"Because I Highlighted it in Green": Knowledge Bounded Teaching in the Classroom

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This paper examines the utilization of Bloom's taxonomic classification system in combination with institutional factors impacting teaching and learning in business schools. Graduates leave business school with the ability to highlight the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats of a business case, without truly being able to use analytical and problem-solving skills. Sadly, graduates are left unaware that they have become masters of the HHO method of business analysis: Hunting, Highlighting and Opinionating.

INTRODUCTION

Students in university business schools can come to believe that classroom learning is a passport to, and indication of future professional success. However, as most experienced professionals will admit, real world relevant situational problem solving requires a great deal of information search and critical thinking, on top any classroom learning. This apparent disconnect can be attributed to a lack of real-world situationally relevant teaching and learning in business school classrooms – and this has been a concern for at least the past fifty years. Porter and McKibbin (1988) emphasized the need for business schools to improve their capability to teach management and leadership. Findings from (Arum & Roska, 2011; Korn, 2012; Muff, 2012) indicate that many undergraduates, in particular business graduates, show little advancement in criticial thinking after four years of college

We suggest this lack of relevance can be due to, first, doctrinaire teaching of management theory and, second, to what we identify as the Hunting, Highlighting and Opinionating (HHO) method of applying theory knowledge in the classroom using business case exercises. Students are positioned outside the case situation as spectators, hunt for and highlight words and phrases in the case at face-value as knowledge-doctrinal labels, and use them to form opinions unsupported by any kind of situation analysis. The following classroom experience of one of the writers is illustrative of such non-relevant learning:

> Teacher: "*I see that you have highlighted your case study in different colours. Does green mean an Opportunity?*"
> Student: *"Yes, and red means a Threat."*
> Teacher: *"OK, so give me an Opportunity."*
> Student: *"The case says that this company is facing a growing market."*
> Teacher: *"What makes you say that this is an Opportunity?"*
> Student: *"Because I highlighted it in green."*

We argue here that powerful underlying and interacting forces of educational orthodoxies and business school customs-and-practices have been militating against more relevant classroom teaching and student learning.

"Bloom's Taxonomy" of learning objectives (Bloom, Engelhart, Furst, Hill, & Krathwohl, 1956), has become a dominant orthodoxy in North America. Classes of objectives are summarised in the Appendix at the end of this paper. Bloom et al. (1956) cautioned, however, that: *"Because of the simplicity of teaching and evaluating knowledge, it is frequently emphasized as an educational objective out of all proportion to its usefulness or its relevance for the development of the individual* (p. 34)*."* To the extent that the Taxonomy has become used for educational and institutional legitimization, and for the classification, normalization and examination of knowledge learning and teaching, it can be seen as obscuring Bloom et al's, (1956) wider intent that: *"What is needed is some evidence that students can do something with their knowledge, that is, that they can apply the information to new situations and problems... This has been labelled "critical thinking" by some, "reflective thinking" by Dewey and others, and "problem-solving" by still others* (p.38 and 39)*."*

University business schools generally may be operating with constrained resources and relatively high student numbers. They also may be experiencing external and university pressures to maintain competitive rankings and to develop and market new programs and delivery modes for more dispersed and diverse student segments. At the same time, faculty members are expected to "publish-or-perish" and, due to the increasing popularity of Course and Teaching Evaluation Questionnaires (CTEQ's) administered to students, to "be-popular-or-perish." These pressures and expectations, combined with *"the simplicity of teaching and evaluating knowledge"* may have become a knowledge-bound vicious circle in which there is no time for teaching situational critical thinking or problem-solving. Sadly, students learn only to be doctrinaire theorists and, at best (or worst) opininiated spectators who must be inherently non-relevant to (and in) real-world situations.

This paper goes on to explore the use of SWOT Analysis by students acting as spectators outside the situation where they can identify (only at face value illustration of theory) items that they think are important, i.e., descriptive SWOT's. Bloom's Taxonomic thinking is a driver towards this knowledge bound teaching.

Problem Statement

Professional development of students can be a direct reflection of the educational methods at colleges and universities. This paper examines the importance of Bloom's taxonomy in present education system at colleges and universities, and answers the following question: Why are problem solving methods better than knowledge-based learning?

OBSERVATIONS ON BLOOM'S TAXONOMY

Classes of Learning Objectives

Bloom et al, (1956) made *"...an attempt to build a taxonomy of educational objectives....intended to provide for classification of the goals of our educational system..."* (p.1). They described six major classes of learning objectives: 1. Knowledge, 2. Comprehension, 3. Application, 4. Analysis, 5. Synthesis, and 6. Evaluation. These are summarily described in the Appendix. The learning objectives in one class were stated as likely to make use of and be built on preceding classes.

Bloom et al., (1956) also were concerned that students learn situational problem solving. (The problem solving process involves analyzing the problem, evaluating material needs, devising a solution and exercising skills to execute the solution.) Bloom et al., (1956) considered that a person's cognitive abilities, knowledge and skills corresponded to his or her technical capability to resolve a new problem (which implies a new situation). They emphasized that students need to apply their knowledge and improve their problem-solving skills through practice in building on prior knowledge and experience. In new situations and facing new problems students could learn to adopt innovative techniques and evaluative methods to maximize desired outcomes.

Bloom et al. (1956) considered that problem solving skills go a long way in shaping an individual's personality and integrity, and that intellectual development of students could make them more effective individuals in society, However, culture in society and in educational institutions plays a crucial role in shaping individual preferences on learning. Bloom et al. (1956) contended that since culture may not change in the near future, the learning process and preferences may not change either. They asserted that institutions and teachers need to take deliberate initiatives to lay greater emphasis on skill development and intellectual learning based on knowledge application (in solving problems) rather than knowledge acquisition. More intellectually developed students becoming more effective individuals in society would, in turn, improve the learning culture over time.

These sentiments expressed by Bloom et al. (1956) appear to be the substance of managing in the real world. So why has Bloom's Taxonomy as institutionalized in practice not led to real-world relevant management education?

Taxonomic Education and Teaching

The influence of Bloom's Taxonomy is widespread and powerful. The taxonomy has become attractive for administrators and accreditation agencies for specifying and classifying the curriculum. Administrators also use the taxonomy as a basis for classifying and evaluating the teaching and learning activities and performance of teachers and students. The professional discourse of teachers also appears to be using Bloom's taxonomic classification scheme as a common language and expression of legitimacy.

Bloom et al. (1956) describe their classes of objectives in terms of *"the material"* (p.33) or *"the communication"* (p.205) and can be seen in the quotations included in the Appendix. This appears to be an inherent orientation towards classroom material and the teaching of it. Also, we have not found that Bloom et al. (1956) included *"situations"* in their descriptions of their classes of learning objectives. (See the Appendix). Taxonomic educational discourse and design therefore can be seen as inherently biased towards classroom teaching versus other real-world situations, and towards teacher-centric communications or materials versus students on their own using investigative problem solving.

For example, the language used by Bloom et al. (1956) with regard to "application" appears to focus on the classroom situation and on knowledge abstractions that can be demonstrated or applied to problems set by the teacher. They assert only that, with appropriate guidance and conceptual understanding, students would like to apply the best solution to a given problem without external help or prompting.

Such an approach may be suitable for science or engineering where the contextual theory applies in all situations and has analytical and prescriptive power. This is not the case in management where the theories are not scientific but merely approaches or perspectives that can be taken. The situation itself is determinate of what approach or perspective may be most effective as a basis for problem definition and action. Student learning must be situation investigative and analytical, so that information search and analytical processes develop their critical thinking and problem solving methodologies.

"Analysis" also appears to be described by Bloom et al., (1956) as concerned with classroom *"communications"* by the teacher. In this sense such analysis is likely to be teacher-knowledge-bounded. They illustrate that the analysis of knowledge is categorizing ideas into a hierarchy such that the knowledge is organized while conveying the intended message. This appears to be theoretical analysis rather than situation analysis.

We do not find in Bloom et al.'s, (1956) descriptions of their classes of learning objectives any statements that include real-world situational application or analysis where knowledge of the real-world here-and-now situation and problem is derived in and of the situation at the time, using critical thinking and problem-solving. We recognise, however, that prior classroom-taught knowledge can be useful in situation analysis, as the analyst needs to know what he or she may be looking for, where it may be found, and what analyses can lead to useful findings.

The orthodox educational and institutional interpretations of Bloom's Taxonomy appear to be as doctrinal theory that, in itself, has become teacher- and classroom-based and knowledge-bound. This is in

contrast to situational learning by students – which teachers cannot as easily specify or control, and administrators cannot as easily measure.

Taxonomic Drivers of Knowledge-Bound Teaching

Bloom et al. (1956) cautioned that *"(knowledge) frequently is emphasized as an educational objective out of all proportion to its usefulness or relevance…*(p.34)*."* This is because the simplicity of teaching and evaluating knowledge learning is ever attractive to teachers, institutional administrators and accreditation agencies. Students also are likely to prefer to be taught classroom knowledge because this learning is unchallenging and straightforward, and the more they know the more marks they can expect.
The Taxonomic principle that "*the objectives in one class are likely to make use of and be built on the behaviours found in the preceding classes"* (Bloom et al. 1956, p.18). This can be interpreted dogmatically as dictating that there always must be strict linear progression in program curricula and classroom course content sequentially from (what has become so-called "lower-level") technical Knowledge, Comprehension and Application to (so-called "higher-level") intellectual abilities and skills of Analysis, Synthesis and Evaluation. This can be an inherent tendency for content, in practice, to remain largely Knowledge-bound, especially as the uses of the Knowledge are covered only later in sequence. This being so, students are unlikely to see any real purpose in learning the prior Knowledge and they have no reason to remember it or incorporate it into skills development. (We are aware that so-called "spiral curricula" are attempts to break away from this linear progression.)

Bloom et al., (1956) explained that complete training involves the cognitive domain along with classes of learning objectives including synthesis and evaluation. It can be suggested, however, that Taxonomic learning objectives take for granted that analysis, synthesis and evaluation are classroom based (for thinkers) and do not explicitly recognize real-world situations outside the classroom. This appears to indicate that analysis, synthesis and evaluation are expected to be learned only relative to classroom-communicated knowledge (theory), rather than being used in real-world situations to find situationally relevant knowledge and information.

Bloom et al.'s (1956) Taxonomy can be used as methods of classifying achievement levels of learning. Taxonomic-ideological educational program designers are able to perceive that certain kinds of students do not need so-called "higher level" intellectual abilities and skills. They can perceive that the education of technicians (doers) need not be concerned with the (higher-level) intellectual abilities and skills of analysis, synthesis and evaluation. Perhaps they do not need the scientific or engineering theory in order to do their jobs. However, in the situational reality where the engine in our car will not start we hope that the mechanic, i.e., the technician, has learned to do some real-world situational critical thinking and problem-solving, i.e., situational application, analysis, synthesis and evaluation, and can find and fix the problem!

Tendency towards Doctrinaire Teaching and Learning

Arum & Roksa (2011) examined the performance of undergraduate students at twenty-four United States colleges and universities in writing the Collegiate Learning Assessment, a national essay test of writing and reasoning skills. They found that: *"At least 45 per cent of students in our sample did not demonstrate any statistically significant improvement in CLA performance during the first two years of college…"* and that their *"gains in critical thinking, complex reasoning and written communication are either exceedingly small or empirically non-existent"* (Arum & Roksa, 2011, p.121). These findings are seen as indicative of knowledge-bound "doctrinaire" teaching and learning that characteristically is classroom-oriented, teacher-centric, textbook theory knowledge-only and gives no consideration to any practical application in real world situations. Business students' scores improved less than students in a range of other disciplines, including education, engineering/computer science, communications, health, humanities/social sciences and sciences/mathematics (Arum & Roksa, 2011, p.105).

In business school classrooms, students can be led to believe (wrongly) that so-called management theory knowledge only has to be applied "scientifically" to the real world to get the right answer. (Real scientific theory is objective and has analytical and predictive application everywhere, so that it is

inherently non-situational, but management theory is not scientific theory!) Doctrinaire business school students and graduates clearly cannot be real-world relevant because they have experienced no real situational orientation where they had to find and use information in and of the situation at the time, for analysis, problem definition and problem solving. It follows that doctrinaire individuals have no difficulty in saying (normatively or prescriptively) what should be considered, or what should be done; and this is because they do not think of analytical considerations in the situation at the time, or of what to and how to do it in practice.

Knowledge Application as Opinionated Spectator Teaching and Learning

Bloom et al.'s, (1956) Taxonomy describes six classes of learning objectives: 1. Knowledge, 2. Comprehension, 3. Application, 4. Analysis, 5. Synthesis, and 6. Evaluation. We note again that scientific theory is objective and inherently non-situational and so its Application can be carried out in a non-situational but still (theory) problem-oriented manner. On the other hand, however, management so-called theory is not scientific and its application needs to be situational, as determined by the critical thinking of the situation analyst at the time. Taxonomic teaching of "Application" can be done in a knowledge-bound manner whereby doctrinaire theory is "applied to" some situation but its "applicability in" the situation is not critically explored.

In classroom discussions of business management case exercises teachers can put students in the role of spectators outside the case situation and they are expected to illustratively "apply" theory knowledge. As spectators, students only can offer labelling of items in the case at face-value, theory commentary, and intuitive and largely unsupported opinions. Applying prior knowledge to a case situation from the outside is not the same an application-or-use of knowledge from inside the situation to find and use information in and of the situation at the time. Positioned outside the situational reality of the case students are in no position to do any analysis, critical thinking or problem-solving relevant to the case situation. Opinionated Spectator teaching and learning in the classroom through so-Called SWOT (Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, Threats) Analysis discussions is described in more detail below.

STRENGTHS, WEAKNESSES, OPPORTUNITIES, THREATS (SWOT) ANALYSIS

"The case method has become a traditional, almost taken-for-granted feature of management education and learning" (Mesny, 2013, p. 56). Business school courses with on-paper management or strategy content often include as orthodox pedagogy the "SWOT Analysis" of business case studies. (This usually is indicated as the means for student learning of problem analysis involving critical and integrative thinking.) So-called SWOT Analysis is a review process that appears to be for analyzing a company's Strengths (including advantages) and Weaknesses (including disadvantages), and the business competitive environmental Opportunities and Threats that it is facing. The identified "SWOT's" can be seen as describing the company's strategic position and to indicate possible strategy directions for the future. A typical SWOT Analysis process can be structured as follows:

- Summary overview
- Problem statement
- Identification of SWOTs
- Identification of strategy alternatives
- Choice of strategy
- Implementation Plan

As noted above, the classroom teaching of SWOT Analysis can be done in a theory-knowledge-bound and illustrative manner, where students oriented outside the situation can do no situation analysis and learn to become opinionated spectators. Sadly, however, students are left believing that they are doing real-world relevant problem analysis. Proponents of evidence-based management have lamented the popularity of the (SWOT Analysis) case method or, more to the point, how its application has tended to de-emphasize evidence based principles (Rousseau & McCarthy, 2007). Mesny (2013: 62) stated that: *"The case philosophy is against teaching general principles derived from research."* There seems to be

an inherent disconnect between the opinionated spectator type of SWOT Analysis case teaching and a (situation analytical) evidence-based approach.

Applied to the Situation versus Used in the Situation

In applying SWOT Analysis as spectators outside the situation students can identify (only at face value) items that they think are important, i.e., descriptive SWOT's. They also can include textbook knowledge items that may be general and normative, or type-situational and prescriptive.

In other words, students are taught to carry out only Hunting, Highlighting and Opinionating (HHO). Students are encouraged to identify at face-value what they see as key knowledge statements (or labels) in the text (or Hunting); to illustrate their identification as somehow relevant and meaningful (Highlighting); and, to state their unsupported opinions in terms of applied normative theory or generic possibilities (Opinionating). The HHO method lays a great emphasis on knowledge, but largely ignores the application of, and search for knowledge in and of the situation at the time, and cannot develop situation analytical, critical thinking and problem-solving skills.

Taxonomic teaching does not encourage an in-situational perspective. As well, institutional pressures can limit the time that teachers can spend on their teaching – and taking an inside-situation perspective that enables and even demand real analysis takes more time in assisting students to learn. Instead, students can be asked simply to shout out items that they think are SWOTs and get their participation marks. For example, *"The case says that this company has a high market share and this is a Strength."* Teachers who are aiming for high Course Teaching Evaluation Questionnaire scores do not ask whether student shout-outs are based on face-value opinions or analytical reasoning.

Premature Problem Statement

According to the typical SWOT Analysis process outlined above the problem is usually stated before doing any (so-called) analysis. Doing so seems premature and likely to limit and predetermine any findings and conclusions. On other hand, stating the problem at the start appears to be useful where the SWOT exercise is expected to merely knowledge descriptive or illustrative.

Believing that SWOT-Lists are Analysis

Identification of Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats (SWOT's) in the classroom can be done by setting up these headings on the board and simply listing whatever students shout out. Students need not be required to provide their situation analysis and major findings to the class to support what they shout out. In particular, the details of the financial performance and situation of the company, specific implications of changing and developing product and market technologies, and significant operational and organizational details need not be explored. Sadly, students can learn to believe that unorganized SWOT-lists derived by using the HHO method (described above) are analysis. In fact, such lists are merely identification of words and phrases in the case that may be, at best, illustrative of some important factors (in theory). Students are left unknowing that SWOTs should be situation-specific conclusions based on analysis and findings in the here-and-now situation. The only way to be sure that students have done the required analysis is to have them write it down individually and hand it in for marking. However, teachers have neither the time nor the teaching support to be able to do this and students may not be capable of doing such analysis because it has not previously been required of them.

Unfortunately, when students graduate to management positions in the real world they are likely to continue to use intuitive SWOT-lists, believing (wrongly) that this is situation analysis. Because they know no better will be, and will be seen to be, doctrinaire and non-relevant to the real situation.

Using Normative Categorical Generalities and Type-Situational Prescriptions

Where prior supporting critical thinking situation analysis is not required in determining SWOTs, students easily can compile general SWOT lists in the classroom or in written assignments by listing textbook and other normative, categorical generalities in the context of the case. For example, "High market share is a Strength," "A growing market is an Opportunity," Increasing price competition is a

Threat." Categorial generalities may be contextually meaningful and illustrative, but to the extent that they do not have situational specificity such generalities cannot have informative meaning in any here-and-now situation. Type-situational prescriptions also can be used, for example, "In this type of situation, market share is important." They also will be correct in the context but not necessarily meaningful in the situation that is being considered.

In contrast, in the real-world context of the stock market it is a meaningful categorical generality that the way to make money is to buy low and sell high. It is the situational specificity of when and what to buy and sell that is the real problem – and this demands critical thinking and situationalization in the here-and-now for analysis and for strategy formulation.

Nevertheless, because categorial generalities and type-situational prescriptions are contextually not incorrect, shouting them out can be an effective way for students to get participation marks. Students who are trained to believe that situation analysis is simply listing as SWOTs and as many contextually appropriate theory normative generalities and type-situational prescriptions that they can think of are unlikely to develop the situational critical thinking needed for real-world relevance. When students graduate to real-world management positions, just mouthing normative generalities and type-situational prescriptions can be an effective means for annoying those who must do the work in the situation and get the results. For students who decide to further their education with an MBA or PhD learning can be extremely difficult if they have not been trained to effectively analyze situations and problems, and discuss the issues at hand.

Believing that Lists of Strategy Alternatives are Meaningful

In the classroom, so-called strategy alternatives can be listed on the whiteboard, based on what students shout out. These can be strategy categorial generalities from the textbooks. For example, the four Porter (1980) generic business strategies, the four Ansoff (1965) growth directions, and any other strategy options listed in the course textbook. Such a list of so-called alternatives is categorially illustrative and without specific meaning for the here-and-now situation of the company in the case being studied. It is simply a testament to students' knowledge recall.

In a situation analytical and critical-thinking approach the strategy options available in a specific here-and-now situation should be a product of the situation analysis. Knowledge of general categorial strategy possibilities for the future can be useful in stimulating imaginative strategic problem/opportunity definitions and solutions.

Picking a Strategy and Rationalizing It

Following a listing of so-called strategy alternatives, so-called strategy choice can be done simply by picking a growth strategy and rationalizing it. Students can say: *"Based on the XYZ Company's market competitive situation, right now, strategic options that should be considered include market consolidation or penetration, product development, market development and innovation/diversification."* Students can go on intuitively to pick one (or all) of the strategy "options" that they have listed and indicate in a general way how it/they might be implemented. (It is likely however that detailed information needed for a proper situational implementation plan may not be included in the case.) Sadly, the students then can believe (wrongly) that they have properly exercised strategic thinking and correctly completed the case exercise.

Such SWOT analysis strategy choices must be unreal and meaningless because students have not carried out a critical thinking in-situation here-and-now analysis. They simply have listed normative categories or type-situational prescriptions for strategic thinking that are always contextually applicable to every company in the world. The real problem in a business corporation's strategic situational here-and-now and into the future is which specific, situationalized strategy is reasoned to be most effective to implement and execute, to produce the desired results. It does not matter what textbook authors or anyone else may label this strategy.

Sadly, teachers under time and resource pressures have every reason not to lead students to do real analysis that will take more time to teach and mark. As well, students may find real analysis time-

consuming, hard to do, and frustrating, so that they may reciprocate their dissatisfaction as lower CTEQ scores.

What Students Learn to Do to get the Marks

Students can list more strengths and opportunities so that a growth strategy can be "justified" and recommended. This enables an implementation plan to be written in hopes of getting more content into the assignment and higher marks. (Students also may believe that their "being positive" in picking a growth strategy will favourably impress the instructor.) It may be, however, that in its situational here-and-now the company under study cannot support a growth strategy, but students cannot take these things into account if they do not look for them.

Students can use their knowledge effectively when they are encouraged to do so. Their effectiveness is a function of both their cognitive skills and emotional response to new experiences (Kuhlthau, 1991). Students need to be led to carry out situational analyses so that they are likely to learn to recognise specific financial, operational and other situational information, and therefore to not always and unthinkingly pick a growth strategy.

INSTITUTIONAL FORCES AFFECTING TEACHERS IN BUSINESS SCHOOLS

Bloom's taxonomy, in use as a classification and specification scheme for classroom taught content, appears to have inherent tendencies towards being knowledge-bound and not to be concerned with "situations." Institutional forces affecting business school teachers include operating budgets, research drivers, customer marketing orientation activities, and student satisfaction scores. These forces are seen to interact with taxonomic ideology to effectively drive classroom teaching to become and remain knowledge-bound.

Operating Budgets

University administrators allocate operating budgets to academic units, i.e., faculties, schools or departments, and they also can specify what each unit is to do with this allocation. Some units are allocated more than others. As well, there need be no direct relationship between a unit's operating budget (and therefore the number of faculty members available to teach the courses) and its teaching load (measured in terms of the total number of student registrations in its courses). Business schools generally can have higher total numbers of student registrations and lower operating budget allocations, and therefore larger average class sizes that teachers must cope with on their own. Glenn, (2011) suggested that reasons for the low level of student learning in business undergraduate programs in the study by Arum & Roksa, (2011) were that business schools are often cheap to operate, with large student-to-faculty ratios and no lab equipment.

Research Drivers

The university academic culture demands research publications from faculty. Second, for business schools in particular, the report by Gordon & Howell, (1959) has continued to be a powerful driver of "scientific" research as demonstrated by published journal articles. Various writers have argued that this research bias has militated against the teaching of management, e.g., Bennis & O'Toole (2005); and Mintzberg (2009). Khurana (2007) wrote that: *"...Faculty are hired and promoted based on the basis of discipline-oriented research that...often has little or no bearing on the practice of management* (p.369-370)." As well, business schools' intellectual contributions are being used as criteria in media rankings (Gioia & Corley, 2002), so that maximizing publication counts is a priority for media-ranked schools and their faculty members. The *Financial Times,* (2011) noted government criticism of United Kingdom business schools for focusing on research at the expense of teaching.

The requirement to "publish or perish" is brutally evident in tenure and promotion processes, where research publications count the most. Faculty members can maximize time for research and publication efforts by minimizing time spent on teaching and on institutional service activities that are taken for

granted. See, for example, Harmon, (2006); Khurana, (2007). Large classes generally should be avoided and, if they must be taught, reducing content to knowledge-only from the textbook and using the publisher's support package can save time. Time also can be saved by doing no course development and by minimizing time spent on marking. Service work may include academic programming and curriculum design, course development, accreditation compliance, and academic administrative activities. Spending time on service can mean fewer publications and, therefore, no recommendation for tenure (Banks, 1994).

Business School Marketing Activities

Media-ranked schools always must be striving to preserve their rankings, presumably through providing what the media, their employer recruiter clienteles and their students-as-customers are looking for. Accordingly, ranked schools can be expected to be directing time, effort and money primarily to these items and the content of the program curriculum may suffer accordingly. See, for example, Navarro (2008); Pfeffer & Fong (2004); and Rubin & Dierdorff (2009).

Low- or not-ranked business schools generally are competing with each other in a geographically fragmented market for business management degree credentials. These schools (or their administrators) are trying to improve their market competitiveness and increase their student numbers. They are offering modified or focused programs, introducing part-time or block attendance, establishing alternative delivery modes such as internet-based distance-learning, obtaining accreditation, and building a brand. Concerns have been expressed that this competition is creating an "explosion" of offerings and watering down and devaluing the MBA degree (*Canadian Business,* 2006, p. 94). These market initiatives can take funds away from teaching budgets that are already spread thin, so that there will be fewer full-time faculty left to teach and class sizes may be increased accordingly. More program and course development work is required to support market initiatives and more and different types of students and delivery modes must be coped with in course teaching. These are further calls on faculty members' time, which they cannot afford to spend because they must "publish or perish." If the marketing efforts are successful in increasing student numbers this will only make things worse. The cycle is further encouraged by course remissions for research initiatives publications, which take faculty members out of the classroom to spend time working on further research projects. Sessional, contractual and non-researchers are left to do more teaching while the researchers do more research and publications, and the cycle continues.

Student Satisfaction Scores for Classroom Teachers

Teachers' scores in "Classroom Teaching Evaluation Questionnaires" (CTEQ's) completed by students, and any complaints by them, can be used in tenure and promotion decisions. Reducing content in amount and in level of learning ("dumbing-down") and judicious grade inflation are well-known means for influencing students to reciprocate with higher CTEQ scores for the teacher (Clayson, Frost & Sheffet, 2006). Content reduction includes removal of situational problem analysis because this can be hard to learn and can lead students to be unhappy with what they do not know, and so reciprocate with low CTEQ scores for the teacher.

DISCUSSION

Textbook "theories" of management, organization, and organization behaviour are not theories in any scientific sense. They are only means of structuring subject area knowledge and do not have application in any scientific analytical or predictive sense. Nevertheless, as these theories are discursively so-called, students may be inculcated with the belief that they are scientific and should be so applied to practice. This is a classic case of non-relevance: students learn knowledge that is non-relevant to real-world situations, but are led to believe that applying the theories scientifically in the real world is relevant in practice. What students really are being taught is management doctrine and what they learn is to be doctrinaire.

Where courses early in a program are content reduced students will not learn what they need to know for later courses. It follows, therefore, that courses throughout the program are likely to be progressively

content-minimized so that students can cope with them. Content minimization of business school courses accompanied by systemic grade inflation may be associated with the lower level of intellectual learning identified by Arum & Roksa (2011) in business undergraduate programs (Glenn, 2011).

According to *A-EPSBA*, (2003-2012)

> …management education must prepare students to contribute to their organizations and the larger society and to grow personally and professionally throughout their careers…Accreditation focuses on the quality of education…It is important to note that accreditation does not create quality learning experiences. Academic quality is created by the educational standards implemented by individual faculty in interaction with students… (p. 3).

Presumably, business schools generally would subscribe to these sentiments. In practice, however, faculty members who must "publish or perish" cannot afford to spend any more than minimum time on their own teaching, or to waste time on service activities such as program and course design. (Of course, no sensible faculty member is going to admit to doctrinaire or opinionated spectator, time-minimized, knowledge-only teaching. In organizational communications regarding learning objectives, rubrics and other documentation teachers can use discursive imaging of real-world relevant student learning of information search, analytical and critical thinking, and problem-solving. On paper and discursively, the course learning will be what administrators and accreditation agencies want to see and hear but it will not be what students, in practice, are learning in the classrooms.)

Exacerbating this situation, research productivity traditionally has resulted in course remissions, along with higher pay and promotion opportunities. (It is acknowledged that some schools are recognizing and similarly rewarding good teaching.) In practice, therefore, the nature and extent of academic quality in teaching and learning in business schools may be questioned.

Accredited status can translate into business school academic and administrative cultures as the belief that being accredited must mean that they should be producing more intellectual contributions, similar to so-called top-ranked schools. Research publication production and productivity performance requirements for faculty members in accredited and aspiring schools therefore can be increased. Faculty members therefore will need to spend even more time on research publication efforts, and this will mean even less time on teaching and service activities needed to create "academic quality." In such schools, the result of accreditation in practice can be lower academic quality – precisely the opposite of what accreditation is intended to bring about.

Andrich (2002) illustrated that learning in a repetitive environment is less effective than learning in a progressive environment. It follows that, in business schools, students as opinionated spectators can be taught through SWOT Analysis how to master the HHO method and pick out items that can act as convenient hooks upon which to hang normative, categorial textbook theory. Students also can learn to use unthinking guesswork in filling in the SWOT boxes, and more guesswork in picking some kind of growth strategy category, because normatively or prescriptively this is always what should be done, or what to do. As a result of SWOT and illustrative learning, students can come to believe that they have learned to apply management knowledge in real-world situations. This is hardly progressive.

Bloom Taxonomic Knowledge-bound thinking and institutional pressures including large classes and requirements to publish-or-perish and to be-popular-or-perish can mean that business school teachers are not, and likely never have been, motivated to teach real situational problem analysis in their classrooms. As a result, classroom teaching has remained knowledge-bound and students have learned to be non-relevant, but to believe that they are relevant.

To close on a somewhat positive note: In the face of taxonomic and institutional pressures what can be done to improve business school teaching and learning for real-world situational relevance? University business schools need to enable and motivate faculty members to spend more time on situational teaching and learning in the classroom. University business schools (or their administrators) generally have been trying to do too much with too little. They also may have been concentrating their limited resources and rewards on high status (pure or thinking) activities, i.e., research, while discriminating against the low status (applied, doing or technical) activities of teaching and learning for the business management

profession. Within the academic culture and administrative processes, a reassessment of school aspirations and a more sensible balance between job responsibilities for, and rewards from, research, teaching and engagement would go a long way in addressing the lack of real-world situational relevance in student learning. In other words, faculty members need to be supported in, given motivation to spend time on, and rewarded for teaching and program development activities for situational application. There is also a need to consider better assessment methods. Palmer and Devitt (2007) asserted that assessment tests also should focus on appropriate cognitive skills and a candidate's performance ability along with content. We recognise that addressing these issues will not be easy, especially because business schools may be at the bottom of the resource allocation totem pole in universities generally. Perhaps business schools should be reducing their student numbers drastically in order to reduce class sizes and generally improve resources for more relevant teaching and learning.

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APPENDIX
BLOOM'S TAXONOMY: CLASSES OF LEARNING OBJECTIVES

All page numbers are from (Bloom, Engelhart, Furst, Hill, & Krathwohl, 1956).

1. KNOWLEDGE: "Knowledge, as defined here, involves the recall of specifics and universals, the recall of methods and processes, or the recall of a pattern, structure or setting" (p.201).

Bloom et al, (1956) cautioned that: "Because of the simplicity of teaching and evaluating knowledge, it is frequently emphasized as an educational objective out of all proportion to its usefulness or its relevance for the development of the individual" (. p34).

Bloom et al. (1956) included all of the remaining classes of learning objectives under the heading "Intellectual Abilities and Skills" and commented as follows: "Problem-solving or thinking cannot be carried out in a vacuum, but must be based upon knowledge of some of the "realities." The intellectual abilities represented in the taxonomy assume knowledge as a prerequisite. Knowledge becomes either the material with which the problem-solving deals or it becomes the test of the adequacy and accuracy of the problem-solving" (p. 33).

2. COMPREHENSION: "...represents the lowest level of understanding...such that the individual knows what is being communicated and can make use of the material or idea being communicated without necessarily relating it to other material or seeing its fullest implications" (p. 204).

3. APPLICATION: "The use of abstractions in particular and concrete situations. The abstractions may be in the form of general ideas, rules of procedures, or generalized methods. The abstractions may also be technical principles, ideas, and theories which must be remembered and applied" (p. 205).

4. ANALYSIS: "The breakdown of a communication into its constituent elements or parts such that the relative hierarchy of ideas is made clear and/or the relations between the ideas expressed are made explicit. Such analyses are intended to clarify the communication, to indicate how the communication is organized, and the way in which it manages to convey its effects, as well as its basis and arrangement" (p. 205).

The taxonomy provides some elucidation of concepts, as follows:

> "In comprehension the emphasis is on the grasp of the meaning and intent of the material. In application it is on remembering and bringing to bear upon given material the appropriate generalizations or principles. Analysis emphasises the breakdown of the material into its constituent parts and detection of the relationships of the parts and of the way they are organized" (p. 144).

5. SYNTHESIS: “The putting together of elements and parts so as to form a whole. This involves the process of working with pieces, parts, elements, etc., and arranging or combining them in such a way as to constitute a pattern or structure not clearly there before” (p. 206).
6. EVALUATION: “Judgments about the value of material and methods for given purposes. Quantitative and qualitative judgments about the extent to which material and methods satisfy criteria. Use of a standard of appraisal” (p. 207).
Earlier in the Taxonomy:

> “(Evaluation) is defined as the making of judgments about the value, for some purpose, of ideas, works, solutions, methods, material, etc. It involves the use of criteria as well as standards for appraising the extent to which particulars are accurate, effective, economical, or satisfying. The judgments may be either quantitative or qualitative, and the criteria may be either those determined by the student or those which are given to him...Although Evaluation is placed last in the cognitive domain because it is regarded a requiring to some extent all the other categories of behaviour, it is not necessarily the last step in thinking and problem-solving. It is quite possible that the evaluative process will in some cases be the prelude to the acquisition of new knowledge, and new attempt at comprehension or application, or a new analysis and synthesis” (p. 185).

Anderson et al., (2001) made a clear distinction between two domains: The Knowledge Domain and the Cognitive Process Domain. The Knowledge Domain was seen as constituted by four types of knowledge: Factual, Conceptual, Procedural and Metacognitive. The Cognitive Process Domain was seen as constituted by six types of thinking: Remembering, Understanding, Applying, Analyzing, Evaluating and Creating.

_____ Arum & Roska, 2011; Korn, 2012; Muff, 2012