regarding the use of experiential learning methodology in the fully employed

MBA (FEMBA) programs at Advanced Management Institute (AMI), Agricultural State University (ASU) and Valley State University (VSU)?

2. What are the current expectations that administrators have of the graduate faculty in regards to their implementation of experiential learning in their own teaching practice?
3. What are barriers, if any, that may prevent graduate faculty from adopting experiential learning methodology?
4. How can administrators motivate graduate faculty members at various levels of proficiency in their implementation of experiential learning?
5. Do attitudes towards experiential learning differ by graduate business subfields such as, Quantitative Analysis, Financial Management, Marketing Management, and Organizational Development?

Conceptual Framework for Analyzing Experiential Learning Theory

There are many well-documented theories that show that experiential learning in higher education can develop better learning, than passive and rote approaches. To date, much research has been conducted on experiential learning as well as its application to university curriculum. Kosnik's research (2013, p 613), states,

> The traditional academic model that removed business students from the real world, into the "safe" classroom environment of theory-driven lectures without real world experience, no longer offers adequate preparation for decision-making and competitive performance in a global marketplace.

The theoretical foundation of this study will examine the roots of experiential learning theory itself, in order to make the case for the use of experiential learning techniques by faculty within the context of fully employed MBA programs across

universities. The foundational theories of Dewey, Piaget, Vygotsky, Knowles and Kolb are presented, in order to examine the value of the experiential application by faculty members teaching in the MBA programs in the selected universities.

Dewey is considered one of most influential educational thinkers of the twentieth century and has been rightly given credit for his theoretical concepts "justifying a shift from prevailing authoritarian teaching methods to more progressive education and pedagogical methods that involve a "learning by doing" experiential approach to education" (Dewey, 1938). He further explained that the educators must make distinctions between experiences as some experiences are educationally worthwhile and others are not. In other words, there should be discrimination between a good experience and a bad experience. In addition, education is a social process and the development of experience comes about through interaction with others. Piaget developed a stage theory of cognitive development. His four stages, the sensorimotor stage, the preoperational stage, the concrete operational stage, and the formal operational stage, try to explain how children try to understand the world. He came to the conclusion that learning is an active process (Lavatelli, 1973) and understanding a new experience grows out of a previous learning experience. Vygotsky developed a theory that was somewhat different from Piaget's theory in the sense that it described the contribution of the society and culture in the development of mental processes. He argued that learning precedes development and not vice versa. He also developed an important concept called "zone of proximal development." This concept explains how an instructor can help a student reaching the next level of learning experience. Kolb & Kolb (2005) based his theory of experiential learning on the above theories by Dewey, and Piaget, and emphasized the role of

experience as a source of learning. He explained how knowledge is created through the transformation of experience. His cyclical model of learning includes concrete experience, reflective observation, abstract conceptualization, and active experimentation and is very well respected. This theory of learning starts with the learner actively experiencing an activity and ends with trying to test the model in a forthcoming experience.

Figure 1.1. Kolb Cycle of Experiential Learning

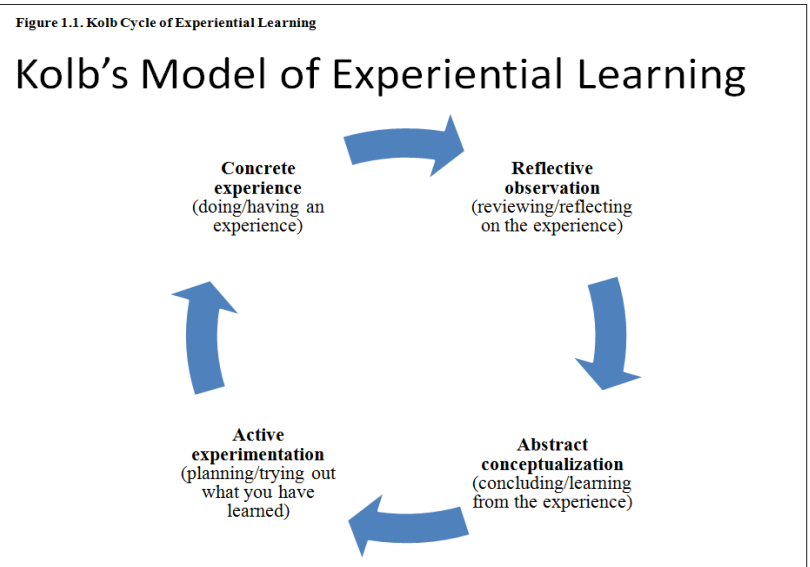

Figure 1.1. Kolb's cycle of experiential learning can result in lifelong learning. Adapted from "Kolb Learning Cycle Tutorial" by C. Davis. Copyright 2014 by University of Leeds, U.K.

Knowles's work (1980) developed the adult learning theory that he termed andragogy. He explained that adults are self-directed and explained the importance of creating a positive environment in the classroom. Knowles also explained why previous experiences of adults should be taken into consideration and how these should be used as a resource in the new learning process.

Overview of Methodology

The multiple-case studies or collective case study methodology has been utilized to interview administrators and faculty to collect data at three university sites that offer

FEMBA programs. Essentially, a multiple-case study approach has applied the fundamental principles of a case study to varied research contexts in order to collect information from different institutions. The case study approach using interviews, according to Creswell (2007), requires developing a sound sampling strategy and detailed analysis of the data, so that it results in informed conclusions and findings. The sites and sampling strategy for this study, in lines with Bloomberg and Volpe (2012), is opportunistic/network and criterion based. What this means is that the researcher has utilized his own professional network to locate (based on specific criteria) study participants as part of the dissertation research sample. This research study has followed the proper informed consent process prescribed by Institutional Review Board (IRB) at AMI, as well as at ASU and VSU, and it has observed and complied with additional protocols regarding invitations to participants, follow through, and confidentiality. It has ensured that the participants understand that the data collected will be used strictly for the research study exploring experiential learning. The request to the IRB also described the purpose of the study, duration of the interview, gratuity for participation, and benefits of the research in the informed consent form. Interviews were scheduled with emails and phone calls to participants.

Three data sources have been utilized in this research which included interviews, observations, and document analysis. First, experiential learning theory interviews as primary data sources were conducted. Second, observations of classroom practice were conducted to carefully document how experiential learning methods were used in practice. Third, internally, syllabi were examined to triangulate research findings about experiential learning theory use. Document analysis included syllabi used in the FEMBA

programs. These additional sources, i.e., syllabi and class observations, provided rich data to inform the research and also enabled triangulation of the sources in terms of data types, sources, and methods to mitigate bias in the data analysis. Discrepancies in evidence from the data have been carefully analyzed and vetted. This has led to more confidence in the results and improved the credibility of this study.

Experiential learning interviews. The interviews for this study were designed and conducted to foster an environment for the participants and researcher which enabled the interview process to be an effective data source. The interviews were semi-structured, and allowed for open-ended responses which concerned the application of experiential learning theory in MBA program courses. For the convenience of study participants, interviews were conducted in either an off-campus location or in the participant's university office to minimize distraction and encourage concentration and communication. In all cases, participants were relaxed and discussed issues freely. The subjects provided pertinent and valuable information, in specificity and depth. The duration of each interview was 30-75 minutes. The interview questions were aligned with the research questions and purpose of this study. As part of the design of the interview process, feedback was also solicited and attained from trusted colleagues to review the design and analysis of interviews, beforehand and afterwards, respectively.

Class observations. Three class observations were made during the data collection period, as part of the multiple case study process. The researcher as a passive participant made these observations. Passive participation is defined when the observer is present at the scene of action but does not interact with other people (Spradley, 1980). The purpose of these observations was to observe the utilization, non-utilization, or minimal utilization of experiential

learning techniques in the classrooms, and these observations helped the researcher triangulate the data collected during the interviews.

Internal document analysis. Document analysis was based on the analysis of the syllabi from all three institutions. The syllabi analysis was used to analyze how much importance was placed on experiential learning techniques by the institution and the instructors in the classroom.

Final analysis, conclusions, and recommendations did occur after the data indicated some themes, which could then be coalesced into a roadmap toward the results.

Limitations and Delimitations

Limitations and delimitations can outline some potential weaknesses in the scope and setting of the study. Limitations are external conditions that influence the study's scope and could affect the results, according to Bloomberg and Volpe (2012), and delimitations are conditions that are intentionally imposed by the researcher to focus the scope of the study. One of the main limitations of this study is that of its limited sample size, due to its qualitative research methodology. This is a study limitation because the findings of this dissertation research cannot be generalized to all FEMBA programs in business colleges using an experiential learning theory approach. Rather, the findings of this study are only applicable within the contexts of the three educational institutions' research sites. Many of the studies reviewed so far are based on the student satisfaction of these techniques, rather than assessment of learning outcomes. Lack of empirical research in the assessment of learning outcomes of experiential learning makes this research limited in its applications. Delimitations included choice of objectives and questions. There is a vast amount of data based on the studies of experiential learning. Every study limits itself to a specific focus. The researcher's focus dealt with faculty using this model

as a methodology in MBA programs in selected educational institutions and excludes other foci. So, the choice of objectives and questions are the researcher's self-imposed delimitation in studying this topic.

Organization of the Dissertation

The dissertation is comprised of five chapters and appendices. The first chapter provides a brief introduction and definition of experiential learning in higher education, a discussion of the needs of various stakeholders, which support the rationale of the study, as well as the problem statement, research purpose and the research questions. This chapter also provides an overview of the overlying theory of experiential learning, summary of the methodology, a discussion of potential limitations and delimitations of this study, and this purview of the contents of this dissertation.

The second chapter presents a comprehensive review of the literature that examines the underlying theoretical notions of experiential learning theory, as first proposed by leading theorists and brought forth to their current understanding and application. Next, the benefits of experiential learning pedagogy applied in business curricula and the positive benefits of experiential learning in general in higher education have been presented. This chapter also covers research about retention, assessment of experiential learning as measured by student satisfaction and the effect of experiential learning and employers on the business curricula. The literature search also explores existing barriers of faculty members to utilize experiential learning innovations in higher education. Lastly, the literature review reports any gaps in the literature, which need to be addressed.

The third chapter describes the methodology of this research study in several facets, describing the research tradition, research setting, data sources and research sample, data collection instruments and procedures, data analysis, roles of the researcher, and a summary.

The fourth chapter presents the results and findings of this study. This chapter describes each interview or case in detail and depth and discusses the evident themes that arise out of the data, along with quotes of the subjects.

The fifth chapter offers conclusions and recommendations. In accordance with the doctoral program (Michael D. Eisner College of Education, 2014) handbook, this chapter provides a summary of the study, analysis, synthesis, and interpretation of results and findings. This chapter also offers recommendations for policy adoption and practice that are specifically intended for institutions with FEMBA programs. In addition, this chapter reviews this study's limitations, discuss the applicability of the study, and recommend avenues for further research.

The appendices include a copy of the research invitation, informed consent form, a list of interview questions with faculty and administrators, as well as the class observation form.

Chapter 2: Literature Review

Introduction and Background

To date, much research has been conducted on experiential learning as well as its application to university curriculum. The literature states that the use of experiential learning techniques is very beneficial for business students. For instance, Joshi, conducted a study in 2005 related to experiential learning that yielded interesting and relevant findings. In his research study, Joshi (2005) and his colleagues used an experiential learning exercise called "Winter Survival Exercise" with 97 traditional undergraduate students at a selective Catholic liberal arts university. The "Winter Exercise" involved engaging students to practice skills of critical thinking, problem solving, teamwork and courage in a scenario where a small plane crashed with loss of the pilots and communications. The exercise was meant to resemble a business enterprise involved in a crisis or challenge, or otherwise possessing uncertainty regarding its future. This study (Joshi, 2005) concluded that this experiential learning exercise contributed to a very strong understanding of the concepts of strategic management, which often forms a basis for the capstone course in many undergraduate and graduate programs. Interdisciplinary capstone courses drawing from all functional areas, e.g., finance, accounting, marketing, information systems, statistics, and organizational behavior etc. encourage students to deal with managerial decisions and actions in the presence of competitive environment, uncertainty, and external opportunities that can influence the survival and profitability of the organization. Business students in the "Winter Exercise" experienced these activities. Joshi (2005) asserts that using experiential techniques is beneficial in undergraduate as well graduate business programs.

This literature search distinguishes between two models of pedagogy: The traditional, lecture-based approach and an approach that combines this with a significant allocation of time and energy to experiential learning on the part of the faculty members. In addition, this chapter scans the literature on the benefits of experiential learning. A highlight of the research review are studies that illustrate that students in actual business settings or internships and the use of experiential learning techniques while in school can significantly increase their chances of success when they seek work and become employed.

Roadmap to the Literature Search

This literature search summarizes literature regarding the theoretical background of experiential learning as well as its benefits in higher education at large. This literature review surveys works which can shed light on the impact of experiential learning programs and methodologies in business programs upon business and industry. The influence and impact of the industry and employers upon curricula in the university system is considered as well. A latter part of the literature review examines some extant literature on barriers or resistance to experiential learning innovations in higher education. Also under consideration is to look at the literature about the utilization or minimal utilization of experiential learning in the universities in the United States.

Some literature on experiential learning concerns the controversy or reports of awarding students college credit for the learner's prior experience in life, and this area is outside the purview of this study. However, this literature search limits its review within the context of earning college credit through the formal curricula of institutions of higher education using adopted experiential learning models and pedagogy.

Subsequent sections of this chapter include: a) the theoretical foundation of experiential learning, b) definition of experiential learning, c) the importance of experiential learning, d) positive effects of experiential learning, and e) retention and assessment of experiential learning. Afterwards, the impact of experiential learning, business, and employers on business curricula in the universities, as well as a summary of gaps in the field, are discussed.

Theoretical Foundation of Experiential Learning Theory

Dewey is considered one of most influential educational thinkers of the twentieth century. In his book Experience and Education (Dewey, 1938), he explained his thinking on concepts such as prevailing authoritarian teaching methods at the time, progressive education (educational reform movement that took place between 1890-1920), the role of education in democracy, and pedagogical methods and curricula. He came to the conclusion that traditional education being delivered at the time was strict and disciplined, and this approach did not give importance to students' experience. Dewey further explained that the schools lacked "learning by doing" activities. In addition to "learning by doing," he emphasized the role of problem solving, critical thinking, and personalized education.

Vygotsky's work dealt with social interaction in the development of cognition. His theory posited that culture greatly influences children's thought and behavior, and the community plays a central role in the process of "making meaning." Vygotsky (1997) made a very clear distinction between spontaneous thoughts and scientific thoughts that are learnt by the child in the classroom. According to him, scientific concepts can be taught only when a child has mastered a certain level of spontaneous thinking. This idea

is depicted as a schematic representation in Figure 1.2 below, which indicates the movement from thinking that is more spontaneous in nature to thinking that takes on a systematic tone. It is a gradual process to a point, at which the child or student is able to develop verbal logic out of spontaneous concepts. The development of these two concepts intersect each other at a certain stage of development of a child and provide mutual support to each other as shown in figure below

Figure 1.2. Every day and Scientific Concepts

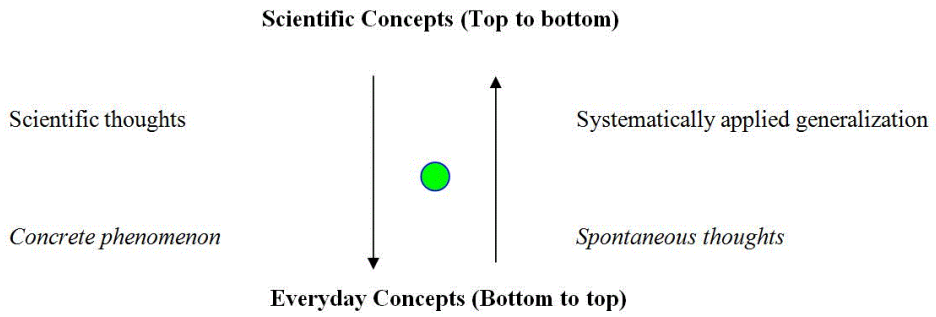

Figure 1.2. Process of movement from Vygotsky's notion of spontaneous thinking to scientific thinking. Adapted from Vygotsky, L. (1997) *Thought and language.* Cambridge, MA: MIT Press

Vygotsky also arrived at the concept of Zone of Proximal Development. The Zone of Proximal Development denotes the difference between what a learner can do without help and what a learner can do with help, and acquiring new knowledge is dependent on previous learning as well as the availability of instruction. This theory states that the educators should provide children with experiences that are within the children's zones of proximal development. This approach, according to Vygotsky, will encourage and advance individuals' learning (Kozulin, 1999). His theory also asserted the role of collaborative learning to be an effective tool in the learning process.

Piaget was responsible for developing a stage theory of intellectual development that included four distinct stages, the sensorimotor, preoperational, concrete operational,

and formal operational stages (Lavatelli, 1973). Piaget asserted that the presentation of ready-made knowledge needs to be deemphasized, and children should be encouraged to discover for themselves through spontaneous interaction with the environment. Piaget's theory also looks into individual differences in the developmental progress of children. This is the reason that classroom teaching should allow provision of individual differences. This theory helped encourage educators to develop the right kind of problems and questions to ask students to help in the process of learning. His emphasis was more on helping students in enhancing their thinking processes rather than using standardized tests or raising students' IQs.

Kolb's seminal and ground-breaking study (Kolb, 1984, p. 38) posited that, "learning is a process, whereby knowledge is created through transformation of experience." Kolb's model of experiential learning creates an iterative cycle of four steps in two parts: grasping the learning through concrete experience, reflective observation and followed by abstract conceptualization and active experimentation (Kolb and Kolb, 2005, p. 194).

While the research and writings of Dewey, Piaget, Vygotsky, and Kolb provide a strong theoretical basis for understanding experiential learning theory, a current research study by Knowles (1973) explores the application of experiential learning within the context of adult learning. Malcolm Knowles has been credited for making some of the most prolific and outstanding contributions in the field of adult education. For instance, Knowles explained that the adults define themselves based on the experience they have accumulated in life. Therefore, the experiences of adults can and should be used as a resource for further learning experience within the educational institutions. The

institutions should help adults develop competencies and help them become life- long learners according to Knowles (1980). The learning methodologies recommended by Knowles are discussions, simulations, team projects, and other action learning techniques.

Defining Experiential Learning

Before moving forward to discuss relevant research on "experiential learning," it is important to understand what experiential learning is and how it has been applied within university curricula. Experiential learning simply refers to the process of "learning by doing"—or engaging the learner in the process of actual doing activities, case studies, projects—so as to utilize the learner's experience as the source of learning itself. Therefore, using interactive techniques in the classroom allows students to individually and collectively see concrete experiences as lessons that help them apply these to the real world. According to the Experiential Learning Education Association, experiential learning is defined as: "a philosophy that informs many methodologies, in which educators purposefully engage with learners in direct experience and focused reflection in order to increase knowledge, develop skills, clarify values, and develop people's capacity to contribute to their communities" (Association for Experiential Education, 2014). Examples of experiential learning include case studies, internships, consulting with for-profit or not-for-profit organizations, computer-assisted simulations, and survey research projects with a local business, etc.

Let us clarify some of these experiential learning methods. Case studies examine practical situations that have already taken place and offer ways to discover how the

theoretical concepts are applied and challenged in real life situations in organizations. Case studies are good ways to study innovations, ideas, and behaviors in organizations.

Consulting projects with companies, whether small size, medium size or multinationals, are another way of putting into practice the concepts learnt in the classroom. The experiential learning methodologies of consulting help students connect with the surrounding communities and vice versa. Internships, in which the student works with a real company pro bono or for pay, are another powerful way for students to learn how the real world connects with the theory. These are just two additional examples of ways that experiential learning is manifest in order to increase knowledge, develop skills, clarify values, and develop understanding.

The Importance of Studying the Utilization of Experiential Learning

Over the last 30 years of professional experience, the author has observed that students in business and entrepreneurship have graduated with better preparation for the profession when experiential learning techniques in business programs were utilized. In spite of its importance, experiential learning modalities are not fully applied in post-secondary education, on nearly "almost all campuses," according to Kuh (2008), who observes that "utilization of active learning practices are unsystematic, to the detriment of student learning."Kuh found that many educational institutions that employed active learning modalities actually only employed it in a small number of departments or programs in a college or university.

Positive Effects of Experiential Learning Model in Higher Education

There are many well-documented studies that show that experiential learning in higher education can develop better learning, than passive and rote approaches. These

will be discussed in this section. According to the Bigg's theory of constructive alignment (Biggs and Tang, 2007), learning takes place due to active behavior of students, and therefore, it would be important for the teacher to engage students in active and participatory activities, upon which students can reflect on what they learned. This theory rests on the ideas that the students construct meaning from what they do to learn, and create meaning for their learning specifically by making discoveries about the environment (Joseph, 2012) as the constructivist teacher designs and facilitates active learning experiences for the student.

Experiential and active learning that encourages students to ask themselves questions about their learning processes in an iterative approach helps them reflect on their learning processes and the learning tools. This approach helps students recognize their thinking and their knowing processes and also helps them with understanding their breadth of knowledge. The ultimate goal in education is to encourage students to be responsible for their own learning and enable themselves to become problem solvers (Zuber-Skerritt, 1992, p. 24). This process of self-assessment engages students in their professional learning and its evaluation (Mingun, 2013, p. 648), and it helps students in self-monitoring during professional practice. Indeed, asking students what they are learning and how they are learning constitutes a critical process, as students are the most important stakeholders in the educational process. The answers to these questions about the learning process explain what the information that the student is utilizing, internalizing, and achieving.

While traditional lecture plays an important part in learning the basic concepts and theory in the overall learning experience, too much lecture and theory does not give

students adequate skills to the students to succeed in the real world. Kosnik (2013) states in this study that the traditional academic model that emphasizes theory-driven lectures, without real world experience, is not relevant, because it does not offer adequate preparation for decision-making and competitive performance in a global marketplace. The authors assigned students with experiential learning projects which led to enhanced analytical and problem solving skills. These projects included a ten-week business consulting assignment and a ticket sales project for a local sports franchise for a marketing class. These projects steered the students to have a rich cooperative learning experience. This study, among other studies, builds a base of support for experiential learning, which can be shared with faculty needing information, evidence, and encouragement for using experiential learning methodologies.

Participation in the classroom engages students, provides teacher and student feedback, promotes dialogue and sharpens presentation skills, and help in accomplishing projects through team development and trust. Mingun (2013) found that there is a significant interaction effect between participatory activities, when students' satisfaction is considered. The research was a quantitative study. There were two hypotheses for this research:

1. Students' self-rating of skills and self-satisfaction will be greater if the students participate in more learning activities.
2. Association between learning activities and skills would differ by students' level of reflection used to integrate classroom theory and field practice.

This research raises some good questions and answers them with the help of quantitative analysis and concluded that both of their hypotheses were partially upheld.

Experiential learning can best develop self-assurance and confidence in the students' careers, Smith (2005) asserts, when its programs are incorporated in the curriculum at several stages of a student's career and personal development. Likewise, Kuh (2008, p. 21) told his colleagues, "When I am asked, what one thing we can do to enhance student engagement and increase student success? I now have an answer: Make it possible for every student to participate in at least two high impact activities." High impact learning has students actively engaged in their education through internships, service learning, business consulting projects, and other experiential learning activities. The benefits of experiential learning are well known among administrators. Rosenstein (2012) confirms the benefits of experiential learning for students. According to his study, almost 9 out of 10 faculty chairs (88%) believe students view experiential learning as "beneficial" or "very beneficial." This study intends to find out why in spite of high administrative awareness, experiential methodology is not implemented by faculty in U.S. institutions.

Retention and Assessment of Experiential Learning

It is logical to assume that if students find great satisfaction in learning using experiential learning techniques, then the programs using experiential learning should have a better retention rate. Weis and Prussia (2002) concluded that experiential learning techniques in classes lead to increased retention. This was a longitudinal study involving 6000 students, and many of these students were MBA students who took an experiential learning course and were followed for a certain period of time. The findings were that their retention rate was much higher than those of the students who did not enroll in the experiential learning course. This study also suggests that the higher retention rate might be because of social integration involved in experiential learning. This study has

tremendous financial implications for educational institutions, as it indicates higher rate of retaining students.

As the educational program develops the curricula, experiential learning can be successful only when the learning outcomes are made clear to the students in the beginning. Establishing clear learning outcomes is a very important process, because it sets standards of required knowledge, skills, and attitudes at the institution to be learned in a particular course. A mixed study by Simons (2013) and other co-authors asserts that experiential learning is a transformative pedagogy that leads students to achieving social justice and multicultural goals, but only when these goals are made explicit to students in their learning objectives and outcomes. The holistic process of defining learning outcomes and designing, aligning, and assessing learning activities around learning activities has the potential to improve programs and the quality of graduates.

To assure that students have acquired the knowledge and skills required as graduates who enter the workforce, Banta (2001) asserts that assessment of student learning outcomes is an essential component of curricular design. Indeed, to instill students with active skills, the culture of higher education has changed from assessing the teaching to assessing learning (Allen, 2006). Likewise, Duke (2002) states, that there is a significant shift taking place, from teaching orientation to learning orientation. Smith (2005) states this indicates the greater use of experiential learning models. This is despite the challenges of assessing learning outcomes. Indeed, Kolb (2005), a seminal theorist of experiential learning asserts that, "learning is best conceived as a process, not in terms of outcomes." However, Smith (2005) asserts that given the importance of learning outcomes, and the positive effects of experiential learning for students preparing for "real

life," the use of experiential learning programs in higher education is expected to increase. When properly designed and supervised, experiential learning, according to Smith (2005), can provide opportunities for students to apply and test their skills and performance in a real workplace setting. These opportunities can provide positive outcomes in students' performance after graduation. Institutions of formal education design and define learning outcomes, to support needs of stakeholders in the community, and they have begun to design learning outcomes for experiential learning pedagogy.

The Association of American Colleges and Universities (2014) defines the following experiential learning objectives: "Inquiry and analysis, critical thinking and creativity, written and oral communication, quantitative literacy, information literacy, and teamwork and problem solving." The Association of American Colleges and Universities also defines as learning objectives that students demonstrate engagement in the local community and on a global basis, intercultural competence, ethical thinking and behavior, and skills for lifelong learning as learning objectives. Most of these learning objectives are general but match desirable qualifications for work in the industry. These objectives, taken together, are designed to evaluate whether students can apply what they have learned in various course subjects to complex issues and real-world challenges. The Office of Institutional Research and Assessment at Drake University (2014) in Des Moines, Iowa has similar aims that students in their experiential learning program will be able to synthesize or "integrate academic knowledge with their experiential learning…demonstrate an ability to apply knowledge and skills to new situations... and take responsibility for their own learning." Drake University's learning objectives not listed here also reflect similar objectives or concerns listed on the Association of

American Colleges and Universities (2014) web site. The website offers rubrics on their learning objectives with more detail to evaluate a student's performance.

There are multiple ways to design learning outcomes (Duke, 2002) and to ascertain learning outcomes. Accreditation agencies in their criteria require that students' learning outcomes are measured and documented for an institution's programs and courses, as part of the Institutional Effectiveness Plan. Exit surveys and alumni surveys are another way to determine if courses are meeting the learning outcomes. A student's journal involves a student in a continual assessment of his or her self-assessment of the learning outcomes. Although student feedback on the accomplishment of outcomes might not be a complete measure, students do have a reasonable grasp of the quality of the program, and they seem to want more from the institutions they attend. It seems assessment not only helps us understand what is being learned, but also what needs to be learned.

Impact of Experiential Learning, Business Employers on Academic Business Curricula

Many members of the faculty believe in a learning methodology, in which faculty talk and students listen. This methodology has many benefits, but research has shown that experiential learning techniques can provide greater benefits to students. Universities are beginning to use the techniques of experiential learning in their curricula (Kuh, 2008). Examples include first year seminars and experiences, learning communities, collaborative assignments and projects, undergraduate research, diversity/global learning, service learning/community based learning, internships, and capstone courses and projects. Some of the very well- known programs, i.e., Harvard (Byme, 2011), Stanford

Graduate School of Business (2014), NYU Leonard N. Stern School of Business (2014), Kellogg School of Management (2014) at Northwestern University, and many more well recognized schools have accepted these techniques and are making an excellent use of these techniques. However, the majority of business schools have either not used these techniques or have minimally utilized these techniques. While the value of experiential learning has been well established in the research, the issue is that experiential learning methodology is not widely, nor systematically used in higher education (Kuh, 2008). In a study by Templeton (2012), experiential learning with internships was required for less than 3.7 percent of business programs (p. 30). This indicates very low use of experiential learning in business programs, where the lecture approach, is the prevalent methodology in MBA programs.

Business school faculty believe that when learning techniques are used in similar situations as to when students begin employment, these tools are most efficacious for students to prepare for their career in the industry, as Michlitsch and Sidle (2002) found in their study. The authors used quantitative analysis and the applied techniques of frequency and chi square tests in a national study. They explored those tools embodying pedagogical techniques, which included content acquisition, application, and practice. While Michlitsch and Sidle (2002) examined traditional as well as experiential methods employed by business faculty, their goal was to consider ways to bridge the gap between theory and practice in business curricula. They found a high use of case studies, which is consistent with their perception of effectiveness. Other studies in the literature consider some specific experiential learning models, which involve not just a resemblance to the work world, but actual participation and contribution in a genuine business setting.

It is essential that business students and entrepreneurs are resourceful and resilient and confident in a world of rapid change. In a pertinent study (Colin, 2006), the authors studied how a learner-centered enterprise education program can be developed within a traditional business school environment. In this article, the authors talk about the benefits of experiential learning, and conclude that this kind of approach provides an opportunity for students to apply newly gained principles and ensure the reinforcement of entrepreneurial behaviors. This gets the business students involved in a learning experience that develops their capacity to think for themselves, to be less reliant upon others and ultimately, to believe in themselves. Over time, business has become complex, ambiguous, and requires executives to solve issues at the strategic level. Through a quantitative study that included multi-dimensional scaling and regression analysis, Karns (2005) studied learning activities and their effectiveness and found that discussions, student operated businesses, student presentations, and case/business competitions evoked favorable student response. These are useful pedagogical teaching techniques because they help students in dealing with complexity, ambiguity, and big picture orientation.

In regards to Business and Employers impact on university curricula, it is clear that the changing world economy and business structures are directly impacting the ways that students in business schools should be taught to afford students opportunities to acquire certain skill sets necessary for success. For instance, having strong networking skills are very important in the business world. Networking helps individuals make connections that are mutually beneficial and help companies expand their businesses by building relationships. In his mixed study, Legge (2007) came to conclusion that

corporate MBA programs with client-based projects lead to better networking for students. This study is relevant in the sense that when students are taught with experiential learning techniques such as group projects, they also end up networking with the real business world.

Collaboration is also an essential business skill and literally means "ability to work effectively" to achieve a common goal. We work in a world where we are dealing with tremendous amount of diversity including people with different languages, cultures, talents, age groups, personalities, values, sexual orientations, etc. Business professionals are expected to work together to complete projects and meet critical goals in this complex and changing business world. Proper use of collaboration skills can add tremendous value for companies in terms of idea generation, problem solving, and product and process improvement. The quantitative study by Young (2003) explores delivery of marketing education from the perspective of experiential learning and the use of educational technology. This study asserts that group project-based learning encourages collaborative roles and changes the role of the instructor and faculty member from a traditional authority role to more that of an informal coach. In this role, the faculty member facilitates student-faculty interaction.

Case Study method is one of the popular techniques used in the realm of experiential learning. Some of the best graduate programs use case studies extensively in their curriculum. Eighty percent of Harvard Business School's curriculum consists of teaching with a methodology using case studies. Other well-known universities, according to Byme (2012), those use case studies predominantly in their curricula, are Virginia and North Carolina.

Organizations tend to give preference to those graduates who seem to have adequate skills to meet the demands of the job. These skills include high-level problem solving ability, leadership ability, competitive performance in global market and entrepreneurship. The students are able to enhance their learning experience through real world experience in many programs in the business programs. Senior executives in the business, according to Brewer (2012), would prefer MBA curricula with experiential learning and solid grounding in ethics. According to this research, senior executives in the business world would like to see more MBA programs using the experiential learning techniques in teaching methodology.

Many employers no longer desire to train employees on the payroll, but are willing to hire students in internships. For recruiting qualified employees, internships have been favored as interactive activities by the industry (Gault, Leach, & Duey, 2010). The authors conducted a survey of 392 undergraduate business interns, which they administered to 185 unique business internship employers, between 2003 and 2007. Gault, et. al. (2010) concluded that business students rated average or better by the internship employers had a better chance of being hired, than students without internship experiences. Students whose performance in internships exceeded employers' expectations had gains in compensation of 15.06 percent, which is statistically significant, compared to non-interns. The authors estimate an overall nine percent increase in starting salaries for interns, compared with non-interns.

Job Shadowing is an experiential technique used in business, entrepreneurship, and other professions to help students become ready for the workplace. Job shadowing involves a student following an employee or an executive at the work place for a day to

several weeks, to learn about his or her interest, and learn about that particular company, certain behaviors, skills, and competencies. This technique of learning can also be very useful, if the student wants to learn about a new career-field. In a study conducted to find out if job shadowing was helpful to students (McCarthy, 2006), the authors found that job shadowing is a very useful and successful technique used in some academic institutions. For this study, the authors conducted a quantitative research study, and students stated that they found the job-shadowing experience activity to be either helpful or very helpful.

Summary and Gaps in the Field

While most of the research above shows the tremendous benefits of using experiential learning methodology, it is not widely used in classrooms of undergraduate business and MBA programs. It is a well- researched topic that change from traditional lecture methodology to experiential learning pedagogy is challenging. In their book (Wurdinger and Carlson (2010), Teaching for Experiential Learning, Wurdinger found that the most college faculty teach by lecturing, because the method of lecturing is how they were taught, and few of them have learned how to teach otherwise.

An early article (Bonwell and Eison, 1991a) offers an overview of challenges to active learning, which is very similar to experiential learning pedagogy. The authors note active learning may be resisted, as it may involve more preparation time, materials, and technical equipment than traditional lectures in the classroom. Active or experiential learning may also be harder to practice in large classes. Most poignantly, Bonwell and Eison (1991a) state that:

> The single greatest barrier of all, however, is the fact that faculty members' efforts to employ active learning involve risk--the risks that students will not participate, use higher-order thinking, or learn sufficient content, that faculty members will feel a loss of control, lack necessary skills…

These authors recommend faculty development workshops that promote active learning to use active learning as the method to conduct the workshops. Bonwell and Eison further discuss the roles of faculty and faculty developers (1991b, pp. 65-71) to influence adoption of innovations in the classroom.

Literature on resistance to experiential learning practice in higher education classrooms includes many admissions of resistance by the bureaucracy in higher educational institutions, but this research is very limited. According to Penger (2011), "The available management education literature does not address sufficiently the choice of experiential learning methods in practice." A rare exception is an overview of experiential learning methods delineated by Kuh in the Association of American Colleges and Universities (2014) website, in the section under "High Impact Activities." The American Association of Colleges and Universities web site also provides case studies on twelve institutions that have used experiential learning to a significant extent. However, these do not consider the extent of adoption or use of experiential learning in graduate and undergraduate business schools.

Even when the university signals it desires change, institutional forces can make change from traditional teaching methods difficult. The change process in educational institutions is incredibly slow. In his study on "New Generation Course Design" containing elements of experiential learning, Turner (2010) states the course redesign project will last at least nine years.

Casual anecdotal evidence during this literature search does indicate that, currently, internships and other experiential learning programs seem to abound in higher education. However, it bears repeating (Kuh, 2008) that utilization of experiential

learning practices remains unsystematic in higher education. One study (Templeton, Updyke, Bennett, 2012, p. 29) concludes that, "few business schools have made internships a universal requirement" for each business major. Templeton's study found (p. 30) that only four out of 107 participants in a survey (3.7% of respondents) were required to have internships for all major business programs. Just 16 schools (15% of respondents) reported in the survey that they required one or more internships for at least some of their programs. The participants in the survey were associate deans at AACSB accredited business schools in the United States, and the study had a twenty-five percent response rate. Although Templeton, et. al (2012) studied the use of learning objectives for in his sample, he found relatively little use of assurance of learning objectives among his respondents, but it appears in the findings that over eighty percent of business schools surveyed did not report the use of internships in their business curricula. Templeton, et. al (2012) asserts that "we have found no previous published reports of attempts to use internships for formal programmatic assessment for AACSB." Templeton, et. al (2012) cites an earlier study (Updyke and Sander, 2005) of AACSB institutions, which found that "of 133 respondents, 114 offered internship programs. Of those 114, only 12 required internships for all business majors, while another 16 required it for some programs." These findings are very similar results regarding the extent of use of internships in business schools.

To sum up, the purpose of the author's research study is to explore experiential learning and learn about the use of these techniques by business faculty in the educational institutions in the local area selected as research sites for this research study. There is a tremendous amount of literature as stated above about the benefits of experiential

learning, but there is a dearth of empirical research whether faculty teaching in the FEMBA programs is effectively using these methodologies. This study will address gaps in the literature in regards to utilization of experiential techniques by faculty teaching in FEMBA programs.

Chapter 3: Methods

Introduction

Research Purpose

This study has explored the use of experiential learning techniques by faculty in business education specifically in the Fully Employed Masters in Business Administration programs (FEMBA). The study has also investigated the varying use of this teaching methodology and has described common perceptions, expectations, barriers, and motivations that may give rise to minimal use or non-use of experiential learning techniques. Additionally, this study considered ways to motivate faculty to use experiential learning techniques in the classroom to a greater extent. Data sources used to conduct this research were drawn from: semi-structured interviews with faculty and administrators, and class observations of faculty teaching practices. Additionally, a document review included an analysis of syllabi.

Research Questions

This study examined the following key questions:

1. What are the perceptions of the graduate faculty members and administrators regarding the use of experiential learning methodology in the Fully Employed MBA (FEMBA) programs at Advanced Management Institute (AMI), Agricultural State University (ASU) and Valley State University (VSU).
2. What are the current expectations that administrators have of the graduate faculty in regards to their implementation of experiential learning in their own teaching practice?

3. What are the barriers, if any that may prevent graduate faculty from adopting experiential learning methodology?
4. How can administrators motivate graduate faculty members at various levels of proficiency in their implementation of experiential learning?
5. Do attitudes towards experiential learning differ by graduate business subfields such as Quantitative Analysis, Financial Management, Marketing Management, and Organizational Development?

Chapter Organization

The methodology chapter has been organized as follows: first, the research design/tradition and the reason and why it was selected will be discussed, and second, the research settings and the justification for these sites are described. The next step was to describe the researcher's intention selecting the participants, and the sampling strategies employed in this dissertation study. This was followed by a description of the instruments and the procedures for data collection. Then, the protocol of interviews and questions were described. Subsequently, the collected data was coded to tell a story based on the data. This led to analysis of the data and interpretation of the results. In this process, all the relevant issues regarding ethical considerations and all the IRB requirements were met. Finally, the researcher's role and assumptions relating to this study are described.

Research Design

This dissertation study used a multiple case study methodology in order to explore experiential learning methodology and its use in the FEMBA programs by posing research questions to faculty members at three different research sites teaching in these FEMBA programs: a) Advanced Management Institute (AMI), b) Agricultural State

University (ASU), and c) Valley State University (VSU). These research sites provided rich data (from faculty and administrators and triangulated by class observations and analysis of syllabi) for the analysis of the effects of experiential learning approach to teaching and learning in a private, non-profit graduate business college and two large sized public universities. The multiple case study is considered a very reliable and robust methodology and is used to explore the differences within and between cases (Yin, 2003). The multiple case study methodology involved the use of interviews with faculty and administrators, document review and observations of the classrooms. The main unit of analysis is the faculty teaching in the FEMBA programs.

Characteristics of Multiple Case Studies

Multiple case study or Collective case study involves looking at several cases and allows for the examination or investigation of a phenomenon (Glesne, 2011). This dissertation research involved exploring the phenomenon of experiential learning in the FEMBA programs at three different sites. This study involved examining multiple cases of faculty and administrators. The purpose of faculty interviews was to try to understand the use, non-use, or minimal use of experiential learning techniques in the classrooms by these faculty members and the administrator interviews helped facilitate the understanding of the communication of expectations and directions/training provided to the faculty by administrators. This study also involved a few observations of the classroom where teaching and learning was in action, and syllabi relating to FEMBA program were analyzed. These two additional steps helped triangulate the data collected.

Bloomberg and Volpe (2013) quote the following studies to define the case study method as follows: “Case study is an intensive description and analysis of a bounded

social phenomenon, be this a social unit or system such as a program, an institution, or a process" (Cresswell, 2007; Merriam & Associates, 2002; Stake, 1995; Yin, 2009). In other words, "bounded" means that the case is limited for research in terms of time, place, or some physical boundaries. The researcher explored the bounded systems over time through in-depth data collection methods involving multiple data sources. In this way, case study involves description of the setting and its participants, accompanied by an analysis of the data for themes, patterns, and issues (Merriam, 1998, 2009, Stake, 1995; Wolcott, 1995). Within the research presented in this study, examining the "bounded" nature of how each of the research sites operates brought forth a new understanding regarding some of the ways experiential learning theory is applied in each context. As such, this study examined multiple cases across three different research sites. The bounded systems in this multiple case study analysis were limited to the investigation of three FEMBA programs in three different educational institutions, faculty, and administrator interviews. Moreover, this study was bounded by the time-period during which interviews with faculty and administrators were conducted within each research site. Additionally, this multiple case study was further bounded by the physical boundaries within which each research site is encompassed. What this means is that each research site utilized space in different ways that may impact the ways that experiential learning theory is enacted. For instance, examining experiential learning theory application in a private, not-for-profit business college housed in an office setting context may be somewhat different than examining the very same phenomenon (experiential learning theory) within a public university context.

Applying Multiple Case Study Design to This Study

Case study can be intrinsic or instrumental. When the case in itself is an interest, it is called an intrinsic study. However, in this dissertation, it was an instrumental multiple case study. The case study is instrumental when it is being used to gain insight into a phenomenon. Therefore, this multiple case study was instrumental, in that various interviews were conducted and compared with each other, in order to provide new insight into the experiential learning methodology. This methodology also provided an opportunity for analytic strategy to provide detailed description of themes within each case followed by thematic analysis across cases. Multiple methods of data collection were used, including: a) interviews, b) observations, and c) an artifact analysis of printed documents, e.g., syllabi. The above characteristics were adapted into case studies of faculty at AMI and two public universities. The concept of experiential learning was explored, and it was discovered that some faculty members adopted these techniques enthusiastically, while others used them less fully as could be possible.

Research Settings

The multiple case studies were selected from three different sites. For example, in this dissertation study, three different FEMBA business school contexts, which serve a wide range of student populations, were examined. The reason for choosing these particular contexts for this study has to do with the fact that each of these business colleges places a certain degree of importance on experiential learning theory as an element to students' learning process. Additionally, each research site serves diverse student populations that will go on to become professional managers who shape the future of business in the 21st Century. The first site is a not-for-profit graduate

educational institution. The other two sites are large public universities in an urban area of the Western part of United States. One of the two public universities is Agricultural State University, and the other is Valley State University. These three sites were chosen because they offer FEMBA programs and emphasize the importance of active learning and the use of experiential learning techniques in the part-time evening context.

Advanced Management Institute (AMI)

One of the sites is Advanced Management Institute (AMI), a start-up not-for profit graduate institution in a big urban city AMI was incorporated as a nonprofit graduate school about five years ago and received Bureau of Post-Secondary and Private Education (BPPE) licensure about two years ago and received its national accreditation recently. The degree offered is an MBA in Executive Management and Entrepreneurship for fully employed students. This is a small school, but diverse in terms of student population. AMI's experiential teaching model includes lecture, presentations, experiential exercises, group-discussion, and monitoring of progress on the consulting project that students work on with a client company. The faculty is provided with additional directions as to how to implement this teaching model as part of the faculty orientation.

Agricultural State University (ASU)

The Agricultural State University is a very diverse campus in terms of race and gender distribution. The mission of the school emphasizes an active, hands-on approach, both in and out of the classroom. Agricultural State University offers an MBA program leading to broad professional development. The MBA program emphasizes that students

learn how to consider problems and make effective decisions in the contexts of firm, industry, and economy. The FEMBA program is offered to working professionals only.

Valley State University (VSU)

Valley State University is a very large university with a diverse population including Hispanic, White, Asian Pacific, and Black, with a fair percentage being non-resident students. The students at VSU are 61% male students and 39% female, and the average age of the MBA students is 29 years. The university places great emphasis on learning by doing through the use of experiential learning techniques via internships, community service programs, and connecting with business community. The MBA program at Valley State University is meant for fully employed professionals and classes are offered in the evenings and weekends. The FEMBA program places a great deal of emphasis on experiential learning by integrating theory and practice with the previous and current experience of the students. The student teams are required to get involved in a consulting project with a real company as a culminating experience of this program.

Site Selection

All the sites were selected based on opportunistic/network or backyard research and are criterion based (Glesne, 2011), in the sense that the sample of faculty members will be familiar with experiential learning and the MBA programs at these educational institutions promote the active learning and experiential learning techniques in their curriculum. The literature search confirmed the benefits of using experiential learning techniques in teaching methodology, and all the sites chosen have a very strong connection with the research purpose and problem. The verbal approval from the

responsible authorities, including relevant gatekeepers and or administrators from the three selected institutions was obtained.

Data Sources and Research Sample

Data Sources

Data sources used to conduct this research were drawn from: a) semi-structured interviews with faculty and administrators, b) class observations of faculty teaching practices, and c) document review of course syllabi. The primary source of data was semi-structured interviews with faculty, since the faculty members in the educational sites are responsible for the use of experiential learning methodology in the classrooms. The instructors selected were those who have either taught or are currently teaching at the study sites. The second source of data was from the administrators who are responsible for evaluating the teaching methodology and making decisions in the institution relating to the teaching and learning processes. The other data points used in this research were class observations to make a determination of the use, minimal use, or non-use of experiential learning techniques at these sites. A pre-determined form was used for evaluating the observations. In addition, syllabi relating to FEMBA programs were analyzed. The class observations and the analysis of syllabi helped to triangulate the data. All of these data points helped the researcher explore the phenomenon of experiential learning techniques and their application in the teaching of the MBA curriculum.

Sampling Strategies

The sampling strategy for this research study was opportunistic and criterion based (Bloomberg and Volpe, 2012, p. 104). It is criterion based because all participants (faculty and administrators), in one way or another, are exposed to the idea of

experiential learning techniques. The researcher applied the above stated sampling strategies to the three samples selected of research participants from each site for this study of faculty and administration. The researcher requested the president of AMI, and he agreed to communicate with faculty and administrators, by writing to them to participate in this research. The Dean and the Graduate Director of the FEMBA program at VSU also approved the request. The individualized letters to all the participants were sent asking their permission.

Sample Characteristics

Samples of administrators and faculty were selected using the following characteristics:

Faculty. The sample of faculty is opportunistic as well as criterion based. It is criterion based and purposeful in the sense that all of the selected faculty are either teaching or have taught in the MBA programs at the individual institutions. The researcher investigated the faculty about their use or non-use of the experiential learning techniques. The researcher's assumption was that that the faculty members will fall into my three main categories of the use, non-use, or minimal use of experiential learning techniques in the classrooms to provide variability in the sample. It was assumed that the different interviewees (three administrators, one from each site, and a total of nine faculty members from the business school sites) brought forth a variability of insight, which helped inform the study.

Administrators. The sample characteristics of the administrators are that they were chosen on the basis of being convenient and purposeful. These administrators were introduced to the researcher by the gatekeepers/decision-makers of the FEMBA programs

at the selected institutions. University administrators were selected based partially on the fact that they had a hand in selecting and hiring specific faculty members and would be generally aware of the teaching methodologies of these faculty members, including their use of experiential learning techniques. Secondly, administrators at these institutions were involved in the policy formulation regarding the FEMBA curriculum and its implementation. Therefore, this sample is opportunistic as well as criterion based and purposeful (Bloomberg and Volpe, 2012).

Practical Considerations

There was a distinct possibility that the researcher would not be able to interview all the participants during the research study. Therefore, the researcher started with a higher number of participants than those expected to complete the interviews. Since the researcher was planning to interview a total of nine faculty members and three administrators, he started with identifying ten faculty members and three administrators. The faculty included a combination of tenured and part-time faculty from different disciplines of management. Every effort was made to ensure that the scheduling and place of interviews was convenient for the interviewees.

Ethical Considerations

The researcher followed all the proper protocols in the invitations to participants, including informed consent, confidentiality, and any other criteria necessary and required by the principles of ethics and law. The researcher ensured that the participants understood that the data collected would be used strictly for the research study.

Data Collection Instruments

This study explored experiential learning techniques in business education and utilized the multiple case study approach. The purpose of this collective case study was to search for data on the perceptions, expectations, barriers, and motivations relating to experiential learning possessed by the FEMBA faculty.

The primary instrument used was the interview. The interview technique helped collect rich data for the analysis in this research. Interviews can have different kinds of structure, including unstructured, structured or semi-structure. The semi-structured interview format was used in this study. Glesne (2012) notes "questions may emerge in the course of interviewing and may add to or replace pre-established ones." Interviews provided the researcher with the opportunity to ask specific questions to faculty and administrators about their acquaintance with experiential learning. The aim was to understand and explore experiential learning and why some faculty use experiential learning techniques successfully and others use it minimally, or not at all.

The researcher also made a few class observations of the selected sites, during the data collection period, as part of the multiple case study process. This observation was based on passive participation. Passive participation is defined when the observer is present at the scene of action but does not interact with other people (Spradley, 1980). The purpose of these observations was to observe the utilization, non-utilization, or minimal utilization of experiential learning techniques in the classrooms, and these observations helped the researcher triangulate the data that was collected during interviews. All of the three instruments, including faculty interview, administrators' interview, and observation questions are attached as exhibits at the end of this chapter.

The interview questions we realigned to the research questions. The interview questions were designed to understand the phenomenon of experiential learning at these sites and find out to what extent, the faculty understands experiential learning techniques and if they are using them.

The questions to the administrators were aimed to find out how the institution recruits potential faculty members and ascertain how they are trained in the experiential learning techniques adopted by the institution, if any.

To enhance the integrity and credibility of this study, the researcher received help from his colleagues to confirm that the interview questions were effectively based and focused on the main research questions. He also conducted a few pilot interviews to streamline his interview questions to enable them to help him collect data that would accurately answer his research questions.

The other two documents that were used before conducting this research were the Informed Consent Form and the Research Invitation. The Research Invitation is a letter sent to invite the human subjects to participate in the research. The informed consent is a form that provides information about the research to the human subjects and seeks permission from the participants, i.e., faculty and administrators at the three selected sites. The informed consent included the purpose of the research, risks and inconveniences, benefits, confidentiality, costs/payments, voluntary participation, and questions that the participants might have.

Data Collection Procedures

The researcher used interviewing as the main method to collect the information. Interviews involved asking questions from the participants and collecting data to inform

the research. Indeed, interviews can be quite time consuming and resource intensive. The researcher took utmost care to prepare for the interview ahead of time, assuring that he was ready for any contingency during the interview.

Preparation for the Interview

It is important to plan and organize the interview process before the interviews take place, as the quality of the interviews and the data collected can determine the overall quality of the findings. Preparation for interviews, according to Turner (2010) "can help make or break the process and can either alleviate or exacerbate the problematic circumstances that could potentially occur once the research is implemented."

The researcher's preparation for the interviews commenced long before the interviews. He sent the necessary emails to the selected interviewees and followed-up by a telephone call, to make sure that the participants were fully informed about the scheduled date and time of the interview. He obtained informed consent from the interviewees and assured each one of the confidentiality of their identity, before the interview.

The researcher informed the participants that they would be provided with an incentive of $35 per interview, in the former correspondence with the interviewee, and where they would be interviewed. The location(s) would be in their offices during their non-office hours or away from the institute at relaxed settings.

During the Interview

The participants were informed that the interviews were going to last 30-45 minutes, with a possibility of a 20-30 minute follow-up interview. The purpose of a

follow-up interview was to allow for the contingency that the researcher may need to seek clarifications, or if any answers were missed in the first interview.

At the beginning of the interview, the participants were explained the purpose of the interview, and the terms of confidentiality were addressed. The researcher explained the format of the interview and communicated that the interview was going to take 30-45 minutes. At this point, he asked the interviewee to clarify any doubts he or she might have.

It was important to the researcher that his questions were easy to understand and that they were spoken distinctively and understandably. He made sure that he came across as sensitive and empathetic and came across as a person who was open to any information, as long as it was related to his research. This was a balancing act of being in control of the interview and avoiding digression, while at the same time coming across as empathetic. He remained engaged during the interview.

The researcher's questions dealt with the respondent's perceptions, expectations, barriers, motivations, and knowledge of the subject matter. He asked faculty 23 questions and asked administrators 11 questions relating to experiential learning. He had a pre-determined sequence of questions with follow-up and probing questions. He remained neutral and provided transition between the major topics of his interview questions. He occasionally verified to see if his recording device was working.

At the end of the interview, the researcher thanked the interviewee and asked him/her if he/she had any additional information to add. He let the interviewee know at this time if a follow up interview was needed, and gave the gift card that was promised before the interview.

After the Interview

After each interview, the researcher had transcriptions of the recordings made through a professional service, coded interviewees to protect their identity, and then proceeded to analyze the data.

Classroom Observations

Direct observations of three faculty members, one in each educational institution, allowed the researcher to see how much time was spent and how faculty communicate with students in experiential learning activities in the classroom. The observation was to review not only how many, if any, experiential exercises or activities were being used, but also the duration and quality of each experiential tool used in the class. The observation also revealed the atmosphere of the class and a lot was learnt from the body language of the faculty and students in terms of faculty enthusiasm to teach the subject matter and if students seem to be satisfied with learning the concepts. The quality of questions in the classroom also threw light on the practical aspects of the FEMBA programs. The researcher used the instrument of direct observation to explore the use of experiential learning methodology in the classroom. He was able to record observations of behaviors and attitudes of faculty and students in classroom situations that provided him with rich information of the actual working of experiential learning model. The observation instrument is attached as one of the appendices.

Data Analysis

Once the data was collected, the researcher organized it, so that he could start making sense of the accumulated information. The data collected from interviews and observations as well as document reviews were used to determine how much the

experiential learning techniques were being used in the classroom. All of this data was transformed into something meaningful by analyzing it and drawing inferences from this data (Bloomberg and Volpe, 2012, p 134). Although the researcher describes this process in four stages below, this process of data analysis is iterative. The iterative process can be defined as deriving new meaning periodically and revisiting the data as new ideas emerge. The qualitative research process involves flexibility and ongoing adaption due to data collection, preliminary data analysis, and further data collection and interpretation.

Data Preparation

The researcher had his recorded interviews transcribed by a professional service. He transcribed his observational notes himself. He requested the transcription service provide him with naturalized transcription, whereby each utterance, i.e., laughter, incomplete sentences, false start, etc. were transcribed. The naturalized transcription led to the realistic interpretation of the data captured during interviews. The researcher redacted the identities of the participants to safeguard their confidentiality. He did this by replacing the names with pseudonyms.

Preliminary Analysis

The preliminary analysis of the data was based on concepts that the researcher learned during his literature review of experiential learning. He conducted the preliminary review of the data after he finished each interview and observation with a second review after all the data was collected. This process was an endeavor to gain an overall sense of the information collected. Based on the researcher's interviews, he concluded that the data from his interviews matched with the research purpose and

research questions. The researcher then made sure that he was not missing any important information.

Thematic Analysis

The researcher was able to discover themes or patterns through copious analysis of the transcripts of the interviews, observations, and internal documents. This process aided in his interpretation of the data in this qualitative study. This theme matched with the research questions and he organized quotes from the interviews. This process led to the next step of interpreting the data.

Interpretation

At this stage, the researcher had coded, organized, and classified all the data to help him start interpreting the information and building his story. While interpreting the data, he tried to find out what was important by analyzing the data, why it is important, what can be learned from it, and how this was connected to his research purpose and research questions. The theoretical framework on experiential learning was able to provide him with the lenses that he used in interpreting the data. He was also able to receive the advice of his trusted colleagues to make sure that his data analysis and interpretation was logical. The other lenses that he used in interpreting data were his research purpose and research questions. Major themes as goals of this study, such as "benefits of experiential learning," "use of experiential learning," or "minimal use of experiential learning techniques," "barriers in implementing experiential learning," etc. helped him in interpreting the information. He was able to discern significant patterns or categories that related to his research purpose and research questions, and he started seeing the relationships of ideas, similarities, and differences. At this juncture, he started

drawing conclusions and arrived at meaningful findings and a workable framework to communicate his findings.

Researcher Roles

Effects of Researcher on Case

The researcher's knowledge, beliefs, background, and environment may have had effects on the case. In this case, the researcher is knowledgeable about experiential methodology and has practiced these techniques for years. The participants in the case may also react to the researcher based on their knowledge and experience. Both influences on the case, that of the researcher and that of the research participants, could affect the case in terms of data collection, analysis, and interpretation.

Researcher bias. Qualitative research involves plenty of subjectivity, and this subjectivity can introduce bias into the research study. A researcher's bias, without mitigation strategies, can taint the authenticity, accuracy, and credibility of the study. The embodiments of the researcher are that he is a 62-year old male who was born in India. He has two master's degrees and 35 years of teaching and administrative experience. He has been in leadership positions as dean and campus director for the last 28 years in Southern California. He is now an administrator at one of the research sites of this study. These are the fixed attributes of the researcher that he uses to see the world and how others might see him. He did his best to minimize these constraints by playing the role of learner and a good listener.

Bias in data collection, analysis, and interpretation. Although the researcher had an open mind about doing this research, he was aware of the biases that might creep in to his collection, analysis, and interpretation of the data. His biases could have arisen

out of what he already believed and hoped to expect. At this point, he expected to find that the professors who have practical experience and are well trained in the experiential learning methodology, would be more effective in using the techniques of experiential learning in their teaching methodology. Furthermore, the participants (faculty and administrators) might be confused about the researcher's multiple roles as an administrator, student adviser, and sometimes as a professor in one of the three sites. In the interviews during the data collection period, the participants needed to adjust to his role as a researcher and learner. All of this may have affected the data he received from the faculty and administrators.

Strategies to Mitigate Research Effects

Researcher bias. Here are some of the strategies that the researcher used to minimize his bias. He received feedback from trusted colleagues and his committee and even analyzed hi sown behavior during the process of his research. Indeed, "developing a level of self-consciousness, however, is useful. You may also seek feedback from trusted persons in the research setting who can see you as you cannot see yourself" (Glesne, 2011, p. 60). He entered into the research with a mindset of openness, curiosity, and desire and willingness to interact in collaborative ways. He continuously attempted to minimize these biases.

The researcher's principal role was to be a curious learner. He remained a good learner, rather than exclusively as an expert in the field, in spite of his experience in the educational field as a professor and administrator. Throughout this process he showed field notes to his peers and solicited feedback from trusted people, to minimize the biases.

The feedback led to refinement of his design and helped ensure that his interview questions possessed clarity.

In addition, he used triangulation in terms of data sources, data types, and methods, to minimize the bias in data. He analyzed the discrepant data or evidence carefully. All of his bias mitigation strategies were shared with his chair and committee, before he conducted his research.

Participant reactivity. Participant reactivity is when the participants may react to the fact of being studied, thus changing their behavior. To alleviate bias in participant reactivity, the researcher conducted the interviews in a relaxed setting that was either during non-office hours or in a different location than the educational site. This encouraged the research participants to more readily visualize and accept him in a different role as researcher and learner. In these relaxed settings, participants were able to concentrate on the interview.

Coded List (pseudonyms) of Participants with the Interview Time

Pseudonym	Title	Date	Duration
Brian Smith	Professor	12/16/15	53.56
John Carpenter	Professor	12/16/15	49.12
Mike Oakes	Professor	12/26/15	1.00.16
Paul Baker	President	1/25/16	44.56

Mark Cullins	Professor	1/15/16	1.26.11
Amanda Brown	Professor	1/17/16	54.52
Barbara Jackson	Professor	2/16/16	38.51
Lisa Harris	Graduate Director	1/15/16	30.20
Nancy Young	Professor	1/8/16	37.35
Mary Walker	Professor	1/19/16	43.43
Jack Lintott	Professor	12/29/15	1.04.26
Ruth Thompson	Interim Dean	1/21/16	31.45
			9 hrs 7 minutes

The next chapter (chapter four) of this dissertation study will describe the findings and results, which are based on the analysis and interpretation of the data, performed utilizing the outline methodological approach outlined in chapter three. Since, chapter four deals with reaching credible results and findings, it is important that all the elements of methodology used (i.e. design, site selection, participant selection, interviews, observations, document review) are performed effectively. In addition, it is also critical that that all the data collected are interpreted and re-interpreted to reach credible results and findings.

Chapter 4: Data Analysis

A Brief Summary and Rationale for How Data Were Analyzed

The purpose of the data collection was to investigate various aspects of business professors' use of experiential learning techniques in the Fully Employed MBA (FEMBA) programs. The research questions are meant to explore experiential learning in order to examine some of the perceptions, expectations, barriers, and motivations of administrators and faculty members toward the use of experiential learning methodology. Furthermore, this study was to examine perceptions, expectations, barriers, and motivations of administrators and faculty members who use this methodology in their practice to various degrees. An additional outcome of conducting this research study was to answer the research questions and also address the issue concerning how faculty members using little or no experiential learning methodology in higher education can be encouraged to utilize it effectively in their courses.

The main source of data collection is the interviews that were conducted with 9 faculty members from the three educational institutions. These three institutions are identified as Advanced Management Institute (AMI), a not-for-profit graduate institution, and two well-established public universities, Agricultural State University (ASU), and Valley State University (VSU) all located in a large metropolitan city in Southern California. These faculty members taught in the FEMBA at these institutions. Additional interviews were conducted with the three administrators, one each, from these three institutions. These interviews were conducted during the months of December, 2015 and January and February of 2016. The interviews were the main instruments of data

collection. The Graduate Directors or the deans were asked to identify the faculty members to be interviewed at each location.

These interviews, syllabi review, and the class observations have helped in understanding how faculty perceive and implement the vision or mission of the educational institution they work for. The interviews helped understand the views of the faculty regarding experiential learning as they relate to the perceptions, motivations, obstacles, and what can be done to improve the practice of experiential learning. These syllabi contained the information of the philosophy of the instructor towards covering the content, the main objectives of the class, how syllabus is a learning tool and what are the expectations from students in that particular class with varying use of experiential learning techniques

Research Questions

The coding scheme to develop themes was prepared based on the following research problem or questions:

1. What are the perceptions of the graduate faculty members and administrators regarding the use of experiential learning methodology in the fully employed MBA (FEMBA) programs at Advanced Management Institute (AMI), Agricultural State University (ASU) and Valley State University (VSU)?
2. What are the current expectations that administrators have of the graduate faculty in regards to their implementation of experiential learning in their own teaching practice?
3. What are barriers, if any that may prevent graduate faculty from adopting experiential learning methodology?

4. How can administrators motivate graduate faculty members at various levels of proficiency in their implementation of experiential learning?
5. Do attitudes towards experiential learning differ by graduate business subfields such as, Quantitative Analysis, Financial Management, Marketing Management, and Organizational Development?

The information available in the interview transcripts were coded and classified. Coding is based on the continuous patterns found in the answers of questions posed (Creswell, 2014, p 198). The data excerpts present major themes that emerged during data analysis. Interview transcripts are presented as related directly to interview questions posed. Each major theme of the findings in this chapter correlate to the research questions the researcher sought to answer.

Themes of the Findings: Overview

The first theme discusses findings of the perceptions of graduate faculty members and administrators regarding the use of experiential learning in FEMBA programs. The interviewee data found positive benefits of experiential learning, when faculty are trained and students are prepared for experiential learning techniques (ELT). Interviewee data and the professional literature indicate that students do transfer practical concepts and skills from ELT to their professional business practice.

The second theme discusses findings of the fair to high expectations of three administrators interviewed for faculty members to use ELT in their classrooms. These administrators discuss some requirements and recommendations to encourage the use of ELT. This second theme also considers data from the administrators and faculty members, which indicates that although interest in ELT is high, ELT is not fully

implemented in their own FEMBA programs. Some interviewees indicate that outside of their programs or departments, there is not a consistent use or interest, nor a high degree of implementation of ELT in graduate business programs at large.

The third theme presents findings of interviewees in this study that identify manifold barriers to the adoption and full use of ELT in graduate business programs. Some findings in the professional literature also indicate extant barriers to the use of experiential learning activities and projects in higher education.

The fourth theme provides findings of interviewees in this study, wherein respondents offer suggestions and recommendations how administrators can encourage graduate faculty members to implement experiential learning. Much available interviewee data or major findings relate to mentoring and training of faculty members as enablers of ELT use. Some information from the professional literature related to the corresponding research question is also considered. The fifth theme reports the findings of interviewees and extant literature concerning attitudes and use of experiential learning in qualitative vs. quantitative graduate business subfields. The available data indicates ELT is more widely used in qualitative business subfields or disciplines, but some data contends that ELT can be used in any academic discipline, depending on ability and training of the faculty member.

RQ1: What are the perceptions of the graduate faculty members and administrators regarding the use of experiential learning methodology in the fully employed MBA (FEMBA) programs at Advanced Management Institute (AMI), Agricultural State University (ASU) and Valley State University (VSU)?

Theme 1: Faculty Member and Administrator Perceptions--Benefits of Experiential Learning: Improvement of Student Motivation, Engagement, Retention and Learning of Practical Business Skills

Theme one that emerged during the data analysis conducted for this dissertation study directly addresses the first research question designed to find out the perceptions of the graduate faculty members and administrators regarding the use of experiential learning methodology in the FEMBA programs at the three study sites. In doing so, the researcher asked several interview questions to seek data to reach findings that could answer the above research question. In varying forms during semi-structured interviews regarding perceptions of ELT, the researcher directly asked respondents what they liked best about experiential learning. Furthermore, the researcher followed up and invited more detailed explanations, conceptions, and techniques that the interviewees found best to use in their classrooms as well as explanations of ways to increase experiential learning. Interviewee responses yielded important data findings regarding their perceptions on ELT. However, discussions during the interviews conducted sometimes were revealed in the interview transcripts at different times of the interview but were still related to the original interview question in response to this theme. Respondents often brought up asides or spoke about other topics or observations related to their knowledge of experiential learning pedagogy and techniques.

The major intent of discussion of this theme is not to explain in detail how to carry out the techniques of experiential learning pedagogy, nor to argue the benefits of experiential learning. Excerpts of interview data from respondents in this study, however, will indicate many positive views explaining the benefits of experiential

learning technique, as well as describing the use of experiential learning and sometimes the extent of experiential learning.

Faculty members and administrators interviewed in this study report that experiential learning is very beneficial for their students, from their teaching experience. According to interviewees' responses presented in this chapter, respondents indicate that experiential learning techniques, a) help raise student motivation, b) increase engagement of students in the classroom, and c) improve retention and lifelong learning of practical business skills in a more effective manner than traditional lecture. The interviewees in this study discussed their perceptions of case-based methodology, simulation, and client consulting as experiential learning techniques, which they used in their practice. Their data implies that work-based consulting, when implemented well, was most efficacious among these techniques.

Findings and discussion of data analysis resulting from transcribed interviews is presented in the subsequent sub-themes and sectional headings. References to related research literature is drawn upon with interpretation throughout this thematic analysis in order to validate the data analysis provided in this dissertation study.

Sub-theme A: Motivation, Engagement, and Interest in Experiential Learning as Benefits of ELT

This sub-theme addresses how this pedagogy can lead to student motivation, engagement, and success. First, discussion and interpretation of interview transcript excerpts will consider initial fears of students used to lecturing to engage in experiential learning activities, followed by positive outcomes with experiential learning. Next in this sub-theme on motivation, discussion and interpretation of interview data will consider

that a positive non-threatening environment to enable motivation and engagement in ELT is indicated. Afterwards, a similar treatment is given to interviewee perceptions and observations on facilitation of group learning with ELT to foster and maintain engagement with ELT. Finally, this sub-theme regarding motivation and engagement offers discussion of interviewee comments, that indicate a preference for ELT to engage younger and older working students alike for experiential learning's active nature to maintain their interest. Drawing and keeping this interest is essential, as expressed in the interviewee data, for experiential learning and learning in general to be successful.

Motivation, initial fears of engagement, and positive experiences with experiential learning. From an ELT perspective, faculty who enjoy teaching techniques often transfer enjoyment, and motivation to student, as data from the following transcript excerpt from Professor Young's interview indicates.

> Interview Question: …maybe they are coming from other classes where they use totally lecture approach. How do you get them excited?
>
> Interviewee Response: I think I am excited about what happens in the class and so that initially brings a lot

As Young expressed, the excitement and motivation becomes mutual, and both teacher and student become successful in their respective roles concerning learning. This dynamic interaction between faculty and students became a self-sustaining pedagogical approach as they received positive feedback from their students and the actual process of engaging in ELT themselves. With this interviewee perception in mind, the researcher asked respondents to tell which aspects of using experiential learning techniques they

most enjoyed in their practice. The next transcripts provided come from interviews with professors Young and Brown respectively.

> Interview Question: What aspect of experiential learning did you enjoy most and why?
>
> Interviewee Response: When I can actually get students involved in something that they enjoy. If they had fun with something that is the one that makes me feel good.
>
> Interviewee Response: Let's see. I think it's sort of post-completion euphoria for the students.

Young expresses satisfaction when her students enjoy using ELT, and Brown enjoys the highly positive feelings students have after they complete an experiential learning activity and realize its value to their learning. When the researcher asked why, Respondent Brown replied,

> Interviewee Response: There are just, once they are done like I said, when they are in it, they are stressed, they are emotional, it's very challenging.

Brown means to say that students invested in the experience and the effort to solve the situation experience intense stress and emotions, but can be euphoric by the end of the exercise. When asked about the first experience, Professor Walker replied,

> Interviewee Response: Scary… (pause) Because a lot of it was because learning simulation yourself and they ask you questions…but I found that once you admit that, hey we are learning this together they were pretty good … so let's figure it out and most of them like it.

Walker reaffirms the other interviewee responses that there is fear at first, followed by favorable reception of the activity when the faculty member and the students go through the activity together. Students tend to go from the steps of fear and stress to a big awakening. Professor Brown observes,

> Interviewee Response: …but when they are done giving that presentation to the client and that client is so grateful … they are just almost giddy. I mean they are proud, they have a sense of accomplishment; they know that they have learned a lot, so it's just really fun to watch them at that point.

After students engage in an experiential learning activity, once students realize the skills they have learned, as Brown notes, students have a real sense of accomplishment, which positively motivates students to engage further their experiential learning. Professor Jackson also explains the phenomenon of initial fear of engagement and subsequent discovery of new learning in another experiential learning technique.

> Interviewee Response: and he had the most phenomenal or hot expression on his face and he said this program has been worth every dime I have paid you because it made me see very clearly with my blindfold

The blindfold exercise Jackson describes focuses on communication skills and develops trust among team members. Working in pairs, blindfolded participants are led on a walk around the surrounding area or a course by their partners and experience an "aha" moment learning how to trust and cooperate with each other. This kind of experiential exercise fosters students' trust and interaction with peers in an experiential learning activity, which can lead to the same with colleagues in the business world.

Administrator Baker notes that after experiential learning activities are completed, students have gained confidence and view ELT positively.

> Interviewee Response: I think they are very beneficial and I think they come out very confident…by the feedback we get as this was just fantastic because it made them really responsible

Baker appears to be indicating that feedback he has observed gives evidence that ELT motivates students, and he has observed that students confidently demonstrate their responsibility and learning in the graduate business program. Professor Oakes has the same observations regarding responsibility and confidence of the students.

> Interviewee Response: …the same students that were a little bit passive in the classroom, when they get out in the field and talk to real people about real problems, it's amazing how they step up to the plate and they become these very professional, well--spoken, thoughtful people

Oakes is indicating the professional growth of students in his courses, when they are given the opportunity to consult with real clients. Oakes is pleased that his students "step up to the plate." The interviewee indicates that while students are shy in the classroom, if FEMBA students already in business professions are empowered to practice ELT in actual business settings under faculty guidance, they are ready to demonstrate responsibility and gain confidence in the industry, as they sharpen their knowledge and skills.

Interview transcripts of faculty perceptions of experiential learning as a methodology for business learning were very positive. However, Professor Jackson's

observations and response to the interview question asking her favorite aspect of experiential learning did come with one stated caveat.

> Interviewee Response**:** The participation of the students, the excitement of the students, but again the excitement only comes if they have a proper background.

What the above comment indicates is that, the initial exposure to experiential learning might not be positive for students unfamiliar with critical thinking, group work, or the methodology. The possibility for this situation can be a barrier to the adoption and use of experiential learning techniques, and these issues are discussed further in discussion of theme three in this chapter.

Fostering positive environment with experiential learning activities for motivation and engagement. Motivation to encourage students to attend and engage in learning depends much on fostering an environment conducive to learning, so students remain involved and learn new viewpoints, critical thinking, and professional skills. In the course of discussion, Professor Jackson spoke of engagement, and also indicates enjoyment of a positive environment.

> Interviewee Response: They are far more engaged. I have had people say, oh it is so much fun to come to your class, well they are learning a lot. They don't even know it, they are just having a good time.

Jackson reports that students are more engaged, enjoy experiential learning in her class, and are learning more than they realize at first. The interviewee is also indicating enjoyment of a positive environment.

Several faculty respondents expressed awareness that in order to foster a positive environment and enable motivation for experiential learning, students needed to be reassured and prepped for the experiential activity. Professor Jack Lintott as well was proud of engagement of his students and the environment he maintained in his classes with experiential learning.

> Interviewer: Now, I am coming to series of questions, which deal with assessment and effectiveness of experiential learning techniques. Are these techniques beneficial to students? If yes, why? How do students respond to your techniques?
>
> Interviewee Response: I would specifically say more engaged, willing to participate less reluctant to say I do not understand something, willing to admit they screwed up…

Professor Lintott's response seems to indicate that his use of experiential learning techniques (with his guidance) creates an environment where students have the comfort and confidence to ask the instructor questions or admit errors, Professor Lintott continued:

> Interviewee Response: I tease the students and say you are very good at screwing up and my job as the faculty is to unscrew you and I am very good at unscrewing you. So, I tease them to say it is okay to make mistakes in my classroom as long as you learn from it.

What Professor Lintott means by “unscrewing you” is that he encourages students to accept errors, question the reason why, and continue practicing and experimenting for solutions.

Lintott’s approach just described reflects the Kolb steps of the experiential learning process (Kolb and Kolb, 2005), and allows an encouraging environment conducive to growth in learning skills. Professor Jackson also cites a positive and reassuring environment as necessary to engage students.

> Interviewee Response: You have to work with how to make them comfortable because everybody needs to be involved.

Jackson is saying in general that experiential learning activities need to be facilitated in a manner that students are comfortable. Then, students will engage and participate in the activity. Professor Jackson notes that training in providing a positive environment is suggested.

> Interviewee Response: I can tell you (voice upturned), there are some aspects to experiential learning that can be psychologically challenging and I think people need to be trained on how to manage that.

Professor Jackson’s response acknowledges that students used to the lecture method and new to the experiential learning process may feel uncomfortable at first with experiential learning.

Faculty members can also experience discomfort when using ELT early in their career or after a long career using traditional lecture-based methodology; however, they

can become acclimate themselves to ELT after experience or training. Observations of faculty respondents, through this chapter provide anecdotal evidence, that faculty with more experience have used active and experiential activities more in order to gain students' engagement and retention. Professor Cullins reported a colleague told him that as faculty gain more experience with experiential learning, they cover less of content and more time facilitating and effectively supporting the learning process of an experiential learning project.

> Interviewee Response: I will give you a cliché that my colleague who is emeritus now said… he said yeah, you know when you start out as an instructor, you are all content and when you get to the end,…he said, you are all process.

Cullins is explaining that faculty using ELT gain much experience and towards the end of their career use this methodology with great ease. Professor Smith demonstrates this ease or genuine learning curve that is evident with use of ELT.

> Interviewee Response: … It's all about...you give them a little bit of content, maybe fifteen or twenty minutes.

Smith in this transcript excerpt is suggesting from experience that giving students only 15 or 20 minutes of lecture content in the classroom is effective and sufficient. After exposure to using ELT, Smith is less concerned with covering content and more concerned with the process of coordinating and facilitating group work in classrooms or

client consulting meetings. This situation can occur when the professor becomes more comfortable and proficient with using experiential learning methodology.

Both Smith (2005) and Kuh (2008) have discussed the engagement, self-assurance, and student success that can result from use of experiential learning techniques, as considered by the literature review of this study in chapter two. These support the growth of students to accept and use ELT that is reported by the study interviewees.

Facilitation and management of group activities in ELT for motivation, engagement, and success. When conducting experiential learning activities, small groups or teams are often used, in order to engage students and enable a setting for communication, or problem solving with other student colleagues in the FEMBA, to help students develop practical skills in business. This process necessitates facilitation and management of the group by the faculty. If the students are new to this process, they might feel uncomfortable with it. Professor Jackson offered additional data.

> Interviewee Response: At first they think I am insane (interviewee stops and think before proceeding) so you don't, you know, take somebody and throw them right into something that is (hesitates) is psychologically dangerous," such as a trust walk.

What Professor Jackson was referring to is the notion of building trust. Building trust in a change effort to try a new activity requires reassurance, briefing, observation, monitoring, facilitation, constructive feedback, and discussion to build students' confidence. This positive management of the students' involvement leads to confidence, motivation, and to

participation and success in experiential learning activities. When Jackson referred to a trust walk, she was referring to a team building activity she facilitates in her classroom, in which the leader builds trust by blind-folding the team members and walks them through an activity with his leadership and communication skills.

What the response above seems to indicate is in order for experiential activities to be successful, the instructor needs to develop a rapport or build trust. Students who are not fully engaged through lack of confidence, social skills or cultural inclinations, as well as lack of prior exercising of critical thinking skills may not be able to pulling their weight to contribute to the learning activity. Jackson observed that in her experience, it was necessary to conduct brief preliminary activities as small steps in the process to help prepare students psychologically for experiential activities.

When the experience of critical thinking to solve realistic business problems is at first daunting to students used to lecture and memorization of facts, group work in the classroom can pave the way to accept active learning. Professor Carpenter explains an exercise he used to illustrate the benefits and rationale for group work in experiential learning.

> Interviewee Response: I try to prove this by giving them an easy problem and a harder problem and then one group had to solve it individually this complex problem, the other group had to solve it as a group and the group solved it much more quickly than the individual, so the point being is that when you have different viewpoints that can go into a complex problem, it makes it easier to solve it

Carpenter's exercise illustrates that students can be psychologically prepared for group work as exposure to different viewpoints allow participants to accomplish more problem

solving in groups than individually. This is a practical issue also. Carpenter's activity helps students cognitively and emotionally to be more amenable to group work.

The groups of students have to be monitored and counseled throughout the main activity for emotional well-being, framing or focus, and adherence of participants to the activity. Professor Young speaks about framing the experience here.

> Interviewee Response: So, it may be it is more faculty needing to tie up the experiential learning to do what they are learning…

Young appears to indicate that, if the instructor does not frame students' experiential activities, students might not see the point of the activity. They will not place their full attention, nor focus, nor engage effectively. This can affect views or feedback of an ELT activity negatively when it is conducted, according to this transcript excerpt from Professor Young's interview.

> Interviewee Response: Yeah. On the other hand fairly in terms of student ratings, students still rate lecture higher than some of the others. So, it is funny.

Young has noted that students can give less favorable feedback on an experiential learning activity. Oftentimes, an experiential activity is framed successfully and works, but is not debriefed or discussed or summarized afterwards with the facilitator. This can result in a latent effect of the ELT activity, wherein students will not gain the point of the activity until much later, and then students will view the activity in a more favorable

light, but only after possibly leaving unfavorable feedback to the instructor. Professor Brown mentions the latent effect.

> Interviewee Response: …A lot of times students do not even realize that they are learning more until later, way later…

Brown notes sometimes students do not realize the point of the experiential learning exercise until long after it has been completed. This can happen without debriefing at the end of the activity.

Professor Jackson states that faculty members need to facilitate and manage group dynamics during the experiential learning activities.

> Interviewee Response: Well, you will have to have, really, facilitation skills, because inevitably you are going to have, all of the you know, dynamics you have in an organization, the over-talker, the person who…but does not actually say anything, the people who don't contribute or participate

Jackson is indicating that similar group dynamics and behaviors which occur in business meetings can occur in group work in classrooms, as well, and the professor needs to monitor and guide students for the experiential activities to be successful. Some students may be shy and not be contributing, and they need to be encouraged to engage. Some students may talk too much, be rigid and not be accepting of other ideas, have overbearing manner, are not productive in good faith, or miss the point of the activity. Jackson implies that professors facilitating experiential learning group activities need a

high degree of skill to monitor and guide the students, so they can succeed in effective learning of the desired objectives.

Brown now discusses the importance of managing experiential learning group activities in terms of monitoring focus and adherence to the activity.

> Interviewee Response: What happens is if their team members complain about them in case there is a grade implication for a lack of something, lack of quality, lack of attendance to meetings or whatever, then I have to paper trail to go back and evaluate. So, they know that paper trail is there, and it keeps them very disciplined…

Professor Brown is talking about issues in-group activities that can include students not pulling their weight. Brown cites the need to manage group-learning activities. She was referring to some undergraduate classes. However, the students in the FEMBA programs can handle more independence as professionals and possess more motivation, confidence and discipline arising out of the challenges of real-life business problem solving requiring critical thinking.

Activities of experiential learning positively affecting motivation, interest, and engagement of younger and older working students. Administrator Thompson believes younger students prefer active or experiential learning techniques to traditional lecturing in the classroom.

> Interviewee Response: …I think they are more beneficial to the students who are coming up now… They are more used to technology in the classroom. I think they are less interested in listening to someone talk and more interested in doing something.

Thompson believes that the younger generation of students is more receptive to ELT in the classroom and more receptive to engage in ELT. The younger generation of students has a reputation for being familiar and comfortable with software technology and social networking. This attribute and facility enables such students to accept and even prefer group learning activities and active learning, which motivates them more in the classroom than lectures.

Non-traditional working older students appear also to prefer active and experiential learning, as will be seen in the following discussion. When Professor Lintott was asked what aspect of experiential learning he most enjoyed, he expressed that he enticed and motivated students to attend his classes when they might not have otherwise shown up for his Finance class.

> Interviewee Response: One is getting students to come to class when attendance is voluntary… knowing the fact that students are in the classroom because they want to be, not because they have to be. That is reward in and of itself.

Professor Lintott explained that attendance was optional. According to him, his Finance class had one of highest rate of attendance because of his use of ELT. In FEMBA programs, students often attend class meetings on Saturdays or evenings after working, and if fatigued, they need to keep up their attention and interest in the course in order to best learn. Lintott discusses this issue, comparing lecturing with experiential learning methodology.

> Interviewee Response: I do not care how dynamic you are as a speaker, a lecture is a lecture, and if you have worked 8 to 9 to 10 hours and then you are going to

> sit for 4 more hours in a graduate class, it needs to have something that keeps you awake and keeps you going and I think experiential learning is a perfect way to be able to keep a student awake, engaged, and active in the learning environment.

Lintott notes that working students appreciate a class that is engaging and even a bit entertaining, and interviewee notes ELT, rather than lecturing, can help these non-traditional students to engage in learning.

Professor Nancy Young notes the same situation with working students and finds experiential learning activities very relevant for her charges.

> Interview Response: Now, with graduate students, it is harder because they are busy. Our program here is purely at night and for the most part working professionals. So, I have to find something, usually it is their final project. I give them the opportunity to use whatever they are actually involved in, just like if they have a business then they can write a marketing plan for that business.

Young is indicating that she has developed experiential learning activities with a practical relation to students' work as a solution that helps maintain motivation and interest in her course.

In addition to the schedules, time-constraints, and active interests of FEMBA students, social communication environments and new information intake habits influence motivation and engagement in education. Students customarily immersed in the internet and social media have ready access to information and ideas, which they can network and share with peers in their classes and colleagues in their profession. Li, et al. (2007, p. 25) quotes Ueltschy (2001) that, "the current generation of business students,

growing up in a social environment that is progressively interactive and communication intensive, expects a more stimulating educational experience to maintain interest, concentration level, and motivation. “It can be concluded that experiential learning techniques using group problem solving and networking can successfully motivate and engage students customarily immersed in social media.

Provision and facilitation of ELT with group work is indicated. “Teamwork, interaction, communication, information gathering, conflict resolution, presentation, and decision-making may all be facilitated by experiential teaching methods,” according to Piercy (2012). These skills for graduate students are best practiced and developed through group process, teamwork and “network-based models of working.” During experiential group learning projects, instructors have to function as the “invisible” hand (Kosnik, et al, 2013) that guides and supports student without overly directing or constraining their higher learning experiences.

Sub-theme B: Utility, Practical Application, and Value to Students and Industry as Benefits of ELT

When asking respondents to assess or comment on experiential learning, the researcher sought to find out the respondents’ perceptions of its efficacy in terms of its engagement, success of experiential activities, utility of ELT for students, practical application, and value for industry and the community. Discussion of interview transcript excerpts in this sub-theme focus on interviewee perceptions of ELT that relate to practical application of ELT, wherein theories can be applied as experiential skills can be learned and brought from industry by FEMBA students. Comments of interview transcript excerpts strongly indicate that experiential learning methodology can

effectively bridge the gap between theory and practice to bring utility and increase engagement in learning.

Practical application as definitions of experiential learning. When the researcher asked respondents to explain the meaning of experiential learning, the faculty interviewees yielded definitions that commonly mentioned the practical application of experiential learning pedagogy. As will be seen, several professors and administrators compared experiential learning techniques favorably with lecture methodology. Administrator Harris gives this broad definition of experiential learning.

> Interview Question: …Can you describe your understanding of what experiential learning really means to you?
>
> Interviewee Response: I accept a very broad definition of experiential learning. To me it's where you are active in the classroom and most commonly involved in learning through application to primarily in some kind of real world setting or real world simulated setting.

Harris considers experiential learning as active participation by students in the classroom in realistic simulations of business settings or in conjunction with workplace settings. In the following transcribed excerpts, Professors Brown, Jackson, and Cullins describe analysis and critical thinking to bridge the gap between theory and practice:

> Interviewer Question: So, may I ask you to describe what experiential learning means to you?
>
> Interviewee Response: Experiential learning means that it is not text book, it is not lecture, it connects the student to something that is occurring in their environment and requires them to do analytical and critical thinking to connect theoretical learning with application.

What this response from Professor Brown indicates is that she firmly believes that Experiential Learning Techniques (ELT) have value for requiring students to engage in analytical and critical thinking. She also believes that ELT seems to transcend textbook and lecture student learning in that it allows students to connect theory and application as they learn to utilize ELT.

Professor Jackson shares this notion as she responds to the same interview question.

> Interviewee Response: Experiential learning to me is about placing your participants in the experience, so it can be any number of things, it's about applied learning, and it could be applied directly, you put them in a scenario in a real scenario, like a case study

The idea expressed by Professor Jackson seems to indicate the importance of applied learning in that students are able to get involved in role-playing scenarios that mimic real world situations. The professional literature reflects Jackson's views that students take active roles in learning, as Canziani, Welsh, Hsieh, and Tullar (2015) define experiential learning " as student-centered instruction through the use of active participation of students, rather than teacher-centered instruction via lectures and testing" (p. 110). Experiential learning can be defined as "the incorporation of active, participatory learning opportunities in the course," according to Hawtrey (2007), wherein "experiential learning is sometimes called situational learning" (p. 144)." Situational learning relates to

scenarios, simulation of business situations or the workplace. Professor Cullins gives a similar definition with two goals in mind:

> Interviewee Response: To me, the goal of experiential learning is twofold, to teach critical thinking and to show people in a very impactful way how the content relates to the world, to their lives, and to their job.

This explanation by Cullins, expresses in different words, the same idea as Professors Brown and Jackson above, that course content and activity shall relate to the real world. Professor Cullins further explains his concept of experiential learning and emphasizes skill building leading to change, which is a precondition to learning and achieving a professional education.

> Interviewee Response: So to me, part of experiential learning is almost synonymous with skill building, because it is about being able to act differently and perceive things differently and have different insights as opposed to memorizing knowledge.

Here, Professor Cullins emphasizes skill building leading to change, as students "act differently" in Professor Cullin's words. Students exercise different habits in practicing skills during an activity, and such change is a precondition to learning and building a professional education.

In the literature, Li, Greenburg and Nicholls (2007) and McCarthy (2010) likewise reflect Cullin's observation that experiential learning is, by its essence, a change

agent for students. Professor Cullins discusses the need to bridge theory and practice with the use of ELT.

> Interviewee Response: We know active learning leads to critical thinking and we know that critical thinking leads to success in any occupation and we know that's the missing piece of most education…

Cullins indicates that most education provided in MBA programs have not given adequate opportunities for students to experience and train their critical thinking skills, which are necessary and functional for success in the modern business world. Professor Amanda Brown states that preparation with real life application and practice of professional skills is the goal of the FEMBA program at her institution.

> Interviewee Response: The active experimentation for our fully employed MBAs definitely, I mean they are like again perfectly prepared and perfectly in a situation where they can take exactly what they have done in this project or learned from this project and apply in their workplace and that is our hope.

Brown is expressing the expectation that the working MBA students will transfer what they have experienced and learned with ELT to their workplaces or businesses Professor Cullins speaks about the application of experiential learning techniques that can be applied directly to FEMBA students' professional workplace further during the next three interview transcript excerpts.

> Interviewee Response: I enjoy a lot watching MBA students wrestle with real problems from their organizations.
>
> Interviewee Response: The experience of going into your own organization and finding a problem and describing it and then taking somebody else's problem from their organization, analyzing it, and trying to solve it for them so it's like a consulting skill.
>
> Interviewee Response: One of my most satisfying things I do here as I always have 3 to 4 students on my project payroll

Professor Oakes expresses desires in a similar vein.

> Interviewee Response: 95% of the students are working full-time so they have a job and I like to get them involved in transferring the knowledge that they are learning in the classroom to their actual work setting

What the Oakes and the above comments are implying is that, in the graduate FEMBA programs, not only prudent professors need to encourage fully employed students to share their own work experience with other students in the class. The comments also imply that forward looking professors can and should motivate working students with a curriculum that provides students with realistic business experiences in activities with practical application and relevance to their interests and needs.

Administrator Harris's interview transcript excerpt concurs with the faculty responses presented above that FEMBA programs should provide more opportunities for practical and realistic skills building.

> Interviewee Response: they want more real world experiences because they want to see that what are you teaching them is meaningful and how would I use this

> and we hear from employers all the time,… that our students hit the ground running, they are ready to work.

Harris is speaking not only of the utility of FEMBA programs with real experiences in the business world with ELT, but the interviewee expresses student expectations that the working students can apply their new skills and knowledge immediately. Employers and accrediting agencies of MBA programs have the same expectations as the students.

Miller and Maellaro (2016) cite Knowles and reports that "The acquisition of knowledge and the transfer of learning can be maximized…when they are actively involved in the learning process and are able to see the relevancy of what they are learning" (p. 71). In a quantitative study, students assessed on a prior basis for "performance self-efficacy," according to Juergens (2012), had a widespread belief that "they are able to change their performance when they want to" (p. 45). Juergens indicates that "both utility and motivation have a similar effect on transfer" of knowledge and skills to the workplace (p. 44). When students have confidence in their ability and in their opportunities to learn new applications, they have motivation and expectations of success which can be more likely realized. Juergens in his study (2012) finds, it was predicted that if trainees believe they are able to change their performance, they are more likely to transfer a learned skill to another application" (p. 45). Utility of learning activities in the curriculum and motivation remain most important in FEMBA programs.

Employers and accrediting agencies have called for greater use of experiential learning on account of their utility to the industry and student graduates already working or entering the field. White (1992) notes that experiential learning theory can be used as a tool for designing management and professional development programs. White (1992)

notes, “our experience with experiential learning theory leads us to believe these are important tools to use when designing many types of management and professional development programs.” Even on the undergraduate level, many employers are making practical experience a prerequisite to employment upon graduation (Covington and Romero, 2015). Four in five employers say they desire students’ “e-portfolios and partnerships with colleges to ensure college graduates’ successful transition to the workplace,” according to a survey by the Association of American Colleges and Universities, published by Hart Research Associates (2013). The need for practical experience is also very high, according to Kosnik, Tingle, and Blanton (2013), as business companies now provide less paid training than before (p. 616). The authors delineate professional skills to deliver a “sound education.” These include skills in communication, time management, teamwork, information literacy, coping with ambiguity or multiple options, and leadership (pp. 614-615). ” These skills are also reflected in the Association of American Colleges and Universities (2014) in their “Essential Learning Outcomes” report. Kosnik et al. (2013) “posits experiential learning projects in business as a valuable alternative to internships to meet the new AACSB standards for accreditation.” AACSB is the AACSB is the Association to Advance Collegiate Schools of Business, which includes utility of students’ learning in their accreditation standards.

Sub-theme C: Ownership and Retention of Learning; Attainment of SLOs as Benefits of ELT

Interview respondents, while defining and explaining the essence of experiential learning, perceive that its use can affect profound positive changes in the learner.

Profound and life altering changes through experiences with ELT can impart concepts and skills to students, which they will retain and never forget.

Ownership of learning, retention of learning. Some respondents expressed beliefs that experiential learning, rather than passive reception of lectures, encourages students to take ownership of their learning and will experience true learning, as will be also shown later in this theme. When asked about the benefits of experiential learning, Professor Smith gave the following response.

> Interviewee Response: They love it...they love it because everybody...every human being would really prefer to be the author of his own work instructions……

What Professor Smith means by "author of his own work instructions" is that students are taking charge of their own learning to engage in experiential learning activities and projects. When students take responsibility for their learning and own it, Smith explains that,

> Interviewee Response: …they'll be committed to the knowledge and they'll walk away remembering something that they won't forget. It's not like cramming for an exam, taking the exam and then three days later you forget it

Smith is indicating that students using ELT experience involvement and commitment to their learning, which students retain for their lifetimes. Professor Oakes spoke about constructivism, which is along the same idea, wherein students have empowerment and responsibility to develop one's own learning of the concept or skill.

> Interviewee Response: A concept I learned earlier…was something called constructivist, and boy, as soon as I started hearing about constructivist that clicked with me. That is me and I have been using it ever since. I just feel that if the students are forced to construct a concept for themselves, it will be sticky. It will stick in the brain a lot longer than if I just stand up and tell them this is what it is and this is how it works

Oakes believes that when students construct their own understanding based on experience and reflecting on those experiences, the knowledge gained and skills acquired will stay with them for a long time. What this first set of interview respondents indicated is they collectively seemed to have positive perceptions about experiential learning pedagogy in their own practice. They also considered ELT as a useful pedagogical tool for student skill building for actual real-world application. With experiential learning methodology, students not only retain concepts, as indicated in the interview data, but can actually learn some very fundamental skill habits. Students engaged to experiential learning who develop as active self-directed learners also are those who become lifelong learners.

Assessing attainment of SLOS with ELT. However, there is concern of measuring and meeting student learning objectives with experiential learning techniques. There is a dearth of measures to assess experiential learning, which will be considered in discussion of the literature, after presentation and interpretation of interview transcript data in this study. The following review of findings offers a qualitative discussion rather than a quantitative treatment.

One faculty member, Professor Jackson, defended experiential learning methodology for assessing student-learning outcomes.

> Interviewee Response: Well, a lot of it is that we have a belief that we need to tightly control content… And my belief is just a little bit different. I would like to tightly manage retention that is why I like experiential learning.

Professor Jackson meant that assessment of student learning should and can be based on retention of practical knowledge and skills, rather than content alone. Volumes of content delivered, when not applied with practice of business skills or applications are not effective. This next interview transcript excerpt from Professor Walker illustrates this well.

> Interviewee Response: …why do they have to memorize all that stuff, they do not, and I am not winning that battle.

Exclusive emphasis on delivering volumes of content can limit attention to instilling skills in FEMBA. These students need to develop new skills and reinforce these skills through experience for their careers. Administrator Baker in the next transcript excerpt offers an example of assessment of experiential learning in the graduate business program.

> Interviewee Response: As a matter of fact, we grade performance… we grade presentations, we grade leadership, and we grade teamwork on the consulting teams, but we don't give written tests.

In his FEMBA program, Baker is saying his graduate program does not give written tests, which traditionally assess content exclusively. Students in experiential learning activities

are assessed and evaluated for their demonstration and practice of desired business related skills, such as leadership and communication, which students would attain and retain through the experiences. Professor Jackson speaks further about retention when students participate in an experiential learning activity.

> Interviewee Response: The other thing that I love about is the lesson sticks with you. I can lecture all day, and if they remember, you know your 5%, you are lucky, but if you put them in activity where they had to actually feel something, then they remember.

Jackson observes that when students are heavily involved in ELT, they remember their experiences in which they have invested, and the experience and new learning is retained much more fully than a traditional lecture. Respondent Oakes believes retention is managed and increased when students must engage in critical thinking during an experiential learning activity.

> Interviewee Response: I just feel that if the students are forced to construct a concept for themselves, it will be sticky. It will stick in the brain a lot longer than if I just stand up and tell them this is what it is…

Oakes is expressing the same idea as Jackson regarding "stickiness" or memory, as students are more actively involved in the experience; they own it and retain it.

Interviewee data indicate that experiential learning can lend itself well to meeting student learning outcomes for FEMBA programs, when students are followed up or

assessed periodically during the project. Professor Jackson, while discussing retention, also turns her attention to assessment while using experiential learning techniques.

> Interviewee Response: … my job is really be the observer and the hard work for me is making certain that debrief covers what I expected them to learn.

Jackson wants to make sure that debrief checks on students' grasp of the ideas and practical skills that the instructor wanted to impart and share. The debriefing allows the instructor to refocus or fine-tune the students' understanding and practice. Professor Jackson offers an example of a debriefing with feedback during the process of an experiential learning activity or project.

> Interviewee Response: I will go around even the big lecture hall and observe every single team and make a note about their dynamic, so that when we tell their scores, I will say you are team speed, you are just wanting to get it done, how would you score have changed if you spent more time trying to gain consequences rather than saying okay lets vote…

Even if it is hard work, Professor Jackson expressed a willingness to spend the extra time, because of her positive perception of experiential learning methodology. This extra effort is to help assess that students are gaining or have attained the SLOs aligned with the practical professional business skills desired.

Faculty who are serious are also closely seeking feedback from students to gauge the outcomes. Professor Jackson makes feedback become one of the assignments.

> Interviewee Response: …midway through the semester, I would make one of the assignments a feedback…

When prompted why Professor Jackson conducts feedback, she replied,

> Interviewee Response: Well, I do it more to see what they are retaining.

Jackson implies that informal feedback from students, as well as formal feedback, can allow the instructor to take a pulse on comprehension or retention. This allows an opportunity for the instructor to facilitate and explain the application, setting or rationale for the activity, as necessary, if a checkup indicates students' understanding the activity or are not near to reaching the desired SLOs. Rather than administering a test once at the end of the course, casual assessment of objectives through informal feedback can give notice to the instructor that a review or reframing is necessary, for students to benefit from the activity. Professor Cullins explains,

> Interviewee Response:…so you can stop in the middle of the class and re-explain the process and improve your framing and one of the things I have learned a lot is that framing of the experience is as important as the debriefing. If people do not know going in, what the point of the experience is. It's not educative.

Cullins suggests, "framing the experience" before the activity, to explain its rationale to the students. Sometimes, after observation or informal feedback, the professor needs to

re-frame the experience with students. Cullins is indicating that ongoing monitoring of the experiential learning activity can allow the professor to review the process (and desired objectives) of the activity, while the activity is still in process. Cullins states that framing before the activity the experience does even more to ensure students' retention of desired learning objectives, than debriefing the experiential learning activity with students at the end of the experience only. Debriefing the activity once, after the exercise has ended, resembles in timing a written exam for assessment at the end of the academic term, even though the debriefing is a review and discussion of the experiential activity. Evaluation of students' understanding and progress for attaining (and retaining) SLOs for essential business skills is best assessed throughout the experiential learning activities, not just after the experience.

According to Saunders (1997), while there is much attention to the practice of specific activities or instructional programs in experiential learning, there is little mention regarding the use of assessment and SLOs of case-based methods and simulations in experiential learning theory. The exceptions, in the researcher's review of the literature, are brief mentions of the Kolb cycle theory (Kolb and Kolb, 2005), which appear to receive the cameo treatment in much of the literature. This lack of discussion of assessment and experiential learning theories may be due to the fluid nature of theories in experiential learning, where the theories are still evolving and are not fully developed and fixed. Saunders (1997) states that, this situation "makes it difficult for instructors to link these learning activities to learning goals, experiences, and outcomes." A more recent article observes the same lack of attention of assessment to newer work-based ELT for entrepreneurs. Scott, Pennaluna, and Thompson (2016) conclude that,

> Although there is a large body of research on experiential approaches towards entrepreneurship education, we know little about how these approaches can potentially contribute towards the effective achievement of desired learning outcomes, or if the learning outcomes are appropriately aligned to the learning.

Scott et al. (2016) makes some contribution to this gap in the literature and discusses some qualities of SLOs that can be considered. The authors contend that "utilizing performance measures that are reliant on "known knowns" becomes problematic," when assessment measuring retention of cut and dry facts is used to measure realistic experiential learning activities., Consulting projects and realistic complex simulations enable students to experience challenging and confusing environments where "variables are many and unpredictable," according to the authors (2016). Experiential learning in actual workplace situations or realistic scenarios is best assessed and evaluated qualitatively, rather than quantitatively (Kayes, 2002, p. 147). When effective assessment of projects and activities requires measurement of outcomes with many variables, it is necessary to develop appropriate SLOS for "adaptable flexible thinkers who demonstrate initiative, independence and innovation…" (Scott et al., 2016). The environment for FEMBA students requires assessment of desired skills and SLOs designed to measure effective problem solving in the industry.

The Association of American Colleges and Universities (2014) has developed SLOs or business student outcomes to be measured for FEMBA. Some of these desirable outcomes to consider include critical thinking, inquiry, pro-activity, and analysis, creativity, teamwork, and engagement in the local community, intercultural competence, and ethical thinking.

Scott et al. (2016) recommend in-depth qualitative studies and especially longitudinal studies to track students' resultant career paths and assess "the extent to which learning outcomes in experiential entrepreneurship education are effective." A study by Hoover, Giambatista, Sorenson, and Bommer (2010) in a quantitative study of assessment with experiential learning methodology concludes, "The effectiveness of the pedagogy was supported. The skills assessed include communication, teamwork, leadership/initiative, decision making, and planning/organizing" (p. 192). The authors found that students who "scored in the 50th percentile overall on the pretest could be expected to score in approximately the 63rd percentile" (p. 194) on the SLOs which the study measured. This improvement in measured performance is significant, and progress by students in the measured outcomes could be even higher if the students are involved in the experiential learning activities for longer periods of time or/and multiple iterations and practice of the activities.

Sub-theme D: Exposure of Students to Steps of Kolb Learning Cycle as Benefits of ELT Use

The researcher's theoretical model for experiential learning is the Kolb cycle (Kolb and Kolb, 2005). Data from the three study sites illustrate respondents' notions of progress in their attainment of steps of the Kolb cycle during use of their experiential learning techniques. Steps of the Kolb circle (2005) are, briefly, 1) concrete experience or doing the activity, 2) reflection, 3) conceptualization, and 4) active experimenting or continued practice. The findings throw light on respondents' perceptions of the extent to which experiential learning is implemented in practice.

The researcher asked several forms of the interview question that queried respondents regarding their use of the Kolb cycle (Kolb and Kolb, 2005) by asking the following question.

> Interview Question: …if you think of Kolb's cycle that includes 4 steps doing, reflection, conceptualization, and active experimenting. Do you think all those 4 steps are being covered in your class?

At large, the study interviewees reported their observations that they have some concerns whether their use of ELT in academic course terms attained either the reflection or the active experimentation stages of the Kolb learning cycle. These will be considered and discussed.

Concern the reflection stage of Kolb cycle is not attained in academic course. Several faculty respondents observed that the reflection stage is sometimes missed during experiential learning activities or projects. Professor Cullins reports that in his practice, he tries to include the reflection step in his activities, and he explains why.

> Interviewee Response: I am a big believer in Dewey and you know the Dewey quote I use all the time when working with instructors is "it's not experience that's educative, it's reflection on experience." So I really tried to build reflection in and the mistake I see is that they do the activities but they do not know how to do the reflection, so if you do not have that reflection piece, then the kids just do this exercise and say what would we do with that?

Professor Cullins indicates that if students do not reflect on the learning experience, or are not educated and guided how to reflect by the professor, students may not understand the point of the exercise. If this happens, students will likely not continue successfully in

the Kolb cycle with subsequent steps, abstract conceptualization (application) and further experimentation or practice. Professor Brown observed that reflection was missing from her recent practice with experiential learning using client consultations.

> Interviewee Response: They come up with their research problem. They do the research. They analyze the data. (naming steps of Kolb Cycle) They reflect. So, hopefully they talk to customers that reflects…(hesitates) I think (name redacted)…was the past director … used to have them write up a reflection…

However, Brown is planning to make reflection a requirement in the following semester.

> Interviewee Response: We did not do that this semester. Now, I am talking to you. I am getting ready to do the syllabus. I probably will put that back in.

Administrator Harris in a transcript excerpt noted the tendency of professors during activities to sometimes omit the reflection step.

> Interviewee Response: I think one of the most important steps, but maybe one that faculty do not paying attention to is reflection

Harris explains why the reflection step is important with service learning, such as internships or client consulting projects.

> Interviewee Response: Yeah, I think you know the research in the service learning field really puts a heavy emphasis on reflection…it is about being exposed to diverse communities and their problems… and reflection is just key to help students become conscious of those attitude changes… new ideas…students actually journal or reflect formally about it…

Administrator Harris's experience is that the reflection step can help students learn concepts and develop new attitudes with diversity, new people and settings, as well as needs and issues of the clients. Harris mentions the use of journals that can be used to ensure that students reflect periodically on their experience in the project. She continues the conversation in this transcript excerpt.

> Interviewee response: …and I would say that probably especially in MBA program, we do not do enough deliberate focus on the reflection

Harris reflects that graduate faculty in MBA programs tend to not devote, nor include, enough time for the reflection step of the Kolb cycle. This may result from graduate faculty having the tradition or expectation those more content needs to be covered in the MBA and other graduate programs.

The faculty respondents have identified time constraints especially in covering course content, student preparation, and limited resources as contributing factors to the lack of all four of Kolb's cycle, even when they used experiential learning techniques. Emphasis on not covering the last stage of the Kolb cycle, active experimentation stage, will be discussed below.

Concern the final active experimentation stage of Kolb circle is not attained in academic course. Professor Cullins is not too sure that he is going through all the steps of Kolb's cycle of experiential learning, and he cites lack of time during the academic term.

> Interviewee Response: No, in fact … I probably try to cover too much territory because my metaphor for this (is)…you can explain to somebody the principles of throwing a football… but sometimes I think in class…that I just show them how to throw the ball and then they throw it once, well … they need to see how the ball goes, and then try again, and that's the Kolb thing.

Professor Cullins was referring to the active experimentation stage of the Kolb's cycle. He is using the metaphor of throwing a ball and repeated practice, a hallmark of active experimentation that may not available in academic course terms. Cullins explains more fully that students may not have enough time during a course to practice what they began to experience and learn.

> Interviewee Response: You have got to observe the outcome and then change your behavior and try it again…so in any one course, it's really tough to get in enough practice…

Likewise, Professor Young is not sure she is effectively following the active experimentation stage.

> Interviewee Response: Yeah. I am not sure about the active experimentation too much in the marketing plan because basically all do this…So, I don't know how far they get into the active experimentation part, but it touches on the three for sure.

When Professor Young mentions, "basically all do this," she seems to be indicating that all students do the marketing assignment once, but do not have the opportunity to experiment with and practice developing additional live marketing plans during the academic course. Hence, the active experimentation is not fully realized.

Professor Jackson is also not sure she used the active experimentation step either. She appears to conceive this step as the application with written assignments in academic courses, which can be a form of experimentation in expression.

> Interviewee Response: The first 3 steps are definitely covered … The application usually ends up in academics being written assignment and so whether or not they actually do that or they blah...blah...blah...you know because that part I actually don't control.

Jackson is implying that she cannot actually control or verify whether students actually experience the final step of application, or whether her students did not create the written presentation.

Professor Brown seems to indicate that there can be more control of the active experimentation step with a FEMBA program, where students have had more experience or will have more experience in their own businesses or management positions.

> Interviewee Response: …Because our MBAs are fully employed mid-career professionals…Their cycle is going to be different clearly than our undergraduates some of whom have very little experience.

Brown notes that FEMBA students have unique opportunities to practice the active experiment stage in their own organizations, as compared with undergraduate students who might not working or are working in a different profession.

Multiple iterations of Kolb cycle and opportunities for practice and learning. Professor Cullins reflects on the extent of implementation of ELT, and speaks of "cycles." Cullins expresses his concern that his students may not receive exposure to enough cycles of the Kolb learning process during an academic course term.

> Interviewee Response: …the practice effect, the cycles…I think I know I don't do enough cycles.

Cullins expresses awareness of the importance of having students experience the steps of the Kolb process more than once, and he means to say that students can best experience skill and concept development to advance their learning, if they can be involved in multiple cycles.

Carpenter observes that all steps of the Kolb Cycle can be and are used, when multiple iterations of client consulting is embedded by curricular design within a FEMBA program, as they are at his academic institution.

> Interviewee Response: I think perhaps in multiple consulting projects it may work. What you do here is because in our consulting program we have 12 different consulting projects. We do, after each consulting project you start, after you have the experiments you reflect and you conceptualize and then you …we continue to go back to them and do them multiple times.

Carpenter seems to indicate that each of the steps in the Kolb Cycle is covered with students' experience of multiple client consulting projects. The active experimentation step of one consulting project is realized with practice during the next client-consulting project in the next academic term.

Professor Smith explains his conception of how he is able to use of the Kolb Cycle in the same FEMBA client-consulting program.

> Interviewee Response: The active experimentation comes from their first client contact…The concrete experience comes...from digging out the information… The reflective observation is manifest in their papers and their discussion...and their conversations with me from which they hopefully get a clearer picture of what they're trying to do: abstract conceptualization. Um...it's a never-ending circle. You can enter almost anywhere…

According to Smith, students practice and apply consulting skills in various contexts at different client companies. Implementing similarly structured experiential learning projects through multiple repetitions of the Kolb cycle of experiential learning enables students to practice transferring knowledge and skills to the workplace. Professor Carpenter concludes the results of a dozen Kolb circles in the FEMBA program at his institution.

> Interviewee Response: … and in the final one actually you do it all yourself. You are the 12th one. It is called a keystone… where you are able to apply those concepts that you have learned over those times effectively on your own.

Professor Carpenter believes that when you combine all of the 12 projects, one each for every class, the four steps of the Kolb cycle are being covered.

The Kolb cycle is frequently cited in the literature on the benefits of experiential learning. The coverage of the four steps of the cycle (concrete experience, reflection, conceptualization, and active experimentation) is considered very important in discussion

of ELT in the literature. This is because learning is a “process whereby knowledge is created through the transformation of experience. Knowledge results from the combination of grasping and transforming experience" (Kolb, 1984, p. 41). A transforming experience in an activity or project using ELT means the student has changed his or her views, perceptions, attitudes, experiences, and skills to have experienced genuine learning. Retention of positive change that can be applied to one’s life and the workplace or business is true professional education.

However, Li et al. (2007) considering Kolb, notes that “grasping a technology that allows students to go through the entire cycle can easily add hours to a faculty member's workload, and one or two semesters, if not years, are needed before an adopter feels comfortable with the tool” (p. 25). So, it is evident that even faculty who are quite proficient in using ELT can have challenges to complete the Kolb cycle, as respondents in this study have reported. In most MBA programs, students and professors do not have the time to repeat the “final” active experimental step of the Kolb cycle within an academic term. McEwen, McQuilty, Young and Conte (2002) discuss Dewey’s Experience Theory (pp. 89-90). Dewey’s principle of continuity of experience is relevant to Kolb’s cycle. Dewey considers experience a “reinforcer of learning” (McEwen, et al., 2002), wherein Dewey posits that “every experience relies on that which has gone before and modifies in some way the quality of that which follows” (Dewey, 1938). The learner needs to experience and complete the four steps of the Kolb cycle multiple times to review and reinforce his or her learning to remember and perfect knowledge and practical skills.

Sub-theme E: Observations Regarding Techniques of Experiential Learning, Efficacy in Increasing Order: Case-based Method, Simulation, and Client Consulting

The use of experiential learning pedagogy and choice of experiential learning techniques can influence students' exposure to the steps of the Kolb learning cycle, and the depth and retention of their learning. The choice of experiential learning technique can also influence practical career relevance, utility, and transfer of professional knowledge in curricula of graduate MBA programs. According to Canziani et al. (2015), "new pedagogical approaches that embrace active and experiential learning, such as student business start-ups, live cases and simulations, should be incorporated into teaching" business management and entrepreneurship (p. 101).

Most respondents in this study utilized a range from case studies and/or role plays, business simulations, and client consulting, and they further cited benefits of experiential learning while discussing which experiential techniques they use in their classes. A brief review of experiential learning techniques chosen by the respondents will be discussed in increasing order of experiential learning efficacy.

Figure 4.1. Degree of Experiential Learning Techniques Considered, Low to High

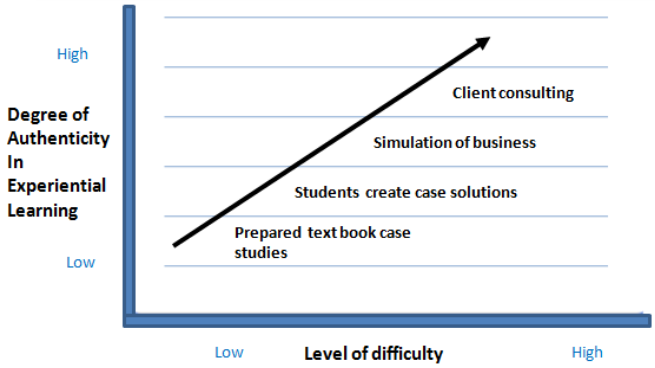

Figure 4.1. Researcher diagram of some experiential learning techniques considered by interviewees in this study.

Case studies as an ELT technique. Case studies are named as a basic experiential learning technique that has been commonly used. Saunders (1997) notes that "case studies are popular among students and faculty because they serve to connect theory to its application in the workplace" (p. 103). Some of the interviewees in this study have used the case study technique successfully in practice, as will be discussed. Some interviewee data does indicate some possible shortcomings or limitations of the case-based method, which will be considered.

Professor Jackson has used case studies in practice. Jackson notes that,

> Interviewee Response: The most basic one of course would be the case study methodology. We will do if it's negotiation class, we will do in-class negotiations, real scenarios.

Jackson is speaking of her use of ELT with students experiencing role-plays in negotiating situations. Jackson is employing these techniques as participatory case studies. Professor Brown was trained at her previous academic institution in Harvard case

methodology, and she extensively engages in client consulting projects. Brown discusses the benefits, as both techniques she has used involve problem solving.

> Interviewee Response: I think they really challenge them and one of the things that both of these techniques do is force them with a metaphor, I always use in class, is that the business school gives them the toolbox and then experiential learning requires them to figure out, which tool is required for which problem.

> Interviewee Response: So, I do like cases. I like them a lot. They are involving them in exciting discussion, and there is no right answer. You know there is room for a lot of different opinions. It is engaging…

In the first transcript excerpt, Brown cites the metaphor of a toolbox to solve problems in cases, which helps to bridge theory and practice. When students think and figure out which tool to use for a solution, they can consider alternative possible solutions. In the second excerpt, Brown lists positive attributes, including different viewpoints and ways a situation can be addressed or solved. The characteristics of problem solving tools, critical thinking, and interaction of case based methods, which respondents discussed, can enable students to apply some consideration to business situations.

In two interview excerpts, Professor Brown has reservations with case study method and explains that students now have access to case notes or teaching notes in this Internet age.

> Interviewee Response: I do really like cases, but I do think that they are more difficult now with solutions on the internet.

> Interviewee Response: I do like the case-based method for class discussions, etc., but I find in this day and age, it is very hard not to have students just pull up

> teaching notes or(exasperated) ...solutions… whatever. So, it is hard to believe all your students are doing the work from level zero all the way through the completion independently.

Professor Brown indicates here that when students can pull up solutions, students bypass their involvement and learning experience of critical thinking to solve the business case problems.

In one data excerpt, Baker implies that, case studies as ELT is a slight improvement over the lecture method, but the interviewee expresses reservations with the case studies.

> Interviewee Response: case studies are an improvement in a sense that it is sort of like experiential learning, but it is bloodless, But in most cases, you are just looking at the case and the professor is presenting the case and you are talking about the case and you got different ideas from people who are raising their hands, and that's it

Baker is describing an ineffective use of the case studies, where, in his experience, students listen to the professor, discuss the case, and in turns may make a comment. Case studies instructed in this way does not require students to own the case by involving themselves in the experience of critical thinking and problem solving. The use of case studies, as Baker described it, does not involve the students in role-plays, small group networking, nor actual responsibility for solving the case problems. This is why he referred to the traditional case study method as bloodless.

Although some other respondents have criticized case studies as a basic or limited technique, Professor Lintott notes its efficacy for students' experiential learning, and describes what he does to manage his caste study activities.

> Interviewee Response: Hand out this single piece of paper to every single one of the students, give them a short period of time…then we physically would go over the issues…What it provided me as a faculty was immediate feedback, did the students understand the entire issue that was being presented, and more importantly if they got stuck where did they get stuck, so that I could solve that learning challenge immediately.

Lintott is explaining that he observes his classroom meetings with case study to obtain feedback, assess students' understanding, and adjust his teaching or facilitation accordingly during the learning activity. Professor Cullins has found a very creative approach to make case studies effective for students. His assignment includes asking students to write a case study about their own organization and having a group of students analyze that case study. It becomes a great learning experience for the author of the case study and the rest of the group involved in analyzing the case and in a way compares with the real client study, because a group of students are actually looking at the real problems of another organization and are trying to solve them.

Some criticisms against the use of case studies have been made in the literature. Saunders (1997) reports that Knoblauch "views cases and the case approach as artificial substitutes for actual experiential learning that occurs in the workplace," (p. 103) but Saunders observes that Knoblauch offers a tepid endorsement, as he "sees their use in the classroom as a step in the right direction." Saunders (p. 104) takes note that Kolb rates cases as weak to moderate to enable students to reach the four stages of the cycle overall.

Static scenarios or case studies fixed in time do not lend themselves to iterative learning cycles for students to reflect, revise and practice. Saunders (1997) in review of the literature considers criticism of the case method by Cadotte, and reports that, "most cases do not provide students with a means to experience the consequences of the decisions they make" (p. 104).

Simulation as an ELT technique. Some interviewees in this study use and prefer simulation as a technique. In addition to the benefits of simulation, the professional literature notes some criticism of simulation, which will be considered as well.

According to the interview transcripts, role models and mentors have played a dominant role in choosing the kind of experiential methodology that professors use. As an example, the role model for Professor Walker in a doctorate program was a professor who used and advocated experiential learning methodology. Walkers's mentor recommended the simulation approach, which she has been utilizing to teach her FEMBA classes.

Professors Walker and Cullins, respectively, essentially define some examples of business simulation, as they explain their use of simulations here:

> Interviewee Response:…we did an elaborate strategy…the BSG game, which is the shoe company, makes shoes… and it is competitive, etc., but, they did it in teams…to build teamwork skills and teach team dynamics… We brought this altogether through the experience of having to make a lot of decisions under pressure, which is what the game requires.
>
> Interviewee Response: I mean I have used case studies as well but simulation to me, especially in this capstone course, where they run a company. The class is divided up into teams, and each team becomes a company and that company competes against other companies, and actually running their own company

Walker describes an elaborate simulation "game" of a fictional shoe company designed to mirror realistic business conditions. Walker notes that in this simulation, students form groups in teams to compete and make strategic decisions under pressure. Cullins also describes what a game or business simulation is designed to teach FEMBA students: competition, strategy, teamwork skills, and team dynamics.

If students have initial hesitation, fear, or confusion, Professor Walker helps students with "buy in" with the business simulation project. Walker gives clues to her approach:

> Interviewee Response: …if they ask me things and I am just come on let's think about this, you are a manager, you have a decision to make, what you are going to do here, not everything is written in the textbooks somewhere for you to go look up and find out, so let's figure it out and most of them like it.

Walker is saying that simulation as an experiential learning technique can involve many variables and no clear-cut answers, which can be intimidating to students, but the faculty member can ameliorate this situation with guidance.

Professor Walker later discusses that she was unsure about using simulations at first. She then compares simulations with case studies and prefers simulations as her main approach now.

> Interviewee Response: … I just thought that simulation is a lot of work when I first started using it…so the next quarter I did just case studies and it was excruciatingly painful. I mean it became what you want to say, we will say it, let you grade it and let's go on with our lives. So, I became very convinced at that point that that is the only way we would teach it and that is the only way we teach it here.

What Walker means here in her response is that she will only use simulation and it is the preferred experiential learning technique that she uses.

Saunders (1997) essentially defines simulation as a decision-making exercise modeled on a business operation, in which students participate in managing activity." Olivia (2003) notes that, "the use of simulations scenarios, business games that are crucial MBA teaching tools" gives business students the opportunity to practice as managers, executives, or leaders in situations where they are responsible for their actions. Graziano et al. (2003) considers simulations, such as "Virtual Enterprise" which he examines, as "an experiential workplace simulation in which students operate virtual businesses performing functions such as sales and marketing, finance, accounting, administration, human resources." With simulation, Olivia (2003) notes that well designed software can engage students with decision-making encounters that are structured and flexible. Simulated business activities allow students to practice workplace situations in the classroom or an online learning platform.

However, the literature indicates some criticisms of simulations. In his study of the Virtual Enterprise simulation Graziano et al. (2003), in a study of Virtual Enterprise simulation, questions whether the absence of real risk in a simulation may allow a tendency for students to have light-hearted approach toward decision making, despite the instructor's intention to have students consider the results of their decisions. Since "practice firms are models, students may not take the outcomes seriously" (p. 178). Pittaway (2007) does note that "pressure in course design via group dynamics and tight timescales" can simulate crises or environments found in business" and alleviate part of this concern.

On the other side of the issue identified by Graziano above, Saunders (1997) contends that real life models that are "overly complex simulations can be confusing and result in a loss of learner confidence and self-esteem." The reason is that complex simulations contain more variables to solve problems, and all these are not structured. Therefore, the likelihood of getting the right answer is reduced. Students who expect the correct answer may resent simulations. They may not recognize, nor appreciate that part of the simulation is learning from errors, aiming to improve through practice, and gain more experience. Graziano (2003) recommends debriefing, to focus students on reflection over any improvements that can be made in decision-making. The need for instructors to monitor and guide students throughout simulations or any experiential activity is indicated, as study respondents have observed and reported elsewhere in the interview transcript excerpts presented.

Client consulting as an ELT technique. Several interviewees in this study have used client consulting in their academic graduate business courses. The data from the study interviewees and the professional literature, when taken as a whole together, indicate the high efficacy of the actual work-based client consulting technique for enabling the transfer and learning of professional skills. A high degree of preparation and coordination is required, however, which is touched upon in this section but is more thoroughly discussed in the theme on barriers to ELT, which appears later in this chapter.

Professor Amanda Brown brought client-based projects to Valley State University, after 10 years of experience at her previous academic institution and she has supervised a lot of projects with this technique. Professor Brown describes attributes that may explain why client consulting is her preferred technique.

> Interviewee Response: …They get excited about it. There is discussion. There is alternative evaluation. There is critical thinking. There is analytical thinking…integration of functional knowledge…In addition, I like the fact that we are also serving the community. That is what the university is supposed to do. Right!

Brown indicates that the main benefits of client-based projects as discussions, critical thinking, integration of learning and service to the community. Client-based consulting in FEMBA programs moves the metaphorical problem solving "toolbox" from a piece of paper on a published or commercially developed case to an actual company serving and being serviced as client. Carpenter and Brown, respectively, briefly describe the client consulting technique here.

> Interviewee Response: …they are given a company by our program… so the student over the 7 weeks has to meet the client, talk to the client, understand the problems that the client wants solved

> Interviewee Response: …you are going to give a report, you are going to have your presentation, you are going to have your business plan, your marketing plan, your feasibility study

As Carpenter explained, students actually consult and advise a client company procured by the faculty or outside sources, and the real-time project takes place over the course of an academic term. Brown described several types of reports that students, as consultants, actually provide to a client company as part of the experiential learning project in an academic course. Students enrolled and participating in client-based projects usually meet with the client in FEMBA programs, analyze the situation, consult and advise the client,

and produce a written report or oral presentation to the class with a business plan, marketing plan, or feasibility study for both the client and the instructor.

FEMBA students with involvement in client consulting become active learners as they produce the reports and services just mentioned. Oakes observes,

> Interviewee Response: …in the classroom students tend to rely on the professor to entertain them, lecture to them, and kind of run the classroom and tell them what to do, but in the actual consulting field, they realize right away that it's them who are running the show and try to help this client, and I had not realized that until I saw this. It's dynamic…

When Oakes says "it's them running the show," he means that the FEMBA students are taking responsibility for their performance and learning, when they are in actual consulting projects with the client businesses and entrepreneurs. Oakes is noting that with traditional learning methodologies, students will likely be passive rather than active learners in the classroom, because the FEMBA students would not have the opportunity to exercise responsibility and direction for their learning in practical applications.

Professor Brown notes a significant advantage of the client consulting experiential learning technique over traditional assignments: Students cannot bypass analytical and critical thinking skills by pulling up solutions from the internet.

> Interviewee Response: ... with the client-based project, there is no way that they are going to be able to pull up the solution. It is always fresh. It is always unique. They are going to have to roll their sleeves and to do it. There is no way around it.

Brown is indicating that with client consulting projects, students must bridge and apply theories and skills to problem-solving skills for the client's organization, and critical thinking skills need to be practiced which cannot be pulled up from the internet. This is because the variables in the environment of a real-time client consulting project precludes ready, exact answers and requires critical thinking, communication, and collaboration by the student with the stakeholders. These elements embody a high potential for the client consulting technique of experiential learning, when the projects are well implemented.

Indeed, implementation of service or client consulting projects within academic courses suitable for MBA programs and objectives can be quite challenging, as the interviewee study data and the professional literature indicates. In an article, Urbaczewski and Beaver (2015) review and discuss several student client consulting successes and failures. The concerns and challenges of client consulting will be discussed as possible barriers at further length in another theme of findings elsewhere in this chapter.

The client consulting assignment is the "most direct way to serve the local business community, albeit a challenging one" (Roche, et al., 2013, p. 418). Covington (2015) contends that, "institutions need to work with industry leaders to create internship sites and project opportunities for students to apply their professional skills" (p. 167). Johnson (2013) observes that, "educators who choose to work with real clients are fully committing themselves to the experiential learning process" (p. 151).

With client consulting projects, extra time and effort is indicated. Project design begins with client selection, according to Johnson (2013), and clients must be willing to communicate with the instructor before, and with the instructor and students throughout

the semester (p. 151). The instructor must provide guidance and feedback throughout the client consulting process.

Roche, et al. (2013) characterizes consulting classes as those in which "groups of students, accompanied by a professor who is a seasoned consulting professional, work as a team on the client's premises throughout a consulting process" (p. 418). The academic faculty member as coordinator and facilitator of the team effort in the real-time client-consulting project is central. Consulting projects "differ from internships, because they are professor-supervised" (Ubraczewski and Beaver., 2015, p. 128). Hagan (2013) holds that, learning activities need to be carefully structured (p. 630), and Hagan explores online consulting in graduate business programs. While students with internships have usually gained some work experience under direction of a work site manager without overview by a faculty member in a professional course, with consulting projects, the students' work experience can be more closely aligned with the objectives of course subjects in the MBA program. Indeed, Kosnik notes that client consulting actually "embeds the practical experience directly into the course content and structure" (p. 617). For FEMBA students, client consulting projects can provide more relevant work experiences and skills than internships, as faculty members design the client consulting projects with the curriculum in mind, while internship experiential techniques usually allow the work site supervisor sole discretion to choose students' internship work duties.

Students consulting for business organizations under faculty guidance take on more responsibility than unguided internships or simulation. Roche, et al. (2013) observes, "key learning objectives are for the students to develop people skills and the professional attitude that a consultant must have in order to successfully handle the needs

of a demanding client. Second, the…clients must be satisfied" (p. 429). The authors advise educators that students' goals would be not just attainment of desirable course learning outcomes, but significantly also to satisfy the clients.

In Johnson's study (2013), a graduate level research course included a consulting project that consisted of students' SWOT analysis of a non-profit organization as client. Students in the course consisted of Masters of Business Administration, Masters of Public and Nonprofit Administration and Masters of Management Information Systems. The students provided positive responses (pp. 149, 152) and reported confidence with their consulting experience. In the study, Johnson (2013) reported that several non-profit client executives came to the class for approximately two hours during the sixth week of the term, and the participants amongst the team, class, professor and executives shared feedback and experiences. Johnson observed that,

> The executives commented on the SWOT analyses and asked questions about the students' conclusions and recommendations. Student reflections indicated that this was the most beneficial time of the process as they were able to ascertain the effectiveness of their analyses and recommendations. (p. 152).

The live projects within FEMBA courses produce actual outcomes for business organizations in the community, according to Urbaczewski and Beaver (2015), which can influence their way of conducting their business enterprises (p. 127). The students' performances for these business organizations can also inform their own ways of conducting business in their own organization or business, as lifelong learning actually takes place.

Highlighting the positive use of experiential techniques involving workplace learning, such as client consulting projects, McEwen et al. (2002) discusses a model that suggests that it is experiential learning, not years of experience in a workplace that

influences new venture creation (pp. 93-96). McEwen's findings, as well as other literature sources discussed have positive implications for the positive use of workplace ELT and client consulting for FEMBA students.

Summary of Theme One:

Overall data analysis of the interviews conducted indicates that professor and administrators compared experiential learning techniques favorably with lecture methodology. Experiential learning is perceived to enhance critical and analytical thinking, raise student motivation, improve engagement and retention and help learning of practical skills. ELT can affect profound positive changes in the learners, e.g., students taking charge of their own learning, which includes constructing their own understanding based on concrete experience, reflection, conceptualization, and active experimentation. These self-directed learners have the capability to become life-long learner.

RQ2: What are the current expectations that administrators have of the graduate faculty in regards to their implementation of experiential learning in their own teaching practice?

Theme 2: Balancing the Tension of High Expectations from Administrator Interviewees with Faculty Implementation of ELT Within and Outside Their Programs

The researcher queried the three administrators interviewed in this study, in endeavor to ascertain the expectations that administrators hold at this time of graduate faculty to implement experiential learning. Interview transcript review of three administrators revealed some data concerning their expectations of faculty to use ELT.

The administrator respondents in this study have a high interest in the use of ELT and practice by faculty in their departments of their FEMBA programs, and they discussed ELT training issues at some length. Some faculty members and administrators interviewed in this study did observe, however, that administrators in business schools at large regard ELT with low interest or laissez-faire, and these observations will be corroborated by the professional literature, as will be discussed later in this theme.

Sub-theme A: High Interest of Administrator Interviewees in ELT and Their Expectations for Faculty Members to Use ELT

During the interviews, the researcher sought to find out the expectations of these administrators held for the graduate faculty in regard to their practice of experiential learning in their classrooms and courses. From the data, each respondent's interview transcripts indicate they addressed the issue of training in ELT of faculty in some form. Respondents also mentioned some desirable qualities for faculty to teach ELT in a FEMBA program. There was some variance in views of administrator respondents regarding training in ELT, emphasis in desirable qualities in faculty, and expectations of performance with ELT by new faculty hires. These variances will be considered and interpreted at length, as necessary, to reconcile differences in their approaches to strive for the same goal for faculty to implement ELT in the courses.

Encouragement of ELT by administrator interviewees. The three administrators interviewed for this study each favor the use of ELT by faculty in their department or institution, as indicated by these transcript excerpts.

> Interviewer Question: So, what are your expectations and I am talking up on the lens of the faculty in regards to their implantation of experiential learning in their own teaching practice?
>
> Interviewee Response: Well certainly I endorsed it and encouraged it as much as I could expect it, really trying to get faculty to get beyond lectures and exams to have experiences, applying knowledge to the real world.

Harris stated that she encouraged and endorsed experiential learning pedagogy.

> Interviewer Question: …what are your expectations of the faculty in regards to their implementation of experiential learning in their own teaching practices at this institute?
>
> Interviewee Response Baker: So, I think what my interpretation of the faculty is that they are responsible and I hold the dean responsible to the faculty…

Baker is very serious about the fact that the faculty use experiential learning techniques in the classroom.

> Interview Question: So, based on the emphasis that is put on experiential learning in the institution and its mission, what are your expectations of the faculty in regards to their implementation of experiential learning in their own teaching practice?
>
> Interviewee Response: My expectation would be that if there is a way to have some experience, then the faculty should commit to doing that.

What administrator Thompson means to say is that she expects graduate faculty in her department to use ELT if there is a way to incorporate processes of ELT into the university to work out concrete plans of carrying out ELT.

Administrator expectations to have logistics in place in order to implement ELT. Thompson is cognizant of the time professors need to practice ELT in their classrooms and courses. Just after the last transcript excerpt, Thompson continues,

> Interviewee Response: I think once we convert to semester, I think that expectation will be greater because one of the obstacles faculty have towards doing is, I do not have time in 10 weeks to do it. Well, now you have 15 okay.

Thompson believes once the institution converts from a 10-week quarter term to a 15-week semester term, faculty will have more time to carry out ELT, and her expectations for ELT use by faculty will be greater.

> Interviewee Response: So, right now, I think the college is getting its feet wet, so to speak. I think some faculty will be able to fully ramp this up on the semester system and the expectation will be greater.

What Thompson is saying is that some graduate faculty members in her Business department are already well versed in their use of ELT and will be able and expected to fully implement it. Thompson makes another observation regarding practical logistics of carrying out experiential learning activities and class size.

> Interview Response: The universities and the colleges need to understand that if the faculty is going to do this, they cannot have class sizes of a 100 or 200 or whatever because this is very labor intensive to do this.

Thompson also has views that faculty throughout the university need smaller class sizes before administrators can expect faculty to implement experiential learning in accordance with the university's mission statement.

Administrator expectations of training and support for faculty. Administrator Thompson explains in the next two transcript excerpts that her expectations for faculty ELT use include training and support.

> Interviewee Response: The first thing that needs to happen is that faculty need to be trained on it like anything else.
>
> Interviewee Response: So then faculty teach them, you provide support for it, and that you acknowledge that it is important. So it has to be a unified strategy in terms of how faculty are treated.

By acknowledgement, Thompson means that the faculty is awarded and praised. Administrator Harris touches on the same idea of positive recognition.

> Interviewee Response: …we would have a preference for faculty who are engaged to do experiential learning, we could communicate with faculty, why they are better.

But, this time, an individual faculty member is praised for using ELT. Administrator Thompson is talking about faculty as a whole, and she reiterates her ideas.

> Interviewee Response: So, what the university would need to do is to acknowledge it (ELT) in some way…There is got to be that closing the loop thing. We told you what we wanted you to do, we trained you to do it, we

> supported you, and now we are going to acknowledge it. It is true for any employee anywhere.

This process for training and resource support for faculty to use ELT, with emotional reward and recognition, when practiced throughout the university would increase implementation of ELT in each school including the MBA programs.

Administrator expectation that faculty can experiment with ELT in non-threatening environment. Administrator Harris's expectations for faculty ELT use in the classroom and courses allows faculty to experiment with new experiential learning activities.

> Interviewee Response: We are not going to ding somebody who tried at something… so we encourage to try a new simulation, try a new activity and if it does not work in a semester, that is okay, but be willing to experiment, so the faculty does not feel that they cannot try something new

Harris does not want to stifle change and expects faculty members to bring in, adopt, use and learn new activities in the classroom. Faculty members are not expected to be successful with every experiential activity when a new experiential learning activity is first used in the classroom. When discussing expectations of faculty to use ELT, Harris implies that faculty members will be successful in subsequent semesters with experiential activities. Harris's expectation is that the faculty will debrief, evaluate the activity, and be willing to use another experiential activity.

Administrator expectations of desirable qualities in professors to use ELT and remain in faculty. Administrator Thompson discusses desirable qualities of faculty to teach or facilitate ELT.

> Interviewee Response: If I hear a faculty say I do not know everything, then because they do not see themselves as the all knowing powerful, then they are trying to figure out… We are going to all learn this together so, they now incorporate experiences…

Thompson expects faculty members who are open in their attitudes and behaviors to try new experiential learning techniques. The implication is that other administrators would have the same expectation, since faculty members who realize they can learn more concepts and even new evidence or content are more open to integrate ELT into their courses. Faculty members are better suited to facilitate ELT, when they are eager or willing to learn or sharpen their own skills of teamwork, networking, and decision making, which students are expected to learn in modern FEMBA programs.

When considering faculty to teach or facilitate ELT in the MBA program, administrator Harris also sees willingness to engage as a desirable quality that is expected of faculty.

> Interviewee Response: There is a limit to degree that you have control over what the faculty do, but clearly to the degree that we are when we set a schedule that we have control or some influence on which faculty teach we would have a preference for faculty who are engaged to do experiential learning…

Harris indicates that hiring and rehiring faculty members willing to engage gives the administrator some control over whether faculty use ELT in the classroom. But, Harris concedes that control over whether faculty members actually use ELT is not absolute at her institution. This may be because faculty members have the freedom to use the teaching methodology and techniques of their choice. Since administrator Harris expects faculty to be willing to engage in ELT, she does retain some control through her capacity to hire or renew faculty members.

Baker emphasizes leadership as a quality that he expects in faculty members. Baker was asked whom he expected to develop ELT.

> Interview Question: So talking about experiential learning techniques and as you mentioned one of the techniques is consulting, were these techniques developed by the university or the faculty or jointly?
>
> Interviewee Response: I would say it is everyone, but especially because we want professors who are leaders. We want professors to be what we call the leader professor or professor leader

Baker expects faculty members to have qualities of leadership, take the lead, be proactive, and be responsible for using ELT. Continuing in the same passage in the interview transcript, Baker, as with Harris, will cite the capacity to exercise whether to renew a faculty member for the next term, but with different affect.

> Interviewee Response: …and so it is a professor who is supposed to make this happen, has to make it happen. If that person does not, we don't hire them again. So, we want a person that takes charge and guides the students, and is responsible for the student in that way, and so far as the experiential learning, same thing.

Baker expects faculty members to use and facilitate ELT. He strongly raises the point that if a professor is not able to teach using experiential learning techniques, he or she is not hired again.

Reconciling variant views of faculty members meeting administrator expectations to use ELT: Faculty abilities count, training paramount. Unlike Administrators Harris and Thompson who use ELT in a department within the MBA program of a large public university, Administrator Baker is president of a private non-profit proprietary MBA school. His institution is marketed on its provision of the client consulting ELT model to deliver real experiences in the workplace. Client consulting projects are used by each student in each course in each of 12 academic terms as part of the curricular design. While professors can lecture one hour per each four-hour class session, each professor must use ELT in their classrooms and in the field in each course to maintain the integrity of the curricular model. This requires that professors be able to use ELT in the model. Administrator Baker notes in a transcript excerpt that,

> Interviewee Response: …I really believe very strongly that faculty makes or breaks this kind of a program.

Administrator Baker is saying that if a professor does not use, nor facilitate the signature client consulting technique, the institution will not be able to deliver on its executive MBA program as advertised. The reputation for the institution in client consulting and providing real experience may decline, and this can affect growth in enrollment and

revenues. With this transcript excerpt, Baker tells of a basic expectation of administrators for faculty members.

> Interviewee Response: …we expect him or her to really do the job, and it is not easy

Baker admits in this transcript excerpt that it is not easy for professors to meet the institution's expectations to use ELT effectively with the client consulting projects and supporting experiential activities. In these transcript excerpts, Baker states,

> Interviewee Response: So…I said earlier this is very-very important about people you have doing this, and everybody cannot do it.
>
> Interviewee Response: …I mean the faculty do have different capabilities…

When a faculty member does not have the qualities or capabilities to carry out ELTs prescribed and expected, they are let go, as previously stated. Elsewhere, Baker describes a situation where learners rise to the challenges, emphasizing leadership qualities he desires.

> Interviewee Response: There was always a lot of time pressure and could not repeat …and at the end of this I say like okay guys what you did, did we demonstrate the leadership or not and every person in class said yep…so it does not take a time period to demonstrate leadership, that can be done instantly. You can see this in emergency situations where something happens and some person rushes forward and does whatever needs to be done…that is leadership

Baker was describing an activity in a Leadership course at a state university with 11 week quarter terms with one project per week. With very little time, each team had to choose a leader and solve the situation. He sees time pressure as motivation and development of leadership. While Baker is referring to students, one may infer that his views reflect his expectations of faculty also, that they learn on the spot and train on the spot. Baker's emphasis seems to be rising to the challenge, rather than prior training.

Elsewhere in the interview, Baker speaks on motivation.

> Interviewee Response: …it can be done and the more you can motivate them…I think it is really worthwhile and it is cutting edge by doing this thing… it is much better than this, you know saying you got to do it this way…

Administrator Baker is saying here that he values motivating faculty to use ELT and client consulting design. He enthusiastically insists that the faculty must use ELT per the institution's curricular model. Baker continues the same conversation in the following excerpt.

> Interviewee Response: and it is a continual challenge because most professors and most administrators do not spend enough time with that aspect of leadership

Baker expects the administration to motivate the professors to use the institution's ELT model, and notes it is an ongoing effort.

> Interviewee Response: If you don't motivate them, then this would go to your students also… and as an administrator you know how you want to motivate your

> students, then you are going to have a lot of time to do and you all have good results.

There is an implication that requires time, training and preparation. With this in mind, the researcher asked,

> Interviewer Question: So when you talk about motivation and inspiration are you talking about giving them better training?
>
> Interviewee Response: …you have to be strong in training and it is something that is really worthwhile and really will help not only because of more training the professor gets the better he or she will do and better they do of course the better the students will do.

Baker recognizes importance of training so faculty can meet the administration's high expectations for them and their students to do well with ELT. He admits not enough training is offered.

> Interviewee Response: I think that right now we are a new school, only 3 years old. We give training; we give more training than most schools. We do not give near as much training as we really should.

This gets us back to the administrator respondents' calls for faculty training so they can meet their expectations for using ELT.

Administrators Harris and Baker acknowledged respectively in these transcript excerpts that implementation of ELT by graduate faculty is not perfect.

> Interviewee Response: There is a limit to degree that you have control over what the faculty do…
>
> Interviewee Response: … to be integrated that way and if you are going to have a program in experiential learning, ours is not perfect by the way, these are our expectations and we have problems with a lot of them

Both of these respondent administrators observed in the transcript excerpts that ELT was not fully implemented to their expectations. Baker continues the conversation just excerpted.

> Interviewee Response: …and if you are going to get there, you have to stay on top of it, you work on it, and eventually you will succeed it, and that is what we really have to do.

Administrator Baker summarizes the common goals, which the three administrators interviewed in this study all held for graduate faculty members to fully implement ELT in their courses in the FEMBA programs. Recommendations for administrators to encourage graduate faculty to implement ELT will be discussed in another theme in this chapter, after consideration of barriers to ELT raised by respondents in the next theme.

Sub-theme B: Low Interest of Administrators in MBA Programs at Large in Implementing ELT

Data from some interview transcripts in this study seem to illustrate observations or perceptions that administrators at colleges and universities show low interest, neglect, or informality towards ELT. This may bear some indication that administrators at FEMBA schools at large, if not in specific instances, have little expectations of faculty to

use ELT, and therefore, implementation of ELT is not widespread. Professor Lintott in this interview transcript excerpt states the following fact.

> Interview Question: …what appeared to be the attitudes and behaviors of other faculty towards experiential learning?
>
> Interviewee Response: I think in the College of Business, there are a few, unfortunately out of 100 faculty maybe 15 that participate with real experiential learning exercises and the majority of the faculty are simply stuck on lecturing as the mode.

Lintott notes approximately 15 percent of professors use ELT in their classrooms, while most are using the traditional lecture methodology, despite his institution ASU having interest and regard for experiential learning in the mission statement When asked the extent that ELT was implemented, Professor Lintott responded,

> Interviewee Response: There are faculty in both institutions (one in a well-respected university) and Agricultural State University, but probably more at Agricultural State, because the university's motto is learn by doing and there is an attempt to have applied material in everything. It does not happen but that is the effort anyway in terms of the university's design.

Professor Brown reports about the extent faculty use ELT in her own academic institution.

> Interviewee Response: I am familiar with the ones that do involve themselves with these projects but I do know that we have an awful lot of faculty that just stand up there and lecture

Brown knows that some of her graduate faculty colleagues use ELT, but she reports that many professors use the lecture methodology, and she has doubts much ELT is used. Brown implies that most faculty members, a large percentage of the faculty, do not use ELT in their classrooms and courses. Reports of such low use of ELT in the classrooms and courses in the FEMBA programs of these respondents gives the implication that administrators have low expectations for graduate faculty to implement ELT in their classrooms.

Acceptance and appreciation of ELT by administrators, but little encouragement to use it. Interview transcripts indicate that administrators pay little attention to implementation of ELT in the MBA program. Interview transcript excerpts reflect an acceptance of ELT, but not encouragement of graduate faculty to implement ELT in their classrooms and courses.

> Interview Question: Did you receive feedback from an administrator or administrator specifically about the use of experiential learning techniques?
>
> Interviewee Response: I don't know. I have never received any negative or positive.

Walker is allowed to use ELT but is not encouraged to use it. She has received no feedback or attention from the administration concerning use of ELT in the classroom.

Respondents at two of the three study sites, while indicating inattention to ELT, did note that administrators do appreciate positive feedback of faculty members, as well as increased motivation, attendance and retention that result out of faculty use of experiential learning techniques. Walker observes,

> Interviewee Response: Most administrators are really-really supportive because of the feedback of the students

Walker observes that administrators appreciate positive student feedback of faculty members who have used ELT. While administrators appreciate positive feedback and student retention out of the use of ELT, some respondents observe there is little interest and use of ELT from many administrators and faculty. Lintott observes,

> Interviewee Response: What surprises me …no other faculty has ever wanted to adopt any of these briefcases or any of the techniques that I have used… I have had faculty from other departments within the College of Business learn about my reputation,,, and have actually attended my classes. I am more than willing to share it but nobody takes me up on it…

Lintott is surprised that other faculty in the department have not expressed interest in his experiential learning techniques using effective case studies that engages his students, even though he has a good reputation and has been observed by faculty members.

The next two transcript excerpts by Lintott further consider administration's interest in ELT and response to faculty members who use ELT.

> Interviewee Response: I think at ASU there is not only a tolerance, but I think when it comes to the evaluation of faculty on an annual basis, the deans and the provost will frequently comment regarding the effectiveness of a faculty member doing something different…
>
> Interviewee Response: …faculty that change typically get rewarded in terms of a response to say kudos to you for doing so. So, it is often an after the fact compliment as opposed to an encouragement to change…

Lintott is indicating that individual faculty members are given encouragement from recognition of positive student reviews or student retention in the program, that have resulted from a faculty member's change to use ELT in the classroom. But, there is little encouragement for the faculty as a whole to use ELT in each course. Lintott observes the administration's consideration of faculty members who have not adopted ELT.

> Interviewee Response: …if it is a faculty member who does not use experiential learning, the administration will rarely say oh, you want to look at a different technique, they rarely talk about how they should change.

Lintott reports that there is little impetus or push from administrators at his institution to encourage faculty members to implement ELT in their classrooms, despite the inclusion of experiential learning in the institution's mission statement.

Little preparation and training for faculty in ELT, due to low expectations of administration to use ELT. Little interest in ELT along with acceptance and adherence to the status quo of lecturing have resulted in little preparation of faculty for the techniques of experiential learning pedagogy, as the following interview transcript excerpts interviews show, with Professors Brown, Young, and Jackson respectively.

> Interview Question: So, how did you learn to teach?
>
> Interviewee Response: Well, I was thrown into the pool.
>
> Interviewee Response: I was thrown in the fire basically.
>
> Interviewee Response: By the seat of my pants, by trial and error…

What the above statements indicate is that the MBA departments at various universities provide little or no training in how to teach or facilitate ELT. Professors Lintott and Walker's observations in the transcripts excerpted below confirm Professor Brown, Young, and Jackson's views that new faculty hires to FEMBA graduate programs have little training and must develop their knowledge of ELT in the classroom on their own.

> Interview Question: …was there a teaching model that you followed? What did this model consist of?
>
> Interviewee Response: Basically in most cases in the graduate programs at both Agricultural State University and one other well regarded university (name redacted), you are given a book and told to teach the course and you are on your own, absolutely nothing about experiential learning or active engagement of the students.
>
> Interview Question: So, were you provided with an orientation or training on experiential learning before or after you started teaching and if you were, what was covered in the training on orientation?
>
> Interviewee Response: …my experience with it prior to being here was you went into a classroom and they kind of say, okay figure it out.

Administrator Harris's perception in the following excerpt echoes those faculty members' observations.

> Interviewee Response: I think there is a tendency for universities, in general to believe, okay, we want faculty to do this, we will tell faculty that they need to do this, and the faculty need to figure it out on their own.

The above quotes demonstrate that faculty members in graduate programs often enter the classroom with no training, and experiential learning methodology is neglected in the initial transition to the classroom. Professor Lintott explains an assumption that makes this possible.

> Interviewee Response: …especially their doctorate, the assumption is you can go from sitting in the classroom to standing in front as a lecturer with no training, no change, and you just replicate this…

Behind the assumption is the notion that faculty in graduate programs can summarily pass their research knowledge to the students, with no need to train faculty in experiential or impact learning techniques.

Despite the interest of some MBA schools and business departments, experiential or impact learning techniques are still the exception rather than the norm. Therefore, even schools or departments accepting or favoring experiential learning offer little or no training in ELT for faculty. This requires any faculty members using ELT to spend a lot of time and effort to learn ELT in most MBA programs. This following passage or transcript excerpt replays and continues Walker's responses.

> Interviewee Response: …they kind of say, okay figure it out. No, I didn't like that because to me that is a waste of time. If I have to figure something out that you already know a procedure that will work why should I have to sit here and try to reinvent the wheel?

Walker is observing lack of training and expressing her frustration. This transcript excerpt implies Walker is asking why arrangements are not made by administrators to coordinate sharing of practices of ELT and why knowledgeable people are not provided to train ELT.

Even in Advanced Management Institute, where ELT is extensively used as part of its curricular model, there is neglect of training based on another assumption.

> Interviewee Response: but this assumption that the teacher knows the consulting process before they go in and that is not a good assumption, I don't think. So, I really do think that you need to train the faculty on how to do experiential learning and how to do processes that go along with it. Because you cannot assume that the faculty knows how to do it…

Carpenter is expressing his view that administrators cannot assume that new faculty hires will know the client consulting process and how to facilitate ELT. This interview excerpt implies that Carpenter is observing a paucity of training at his MBA institution, which uses ELT. Administrator Harris expresses the same basic idea as Carpenter above that faculty need to be trained in ELT or any activity to meet expectations of administrators and management.

> Interviewee Response: ...In any other organization, if we want people to do something, we train them first. Faculty are no different. Okay, yes, they are more intelligent. They had PhDs and all that, but the same basic process of learning acquisition is true for faculty as it is true for any other employee.

Harris is explaining that faculty members will enjoy the benefits of training for activities as other employees, to meet expectations of their managers and stakeholders. When

administrators do not provide any training in ELT consistently, this indicates either lack of attention to ELT or lack of attention to training, which can optimize the use of ELT, or both.

Freedom of teaching methods in classroom, benign neglect of ELT in the faculty's perspective. While Professor Lintott has cited prevalent use of lecturing, he brings up another facet.

> Interviewee Response: Our department chair here feels that his role as department chair is to protect his faculty and let them teach the classes the way they want to teach them.

This transcript excerpt may indicate the department chair ensures the faculty members' freedom to use their own teaching or facilitating methods. When faculty members are free to use any technique, there would be no direction by administrators to use ELT. This can result in less use of ELT and fewer opportunities for training in ELT to develop skills and expertise in the methodology. This freedom may appear as a form of benign neglect of ELT.

> Interviewee Response: I think that administrator should become more involved in what their teachers are doing...

Walker, who uses ELT (simulation), believes the chair should devote more attention to faculty teaching methods, and what Walker really seems to say is that she wishes the administrator would provide more attention for her methodology, ELT, through support and training.

Freedom of teaching methodology or benign neglect by administrators, when it occurs, raises the question of where and by whom ELT can be developed and implemented. The researcher posed such a question to an administrator at a large public university, respondent Harris.

> Interviewer Question: …were these techniques developed by administration and communicated to the faculty or is it a joint effort all the time?
>
> Interviewee Response: I would say mostly it is faculty generated, both within curriculum committees, departments, and the graduate faculty.

One can infer that ELT programs and activities must necessarily be developed by faculty, curriculum faculty or jointly by departments and faculty. One can also infer that choice of teaching methodology and adoption and use of ELT varies from department to department within a university.

There is little use of this methodology consistently in departments of MBA programs in the U.S. (Kuh, 2008) with little training of faculty in ELT at many graduate business schools. "In relatively few instances in established business schools, is there much clinical training or learning by doing" (Pffefer and Fong, 2002, Covington and Romeo, 2015). A survey of 405 course syllabi in 49 graduate degree programs in non-profit management and public administration programs (Carpenter, 2014) revealed "low levels of interactions between students and community organizations" (p. 114). Although the programs studied by Carpenter included experiential learning activities, "both support and evaluation for experiential education were primarily informal" (pp. 114, 123). Informal regard for ELT can give the implication that ELT is not fully implemented,

especially with projects involving practicing and learning practical skills in real workplaces outside the classroom.

Summary of Theme Two:

Data from administrator interviews in this study indicates they believed that they had a fair to high interest in ELT. While each administrator expressed a desire to see ELT implemented in their faculty members' practices, administrators often expressed some level of frustration stemming from the fact that some faculty were more willing to utilize ELT in their teaching than other faculty refused to embrace an ELT framework. In the findings for this theme, these administrators reported that implementation of ELT in their programs were not fully implemented to their expectations. Some of the administrators either felt that not all the faculty are suited to teach using ELT, or/and the professors need to have desirable qualities, i.e., pro-active leadership or being open to new ideas, willing to deal with a sense of loss of control implied in the use of ELT. Some of the reasons faculty were not embracing ELT as quickly or fully as administrator interviewees expected may include some faculty interviewees' criticisms of little to no training to prepare faculty for the use of ELT in their classrooms. Some administrators in this study also expressed concerns that logistics for implementing ELT are not in place at their academic institution.

In another finding of this theme, administrator and faculty member interviewee data reported that administrators at MBA schools in the U.S. at large or in other business departments at their institution either exercised low expectations or benign neglect. An administrator interviewee discussed views to accord the faculty academic freedom to choose their own teaching techniques for their classroom. Interview data also cited a

corresponding lack of faculty training in ELT in academic institutions and MBA programs besides their own, as well.

The tension between administrator interviewees' expectations for ELT and its degree of implementation at their departments and in U.S. MBA programs overall reflected in the data findings can be due to barriers to experiential learning. Those barriers will be discussed in the next major theme of this chapter. Efforts by administrator interviewees to reconcile their tension between high expectations for faculty members or the academic institution arose in some suggestions for faculty training in the findings of this theme. Further discussion of interviewees' advice and recommendations of improved practices for increased use of ELT will be addressed in a major theme in this chapter after consideration first of barriers to ELT implementation in the next theme.

RQ3: What are barriers, if any that may prevent graduate faculty from adopting experiential learning methodology?

Theme 3: Self-imposed and other Barriers Implementing Experiential Learning Techniques

The researcher sought to arrive at findings that would identify and evaluate barriers, if any that could prevent or limit implementation of ELT in FEMBA programs. Interview questions investigated presence and extent of barriers, which respondents could identify both inside their academic institution and at other educational institutions of higher learning. Therefore, the interview questions took one of the two forms such as indicated in the following sample questions used.

> Interview Question: Are there any barriers in implementing experiential learning methodology at this institution?
>
> Interview Question: Based on your understanding of what is going on nationwide at other educational institutions, do you think there might be barriers for the faculty to use experiential learning techniques?

Both faculty and administrators interviewed in this study have used ELT and support its use.

A common theme of findings illustrates an awareness of barriers to ELT that did emerge from the interviews of faculty and administrators. Coding of data seems to indicate that the barriers observed by faculty could be manifold. Some respondents cited no internal resistance to ELT, and other respondents did not concur with this view. Among the findings, several interviewees observed or noted self-imposed barriers of faculty within and outside their academic institutions. Other interviewees mentioned barriers imposed by the institution, often without intent. Some barriers to ELT implementation discussed include not wanting to take chances with change and the need for more time and resources in preparation and implementation. The findings include discussion of barriers identified by interviewees, as well as sources from the professional literature.

Sub-theme A: Reluctance to Take Chances with Change

Experiential learning activities that are new to its participants can be met with fear, stress, hesitation and resistance, which is likely to be a barrier if it is not managed to address these issues. Professor Jackson talked in the two following interview transcript excerpts about the psychological damage it can do if experiential learning is not introduced slowly.

> Interview Question: Are there any barriers in implementing experiential learning methodology at this institution?
>
> Interviewee Response: I don't see barriers; however, I would really want to see training because as I told you, there are some aspects to experiential learning that can be psychologically challenging and I think people need to be trained on how to manage that.
>
> Interviewee Response: At first they think I am insane (interviewee stops and thinks before proceeding) so you don't, you know take somebody and throw them right into something that is (hesitates) is psychologically dangerous

Through the psychological nature of this response, Jackson expresses her concern with potential damage to students. It appears that Jackson's response appears to indicate that she sees training of faculty as necessary to make students comfortable in order that they will engage in the ELT models. This would need to be an integral component for successful implementation of ELT. Therefore, the facilitator often needs to frame the context of the activity to enable students to be comfortable and focused enough to engage in the activity, when students are not familiar with the techniques of experiential learning. The faculty as facilitator also needs to devote a lot of preparation, framing, monitoring, managing, counseling, de-briefing, seeking and providing feedback, and assessing professional skill development to ensure success with ELT. The high degree of skill and time required as well as any training for faculty to facilitate students using ELT can be a barrier to the use of experiential learning techniques.

Reluctance to change as barrier to ELT, due to prior background in traditional or lecture methodology. Faculty, as well as students, can be reluctant to

"sign on" to experiential learning techniques, if their prior experience and preparation has only been with the lecture approach. Professor Lintott explains,

> Interviewee Response: and the majority of the faculty are simply stuck on lecturing as the mode, I think, primarily because that is how they were taught and they are simply mimicking how they learned from their graduate education, especially their doctorate…

Lintott indicates that, graduate level faculty members were taught to use lecture methodology. In the same discussion, he explains why.

> Interviewee Response:…the assumption is you can go from sitting in the classroom to standing in front as a lecturer with no training, no change, and you just replicate this

It seems evident from this response that the majority of faculty at Professor Lintott's university setting are accustomed to using a lecture-based approach, because that is the modality that is most comfortable to them. Since ELT is not a methodology that is widely used in business school contexts at universities in the United States, there seems to be clear resistance to its implementation through self-imposed and other barriers. Graduate level faculty members traditionally pass their knowledge of theory and content of their discipline to their students with no expectation to be trained in any other teaching methodology. Lintott in the transcript excerpt above notes the assumption also that no training is necessary.

Administrator Baker also attests to resistance of faculty who've been using the traditional lecture methods and the difficulty using ELT.

> Interviewee Response:… but the thing that really people don't realize is they have the same old model they follow through the last thousand years and that is what they think teaching is and…they have to throw this thing out, saying out (unintelligible), and if they don't get it, they will fail…

Baker implies that some faculty members who have used traditional methods throughout their careers will not be able to handle sudden changes to use experiential learning methodology.

In the next two interview transcript excerpts, Administrator Harris, who supports experiential learning, has noted that some professors may be reluctant to use ELT in their classrooms on first adoption, especially if they have no training or background in ELT.

> Interviewee Response: We meet some resistance because it is more of work when you first start doing it and especially if you have not had a professional experience or so or exposure to those teaching pedagogy yourself, it is really hard.
>
> Interviewee Response: The faculty not knowing how it seems harder and it is more work when you first start. You have to learn it yourself. You have to figure out.

Administrator Harris is stating that faculty members who are used to traditional lecture methodology will have a lot of preparation to do when they first use ELT.

Reluctant to change as barrier to ELT, due to unfamiliar activities and sense of loss of classroom control. Administrator Harris gives further observations about what professors may experience when faced with unfamiliar activities.

> Interviewee Response: They are messy, they are out of control and some faculty do not like their feeling of out of control. Especially if you are doing field work, community based work, plant based work that is out of control.

The interviewee observes that faculty new to ELT experience a high degree of learning and activity on their own part. New faculty or faculty with backgrounds with lecture methodology may experience a feeling of uncertainty and loss of control over how to facilitate experiential learning activities, the participants, and behavioral outcomes. In the next two interview transcript excerpts professors Walker and Jackson observe that kind of situation.

> Interviewee Response: …it's a dynamic classroom, I called it organized chaos, some of my colleagues just don't**.**

> Interviewee Response: it is chaotic and people have difficulty with that, I don't. I like the chaos, but it is not for somebody who needs their classroom to be quite structured, so I see discomfort

Walker and Jackson have become familiar with ELT, but also recognize that other faculty members do not feel comfortable with classroom "chaos" and experience a sense of being out of control. Jackson discusses a fear of loss of control over content with experiential learning methodology, which another faculty member related to her.

> Interviewee Response: I have one faculty member, not here, but at another institution…tell me that teaching methodology does not lend itself…because he, (gearing up) okay, I am going to paraphrase what I heard. He needs to control the content, he needs to ensure that they get these…theories down the path. He does not have time to let them play around…

When Jackson cited controlling the content, she was referring to a common fear or concern about experiential learning techniques with covering the course content during an academic quarter. The following transcript excerpt from Professor Smith also expresses a concern with covering content, even though he implements ELT in the classroom and uses it in his courses.

> Interviewee Response: ...I mean obviously we've got a curriculum we have to take them through right? I mean we have to maintain our accreditation.

Smith's concern over content coverage transfers into fear of demands of accreditation of the MBA program, but this is not just the interviewee's fear, as Smith continues his statement.

> Interviewee Response: All universities are concerned about that and they want to transmit the legacy of human knowledge that's been acquired thus far to their students…..and that is our obligation to do. They're (students) paying tuition for at least that

Although Smith uses ELT in his courses, he finds it necessary to respect the tradition of passing knowledge on to the students. However, obligations to cover content can reduce time available to faculty to use experiential learning activities or projects during a course. The situation becomes a balancing act, which challenges an educator's priority to implement ELT. In any event, an instructor can sometimes overlook inclusion of ELT during some academic terms, while trying to cover content in the course syllabus.

Professor Jackson admits a tendency in oneself, even though she uses and favors experiential learning techniques, to become lazy in applying experiential learning consistently in her courses.

> Interviewee response: I fall back in the lazy mode… (ponders) You know it made me really stop and think, so you know we could little lazy and you, you know, just kind of get into a little pattern and you find you are lecturing too much.

What Professor Jackson seems to be explaining is a common concern for covering the content in the course syllabus and managing one's time during an academic course. These concerns can cause one to either avoid experiential learning or for those who use it to slip, for awhile, from devoting the extra effort to keep experiential learning a priority each academic term.

Klink and Athaide (2004) note that, "Any new pedagogical technique presents barriers that inhibit its adoption." Bunwell and Eison (1991b) in an older report observed in their survey of barriers to active learning that fear of risk in loss of classroom control was the greatest barrier of all. The authors consider fears that the faculty member does not have the needed skills and does not feel in control, or the students may not engage (pp. 62-63).Practice of experiential learning activities and projects with simulation or with service workplace learning, "by its nature, implies the existence of an experience over which the instructor is unlikely to have great control" (Klink and Athaide, 2004, p. 146).

Reluctance to change as barrier to ELT, due to a need for skills and training in ELT. A high level of skill in experiential learning through background and training

can reduce uncertainty, fear, or concerns with covering the course syllabi. Training in experiential learning methodology needs to be developed or recognized, and lack of it can be a barrier. Respondent Jackson attests to the need for one to be comfortable and skilled in the use of experiential methodology.

> Interviewee Response: I think the only barrier is perhaps a personal discomfort, not fear, but a discomfort, (pause) you know again it is managed chaos, so you have to be skilled.

Brown is indicating that ELT, if not properly managed, can result in chaos in the classroom.

It can take a professor several years to become comfortable or proficient at using ELT. Li (2007) notes "one or two semesters, if not years, are needed before an adopter feels comfortable with the tool" (p. 25). As a result, it can be challenging to hire new faculty members who can use ELT effectively. Mandell and Noyes' study (2016)cites a respondent who reported that, "It is often difficult to find faculty who are comfortable with the practical approach" (p. 171). The authors consider another respondent who experienced that, creation of a sustainable group of practicing entrepreneurs "willing to commit to playing a mentoring role" is a challenge to ELT (p. 171).

Reluctance to change as a barrier, due to concerns regarding reputation risk with unsuccessful ELT activity. Graduate faculty whose background is with lecture methodology may not take chances with ELT in their MBA programs that already have good standing competitively. Administrator Harris discusses this issue and discusses the risk to MBA rating programs.

> Interviewee Response: …because they are so concerned about having positive evaluations, you know the rankings are a big influence in MBA program, so if you take a risk for having an experience the students do not like, is that going to hurt you and in some public way it could.

Harris uses experiential learning in her MBA program, but notes that a program used to the lecture method can face risks to its reputation if experiential learning projects do not run successfully and their MBA ratings suffer. Pfeffer and Fong (2002) states that, "as with any status-based system, it is scarcely in the interests of those schools winning the competitive war for status to change the rules of the game that have put them on top" (p. 91).

Faculty primarily with lecture experience may not take chances with new experiential techniques, if the faculty members have been receiving good evaluations with the lecture approach. Professor Lintott explains this issue, discussing the risk of trying ELT with or without training to faculty obtaining tenure.

> Interviewee Response: …If your teaching evaluations which constitute one third of the weighting are not strong, you basically would not get tenure. So, there is a very big reluctance to try anything new simply because the risk is too great….if they fail they do not pull it off well, they could seriously jeopardize and I mean seriously their ability to get tenure.

Lintott notes this is a sad commentary on the tenure system at U.S. colleges and universities. The tenured faculty can resist any reforms such as the requirement to use ELT, as the faculty generally stay in their positions longer than the administrators.

Reluctance to change, due to research orientation of graduate faculty as barrier to ELT. The orientation of graduate faculty as research faculty, rather than as

teaching faculty can jeopardize their publishing career and status, if they risk the time to develop, engage, and experiment in ELT. Remember the cliché: It is publish or perish. Research faculty necessarily place first priority on their research and publishing activities. Professor Brown observed,

> Interviewee Response: Most of the faculty are research teachers, so their time is best spent on their research, so they want to attend conferences that are relevant to their research… when I bring this topic up (experiential learning) just because I enjoy it and I think it is engaging and wonderful and it would be fun, it is not nearly as important to those who are really pushing their research.

It is apparent from the above comment that in VSU and at other universities as well, many faculty have a priority to do research and attend conferences that are related to their specific research, rather than paying attention to the idea of pursuing or receiving training in ELT. The need for graduate faculty to devote time for their research, with any concomitant lack of training in ELT, exacerbates their risk to implement ELT.

Some literature briefly concurs that the adoption of ELT does indeed carry risk to graduate faculty members oriented to research and publishing. Saunders (1997) contends that "untenured faculty take serious risks using these tools, for the time required to run them competes with research and publishing, hallmarks of the instructional paradigm" (p.11).Mandel and Noyes (2016) also note that "classic doctoral training, focused on research outputs and peer-reviewed publications, does little to equip entrepreneurship faculty members" (p. 171) when they do not have entrepreneurship or executive managerial experience in the industry. The risks and lack of preparation of faculty

exclusively focused on research and publishing is a formidable barrier to implementation of ELT in graduate business programs.

Reluctance to change as barrier to ELT, due to traditional assessment methods. Traditional habits of assessing students can also inhibit or impinge on the full use of ELT. On occasion, the state mandates exams for assessment. Faculty with a background using lecture methodology has traditionally assessed students' true/false, multiple choice questions and written exams to test recall of content provided in lecture and reading assigned. On the same vein, the administrations of some MBA programs mandate a type of exam for each student in the program. Professor Walker expounds on this idea.

> Interviewee Response: So yeah, I think there are barriers and I think it can be an easy copout, oh well administration requires that we give multiple choice tests, so I am just going to do it this way.

Walker is mentioning an example of a mandated type of test, which can be a barrier to implementation of ELT. The interviewee is implying that instructors would spend time to teach to the test as expected by administration, rather than planning and facilitating an experiential activity or project.

The researcher did not locate literature specifically citing assessment with "objective exams," such as multiple-choice tests, as an impediment or barrier to implementation of ELT. However, the following discussion is pertinent. As it is very important to ensure FEMBA students are well prepared for the industry, accrediting agencies have incorporated "Institutional effectiveness" as a standard in their criteria. An important part

of institutional effectiveness is assessment of the student learning outcomes (SLOs) that graduate business students experience through the ELT activities which faculty members can design and facilitate in academic courses. Mandated multiple choice tests or standardized essay exams, for example, align poorly as an assessment tool with desired SLOs (Biggs and Tang, 2007) for FEMBA, as these kinds of instruments do not assess proficiency in skills desired by employers or success in entrepreneurship. Assessment exams designed to assess short-term student retention of lessons delivered through lecture methodology do not align with skills FEMBA students need to develop and practice. Standardized mandated exams require the professor to "teach to the test," which reduces the use of ELT within time-sensitive academic course terms. With customary or mandated written testing, lecturing may even replace opportunities MBA students have with experiential learning to construct their own learning and meet the SLOs common to the students, faculty members, and the industry. Traditional assessment testing, and lecture methods that can go with it, are barriers to implementation of experiential learning.

Sub-theme B: Need for More Time, Logistical Issues, and Resources for Preparation and Implementation

The faculty members interviewed in this study, although they support experiential learning, note that lack of course time and resources to prepare and implement experiential learning techniques can be a barrier. Indeed, experiential learning techniques generally require preparation, resources, time, attention, and skill to implement.

Time as barrier to ELT. Professor Oaks and Administrator Thompson talk about the time needed to implement ELT well, in these two transcript excerpts.

> Interviewee Response: There certainly are some, I am not sure negative is the word, time, time is a big deal. It takes a lot of time to do experiential learning.
>
> Interviewee Response: I think it takes a more work to develop a quality experiential exercise activity than it does walk to into your class and talk about the same things in the same way that you have done for the past 20 years. So I think the barrier is time.

Oakes indicates time can be a barrier to implementation of ELT. Administrator Thompson explains time is necessary to develop new experiential learning activities, and facilitate students' learning experiences so that they meet the desired learning objectives of the activity. She is noting that a professor with extensive career experience lecturing tends not to spend the extra time to learn and develop new experiential activities, and that time is a barrier to implementation of ELT.

Adoption of experiential learning methodology, due to the additional time and attention required, forces the instructor to make trade-offs in terms of covering the content of the course. Young discusses this issue.

> Interviewee Response: Every so often you may have to forgo one or two exercises because you are running out of time with your syllabus. So, it depends on what is working. I am always tempted to stay with the topic because of the attention of the students…but then if you have other topics, it's a balancing act

What the above response means is, that when coverage of the course syllabus in an academic term becomes a time sensitive issue, professors can face tough decisions between implementing an ELT activity or not. Earlier in the transcript of the discussion, Young noted,

> Interviewee Response: One thing about the lecture method is it is efficient.

Often, faculty members who face such pressures covering the course syllabus decide just to use lecture, since it requires less time and preparation.

Some research literature sources reflect observations of the interview respondents that cited time and resources required to plan and facilitate experiential learning activities as a barrier. "Grasping a technology that allows students to go through the entire cycle," the Kolb cycle, Li et al. (2007) indicates, "can easily add hours to a faculty member's workload." Many professors or administrators shy away from longer client-based projects, according to Lopez and Gravois (2005), because of "the considerable workload and time commitment often required" (p. 172).

Time and logistics of class sizes, academic terms, and class schedules as barrier to ELT. Time issues are acerbated with large class sizes, when trying to conduct ELT group activities. Brown exclaims,

> Interviewee Response: I don't know too many people who would go in that big lecture hall with 175 people and break them down into 20 to 25 teams and have them do an activity every day because it is chaotic, it is insane. I think most people would prefer in that amount of time to just lecture.

Brown is obviously stating that it takes time to set up and facilitate ELT in large classes and classrooms designed to be used as lecture halls. Using facilities and class sizes that

are not designed, nor suitable, respectively for ELT makes the activity very stressful when used often. The challenges of managing class session time and large class size to carry out ELT is definitely a barrier to full implementation of ELT.

The length of academic terms in the quarter system can be a time or logistical issue and barrier to implementing ELT. Administrator Thompson gives her view of the quarter system.

> Interview Response: I think we are limited by the fact we are on quarter system and we only have 10 weeks. So, if you are going to go out and give a student a client experience, 10 weeks often is not long enough…

Thompson indicates that more time is needed than 10 weeks to plan, prepare, frame, motivate, engage, monitor, facilitate, and debrief an experiential learning project. The implication is that the 15 or 16 week semester term would be less of a challenge or barrier to full implementation of ELT. Thomson also cites the time of class session as a limit or possible barrier to effective implementation to ELT.

> Interview Response: So, in the evening MBA program I think the challenge is just dealing with students who are already working and how do you coordinate an activity where your client has to come to campus between 6 and 9 at night. I think that would be less of an issue if we had a daytime MBA program with students who are not fully employed

Thompson appears to have experienced logistical issues with having night time students meet with clients who are based around their workplace only 9 to 5 for client consulting projects. Shortly in the interview before the transcript excerpt above, Thompson stated,

> Interviewee Response: …you have students that are working 40 hours a week and then you are going to have them come here and then do some additional work. Sometimes, it is a challenge to do that because the students are already tired.

By additional work, Thompson means that students already work 40 hours and may not have any time for additional activities or meetings with the client outside of the students' work and classroom time. The interviewee notes that students are already tired, but this is also a challenge with lecture or presentation based delivery methods if students are too tired to participate or listen.

Carpenter (2014) reports that impediments to service learning included student time and availability to complete projects. One respondent said, "It is often difficult for students who are working full time and then come to class in the evening to ask them for another day or a weekend for a project" (p. 122).

In a survey of barriers to ELT, Mandel and Noyes, 2016 note that most popular programs "appear under pressure to grow, which itself a challenge to offering robust, experiential options to students and student teams"(p. 172). The call and growth for entrepreneurial programs with service or work-based projects in the curriculum of program offerings puts pressure for administration to admit larger enrollment or class sizes. This increase in load is often more than the college or university's capacity to accommodate and coordinate processes for ELT, much less enable faculty to effectively carry out and facilitate ELT group activities. Bonwell and Eison (1992, p. 59) and Diatte and Raghav (2015, pp. 273-274) note, as well, that large classes in higher education prevent implementation of active learning or experiential learning.

Risk insurance for off-site activities as barrier to ELT. Risk insurance is another logistical challenge to experiential learning projects in the workplace or in field trips. Professor Brown and Administrator Harris note the risk of injury in workplace experiential learning projects for MBA students.

> Interviewee Response: Okay, there are a lot of barriers. Big one is risk, litigation. If one of my students goes and gets bit by a dog, well professor Brown required us to go and I am in trouble if something happens.
>
> Interviewee Response: Especially if you are doing field work, community based work, plant based work that is out of control… Of course, there are some risk management issues if you are going into the community…we provide insurance to cover the students when they are out in the field

Brown and Harris note that off-site visitations by students and interactions with clients or supervisors can be unpredictable, and that there is a fear and risk of injury and damages during the work project. Harris indicates that insurance is necessary to cover the risk to the academic institution from any damages that could result from injury in the unlikely result it would occur. In the next two transcript excerpts, Brown explains how concerns of risk, as well as the insurance paperwork logistics, can be a barrier to implementation of the experiential learning projects.

> Interviewee Response: …in terms of litigation, we are covered at some degree by the university but nowhere near what we could be held liable
>
> Interviewee Response: Now that we have this whole risk management system but oh my God, they have like these binders and these contracts and da… da... da... and if you were to take that to a client, our little clients, there is no way. You know, they would look at that and go what, forget it, I don't need a project…

What Brown is explaining and describing is the issue of losing clients, which is a barrier to fully implementing workplace client consulting projects. Brown is also saying that the university provides insurance for students in the classroom, but not insurance for client consulting away from the university campus and auspices. Small companies may be reluctant to commit to legal binders and contracts, which Brown mentioned, that could increase their own liability and costs if something should happen. These concerns and the time necessary to proffer, complete, and review required documents is a barrier. Brown briefly summarizes a procedure to provide proper for off-site insurance for client consulting projects, internships, or field trips.

> Interviewee Response: If you did this sort of like by the book, then you would be like having the clients and giving the list of the clients to the university and the university would send a risk manager out and then they would do this and then they have the contracts and the client will send a copy

What Brown is describing is the logistics and steps for necessary documents to put insurance coverage for the projects into place. Harris summarizes,

> Interviewee Response: but you know that takes some advanced work because you have to work with office and get that agreement in place, so there are little barriers.

Harris is reporting that academic institutions with ELT in MBA or other programs need to arrange and coordinate the required documents and agreements for the projects to proceed.

Time is involved to complete these preliminary steps in advance of the academic term to implement the actual experiential project. Therefore, risk insurance and vetting clients or field sites becomes a logistical challenge to academic institutions dedicated to ELT.

Acquisition of quality clients and extra planning and coordination necessary with client consulting projects as barrier to ELT. Some interview responses in this study regarding time and logistics issues concentrated on challenges or barriers to client consulting projects or business simulation, as the interview respondents used these experiential techniques. With client consulting, more resources, such as the clients with whom the students will advise during the project, have to be arranged in advance. This can take time, coordination, and energy, which when lacking can present barriers. In her words, Professor Brown identifies what she considers to be the biggest problems related to teaching experiential learning with client consulting.

> Interviewee Response: I guess barriers are acquisition of quality clients and the workload, those are the two.

Brown indicates that finding quality clients can be a very time consuming process, and she vets prospective clients with an application process weeks before the course project begins. Brown also shared an observation that, with client consulting projects, faculty members have to manage how many clients shall be recruited, so there is a suitable pool of clients for students to choose.

> Interviewee Response: You have to manage like how many clients you are going to have in the pool because you want to have enough for the students to choose from, but you do not want to have so many that the clients become disappointed…

Likewise, the faculty member as project manager has to monitor the list in order that not too many clients are in the pool, so clients are not disappointed in not being called for consulting service within a reasonable amount of time.

The problem of finding clients is common, as stated by faculty from two institutions studied that use clients. Respondent Brown of VSU related,

> Interviewee Response: We will manage the clients once we get them. You know we have an application, we have all kinds of things we can do but to make us go out and generate the clients, it's a barrier… It really puts it back on this office to generate clients…

Brown further explains a situation when a major source did not provide client opportunities as planned, shortly before an academic quarter began.

> Interviewee Response:…so like this semester, I wrote to the Wells Fargo Center and asked them for clients and they said that they don't have any. That was supposed to be how this is addressed. So, now like I said I am scrambling to get good clients.

It is apparent from Brown's comments that acquiring clients is a very cumbersome process. As can be recognized from the above response, faculty who are involved in client consulting projects may have issues in managing the projects. Professor Smith observes,

> Interviewee Response: the clients...I mean because of the teaching model of our school, we would get clients which would have specific problems that were not directly related to the contents of the course.

Smith is saying the clients available have to match the needs for the subject of the academic course and the student learning objectives of the course.

Finding the right client(s) by educators is one of the essential components for students to begin the learning process with consulting (Johnson, 2013, p. 150). According to Carpenter (2014), impediments to ELT listed (p. 122) included limited access to community organizations, or clients, for students to engage with consulting or service learning. This challenge to locate clients is a barrier to MBA programs located far from metropolitan areas, when the institutions do not have fully designed and coordinated e-learning programs. As well, a shortage or lack of quality of clients can present impediments to ELT in large metropolitan areas with more commerce, business ventures, and non-profits. Resources must be available within the institution or academic department to procure suitable clients from this larger pool. Covington and Romero (2015) content that, "institutions need to work with industry leaders to create internship sites and project opportunities for students" (p. 167). Johnson (2013) advises communication with clients before the academic term (p. 151), in order that the academic department and institution can ensure consulting projects align effectively with SLOs of various academic courses within a graduate business program. To carry this out, vetting, networking and arrangements for signing suitable clients is indicated, and this requires strategic coordination processes. Without institutional offices or coordinated support between these offices and the academic department to locate clients, client procurement for student consulting becomes a barrier to full implementation of ELT, as several study interviewees have reported.

Lack of resources as barrier to ELT. With some experiential activities, commercial software is possible and available. This software may permit less time needs to devoted to developing experiential learning techniques, such as simulations, but costs have to be considered. Brown has observed instances wherein software resources for using experiential learning methodology are lacking.

> Interviewee Response: When I think we should have Edusource, we should have Envivo, we should have Envivo…Yeah, the resources, you know they are barrier."

A delay such as Brown just described can be a barrier to full implementation of experiential learning with business departments that have adopted it. If software resources are not available, ELT with simulation is difficult for professors to implement. Software resources are essential for online or blended classrooms using ELT.

Lack of support staff is a barrier to full or effective use of ELT as well. Since ELT usually requires more time and coordination than traditional lecture methodology, support staff and office coordinators would be helpful to faculty. However, variance in funding from one fiscal year to the next can result in unstable levels of support staff. Jackson and Brown mention loss of staff resources.

> Interviewee Response: ...and I used to have a TA, they would help you grade the projects, but since budget cuts, they pulled the TA so I have to change the project…and it varies whether you get the support or not in terms of TA support

> Interviewee Response:…she loved the projects, she was devoted to the projects. Now, there does not feel like there is as much support, it's a different chair and the TAs have been pulled and things like that…

The loss of a chair or business program director, who leads and supports ELT, is a potential loss of people resources to maintain experiential learning in an academic program. The loss of continuity of professional and support staff impacts the use of ELT and constitutes a barrier.

The available literature viewed by the researcher mention different aspects, but similar concerns, as study interviewees regarding inadequacy of resources to support ELT effectively. Some administrators may be reluctant to invest in simulation software, for example, due to "the accelerated life cycle of product innovation…" (Li, et al. 2007). Adoption of software for ELT can involve risks if, according to the authors, the technology platform shifts and IT support is less consistent or disappears entirely, "forcing the adopters to abort the projects in the middle of the adoption…" (p. 25).

Lack of human resources has been given some attention as a barrier (Mandel and Noyes, 2016). The authors cite an interviewee in their study: "The availability of entrepreneurially experienced full-time faculty for student mentoring has been a key bottleneck that we continue to tackle" (p. 171)

Somewhat more literature addresses a general lack of support for ELT as a barrier to the implementation of ELT. Andrews (2007) notes that Lamb, Swinth, Vinton, and Lee "attributed much of the resistance to the successful integration" of service learning (SL), which is related to client consulting ELT, to the absence of infrastructure. Andrews (2007, p. 20), in considering Lamb, et al. notes that, "They pointed out that the operational aspects of SL, including identifying and nurturing agency connections, assisting faculty with designing activities, and assisting students, require infrastructure and financial commitment from the institution." In just one example that could result

from lack of infrastructure and adequate funding for offices to coordinate processes of experiential learning projects, Carpenter (2014) indicates that barriers for some academic institutions includes limited access to resources and community organizations for work-based service projects. Some academic institutions outside major metropolitan areas such academic institutions with graduate programs such as MBA schools in rural areas will need to develop offices and expertise to implement and facilitate client-consulting projects online. The difficulty or lack thereof can be and often is a barrier. This is just one example of manifold processes that need to be coordinated to support ELT. Lack of such support is a barrier to implementation of ELT.

Quinn and Shurville (2009) notes the high cost of implementation, calling for patience and investment of time and money in experiential learning (p. 341). The indication of this study from Australia is that lack of funding resources for ELT over the long run consistently indeed constitutes a barrier to implementation of ELT.A study by Mandel and Noyes (2016)from the U.S. offers a different view in their findings that, "funding and fund availability did not emerge as the core challenge in offering experiential opportunities" (p. 172).The authors in their study continue that, "rather, the organization and leadership of a committed core of faculty and mentors – and the ability to identify capable faculty – were chief obstacles." A survey of 25 top undergrad entrepreneurship schools found ample credit-bearing experiential learning program, according to Mandel and Noyes (2016). Yet, "an array of challenges constrain the growth this mode of delivery – including finding suitable faculty, mentors and other support resources" (p. 165).

According to Carpenter (2014), "support for experiential education is limited at the master's degree level" (p. 123). There are limited resources for experiential learning programs in business departments that use ELT, according to Kuh (2008), and the author notes limited encouragement of this pedagogy in many other business departments within an academic institution. The lack of direction, impetus, or requirement for academic institutions to embed experiential learning in their mission, curriculum, activities, budget, and resources effectively contributes to barriers discussed that limit implementation of ELT in FEMBA programs.

Summary of Theme Three:

Among the findings related to this theme, the faculty and administrators report many barriers in the implementation of ELT. These barriers include resistance to change, prior use of lecture methodology, the time it takes to prepare for experiential learning methodology, possible loss of control, pressure to cover the content, research orientation emphasis of universities, and traditional assessment methods. Additional barriers of mention were class size, short academic terms, students too tired to get involved in ELT, risk insurance, and lack of resources.

RQ4: How can administrators motivate graduate faculty members at various levels of proficiency in their implementation of experiential learning?

Theme 4: Role of Mentorship and Additional Recommendations by Faculty and Administration Respondents to Encourage ELT

This theme of findings explores how administrators and universities can encourage the use of ELT in graduate business schools. The researcher sought to find out

how academic institutions of higher learning could increase adoption and full use of ELT in FEMBA programs. Graduate faculty and administrator interviewees and the professional literature as well offer some observations and recommendations how administrators could increase the use of experiential learning.

Sub-theme A: Mentoring, Training and Preparation of Faculty Members to Use ELT as Recommendation to Implement ELT

Most data from interviews in this study yielded responses from faculty and administrators which discuss and recommend mentoring, shadowing, best practices in-services, guest experts, and professional conferences as forms of training support of faculty to use ELT. Most of the interviewee data, except for the administrator responses, do not address the systemic infrastructure and process changes necessary to effect changes to increase mentoring and training of graduate faculty.

Mentors and shadowing. Faculty members with experience and proficiency with ELT can mentor newer faculty members or most any professor with little experience if any using ELT. Lintott suggests,

> Interviewee Response: I think if more institutions had mentorship programs with senior faculty mentoring untenured faculty, they could provide them the opportunity to visit the classroom of a senior faculty and watch how things were done differently to provide models of how to do something differently

Lintott suggests the university arrange or allow mentors to guide newer faculty. Lintott notes a mentor program exposes new faculty members to new experiential techniques in a safe, non-threatening way and can increase implementation of ELT in classrooms. Lintott

is speaking about senior faculty members who have experience teaching and facilitating ELT in the classroom to act in the capacity as mentors for the newer faculty. The mentor provides models of experiential learning techniques for one or several faculty newer members to observe during visits to the mentor's classroom. When larger groups of faculty need to improve their use of ELT in their classrooms and courses, live classroom observation may not be practical. It is also not feasible for large projects in experiential learning, such as client consulting, unless a new faculty member can shadow an experienced instructor through an entire client-consulting project. Professor Walker learned simulation with a mentor who encouraged her to observe her classroom through the academic term. Professor Walker explains in these three interview transcripts.

> Interviewee Response: …I spent one quarter shadowing him with the simulation. So, I tried the basics that they learn the simulation. Yes, I did have some training and he was so excited about it and I think it got me excited
>
> Interviewee Response: Come on, you are going to like it, this is the way they learn the best, and after viewing his class, I agreed that they got excited about it…
>
> Interviewee Response: I was fortunate enough to have a mentor when I first started…

Walkers's mentor recommended the simulation approach. Walker might never have adopted experiential learning and the simulation technique if she did not have a mentor to shadow for an academic term. Role models and mentors play a dominant role in the lives of faculty in choosing their teaching style or the kind of experiential methodology they use. Walker's mentor was her professor in the doctoral program. Mentors help in building

positive perceptions of ELT in the minds of faculty, which can increase implementation of ELT, one graduate faculty member at a time.

This transcript excerpt by Professor Walker indicates one further advantage of mentoring as she comments on training and preparation in her department in the graduate program.

> Interviewee Response: While we require simulation,…any adjunct faculty member that is hired is required to shadow his work order before they start teaching, because if you are thrown into it, it is overwhelming…

More and more, universities employ adjunct professors who teach in the program part-time. Some adjunct faculty members have their own business or work in the industry, and they bring their professional expertise to graduate students in FEMBA programs. Walker explains a new adjunct faculty member is required to shadow a professor experienced in the simulation technique before beginning a course in her department. Shadowing with a mentor especially helps a new adjunct faculty hire when no group in-services in ELT can be scheduled at the time period when the adjunct is to be oriented and begin teaching.

In-service meetings, faculty sharing best practices in ELT. The respondents in this study have all used ELT to some extent, though some have had limited training as reported earlier in this chapter. Several respondents recommended training in faculty or in-service meetings. Carpenter suggests sharing of best practices in quarterly faculty meetings.

> Interviewee Response: …we have a quarterly faculty meeting. I think that may be every faculty meeting we should introduce this concept to the faculty. You know continually emphasize it,…show them kind of how a person…is successful at it.

Carpenter speaks of success through examples of best practices and introducing or reinforcing the importance of experiential learning at the regular faculty meetings. Increasing awareness and success of graduate faculty using ELT during faculty meetings is a step in fuller implementation of ELT. Faculty meetings also consider other business regarding affairs of the faculty, department, and the institution.

These transcript excerpts by Jackson, Lintott, and Harris appear to suggest meetings be held devoted exclusively to faculty colleagues sharing best practices in techniques of experiential learning that they have used.

> Interviewee Response: I have to where we could all get together and learn experiential methodologies from one another.
>
> Interviewee Response: Well, I think the institution… for example would do well to do a best techniques seminar series
>
> Interviewee Response: it is the MBA program's form and they do evaluate the teacher… and, so when we see faculty score high on those items we invite them to talk about what are you doing and sharing practices, so it is really a community of educators to develop best practices

Jackson in the first transcript excerpt suggests the idea that the graduate faculty can meet to share their knowledge. In the second excerpt, Lintott suggests a seminar series where a different graduate faculty colleague from within the department or School of Business can present and share experience of effective techniques of experiential learning. Administrator Harris in the last excerpt explains that she invites faculty members with

high scores on the MBA teaching evaluation form to share successful practices they use in ELT with faculty colleagues. Harris speaks further, and explains why in-service seminars to share practices are effective in encouraging the use of ELT.

> Interviewee Response: This community of best practices I think is very effective, not only does it allow faculty to be rewarded and recognized for doing something well, they exclusively share what they do, that gives ideas to other faculty. It also kind of puts the pressure on everybody to step it up

Harris notes that faculty members who use ELT effectively are acknowledged positively with the opportunity to share their ideas and practices in seminars devoted exclusively to techniques of experiential learning methodology. Harris states the best practices seminars put some impetus on faculty in the graduate program to adopt and use some of the techniques presented. The implication is that other members in the graduate faculty will become proficient and successful in ELT, and in turn teach or facilitate ELT seminars and earn recognition. This cycle can build a growing community of graduate faculty who implement ELT in their classes and courses.

Training with in-services, guest experts. Much additional interview data indicated a recommendation of in-services for faculty, plus orientation and training of new faculty hires. These are considered here. Administrator Thompson and Professor Brown respectively recommend the university arrange its own training in ELT for graduate faculty.

> Interviewee Response: So, I think that the university would have to commit to and provide workshops for their faculty…you know, bring the speaker to campus or bring several speakers to campus to provide that learning experience for faculty.

> Interviewee Response: How do you get down to be more experiential, I think we could have more training. You know, we could have people come in and teach us how to do it but that would take a commitment at the upper levels

Thompson and Brown as well recommend in these transcript excerpts that the university commit resources for graduate faculty training on campus. An unstated implication is that the institution arranges and procures funding for faculty training in ELT as a priority. In the next transcript excerpt, Thompson reemphasizes bringing outside expertise to campus to support graduate faculty training in ELT that encourages implementation. She emphasizes provision of examples and best practices from experts.

> Interviewee Response: … We are going to bring in an expert in experiential learning if that person exists and they are going to give you examples of this…We are going to have someone give you examples of how this works

In the excerpt above, Administrator Thompson notes that sometimes, an outside expert in ELT does not exist or cannot be scheduled.

Professional conferences (outside institution). Administrator Harris reports in this interview transcript excerpt that she sends faculty to conferences for professional development.

> Interviewee Response: We have provided faculty development support to send them to conferences to help them learn some new techniques…

Harris sends her graduate faculty to conferences so they can learn new techniques or hone their skills in using experiential learning in their classes. The indication is that professional conferences can encourage use of ELT by faculty in departments that have already adopted it. Professor Young speaks about professional conferences in this transcript excerpt.

> Interviewee Response: I usually stay with the tried and the true. Now if in a conversation with… some colleague as I go to education conferences, I would attend sessions sometimes where they would highlight techniques…I would pick up tips sometimes.

Young is indicating that when she goes to professional conferences, she learns new experiential techniques and progresses away from using the same traditional or experiential techniques she has used. Faculty members would benefit from opportunities for comprehensive training than "picking up a few tips." Administrator Thompson prefers in-services to teaching conferences, during this transcript excerpt.

> Interviewee Response: … if you go to teaching conferences, it is filled with faculty from community colleges and so your university professors do not want…because we are different. …you know, bring the speaker to campus or bring several speakers to campus to provide that learning experience for faculty.

In Thompson's experience, it appears that the conferences her faculty members have attended concentrate on general teaching of experiential learning in the classroom and do not consider the specific needs of graduate faculty in FEMBA programs. While service learning and internships might be considered in general teaching conferences, it seems unlikely graduate business faculty would encounter opportunities to learn techniques they need to develop FEMBA students' workplace, leadership, and entrepreneurship skills, such as client consulting projects.

Merit of mentoring and training for faculty employees expected to use ELT in the classroom. Administrator Thompson explains that, graduate faculty indeed deserve training to use ELT and non-traditional teaching techniques.

> Interview Question: How can the other faculty members be encouraged to use experiential learning techniques?

> Interviewee Response: In any other organization, if we want people to do something, we train them first. Faculty are no different. Okay, yes, they are more intelligent. They had PhDs and all that, but the same basic process of learning acquisition is true for faculty as it is true for any other employee.

Thompson explains that, graduate faculty members deserve training in use of non-traditional teaching techniques, much as employees in companies and corporations are trained or oriented in the concepts and processes to be learned and the duties in job descriptions that are to be performed. Business organizations have begun to use ELT in recent decades and also struggle to implement ELT further in their training.

This interview transcript excerpt by administrator Baker of AIM also attests to the importance of training to reach an outcome of implementation of ELT in an academic institution.

> Respondent Baker: … you have to be strong in training and it is something that is really worthwhile and really will help not only because the more training the professor gets, the better he or she will do, and better they do of course the better the students will do.

Baker notes that training of the graduate faculty will increase the professor's performance and success with ELT in the classroom, and the investment in training graduate faculty will pay off in more effective learning experiences, which FEMBA students can apply to their professional work place.

The opposite of lack of attention to ELT implementation in graduate programs is mandatory use of ELT as part and parcel of the curricular design and institutional model. Professor Carpenter explains,

> Interviewee Response: I think it is generally forced upon the faculty and so some may like it more than others.… it is a very top down hierarchical organization… the question you have to ask yourself is are experiential learning concepts, is that a good thing, if it is forced upon the faculty to do. It is question that might be worked upon.

The interviewee is not comfortable that experiential learning is forced on faculty. The implication for administrators is that there be more training support in graduate business programs using dedicated curricular models in ELT.

Notably, little literature on experiential learning focuses specifically on mentoring to train graduate business faculty to use ELT. Mandel and Noyes (2016) exposit that, "clearly, executing and scaling experiential entrepreneurial programs highlights a need to recruit and retain experienced faculty and mentors"(p. 171). Ganser (1997) explains an objective of mentoring is to retain the good teachers by providing them with psychological support and instructional assistance." To put this into practice, mentoring takes place throughout an academic term. "No longer are stand alone, quick fix workshops viewed as adequate" (p. 3). Ganser considers mentoring to have a beneficial effect on new teachers and their students. Mentoring also benefits the mentors, as they discuss teaching techniques with the new faculty hire, and the mentors reflect on their own teaching practices during the process and improve their craft. Mentoring of new faculty hires in graduate business programs can increase implementation of ELT by new faculty and by senior faculty mentor. The data from interviewees in this study together Mandel and Noyes indicate findings that mentorship and shadowing have a great influence to increase adoption, implementation, and full use of ELT. The interviewee data indicated that best practice in-services for faculty members can also improve practice and use of ELT.

Sub-theme B: Attention Plus General and Coordinated Support of College and University Administrations as Recommendation to Implement ELT

Respondents in this study have recommended that administrators devote attention, direction, and support to the use of ELT. Administrator Thompson states that,

> Interviewee Response: …we need to provide support for the faculty to put this in their course. The universities and the colleges need to understand that if the

> faculty is going to do this, they cannot have class sizes of a 100 or 200 or whatever because this is very labor intensive to do this.

What Thompson means is that if colleges and universities are to implement ELT for the benefit of the students, reduction of class sizes and scheduling of courses and campus facilities will need to be restructured. This will necessitate increased funding and perhaps an office designed for FEMBA programs to arrange creative sources of funding from the community to support the budget for ELT. The college or university, even with fundraising from private sources, needs to devote funding for offices to raise these funds to support ELT for students in all programs. Thompson states,

> Interviewee Response: So, the university has to decide do we truly value this experiential learning and do we truly understand the increased work and time and attention it takes to bring this kind of experience to the class.

Thompson, an educator and administrator, is saying that the university needs to be serious in mission and support ELT in a material way if it wants ELT implemented on a widespread or significant basis. This support includes recognition, patience, and funding of the extra work, time, and attention which ELT requires to deliver its benefits.

The next several interview transcript excerpts focus on recommendations within academic departments or a College within a university. Oakes replies,

> Interviewer Question: How can the other faculty members be encouraged to use experiential learning techniques? What are your thoughts on that?

> Interviewee Response: From my perspective, it's the administrators that need to do that, not me, … administrators need to focus on it in faculty meetings and talk about why it is a good thing and why it works and be enthusiastic about it and that the experiential learning is a good way for people to learn.

Oakes believes that primarily, it's the administrator's job to encourage faculty to use ELT more extensively in the classroom. He suggests more emphasis, focus, and attention be placed on the benefits of ELT in faculty meetings, and this entails communication with the faculty. Administrator Thompson concurs,

> Interviewee Response: … the administration can influence it…simply say you know, we value this type of approach to teaching and we strongly encourage you to identify ways to add experiences to your teaching, so administration can encourage it… and then because administration encouraged it, they have to also support it, otherwise it will not continue to happen.

Like Oakes, Thompson in the next transcript excerpt recommends that administrations communicate to faculty the benefits of ELT. Thompson in this excerpt recommends that administration devote attention to encourage faculty to use ELT, but counsels that processes to implement ELT need to be supported or any adoption may not be long lasting. In another transcript excerpt, Administrator Thompson speaks concisely of processes and recommends a unified approach to encourage faculty to use experiential learning in the classroom.

> Interviewee Response: So then faculty teach them, you provide support for it, and that you acknowledge that it is important. So it has to be a unified strategy in terms of how faculty are treated.

In this transcript excerpt, Thompson advises a unified strategy to increase ELT implementation that includes training of the faculty, material and emotional support for the faculty, and communication by word and deed that use of experiential learning is important. By advising a unified strategy, Thompson recognizes and implies administrators should devote more attention and priority to ELT, through encouragement, training, and support of faculty to use ELT.

One transcript excerpt, which can well be considered, again is this excerpt by Professor Jackson.

> Interviewee Response: At first they think I am insane (interviewee stops and thinks before proceeding) so you don't, you know take somebody and throw them right into something that is (hesitates) is psychologically dangerous

Lack of preparation, orientation, or training in how to use ELT in the classroom can indeed be scary and psychologically dangerous, as Jackson reported, and this lack of preparation and training indicates a lack of emotional support for faculty. The small number of following transcript excerpts illustrate additional facets of emotional support which administrators can consider to increase implementation of ELT by various levels of proficiency among graduate faculty. Although small in number, these transcript excerpts from the data offer some significant recommendations that have implications for administrators wanting to increase implementation of ELT in their graduate business programs. In these next two excerpts, Administrator Thompson discusses the need for positive acknowledging of faculty member's use of ELT.

> Interviewee Response: So, what the university would need to do is to acknowledge it (ELT) in some way…It is true for any employee anywhere.
>
> Interviewee Response: …the faculty has to feel that the extra effort to have that quality classroom experience is valued and acknowledged in some way.

Thompson also indicates that ELT requires an extra expenditure effort for professors to facilitate and deliver a superior learning experience, and she recommends that administrators proactively provide recognition to faculty members to give them emotional support. Administrator Harris expresses a specific form of emotional support for faculty.

> Interviewee Response: We are not going to ding somebody who tried at something… so we encourage to try a new simulation, try a new activity and if it does not work in a semester, that is okay, but be willing to experiment, so the faculty does not feel that they cannot try something new

Harris is citing an environment where graduate faculty or any faculty can have confidence to experiment and try new experiential learning activities or projects. This positive and non-threatening environment indicates acceptance and encouragement of a learning curve, as faculty are allowed to experience and practice ELT in the classroom, in accordance with experiential learning methodology. (Training of faculty members can also shorten the learning curve, as many interviewees have indicated.) Emotional support of faculty an environment for faculty to experiment with ELT without risks upon early adoption is an implication to administrators that can foster greater implementation of ELT in the classroom.

Rather than a macro-analysis of ELT implementation across an academic institution at the graduate level, much available literature on implementation of ELT in higher education describes a specific ELT activity or project that was used or implemented in a course. However, there are some sources in the former category to consider, which will be discussed here. In one article, the authors (Li, et al., 2007) described a bottom-up implementation of ELT by one faculty member, who convinced faculty in other departments to accept and adopt experiential learning. According to the authors, "the marketing faculty took every opportunity to communicate with colleagues in other departments to facilitate the course approval in meetings" (p. 27) and encourage "buy in." After adoption, faculty shared "deliverables" or handed out documentation of the simulation programs used by the department (p. 28). The Li, et al. article attribute successful adoption of ELT innovations to effective internal group dynamics within an academic department, as just described, as well as positive characteristics of technical product software.

The authors described a bottom-up implementation of ELT by one faculty member who convinced faculty in other departments to accept and adopt experiential learning. The diffusion of one flavor of ELT from course to course does take time. "Experiential education was primarily implemented at the course level (p. 121), Carpenter (2014) concludes in its qualitative study. "The interviewees explained there was limited support available for experiential education at the program, department, and university level" (p. 122) in the non-profit management and public administration graduate level programs.

According to Andrews (2007), "therefore, coordination of SL (service learning) implementation at the college level may be the best way to derive maximum benefits from SL experiences" (p. 24). There is a paucity of literature for implementation of ELT at the college wide level. A report by Weis and Prussia (2002) favors design by administrators of cohort cohesiveness, where students in the same class group can keep their peers thru each academic term in the program. This practice could aid teamwork and networking for students to experience and solve issues in multiple experiential learning projects throughout FEMBA programs.

Attention and support of ELT and those who are to use it requires time, resources, and funding, and long range views are indicated for successful implementation of ELT. A small amount of available literature did devote some focus to the influence of infrastructure, organization, and processes in institutions of higher learning to implementation of experiential learning, as did some of the three administrators in this study. Andrews (2007) notes that, in a presentation at the National Service Learning Conference, Andrew Furco from the Service Learning Research and Development Center at the University of California at Berkeley confirmed the "need for infrastructure…including institutional structure, administrative support, financial and development support for faculty" (p. 20). These indicators (2007) are necessary to realizing an "engaged campus" with "community opportunities." Andrews (2007) and Mandel and Noyes (2016) essentially recommend facilitating and funding the processes that support the practices recommended and discussed above.

Quinn and Shurville (2009), speaking about scale up of experiential learning, purports that despite the high cost of implementation, "all stakeholders must recognize

that transformation requires significant investments in both money and time. Indeed time and sector-wide patience will be more precious commodities than money" (p. 341). Although Quinn and Shurville hail from Australia, the advice is applicable to graduate business education in the United States. The authors advise that universities and administrators not lend obeisance only to the bottom line. The authors recommend investment in time, resources, and processes to implement ELT. This means stakeholders take the long term view and effectively invest in the students who will become leaders in the next generation or are current leaders in the FEMBA seeking professional development. Such investment in infrastructure and business education, if the long term view is adopted, will deliver the best value.

Sub-theme C: Longer Academic Terms and Smaller Class Sizes as Recommendation to Implement ELT

The logistics of scheduling class sizes, physical facilities, and length of academic terms can affect implementation of ELT and are implications for administrators to increasing its use, according to the few interview transcript excerpts available in the data. Professor Brown in the first transcript excerpt and Administrator Thompson in the second and third excerpts indicate collectively that large classes in lecture halls and short academic terms do not allow professors to carry out meaningful experiential activities and projects.

> Interviewee Response: I don't know too many people who would go in that big lecture hall with 175 people and break them down into 20 to 25 teams and have them do an activity everyday

> Interviewee Response: The universities and the colleges need to understand that if the faculty is going to do this, they cannot have class sizes of a 100 or 200 or whatever because this is very labor intensive to do this
>
> Interview Response: I think we are limited by the fact we are on quarter system and we only have 10 weeks. So, if you are going to go out and give a student a client experience, 10 weeks often is not long enough…

Brown and Thompson's responses have implications for administrators that, colleges and universities need to restructure class and course scheduling to increase implementation of ELT. Large lecture halls are suitable for lecturing, for which they were designed. Brown and Thompson indicate that faculty members scheduled for large class sizes in these lecture halls face barriers in using and facilitating ELT, with challenges to logistically coordinating and managing large numbers of students in participating groups. The effective use of ELT involves increased time and effort for set up for activities in large classes. Scheduling of smaller class sizes necessitates a commitment to resource funding to support hiring of faculty members for the additional class sessions, which would result with the smaller class size more amenable to ELT use and its implementation. Administrator Thompson indicates short academic terms also present challenges to faculty coordinating and managing real-time ELT projects with real life clients. Thompson has greater expectations for administrators to fully implement ELT with 16-week semester terms than 10 week quarter terms. She indicates implementation of ELT can increase with changes to the semester course system.

The researcher did not find literature regarding full implementation of ELT in graduate business education refuting or supporting, the study interviewee data, which views longer academic terms and smaller class size to have a positive effect on ELT. One

may consider Diette and Raghav (2015), who states that, “smaller class size encourages greater student–faculty interaction… and increases adoption of innovate teaching techniques such as active learning exercises in the classroom”(p. 273). This quantitative study of colleges and universities found “that increasing class size is harmful to students” (p. 274), after controlling for semester, time, and other characteristics. Conversely, the implication is that decreasing class size would encourage implementation of ELT at the higher education level.

Sub-theme D: Resource Support as Recommendation to Implement ELT

Support of funding for software resources and human resources with offices to coordinate the processes of ELT indicate implications for administrators to implement ELT, as presented in the data collected. Software resources can reduce to some extent the amount of time and preparation to use ELT. Professors Brown and Young, respectively, mention in the two following interview transcript excerpts, that resources are available in the marketplace or can be developed.

> Interviewee Response: When I think we should have Edusource, we should have Envivo, we should have Envivo…Yeah, the resources, you know they are barrier.

> Interviewee Response: Yeah. Because there are a lot of programs now where you can apply programs where you can apply for grants and things like that for resources to help in experiential learning and so basically you have to come up with creative kinds of plans that you can submit. There are resources available.

Brown notes a lack of software resources are sometimes lacking and indicates that adequate funding for these resources to support ELT in the program can address this situation and aid in implementation of ELT. Young seems to mean that faculty members

or other personnel could write grants for resources and the implication is that administrators could fund grant writing for resources to use some experiential learning techniques. It takes extra time and effort for faculty to write grants, and they would need to be compensated, or an office of grant application would need to be developed or expanded and funded. The latter would entail an increase of human resources, as well as for the resources themselves. These recommendations are implications for administrators to support funding, to commit to fully implementing ELT in graduate education.

As well as lack of software resources, lack of support for faculty members and support staff can be an issue. Jackson explains a concern with loss of support staff.

> Interviewee Response: ...and, I used to have a TA, they would help you grade the projects, but since budget cuts, they pulled the TA so I have to change the project…and it varies whether you get the support or not in terms of TA support

Jackson indicates a need for a steady source of TA support, to support professors and programs using ELT. Smith raises another issue, in these two following transcript excerpts.

> Interviewee Response: I would pay the instructors better because a lot more is expected of them than a typical teacher.
>
> Interviewee Response: And if I couldn't pay them better I would give up because what you guys are asking to do you're not paying them anywhere near enough... (speaking as if she were the president)

Professor Smith, in the first excerpt, indicates that more time and effort is required out of graduate faculty, of whom he is speaking, than is required graduate professors using traditional lecturing techniques, and therefore, faculty members using ELT deserve and should receive higher compensation. In the second transcript excerpt, the interviewee means to say that graduate faculty members using ELT are not paid nearly enough, and administrators need to place a high priority in graduate faculty compensation, to ensure successful implementation of ELT in graduate business programs.

The several interview transcripts in the data indicate a need for more software resources, support staff, and graduate faculty compensation. The implications for administrators are increased commitment, funding, and support of material and human resources for ELT, to increase its implementation in MBA programs.

The small amount of professional literature concerning the supply of resources specifically to support ELT concerns budgetary matters. Quinn and Shurville (2009)imply that a long view and attitude of commitment to funding could ensure consistent supply of resources to implement ELT. Dolan and Stevens (2006) contend that, "although some of the costs may be part of the university budget for special programs, the best source of funding is endowment from a donor." This in turn requires funding of resources for an endowment or investments office. Dolan and Stevens (2006) recommend that the program director guiding the process of coordinating experiential learning projects with students' course sequence in the curriculum "receive a one-course release per semester." This recommendation would allocate an additional human resource to implementation of ELT at a university.

Sub theme E: Recruiting Faculty for ELT, Desirable Background and Qualifications as Recommendation to Implement ELT

The interview transcripts in this study yield little data concerning recruitment of faculty members. Yet, the data available can give significant information to the findings in this study, regarding respondents' possible recommendations that administrators could consider to implement ELT in MBA programs. Several interview transcript excerpts touch on prior consulting and training experience as a desirable trait to be considered for recruiting faculty members who would tend to be successful in using ELT. A faculty member with background or qualities to adopt ELT would be part of a strategy to more fully implement ELT in MBA programs.

Organizational training and consulting experience. Faculty with prior training experiential learning techniques in organizations can help increase implementation of ELT as it scales up. Cullins recalls that,

> Interviewee Response : The most powerful experience I had learning to teach was doing training, and when I did the auto-plant project relatively early in my career, we had to train 4000 auto workers

Cullins's prior on-the-spot learning training 4000 auto workers was an experience he will remember for life, which he learned skills which he can transfer to training students with ELT in the graduate classroom.

Carpenter's background with consulting training can help students with experiential learning projects using client consulting.

> Interviewee response: My plan is I am going to be producing a consulting video that is going to give a step by step on how to do a consulting project. So, in that way it builds a concrete experience. So, I think one of the things that I want to do is I want to create a teaching video for the students to understand the process better.

Carpenter has plans to develop a training video for students in client consulting projects to improve students' performance. Carpenter's experience with clients in the business world can help train students and other faculty, fostering implementation of ELT in the FEMBA program.

Positive qualities for faculty using ELT. Interviewee transcript excerpts indicate respondents identified some desirable qualities for practitioners of ELT to have. And, these qualities can inform recruiting of graduate faculty or part of the training that the current faculty receives. Carpenter identifies a positive personality as a desirable quality for facilitating ELT in the classroom.

> Interviewee Response: I think that they have a positive personality. They are comfortable in front of students. They do not think they know everything. They are so humble that they realize that they can learn from the student…they have respect for the students…I think that the students are more of tendency to respond to an instructor like that…

Carpenter explains that a positive personality means that a faculty member is comfortable enough in the classroom that they can be open to learning new ideas and new content. A positive manner also can indicate that the professor is confident, which can transfer confidence and courage to try new ideas to students, who need it, for ELT adoption and implementation to occur. A positive faculty member therefore also tends to be an open faculty member who provides a more accepting atmosphere for students to try new ideas

and activities. Carpenter is also saying that faculty members who do not "know everything," or project that manner, are showing due respect to the students, which students appreciate and respond to the instructor positively. Professor Smith expresses the same ideas here.

> Interviewee Response: …I would pick his brain. See, you got to respect your students … Sometimes your students are going to know things you don't know … You say, "That was a remarkable insight. I've lived all these years…and I hadn't figured that out yet. Thank you for teaching me back."

Smith realizes that his FEMBA students from the business world may have some knowledge he does not know, and his receptivity to learning and sharing new ideas helps provide a positive environment for his classes. Smith is indicating that humility to learn from your students and consider new ideas and concepts is a desirable quality for faculty members who facilitate ELT. The data from Carpenter and Smith are an implication to administrators that administrators can recruit faculty members who are positive and open minded to help increase implementation of ELT in classrooms.

Another respondent, Baker, emphasized leadership as a desirable trait while recruiting faculty members in his institution's MBA program which uses ELT in the curriculum.

> Interviewee Response: We want professors to be we call the leader professor or professor leader, and so it is a professor who is supposed to make this happen, has to make it happen. If that person does not, we don't hire them again.

Administrator Baker says that he expects faculty members to be a "leader professor" who is proactive to lead and direct his or her students to use experiential learning projects in the courses. Baker also says that if a professor is not able to teach using ELT, that professor is not hired again. For him, recruiting would then begin anew, to aim to build a cohort, which can fully implement ELT. Baker speaks of motivation in the following transcript excerpt.

> Respondent Baker: If you don't motivate them, then this would go to your students also, you don't motivate them and the professors who motivate them and as an administrator you know how you want to motivate your students

Here, Baker is indicating that he highly values motivation as a qualification or skill of a faculty member, as he recognizes that faculty members who are not motivated to use ELT will result in students who are not motivated to use ELT either. The implication is that administrators who do not motivate faculty to use ELT will not increase implementation of ELT, and students who are not motivated (to use ELT) will not be as successful in FEMBA programs. According to Baker's two transcript excerpts presented above, part of the administrator interviewee's motivation of faculty use ELT includes not rehiring faculty who employ little use of ELT in their classrooms and courses. These practices indicate that strictness in recruiting and retaining faculty is necessary in Baker's view, to build a cohort of faculty who will implement ELT in FEMBA programs. The interviewee recommends proactive leadership as a desirable quality for recruiting faculty to motivate students to use ELT in graduate business programs.

Kosnik, et al. (2013) recommends that faculty members have consulting and coaching experience (p. 617, Table 1).Roche, et al. (2013), while defining client consulting (p. 418), implies a strong recommendation that a faculty member shall be "a seasoned consulting professional" to work on the client's premises with the students during the academic course.

Mandel and Noyes (2016) recommend graduate business institutions" recruit and retain experienced faculty and mentors" (p. 171). If there is a shortage of experienced faculty, the authors advise recruiting, training and hiring adjunct faculty. The authors report that their institution, Babson College, has ongoing experience training "successful entrepreneurs to be enthusiastic and engaged adjunct faculty in experiential entrepreneurship courses (p. 171). This is an example where the cohort practicing ELT has been maintained to ensure its use going forward, according to the authors of the study.

Sub-theme F: Curriculum Changes as Recommendation to Implement ELT

In one interview transcript excerpt, Brown identifies revision of curriculum as a step in processes that administrators can promulgate to increase implementation of ELT. Brown reports,

> Interviewee Response: … I just am forming that curriculum and strategy committee and I have my new learning goals we are going to try to embed and some of those are going to require experiential learning, particularly critical thinking and analytical thinking

Brown's transcript excerpt provides implications for administrators that delineation and embedding of student learning outcomes (SLOs) for FEMBA students into the curriculum can lead to increased implementation of ELT. When SLOs are defined, desirable learning goals such as critical thinking, analytical thinking, teamwork, negotiation, and other "soft" business skills can lead to ELT to lead to these goals in professors' courses.

"For a successful adoption," of experiential learning, Li et al., (2007) expounds that, "greater effort is required in curriculum development because the pedagogy is not hereditary" (p. 25). This is because the status quo is still the lecture-based approach, and a cohort dedicated to ELT may not remain stable in an organization. Integration and imbedding of experiential learning activities and projects in the curriculum can focus attention to ELT and help provide stability of the cohort. This practice will help contribute to implementation of ELT, and students will have more opportunities to transfer learning from the academic course to the workplace. To transfer learning from the workplace back to the academic course, Prince, Burns, Lu, and Winsor (2015) recommend "the re-design of the curriculum to include courses that provide greater latitude for students to introduce concepts and skills acquired in the workplace" (p. 219). The authors suggest that one way to support this innovation to the curriculum is that students "might be accorded higher grades for infusing workplace knowledge and skills" into their course work activities.

Sub-theme G: Marketing of ELT Models as Recommendation to Implement ELT

Experiential learning could be marketed in MBA programs for its ability to help graduate students learn and improve their practical workplace management skills. Professor Cullins suggests that,

> Interviewee Response : **…**to make active learning, the experiential learning a feature of the MBA program and that we would sell it, it would be part of the strategic positioning of the MBA program just like Harvard decades ago was positioned as the case MBA program

Cullins cites the case study methodology-marketing model that Harvard has been using. Harvard has strategically positioned itself well, and it is known as the case study school. Many other MBA programs have used case studies. This is an implication that if a college or university markets ELT and strategically positions itself well, implementation of ELT can increase in the academic marketplace. AMI, one of the three sites in this study, is an example of the client consulting experiential learning technique embedded in its curriculum, and it is designed to be employed in every academic course and marketed as such. The institution markets the client-consulting model to target fully employed graduate students for the program's provision of real business experiences.

In an example from the literature, the David Eccles School of Business Public Relations launched Foundry Utah in 2010, to market and provide to students a curriculum based on entrepreneurship. FoundryUtah's "first cohort of 85 participants created a total of 22 startup companies" with 18 still standing. The focus of the program is on the entrepreneur, not the company. The program currently gives hands on real life training

with 49 student entrepreneurs in 15 start-up companies (David Eccles School of Business, 2016). The main focus on entrepreneurship in one example, the FoundryUtah program, is a feature that enables it to be marketed as a cutting edge brand for MBA students.

Summary of Theme Four:

This theme explores how administrators and universities can encourage the use of ELT in graduate business schools. Many of the ideas discussed by administrators and faculty are that more mentoring and training needs to be provided to the faculty members, but some interviewee data indicates that use of ELT cannot be forced. Review of data shows that study participants recommend the benefits of ELT need to be emphasized in faculty meetings, and more senior faculty using ELT should be asked to mentor and otherwise train faculty members to encourage the use of experiential learning. In addition, the administrators should provide all kinds of resources in terms of software, teaching assistants, offices for coordination of processes, and support for grant applications to facilitate the use of experiential learning.

RQ5: "Do attitudes towards experiential learning differ by graduate business subfields such as, Quantitative Analysis, Financial Management, Marketing Management, and Organizational Development?"

Theme 5: Quantitative Business Disciplines Less Amenable to ELT Use, Than Qualitative Business Disciplines, However ELT Usage Possible in Any Business Field with Faculty Training

The researcher also sought to find answers to the research question, "Do attitudes towards experiential learning differ by graduate business subfields such as, Quantitative Analysis, Financial Management, Marketing Management, and Organizational Development?" at the three study sites. A theme emerged while reviewing the interview data, to indicate that the degree of use and implementation of experiential learning varies according to the nature of the class taught. The faculty who teach qualitative courses devoted to developing "soft skills" meaning social sciences including organizational behavior, strategic planning, leadership, and marketing, etc. use much more experiential learning than faculty teaching quantitative classes, such as accounting, quantitative analysis, finance, and economics, that are numbers oriented with a fair amount of methodological rigor. Some MBA instructors have used experiential learning techniques in their finance and economics classes. The professional literature also reflects attention to some use of ELT in the finance and economics disciplines. Finance and economics, though considered quantitative in nature, are social sciences and therefore receive more ELT use than other quantitative disciplines. Review and analysis of interview transcripts also reveal a variance between respondents in this study. Some respondents contend that the use of ELT in a classroom depends not on the discipline, but on the skills and inclinations of the faculty member.

Sub-theme A: Social Science Disciplines in MBAs Seem More Amenable to ELT

Based on the data available, a common view or belief emerged that the qualitative disciplines enjoyed greater use of ELT than quantitative disciplines. Most available data indicating this view focused on the tradition of lecture methodology. Moreover, a small incidence of data transcript excerpts included discussion of theory fluidity of the discipline field, as well as characteristics of quantitative and qualitative disciplines as determinants of ELT use. While few in number, these discussions bear some significance and will be discussed shortly later.

Qualitative disciplines, traditional lecturing, and course content. When the researcher noticed that Professor Jackson mentioned that faculty members of quantitative classes were less interested in experiential learning techniques, the researcher asked why.

> Interviewer Question: …so it seems that the classes like strategic planning, organizational behavior, HR, leadership, faculty use much more experiential learning in those classes than the ones you mentioned, accounting, quantitative analysis, IT, why do you think that is the case?
>
> Interviewee Response: I have one faculty member, not here, but at another institution, tell me he was in decision sciences, tell me that teaching methodology does not lend itself to his target....Because he, okay, (pauses and paraphrases)…He needs to control the content, he needs to ensure that they get these techniques and theories down the path…and he was not negative about it, it was just "this does not work in my field."

Jackson is reporting in this transcript excerpt that a graduate faculty member with a background in traditional lecture teaching methodology believes he or she needs to control coverage of content and theories of his or her quantitative discipline field,

decision sciences. Thompson also considers the same idea as Jackson, with a different angle.

> Interviewee Response: …in general, that quantitative faculty as a rule,…tend to be more traditional in their approach to teaching because they come to the classroom with the idea that Quantitative is very tough. I need to spend time lecturing and reemphasizing points

Thompson's angle on the topic is that in her experience observing faculty members as an administrator, professors consider quantitative subjects to be close to hard sciences that need points or main content reemphasized or covered and reviewed. Faculty members with backgrounds in traditional lecture methodology have enough difficulty adjusting to experiential learning methodology, as discussed earlier in this chapter. Such professors will tend to view quantitative disciplines as harder to adapt to ELT, due to their belief that the fixed course content, by tradition, must be covered. As such, professors used to lecture methodology may not seek to use ELT, especially in quantitative disciplines. Thompson states that,

> Interviewee Response: …a lot of times faculty who teach in quantitative field have not really thought through how they can make their class…more real for the students.

Thompson observes that many professors in quantitative courses who teach by imparting hard content in lectures do not even consider how to transfer the information and theories into real applications, which students can understand. Harris says this situation in

quantitative subjects is not the graduate professors' fault; they have to be taught. That is her implication.

> Interviewee Response: Particularly…not to throw them under the bus, it is their training, we have a department in economics…sometimes when they were very junior faculty teaching, they are turned out of a doctorate program and they are very traditional in teaching about widgets and this does not go over well with MBAs and especially fully-employed MBAs, who are real about the real world

Harris is also saying that professors in traditional backgrounds in teaching quantitative subjects with lecture methodology sometimes do not succeed in FEMBA programs that favor the use of ELT to provide real world learning experiences to graduate students.

Fluidity of theories in academic disciplines as determinant of ELT use. Professor Jack Lintott throws some additional light into why courses in organizational behavior, strategic planning, leadership, and marketing, etc. tend to use much more experiential learning techniques than quantitative courses. He compares finance, a mathematical and business science, with leadership, which is usually aligned closely with social science.

> Interview Question: Now, you shared you background in consulting and your PhD in Organizational Behavior and Finance and then you have done teaching in both Organizational Behavior, Leadership and Finance. Do you see any difference in the teaching approach of these two areas…?

> Interviewee Response: Time value of money has been in existence as a topic in finance that has to be taught to understand finance that has not changed in 50 years whereas something in the leadership area, there are new things going on every five years.

Professor Lintott is indicating that concepts and theory in finance have not changed in half a century. In pure mathematics, the theories have not changed for hundreds of years. Well-established theories are rarely tweaked, and in quantitative disciplines, theories or their formulae are rarely tweaked or experimented with in instructional courses. Meanwhile, theories of leadership and other MBA disciplines aligned with the social sciences have changed much more frequently; theories of leadership have even have become the latest news. The increased fluidity of theories supporting these disciplines allows knowledge and learning to be more flexible, as the theories themselves are tested, tweaked or challenged with alternative hypotheses in classrooms as well as the research laboratory. Hence, the disciplines involved with evolving theories appear to allow a better environment for the development and use of experiential learning techniques. Professor Lintott indicates how the bridge between theory and practice can more easily be bridged in the classroom with business disciplines in the social sciences.

> Interviewee Response: In anything having to do with Management, Leadership, Org Behavior, there is often a development of a theoretical groundwork and that theory brings us up to where is that topic in today's environment in academia…experiential learning taps into basically how can that theory be applied.

Management, Leadership, and Organizational Behavior courses are social sciences wherein theories began developing within the last century, relatively recently, and new theories are still being developed today. New theories in these social sciences are being tested and applied in current affairs, and therefore, students can more readily test, experience, and apply fluid theories in the MBA classroom.

Two examples of characteristics of qualitative and quantitative disciplines as determinants of ELT use. In the two following interview transcript excerpts, administrator Thompson briefly explains characteristics of qualitative and quantitative disciplines that can affect use of ELT.

> Interview Question: So what would be an example of class which lends itself to experiential learning and what would be an example of a class which does not lend itself to experiential learning?
>
> Interviewee Response: …classes where you can replicate or easily do experiential… is any kind of management class where you can identify client and have the students work with the client. So, we will see some types of experiences in marketing classes…because you can find the …you can put together a…marketing plan…

Thompson notes that client consulting can be utilized in management and marketing classes, as these courses involve considering and teaching skills of fluid communication between the stake-holders in the business world. Students can apply the latest management or marketing theories to their consulting with clients, as these theories are flexible. Thompson cited the real life experiences of students consulting clients in actual business enterprises, which reflect the goals of management, and marketing courses in the FEMBA.

Thompson then gives an example of a course, which she considers not amenable to the use of ELT. Thompson explains why.

> Interviewee Response: …The classes that do not quite lend themselves to it would be more quantitative classes like finance, because the students spend a lot of time calculating things and there is not really same opportunity to go out into industry

> and practice finance, because the possibility for error…could be critical and something that you can't fix

Thompson is noting that with finance courses, the characteristics of this discipline is that it may not even be advisable to have students experiment and experience financial calculations in a real business enterprise, due to the risk of mathematical or financial error to the company's balance sheet. The current theory of finance, for example, is more fixed, and basic theories, principles, facts and formulae have to be mastered, before students can apply and practice financial calculations in actual business enterprises. In qualitative courses, proficiency is required also, but desired "soft" skills, such as communication, negotiation, teamwork, and strategic analysis can more easily be experienced and learned through experiential learning activities and projects.

The researcher found not much academic literature is readily available, at this time, which compares attitudes towards suitability of ELT for qualitative versus quantitative business subfields. There is more literature that reports specific applications of experiential learning projects to qualitative business subfields, such as marketing or consumer behavior. In one example, Klink and Athaide (2004) described a case of experiential service learning integrated into marketing courses. The project involved students in developing a marketing plan for a non-profit organization. Kosnik et al. (2013) reports on the use of consulting projects in a sports management course and a strategic management course. Civi and Persinger (2011) describe a semester long experiential activity for a marketing management course, where student teams competed to produce a winning marketing plan for an assigned client, the university main cafeteria,

which had image issues (pp. 51, 54). Pittaway and Cope (2007) describes experiential learning characterized by the authors as simulation in a course in new venture planning in the U.K., in which students are experientially involved with ambiguity and uncertainty in a work-based context with communal group work. Another article (Li, et al., 2007) describes adaption of the commercial software, Marketplace, which would be suitable for some qualitative MBA subfields, such as marketing or negotiation. Students were asked to develop quarterly reports analyzing sales, market demand and competition, prepare a business plan, negotiate for equity investment, and form strategic alliances to develop new products (p. 27). Notably, the project which Li et al. (2007) described is characterized as a simulation course for an MBA program, not as a specific business subfield, but it appears to reflect use in qualitative business subfields.

Sub-theme B: Some Use of ELT in Finance and Economics in MBA Programs

The theme just discussed considered the differences between qualitative and quantitative disciplines from the available date, which tend to affect use of ELT in the classroom differently. This following theme considers a variant view that ELT can be used in both qualitative and quantitative business disciplines in some form, due to faculty experience, learning curve, or capabilities. Professor Lintott, for example, has observed in his experience that ELT can be used in a finance course.

> Interviewee Response: …The most interesting part for me is that over time I have increased the level of sophistication of a particular finance topic, so I originally may have only had 10 briefcases on 10 topics. I am now up to about 25 briefcases

In this transcript excerpt, Lintott is discussing his use of briefcases or "toolboxes" for solving finance problems, which have applications to realistic companies that are presented as case studies. Lintott in another excerpt cites his use of group work in his graduate finance classes to review the problem solving briefcases.

> Interviewee Response: …graduate students often did it as groups, self-selected, and then we physically would go over the issues and go over the problem set. What it provided me as a faculty was immediate feedback, did the students understand the entire issue

Lintott also uses group work in a non-threatening environment to obtain real-time feedback to check whether students understand the finance problem solving issues, as well as the correct number. Group work and real-time feedback also gives the instructor an opportunity for debriefing discussions to help insure the students understand transfer to realistic practical applications.

In the next two transcript transcripts from the data, Lintott expresses his concern with practical application of his classroom activities using experiential learning activities.

> Interviewee Response: …the student was sitting in the back of the room, raised her hand, and said stop …I want you to explain in words what that formula means because all I see are numbers and letters up on the board

> Interviewee Response: No, it is good that you produce the correct number, but if you do not do something with that number, it is pretty pointless and the exercises is fruitless.

Lintott's first transcript excerpt recalls when a student asked him to explain in words the meaning of a formula in a quantitative course. Lintott was referring an early experience

in his career when he would only write numbers and letter variables in formulae on the board, as per traditional teaching delivery in quantitative disciplines. In the second transcript excerpt, Lintott states that the custom of expecting correct answers only, as has been customary in quantitative subjects, has little value without practical application. Lintott's learning curve and concern with practical application indicates that ELT can adapted and used in quantitative courses.

Thompson indicates that experiential learning can be used in both qualitative and quantitative course, but may take different forms.

> Interviewee Response: I think the difference is how experiential learning is defined. In Quantitative, there is a tendency to view experiential learning as learning how to use a tool or software effectively. I think in the soft skills like marketing and OD, it means actually working with people and creating a product and getting evaluated on that product

Thompson is saying that while qualitative disciplines such as marketing and organizational develop involve students with people and business clients, for example, quantitative disciplines using experiential learning define it as using tools or software, such as MS Excel, effectively. The tools, software, or problem solving "toolbox" would involve some practical application, much as Lintott has described. The indication is that both qualitative and quantitative disciplines can involve some form of experiential learning.

The researcher has found few if any articles on business subfields. There are articles extant in the literature that indicate the use of experiential learning in some quantitative disciplines, such as economics and accounting, which are social sciences

related to business and finance. Much of this literature reported on undergraduate students. Herz and Merz (1998) concludes that experiential learning with simulation in economics courses was more effective in exposing students to all the stages of the Kolb learning cycle than traditional teaching methods. Dolan and Stevens (2006) report an expanded program at University of Richmond, which features economics analysis and forecasting activities for senior undergraduate economics students. The students also provided analysis for finance students at the university, and the authors discuss SMIFS (student managed investment funds).

In the accounting field, McCarthy (2010) notes that according to Kolb and Kolb (2005), 15 studies in the literature were preformed between 1985 and 1999, and seven studies were performed in the previous five years. McCarthy gives an overview of literature on the use of ELT in accounting (p. 134). Some studies reviewed considered learning style preferences for accounting students or focused on changes in learning preferences over students' accounting careers. Other literature, according to McCarthy (2010) focused on the use of ELT to "design instruction in accounting and studying relationships between learning style and performance in accounting courses (Kolb &Kolb, 2005)." One notable recent article (Fuglister, Stegmoyer, and Castrigano, 2010) discusses the use of experiential learning cases for accounting courses, which involve students using current data of real companies, as students employ critical thinking to analyze whether their interpretation of GAAP standards and decisions are ethical.

Andrews (2007) discusses the use of ELT as service learning in accounting courses. It is of note, however, that in a review of literature on service learning (pp. 22-

23), the Andrews observed that most such literature were not course based, but involved extra-curricular work that could be of value to the accounting students (pp. 22-23).

Sub-theme C: Use of ELT in Qualitative or Quantitative Disciplines by Any Proficient Faculty Member

The following two transcript excerpts from Administrators Baker and Harris respectively seem to place emphasis for proficient faculty members to use ELT in either qualitative or quantitative disciplines on the capability of the professor.

> Interview Question: …a person who teaches leadership or organizational behavior, would he or she would have more experiential stuff in the class than the person who is teaching quantitative analysis, generally speaking?
>
> Interviewee Response: Generally speaking, maybe, but it is still so, you know it is really an individual, how they approach to this thing.
>
> Interviewee Response: I don't know if I could generalize that much. Certainly, I used economics as an example because we did have a few things, but we also have people in that department who did it very well and who were very good at it. So, I think in part it is a faculty issue.

Baker seems to think that quantitative classes can be taught using experiential learning. It does not depend on the kind of class but on the skills of the professor. Harris has seen by experience as an administrator that experiential learning was used successfully in one economics class but not in the other instance of the same course, and Harris identifies it as a faculty issue. The implication is not clear whether lack of capability or willingness to use ELT or lack of faculty training was the reason.

Administrator Thompson believes quantitative classes can include the use of ELT with training and preparation. The following transcript excerpt by Thompson indicates

her view that ELT can be used in quantitative disciplines by any proficient faculty with training.

> Interviewee Response: …they need to say okay faculty, we are going to teach you what this means…This is how you can do it in your Quantitative class, in your Marketing class. We are going to have someone give you examples of how this works.

Thompson believes training can help professors use ELT with MBA courses, even in quantitative disciplines, by providing examples from professors who have successfully used ELT in their classrooms and courses. Support, including training of graduate faculty, can reconcile the varying views of implementation of ELT in qualitative and quantitative disciplines in FEMBA programs.

Summary of Theme 5:

Most of the faculty teaching quantitative classes felt that it is difficult to use ELT in these classes, because most of the time is spent covering the content so that the students can grasp the concepts and formulae, etc. Therefore, there is very little time left for the use of experiential learning. All the administrators interviewed understood the above limitation, but felt that the faculty can use ELT in the classrooms with proper planning.

Curriculum & Syllabus Analysis and Class Observation Analysis

Observation and analysis of syllabi and class observations took place in addition to the study interviews. These additional data sources allowed the researcher to observe part of the curriculum and gauge the extent of ELT use at each study site.

Syllabi

The researcher reviewed syllabi of the three study sites for extent of inclusion of ELT in the curriculum, through a review of the syllabi. The analysis of the syllabi at the three institutions provided the following information:

Agricultural State University (ASU). Each syllabus outline calls for the use of case studies, some specifically mentioning Harvard Business School (HBS) cases. The role of team-work and interpersonal skills is emphasized in each syllabus. The quantitative course primarily uses cases as a experiential learning technique. The strategy course uses simulation game(s) as stated in the syllabus.

Valley State University (VSU). The analysis of Valley State University shows that its FEMBA program uses discussions and Harvard Business School (HBS) cases in most of its courses. This includes one course in which students write a case study based on the issues/problems of a real company, and a group of students then analyze this case study. A few courses use simulations and field studies as ELT.

Advanced Management Institute (AMI). AMI uses primarily field studies in each course. The groups of 3-5 students are assigned a company. The students visit the company and gather all the information regarding the issues/problems the company wants help in solving. For the rest of the term, the students work to solve these issues by applying the knowledge they are learning in the course/program. The client is required to attend the last session of the class to listen to the students' presentation and is the client is provided with a written copy of the report. The client's evaluation is considered in assigning the grade for the group.

Class Observations

The researcher observed one class in each of three institutions studied. The researcher surveyed the extent of use and techniques of experiential learning used in each classroom.

Agricultural State University (ASU). The observation of the Strategic Management class was made at ASU on January 19, 2016 from 6 PM to 7:15 PM. The instructor was facilitating a simulation game in this FEMBA class. The class had already been divided into groups during the first session. In this simulation game, students form management teams and make decisions about pricing, marketing, distribution, finance, human resources, and R&D. Students also analyze financial data and accounting data. There was a fair deal of interaction among the students in each group and occasional questions from the groups to the instructor. The instructor was successful in creating a positive environment, and at the same time, she communicated the goals of the simulation game and her expectations from each group. Since it was early in the semester, students seemed to be somewhat fearful and stressed about the simulation game and their expected performance.

Valley State University (VSU). The observation at VSU was made on March 8, 2016 at 7 PM to 8:15 PM. The topic of the class was Strategic Management. The instructor started the class by explaining the productivity of groups and how groups can become dysfunctional. She also explained the concept of how groups should start with a team charter that commits the students to some specific rules for the effective functioning of the group. The charter includes rules about the equal participation from each member and what to do if a student is not pulling his or her weight towards the project completion. There was an extensive discussion on the case related to South West

Airlines. The class had already been divided into groups and there was a very lively discussion on the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats (SWOT). The instructor did an excellent job encouraging participation from each student and made insightful comments throughout the class. The instructor encouraged student groups to compete with one and another. Throughout the discussion, other current companies, such as Amazon, were used as examples to elaborate concepts like customer service and logistics.

Advanced Management Institute (AMI). The class observation of Advanced Management Institute was made on December 2, 2015 from 5 PM-9 PM. The topic discussed was leadership. The instructor started the class by lecturing on leadership, motivation and group dynamics that included excellent examples. There was a lively discussion during his lecture. This was followed by a Skype speaker from an Ivy League University. The speaker talked about Interpersonal and Group dynamics in the context of management. This was a great interactive presentation. It was followed by students' presentations on pre-assigned topics. The last element of this class involved discussion among student groups who were working on consulting projects with live companies. The discussion among students centered on the problems facing these companies and the potential strategies that may be utilized to solve them. Since the students are fully employed adults, they also brought their own experience and problem solving skills into this discussion.

This part of the observation was deemed as the best example of experiential learning by the researcher, mainly because the students were in the process of solving the problems faced by a real company. This methodology gave students the opportunity to

employ their new learned knowledge in the classroom to solve the problems of a live client.

The data collected by analyzing the syllabi and conducting observations corroborated with the findings of the administrator and faculty interviews, showing that there is varying use of experiential learning techniques in these three institutions. However, the use of experiential learning observed is neither systematic, nor does it follow the four steps of Kolb's cycle in terms of concrete experience, reflection, conceptualization, and active experimentation.

According to Andrews, "studies regarding integration of service learning into MBAs are not readily available in business literature" (2007, p. 23, Table 3).While Andrews lists several sources regarding single experiential service learning projects at the masters level, those studies do not survey the diffusion of various experiential learning techniques in a sample of MBA programs. The following study does so, however, in a review of non-profit or public administration related graduate programs, and its findings reflect similarly with the data findings that the researcher of this study obtained from the review of syllabi and class observations at the three FEMBA program study sites. In a survey of experiential education listed on master's degree websites, Carpenter (2014) noted the following categories: "capstone, internship, experiential learning, and fieldwork" (p. 123). Carpenter reported that, "experiential education approaches were listed in 178 of the 405 course syllabi" (p. 25), and evidence of experiential education ranged from 12 to 100 percent for 49 graduate programs reviewed. The most commonly mentioned form of experiential learning that the study found (p. 133) was "a project within a course." Hence, Carpenter found that the experiential learning is primarily

implemented at the course level (p. 121). The author also considered the range of experiential learning, from interviewing a client, to presenting a report, to working with the client. Notably, Carter's review of the master degree course syllabi (2016) revealed low levels of interactions between students and community organizations in service learning (p. 133). This result reflects the researcher's review of syllabi and class observation data at the three study sites with FEMBA programs.

Summary of Chapter Four

The interpretation and findings of the data aimed to answer the five research questions in this study, in parallel with the five main themes discussed. This chapter has endeavored to analyze the data toward outcomes that would indicate whether ELT is beneficial for FEMBA students, and indicate as well, the impediments and enablers of adoption and full implementation of ELT in graduate business programs and course disciplines.

The first theme reviewed and discussed interview transcript excerpt evidence which indicate that the use of ELT benefits FEMBA students in terms of motivation, engagement, practical application, retention of learning, and lifelong learning. The interviewees also discussed experiential learning techniques, which they used in their practice, with some indication of their efficacy for learning of fully employed graduate business students. The second theme reviewed interviewee data, which indicated that the three administrators interviewed for this study had fair to high expectations for faculty members to use ELT, while many interviewees indicated lower interest and use of ELT by administrators in other business departments or academic institutions. Some tension exists between Administrators expectations and faculty members' expectations. This

tension exists because in many cases, the administrators have high expectations from faculty to use ELT without providing them enough training, but at the same time assume that they would know instinctively to use ELT in the classroom. In some cases, the administrators do not insist on ELT, when they assert that the faculty members are responsible for choosing their teaching methodology, because of the academic freedom provided to them. This problem is compounded by the fact that many faculty are not provided with much orientation about teaching at the beginning stages when they are hired and may not even aware of the ELT. This tension can be minimized by communication, motivation, orientation, and training of the faculty regarding the proper use of ELT. In the third theme, discussion and interpretation of the data surveyed the barriers to adoption or full implementation of ELT, which interviewees identified in this study. The fourth theme offered suggestions or recommendations of best practices or ideas for administrators to encourage faculty members to implement ELT in their courses and classrooms. The fifth theme briefly reviewed available interviewee data discussing and comparing ELT between qualitative and quantitative business disciplines. Interpretation and synthesis of interviewee data indicated that while ELT is more widely adopted and used with qualitative course subjects, ELT could be used regardless of the qualitative or quantitative nature of a course, dependent on the abilities, receptivity, and training of the faculty member.

Chapter 5: Discussion, Recommendations, and Conclusions

Conceptual Framework of this Qualitative Study, Study's Contribution to the Field

This study was conducted from the perspectives of the faculty about their perceptions, motivation, and perceived barriers about using experiential learning. The following five RQs were explored.

1. What are the perceptions of the graduate faculty members and administrators regarding the use of experiential learning methodology in the fully employed MBA (FEMBA) programs at Advanced Management Institute (AMI), Agricultural State University (ASU) and Valley State University (VSU)?
2. What are the current expectations that administrators have of the graduate faculty in regards to their implementation of experiential learning in their own teaching practice?
3. What are barriers, if any that may prevent graduate faculty from adopting experiential learning methodology?
4. How can administrators motivate graduate faculty members at various levels of proficiency in their implementation of experiential learning?
5. Do attitudes towards experiential learning differ by graduate business subfields such as, Quantitative Analysis, Financial Management, Marketing Management, and Organizational Development?

There is evidence which suggests that the "interactive pedagogical methods of experiential learning" enable learners to "develop higher order skills beyond the specific, academic content of the module" (Piercy, 2012), which is called for graduate business

students in the 21st century business world. However, the literature is practically devoid of studies of graduate education that consider the extent of ELT use by faculty and in business programs as the primary source of consideration.

Kuh (2008) has observed that active learning or ELT has not been implemented systematically, and the colleges and universities that employ ELT only use it in a few business departments or programs. Templeton, et al. (2012) reported 16 out of 107 collegiate institutions required experiential internships in some major business programs (p. 30), while Updyke and Sander (2005) also reported low diffusion of ELT in AACSB academic business schools. The Association of American Colleges and Universities notes that four in five employers in a study "would like colleges and universities to place more emphasis on students' ability to apply their knowledge to real world settings by providing experiential learning experiences" (Hart, 2013). This stated desire and concern of industry suggests that business schools may well not be gearing their curricula and pedagogy to a significant extent to develop students' practical skills for the workplace. Kosnik et al. (2013) states that business schools frequently face criticism for having few practical learning opportunities (p. 213). "Much criticism has been aimed at business schools for lack of relevance in management education," as stated by Updyke and Sanders (2005), and "lack of experiential learning has been at the top of the list of deficiencies" (p. 118). Likewise, Johnson (2013) asserts, "Experiential learning needs to be encouraged in graduate programs" (p. 150).

Many articles in the professional literature call for implementation of experiential learning. Covington (2015) concurs, stating that "experiential learning needs to become the rule of thumb for MBA programs" (p.167). Quinn and Shurville (2009) contend that,

“assessment of experiential learning is at the tipping point where it needs to transition from the enthusiasts towards the mainstream of academics.” What Quinn appears to say is that ELT shall be regarded not only by its advance adopters, but throughout institutions of higher education, as the norm. The increasing practice of assessing ELT, which Quinn and Shurville mentions, indicates that ELT is being taken more seriously, due to its ability to provide students skills and attributes needed as business managers, executives and entrepreneurs.

Covington (2015) characterizes ELT as “an avenue for students to gain professional experience, networking opportunities, building of self-confidence through practical application, and future marketability” (p. 167). The industry calls for greater use (and implementation) of ELT in MBA programs, in order that MBA students can have opportunities to experience, develop, and apply skills in their workplace or businesses.

Therefore, this study contributes to the literature in bringing focus and attention to the perspectives, views, and recommendations about experiential learning techniques of nine faculty members and three administrators in three FEMBA programs. The research and conclusions presents direct recommendations and action plans to increase ELT use and implementation at the three institutions studied. Also, this study can inform, in a diffused way, faculty and administrators of business schools in higher education institutions seeking to learn about or increase use and implementation of ELT in their courses or programs.

The researcher conducted and recorded the interviews, which were designed to answer the research questions through a series of questions and open-ended discussion within the context of semi-structured interviews. The interview recordings were

transcribed, and the researcher analyzed and coded the interview data thematically, as well as analyzing data from syllabi and class observations at the three study sites. The sources of data were interpreted and synthesized to arrive at findings and then to reach conclusions for recommendations and action plans.

Positive Perceptions of ELT

Faculty and administrator interviewees perceive experiential learning very positively. They indicate that it is much more impactful than lecture methodology, as it enhances critical and analytical thinking, and is a very powerful technique for students to relate the content to the world, their lives, and their employment. In addition, ELT builds students' engagement, self- assurance, and their overall success (Smith, 2005). Students start to take charge or ownership of their own learning, leading to life-long learning.

However, one of the key areas of this finding was that the students go through a period of stress and fear during the initial stages when these experiential learning techniques are first introduced. Experienced faculty introduces these techniques slowly, by articulating the benefits of ELT, proving to the students why and how these techniques work, and then building trust among team members within the class. The effective use of experiential learning, according to study interviewee data, leads to great satisfaction and enjoyment among both faculty and students. The faculty interviewees with years of experience used more ELT as they progressed in their teaching careers.

Faculty in the beginning stages of learning ELT, whether they are new faculty or have used lecture approach all along during their teaching years, as well as students, also go through a period of stress and fear as they try to adjust to this new way of pedagogy

and early socialization process (Bonwell and Eison, 1991b, p. 57). This may happen, because of the fear of risk and failure using this approach in the classroom (pp. 62-64).

Overall, the students (based on the literature search), faculty and administrators (based on data collection in this research) have a very strong preference for ELT, because of the engagement and practical skills that students learn related to their careers. Students engaged in experiential learning activities reported higher satisfaction and better professional skills for their careers, according to Mingun (2013, p. 655). However, based on further probing, analysis of the syllabi and class observations, it is obvious that not all the steps (Kolb, 1984) of the Kolb cycle (concrete experience, reflection, conceptualization, and active experimentation) are utilized in the experiential learning activities. The simple explanation of these steps is 1) experience, 2) reviewing or careful consideration of the experience, 3) thinking and drawing conclusions, and 4) acting and practicing again. This model of experiential learning was considered to be the backbone of this research. This is an integrated process of learning, where each step leads into next and it is critical that all four steps are followed, and one can enter into cycle at any of the four steps described above.

Exposure of students to all four of the Kolb cycle and multiple iterations of Kolb cycle, if available in curricular design and practice of experiential learning projects can aid in practical skill and learning transfer from the classroom to the workplace. Transfer of learning from workplace back to the classroom, can enable the workplace experiential activities to better relate to the objectives of the academic courses. This is possible and desirable in FEMBA programs. With multiple Kolb experiential learning cycles, a

positive “transfer environment”(Prince, et al., 2015, p. 219) can strengthen the efficacy and academic value of an MBA, as well as practical experiences gained.

The administrators of all the three institutions believed that the ELTs are very beneficial for FEMBA programs; however, the faculty believed that the administrators play a minimal role, if any, in promoting the use of ELT at these institutions. However, both faculty and administrators provided many recommendations that will be discussed later in this chapter.

The Role of Trust and Mentorship in ELT

Building trust and framing the activities become very important aspects to make sure that ELT succeeds in the classroom setting. Trust here refers to trust among students and trust between students and the faculty member teaching the class. Additionally, building trust between the faculty member and the administrator is equally important, as there is always a chance that the trial of ELT with students might not succeed. Bonwell and Eison (1991b) recommend that, “faculty must feel that it is all right to try a new strategy, even if first attempts are less than satisfactory” (p. 74). It can take a few semester or quarter terms up to a few years for the faculty member to become an effective facilitator in implementing experiential learning techniques (Li, et al., 2007, p. 25). In this respect, the role of senior faculty, experienced in ELT, becomes critical (Mandel and Noyes, 2016, p. 171).

Experienced faculty can be very effective mentors to the faculty members learning these techniques for the first time. Study interview transcripts indicated some faculty members utilizing high-quality ELT practices were in fact mentored by other capable faculty members or were trained in the industry to use ELT. On the other hand,

many of the faculty members interviewed in this study who did not embrace an ELT framework early in their teaching practice felt as though they were thrown in to the fire at the initial stage of their teaching career. Mentors work with faculty in providing new faculty with new ideas about teaching and curriculum (Huling and Resta, 2001). Mentoring of new faculty hires is "designed to retain good teachers," according to Ganser (1997),"by providing them with psychological support and instructional assistance" Mentoring can also provide teaching ideas to the mentor, as mentoring promotes reflection and self analysis of their own work (p. 5), as well as working with the new faculty hire to discuss various ways for both to improve each other's craft with ELT. This helps improve the use of ELT for the mentor teacher, as well as for the new faculty hire. Hence, mentorship can well increase implementation of ELT in the academic program.

Framing and debriefing as crucial components of ELT. The study interviewees found framing and debriefing are other critical elements of effective use of ELT. Framing is the process in which the facilitator makes clear the purpose of the learning activity. Framing provides the context for learning. When framing and reframing is done effectively, students will know what the objectives of experiential learning exercises are and will be more focused to learn the skills. Effective framing is necessary at the onset of experiential learning exercises. Debriefing, if done effectively, will summarize how the activity connects with concepts and applications in the business setting. Debriefing can be done in question answer format or the facilitator can divide the class in pairs or small groups and give them time to reflect on the experiential activity before the group shares it with the larger group.

Barriers to ELT Implementation

Faculty and administrators perceive many barriers in implementing ELT in the FEMBA programs. One of the main barriers is that most of the faculty were themselves taught using the traditional lecture methodology. Many began their careers in the classroom without training in ELT or any other methodology; they were "thrown into the fire" on day one. Other barriers include lack of training, time, possible loss of control, pressure to cover the content, etc.

Overall ELT Findings

Many ideas were expressed by the administrators and the faculty to help ease the implementation of experiential learning techniques in the FEMBA programs, including more mentoring and training, bringing in experts from inside and outside of their institutions to share their expertise, providing resources to the faculty, like student assistants and simulation software when requested, and proper risk insurance for the students who get involved in field studies. Based on the feedback received from the administrators and faculty, the qualitative classes use more ELT than the quantitative classes, because faculty teaching quantitative classes believe that they are obligated to cover the content, and most of the time during the semester is spent doing so. However, there was a counter argument by some faculty members, who are effectively using ELT in quantitative classes and believe that with proper advanced planning of lessons, ELT can be implemented in quantitative classes.

The conclusion arrived in this study is that faculty and administrators perceived ELT positively; however, there are barriers in implementing ELT. The researcher also discovered many recommendations by faculty and administrator interviewees, which if

implemented, can enhance the use of ELT in the FEMBA programs. These recommendations will be discussed later in this chapter

Study's Limitations, Generalizability of the Findings

Since this is a qualitative study, generalizability of its findings is very limited, even considering that the observations and suggestions of study respondents are plausible. Because of the fact that only a limited number of administrators and faculty were interviewed, it is extremely difficult to generalize the findings of the study conducted at three university FEMBA programs to all FEMBA programs across the state of California or even in the U.S. Larger quantitative studies afford opportunities to collect large data sets that can be generalized across many university contexts while smaller qualitative studies have relevance in uncovering more subtle, nuanced, behaviors, perceptions, and attitudes that may exist within very specific research contexts. The participants were purposefully selected by the help of graduate directors or deans at these institutions offering FEMBA programs and thus were not chosen on a random basis. Thus, the results cannot be generalized in other situations or other programs. The limitations of this study also include 1) small sample size and 2) self-reported data. The small size required detailed interviews, observations, and analysis of the syllabi. All this required a considerable investment of time and effort in coordination, conducting interviews, and analyzing of the data. Since, this was a qualitative study, the interpretation by other researchers might differ. When the data is self-reported, at times, people do not have the ability to recall all the information relevant to the question asked or may decide to ignore other relevant information (Paulhus and Vazire, 2007, p 232).

However, the study interviewee data findings for administrators to increase use and implementation of ELT can be applied directly to the three study sites of FEMBA programs. The views and suggestions of study interviewees and the research findings reviewed in this study can form a background for further consideration and research on ELT implementation to apply to graduate business programs nationwide.

Implications for Educational Policy and Recommendations for Specific Action Planning, Based on Review of Findings

There are specific implications that the all three institutions in this study can adapt, because the administrators and faculty showed interest in further benefitting from ELT. ASU can benefit by using ELT in more classes. ASU could imbed experiential learning in its curriculum, to support its mission statement, which calls for the use of experiential learning. When the curriculum is revised or redesigned to include ELT, professors still have to be encouraged by administrators to engage in experiential learning in the classroom. According to one of the professors at ASU, only 15% of the faculty uses experiential learning.

From the interview data, it seems there is much more use of ELT in VSU and AMI. (The use of ELT in AMI is mandatory). However, the interview transcript data revealed that not all four steps of Kolb's cycle are covered in implementing ELT, as has been discussed. It can be suggested that these schools train their faculty to use all four steps of experiential learning. The following sections present recommendations for specific actions that can be specifically applied to the three different FEMBA programs where this research study was conducted:

More Attention to Be Placed Communicating Benefits of ELT in Faculty Meetings

The literature search conducted states that students and administrators find that ELT is very beneficial for students in learning new skills, for their present and future carriers. The research also asserted that the businesses and industries that hire the FEMBA graduates would also like to see the universities utilize experiential learning methodology. The additional research conducted with the faculty and administrators came to the same conclusion. However, in spite of the overwhelming agreement regarding the benefits of ELT, very few faculty members in the FEMBA programs use ELT. Therefore, it will be highly recommended that all the three institutions promote the use of experiential learning in the faculty meetings. This communication has to start with Academic Senates, Deans' and Administrators' meetings with the faculty. The administrators need to communicate clearly about their expectations of the use of ELT in the FEMBA classes.

The faculty need to be communicated that at times, the use of ELT might not lead to the desired results, and they need to be assured that there would not be any negative consequences for them if that happens. This failure would be seen without risk to their employment standing, during early use, to avoid discouraging the use of these new teaching techniques, according to Bonwell and Eison (1991b, pp. 62-64). In other words, the administrators need to create a non-threatening environment for faculty for them to become comfortable in using ELT.

Students to Be Trained to Deal with the Fear and Stress Related to ELT

The researcher discovered that students go through a period of fear and stress during the initial phase of learning ELT. This might be due to the fact that students have

been used to the lecture approach and have become comfortable with that methodology. Now, they have to learn a new methodology that involves much more analytical, critical thinking, and all the issues involved with learning group dynamics. These problems might stem from weak leadership, lack of trust, groupthink, free riding, or one member dominating all the time etc. The students need to be taught how to deal with these issues, so that no psychological damage occurs in the initial stages of ELT.

Mentorship Role of Senior Faculty Using ELT to Be Enhanced (Peer-to-peer Mentorship)

The data collected from faculty indicates that the senior faculty members play a very critical role in motivating and training new faculty hires to use ELT. The senior faculty mentors share their experience and guide the new faculty member hires according to their own insight gained on specific experiential earning techniques. Some faculty interviewed credited other faculty mentors for recommending and teaching them various techniques of experiential learning, i.e., case studies, simulations, or other experiential learning techniques. In all these cases, the new faculty felt that they were supported in the initial period of the use of new ELT, and they could draw on the senior faculty's experience.

The role of mentoring in the literature is documented in Mandel and Noyes (2016, p. 171), where experienced faculty have successfully taught the new faculty hires experiential learning pedagogical techniques. Mentoring can also provide ideas for teaching ideas to the mentor, as mentoring promotes reflection and self analysis of their own work (p. 5), as well as working together with the new faculty hire to discuss various ways for both to improve each other's craft with ELT, when done in a collegial spirit of

trust. This can help improve the use of ELT for the mentor teacher as for the new faculty hire, and this can increase implementation of ELT in the academic program. Ganger (1997) states that, "No longer are stand alone, quick fix workshops viewed as adequate" (p. 3). The positive outcome of mentoring depends on the resources allocated to it, in terms of released time for the mentoring activities (p. 8) and workshop training for the mentors, themselves.

Faculty Using ELT in their Practice to Be Encouraged to Publish Articles in Their Field

Many of the research institutions and teaching institutions require faculty to publish. A faculty member and an administrator in this research recommended that faculty practitioners in ELT should be encouraged to publish in the field of ELT. This would help in the dissemination of information relating to ELT to new faculty and to faculty who predominantly use lecture to teach FEMBA students or only employ discussion and case studies. This, way the intellectual contributions of the faculty can be used for the benefit of the faculty and eventually, the students.

Business Schools to Consider the Previous Consulting or Training Experience of New Faculty in Hiring Process

The research data reveal that faculty members with prior consulting or training experience are much more comfortable using ELT in the FEMBA classes. This fact has implications in new hiring for the administrators and deans of these programs. The administrators should give preference to those who have used ELT in their training experience, or are familiar with working with clients in their consulting experience. Kosnik, et al. (2013) outlines recommended practices that faculty members have

consulting and coaching experience (p. 617, Table 1). These faculty members will feel much more comfortable in bringing real world experience in to the classroom. They would also have experience to mentor faculty members newly using ELT in their classes and courses.

Better Understanding of Kolb's Cycle and Its Use in ELT to Be Ingrained in the Curriculum and Training

Although, all the faculty members interviewed are using ELT to varying extent, there is no clear evidence that all the four elements (Kolb, 1984) of the Kolb Cycle (concrete experience, reflection, conceptualization, and active experimentation) are being utilized in their ELT methodology. In several cases, the students went through the step of concrete experience, but reflection was missing, and in other cases, reflection and conceptualization were missing. More often, active experimentation was not reached or only reached once in an academic term. The curriculum and the faculty training in ELT should include emphasis on all four steps, to realize the full benefits of ELT, as well as underscore the importance of framing the experiencing learning exercises.

Recruitment of Faculty Members with Desirable Qualities

The research indicates that potential faculty members who are considered open-minded to new concepts and attitudes should be given preference in the hiring process for FEMBA programs. The faculty members who have a strong desire to control class environment might not be open to learning ELT and would be less effective in implementing the experiential learning techniques. Open-minded faculty are willing to step out of their comfort zone with the lecture approach, and are more willing to learn new techniques relating to experiential learning, i.e., case studies, simulations, or using

field studies. Mandel and Noyes (2016) purport that faculty to be hired "must show comfort and competency guiding highly unstructured and unpredictable student experiences, given the nature of innovation" (p. 171) of in the modern business world. For faculty, additional skills of resourcefulness, facilitation, project management, and leadership are also critical in being a catalyst in promotion of ELT in FEMBA programs. Kosnik, et al. (2013) expresses it with in this way: "Business faculty now need to function as academic instructors, coaches, leaders, and role models…"

Recognition of Faculty Succeeding in the Effective Use of ELT

The interview data indicate that some of the faculty that are doing a great job in using ELT in the classrooms are not being recognized by the administrators, despite their efforts to enhance the quality of education by engaging students, and providing them with practical skills in solving the real problems of work place. One of the administrators, Thompson, was of the same mind that administrators should recognize and reward, even monetarily, those faculty members who effectively use ELT, as it takes much more time and preparation to incorporate ELT in their teaching approach.

Recommendations for Future Research

More Research Needed to Resolve the Issues of Content Vs. Process Tradeoffs

The interview data reveal that some faculty members do not fully use ELT at times, because they feel obligated to cover the content of the course. They further assert that effective coverage of the content is a time consuming process, and it can take the whole class time in an academic term. One of the instructors indicated that the use of ELT can eat into lecture time used to cover content (the body of knowledge) and is not pertinent to the traditional assessments required of students, some of which are still

believed to be required as per accreditation criteria. Therefore, more research is needed to study the issue of content vs. process tradeoff.

Further Exploration, Re., SLOs Difficult to Measure with ELT in Academic Course and During Students' Professional Career After Graduation

The research data indicate that the benefits of experiential learning, sometimes, are not derived in the short-term. It might take years for students to truly realize the benefits. At the same time, more and more accreditation bodies are adding criteria to demand "impact learning" and engaging students, in order to transition the higher educational system from teaching to learning (Allen, 2006) and from delivery of content to demonstration of student learning outcomes. Kosnik, et al. (2013) considers experiential learning in business education to be a valuable pedagogy to meet the new AACSB standards for accreditation. However, since it is a challenge to integrate ELT within an academic course and measure the SLOs, as well as to measure lifelong learning aligned with the SLOs, more research is needed on how to successfully come up with effective assessment measures. One longitudinal study (Hoover, et al., 2010) measured efficacy of experiential learning, assessing communication, teamwork, leadership, initiative, decision making, planning, and organizing (p. 192), and reported students using ELT increased their percentiles (p. 194) by 13 percentile points, from pre-test to post-test on the criteria. Improvements in meeting SLOs with experiential learning could be higher, if students had more opportunities to have multiple iterations of experiential learning. FEMBA students have an opportunity to do this in their business careers. Scott, et al. (2016) recommends in-depth qualitative studies and additional longitudinal studies

to track graduate students' professional career paths, to assess the efficacy of experiential learning methodology to the program's SLOs.

Study of Effective Class Size for ELTs

The research indicates that the faculty members teaching in the FEMBA programs find it difficult to use ELT in large classes, because of the difficulty of managing sizable numbers of groups. According to the study interviewees, the huge number of groups, which they experienced or observed, makes the use of ELT very demanding and problematic. However, one faculty member indicated that she does a very effective job of engaging students in-group experiential exercises with 125 students in the class. She divides the class in 25 groups of five students each and monitors each group for its effectiveness. Thus, the researcher is not able to determine what would be an effective number of students in a class to be efficacious in the use of ELT. One of the administrators in the study stated that larger class sizes are unsuitable for the use of ELT. Further study is needed to research the optimum size of the class for the effective use of ELT.

Exploration of Better Use of ELT in Quantitative Business Courses

The research data shows that quantitative courses in the FEMBA programs, i.e., Quantitative Analysis, Finance, Accounting, and Economics etc., are not utilizing ELT potently based on interviewee observations or experience. The perception is that faculty feel that they are obligated to cover the content, and therefore, do not have time to use experiential learning techniques. Furthermore, faculty observed colleagues who assert that quantitative subjects are hard to grasp and therefore students need to be lectured. However, other faculty members and administrators asserted that ELT can be used in

these classes, if the faculty members will take the time to do proper planning to include ELT in their syllabi and then it implement in the classroom. This aspect needs to be further explored. Some of the ideas to consider will be to plan out the sessions, so that they make a good use of ELT, use simulations alongside the lectures, or cover the material in the first 75% of the classes of the semester and have students apply the concepts with a real company in the last 25% of the classes. The use of ELT in quantitative classes needs to be further researched.

Infrastructure for Graduate Business Programs to Implement ELT in FEMBA Programs

Interviewee data provided findings that provision of mentoring and training, more resources, support and appreciation, and impetus can increase faculty member motivation to use ELT. A small but significant amount of professional literature concerned enhancement of infrastructure for colleges and universities to increase implementation of ELT in FEMBA programs in colleges and programs. Coordination of implementation is most efficacious at the college level or college wide (Andrews, 2007, p. 24), rather than only in some departments by some department heads or in some courses by faculty members. Then, implementation of ELT in graduate business education will be more substantial, and more FEMBA students will benefit. A top down implementation of ELT, however, cannot be forced without training, preparation, support, and infrastructure. According to Li, et al. (2007), the investigation of the top-down method offers an opportunity for future research on experiential learning (p. 27), according to Li, et al. (2007, p. 27). The authors suggest that, "researchers may focus on…what transformational changes in institutional structure, policies, and routines are required to

implement the top-down method and to what extent these changes contribute to a successful adoption" (p. 33).

Study Conclusion

Although this qualitative study can have recommendations and actions that can apply directly to practice and implementation of ELT at the three FEMBA study sites, this take away message can also inform educators desiring to use or implement ELT in graduate business programs. The lecture method is unfortunately the most used method among college faculty (Wurdinger and Carlson (2010). This pedagogy has been used for hundreds, if not thousands of years in the higher educational system. The lecture approach is full of limitations and deficiencies. Professor Rathburn of Stanford University weighed in when he made the profound statement on this topic, declaring "A lecture is a process whereby the notes of the professor become the notes of the student without passing through the minds of either" (O'Toole, 2016). The biggest take-away is that this researcher's future teaching in the FEMBA program is going to be ELT based, and he will do further research to integrate ELT and SLOs. Although, using ELT is much more time consuming, it is clearly beneficial for FEMBA students in terms of applying their newly acquired knowledge through solving current and future management related problems.

Since the literature research and data collected during interviews has convinced the researcher of the efficacy of the ELT methodology, the use of experiential learning at AMI, where the researcher works as a dean, has been validated. However, one of the findings of this research is that faculty members are concerned about not receiving enough information and proper training for implementing this methodology in the

classroom. Therefore, based on this feedback, the researcher is going to implement a model, in which the senior faculty will mentor the new faculty members and the faculty struggling with ELT. The researcher is also considering the idea of teaming new faculty members with a senior faculty after a new faculty member is hired. Here, the senior faculty member prepares the syllabus and teaches using experiential learning methodology, and the new faculty shadows the mentor as an observer, debriefed regularly by the senior faculty mentor. The new faculty member, in the next semester, then teaches using ELT, with occasional visits from the senior faculty for evaluation and debriefing. This methodology will lead to the proper training of new faculty in ELT.

Two other issues that became obvious during the research were acquisition of quality clients for consulting, and risk management while students are visiting the clients for interviewing, and additional visits during the FEMBA students' data collection phase. These two areas were considered problematic by faculty and administration during the researcher's interviews. Thus, the researcher, as a dean, is going to make every effort to acquire quality clients and buying risk insurance. This would ease the process of students visiting clients and lead to a better learning experience for students.

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Appendix A: Draft Email Solicitation to Participants

CALIFORNIA STATE UNIVERSITY, NORTHRIDGE
EXPLORING EXPERIENTIAL LEARNING METHODOLOGY IN FULLY EMPLOYED MBA PROGRAMS (FEMBA)
INVITATION TO PARTICIPATE IN RESEARCH

Dear Professor Jackson,

I am writing to inform you that I am conducting a dissertation study at California State University, Northridge (CSUN) regarding exploring experiential learning methodology in fully employed MBA programs. I am a doctoral candidate and this study is a part of the Ed.D degree requirements.

The purpose of my dissertation study is to explore experiential learning and examine its acceptance in higher education, specifically in fully employed MBA programs. As part of the study, I will be conducting confidential, private interviews with faculty members, and administrators to obtain their opinions about their familiarity with experiential learning methodology and their views on what makes this methodology work and what might be the obstacles in implementing this model. Your participation will help me in developing a better understanding of experiential learning methodology. Each interview should be approximately 30-45 minutes in length, with a potential of not more than 30 minutes in a follow-up interview on another day. Responses used in this dissertation will be confidential, and your name or college affiliation will not appear in the study.

Participation in the study is voluntary, you may withdraw at any time. Your time investment in this study is greatly appreciated. If you would like to participate, please contact me atdeanharish@gmail.com or call me at 818-438-3237.

Thank you,

Harish Amar

Appendix B: CSUN Informed Consent Form

California State University, Northridge
CONSENT TO ACT AS A HUMAN RESEARCH PARTICIPANT

Exploring Experiential Learning Methodology in fully employed MBA programs

You are being asked to participate in a research study. Exploring experiential learning methodology, a study conducted by Harish Amaras part of the requirements for the Ed.Ddegree inEducation at Michael Eisner College of Education.Participation in this study is completely voluntary. Please read the information below and ask questions about anything that you do not understand before deciding if you want to participate. A researcher listed below will be available to answer your questions.

RESEARCH TEAM
Researcher:
Harish Amar
Department of Education
18111 Nordhoff St.
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PURPOSE OF STUDY
The purpose of this research study is to explore experiential learning methodology in business education specifically in the fully employed MBA programs (FEMBA).

SUBJECTS

Inclusion Requirements
You are eligible to participate in this study if you are a faculty member in theFEMBA and have used this methodology in the classroom in the curriculum or an administrator in the FEMBA who has an understanding of experiential learning methodology.

CSU, Northridge
Human Subjects Committee
Approved: 10/29/15
Void After: 7/14/16 KS

Time Commitment
This study will involve approximately 30-45 minutes of your time on one day with a possibility of up to 20-30 minutes of your time another day.

PROCEDURES
The following procedures will occur: You will be asked to complete30-45 minutes interview with the possibility of another follow up 20-30 minutes interview another day. The interviews will be audio recorded.

I would like to request that three faculty members allow me to visit their classes in fall or spring as a non-participant observer. This simply means that if you are chosen, I will not ask any questions during the class and just observe the use, minimal use or non-use of experiential learning methodology and take notes to be included in my research.

RISKS AND DISCOMFORTS
This study involves no more than minimal risk.You may feel uneasy about answering some of these interview questions. You may elect not to answer any of the questions with which you feel uneasy and still remain as a participant in the study.All the information provided by you will be kept confidential, pseudonyms will be used, and all your information will be stored in a computer that is password protected.

BENEFITS
Subject Benefits
The possible benefits you may experience from the procedures described in this study include a better understanding and pitfalls of experiential learning methodology, which will helpfaculty andadministrators in better use and implementation of experiential learning methodology in the classrooms.

Benefits to Others or Society
This study may benefit you, other faculty, administrators or other educational institutions that are interested in exploring or implementing the experiential learning in their teaching model.

ALTERNATIVES TO PARTICIPATION
The only alternative to participation in this study is not to participate.

COMPENSATION, COSTS AND REIMBURSEMENT
Compensation for Participation

You will receive a total of $35 Amazon gift card. This gift card is the total amount you will receive, whether the follow up visit is required or not.

Costs

CSU, Northridge
Human Subjects Committee
Approved: 10/29/15
Void After: 7/14/16 KS

There is no cost to you for participation in this study beyond the commitment of your time of two possible interview meetings of 30-45 minutes and possible follow-up meeting of 20-30 minutes.

WITHDRAWAL OR TERMINATION FROM THE STUDY AND CONSEQUENCES

You are free to withdraw from this study at any time. Withdrawing from the study or opting out of particular interview questions will have no consequences for you. **If you decide to withdraw from this study you should notify the research team immediately**. The research team may also end your participation in this study if you do not follow instructions, miss scheduled visits, or if your safety and welfare are at risk

CONFIDENTIALITY

Subject Identifiable Data

Any information that is obtained in connection with this study and that can be identified with you will remain confidential and will be disclosed only with your permission or as required by law. Names will not be used in the reporting of findings. All identifiable information that will be collected about you will be removed and replaced with a code. A list linking the code and your identifiable information will be kept separate from the research data, and your institution and/or program will not be identified by name in any published report.

Data Storage

All research data will be stored on a laptop computer that is password protected.The audio recordings will also be stored in a password protected laptop, then transcribed and erased once all necessary transcripts are completed.

Data Access

The researcher and faculty advisor named on the first page of this form will have access to your study records. Any information derived from this research project that personally identifies you will not be voluntarily released or disclosed without your separate consent, except as specifically required by law. Publications and/or presentations that result from this study will not include identifiable information about you.

Data Retention

The researcher intends to keep the research data for a period of five years after which it will be destroyed.

Mandated Reporting

Under California law, the researcher isrequired to report known or reasonably suspected incidents of abuse or neglect of a child, dependent adult or elder, including, but not limited to, physical, sexual, emotional, and financial abuse or neglect. If any researcher has or is given such information, she may be required to report it to the authorities.

CSU, Northridge
Human Subjects Committee
Approved: 10/29/15
Void After: 7/14/16 KS

IF YOU HAVE QUESTIONS
If you have any comments, concerns, or questions regarding the conduct of this research please contact the research team listed on the first page of this form.

If you have concerns or complaints about the research study, research team, or questions about your rights as a research participant, please contact Research and Sponsored Projects, 18111 Nordhoff Street, California State University, Northridge, Northridge, CA 91330-8232, or phone 818-677-2901.

VOLUNTARY PARTICIPATION STATEMENT
You should not sign this form, unless you have read it and have been given a copy of it to keep. **Participation in this study is voluntary.** You may refuse to answer any question or discontinue your involvement at any time without penalty or loss of benefits to which you might otherwise be entitled. Your decision will not affect your relationship with California State University, Northridge, California Institute of Advanced Management and California State Polytechnic University, Pomona. Your signature below indicates that you have read the information in this consent form and have had a chance to ask any questions that you have about the study.

I agree to participate in the study.

___ I agree to be audio recorded
___ I do not wish to be audio recorded

_____ _____
Participant Signature Date

_____
Printed Name of Participant

_____ _____
Researcher Signature Date

_____
Printed Name of Researcher

CSU, Northridge
Human Subjects Committee
Approved: 10/29/15
Void After: 7/14/16 KS

Appendix C: Semi-structured Interview Protocol-Faculty

CALIFORNIA STATE UNIVERSITY, NORTHRIDGE

EXPLORING EXPERIENTIAL LEARNING METHODOLOGY IN FULLY EMPLOYED MBA PROGRAMS

INTERVIEW PROTOCOL/FACULTY

I. Pre-interview Session: Introduction/Background

Welcome and introduction:

Good morning/afternoon/evening. Thank you for taking the time to talk with me today. Before we begin the interview session, I'd like to give you the opportunity to read and sign the Consent to Participate in Research.

Purpose of the interview:

As we discussed, this interview is a one-on-one interview intended to collect information for a research study that explores experiential learning. During this interview we will talk about your perceptions of using experiential learning methodologies in yourMBA program.

Timing:

Today's interview will last approximately 30 to 45 minutes. Are there any questions before I get started?

II. Interview Session

Questions for faculty:

A little bit about you

1. May I ask you to describe your background briefly?
2. What subject or subjects have you taught or are presently teaching in the MBA program at your institution?
3. How long have you been teaching?

Experiential Learning and its techniques

4. Please describe what experiential learning means to you?

5. Please describe the technique(s) that you have used relating to experiential learning?

6. How many and what techniques are you using now?

Development of experiential learning techniques

7. How did you learn to teach?

8. Were you provided with an orientation or training on experiential learning before or after you started teaching? What was covered in the training or orientation?

9. Was there a teaching model that you followed? What did this model consist of? Was the model flexible?

10. Were the technique(s) you described above developed by your institute/department or have you formulated these techniques personally, or were these techniques a combination of the institute's instructions and your own objectives of teaching? Please explain your answer in some detail.

11. What aspect of experiential learning did you enjoy most and why?

12. Do you have any memorable experiences about experiential learning methodology if any?

Assessment and Effectiveness of Experiential Learning Techniques

13. Are these techniques beneficial to students? If yes, why? How do students respond to your techniques? Are they more engaged versus a simple lecture?

14. What appear to be attitudes of students towards experiential learning?

15. What appear to be the attitudes and behaviors of other faculty towards experiential learning?

16. What appear to be attitudes of administrators towards experiential learning?

17. Are there any barriers for the faculty to use the experiential learning methodology?

Modifying your Experiential learning techniques

18. Did you receive student feedback during your use of experiential learning techniques or after completing a course? How did this feedback help you?

19. Did you receive feedback from an administrator or administrators specifically about the use of experiential learning techniques at your educational institution? If yes, how did you receive this feedback?

20. What would you do differently about experiential learning when you teach next time?

Impediments at your institution to the use of experiential learning techniques

21. Are there any barriers in using experiential learning techniques at your institution?

22. What was the biggest problem relating to teaching using experiential learning? How did you resolve it?

23. What ideas do you have about improving experiential learning methodology? or how do you keep your-self current on experiential learning techniques? By attending conferences? or by reading literature or professional seminars? Or by any other method?

24. How can the other faculty members be encouraged to use experiential learning techniques?

Closing Questions:

I would like to give you a final opportunity to help us examine these issues relating to experiential learning. Before I end today, is there anything that I missed? Do you have anything else to add at this time? Have you said everything that you wanted to say, but didn't get a chance to say? Have you shared everything that is significant about these experiences with me? If there's anything else that you recall after our interview session, I invite you to share it by contacting me.

III. Post-Interview Session: Debriefing and Closing

Thank you for participating in today's interview session. I greatly appreciate you taking the time and sharing your ideas with me. I also want to restate that what you have shared with me is confidential. No part of our discussion that includes names or other identifiable characteristics will be used in any report or document. Finally, I want to provide you with a chance to ask any questions that you might have about this interview. Do you have any questions at this time?

Appendix D: Semi-structured Interview Protocol-Administrators

I. Pre-interview Session: Introduction/Background

Welcome and introduction:

Good morning/afternoon/evening. Thank you for taking the time to talk with me today. Before we begin the interview session, I'd like to give you the opportunity to read and sign the Consent to Participate in Research.

Purpose of the interview:

As we discussed, this interview is a one-on-one interview intended to collect information for a research study that explores experiential learning. This interview will ask you about your perceptions of using experiential learning methodology in your MBA curriculum relating to experiential learning techniques.

Timing:

Today's interview will last approximately 30 to 45 minutes. Are there any questions before I get started?

II. Interview Session

Administrator Interview Questions

1. May I ask you to describe your background briefly?
2. Please describe your understanding of experiential learning?
3. How are experiential learning techniques being used in your MBA program?
4. Were these techniques developed by the university or by the faculty or jointly?
5. Are these techniques beneficial to students? If yes, why?
6. What are your expectations of the faculty in regards to their implementation of experiential learning in their own teaching practice?
7. What appear to be the attitudes and behaviors of faculty towards experiential learning?
8. Are there any barriers in implementing experiential learning methodology at your institution?
9. What barriers or obstacles, if any, do you view to use of experiential learning?

10. Do attitudes towards experiential learning differ by business subfields such as, Quantitative Analysis, Financial Management, Marketing Management, and Organizational Development?
11. How can the faculty members be encouraged to use experiential learning techniques?
12. What ideas do you have about improving experiential learning methodology? or how do you keep your-self current on experiential learning techniques? By attending conferences? or by reading literature or professional seminars? Or by any other method?

Closing Questions:

I would like to give you a final opportunity to help us examine these issues relating to experiential learning. Before I end today, is there anything that I missed? Do you have anything else to add at this time? Have you said everything that you wanted to say, but didn't get a chance to say? Have you shared everything that is significant about these experiences with me? If there's anything else that you recall after our interview session, I invite you to share it by contacting me.

III. Post-Interview Session: Debriefing and Closing

Thank you for participating in today's interview session. I greatly appreciate you taking the time and sharing your ideas with me. I also want to restate that what you have shared with me is confidential. No part of our discussion that includes names or other identifiable characteristics will be used in any report or document. Finally, I want to provide you with a chance to ask any questions that you might have about this interview. Do you have any questions at this time?

Appendix E: Conducting an Observation as a Passive Participant

Observation Form Questions

Date_____ Time_____ Place_____ Number of students in the class_____

Demographic Information_____ Course Title_____

1. Does the instructor define the objectives/outcomes of the class session activities to the students? Or do the objectives/outcomes seem clear to the students?

2. Does the instructor effectively organize learning situations to meet the objectives of the class for that day?

3. Does the instructor use instructional methods encouraging relevant student participation
   during the learning process?

4. Does the instructor create a positive environment for learning?

5. Does the instructor use any of the experiential learning tools in the class-room, i.e., case studies, group work, experiential learning exercise, discussion on the consulting project, discussion about internship? (Number of experiential learning episodes, duration of active learning episodes, number of different types of experiential techniques)

6. Are the students asking questions in the classroom, if so, what types of questions are they asking?

7. What interactions are taking place in the classroom that may be related to a experiential learning theory approach?

8. Do the students look satisfied/engaged with the learning process? If so, what are some of the indicators?

9. What is the physical arrangement of participants in class activities and do they enhance an experiential learning theory approach?

10. Does the instructor provide a closure or feedback or reflection at the end of the experiential learning exercise?

11. Does it appear that the experiential learning model is familiar to the students?

12. How does the instructor encourage the non-participant students to engage?

13. What percent of students are:

a) Active participants

b) Somewhat participants

c) Non-Participants

14. Any additional observations?

15. Observer Comments? (Emotional reactions to events, analytic insights etc.)