

## THE IMPORTANCE OF THE TRAINEESHIP OF MANAGERIAL PRACTICE IN THE PROFESSIONAL TRAINING OF THE STUDENTS OF FACULTIES WITH SPORT PROFILE

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**Abstract.** Learning by doing represents a method of training students to build the skills they need to become valuable employees or responsible entrepreneurs. Thus, within the managerial practice, students apply interdisciplinary the studied notions and realize their deepening in a functional system, university or specialized department, and at the same time is created the didactic endeavor by the practice manager for the approach and application of some new concepts, useful in organizing and management a business in the field of sport. The traineeships of practice constitute an compulsory integral part of the educational process and are carried out in order to deepen the theoretical knowledge accumulated by the students during the years of study and the training of competences established by the National Qualifications Framework. Being a main element of the educational process and professional activity, the traineeship of practice provides the training of professional competences and the accumulation of experience regarding the organization and achievement of the activities in the professional field. The success of graduates in the labour market will depend, to a large extent, on the degree to which they will know the specifics of the professional activity. As a result of carrying out of the traineeships of practice, the student - the future specialist, can determine the prospects of professional achievement in the chosen system of specialization, and the results of the practice justify the assignment of the professional qualification to the graduate.

**Introduction.** According to Vermunt J. [10], teaching and learning are interdependent processes that can be mutually adjustable, by adapting the teaching strategies used by the teacher to the way in which the students use and regulate their learning activities. Teaching, thus involves, guiding students in the process of choosing learning strategies that allow building, modifying, and utilizing knowledge. Such teaching is oriented towards learning processes and, implicitly, towards student, because it focuses on processes through which knowledge is built and then applied in practice. Most frequently, studies that have addressed this issue have found an increase in understanding, metacognition and autoregulation [8, 9]. Furthermore, studies show that learning oriented towards sense is associated in a positive way with the indicators of efficiency of the study, even in the case of the scores obtained at the exams that contain factual questions. Learning oriented towards reproduction has shown negative correlations with results measurement systems. Purely undirected learning has shown, for the most part, strong negative relationships with performance at the exams, while in most cases, application-oriented learning has demonstrated a lack of a relationship with academic success. In addition, the usual exams in the first years of

higher education succeed with great difficulty to capitalize on students' ability to use critical, analytical and concrete processing strategies [4, 10].

**The objective of the research** constitutes the determination of the development level of practical skills, in graduates, as an objective way of evaluating the efficiency of interdisciplinary learning activities centered on the study of marketing researches, carried out by various technologies. The assessment at the level of II cycle, „Marketing and Legislation” specialization, within the framework of deployment of the managerial practice, provides the necessary information for the adoption, on a scientific basis, of some measures to establish continuity in the process of education and training of the students.

**The purpose** of this research constitutes the analysis of measure in which a program of managerial practice, run by the MA students of the „Marketing and Legislation in Sport” specialty, can contribute to the efficiency of learning and lead to changing the students' views and concepts about learning in a constructive way.

Another objective, derived from this, is verifying of the impact of such a program on the development and improvement of students' learning strategies and styles, directed towards understanding and self-regulating learning. It is known

that the assesment covers the efficiency of education and training in terms of the relationship between the projected objectives and the results obtained by the students through their activities. The evaluation follows the consequences of the action taken by the teacher in the process of formation of general and specific competences of the students [2, 4]. Thus, three directions of evaluation can be envisaged through appropriate didactic strategies, ending with apreciations on the internal functioning of the educational-instructive action, namely: evaluation of the attitudes, knowledge and skills of the students of Cycle II.

Through the formative experiment and starting from the **general hypothesis**, according to which the integrated design and implementation of an optional educational program within the managerial practice, with emphasis on the individual activity of the graduates with a specific in the realization of the marketing researches, will determine the development of practical skills, written and oral communication, of attitudes to valorizing the act of learning, by capitalizing on complex interactions within managerial practice.

The objectives monitored by us during the deployment of traineeship of practice period were mainly those pedagogical focused on the development:

- of personal competences, respectively: workplace efficiency, flexibility, result orientation, seriousness, appropriate behavior, willingness to learn on a continuous basis, time management in order to make the activity more efficient at the organization level;

- social skills (interpersonal communication, teamwork, problem solving, leadership) for the development of professional activity.

Also, have been monitored and the economic objectives that can be achieved through students' activities that can lead to the acquisition of skills to anticipate customer needs by promoting an appropriate offer in tourism; their ability to develop marketing strategies tailored to specific market segments; the ability to properly manage the human resources of a sports or tourism entity.

According to the university curriculum of managerial practice within the Department of Physical Culture Management (specialty department of the State University of Physical Education and Sport responsible for organizing and

conducting the respective internship of practice), its objectives are established concrete as follows:

The traineeships of managerial practice aim to achieve the following objectives:

- Familiarizing students with different management and guidance structures from the field of physical education and sport such as:

- associations and sports clubs;
- sports schools from different rank;
- sports federations.

- Strengthening and deepening of management and guidance skills, as well as their transformation into managerial skills and abilities.

- Forming the ethical and management skills of the manager according to the contemporary requirements.

- Strengthening the management and organising experience of future managers in current links.

- Strengthening the professional interest, as well as stimulating the interest for the independent and creative activity.

- Developing managerial skills and the ability to apply in various conditions the acquired knowledge.

- Speeding up the process of employment of the students into the respective function and subdivision.

- Deepening the practical knowledge through the profile activity.

- Studying by the coordinator and leader of traineeship of practice of the student interns capacities and skills in order to efficient framing of them in the field of specialization of the chosen profession.

Starting from the study *hypothesis*, supplemented by the fact that a managerial practice program run by MA students from specialty of „Marketing and Legislation in Sport” can contribute to learning efficiency and also to increasing the use of learning strategies centered on concrete practical activities and on the application of theoretical knowledge acquired within the course „Marketing Research Methodology” we conducted the research in order to identify the competences that can be acquired by the students at the end of the internship of practice with reference to the study discipline „Marketing Research Methodology”.

Din punct de vedere funcțional, ipoteza gener-

ală se poate descompune în două ipoteze specifice:

From a functional point of view, the general hypothesis can be decomposed into two specific hypothesis:

Specific hypothesis 1: The implementation of an educational program addressed to MA students from the specialty „Marketing and Legislation” into the management practice with reference to marketing research, determines the structuring of a coherent ensemble of individual study knowledge and skills, through active and creative involvement in the act of learning.

Specific hypothesis 2: The use of the interactive methodology of critical thinking development within an interdisciplinary program focused on the acquisition of specific marketing research skills, fact that will also contribute to the development of the oral and written communication skills of the students of the monitored Cycle II.

Thus, the groups of MA students, practitioners, have been tested the capacity of application of the theoretical knowledge gained in the „Marketing Research Methodology” discipline in various practical and concrete research activities of direct marketing, according by a series of criteria, reflected in the Table 1 and by the concrete realization of some marketing direct researches reflected in Table 2.

MA students have realised their own marketing research, based on the requirements set by the leader of the managerial practice, based on discussions with friends, employees of monitored entities and their clients. Also, the MA students mentioned that this would be the only way to truly understand the desires of sports participants or supporters / customers. Moreover, they consider that the success of the communication depends on this understanding. Therefore, the observation method, although it does not allow the obtaining of complex information as in the case of the investigation, has the advantage to restore the natural behavior, effective behavior of the sports consumers, without off train the information bearer. Recourse to observing assumes the direct involvement of the graduate student, in his possible quality of marketer or manager-practitioner, respectively the attendance by them of playgrounds, sports halls, tribunes, ticket sales venues at sports events, sports souvenir shops and all places from where information on consumers and products can be collected. In view of membership of the managers to system and their professional band, predominantly sporting, this helps them to obtain useful information, for example such as personal addresses and other data that can not be obtained by observation, but by resorting to direct investigation [1, 5].

*Table 1. The main marketing research activities in the field of promoting the sporting entity carried out by the MA students within the traineeship of managerial practice*

Marketing researches activities made by MA students	Application proportion of the researches on sports entities	Marketing researches activities in the field of purchasing behavior of the product	Application proportion of the researches on sports entities
Studies on motivations	23	Preference towards the sports program	51
Studies regarding advertising and its efficiency	54	Satisfaction offered by the product	39
Studies on public image	65	Behavior of purchase	61
Studies regarding media	26	Purchasing intentions	47
Studies on sales force	34	Segmentation studies	37

Also, the practitioner MA student has resorted and to achieving some market researches, such as: launching a new sport event or product; studies on the revision of the price structure on

the stadium or in the sports arena; price reassessment studies on certain sports services; studies of revaluation of price differences between different products or between different seats at the tribune.

Table 2. Direct researches made by MA students

Criteria	Kinds of researches
The mode of takeover of the information from its bearer	Observation and investigation
The mode of deployment in time	Permanent and occasional researches
The place of the research deployment	Researches carried out at the venue of sports events Researches done at the headquarters of the sports entity Street researches
Information type that it is intended to be obtained	Quantitative researches Qualitative researches

Moreover, the most common interrogation techniques on the basis of structured interview, used by practitioners MA students as a research tool was the questionnaire. The building of questionnaire they have realized together with the leader of the managerial practice, being determinant in reaching the research goal and the established objectives. The MA student had to first determine the information needs and then, to include only the questions he needs answers, anticipating, as far as possible, the types of answers he is expected to receive, and well as how he will utilize them. The structure and content of the questionnaire has tracked a logical scheme, starting with general questions and continuing with those specific and vice versa. Each question has been evaluated from the point of view of its understanding by the respondent, of the probability of obtaining an answer; simple, objective questions receive usually more clearly answers than the questions grouped by topic.

The MA students have understood that using the questionnaire in selective field investigations allows three types of applications possible in sport [2, 6, 7]:

the selective inquiry of field realize the dispatch of the questionnaire by post or email. This method is less costly and may be a better way to reach a wider sample of respondents;

the selective inquiry of field realized by telephone - which has the advantage of allowing the studying of consumators on market segments, conducting the questionnaire towards specific types of respondents, whether individuals or organizations;

audit of public - the most commonly used method of research in sport, which consists in

using a questionnaire that must to be distributed to participants or supporters with the occasion of a sporting event.

MA students have also resorted to exploratory interrogation techniques in sport, primarily through realization of personal interrogation, researches which involved the organization of experts groups (groups used in evaluation certain promotional campaigns, in sales forecasting, or in the appreciation of affiliation tendencies to certain clubs sports) and specialized groups (on base of a sample of supporters, a selected group of sports consumers or sports journalists) [7, 8].

In Table 3 we reflect a stream of applications of marketing researches made by MA students within the traineeship of managerial practice with reference to the sports organizations communication policy.

In continuation we present the results obtained by the MA students after the completion of practice traineeship on groups of researches carried out. The comparison was realized between the control group (who did not attend the optional educational program previously set by the practice leader regarding the concrete achievements about marketing researches) and the experimental group (which has travelled this program). The groups were homogeneous, being composed of 11-12 MA students. The proposed investigation, feasible in conditions of intra, inter-transdisciplinarity, is located at the intersection line between fundamental research and applied research, normative research and operational research, philosophical research and action-research, prospective research and retrospective research [4].

As special type of scientific research, pedagogical research tends to an explanation and a nor-

mative understanding of the activity of education. It seeks definition and argumentation of the laws and principles that unscramble the design and realization of education at system and process level. This perspective, lying at the limit of philosoph-

ical research, highlights the need to research of the education finalities that determines the value orientations of the education, achievable in different historical and social contexts.

*Table 3. Applications of marketing researches carried out by MA students within the traineeship of managerial practice with reference to the communication policy of sports organizations*

<b>Qualitative researches on the consumer</b> 2 groups Age: 22-47 years old With affinities on certain sports Realized during the practice	<b>Qualitative researches on the consumer</b> 4 groups 256 of respondents Age: 23-54 years old Who know certain important sporting events that have taken place at national or international level Done in a preset time.
<b>Interviews with members of the national team on a particular sporting probation</b> - National Sports Federations on identified sporting probations - National Olympic and Sports Committee - Athletes - Coaches of the national team	<b>Interviews with sponsors</b> - Sponsors - Other organizations than sport organizations - Written media - Involved televisions in sports event media coverage - Opinion leaders

Pedagogical research also involves the concentration of efforts on the descriptive analysis of the main factors and „actors” of education. As Gilbert de Landsheere observes, before we know the laws of education, it is important to objectively describe the conduct of the training process and to analyze its procedures of conducting. Another necessary direction at the level of pedagogical research is the study of the historical process of evolution of thinking about education and of the school institutions specialized in its effective realization in concrete conditions that proves the „irreducible originality of the phenomenon”.

Finally, modern trends of pedagogical research highlight the importance of investigations specifically geared towards the direction of higher education, lifelong learning, adult education. These investigations capitalize the issue of the theory of education at the level of operational models applicable in the field of permanent training, possible and necessary in the context of an intra, inter- and trans-disciplinary approach, open in the direction of permanent self-improvement of the subject and the object of education.

In the postmodern perspective, pedagogical research represents a managerial leadership activity of the system and of the educational process designed and realized especially for the adjusting and self-regulation of the educational action, re-

spectively of the didactic act. It permits the identification of new pedagogical relations, relevant within the educational / didactic action, constituting the basis for optimal solutions of the problems that arise at the level of the system and the educational process (Education Management).

Thus, we also made an investigation of the levels of development of written and oral communication skills, realizing an implicit evaluation of learning outcomes through the observation grid of student behavior from the Cycle II, within managerial practice.

Within this experiment we projected and implemented an optional educational program, addressed to students from the experimental sample. In this program we have used an interactive methodology that we following are presenting. Regarding the educational act from this perspective, we can understand the marketing research, communication and communication in sport, as essential actions for the development of critical thinking and an appropriate approach, appropriate to the current requirements. Promoting another learning style, the methods were centered on:

- stimulating curiosity and forming an original thought;
- problem solving;
- reasoned debate of the ideas;
- democratic acceptance of each person's ideas;

- active involvement in the learning process;
- valuing teamwork, that lead to the development of every one.

In this context, the methods submitted to the MA students' attention are intended to make them focus on the theoretical and practical values of knowledge and to acknowledge of how they can help them in their own development.

The methodology of pedagogical research implied the valorisation of a set of techniques, procedures and means, integrated at the level of the following categories of methods aimed at the scientific investigation of the educational reality:

- systematic observation;
- inquiry in written form (observation grid);
- analysis of results within the managerial practice;
- study of bibliographic documents accessible at academic level.
- portfolios analysis.

The analysis method of portfolios, of products of subjects' activity consisted in the analysis, in terms of product and process, from the perspective of certain parameters established consistent with the purpose and objectives of the research, of the offered data by the components of portfolio materials. We analyzed the portfolios made up by students within the managerial practice, having regard the mode to inform them, documenting, collecting and processing information, and the mode to made the portfolio. We also analyzed the final product and its presentation by the students

of Cycle II.

We started the experiment in the idea of verification hypotheses in deployment of each activity inserting sequences that aims the skills of the research on marketing and communication.

The control group continued their didactic work normally, using classical teaching-learning-evaluation strategies, while the experimental group had an educational optional program of work within the managerial practice, more special, having regard that they had benefited from the study of discipline „Marketing Research Methodology” with a new curricular content focused on practical and less theoretical aspects. During the advancement within the establishment unit of learning, we have secured guidance and the controlle of learning and practiced various forms of periodic assessment (tests, questionnaires) and final (portfolios, tests).

The qualifiers that we will discuss below reflect students' practical knowledge following the optional educational program within managerial practice. The awarded qualifiers relate to 1 - insufficient, 3 - sufficient, 5 - good, 7 - very good. Thus, for the items targeting the oral communication capacity, 30% of the students from the control group get the insufficient qualifier, 24% sufficient qualifier, 20% good qualifier and 26% get the qualifier very good. Students from the experimental group in 7% obtained the insufficient qualifier, 12% sufficient, 44% good, and 37% get the qualifier very good, as shown in Table 4 and Figure 1.

Table 4. The obtained qualifiers for students' oral communication skills within the managerial practice with the use of marketing research specific terminology

Norm Minimum 1 Maximum 7	Items							
	Control group				Experimental group			
	Insufficient	Sufficient	Good	Very good	Insufficientnt	Sufficient	Good	Very good
	30%	24%	20%	26%	7%	12%	44%	37%

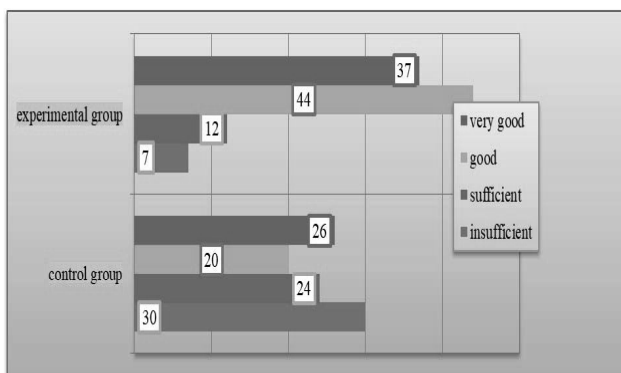


Fig. 1. Graphic reflection of the items obtained by the MA students in the oral communication within the managerial practice

In Table 5 and Figure 2 are reflected items aimed to written communication ability. Thus, 10% of the students from the control group get

the good qualifier, 8% get the sufficient qualifier and 30% get the very good qualifier, as shown in Table 5.

Table 5. Qualifiers obtained for students' oral communication skills within managerial practice with the use of terminology specific for marketing research.

Norm	Items							
	Control group				Experimental group			
	Insufficient	Sufficient	Good	Very good	Insufficient	Sufficient	Good	Very good
Minimum 1 Maximum 7	35%	27%	15%	23%	18%	23%	29%	30%

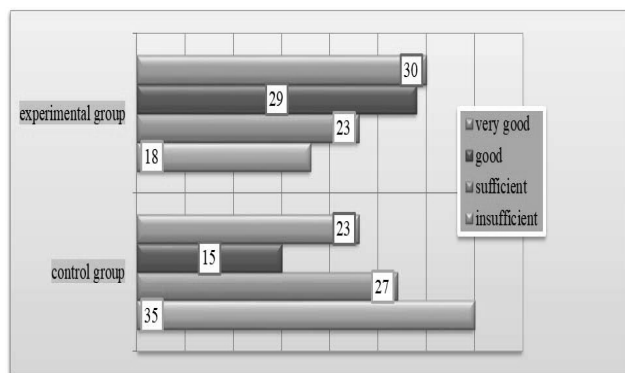


Fig. 2. Graphical reflection of the items obtained by the MA students in the written communication within the managerial practice

In Table 6 we present the comparative values of research competences with marketing specific of the experimental group, following the evaluation by the expert group on the basis of the individual activities of the MA students made within the managerial practice and reflected in the documentation of practice and the portfolio drawn up.

Table 6. The comparative values of the marketing research competences of the experimental group evaluated within the managerial practice

Nr.	Tested values	Initial testing (without optional unfolded program)	Initial testing (with optional unfolded program)	t	P
		$\pm m$	$\pm m$		
1	Takeover mode of the informations	1,78 $\pm$ 0,17	2,34 $\pm$ 0,31	5,544	< 0,001
2	Studies regarding its advertising and efficiency	1,69 $\pm$ 0,27	2,38 $\pm$ 0,24	5,543	< 0,001
3	Studies on public image	1,84 $\pm$ 0,29	2,53 $\pm$ 0,21	5,746	< 0,001
4	Studies on motivation	2,23 $\pm$ 0,24	3,12 $\pm$ 0,22	7,723	< 0,001
5	Studies on sports consumers	1,81 $\pm$ 0,25	2,6 $\pm$ 0,20	5,392	< 0,01
6	Studies regarding communication (interviews with members of the national team on a given sporting probation, interviews with sponsors, interviews with the customers of sports entities)	1,80 $\pm$ 0,23	2,5 $\pm$ 0,19	5,384	< 0,01

From Table 6 we can see that the take-up and processing mode of information in the initial

testing recorded a value of less than 1.78 versus 2.34 in the final testing (t = 5.544, P < 0.001).

Also, in the studies regarding advertising and its importance for the sports entities, the MA students reached the values at the initial testing of 1.69 compared to 2.38 at the final one ( $t = 5.54$ ,  $P < 0.001$ ). As far as the registered values at the studies regarding sports consumers are concerned, the MA students recorded significant values at the 1% threshold, the items from the initial testing being 1.82 compared to the final testing of 2.6. Also we can see significant values at studies regarding written and oral communication, where 1.8 items were recorded in initial testing and 2.5 in final testing, with a Student criterion value of 5.384 and  $P < 0.01$ .

**Concluding**, we can say that during the managerial practice the students acquire knowledge about the experience of those who activate in the respective institutions, they succeed to claim these pragmatic sides of the future profession, the applying ways of the theoretical knowledge

to solving the problems that constitute the content of the activities specific to the field of work in which they work. Students learn to operate with the means (instruments, sports equipments, documents, registers, etc.) with which the activity specific to the training field is actually carried out. Also, modern learning assume the valorisation of all sides and dimensions of the human personality. More attention is paid to multiple intelligences, critical thinking and educational alternatives, without which the learning process is not complete or effective, in the hope that the student will be ready to learn throughout life. Today's education must be centered on the participation and development of cognitive functions, favoring „the development of thinking, faculties of the acquisition and the use knowledge, of creation in knowledge, in all ages, and the developing of the capacities to cope with new situations of learning or of life" [3, 4].

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