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Student Managed Investment Fund Participation and Career Readiness in Business Education

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Abstract

Student run investment clubs represent an intensive form of experiential learning that integrates academic knowledge practical skill development and professional socialization within business education. Drawing on experiential learning theory and the high impact practices framework this study examines how participation in a student managed exchange traded fund portfolio influences multidimensional college adjustment and early career outcomes. College adjustment is conceptualized using the Student Adaptation to College Questionnaire which measures academic adjustment social adjustment personal emotional adjustment and institutional attachment (Baker & Siryk, 1984 1989). Data are being collected through an Institutional Review Board approved mixed methods design at a public university in the Middle Tennessee region. Quantitative survey data from current club members assess adjustment across SACQ domains while qualitative interviews with alumni one to five years post-graduation examine perceived career readiness professional identity development and employment trajectories. Experiential learning theory suggests that sustained engagement in authentic financial decision making promotes deep learning skill transfer and self-efficacy (Kolb, 1984) while high impact practice research predicts gains in persistence engagement and post-graduation success through intensive collaborative environments (Kuh, 2008). The study contributes to management education and talent development research by providing evidence on whether student managed investment funds function as a high impact practice that enhances student success and workforce preparation. Findings are expected to inform faculty advising co-curricular program design and institutional strategies aimed at improving career readiness and long-term professional outcomes for business graduates.

Keywords: Experiential learning, High impact practices, Career readiness, Business students, Gen Z