MBA Student Perceptions: Learning, Teaching, Entrepreneurial and Intrapreneurial Skills

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Introduction

The demand for more effective management education and skills in order to generate wealth creation and achieve competitiveness in international markets is a recurring theme in many Australian government official reports and reviews (Mathews, 2002). Management educators need to be cognisant of the drivers of change such as globalization, demographic shifts, technology and deregulation, and develop business school strategies with these in mind (Friga, Bettis and Sullivan, 2003). Formal management education has seen significant changes to the development and delivery of its curriculum to keep pace with changes in the managerial workplace and to meet government initiatives. For example, in 2002 the expected rate of return for an MBA was 11.1% in real wages growth, and it remains high, (Connolly, 2003).

Educational variety, through increased diversity of subjects within a program, meets the emerging needs of a new century (Davies, 1997) and management education providers should be accountable for its performance through the judgments of their students (AV-CC, 2003). Today’s managers need to develop new skills and competencies including mastering a broad range of managerial disciplines (Lewis, Goodman, and Fandt, 1995) and management education providers need to help managers acquire these skills including entrepreneurial and intrapreneurial skills to enhance workplace creativity and problem solving.

The purpose of this study was to uncover student feedback on teaching, learning and skills acquisition in an MBA program in an Australian university. The MBA, used in this study, was redesigned two and a half years ago to be aligned with the University’s new strategic direction, industry needs, and the Federal government’s initiatives of entrepreneurship and innovation. The program is a fourteen subject managerial toolbox consisting of subjects such as opportunity evaluation, business planning, finance, entrepreneurial strategy, innovative leadership including an action research task, and four electives of which one is a double subject option of undertaking a significant industry based research project. There are 90 MBA programs in Australia, of which only seven were awarded a five star rating by the Graduate Management Association of Australia (GMAA) a national association of MBA graduates. The study’s MBA was awarded a five star rating in both 2003 and 2004 in terms of its standard and value.
Literature Review

Management education

The education environment is undergoing rapid evolution where learning methods, flexible learning technologies and changes to student life-long learning and teaching principles are eroding the traditional paradigms of management education. Unfortunately, Karpin’s 1995 report on the future of management education overlooked the inclusion of opinions, knowledge and expertise of management academics (Mathews, 2002).

Mathews (2002) questions whether management academics should be change agents i.e. be proactive contemporary progressives generating radical new ideas or whether they should be reactive traditionalists delivering theory and practice to make changes in response to new demands from government, industry or the student body. Preferably, management educators should strive to marshal both contemporary and traditionalist approaches to meet the needs of today’s management students.

Management education may be defined as:

A formal program of study, which is designed to provide knowledge of management processes and functions, and an understanding of related disciplines supporting management activities. Management education involves the learning of practical skills and techniques, and the development of analytical, decision-making, communication and conceptual abilities (Mathews, 1999:7).

Through the design and delivery of curricula, management academics have the potential to create and develop new knowledge, ideas, and skills and impart these to their students. Hence, ongoing review and evaluation of learning, teaching and skills acquisition within management education programs is essential in order to maintain currency within the rapidly changing workplace.

Management qualifications are increasingly regarded as important to the public sector (Guardian, 2003) and to private sector workers. The changing rules of today’s business may be driven by the need for senior position holders to continually innovate and hence embrace change. Therefore, it is essential that MBA programs recognise that managers require training in a number of areas including leadership, marketing, finance and operational, project and people management (Guardian, 2003; Lewis, Goodman, and Fandt, 1995).

Skills development

The role of management education in the development of student skills cannot be underestimated, for excellent teaching promotes high quality student learning (Ramsden, 1995). Tomorrow’s successful manager must possess a range of skills including strong communication skills, flexibility to implement and adapt to change, team dynamics skills, technology and problem solving skills. They must also be effective foreign ambassadors (Lewis et al., 1995) as business communication and dealings are becoming global.
It appears that MBA skills development tends to vary in terms of depth according to whether the program is online or face-to-face. Specifically, researchers at Colorado State University’s Business School compared distance students to their campus counterparts within the Executive MBA program regarding their perceptions of 12 specific competencies (http://distancelearn.about.com/library/weekly/aa063003a.htm). The study found that distance Education MBA students learned more than the traditional classroom based students particularly with respect to technology skills, quantitative skills and theory studies.

**Entrepreneurial and Intrapreneurial Skills**

Stimulating entrepreneurial and intrapreneurial skills and processes may enhance the traditional values of universities aligned with modern learning demands. Entrepreneurial skills are concerned with adding value whether it is financial, social or other and for the purpose of this study are defined, as a set of skills required in the establishment of a new enterprise. Intrapreneurial skills were defined as a set of skills requiring innovative behaviours within an existing organization. Innovative behaviours are complex in that they may occur impulsively by a groping process that moves iteratively towards the organization’s aims and objectives that are loosely defined (Behn, 1988) or alternatively, they may be generated through comprehensive organizational planning (Borins, 1998).

To remain competitive, many large organizations are encouraging their managers to start-up new business developments within the existing organization. For example, Orica Chemicals, which developed their Live Wire? Program, which is designed to create, investigate and implement ideas that deliver cost savings, and new revenue streams for their business (Fazzino and Sheldrake, 2003).

In addition to focusing on intrapreneurial skills development within MBA programs, the literature indicates varying degrees of emphases on the development of entrepreneurial skills. For instance, at the University of Chicago, the Graduate School of Business (<www.mba.wfu.edu>) uses studies in MBA classes to teach entrepreneurial concepts. At this University students can refine their entrepreneurial skills by participating in the entrepreneurship national case writing competition. Similarly, at the University of Michigan Business School’s William Davidson Institute, the MBA program provides training of business leaders including entrepreneurs and government officials (http://www.bus.umich.edu/Admissions/Mba/SpecialPrograms/Davidson.htm). In particular, the Institute reports that its international multidisciplinary action project was invaluable to students in terms of acquiring international experience, developing entrepreneurial management skills, and working with a dynamic team of students, managers and professionals.

Another skill development emphasised by some, in terms of MBA programs relates to the capacity to undertake research. For instance, Myers (1999) mentions research work undertaken by MBA students at Cornell’s Johnson Graduate School of Management in the identification of undervalued stocks. Similarly, Wagner (2003) provides examples of strong applied research skills undertaken within the MBA program at the Arizona State University where students are required to write comprehensive business plans from actual research being undertaken on campus. In
In some cases, the plans developed by the students, are used in businesses formed as a result of the research. MBA research is developing an international dimension (Mays, 1999). This is supported by the authors for their MBA integrating project students who, through applied research, conduct their projects on organizations that are based both in Australia and overseas.

The majority of MBA students are employed in large organizations and hence it was decided to explore the students’ beliefs about the inclusion of both entrepreneurial and intrapreneurial skills in their management education program.

**Methodology**

The multi-method study utilized a 35-item questionnaire comprising both open and closed questions administered to a sample of 53 MBA students enrolled in a core leadership subject in the final stage of a five star MBA program.

**Sample**

The sample consisted 80% males and 20% females, 63% of the respondents were local students whilst 37% were from overseas countries. The overseas percentage is very close to the average number of international students enrolled in the MBA program at the University (34%), thus providing a degree of confidence in the representativeness of the sample. Fifty one percent of the responding students were studying full-time in the program and this is close to the actual enrolments in the program. Twenty seven percent of the respondents stated that they were permanent residents of Southeast Asia. Seventy two percent of the responding students were employed full-time during studies, 6% were working part-time and 22% had no employment during studies. Those that were employed, worked in both the private and public sectors.

**Instrument**

The double-sided one-page questionnaire contained open and closed questions addressing learning, teaching, a range of specific skills development including problem solving, and entrepreneurial and intrapreneurial skills development in the MBA program. The closed questions were anchored to a Likert-type Scale with 1=Strongly Disagree and 5=Strongly Agree. The open questions allowed the respondents to provide detailed explanations and feedback on their beliefs regarding entrepreneurial and intrapreneurial skills, and the strengths and weaknesses of the MBA program.

SPSS descriptive statistical analyses were cross-tabulated and Chi-squared tests, which calculate a measure of association, were utilized to uncover relationships between the independent and dependent variables in the quantitative data (Haire et al, 1998). Theme category analysis was used to uncover themes in the qualitative data that were used to inform and add rich meaning to the quantitative data analysis.
Findings of the Study

Quantitative analysis

The students were requested to indicate whether they had changed their opinion about the skills they intended to develop following their enrolment in the MBA program. 42 percent of the respondents had changed their opinion about skills acquisition whereas 58 percent did not alter their opinion about the skills they wished to acquire.

Learning and teaching environment, and specific skills development

Respondents were asked to indicate their degree of agreement on a five point Likert-type Scale to a series of statements regarding the learning and teaching environment, and specific skills development. Table 1 shows the percentage of students broadly agreeing with the given statement (the percentage includes the neutral category).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Statement</th>
<th>% Agree</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. The lecturers of the MBA motivated me to do my best work</td>
<td>92.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. The lecturers put a lot of time into commenting on my work</td>
<td>79.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. The lecturers made a real effort to understand difficulties I was having with my work</td>
<td>82.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Lecturers normally gave me helpful feedback on how I was going</td>
<td>84.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Lecturers were extremely good at explaining things</td>
<td>86.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Lecturers worked hard to make their subjects interesting</td>
<td>96</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. The MBA developed my Problem-solving skills</td>
<td>98.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. The MBA sharpened my analytical skills</td>
<td>98.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9. The MBA helped me develop my ability to work as a team member</td>
<td>98.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10. The MBA helped me feel confident about tackling unfamiliar problems</td>
<td>98.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11. The MBA improved my skills in written communication</td>
<td>96.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12. The MBA helped me to develop the ability to plan my own work</td>
<td>96.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13. Overall I was satisfied with the quality of the MBA course</td>
<td>92.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14. The MBA degree will assist me when I start my own business</td>
<td>96.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15. The MBA will assist me to help my present/future employing organisation to diversify its business</td>
<td>98.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16. The probability of starting a new Business is greater than 50%</td>
<td>71.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17. The probability of contributing ideas towards the diversification of an existing business is greater than 50%</td>
<td>94.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Authors

The following observations are noted for the data contained in Table 1:

1. A very high proportion of the respondents (92.5%) felt that the lecturers of the MBA program motivated them to do their best work.

2. 79% of the students felt that their lecturers put a lot of time into commenting on their work with nearly 21% not being happy with the feedback received from academic staff.
3. Nearly 83% of the respondents believed that academic staff had made every effort to understand difficulties students were facing with their academic work.

4. About 85% of the students were provided with helpful feedback on how they were progressing by academic staff.

5. An even high proportion (87%) believed that the academic staff was extremely good at explaining concepts to them.

6. A very high percentage (96%) felt that the lecturers worked hard to make their subjects interesting to them.

7. Over 98% of respondents believed that the MBA program developed their problem solving skills.

8. Exactly same proportion (98%) felt that the program sharpened their analytical skills.

9. Again 98% of the students agreed that the program helped them develop their ability to work as a team member.

10. 98% of the respondents believed that the program helped them feel confident about tackling unfamiliar problems.

11. 96% of the students felt that the MBA course improved their skills in written communication.

12. The same percentage (96%) expressed the viewpoint that the course helped them to develop their ability to plan their work.

13. Importantly a large majority of the students (92%) were overall satisfied with the quality of the MBA program.

14. 96% of the respondents believed that the MBA degree will assist them to start their own business.

15. An even higher proportion (98%) felt that the MBA will assist them to help their present/future employing organisational to diversify their business.

16. Just fewer than 72% of the respondents believed that the probability of them starting a new business was greater than 50%.

17. An even greater percentage (94%) agreed that the probability of them contributing ideas towards the diversification of an existing business is greater than 50%.

Finding: Statements one, three, four, five and six refer to teaching quality that is high (83% - 96%) and indicates high quality student learning as shown in the literature (Ramsden, 1995). Item two at 79% is the lowest quality of teaching perception.
relating to feedback with 21% not being happy with the feedback received from academic staff.

Statements seven to fifteen and seventeen refer to attaining high skills development (92% - 98%) in particular communication, problem solving, entrepreneurial and innovation skills. Statement fifteen refers to the probability of starting a new business with 72% of respondents reporting that there was more than a 50% chance of them starting up their own business.

**Statistical Inferential Analyses**

The descriptive statistics contained in table 1 were cross-tabulated against the key demographic variables and chi-squared test undertaken.

**Gender**

The first demographic variable considered was the gender of the student. The significant findings showed:

?? Regarding the issue of whether academic staff were extremely good at explaining concepts, gender was significant (chi-squared = 9.35, df=4, p < 0.05); in this case all female students broadly agreed with the statement, however, 14.3% of the male students disagreed with it.

?? Concerning the statement that the MBA will assist the student to help present/future employer to diversify their business, gender appears to be significant (chi-squared = 7.71, df=3, p < 0.05); a closer examination of the responses indicates that male students appear to be more in agreement with the statement (84.4% of such students either agreed or strongly agreed with it) than female students (only 44.4% either agreed or strongly agreed).

**Age**

Another variable subject to the chi-squared test procedure is the age of the student. This was not found to be significant in most cases with the following exceptions:

?? In regard to the statement “the lecturers of the MBA program motivated me to do my best work” the age of the student appears to be significant (chi-squared = 17.97, df = 9, p<0.05); the responses suggest that older students tend to be less in agreement with it, for example, none of the youngest group of students (21 to 30 years of age) disagreed with the statement whilst over 33% of the 41 to fifty age group did not agree with it.

?? Again age appears to be a significant variable concerning whether the MBA program helped the student feel confident about tackling unfamiliar problems (chi-squared = 18.47, df = 9, p is less than 0.05); the younger students were more likely to agree with the statement. For instance, 100% of the 31 to 40 age group agreed or strongly agreed with the statement whilst 22% of the 41 to fifty age group either disagreed or were neutral regarding the statement.
Country of Birth

The chi-squared test procedure was applied according to whether the student was born in Australia. It was found that this variable was not statistically significant with respect to the 17 statements included in the above-mentioned table.

Employment Status

The chi-squared testing was also applied to the employment status of the student. It was not found to be significant except in the following case:

?? Regarding the statement “the lecturers of the MBA motivated me to do my best work” was found to vary significantly with employment status (chi-squared = 16.64, df = 6, p is less than 0.05); in particular, none of the respondents in part-time employment disagreed with the statement, however, around 9% of students in full-time employment or those not working disagreed with the statement.

Computation of means

Another method of statistically analysing the student agreement data is to compute the mean agreement with the various statements, using the Likert-type Scale (1 = strongly disagree and 5 = strongly agree). Table 2 shows the mean and standard deviation of each of the 17 statements.

Table 2: MBA Students Mean Agreement with Statements

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Statement</th>
<th>Mean Agreement</th>
<th>Std Dev.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. The lecturers of the MBA motivated me to do my best work</td>
<td>3.70</td>
<td>.64</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. The lecturers put a lot of time into commenting on my work</td>
<td>3.32</td>
<td>.87</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. The lecturers made a real effort to understand difficulties I was having</td>
<td>3.38</td>
<td>.91</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Lecturers normally gave me helpful feedback on how I was going</td>
<td>3.46</td>
<td>.87</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Lecturers were extremely good at explaining things</td>
<td>3.37</td>
<td>.82</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Lecturers worked hard to make their subjects interesting</td>
<td>3.53</td>
<td>.78</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. The MBA developed my Problem-solving skills</td>
<td>3.90</td>
<td>.63</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. The MBA sharpened my analytical skills</td>
<td>4.10</td>
<td>.60</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9. The MBA helped me develop my ability to work as a team member</td>
<td>4.10</td>
<td>.60</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10. The MBA helped me feel confident about tackling unfamiliar problems</td>
<td>4.14</td>
<td>.57</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11. The MBA improved my skills in written communication</td>
<td>4.00</td>
<td>.72</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12. The MBA helped me to develop the ability to plan my own work</td>
<td>3.76</td>
<td>.76</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13. Overall I was satisfied with the quality of the MBA course</td>
<td>3.76</td>
<td>.71</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14. The MBA degree will assist me when I start my own business</td>
<td>3.67</td>
<td>.91</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
15. The MBA will assist me to help my present/future employing organisation to diversify its business | 3.88 | .67
16. The probability of starting a new Business is greater than 50% | 3.16 | 1.11
17. The probability of contributing ideas towards the diversification of an existing business is greater than 50% | 3.92 | .80

**Source: Authors**

Table 2 shows the top three statements with the highest-level agreement include the following:

?? The MBA helped me feel confident about tackling unfamiliar problems.
?? The MBA sharpened my analytical skills.
?? The MBA helped me develop my ability to work as a team member.

In contrast, Table 2 shows that the following three statements elicited the weakest agreement from the students:

?? The probability of starting a new business is greater than 50%.
?? The lecturers put a lot of time into commenting on my work.
?? Lecturers were extremely good at explaining things.

**Calculation of mean agreement**

Calculation of mean agreement further provides an excellent opportunity to compare differences of mean values segmented by various demographic and other variables. For instance, such inferential analysis on the 17 statements was undertaken according to whether the MBA students changed their opinion about skills they intended to develop subsequent to their enrolment in the program. This analysis did not yield statistically significant results except in the following cases:

**Skills**

The significant findings showed:

?? Students who had changed their opinion about skills acquisition were more inclined to agree with the statement that the MBA helped them to develop the ability to plan their work (mean = 4.05) in comparison to those who had not altered their opinion about skills (mean = 3.54,  t = 2.43, p is less than 0.01).

?? Students who had not changed their mind about skills acquisition, subsequent to their enrolment, were more likely to agree with the statement “The probability of starting a new business is greater than 50%” (mean = 3.38) than those who had changed their opinion (mean = 2.82, t = 1.82, p is less than 0.05).
**Country of Domicile**

Similar testing was undertaken according to whether the students were local or international. Statistically significant results were obtained only in the following cases:

- International students were more likely to agree that the lecturers put a lot of time into commenting on their work (mean = 3.71) in comparison to local students (mean = 3.07, t = 2.48, p is less than 0.01).

- Local students were more likely to believe that academics made real efforts to understand difficulties the students faced in their academic work (mean = 3.61) in comparison to international students (mean = 3.06, t = 2.02, p is less than 0.05).

- International students more strongly agreed that the MBA assisted them to develop their ability to work as a team member (mean = 4.29) in comparison to local students (mean = 3.96, t = 1.73, p is less than 0.05).

**Enrolment status**

The statements were tested according to the enrolment status of the students. Again no statistically significant results were found except in one case:

- In particular, full-time students more strongly agreed that the MBA improved their skills in written communication (mean = 4.33) in comparison to part-time students (mean = 3.89, t = 1.82, p is less than 0.05).

**Gender**

Analysis was then undertaken according to the gender of the students. Statistically significant results were noted in the following cases:

- The female students more strongly agreed that the lecturers were extremely good at explaining things (mean = 3.78) relative to their male peers (mean = 3.29, t = 1.64, p is less than 0.05).

- Similarly female students were more likely to agree that academics worked hard to make their subjects interesting (mean = 3.89) in comparison to male students (mean = 3.41, t = 1.64, p is less than 0.05).

- The male students more strongly agreed that the MBA will assist them to help their present/future employer to diversify their business (mean = 4.03) in comparison to their female counterparts (mean = 3.44, t = 2.35, p is less than 0.05).

**Age**

Statistical testing was then undertaken according to the age of the respondents. This variable was found to be statistically significant in the following cases:
Students aged between 21 and 30 years were more likely to agree that the academics of the MBA program motivated them to do their best work (mean = 4) in comparison to students aged between 41 and 50 years (mean = 3.22, t = 2.41, p is less than 0.05). On the same statement, there was greater agreement by 31 to 40 age group (mean = 3.76) than the 41 to 50 years students (mean = 3.22, t = 2.16, p is less than 0.05).

Similarly the younger students (those aged 21 to 30) yielded stronger agreement (mean = 3.89) that academics were extremely good at explaining things than was the case with either the 31 to 40 age group (mean = 3.28, t = 2.01, p is less than 0.05) or the 41 to 50 age group (mean = 3.22, t = 2.24, p is less than 0.05).

Again the younger students aged 21 to 30 more strongly agreed that the MBA helped them feel confident about tackling unfamiliar problems (mean = 4.50) than was the case with the 31 to 40 age group (mean = 4.16, t = 1.82, p is less than 0.05) or the 41 to 50 age group (mean = 3.78, t = 1.86, p is less than 0.05).

The 21 to 30 age group more strongly agreed that the MBA improved their skills in written communication (mean = 4.44) than was the case with the 31 to 40 age group (mean = 3.84, t = 2.28, p is less than 0.05).

The youngest age group was more likely to agree that the MBA degree will assist them when they start their own business (mean = 4.33) then either the 31 to 40 age group (mean = 3.48, t = 2.84, p is less than 0.01) or the 41 to 50 age group (mean = 3.56, t = 1.73, p is less than 0.05).

In a similar way, the youngest age group more strongly agreed that the probability of starting a new business is greater than 50% (mean = 4.00) in comparison to the 31 to 40 age group (mean = 3.03, t = 2.43, p is less than 0.01) or the 41 to 50 age group (mean = 2.63, t = 2.74, p is less than 0.01).

**Employment status**

The data was analysed according to the employment status of the respondents. Again no statistically significant results were obtained except in one case:

It was found that the MBA students who were not working more strongly agreed that the probability of them starting a new business is greater than 50% (mean = 4.00) in comparison to those students working full-time during the MBA studies (mean = 2.88, t = 2.15, p is less than 0.05).

**Qualitative Analysis**

**Entrepreneurial and intrapreneurial skills**

The MBA students responded to a question regarding the development of entrepreneurial and intrapreneurial skills within the MBA program. Two percent felt that the MBA course should develop only entrepreneurial skills, with nearly 8% believing that only intrapreneurial skills should be developed, and the majority (83%) wanting both entrepreneurial and intrapreneurial skills development. The residual
(7%) expressed an interest in the MBA program developing entrepreneurial, intrapreneurial and other unstated skills in the program.

This finding could indicate that business managers are expected to be both entrepreneurial and innovative within their organizations and could give support to the latest literature showing existing large organizations develop new business ventures within their business units as shown by Orica (Fazzino and Sheldrake, 2003).

1) Prior to commencing the MBA, what were the main skills you intended to develop?

Overseas: Age between 31 – 50 years (2 females, 18 males) All Indian only I Chinese, I German).

Verbal and written communication and presentation skills (most popular), gaining of knowledge and technical expertise, business and marketing, analytical, finance, team working, leadership, computing, entrepreneurial and innovative thinking, opportunity screening, business plan writing, HRM, administrative acumen.

Local: Age (31-40 years predominantly) (6 females, 27 males)

Management (most popular), strategy formulation and implementation, leadership of innovation and technology, financial (most popular), IT, leadership (most popular), and strategy, marketing, project management, networking, overall business knowledge and acumen, HR knowledge, relationship management, evaluate business opportunities, unsure, generic business skills.

Finding: Prior to commencing the MBA, the main skills the overseas students intended to develop were communication and presentation skills whereas the local students, wanted management, financial, and leadership skills. This was the case for both the males and females in each group.

2) Subsequent to enrolment in the MBA have you changed your opinion about the skills you intended to develop:

Overseas: Age between 31 – 50 years. None, communication to presentation and writing skills x 2 from marketing, no (most popular), finance changed to soft inter-personal skills, project management, contact with oneself and others from it skills.

Local:
Broader management skills have been acquired, - not necessarily related to innovation, greater people and innovation focus, business strategy from just personal leadership and finance (most popular), financial from management leadership and organizational, evaluation and opportunities in the business environment, leadership style improved, leadership, management strategy and finance, more strategic less analytical, more self confident, commercially aware, socially active, wider thinking, ability to analyse and make more informed decisions, no.
Finding: Overseas students did not change their opinion about the skills they intended to develop which were communication and presentation skills whereas for local students those who had not been specific earlier changed from broad management skills to leadership and finance. Similarly for males and females.

3) **Explain why E and I should be developed**

**Overseas:** Age between 31 – 50 years
Both because people take up work in both corporate and self-employment and skills for both are identical to understand processes, because they are both necessary, for gaining sustainable competitive advantage companies require to be innovative and to seek new opportunities constantly, necessary to understand business.

**Local:** Age between 31 – 50 years
Because the students are drawn from both field of entrepreneurship and innovation, exposure to new possibilities, there is too much on start-ups, intrapreneurial skills needed for existing organizations, to ensure understanding of current business practices, balance, employment, both E and I to be diverse, leadership needed for a CEO role, competitive advantage, important for business development and personal growth, I for making change in organizations which is very difficult, new market development and reinventing the organization.

Finding:
Both overseas and local students agreed that both E and I skills were required in today’s business environments. Similarly for male and female. There was more focus placed on the intrapreneurial rather the entrepreneurial skills, which if they wanted, they would do an MEI.

3) **Examples of how you will apply these skills in your workplace**

**Overseas:** Age between 31 – 50 years
Introduce and manage change, relate better to others, measure end enhance productivity better, effective working in groups succinctly present your ideas to others with no communication gap, through inter- personal and personal skills, business knowledge, improve upon costing and forecasting of next years budget, finding new opportunities for the company, building new business, manage different parts of the company, leadership and fellowship, management systems, start-up a company, innovative thinking, mission statement and vision of company, leadership, communication and motivate others these are most popular (most popular).

**Local:** Age between 31 – 50 years
Execute a knowledge base, development of strategies, maximize business success, knowledge transition and creating an innovative culture, differentiation, marketing and business strategy, change management, personal development, consulting, group development, financial and organizational development, all round business acumen, leading teams, business planning, budget management, set up a personal diary plan to apply in the daily workplace, start-up a business (most popular), use in own business, building culture, promote non-standard thinking, promote training, improve leadership (most popular), new product implementation, problem solving, promote new ideas.
Finding:
The overseas students stated they would apply E and I skills in their workplace to motivate others and through their leadership and communication. Local students stated they would apply E and I skills in start-ups and to improve their leadership. Similarly for males and females.

**Strengths and weaknesses of the MBA program**

**Strengths of the MBA in terms of intrapreneurial skills development**

Overseas: Age between 31 – 50 years
Organization development stream is strong, financial (most popular) management, faculty are experienced, some industry knowledge, working in teams, interpersonal skills/communication and public speaking skill development, encouraging critical and analytical and focused thinking, organizational behaviour (most popular), teaching innovation and management, good contents and subjects and methodology, evolve leading and following skills and to establish new ventures, practical skills, promotion of independent thinking, focus on innovation and soft skills is high quality

Local:
3) Opportunity evaluation and development, finance subjects, action learning, strategy, personal awareness, 1) leadership stream (overwhelmingly most popular), 2) finance stream (most popular), practical, experiential, business planning, marketing, assignments, use of syndicate groups.

Finding:
Both the overseas and the local students sited the financial and the leadership streams as being the strengths of the MBA in terms of intrapreneurial skills development.

**Strengths of the MBA in terms of entrepreneurial skills development**

Overseas: Age between 31 – 50 years
Opportunity scanning, risk taking is encouraged, that there is no single way, org development is again taught well, name of the institute and positioning itself as being entrepreneurial, strong grounding provided in evaluating opportunities and in being consistent in business proposal, to develop business idea and start-up businesses, organisational behaviour, finance and organizational behaviour courses, assignment relating to opportunity exploration, OB, finance, strategy, opportunity evaluation, organizational behaviour and finance most popular.

Local:
1) Opportunity evaluation (most popular), and development, networking, business planning, lecturers with practical experience, focus on identification and execution, strategy development, overview of business environment, 2) finance (most popular), enhanced creativity, very street smart, analytical skills, develop ideas, marketing, lecturers and their work experience
Finding:
The overseas students sited opportunity evaluation, organizational behaviour and finance as the strengths of the MBA in terms of entrepreneurial skills development whereas the local students sited only opportunity evaluation and finance.

Weaknesses of the MBA in terms of intrapreneurial skills development

Overseas: Age between 31 – 50 years
Marketing and business development lack depth and academic rigor, more emphasis on finance and strategy needed, sessional lecturers are normally not of good standard, doesn’t sufficiently explain how to use intrapreneurial skills, lack of case studies and simulations, some overlap i.e. business planning and opportunity evaluation, too much discussion, no emphasis on economics, insufficient practical application, lack of exposure to detailed managerial environment i.e. visiting organizations lack of depth (most popular).

Local: Nothing (most popular), international students bring very little to the course, lack of case studies, no focus on SME development, lecturers do not have corporate background, too much waiting in group work, leadership subjects are too theoretical, course structure interaction focused on end assignment rather than class learning, administration, lack of depth in strategy development business models, never enough time to cover everything, occasionally difficult to link learning to real world and its complexities, too much emphasis on manufacturing not enough on service sector, too much overlap in subjects e.g. opportunity evaluation, business planning, marketing and strategy, not enough guest lecturers from industry, lack of corporate structure discussion, assumptions that intrapreneurship is welcomed in all organizations, too many HR subjects and shortage of assessment subjects such as risk assessment or statistical assessment, learning how to break down barriers without being conceived as nonconformist, lacks detail, there is a lot of talk of innovation but no different from other MBAs except less statistics, lack of case studies, lack of in-depth discussion on real topics and ways of application, too much theory and not enough practical application, focus on assignment requirement leads to lack of time for class discussion, not enough time to do everything, too many group assignments (most popular).

Finding:
The majority of the overseas students sited lack of depth as a weaknesses of the MBA in terms of intrapreneurial skills development whereas local students stated that there was too much theory and not enough practical application, focus on assignment requirement lead to lack of time for class discussion, not enough time to do everything, too many group assignments.

Weaknesses of the MBA in terms of entrepreneurial skills development

Overseas:
Lack of depth in teaching entrepreneurial skills, sessionals normally not of good standard, lack of opportunity to learn from feedback and apply what we learn, more practical elements could be introduced, too much to read and study in short period, no
time for reflection, business planning skills, not enough emphasis on thinking outside the box, punished for creative presentations, lecturers should bring in their experiences and examples instead of students, less real life Australian cases, more focus on start-ups instead of building up existing businesses, insufficient time (most popular), lack of guest lecturers who are experts and/or are investors.

Local:
Not enough industry based lecturers and relevance to the real world, not enough exposure, of entrepreneurial skills development, too much focus on entrepreneurial skill development, too much waiting during group work, too much focus on assignments, nothing, lecturers are not entrepreneurs, not useful in all organizations, business planning and entrepreneurial strategy are disappointing, lack of entrepreneurial guest speakers (most popular), no practical skills development, it is product focused, if I wanted entrepreneurial skills I would MEI, no information on cost ($$) of experimenting in real time, over marketed (most popular).

Finding:
The majority of overseas students stated insufficient time as a weakness of the MBA in terms of entrepreneurial skills development whereas local students identified a lack of entrepreneurial guest speakers and that the program was over marketed.

Discussion
The statistical findings showed that the teaching quality in the MBA program is high (83% - 96%) and indicates high quality student learning as shown in the literature (Ramsden, 1995). However, the quality of teacher’s feedback at 79% with 21% not being happy with the feedback received from academic staff is an area that could be improved.

Statements referring to students attaining high skills development was high (92% - 98%) in particular communication, problem solving, entrepreneurial and innovation skills. Statement fifteen refers to the probability of starting a new business with 72% of respondents reporting that there was more than a 50% chance of them starting up their own business.

Chi-square analysis revealed significant relationships between independent demographics variables such as age, gender and country of domicile including Southeast Asia and Australia and dependent variables of teaching and learning. In relation to preparedness for entrepreneurial activities, statistical testing suggests that male students were more likely to engage in intrapreneurial activities, whilst younger MBA students and MBA students who are not working were more likely to start a new business.

Prior to commencing the MBA, the main skills the overseas students intended to develop were communication and presentation skills whereas with the local students, wanted management, financial leadership skills. This was the case for both the males and females in each group. However, subsequent to their enrolment in the MBA overseas students did not change their opinion about the skills they intended to develop which were communication and presentation skills whereas for local students
those who had not been specific earlier changed from broad management skills to leadership and finance. Similarly for males and females.

Overwhelmingly, the results showed that the majority (83%) believed the MBA program should develop both entrepreneurial and intrapreneurial skills. Both overseas and local students agreed that entrepreneurial and intrapreneurial skills were required in today’s business environments. Similarly for male and female. There was more focus placed on the intrapreneurial rather the entrepreneurial skills which if they wanted, they would do a Master of Entrepreneurship and Innovation. The overseas students stated they would apply entrepreneurial and intrapreneurial skills in their workplace to motivate others and through their leadership and communication whereas local students stated they would apply entrepreneurial and intrapreneurial skills in start-up businesses and to improve their leadership. Similarly for males and females.

Both the overseas and the local students cited the financial and the leadership streams as being the strengths of the MBA in terms of intrapreneurial skills development. In relation to strengths of the MBA in terms of entrepreneurial skills development, the overseas students sited opportunity evaluation, organizational behaviour and finance as the strengths of the MBA in terms of entrepreneurial skills development whereas the local students sited only opportunity evaluation and finance.

The majority of the overseas students sited lack of depth as a weaknesses of the MBA in terms of intrapreneurial skills development whereas local students stated that there was too much theory and not enough practical application, focus on assignment requirement lead to lack of time for class discussion, not enough time to do everything, too many group assignments. In terms of weaknesses of the MBA, the majority of overseas students stated insufficient time as a weakness of the MBA in terms of entrepreneurial skills development whereas local students identified a lack of entrepreneurial guest speakers and that the program was over marketed.

Based on the findings of this research, the implication for management educators is to develop programs that consider the trends in organizational restructuring where many current organizations develop new business ventures within the organization itself and managers working within those contexts require entrepreneurial and intrapreneurial skills to function effectively.

**Conclusion**

Academics who develop and deliver management education curricula clearly play a significant role in the change process confronting management education. The content and role of management education is changing to include entrepreneurship and innovation with evidence that student cohorts value these skills.

Whilst the sample was representative of the MBA enrolment cohort, its limitations are that it is both small in size and a convenience sample. Future studies would benefit from a larger and more diverse sample including those who had completed their MBA some years ago.
The relatively high satisfaction rate with teaching and learning elements of the MBA program is an important finding of the study. In Australian universities, the MBA is entirely fee paying, driven by the need for the institutions to be more entrepreneurial and diversify the funding sources away from the public purse. Therefore it is important that the students are satisfied with the learning and teaching outcomes of the program. Further the university of the 21st century needs to be more market and service focussed, if it is to be successful both economically and academically especially in the light that younger students appear to be more entrepreneurially inclined than older students. This suggests that universities ought to be change agents and to be encouraging students to develop their business ideas sooner rather than later, whether that idea is to start a new business or innovate within an existing business.

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