

Curriculum gaps in business education: Cause for concern?

Wong Kee Luen
Universiti Tunku Abdul Rahman
Kuala Lumpur

The issue of business graduates unable to find employment has put pressures on business educators. The employers have accused the business educators of teaching irrelevant knowledge and skills. Therefore, the graduates do not possess the necessary knowledge and skills employers are looking for upon graduation. This accusation suggests that there are gaps in the business curriculum between the intended curriculum provided by the business educators and the curriculum expected by the business community. The primary purpose of this study is to identify these curriculum gaps and determine whether these gaps are significant and cause for concern.

The study adopted the case study method and follows Yin's (2003) 'surveys within a case study'. There were two surveys conducted using a reliable questionnaire as measuring instrument. The lecturers of the case institution were requested to complete copies of the questionnaire using the 'drop-and-pick' method. The business alumni of the case institution were surveyed via e-mails.

While there are significant differences between the perspectives of the educators and the alumni, it was found that these gaps are not causes for concern. These gaps come about due to different perceptions about education. While the academics are concern about 'education for life', the alumni consider 'education for employment'. These gaps can be drawn closer with the business educators taking the lead to accommodate the demands of the alumni in their curriculum design.

Keywords: business curriculum, curriculum gaps, business education, educators, business community.