

**“CAMPUS TO CORPORATE” - A STUDY ON SUSTAINABLE HIGHER  
EDUCATION PRACTICES FOR STUDENTS OF BUSINESS EDUCATION”**

**Dr. Radha.R,** M.Com., M.Phil. ACS., Ph.D

Professor & Program Head,

Ramaiah Institute of Management Studies, (RIMS)

# 15, New BEL Road, MSRIT Post, MS Ramaiah Nagar,

Bangalore 560054

**Introduction:**

**“Exploration is the engine that drives innovation. Innovation drives economic growth. So let’s all go exploring.” –Edith Widde**

Innovation as described by Webster’s dictionary: *noun*, in·no·va·tion—the introduction of something new; a new idea, method, or device. In short, whatever is introduced newly to tide over a business situation, improvisation of something which is already existing, new processes, procedures to ease out the conduct of business – can be termed as innovation. The landscape of business is undergoing very rapid and continuous changes and to be relevant and not become extinct the businesses of today should not only change rapidly, they should also think globally taking in to consideration the repercussions of ever changing technology. All this requires the managers to be prepared not only for the present but also for the future with a whole list of skills required to handle the ever changing business scenario.

The business scenario has transformed in to “think globally but act locally”, and is becoming turbulent by the day. To survive and thrive in this mayhem requires a whole lot of skills and the business schools should prepare their students to meet these uphill challenges. We have also entered a post digital era where the need to innovate is of the highest priority. To achieve this, the business schools should change the way they think and educate their students and change their focus from tutor centric education to task and objective oriented

education. In this context it is relevant to mention that experiential learning has been the most popular and fruitful teaching pedagogy for the business students. It has been proved in various studies that experiential learning offers practical hands on experience to the students and they are better equipped to work in demanding roles.

College isn't just about classrooms, lectures, projects, assignments and internships. MBA students want real-world experiences that will prepare them for their careers. This is acquiring utmost importance in a time when employers are raising the bar for new hires. Employers are increasingly looking for candidates with skills that go beyond the logical thinking, problem solving, and leadership skills than in more technical or theoretical skills.

A recent survey in Asia has indicated that the most pronounced skills gaps are in resilience, dealing with conflicts, communication, flexibility and adaptability, and the ability to work in teams.

To help close these gaps, many professors are turning to experiential activities to engage students and expose them to transformative experiences that let them practice these skills in a conducive environment.

#### **Review of Literature:**

A study done by Castoral (2008) and Mildeova (2007) has proved that computer simulations play a vital role to teach the students about a process, results, changes in decisions, results after the changes and includes a number of specific, complex and even non linear problems. Simulation enables an interactive learning platform and forges understanding of the complex business situations. Simulation games simulate the economic processes, various decision making processes in real time and can provide answers to many questions like How?, What if?etc.

no longer are “classical”, still majority of educational processes carried out by classical teaching/learning methods and much of education is focused on memorizing and reproducing of subject matter.

Gustina and Sweet (2014) suggest that due to impact of creativity on both economic development and personal development and wellbeing the educators emphasize inculcating creativity into students.

Craft (2006) argues that education has a dynamic relationship with shifting world of employment and improving the business acumen of the students.

Creativity is critical to surviving and thriving, because it is the creative process (the sequence of thoughts and actions) which according to Groenendijk et al. (2013) – leads to novel and useful products.

### **Research Methodology:**

The study is an original research conducted in 12 business schools in Karnataka. 6 business schools from urban and 6 from rural areas were selected on a random basis for the study. Structured questionnaires were distributed to the management students and faculty members of these 12 colleges and this was followed with an in-depth discussion with the faculties of these B Schools also. 430 responses were collected. The **primary data** obtained through **structured questionnaires** has been tabulated and further analysed

The **secondary data** was collected by reviewing the existing literature, journals, newspapers and by referring to books on innovative pedagogy of teaching management students.

**Methodology:**

Three important methods of imparting business education to make it a truly experiential learning were identified

1. Lotus Blossom Technique
2. Fish Bone Diagram
3. Simulation games

The above techniques were well documented and the first part of the survey was to find out whether the students and the faculties were able to recognise the techniques.

**Lotus Blossom Technique:**

The Lotus Blossom Technique is a structured brainstorming exercise used to expand on a central idea or problem. Teams place the original problem statement in the center box in a 3x3 matrix, and then add related themes or elements of the problem in the 8 boxes surrounding it. After filling out this central box, 8 new grids are created with an idea from the first grid in the center. The process repeats, with the team adding 8 ideas for each of the 8 initial aspects from the first grid.

Idea 6	Idea 1	Idea 4
Idea 3	<b>Problem Description</b>	Idea 7
Idea 8	Idea 5	Idea 2

as triggers for further thinking, thus asking the students to move further away from the problem. This technique when taught to the business students give them an idea as to how to focus on the central problem, keep on building the other aspects related to the problem, keep on increasing the surrounding aspects pertaining to a given problem. The students can be at their innovative best and can come up with real aspects to the problems.

### **Fish Bone Diagram:**

The fishbone diagram is a cause-and-effect diagram that helps managers to track down the reasons for imperfections, variations, defects, or failures. The diagram looks just like a fish's skeleton with the problem at its head and the causes for the problem depicted in the spine. Once all the causes that underlie the problem have been identified, managers can start looking for solutions to ensure that the problem doesn't become a recurring one. When this cause and effect technique is taught to the students and they are given projects to identify the cause and effect they become experts in root cause analysis.

### **Simulation Games:**

A famous adage by Albert Einstein states "Logic will get you from A to B. Imagination will take you everywhere." To imagine oneself in a business scenario, make decisions based on the existing situations, find out the problems encountered, and take corrective decisions till the end goal is achieved is the objective of simulation games. Starting from chalking out a business plan after feasibility analysis, Planning for HR, securing of fund (both debt and equity), run the operations every quarter, the simulation games provide hands on experience to the students in establishing and running the business profitably.

**Objectives of the Study:**

To evaluate the level of awareness of select B Schools about the select innovative pedagogies of learning and teaching

To offer suggestions and recommendations to make learning a fruitful experience to the students and prepare them for the professional world.

**Analysis and Discussions:**

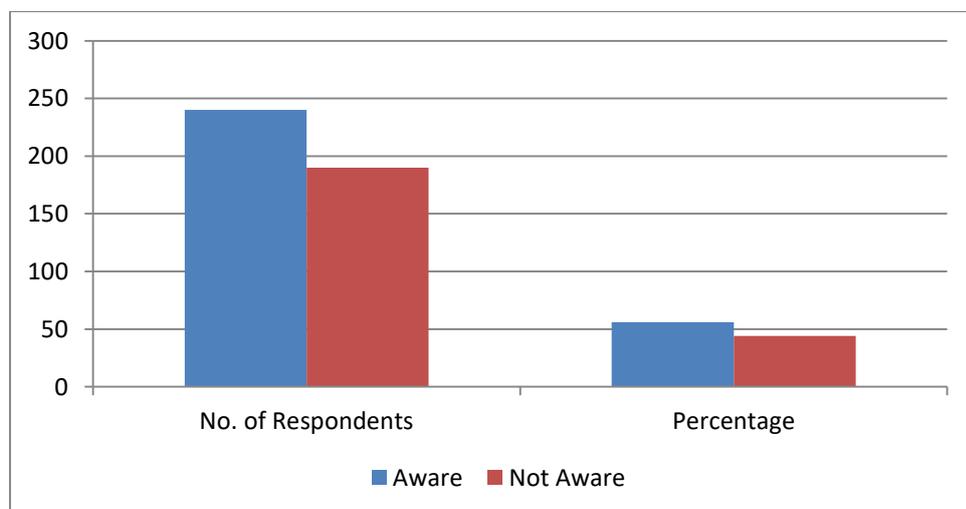
The response was collected from 430 students and faculties of select B Schools by administering a structured questionnaire. The questionnaire also provided them a write up about lotus blossom technique, fish bone diagram and simulation games. . The primary data thus obtained through a structured questionnaire has been analysed as follows

**Table 1 General Awareness about Innovative Techniques of Learning/Teaching:**

Particulars	No. of Respondents	Percentage
Aware	240	56
Not Aware	190	44

Source : Primary Data

**Graph 1 General Awareness about Innovative Techniques of Learning/Teaching:**



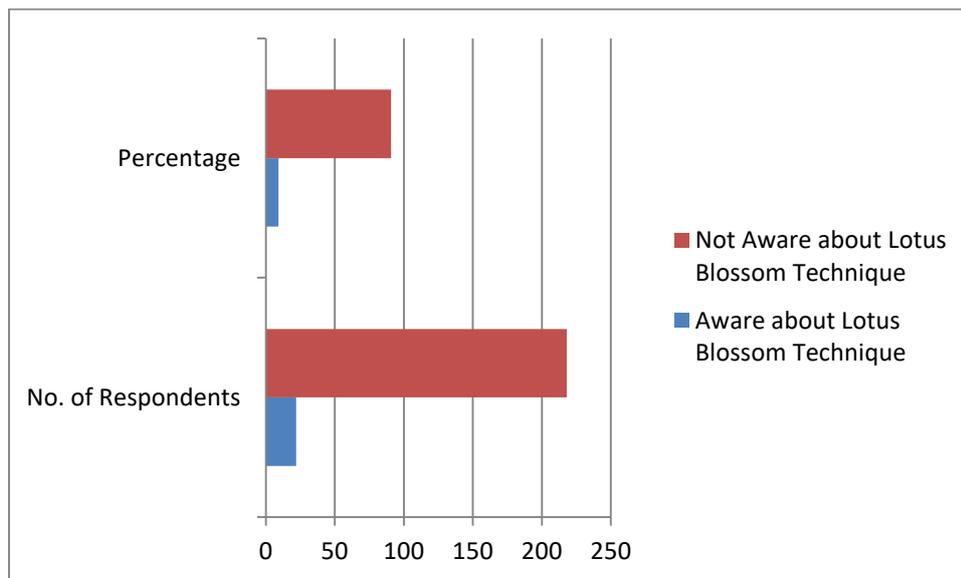
Out of the 430 responses received it was found that only 56% were aware about the techniques like lotus blossom, fish bone and simulation games. It is rather shocking to find that nearly half of the respondents have not even heard about these.

**Table 2 Awareness about Lotus Blossom Technique:**

Particulars	No. of Respondents	Percentage
Aware about Lotus Blossom Technique	22	9.2
Not Aware about Lotus Blossom Technique	218	90.8

Source : Primary Data

**Table 2 Awareness about Lotus Blossom Technique:**



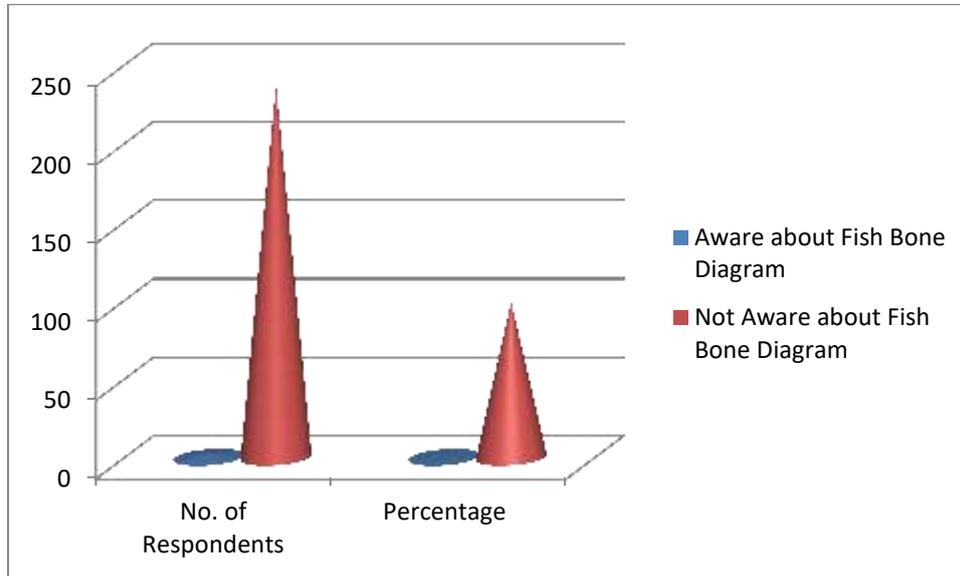
90.8% of the respondents were not aware about the lotus blossom technique. Only 9 % of the respondents stated that they have heard about this but have not used it in the class.

**Table 3 Awareness about Fish Bone Diagram:**

Particulars	No. of Respondents	Percentage
Aware about Fish Bone Diagram	03	1
Not Aware about Fish Bone Diagram	237	99

Source: Primary Data

**Graph 3 Awareness about Fish Bone Diagram:**



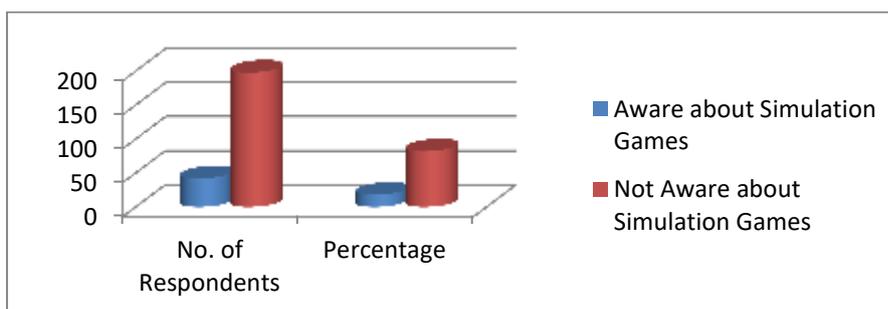
The shocking data about the awareness of fish and bone diagram is that only 03 respondents were able to recognise this. Later when the researcher used the term **root cause analysis** the respondents were able to identify the term.

**Table 4 Awareness about Simulation Games:**

Particulars	No. of Respondents	Percentage
Aware about Simulation Games	42	18
Not Aware about Simulation Games	198	82

Source : Primary Data

**Graph 4 Awareness about Simulation Games:**



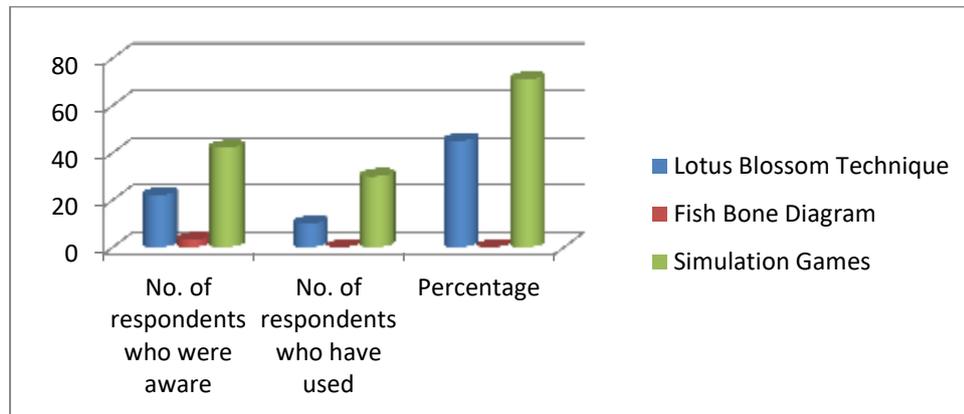
Only a dismal 18% of the respondents said that they were using simulation games to strengthen the business concepts to the management students. The balance 82% were not even aware about the existence of the games

**Table 5 Overall Awareness and Usage of Innovative Techniques:**

Particulars	No. of respondents who were aware	No. of respondents who have used	Percentage
Lotus Blossom Technique	22	10	45
Fish Bone Diagram	03	0	0
Simulation Games	42	30	71

Source: Primary Data

**Graph 5 Overall Awareness and Usage of Innovative Techniques:**



The study has found out that out of the three innovative teaching techniques used for this study the respondents were aware and used simulation games to a greater extent followed by lotus blossom or brainstorming technique.

**Hypothesis:**

Out of the 12 B-School units surveyed, 6 belong to urban and 6 belong to rural area. The following hypotheses were formulated for the purpose of the study. The general hypothesis formulated for the purpose of MWW test is as follows:

**Ho: “The two populations are identical”**

**Ha: “The two populations are not identical”**

The specific hypotheses formulated on the aspects of creative and innovative pedagogies of teaching and learning is as follows:

**Ho:” Urban B Schools and Rural B Schools are identical in terms of using innovative techniques of imparting business management skills”**

**Ha:” Urban B Schools and Rural B Schools are not identical in terms of using innovative techniques of imparting business management skills”**

**Statistical Technique used for analysis of primary data:**

**Mann-Whitney-Wilcoxon Test (MWW Test)**

MWW is a non parametric test that can be used to determine whether a difference exists between two populations. The advantage of using this test is that it is not based on a matched sample. Two independent samples one from each population can be used. This non parametric test does not require interval data or the assumption that both populations are normally distributed. The basic requirement of MWW test is that the measurement scale for the data is at least ordinal. In that case, instead of testing for the difference between the means of the two populations the MWW test determines whether the two populations are identical.

The hypothesis for MWW test is as follows

Ho: The two populations are identical

Ha: The two populations are not identical

The first step is to rank the combined data from the two samples from low to high. The lowest value receives a rank of 1 and the highest value receives the highest rank. The next step is to sum the ranks of each sample separately. The critical values of the MWW, T statistic is provided in the table.  $n_1$  refers to the sample size corresponding to the sample whose rank sum is being used in the test. The value of TL is read directly from the table and the value of TU is calculated as follows

$$T_u = n_1(n_1 + n_2 + 1) - T_L$$

Neither the value of TL or TU is in the rejection region. The null hypothesis of identical populations should be rejected only if T is less than TL or greater than TU.

The hypotheses have been tested using MWW test and the findings have been listed with meaningful conclusions drawn out of it.

#### **Analysis and Testing of Hypotheses:**

The data collected from the structured questionnaires was tabulated and MWW technique was used to test the hypotheses.

#### **Response on Innovative and Creative Teaching and Learning of Business Skills:**

**Ho: "Urban B Schools and Rural B Schools are identical in terms of using innovative techniques of imparting business management skills"**

**Ha: "Urban B Schools and Rural B Schools are not identical in terms of using innovative techniques of imparting business management skills"**

Score obtained by Urban B Schools	Rank	Score obtained by Rural B Schools	Rank
70	1	151	11
124	7	153	12
104	2	115	5
128	8	148	10
113	4	139	9
110	3	121	6
T=	25		53

Test carried out at 0.05 level of significance

TL is read directly from the MWW table where  $n_1=6$  and  $n_2=6$

$$TL=27$$

$$TU=n_1(n_1+n_2+1)-TL$$

$$TU=6(6+6+1)-27=51$$

Reject  $H_0$  if T is less than 27 or greater than 51

Since  $T < 27$  the null hypothesis is rejected. Urban B Schools and Rural B Schools are not identical in terms of imparting innovative business management skills. **There is difference between Urban and rural B Schools in terms of innovative pedagogy. .**

In order to test the hypothesis further, the aspects considered were

Awareness of B Schools on the innovative pedagogies

**Awareness of B Schools on the Innovative Pedagogies:**

**$H_0$ : “Urban B Schools and Rural B Schools are identical in terms of awareness about the existence of various innovative teaching pedagogies available”**

**$H_a$ : “Urban B Schools and Rural B Schools are not identical in terms of awareness about the existence of various innovative teaching pedagogies available”**

Score obtained by Public Sector	Rank	Score obtained by Private Sector	Rank
18	1	20	4.5
22	9	19	2
20	4.5	21	7.5
20	4.5	20	4.5
24	11	21	7.5
23	10	25	12
T=	40		38

Test carried out at 0.05 level of significant

Since the value of T is greater than 27  $H_0$  cannot be rejected. **Both the urban and rural B Schools do not differ in terms of their awareness towards the availability of various creative learning and teaching pedagogies available to the management students.**

**Findings:**

1. Only 56% of the respondents were aware about the existence of the three innovative techniques of teaching whereas 44% were not even aware about this.
2. 9% of the respondents were aware about the lotus blossom technique whereas the rest 91% were not aware about this technique.
3. A negligible 1% of the respondents were aware about Fish Bone diagram whereas 99% of them had not even heard about the same
4. The testing of hypothesis has revealed that both the urban and rural B Schools do not differ in terms of their awareness towards the availability of various creative learning and teaching pedagogies available to the management students.
5. Further testing of hypothesis has revealed that there is difference between Urban and rural B Schools in terms of using innovative pedagogy. The urban B Schools have been using at least a few of the innovative teaching pedagogies.

**Conclusion:**

The basic role of business education has always been preparation of young students ready for business and professional life which is highly challenging. To better prepare their graduates for facing the real business world, business schools resort to new teaching and learning pedagogies. Experiential learning methods are one of them which help the student to assimilate a lot of practical hands on knowledge when compared to the traditional classroom lectures. The students are more engaged in the learning process and simulation games can teach them aspects which otherwise will take a number of years. Learning is fun and students are enthused to learn more and do more. It is high time that the B Schools start investing more in introducing these innovative teaching pedagogies to make the students ready to face the challenges of the business world.

**References:**

- Aldrich, C. (2009). *The complete guide to simulations and serious games*, Pfeiffer
- Častoral, Z. (2008). *Strategic management*, Praha.
- Mildeová, S. (2007). *Oeconomica*, Praha
- Aslan, S., & Reigeluth, C. M. (2015), "Examining the Challenges of Learner-Centered Education", *Phi Delta Kappan*, 97(4), 63-68.
- Burns, M., Pierson, E., & Reddy, S. (2014), "Working together: How Teachers Teach and Students Learn in Collaborative Learning Environments", *International Journal of Instruction*, 7(1), 17-32.
- DeNeve, K. M., & Heppner, M. J. (1997), "Role Play Simulations: The Assessment of an Active Learning Technique and Comparisons with Traditional Lectures", *Innovative Higher Education*, 21(3), 231.