

THE CLASSROOM ENVIRONMENT: UNDERSTANDING THE ORIENTATIONS AND MOTIVATIONAL VALUES OF BUSINESS STUDENTS

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ABSTRACT

Overall, the objective of business education is to prepare students for careers in the competitive and turbulent business environment. It is intended to improve the student's capacity for effective decision-making, and to facilitate professional growth and development. This paper reports on the definition of an ideal classroom environment by American, French and other international students. Investigated were both cultural orientations and motivational variables of students across international borders. Findings indicate that there are distinct orientations that students desire in their definition of an ideal environment.

Orientations

The orientations evaluated included the following:

What is a good instructor?

What does a good student do?

What does a good member of the class give priority to?

Students who do well in classes are what?

In class, students should be treated as?

Control and influence of student in the classroom is by:

Is it legitimate for one student to control others activities?

The basis for class assignments to student is

Students work together when?

The purpose of competition in the classroom is to do what?

Conflict in a classroom should be resolved in what way?

Decisions in the classroom should be made by whom?

What is the appropriate control and communications structure for the classroom?

What role does the external environment represent?

Conclusions

This small sample of 70 students is overwhelmingly oriented toward doing their assignments in any way that they can, regardless of the rules and procedures of the classroom and/or the dictates of the instructor. In regards to an Ideal Classroom, the findings were extremely interesting. That is, the rankings did not reflect my assumptions of students' motivation. For example, I assumed that having challenging assignments to do, having a good relationship with the instructor, having the freedom to adopt your own approach, and having the opportunity to help others would be ranked higher than they were. Obviously, additional studies would be helpful in helping to determine an ideal classroom environment.