

Prior Work-Experience & It's Impact on A Learner's Learning Experience during MBA Course

Prof. Lalitkumar Premchandra Patil

Research Scholar, JJTU Rajasthan / Assistant Professor, VIVA Institute of Management and Research, Virar East

Dr. Hiresh S. Luhar

Research Guide, JJTU Rajasthan / Director, VIVA Institute of Management and Research, Virar East

Article Info

Volume 83

Page Number: 4850-4853

Publication Issue:

July - August 2020

Abstract:

There are numerous Universities and Institutes across the world which are offering courses in Business Administration & Business Management. These courses are either 'Masters Degrees' or 'Post Graduate Diplomas in Business Management'. Duration of these courses varies from 1 year to more than 3 years depending on the mode in which it is offered to learners – 'full time', 'part time', 'correspondence', 'certification' etc. The goal of any of these MBA courses is to provide a conceptual knowledge, theoretical background & practical way of functioning various crucial concepts in managing a business. Learners as well the trainers are expected to discuss the business management concepts in a more practical way by discussing certain case studies and live examples. MBA learners are expected to carry out certain 'Live Assignment' as well 'Internship' with a corporate entity. The purpose of such assignments and internships is to have them the hands on experience of the actual functioning of the businesses in a practical way. These hands on experiences are as good as if they would have been worked actually in the industry. In short, we can say that it is as good as their 'work experience'. In this paper, researcher have tried studying whether there is a connection between work experience before taking admission to MBA course and whether or not this prior work experience really helps the learner to pursue this course in a more better way. The results of the study are based on the primary data collected from the MBA pursuing students as well from the students who have already completed their MBA course.

Keywords: Work Experience, MBA, Learner, Internship, Live Assignments

Article History

Article Received: 25 April 2020

Revised: 29 May 2020

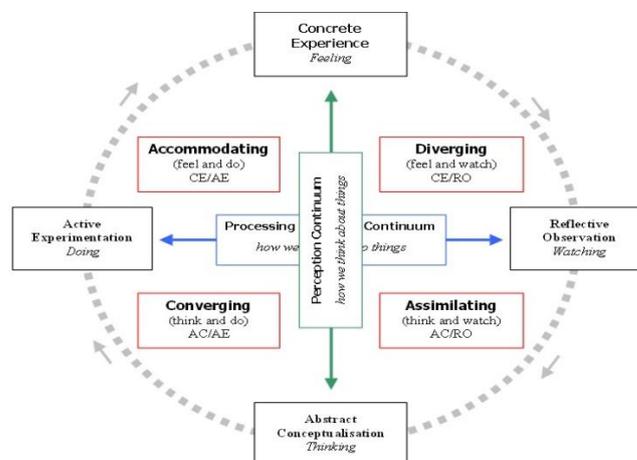
Accepted: 20 June 2020

Publication: 10 August 2020

INTRODUCTION

Every individual in his life has to start with some kind of job to earn money to fulfill his and his family's requirements to live a contended life. Even entrepreneurs, at some point of their life, gone through some kind of job to gain some work experience. Talking about a course which is available in the market, called as MBA, is often considered as a 'job oriented' course. The students of this course are taught, rather trained in such a manner that they should be readily absorbed by the employers in the market. The real life cases which are discussed in the classrooms are as good as the imitation of the real situation of the market. In India, about 3.6 lakhs students pursue MBA course every year from more than 4,000 Business Management Institutes across the country. Surprisingly more than half of them are unemployable due to lack of sufficient skills required or demanded by employer. It's not the only work experience which is considered as useful, which assist a learner to pursue this course in a more better way, but all the skills, qualities and capabilities that comes with the work experience,

which assist him in the course. Mr. David Allen Kolb, an American educationist have defined and developed following set of skills, preferably possessed or should be developed by a learner, to get a lead in the competitive learning environment.



Kolb's Learning Skills Cycle

(Source: <https://www.businessballs.com/self-awareness/kolbs-learning-styles>)

The skills required for successful completion of MBA course can be definitely developed before and during the course without a job experience, but the experience assist a learner to develop few of the skills. In fact few Universities and few types of MBA courses, like 'executive MBA' demands prior work experience. A pre-admission work experience of minimum 2 years or more than that is the mandatory criteria to secure admission to such types of courses. Even a learner is expected to perform distinguishly by the teachers as well from a team of co-learners during the course.

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Ahmad Sharbatoghlie at el. (2017) has studied performance pattern of the learners during MBA course based on Kolb's LSP (Learning Skills Profile). This LSP is based on 12 different skills parameters required for completion of MBA course. They found prior work experienced learners performs better than non-experienced learners, but the difference between the performance of these two groups is not that significant.

Munjal (2017) has studied the scenario of business management education in India and pointed out few key factors which are driving as well decreasing the attractive of management courses in India. He found out that there is disconnect between the industry requirement and skills of the MBA graduates. Along with several skills to be possessed by a learners, job experience was one of the factors that can bridge this gap.

Graduate Management Council – GMAC – (2009), a U.S. based global association of leading b-schools has mentioned that the minimum job experience to secure admission to top b-schools of the world can be increased to five years. As per the report of the expert committee of GMAC, MBA course can be completed and its aims can be achieved fully with the prior knowledge about the functioning of the corporate world.

Dreher & Ryan (2000), in contrast to GMAC's observations, found in one of their study conducted found that there is a very little connection between previous work experience as well the level of academic achievements and excellence during the MBA course.

Schweitzer & McKenzie (2001) analyzed the factors influencing academic performance of the students in Australian Universities. Job experience was of the factors observed by them which improves the academic performance of the students.

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

The primary objective of this study is to analyze and find whether the prior work experience assist the MBA aspirants to complete their course in more better way.

Further to understand the skills and qualities of the work experienced learners as compare to non-experienced learners, following objectives are set:

- To study the effect of work experience on the performance of a learner during MBA course.
- To study the set of skills required to complete MBA course, which are readily developed by the experienced students.
- To study the impact of prior work experience on the final placement of an MBA graduates.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

To carry out this research study, a 'Structured Questionnaire' was prepared and it was circulated among the sampled respondents to collect the responses from them. Deliberate sampling technique was used to distinguish the students doing 'full time MBA course' from the students who are pursuing MBA in various other modes like – part time MBA, correspondent MBA, online MBA etc. 240 samples- consisting students who are pursuing and who are already completed their 2 years full time MBA course, from the Mumbai sub-urban areas were selected for the study. The primary data collected through responses of these respondents was analyzed and interpreted using 'Frequency Distribution Tables, 'Pie Charts', 'Cross Variable Tables'.

DATA ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATIONS:

a) Respondents Profile

For the study under the consideration, the structured questionnaire was responded by total 240 respondents, consisting of 108 (45%) females and 132 (55%) males as shown in Chart No. 1. As indicated in Chart No. 2, respondents consist of 56 (23%) learners from 1st year, 51 (21%) from 2nd year and 133 (56%) respondents have already finished with their MBA course. Chart No. 3 indicates that 102 (42%) of them have prior work experience before taking admission to MBA course, whereas 138 (58%) of them have continues with the MBA course after their bachelor's degree, instead of going for a job. Chart No. 4 indicates the specializations elected by the respondents.



Chart No. 1



Chart No. 2



Chart No. 3

Chart No. 4

b) Interpretation Based on Responses of Non-Experienced Learners

Respondent samples were deliberately selected in such a way that there should be a mix of experienced as well non-experience learners. The interpretation in this section of the study is based on the expectations and perceptions of those respondents, who do not have any prior work experience before admitting to MBA course. As indicated in Table No. 1, total 162 respondents out of 240 responded that the prior work experience definitely helps a learner to pursue MBA course in better way – though 80 of them don't have any prior work experience.

		Pursue MBA In Better Way			
		Yes	No	Can't Say	Total
Prior Work Experience	Yes	80	10	12	102
	No	82	14	42	138
	Total	162	24	54	240

Table No. 1

	Highly Benefited	Moderately Benefited	Can't Say	Somehow Benefited	Not Benefited	Total
Communication / Interaction with others	55	36	4	39	4	138
Overall Grooming	42	43	14	33	6	138
Subject Knowledge	43	32	18	34	11	138
GD & PI for Placement	39	30	26	35	8	138
Overall personality & Attitude	52	31	18	33	4	138
Total	231	172	80	174	33	-----
Average	46.2	34.4	16	34.8	6.6	138

Table No. 2

Following five parameters were used on a five point Likert scale to collect the responses to assess the benefits on prior work experience – i) Communication / Interaction with others, ii) Overall Grooming, iii) Subject Knowledge, iv) GD & PI for Placement and v) Overall personality & Attitude. The scale parameters used were –

i) 5: Highly Benefited, ii) 4: Moderately Benefited, iii) 3: Can't Say, iv) 2: Somehow Benefited and v) 1: Not Benefited.

It is observed in Table No. 2 that on an average 46 out of 138 non-experienced learners responded that work experience has high benefits to pursue MBA in better way. An average of 34 responded about moderate benefits and around 35 responded that somehow they gets benefited. The highest benefit weightage is assigned by the respondents to improvements in 'Communication skills' and 'Overall personality and attitude'.

c) Interpretation Based on Responses of Prior Work-Experienced Learners

	Highly Benefited	Moderately Benefited	Can't Say	Somehow Benefited	Not Benefited	Total
Communication / Interaction with others	49	26	0	25	2	102
Overall Grooming	40	35	0	25	2	102
Subject Knowledge	33	32	12	23	2	102
GD & PI for Placement	32	28	8	23	11	102
Overall personality & Attitude	45	26	4	21	6	102
Total	199	147	24	117	23	-----
Average	39.8	29.4	4.8	23.4	4.6	102

Table No. 3

The responses of the respondents who have prior work experience before taking admission to MBA course are summarized in Table No. 3. Here also it is observed and interpreted that an average of 40 learners out of 102 have assigned highest weightage to high benefits of prior work experience to pursue MBA in better way. Though there is a dilemma about whether work experience helps in subject knowledge, communication and overall personality are the two variables which are highly rated by the respondents. 11 respondents responded that it does not help in GD & PI of final placements. It indicates that the performance in the PI of final placement after completing MBA is depending on the way in which you have developed your soft skills and personality during the tenure of MBA.

FINDINGS AND CONCLUSION

MBA as a degree or course is rightly positioned in the market as one of the course which is job oriented. Rather it can be said with confidence that one of the prime motives to pursue this course by learners is to get a good job in the market. This job could be the 'Dream Job' of any learner which gives him a handsome salary and a complete job satisfaction in the long run. Prior work experience before pursuing this course is the key to

further improve overall effectiveness of this course. It can be concluded from the interpretations and analysis of the study that prior work experience definitely helps a learner to pursue MBA course in better way than the others. Communication skills as well soft skills of a learner gets improved during facing the market during his job tenure. These improvements in communication & soft skill, grooming and overall personality - definitely assist him to secure even better job opportunities and satisfactory designations in the corporate world, after completing MBA course successfully. His practical work exposure also assist him to understand the business concept easily and the learner can easily correlate these concepts with the actual business practices. His attitude towards learning the practical cases during the course changes in a positive manner during course. But finally, it can be further an area of research study that whether during the course, performance of work experienced learner is better or even non work-experienced learners are also equally performing well.

LIMITATIONS AND FUTURE SCOPE OF THE STUDY

The findings and conclusions of the study are based on the respondent's from Mumbai Suburban region learners. Similar studies can be conducted over various geographical regions and the results can be compared to arrive at a uniform observation. Through this, the common variables which are getting benefited can be drawn. Even researcher in this study has considered parameters like - communication skills, overall grooming, overall personality, subject knowledge, GD & PI etc. besides these parameters, there are so many other parameters which are required / useful during an MBA course and can get benefited due to prior work experience.

REFERENCES

- 1) Cable, D. M., & Kay, V. S. (2012). Striving for self-verification during organizational entry. *Academy of Management Journal*, 55(2), 360-380.
- 2) Dhar, Rajib, (2011). Why MBA education? An examination of reasons for pursuing a management course, *Education, Knowledge and Economy*. 5. 53-70. 10.1080/17496896.2011.635428.
- 3) Dokko, G., Wilk, S. L., & Rothbard, N. P. (2009). Unpacking prior experience: - How career history affects job performance? *Organization Science*, 20(1), 51-68.
- 4) Dreher, George & Ryan, Katherine. (2000). Prior Work Experience and Academic Achievement Among First-Year MBA Students. *Research in Higher Education*. 41. 10.1023/A:1007036626439.
- 5) Gupta, Mukul. (2018). What is happening to MBA in India?. 10.13140/RG.2.1.1181.1681.
- 6) Graham, Lawrence. (1991). Predicting Academic Success of Students in a Master of Business Administration Program. *Educational & Psychological Measurement - EDUC PSYCHOL MEAS*. 51. 721-727. 10.1177/0013164491513023.
- 7) Koh, Yoon & Frechtling, Douglas & Boo, Soyoung. (2010). Prior Work Experience as Predictor of Academic Achievement Among The Graduate Level Tourism and Hospitality Students. *Journal of Hospitality and Tourism Education*. 22. 5-14. 10.1080/10963758.2010.10696987.
- 8) Lele, Upendra. (2019). Internationalization of Management Education - A journey towards excellence, *OVERVIEW OF MBA PROGRAMS IN INDIA FROM A GLOBAL PERSPECTIVE*.
- 9) Nair, Vivek & Chatterjee, Leena. (2019). Indian MBA careers in a high-growth, globalized economy: An exploratory study. *Academy of Management Proceedings*. 2019. 13095. 10.5465/AMBPP.2019.13095abstract.
- 10) Parida, Rashmi. (2017). Indian MBA: A paradigm shift. *Asian Journal of Management*. 8. 87. 10.5958/2321-5763.2017.00013.0.
- 11) Singh & Satyendra (2015). Are Indian MBA Schools Global and Market Oriented?. *SSRN Electronic Journal*. 10.2139/ssrn.2631313.
- 12) Singh, Surya. (1974). Work Experience and Indian Education. *Social Scientist*. 2. 66. 10.2307/3516957.
- 13) Wirtz, Jochen. (2015). Improving the MBA Student Education Experience. 10.1007/978-3-319-10912-1_258.
- 14) Woeber, Kate & Sibley, Lynn. (2018). The Effect of Prior Work Experiences on the Preparation and Employment of Early-Career Midwives. *Journal of The Midwifery & Women's Health*. 63. 10.1111/jmwh.12910.