

Professionalism and Contributive Pedagogical Factors to Teaching Performance in Marketing

Profissionalidade e os Fatores Didáticos Contribuintes ao Desempenho Docente em Marketing

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ABSTRACT

The purpose of this research is to amplify and organize knowledge about didactic factors that contribute to teaching performance in *lato sensu* Marketing graduate courses. From a scientific perspective, the study advances in the construction of knowledge about the contributing factors for graduate teaching performance. From the managerial mindset, it contributes to the formation of better teachers, through reflection on their training in a broad way. From the social viewpoint, studies that aim education improvements may result in a better use of investments in Education and citizen formation. A multiple case study focusing on reference professor as the subject of the research, by using different source of evidence as secondary data analysis and in-depth interview. Our results suggest that teaching performance is the result of teaching practice, influenced by the permanent didactic training of a professional educator, focused on student learning, and the will to grasp new ways to help students learn constantly. Besides didactic factors, other factors influence teaching practice, such as technical and personal factors. We also highlight the importance of understanding the professor in its completeness: as a human being who integrates his/her professionalism with his/her personal experiences.


Keywords: Marketing Education, Continuing Education, Marketing Teaching, Pedagogical Factors, Teaching Performance.


RESUMO

O objetivo desta pesquisa é aprofundar e organizar o conhecimento acerca dos fatores didáticos contribuintes ao desempenho docente em cursos de pós-graduação *lato sensu* em Marketing. Pela perspectiva científica, o estudo avança na construção de conhecimento acerca dos fatores contribuintes para o desempenho docente na pós-graduação. Pela perspectiva gerencial, contribui para a formação de melhores profissionais, por meio da reflexão acerca da formação de um docente de forma ampla. Pela perspectiva social, os estudos que visam melhorias na educação podem resultar em um melhor apro-

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RESUMO

veitamento dos investimentos em Educação e a formação de melhores cidadãos. Estudo de caso múltiplo tendo o docente-referência como sujeito de pesquisa, com uso de diferentes fontes de evidências, envolvendo análise de dados secundários e entrevistas em profundidade. Os resultados do estudo sugerem que o desempenho docente seja fruto da prática docente, influenciada pela formação didática permanente de um docente profissional, centrado na aprendizagem dos discentes e dispostos a aprender novas formas de ajudá-los a aprender constantemente. Como contribuição científica, o estudo destaca a importância da formação didática específica e continuada, com centralidade nos estudantes, adoção de técnicas didáticas coerentes com os objetivos de aprendizagem e constante adequação técnica.

Palavras-chave: Educação em Marketing, Educação Continuada, Docência em Marketing, Desempenho Docente, Pós-Graduação Lato Sensu.

Introduction

The key competencies required of contemporary managers involve both technical and behavioral skills. Considering flexibility with credibility, improving decision-making capacity in uncertain contexts, anticipating market movements, balancing the interests of all stakeholders, and knowing the new business models are some of the skills required by large companies (Alcaniz et al., 2020; Horney et al., 2010; Quinn et al., 2003).

From a practice perspective, the function of Marketing inside businesses was also influenced, in a more significant way, by societal alterations. The analysis of the consumer shifts to consider him/her as a person in his/her fullness, having greater concern with the centrality of the human being and his/her individual values. This orientation fails to focus only on the customer's purchasing journey but also considers the impact of the brand on society as a whole (Melo et al., 2019; Kotler et al., 2017, 2021; Rodrigues et al., 2021).

From the perspective of Education, these shifts demand an update of skills of professors and egresses from the traditional Business Schools. As the market began to value new skills, Business Schools began to be challenged to prepare the most complete executives to act in the direction of large companies. Changes are often required in the syllabus of the courses, in the teaching method, and the pro-

fessors' ability to adapt. (Salvador & Ikeda, 2019; Walsh & Powell, 2020; Wood Jr. & Cruz, 2014). This challenge influences learning per se, students' expectations, the roles assumed by professors and students, the adoption of innovation in education, and the updating of syllabuses (Duncan & West, 2018; Ewing & Ewing, 2017; Irigaray et al., 2019; Kitchlew, 2020).

From the perspective of Research on Teaching in Business Administration, few papers focus on discussions about teaching in graduate courses (Donthu et al., 2021). Studies that analyze continuing education from the perspective of Marketing managers are more common, identifying the need to improve the social and emotional skills of student professionals. In contrast, new technical skills, linked to changes in the business environment, are developed. Thus, the role of academic staff changes by having them as responsible for supporting the development of technical and behavioral skills to contribute to the achievement of personal fulfillment, career success, and the good exercise of the work of their students citizens, professionals, practitioners of Business Administration (Finch et al., 2013; Kerr & Kelly, 2017; Kitchlew, 2020; Schlee & Karns, 2017).

In this context, characterized by the increasing concern of Marketing professionals with continuing education, the constant changes in the marketing environment, and the questions about the adaptation of academic staff, the importance of learning from reference professors of Marketing who stand out for their performance in classrooms. Thus, the goal of this research is to organize knowledge about the didactic factors that contribute to teaching performance in *lato sensu* graduate programs in Marketing.

Theoretical Foundation

TEACHING AND LEARNING FOR ADULTS

The main function of a professor is to contribute to student learning, and it is expected that he/she masters the teaching and learning processes (Anastasiou & Alves, 2009; Masetto, 2012; Slomski et al., 2013). Teaching involves more than knowing and speaking what one knows to students. For Freire (1996), the act of teaching is one in which the educator creates possibilities so that the student can

learn and not just transfer knowledge; the objective of teaching is the development of the student.

Learning, on the other hand, can be defined as “any process that, in living organisms, leads to a permanent change in capacities and which is not due solely to biological maturation or aging” (Illeris, 2013, p. 16). The learning process entails the integration of internal processes of interaction between the individual and their social, cultural, or material environment, in addition to an internal psychological process of integration between new knowledge and prior knowledge.

Regarding the teaching of adults, from the 1970s the term andragogy was popularized. Knowles (1973) considers that andragogy encompasses principles of pedagogy and emphasizes progressive accountability for students for their learning. While pedagogy means “the art and science of teaching children” (Noffs & Rodrigues, 2011, p. 285), andragogy would be “the art and science of helping adults to learn” (Noffs & Rodrigues, 2011, p. 286).

According to Brandão and Silva (2017), andragogy covers three dimensions: (a) objectives and purposes for learning; (b) the recognition of individual and situational differences; and (c) andragogical principles, such principles being “the learner’s need to know, self-concept (self-directed learning), previous experience, readiness to learn, orientation to learning, and motivation” (Brandão & Silva, 2017, p. 266).

Student-centered approaches have gained increasing acceptance since the beginning of the 21st century, bringing with them the application of different teaching strategies and methods (Anastasiou & Alves, 2009; Kolb et al., 2014). The highlight of these contemporary methods is mainly due to the statement that traditional approaches reinforce memorization and repetition while a learning-focused approach involves more complex operations, such as comparison, synthesis, classification, interpretation, criticism, search for assumptions, imagination, data organization, formulation of hypothesis, the application of principles and facts to new situations, decision, and project development (Anastasiou & Alves, 2009). Therefore, the focus on learning entails more concern with the intended goal: student transformation. Thus, the definition of the learning objective should be the starting point for defining the teaching method.

To consider that professors and students are now responsible for taking the class together, requires a review of the class strategy, understanding the student as

an active part of the class, and then, the use of active methodologies is highlighted (Anastasiou & Alves, 2009). Learning would increase with the centralization of the process in the student and, therefore, the level of self-awareness should also be increased. Under this perspective, we understand the teaching and learning process as a process of joint development by students and professors together.

TEACHER TRAINING AND PROFESSIONALISM

Teaching in Higher Education was considered, for a long time, as a vocation, a gift, that is, it was not understood as necessary a specific qualification to act as a professor (Cunha, 2009). Tardif (2012) calls attention to a movement of academic staff and teacher professionalization in Higher Education around the world. In Brazil, this professionalization is marked by the Law of Guidelines and Bases of National Education (LDB), Law 9.394/1996, which provides in article 66 that preparation for higher education must occur primarily in masters and doctoral courses. Although it presents a regulatory advance, this article is criticized for two reasons: for predicting preparation and non-training for teaching (Pimenta & Anastasiou, 2005); and the fact that master's and doctoral courses emphasize training for research and not for teaching (Maranhão & Paula, 2009; Slomski et al., 2013).

The teaching career considered a safe career and of high social status, began to suffer from market changes and shifts in the work regime (Irigaray et al., 2019). Discussions on the process of professionalization and teacher training permeate the various areas of knowledge. One of the main points of this discussion is based on the question: what are the essential components for the didactic-pedagogical training of a Higher Education professor? Tardif (2012) states that teaching practice integrates different knowledge that comes from different sources, namely: the knowledge of professional qualification that originates from the sciences of education and can also be called pedagogical knowledge; disciplinary knowledge, which corresponds to the knowledge of the various fields; curricular knowledge, which correspond to discourses, objectives, methods and school contents; and experiential knowledge, which emerge from their practice and are based on daily work and knowledge of their environment.

For Freire (1996), teaching knowledge can be divided into three categories: the relationship between professors and students; the understanding that teaching

is creating strategies for learning and not only transferring knowledge; and the fact that teaching is a human characteristic. In general, teacher education should be based on the development of knowledge focused on educational practice, centered on student autonomy.

Masetto (2012) states that a Higher Education professor should master the teaching and learning processes and its influencing factors. By teaching and learning process, we interpret the design and management of curriculum; the integration of subjects as curricular components; the understanding of teacher-student and student-student relationship; the theory and practice of educational technology; the design of evaluation processes and its feedback techniques; and planning as an educational and political activity.

Teaching action is also influenced by the individual's understanding of teaching. In this sense, Santos and Silva (2019, p. 3) state that "being an educator is a process of social construction" and "a process of formation that involves intellectual, contextual, social, emotional, political and moral dimensions". It is also worth highlighting the influence that professors who are considered references have on teaching practice (Lima & Araujo, 2019; Miranda et al., 2012). Castanho (2009) highlights the combination of the "personal self" and the "professional self", by joining a personal and professional dimension in the professionalism of the reference professor. Thus, it is clear that good teaching practice goes through a formative path that must be continuous and based on successful experiences of professors considered as a reference by students.

We understand that teaching should be treated within the scope of professionalism, considering it as "what is specific in the teaching action, that is, the set of behaviors, knowledge, skills, attitudes and values that constitute the teaching specificity" (Sacristán, 1995, p. 65). A profissionalidade também pode ser constituída por quatro pilares: a especificidade da função; o saber específico; o poder de decisão; e a pertença a um corpo coletivo (Roldão, 2005). In this way, professionalism permeates the understanding of teaching, its training, and teaching-learning practices.

THE CHALLENGES OF LATO SENSU GRADUATE COURSES IN MARKETING

In addition to the technical skills of the area, shifts in the business environment required that the marketer also develop other skills, such as project manage-

ment, conflict resolution, leadership, creativity, emotional intelligence, and quantitative reasoning, among other skills, both specific and generalist (Finch et al., 2013; Ly et al., 2015).

These requirements have fallen into Business Schools, which need to constantly update to meet market needs. Consequently, these requirements demand professors to update their teaching methods (Bacellar & Ikeda, 2011). The curricular components of courses and the teaching and learning methodologies, with practical application of the concepts discussed (David et al., 2011) as well as the adoption of the new information technologies available, also become targets for adaptations (Mora et al., 2017; Fitzgerald et al., 2015; Sebastianelli et al., 2015).

From the practitioners' perspective, marketers note the need for technical and behavioral expertise. Among the technical skills, marketing strategy (with emphasis on positioning, *branding* and competitor analysis, product management, and measurement of return on investment) appears as the largest gap between importance and declared performance. On the other hand, behavioral skills, problem-solving, written communication, and time management appear as priorities (Finch et al., 2013).

Thus, the challenges for the evolution of Marketing education lie in updating not only technical knowledge but also the development and practice of more efficient ways of constructing meaningful learning, which involves the definition of the appropriate curriculum, the definition of learning objectives of course programs, the identification of the courses' essence and the endorsement of a more efficient didactic strategy centered on the student (Finch et al., 2013; Machado, 2015, 2016; Ly et al., 2015).

THE ADOPTION OF SETE AS A TOOL FOR THE EVALUATION OF TEACHING PERFORMANCE AND THE DEFINITION OF THE STUDY PROPOSITIONS

The good performance of professors, especially in *lato sensu* graduate courses, is increasingly being evaluated by the students themselves. These evaluations are known as reaction or *student evaluations of teaching effectiveness* - SETE (Estelami, 2015; Reisenwitz, 2016; Stroebe, 2016). SETE are assessments of primary data, obtained using a self-completed questionnaire, aimed at analyzing faculty performance by student learning perception (Bacon, 2016; Guolla, 1999).

By adopting a market and business vision, Higher Education Institutions became more concerned with the satisfaction of their students, even though it is not an accurate and question-free process by all parties (Bacon, 2016; Bhattacharjee & Ravishankar, 2016; Reisenwitz, 2016; Stroebe, 2016). Teaching assessment is an important tool for monitoring the performance of professors and schools (Sharma, 1995). Its objective is to identify gaps and enable the continuous development of educators, in addition to increasing knowledge about student satisfaction (Gruber et al., 2012; Guolla, 1999; Sharma, 1995).

In the present study, student satisfaction is considered “a key strategic variable in maintaining a competitive position, with long-term benefits arising from student loyalty, positive word-of-mouth, and image of the higher education institution” (Gruber et al., 2012, p. 33). According to Estelami (2015, p. 54), “From an organizational perspective, teaching evaluation can be seen as a reflection of customer satisfaction”; this metric would have proved to be a good indicator after years of study, being valued by different stakeholders, such as educators, educational institutions, students and accreditations. Given the absence of clear metrics on the good performance of educators, this work will consider it as the result of the professor’s activity as an educator, who aims to teach or facilitate the learning of the syllabus and would have, as one of the forms of evaluation, the result of the application of teaching evaluations.

Based on reflection grounded on the theoretical foundation, eight propositions were elaborated to guide the investigation (Table 1).

Table 1. Propositions on didactic factors.

Propositions	References
1 Teaching performance is influenced by the appreciation of the student's experience and previous knowledge.	(Knowles, 1973; Machado, 2011; Noffs & Rodrigues, 2011)
2 Teaching performance is influenced by valuing the student's centrality in the learning process.	(Bonwell & Eison, 1991; Freire, 1996; Rogers, 2011)

- 3 Teaching performance is influenced by the recognition and stimulation of different forms of learning. (Illeris, 2013; Kolb et al., 2014)
- 4 Teaching performance is influenced by the recognition of the development of competencies as an objective of the learning process. (Machado, 2016)
- 5 Teaching performance is influenced by the adaptation of the role of the professor, according to the defined learning objective. (Kolb et al., 2014)
- 6 Teaching performance is influenced by specific didactic qualifications. (Miranda et al., 2012; 2013)
- 7 Teaching performance is influenced by didactic continuing education. (Bacellar & Ikeda, 2011; Cunha, 2006; Finch et al., 2013a; Miranda et al., 2012, 2013)
- 8 Teaching performance is influenced by the recognition, by the professor himself/herself, of his/her activity in the field of professionalism. (Freire, 1996; Machado, 2016; Masetto, 2012; Santos & Silva, 2019)

Source: Developed by the authors.

Methodological Course

The method of this research is the case study, designed as an exploratory and qualitative study (Bardin, 2009; Flick, 2004; Yin, 2015) with the reference professor (RP) as the object of study. RPs were investigated through different sources of evidence, such as in-depth interviews and documentary analysis. The semi-structured script for the interviews was prepared based on the propositions and categories first defined, according to the theoretical framework (Mayring, 2014).

As a criterion to increase the validity aspects of the study, the data were investigated considering more than one source of evidence: the selected business schools should appear on the list of the best business schools in the Folha University Ranking - RUF (Ranking Universitário Folha <https://ruf.folha.uol.com.br/todas-as-edicoes/>) and should also be listed among the business schools selected by the MBA Guide, from the O Estado de São Paulo newspaper, with MBA courses in Marketing (<https://publicacoes.estadao.com.br/guiadomba/mba>); the RP should appear in the first quartile in the ranking of professors evaluated by SETE and should have their names validated by the coordinators of the courses and reference professors; information on qualifications and career were investigated through the interview,attes curriculum check and *LinkedIn*. Professors who taught courses related to Marketing knowledge, presented by Finch et al. (2013) and Schlee and Karns (2017), were considered.

Data analysis took place in sequential stages, it started with the documentary analysis of performance research carried out by students, then the documentary analysis of teachers' information on social networks, the analysis of in-depth interviews, and it ended with the triangulation within and between the units of analysis. Data was processed with quantitative analysis of content for the organization and systematization of information (Bardin, 2009), using categories defined at first according to the theoretical framework. The first reduction was carried out through global content analysis (Flick, 2004) and subsequent analyses through direct qualitative content analysis based on categories defined at first (Mayring, 2014). As a way of minimizing biases arising from the social and professional role of the interviews, their confidentiality will be ensured, being identified as School 1, 2, and 3; Coordinator 1, 2, 3, and 4; Professor 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, and 11.

To ensure the reliability of the study, the conduction of this research followed the procedures described in a pre-established protocol, and we also sought secondary sources to confirm the evidence and retrieved the lessons learned from the reviewed literature. The content analysis was supported by the analysis software Atlas ti (Bandeira-de-Melo, 2010), and the mental and conceptual maps used during the analysis (Aguiar & Correia, 2013) were structured with the support of Mind Meister and C-Map Tools applications.

Presentation of Results

Table 2 shows the frequency of presence of the didactic factors found among the RPs analyzed in this case study, which will be discussed in the following topics.

Table 2. Frequency of didactic factors in RPs.

Didactic Factors	Didactic Qualification	a1: Graduate course	1
		a2: Teaching internship	2
		a3: Teaching training	8
		a4: Executive training:	4
		a5: Corporate training experience	2
		a6: Advisor's guidance	1
		a7: Example of good professors	7
		a8: Example of bad professors	3
		a9: Examples of good managers	1
		a10: Inspiration from professionals in other fields	4
		a11: Learning in teaching practice	8
		a12: Experience exchange with colleagues	4
		a13: Religious instruction	1
		a14: Online	1
		a15: Experience as an assistant-professor	3
Fatores Didáticos	Focus on student	b1: concerned with understanding	5
		b2: Checks understanding	5
		b3: Sees the student as a professional	11
		b4: Sees the student as a citizen	9
		b5: Questions the School on behalf of the student	3
		b6: Seeks to understand the student (empathy)	10
		b7: Understands student experience	10
		b8: Student as a customer of the service	5
		b9: Sees the student as a student	1
		b10: Helps the student learn	7
		b11: Focus on skills development	10

Fatores Didáticos	Teaching role/ activity	c1: Establishes rapport	5
		c2: Arouses interest	6
		c3: Seeks to entertain / to delight	8
		c4: Shows utility /sensitizes	9
		c5: Shows currentness	6
		c6: Builds relationships outside of the course	5
		c7: Values time in the classroom	4
		c8: Takes time to prepare	10
		c9: Has repertoire	9
		c10: Understands the discipline within the course	4
		c11: Respects the program	2
		c12: Goes beyond the program	1
		c13: Complies with School procedures	1
		c14: Leads the lesson	1
		c15: Handles difficult situations	7
		c16: Demands work	7
		c17: Selects the essential / curation	6
		c18: Gives clear feedback	1
		c19: Provokes/ challenges	8
		c20: Encourages/stimulates	4
		c21: Is a reference/model/mentor	4
		c22: Deconstructs to rebuild	6
		c23: Assesses	9
Fatores Didáticos	Diferentes formas de aprendizagem	d1: Expositive	10
		d2: Reading	7
		d3: Active methodologies	10
		d4: Appreciation of Practice	7
		d5: Utiliza os recursos da Escola	2
		d6: Borrows techniques from other fields	3
		d7: Adjusts the lesson with feedback	8
		d8: Requires an adaptation from the professor	5
		d9: Adoption of innovative teaching methodologies	2
		d10: Values information online	0

Source: Developed by the authors.

THE RP IS A PROFESSIONAL IN EDUCATION

All RPs interviewed had experience in business practice before teaching (executive, consultant, researcher), all of them still had another professional activity besides teaching and, for some, teaching was not the main professional activity in terms of time dedication and remuneration. Even so, all reference professors (RPs) recognize themselves as educational professionals, having their teaching performance influenced by the professionalization of teaching.

According to the RPs, teaching requires (i) technical qualification, built by academic training, practical experience and self-development and updating through research (academic or not); (ii) didactic qualification, developed by specific, continuous training and observation of good examples; (iii) preparation, which involves the understanding of the discipline in the context of the school and students; (iv) concern with the execution: the professor instigates and challenges, he/she shows usefulness, entertains and enchants; shows authority, when being demanding and assessing; and also shows maturity, when knowing how to deal with difficult situations in the classroom.

Machado (2016) points out that the professor's skills involve the balance between authority and tolerance, between the mediation of interests and fabulation, and between the mapping of the essential and the weaving of meanings. The professor should place himself among the students, though not as an equal, because he/she needs to respect his/her function as an educator, and also should enchant without distancing himself/herself from the objective of the class and the course, and identify the specific, but without disconnecting it from the general context. This mediation skill is fundamental in the management of different objectives and positions, as reported by Professor 6, exemplifying the constant questioning of students about the practical application of theoretical concepts:

It is similar if I say: "Do you know what you want to become? I got there", so, this gives me the authority to talk about the issues" (Professor 6, July 5, 2018. 16:57)

The RPs reject the contemporary professor's popular ascending discourse not as a professor anymore, but as a facilitator, mentor, or coach. To them, their role is to be the Professor, who is responsible for defining objectives, strategies, methods, and techniques of teaching and learning. In this discourse, it is possible to perceive

a confusion of terms, since the facilitator is academically used not as a substitute for the professor, but as the description of one of his/her roles (Kolb et al., 2014), not working as an enabler of the student's work, but as of the learning process.

The case study suggests the acceptance of proposition 8 - teaching performance is influenced by the recognition, by the professor himself/herself, of his/her activity in the field of professionalism (Freire, 1996; Machado; 2016, Masetto, 2012; Santos & Silva, 2019), and the reference professor (RP) is a professional of Education, with permanent didactic qualification and a focus on student learning. Teaching is in the field of professionalization, it requires the professor to know, to know how to do, and to know how to be, demanding expertise and commitment from them (Guolla, 1999; Miranda et al., 2013; Placco & Almeida, 2014; Sharma, 1995; Tardif, 2000).

DIDACTIC CONTINUED, AND PRACTICAL QUALIFICATION INFLUENCED BY GOOD EXAMPLES

Teaching qualification and practice learning appear as the main forms of RP training, mentioned by eight out of eleven interviewed. Training appears prominently among professors in Schools 2 and 3. According to Professor 3:

“Yes, actually, this might be an asset, especially from School 2, since I had the opportunity to (//) the first time I taught was through School 2, between the period of being escalated and a year and a half later after teaching in the first class, I went through a three or four-month training process with full-time lessons so I could become a good professor. Then, I had the opportunity to enroll in several courses in School 2, which involved presentation dynamics, how to teach the course, how to teach adults, and how to engage them in audiovisual activities (Professor 3, May 16, 2018. 13:9)

The analysis also highlights the importance of the influence of good teachers during the student life of the RP - out of the eleven RPs interviewed, seven declared that they were inspired by their good professors to develop their teaching styles, by the discussion about outstanding teachers proposed by Castanho (2009).

The RP also seeks other sources of inspiration for their didactic development: by exchanging experiences with other professionals, borrowing techniques and approaches from arts and sports (theater, clown, martial arts), bringing management training practices into the classroom, and doing teaching internships or working as

assistant professors at the beginning of their careers. For instance, Professor 8 had an important reference in religious training at the APEC (Associação Pró-Evangelição de Crianças [Child Pro-Evangelization Association]):

Then, I qualified, right, when I was about fifteen years old, I had a qualification training at APEC. Wow, every professor should do it to stop being retarded. Man, nobody teaches as well as the evangelical [laughs], it is like this, didactic runs in their blood, they are super didactic (Professor 8, June 18, 2018. 18:11).

When talking about teaching qualification, Machado (2016a, p. 29) states: “we are faculty doomed to continuously learn or to perish professionally”, and thus, the analysis of the case study in the light of the theoretical framework supports propositions 6 and 7 - teaching performance is influenced by specific and continuous didactic qualification (Cunha, 2006; Finch et al., 2013; Miranda et al., 2012, 2013).

LEARNING AS THE CENTER

The *work-ready* identity of *lato sensu* graduate students (Erwing & Erwing, 2017) favors an increased focus on learning, by stimulating their participation, expanding their involvement, and questioning and expanding the acceptance of ambiguities, a critical point for the practical application of concepts and theories. By recognizing the student as a developing professional, the RP expects and has a collaborative relationship between professor and student, increasing the distribution of responsibility for the learning process. The *lato sensu* graduate student is a citizen and a developing professional for the RP, and his/her role as academic staff is related to helping the student in this construction process beyond the ongoing course. For the RPs, the contents act as a means for the development of skills, requiring the understanding of the student’s previous knowledge and empathy to understand the current moment of their life and their motivations, limitations, and anxieties.

RPs consider themselves to be multiclient service providers, involving students, employers, and society as a whole. Even aware of the importance of student satisfaction in their assessments of the Schools, the RPs highlight that they cannot only offer what students want, but what students need for their qualification and development. In this sense, they are interest mediators to educate students con-

cerning the importance of skills development. By working to qualify better professionals, and worrying about the consequences on the market and society, RPs have employers, companies, and society as customers, and the student as a collaborator and co-responsible in building values. In all of those cases, student learning is at the heart of the process.

The analysis suggests that teaching performance is positively influenced by the recognition of the student's need for centrality in the teaching and learning process, understanding and valuing their previous experience and their moment, as presented in propositions 1, 2 and 4 (Knowles, 1973; Machado, 2011; Machado, 2016a; Noffs & Rodrigues, 2011; Bonwell & Eison, 1991; Freire, 1996; Rogers, 2011) - teaching performance is influenced by the appreciation of the student's previous experience and knowledge; teaching performance is influenced by the appreciation of the student's centrality in the learning process; teaching performance is influenced by the recognition of the development of skills as an objective of learning process.

THE WAY TO HELP LEARNING IS EVOLVING

The RPs state that they are going through a moment of change in the way they teach, recognizing that they no longer do as they did in the past while feeling pressured to do something even bolder. This demand would occur more on the part of Schools than on the part of students themselves.

The appreciation of practice and the adoption of active methodologies in the teaching and learning process seem to be more widespread and valued in the business environment than in the academic environment. For RPs, there is an overvaluation of active methodologies and an often disconnected application to learning objectives. RPs believe in the potential of active teaching and learning methodologies, but always with a purpose aligned with the purpose of the lesson. Professor 11 reports his/her acquaintance with active methodologies:

Then, I liked these methodologies, the company also had a lot of business methodology, they teach all the courses, hands-on, which is what makes a lot of sense in the company. For instance, if it is way too theoretical, people don't like it. And then I remembered and kept all this material at home and a lot of what I [was] putting in my classes, in the classroom activities was very much from what I have experienced in the company (Professor 11, June 18, 2018, 11:18).

RPs work with a mixture of different teaching and learning strategies and techniques; however, the expository-dialogued lessons appear more often, complemented by a combination of active methods such as solving exercises and solving and discussing cases and projects. The interviewees also stated the use of reading to increase repertoire; the use of the exposition to increase both repertoire and awareness; the rise of discussions which generate tension and interest, as well as the deconstruction of previous beliefs, reordination of knowledge and systematization of tacit knowledge; and also, the practice by exercises, projects, cases and challenges to operationalization and consolidation.

To increase students' engagement in skills development, problems, projects, and case studies can be offered with more contemporary and attractive names, such as challenges or pitch elevators, for instance. The adoption of active methodologies seems to be linked not only to increased learning but also to increased student satisfaction, considering the willingness to learn as an influencer of learning. Regarding the developing burden on greater adoption of pedagogical innovation, some RPs are skeptical, not yet clear whether it is something positive for learning or just a fad that does not work for learning itself.

RPs work with different learning styles (Kolb et al., 2014; Kolb, 1984) and learning dynamics (Fialho, et al., 2008; Machado, 2015; Polanyi, 1983; Takeuchi & Nonka, 2004), assuming different roles as educators (Kolb et al., 2014) and generating the necessary tension for the learning process. Thus, the integrated analysis of the cases suggests the acceptance of proposition 3 and partial acceptance of proposition 5 – teaching performance is influenced by the recognition and encouragement of different forms of learning (Illeris, 2013; Kolb et al., 2014); teaching performance is influenced by the adaptation of the educator's role, according to the defined learning objective (Kolb et al., 2014).

Conclusion

The paper is the result of a multiple case study carried out with eleven reference professors (RP), and four-course coordinators, in three Business Schools. Thus, the goal of this research is to organize knowledge about the didactic factors that contribute to teaching performance in *lato sensu* graduate programs in Marketing.

From a scientific perspective, the study investigated an important gap (Donthu et al., 2021), and highlighted the importance of specific and continuous didactic qualification for professors of *lato sensu* graduate courses, with an educator development within the field of professionalization, with a focus on the student, adoption of new didactic techniques consistent with the learning objectives and constant technical updating. The article has as its scientific contribution (i) the identification and organization of didactic factors contributing to teaching performance, presented in Table 1, as well as (ii) the discussion about the propositions established based on the theoretical framework in the light of the analysis of the multiple cases researched. In a scenario within the Business Administration field, the connection with management practice deserves to be highlighted. Como contribuição gerencial e social, os estudos que visam a melhoria da formação do docente podem contribuir para o desenvolvimento da sociedade, com a formação de profissionais melhor preparados, por meio do aumento da qualidade das Escolas de Negócios e melhor aproveitamento dos investimentos em Educação e formação do cidadão.

This study was conducted considering the in-person modality and highlighted that the reference professor is a professional of Education, with permanent didactic qualification and a focus on student learning; their performance is influenced by their specific and continuing education, by valuing the student's experience and prior knowledge, by valuing student centrality in the learning process, and by the recognition of skill development as a goal of the learning process. As an exploratory-qualitative study, this paper presents inherent limitations to the method, making it not possible to generalize the conclusions to other cases not studied. In-depth interviews may present a limitation due to the interviewer's bias, mitigated by the adoption of a hermeneutic stance and the search for more than one source of evidence throughout the investigation.

The study suggests that the reference professor recognizes and values different forms of learning, always linked to different learning objectives. Given the differences between face-to-face, virtual, or hybrid teaching practices (Neuenfeldt et al, 2021), future studies may deepen the discussion on contributing factors to teaching performance in different modalities. In addition to that, the analysis of the interviews suggests that other factors, besides didactics, influence teaching practice, such as

technical (scientific qualification, managerial practice) and personal (purposes, life history). Future studies can deepen this investigation, still qualitative, to understand the factors contributing to teaching performance more broadly.

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