



TEACHING CASE METHODOLOGY UNDER AN INNOVATIVE PERSPECTIVE

METODOLOGIA CASO DE ENSINO SOB UMA PERSPECTIVA INOVADORA

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Abstract

This article's objective is to understand the application of the Teaching Case methodology, in order to verify to what extent this methodology can be considered an innovative educational practice. Thereunto, it is adopted the Study Case to analyze the application of the Teaching Case in students of the Germinare School. The study demonstrates the contribution of the Study Case method for the teaching-learning process in four categories: i) practical learning; ii) theories subordinated to practice; iii) interesting challenge; iv) commitment. The results indicate that the Teaching Case articulates the four categories and therefore, corroborates with the Practice-Based Studies.

Keywords: Practice-Based Studies. Innovation. Learning in Practice. Competences. Teaching Case.

Resumo

O objetivo deste artigo é compreender a aplicação da metodologia Caso de Ensino, para verificar em que medida referida metodologia pode ser considerada uma prática educativa inovadora. Para isso, adota-se o Estudo de Caso para analisar a aplicação do Caso de Ensino junto aos estudantes da Escola Germinare. O estudo demonstra a contribuição do método Caso de Ensino para o processo de ensino-aprendizagem em quatro categorias: i) aprendizagem prática; ii) teorias subordinadas à prática; iii) desafio interessante; iv) engajamento. Os resultados indicam que o Caso de Ensino articula as quatro categorias e assim corrobora com os Estudos Baseados na Prática.

Palavras-chave: Estudos Baseados na Prática. Inovação; Aprendizagem na Prática. Competências. Caso de Ensino.

Introduction

When carefully examined, the current gap in formal education regarding the dissonance between learning and the development of competences in students, allows the investigation of an important topic, both for management studies and for the field of education, which is, learning based on practice. There is already extensive academic production regarding practice as a place in organizational learning (Durante et al., 2019; Gherardi; Strati, 2014; Lohman, 2000; Souza-Silva; Davel, 2007). In this article, however, the focus is on practice as a locus for learning in the school organization.

It is known that Practice-Based Studies consubstantiate reflections on knowledge and learning in organizations, untying the strictly functionalist application and/or the utilitarian view, based on instrumental reason, to allocate knowledge and learning, in the organizations, from a transdisciplinary perspective (Durante, D. et al., 2019).

This field of studies advocates that the development of competences, within an organization, goes through learning grounded in practice, which means that knowledge is “done” collectively (Gherardi; Strati, 2014). Thus, learning also gains relevance beyond the formal space, taking place, informally, in the actual exercise of the profession and allowing, from there, “the learning to be carried out in a more intuitive way through personal and collective experiences that occur gradually” (Motta; Corá, 2019, p. 97).

The present article considers that the development of competences shall be the propellant of the critical insertion of young people in society, so, it starts from the epistemology of practice to, in line with the legal document that guides the Brazilian Basic Education, the National Core Curriculum (Base Nacional Comum Curricular – BNCC), propose an investigation into the teaching-learning methodology that focuses on practice: the Teaching Case.

Whereas “the role of the school is to help students learn to recognize themselves as subjects, considering their potential and the relevance of the modes of participation and social intervention in the achievement of their lives projects” (BNCC, 2018), the article intends to examine, from the pedagogical project of the Germinare School to what extent the Teaching Case Methodology, adopted by this school, can be considered an innovative educational initiative.

In searches carried out in major journals in the Administration area of the country (Revista de Administração Pública, Revista de Administração de Empresas, Revista de Administração Contemporânea e Revista Organizações & Sociedade), the authors place the education x innovation intersection, attached to some important reflections: (i) in higher education in which social innovation is articulated as a proposal for a collective model of university management (Bizarra et. Al., 2020); (ii) in marketing teaching based on hermeneutics, as a form of analysis and critical reflection in the teaching of this discipline (Viana; Costa; Briot, 2016); (iii) in the mediation of emotion in the teaching practice, for the formation of the administrator as a critical, reflexive and sensitive subject (Canopf; Appio; Bugacov, 2018); and (iv) in the conception of an undergraduate program in administration focused on innovation and leadership, that is guided by the development of competences (Borba; Silveira; Faggion, 2005). It was not verified, on said bases, the existence of any study that focused on the introduction of a Teaching Methodology for the Basic Education students, aiming to provide academic formation in management, through a practice-based learning.

Concerning innovation, it is adopted in this research, the concept introduced by the “Oslo Manual” (2006), elaborated by the Organization of Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD):

Innovation is the implementation of a new product (goods or services), or a product significantly improved concerning its characteristics or intended uses, or a process, or a new method of marketing, or a new organization method in the business’s practices, in the organization of the work place or in the external relations (OECD, 1997, p. 55).

The Germinare School is chosen as the object of study, a non-profit organization, supported by a private corporative group, focused on the regular formation in the Basic Education and Technical Education in Business Administration for students from the 6th grade of Junior High School to the 3rd grade of High School. The organization's pedagogical proposal is to be a business school, aimed at the hybrid formation of students – academic and technical. This fact per se, allows the recognition of advances in a learning that proposes to be contextualized and grounded in practice.

Concerning the execution of this research, the students of the Germinare School have been learning business management using the Teaching Case Methodology. At first, during the month of February 2021, year of this study's elaboration, Germinare School students from the 6th grade of Junior High School to the 3rd grade of High School, developed what is called a "Teaching Case". As the duration was only one month and it serves as a reference for further development that will take place during the year, this approach was designated as "Inspirational Teaching Case". After this first contact with the methodology, the students started the Annual Teaching Case that shall last from March to the end of the school year in November.

The objective of this article is to understand the process of construction and practical application of this methodology, Teaching Case, in the school pedagogical project and along with that, analyze the students conceptions about the teaching-learning process that takes place from this specific methodological approach, adopted in the classrooms – the Inspirational Teaching Case and the first stage of the Teaching Case, in order to answer the following research problem: does the aforementioned methodology emerge as an innovative educational initiative?

The interest of investigation lies in the fact that even technical education can have a content bias. When the school uses the Teaching Case Methodology, it begins to adopt the theoretical assumption of John Dewey, an American philosopher, for whom the pedagogical ideal lies in "learning by doing", in line with the organization studies based on practice. Borrowing the analogy of Gherardi and Strati (2014), while students learn to manage a business, they learn to be managers.

The students perceptions collected at the end of February, as well as those collected on May, enable the authors to understand if the Teaching Case Methodology can be considered an innovation for the field of education as they allow to assess whether the students (i) realize the relevance of practice in their learning; (ii) can evaluate this approach against theoretical teaching; (iii) consider that the Teaching Case provides commitment and how; and (iv) if the proposed challenge arouses interest.

This study is organized into two categorical "parts". In the first one, dedicated to the theoretical foundation, the authors present the learning concept based on practice and the development of competences concept from the pedagogical ideal "learn by doing". In the next topic, they look for locating the reader in the Germinare School specific teaching-learning process, to examine the Teaching Case Methodology in detail.

In the second part of the article, the research methodology is explored, which is, the adoption of the Case Study method. At this moment, they look for justifying the choice of the Case Study method and contextualize the reader in the contributions of this method to achieve the intended objective. At the end, they expose the analytical considerations of the research with indications of future studies.

For aiming at the learning of students from Junior High School and High School inserted in a hybrid formation, academic and business management – based on practice – it is expected that this research can contribute both to the field of management studies and to the studies of the teaching-learning process.

Theoretical Reference

Based on Gherardi and Strati (2014), it is understood that learning based on practice is situated and contextualized, that is, it comes from a given situation experienced by subjects who negotiate meanings

from a context. Thereby, the construction of knowledge is generated in the social tissue, in the everyday practices and, “as a process, it is necessary to notice this construction dynamicity, the relationships and mediations that emerge, the negotiation for the concretization of the learning forms and the knowledge that reproduces a social reality or that transforms it” (Durante et al., 2019 p. 9).

Learning is a study area still in development, so, it is difficult to identify its paradigm (Durante; Coelho, 2020). For now, there are several perspectives of practice-based learning and with this in mind, this article takes as a theoretical assumption the socio-practical perspective, that positions and thinks learning beyond the human mind, like the one that arises from social relations accrued from a practice, in other words, prioritizes the “learn by doing”:

Consequently, organizational learning is not only a cognitive process, but also a collective accomplishment, inseparable from the exchange of experiences, knowledge and meanings about practices and professional processes (Gherardi, 1999). Hence, from this perspective, organizational learning includes the negotiation process, sharing and practical knowledge absorption equivalent to the notion of competence (Souza-Silva; Davel, 2007, p. 55).

In this research, the authors join Schatzki (2012) to place practice as a part of the social organization, resulting from human activities collectively organized through interlacement of people, objects and artifacts, within a certain time and space. Such texture originates “doings” and “sayings” that we perceive as actions, activities, and material objects inside an organization.

Complementing, the authors join Versiani et al (2018) when they start from the theoretical picture of the organization learning to think strategy as practice (s-a-p). In this sense, we borrow the definition of practice and praxis to situate learning:

According to s-a-p, the creation of strategies represents the place where practices, praxis and professionals are interconnected. Practices are traditions, rules and routines that guide and legitimate strategy (Jarzabkowski et al., 2007). Praxis, however, refers to episodes, techniques and specific tools involved in the elaboration of strategies (Versiani et al., 2018, p.159).

Thereby, both practice and praxis are interpreted and understood by the organizations’ professionals, who create a repertory of meanings in the execution of their activities. Such meaning construction happens upon attribution of sense (Versiani, et al, 2018). The authors use his logic to think learning within the school.

When placed from the perspective of school education, practice-based learning finds support in the Brazilian priority educational legal guides, once the National Core Curriculum, the basis that defines a set of essential learning that all students must develop throughout basic education, proposes to overcome the radically disciplinary fragmentation of knowledge, and encourages its application in real life. Such an undertaking will only be successful if the importance of the context is considered, to make sense of what is learned, considering the role of the student in his/her learning and in the construction of his/her life project as an individual and a professional.

The National Core Curriculum even advances in the curriculum provision, aggregating to the general basic formation, the so-called “formative itineraries” – in the knowledge area (languages and their technologies; mathematics and its technologies; nature sciences and their technologies; applied human and social sciences) and in the technical and professional formation. Planned for High School, the itineraries materialize in “academic tracks” that make curriculums more flexible and intend to provide students the chance to choose their learning path, guaranteeing, therefore, methodologies that privilege the students’ protagonism. The formative itineraries are organized in four structuring axes: scientific investigation, creative processes, mediation and social-cultural intervention, and entrepreneurship, that guide learning for life.

It can be noticed, therefore, that the Brazilian education is in line with the practice-based learning literature. Practice itself connects “knowledge” with “doing” so that knowledge does not arise from scientific discoveries, instead, it is fabricated by practices situated in the production and reproduction of knowledge using representation and mobilization technologies” (Gherardi; Strati, 2014, p.6). Thence, the relevance of the context for learning, especially in management education.

The Teaching-Learning Process at Germinare School

In accordance with recent research (Paschoalotto et al., 2020) the Brazilian public basic education system lags behind in its governance, so increasing the level of investment in the public schools is not necessarily the way to achieve improvements:

In the case of Brazil, Diaz (2012) says that spending more resources in public schools does not guarantee achievements, as shown through multilevel analysis study in the Brazilian municipalities; in other words, more economic resources do not necessarily lead to an improvement in public education. Moreover, Rocha, Oliveira, Duarte, Gadelha and Pereira (2017) arrived at the same results in another study based on public schools in Brazilian municipalities, where using more resources without better management practices does not generate a more effective and efficient system. Finally, Lauro, Figueiredo and Wanke (2016) represent efficiency as vital for socioeconomics and management in terms of improving student performance in public schools (Paschoalotto et al., 2020, p.5).

Germinare School’s project has both the gratuity of public education and is independent from state investments. It is an institute – third sector legal entity – privately funded. The School is accredited by the Brazilian Ministry of Education (MEC) and by UNESCO and it stands out as one, among countless, initiatives from the private sector that seek to contribute with the improvement of the Brazilian education, in line with article 205 of the Federal Constitution: “article 205: Education, which is the right of all and duty of the State and the family, shall be promoted and encouraged with the cooperation of society, aiming at the full development of the person, his/her preparation for the exercise of citizenship and his/her qualification for work” (Federal Constitution, 1988).

At Germinare School, students start their academic track at the 6th grade of Junior High School, achieving the formation in the Basic Education and as a Technician in Administration at the end of the 3rd grade of High School. The school has already graduated over 305 young leaders, and, at the time of this research, it had 654 students. Its mission is to graduate “business runners” (managers), since its pedagogical project privileges a hybrid structure, offering both academic and professional formation.

The professional formation happens at school, through the management curriculum and in parallel, in what we call “formative route”, as shown in table 1. It starts on the 9th grade of Junior High School, with an internship in retail (sales leader), continuing with an internship in the commercial area (seller), in retail (store manager) and in a later step, the formative route can culminate in the position of sales supervision, still on the 3rd grade of High School.

Table 1 – Formative Route

Grade	Professional Experience
9 th JHS	Retail sales leader
1 st HS	Seller of non-durable consumer goods
2 nd HS	Retail store manager
3 rd HS	Sales supervisor

Source: Authors, 2021

Along the school trajectory, in all grades, students have classes in the knowledge areas established by MEC (Language, Nature Sciences, Human and Social Sciences and Mathematics), as well as in the “Teaching Academies”, that personify the business pillar in which the school sponsoring group operates. This way, students have, in addition to regular formation, a formation based on the five management pillars: brands and consumer goods, retail, commodities, finances and technology and control, all of them

moved by the pillar of people. In table 2, in order to better show how the contents' intersection is accomplished, follows the Germinare School Curriculum:

Table 2 – Germinare School Curriculum from 6th grade JHS to 3rd grade HS

Business	Consumer Goods Academy	Retail Academy	Commodities Academy	Finances Academy	Technology and Control Academy
Formation Axes	-Marketing -Commercial -Product -Supply Chain -History -Geography -Sociology -Philosophy	-Retail -Operations -Expansion -Commercial -People	-Commercial -Production -Planning and Commercial -Sciences -Biology -Physics -Chemistry	-Economy -Capital Market -Banking -Maths -Statistics	-User Experience and Development Methods -Systems Architecture and Programming Language -Accounting -Law -Tax -Computer
Portuguese Language and Literature, Physical Conditioning and English					

Source: Authors, 2021

It is through the intersection of the “management curriculum” and the “academic curriculum” that the School intends to train young leaders that, as protagonists of their lives projects, become transformer professionals. It can be noticed that such pedagogical project has the practice as the starting and the arrival point, once learning happens in the professional context, experiencing management practices “just like reality”, aiming to return to business, competent managers in these same practices. What we have here is learning contextualized in practice, because the process of knowing is associated to the day-to-day actions of the business, going beyond content immersion in the classroom.

Competence is, by definition, the effective way of facing situations, in order to articulate conscience and cognitive resources with knowledge, capabilities, attitudes, information and values, all in a quick, creative and connected way. Competences cannot be taken as objectives, they are not performance indicators, or human mind potentialities, once they only develop and manifest through learning, that is, competences are built and acquired through practice. Germinare School pedagogical project suggests that education prioritizes the development of management and leadership competences, intending to develop a future business manager.

At this point, an important contribution of this pedagogical project to basic education is highlighted. This is because the logic of competences, which prepares students for the world of work, through rich and significant experiences, has become increasingly active in Administration courses. This importance can be extended to education in general, as learning through practice, as proposed by the Teaching Case methodology, is much more effective (SILVA; BANDEIRA DE MELLO, 2021).

At the same time, it is possible to say that the organization mobilizes practice as a condition to the continuous development and learning, once it creates conjunctions for their teachers to take entrepreneur attitudes as meeting with business professionals, so they can learn. In line with Lohman (2000), learning through practice happens informally in the academic workspaces this way:

Teachers associated three main types of informal learning activities with reflecting learning outcomes: exchange of knowledge (share and think about the practice and experiences of others), experimentation (actively experience new ideas and techniques) and environmental verification (independent verification and collection of information from sources outside school) (Lohman, 2000, p.84).

In the present study, the research interest lies on the adoption of the Teaching Case Methodology with students from the 6th grade of Junior High School to the 2nd grade of High School, where each grade

was responsible for answering to a business challenge of a specific brand. Such methodology was adopted in one of the five Teaching Academies, the one responsible for the brand and consumer goods pillar.

Methodology

This article approaches qualitative research with theoretical reflections, based on the Case Study method (Cesar, 2005), to understand, from the Germinare School teaching-learning process, if and to what extent, such methodology can be considered as an innovative educational initiative. Here, any other methodological resource would not be appropriate, once the research situation stands out as the one so well described by Yin (2002, p.13), “the limits between the phenomenon and the context are not so clear and the researcher has little control over phenomenon and context.” In line with the author, the case allows the investigators to ask “how” and “why” the analyzed phenomenon happens, as it is intended in this investigation.

In February 2021, the school students, under the supervision of a work team of one of the management pillars (brands and consumer goods), received real business challenges to be investigated and solved by the end of the month – The “Inspirational Teaching Case”. Six challenges were introduced linked to non-durable consumer goods businesses in the food sector and/or hygiene, beauty, and cleaning to the 605 students from the 6th grade of Junior High School to the 2nd grade of High School.

After completion, a mixed survey was applied using a ten-question quiz prepared by the online platform Survey Monkey (eight closed questions and two open), that substantiates part of the data collection of this investigation, trying to understand the students’ perceptions about the used methodology based on four analysis axes: i) practical learning; ii) theories subordinated to practice; iii) interesting challenge; and iv) commitment. The adherence rate was 79%, that is, 518 students answered the quiz.

After completing the “Inspirational Teaching Case”, it was started the “Annual Teaching Case”, where each grade (also from the 6th JHS to the 2nd HS), received real businesses challenges, linked to non-durable consumer goods brands in the food sector and/or hygiene, beauty, and cleaning, that integrate the sponsoring group businesses. Through stages: diagnosis, strategy and action plan, students are mobilized to develop solutions for the challenges, going through the four theoretical axes: commercial/sales, marketing, product development and supply chain.

The diagnosis stage was completed in May and a new ten closed questions quiz prepared by the online platform Survey Monkey was applied and became the second part that substantiates this investigation data collection. This quiz also tried to understand the students’ perceptions concerning the applied methodology. The adherence rate was 95%, that is, 607 students answered the quiz as shown on table 3:

Table 3: Methodological Itinerary

Step Researched	Research Instrument	Composition	Date	Number of answers	Adherence Rate
Inspirational Teaching case	Survey Monkey Quiz	10 questions: 8 closed and 2 open	February 2021	518	79%
Teaching Case Diagnosis Stage	Survey Monkey Quiz	10 closed questions	May 2021	607	95%

Source: Authors, 2021

As Creswell and Creswell (2021, p. 153) say “the qualitative research is interpretive research; the investigator is, usually, involved in a constant and intensive experience with the participants” and for this, attention must be paid to the necessary reflexivity of one’s role as a researcher.

The researchers of this article perform professionals’ functions at Germinare School, one as a director of the examined pillar and the other as a teacher of the researched students. However, the Teaching Case that supports the following results, was not implemented by the authors to submit respondents to their research interests, on the contrary, the referred methodology was already expected to be used during the

year as part of the school pedagogical project and the results of its adoption are herein shared through the data obtained from the quizzes.

Analysis of Results

As mentioned before, six challenges were introduced linked to non-durable consumer goods businesses in the food sector and/or hygiene, beauty, and cleaning to 637 students from the 6th grade of Junior High School to the 2nd grade of High School, both in February – the Inspirational Teaching Case – and in March, to develop the Annual Teaching Case. To be a valid methodological approach, the Teaching Case must have the description of a work dilemma, supported by a rich source of data that represents the organizational complexity and enables the experience of a real situation (Albertoni; Silva, 2018).

What happens in the beginning is that the Teaching Cases, the way they are formatted, intend to give the students the opportunity to learn to “run a business”, by proposing a business challenge to be achieved by the end of the cycle. However, to understand if this teaching-learning methodology promotes an emancipating education that propitiates the development of children and young people and so, represents an innovative educational initiative, students must be at the center of the debate. They were asked if they understood that, in the Teaching Case, there was a relevant teaching practice, how they evaluated this approach in face of theoretical teaching, if they considered that the Teaching Case propitiated commitment and how and if the proposed challenge aroused interest.

This way, this article established four categories for data analysis: i) practical learning; ii) theories subordinated to practice; iii) interesting challenge and iv) commitment. Based on the quizzes answered by the students, it is possible to analyze their perceptions about the impact of the Inspirational Teaching Case methodology in their learning, according to these four categories, allowing understanding how this methodology enables students to experience the “new” in the teaching-learning process.

Practical Learning

In the quantitative survey carried out in February in the Inspirational Teaching Case, 99% of the respondents agree that the Teaching Case methodology generates significant learning on management of a business and allows this learning to be mobilized through practice, as shown on Tables 4, 5 and 6:

Table 4 – Learning Perception

Do you consider that you learned a little more about managing a business with the Teaching Case activity carried out at the beginning of the year?		
Likert Scale	Answers	Respondents
5 – Totally Agree	41,28%	213
4 – Agree	45,00%	233
3 – Agree in Parts	12,60%	65
2 – Disagree	0,97%	5
1 – Totally Disagree	0,00%	0

Source: The authors, 2021

Table 5 – Learning in Practice

Do you consider that the Teaching Case activity was carried out in a practical way?		
Likert Scale	Answers	Respondents
5 – Totally Agree	34,63%	178
4 – Agree	46,69%	240
3 – Agree in Parts	17,32%	89
2 – Disagree	1,36%	7
1 – Totally Disagree	0,00%	0

Source: The authors, 2021

In the quantitative survey carried out in May in the Teaching Case diagnosis, 97% of the respondents agree that the Teaching Case methodology has been carried out in a practical way, as shown on Table 6:

Table 6 – Learning in Practice

Do you consider that the Teaching Case activity was carried out in a practical way?		
Likert Scale	Answers	Respondents
5 – Totally Agree	38,47%	232
4 – Agree	40,30%	243
3 – Agree in Parts	17,91%	108
2 – Disagree	2,99%	18
1 – Totally Disagree	0,33%	2

Source: The authors, 2021

The collected testimonies match the broad perception that the Teaching Cases generate learning and do so through practice, mostly translating the perceived bond between learning and feeling part of the business environment:

“It was a very cool experience; I could feel myself inside the business world” (8th grade JHS).

“I had a totally innovative experience, I felt like an employee working for a company and creating products for it” (6th grade JHS).

“With practical cases, learning is more effective. I believe it was a good case to introduce a different learning model” (1st grade HS).

“My experience made me feel in a professional position, making decisions, making choices, knowing how to administer my money” (6th grade JHS).

“I liked it a lot, even because I was always in favor of a practical learning and with this activity, we were able to learn a lot in an objective and clear way” (1st grade HS).

“It was a unique experience and certainly brought me a lot of knowledge, allowing me to learn with a practical case, dealing with different obstacles in the middle of work” (2nd grade HS).

“A very dynamic activity, we were able to develop ideas as if we were in a company. I thought it was a really interesting proposal and I would like to develop even more challenging cases” (1st grade HS).

“I loved the activity, it was practical and challenging, we just created a product and were able to see our capability of research and development. It contributed a lot for our autonomy and self-knowledge” (8th grade JHS).

There are two fundamental components for practice-based learning: it must be situated and contextualized. Based on the testimonies, it is possible to see the effectiveness of these two components in the Teaching Case methodology, once its construction is based on a real business situation and the competences that are developed together with the students emerge from the need to face a business context. Therefore, practice, that articulates a knowing with a doing, emerges, with no difficulty, from a context that simulates a management reality and allows the development of competences of a business manager. Thus, an important contribution of the Teaching Case methodology to the teaching and learning process in Administration can be seen, since it allows, through practice, that students experience the practice through experiences, which it is more effective for learning, as this phenomenon allows establishing relationships between new and previous knowledge (SILVA; BANDEIRA-DE-MELLO, 2021).

Theories Subordinated to Practice

The research also evidences those students perceive greater effectiveness in practical and dynamic classes if compared to theoretical classes. The overwhelming majority of the respondents (98%), when completed the Inspirational Teaching Case, believes that practical and dynamic classes are more efficient for learning (Table 7):

Table 7: Theory x Practice

Comparing with explanatory and theoretical classes, do you think that practical and dynamic classes are more efficient for your learning?		
Likert Scale	Answers	Respondents
5 – Totally Agree	54,84%	283
4 – Agree	26,94%	139
3 – Agree in Parts	16,09%	83
2 – Disagree	1,55%	8
1 – Totally Disagree	0,58%	3

Source: The authors, 2021

The priority conferred to practice over theory for an effective learning is confirmed through the collected testimonies:

“I found it a good activity model, I liked it, it makes it necessary not only listen, but also think and do” (2nd grade HS).

“With practical cases, learning is more effective. I believe it was a good case to introduce a different learning model” (8th grade JHS).

“It was a great experience, where I could put into practice all the concepts and theory that were taught during the last years at Germinare” (2nd grade HS).

“I liked it a lot, I felt challenged and was able to apply the theory of all these years in this work” (1st grade HS).

“It was interesting, we were able to experiment someone’s experience who look for a solution for a company, something we will have to do in our professional careers” (9th grade JHS).

“It was an unique experience and certainly brought me a lot of knowledge, allowing me to learn with a practical case, dealing with different obstacles in the middle of work” (2nd grade HS).

Practice is placed where learning happens, once it is from practice that thinking is mobilized and the reflective practice by the students is made possible when adopting the Teaching Case. Furthermore, competences are developed as in “execution” as they become necessary to deal with challenging situations that appear along the way.

Interesting Challenge

When we asked about the strong point of the Inspirational Teaching Case, among five points that could be chosen, 30,5% of the students pointed that the challenge of making decisions stood out (Table 8):

Table 8 – Strong Points

If you could highlight one, what would be the strong point of this activity (Teaching Case)?		
Strong Points	Answers	Respondents
The challenge: I was able to understand the challenge and make decisions	30,04%	155
The professional experience: I was able to feel myself in the business environment	22,09%	114
The classes: it was really cool to learn theory from practice	19,77%	102
The protagonism: I liked to have the autonomy to choose the paths during the activity	17,83%	92
Clarity: I was able to understand how useful my learning is for my career	10,27%	53

Source: The authors, 2021

Concerning the Annual Teaching Case, 98% of the students considered that the chosen challenge for the Teaching Case is interesting and challenging (Table 9):

Table 9: Interesting Challenge

Compared to the explanatory and theoretical classes, do you think that the practical and dynamic classes are more effective for your learning?		
Likert Scale	Answers	Respondents
5 – Totally Agree	31,95%	192
4 – Agree	47,92%	288
3 – Agree in Parts	18,64%	112
2 – Disagree	1,33%	8
1 – Totally Disagree	0,17%	1

Source: The authors, 2021

In the same sense, in the perception of 99% of the students, the business challenge in the Inspirational Teaching Case was interesting and challenging, what can be confirmed by the following testimonies:

“It was a very good experience, because the case is difficult to be answered, so it made us beat our brains out and organize well” (1st grade HS).

“It was a challenging and fun experience” (6th grade JHS).

“It was interesting and challenging, the proposed case was complicated to be solved, which motivated me to work and understand the business environment” (2nd grade HS).

“I felt myself challenged and it was interesting to think about the brand’s positioning in relation to an agenda is so discussed nowadays. I was able to think like a manager and I hope to have more challenges like this in the future” (9th grade JHS).

“I liked this activity a lot, especially the part of decision making and to realize how the professional environment is” (9th grade JHS).

“It was interesting, we were able to experiment someone’s experience who look for a solution for a company, something we will have to do in our professional careers” (9th grade JHS).

“I found it a good activity model, I liked it, it makes it necessary not only listen, but also think and do” (2nd grade HS).

“It was a really good activity, in my opinion would not need to improve!” (8th grade JHS)

Considering that the proposed challenges come from businesses, we emphasize here, as an example, how the Teaching Case proposes to articulate such narrative construction, based on facts. As example, the Case of the juices brand “Sucos do Bem”, which was designated to the students of the 1st grade of Junior High School, in February. Along its trajectory, the brand “Sucos do Bem” effectively went through the challenge of developing the whole juice market in Brazil. Therefore, the students challenge was the same of the brand: build a plan of action that allowed the business to continue developing this market and at the same time, increase revenue.

Commitment

The students’ testimonies bring robustness to the conclusion that the Inspirational Teaching Case provided a mobilizing learning. For 97% of the students, the proposed activity facilitated commitment with classes, as shown in Table 10:

Table 10: Commitment

In your opinion, the proposed activity dynamics in this first month facilitated your commitment with the classes?		
Likert Scale	Answers	Respondents
5 – Totally Agree	44,47%	229
4 – Agree	40,19%	207
3 – Agree in Parts	12,23%	63
2 – Disagree	2,91%	15
1 – Totally Disagree	0,19%	1

Source: The authors, 2021

The testimonies meet the same sense of recognizing the value of the methodology to their learning experiences:

"It was great, we were able to learn a lot with this activity and we had to think of several details for the proposed challenge" (1st grade JHS).

"I liked it a lot, I felt challenged and was able to apply the theory of all these years in this work" (1st grade HS).

"In my opinion it was a sensational activity, I was able to practice all the knowledge I acquired in the past 4 years in one case and from there, I was able to develop several questions and improvement proposals, together with my group" (1st grade HS).

"A challenging experience and nice to execute" (2nd grade HS).

"It was nice, and I liked the experience a lot" (6th grade JHS).

"Very good, it was a very dynamic work that led us to work our minds to innovate and think of improvements for the product" (8th grade JHS).

"A very good experience, where we could expand our knowledge, propose ideas, a very cool activity to start the year well" (8th grade JHS).

"The experience of making a product, creating, doing the design, making decisions and work in group was really dynamic and fun, this way we can unleash our imagination (besides, this is my favorite course)" (8th grade JHS).

It is noticed that the Teaching Case works out students' autonomy, which is fundamental for the engaging learning process: it is from autonomy that students start to seek the intrinsic motivation to act by will and not by imposition. Therefore, it is necessary to exist flexibilization in the execution, a feeling of pedagogical freedom and choice, what happens in the Teaching Case, where real businesses challenges are used as teaching-learning strategy with the objective of engaging the student. It is such problematization that propitiates students to get in touch with information and to go beyond, because they need to produce knowledge to solve challenges and with that, promote their own development.

Final Considerations

The investigation herein proposed reveals that Germinare School articulated the general competences provided by the National Core Curriculum (Base Nacional Comum Curricular – BNCC), with the school specific ones (management in the five pillars: consumer goods, retail, commodities, finances and technology and control) and adapted its educational strategies to an education through competences, which aims to develop business managers. Not only the construction of the Teaching Case methodology, but also the impact of its use on students, who realize the relevance of its teaching-learning process, reveal an innovative methodological concept, once the Teaching Case aims to inaugurate a new organizational method – within school – that has in practice its privileged locus for learning.

It can be said that the Teaching Case methodology allows the school specific professional formative itinerary to be inseparably tied to what is considered priority for learning: the practice. In other words, the Teaching Case methodology continuously pursues a practice-based education, the disciplinary character of the contents stays in the background and learning gains relevance, once it configures meaning for the young people's lives projects, enabling their development and their formation as critical citizens and transformer professionals.

As the main finding of the research, it is verified the compatibility of the Teaching Case methodology with the logic of competences, that are increasingly predominant in the teaching and learning process in Administration. So, this article, as shown, puts Germinare School in line with the need to rethink curricula and review pedagogical practices. The Teaching Case is a methodology that, built on top of a real business challenge, mobilizes the student to be active in search of its resolution.

In the specific context analyzed here, the Teaching Case lasts one year, and students go through three distinct stages to solve the challenge: diagnosis, strategy, and action plan. As all the challenges are linked to businesses that involve brands of non-durable consumer goods, in the diagnosis phase, students use the SWOT hue in terms of marketing, commercial, product and supply chain axes. Then, based on Porter's generic strategies, they define the one that will best guide the resolution of the challenge and, finally, they propose an action plan, based on metrics from the income statement for the brand's historic year.

What is present in this reflection is the demonstration of the effectiveness of the Teaching Case methodology for the teaching and learning process, based on the categories examined: i) practical learning; ii) theories subordinated to practice; iii) interesting challenge and iv) commitment. And, in addition, an advance in the Teaching Case methodology is proposed, which makes it possible to adopt this methodology in both basic education and in technical courses, undergraduate or graduate courses, namely: i) its realization in one academic year; (ii) its design based on a real business challenge; (iii) three well-defined steps for its realization; and (iv) theories linked to the proposed challenge.

The aforementioned methodology, in the authors' understanding, faces up to the existing gap between learning and the development of competences in students. The fact that students become "owners" of knowledge does not make them able to deal with issues of reality, either in the future exercise of their professions, or along their life's trajectories. Thereby, the legal document that guides the Brazilian Basic Education, the National Core Curriculum (Base Nacional Comum Curricular – BNCC), privileges an education based on the development of competences, seeking to form a critical student, prepared for work and for life.

Taking the Teaching Case as an empirical basis, the article can show this methodology's impact on the teaching-learning process. Remains evidenced that learn presupposes "to know how to do", in other words, it requires practice and contextualization. This is the Teaching Case proposal: when proposing a real business challenge, students are encouraged to mobilize knowledge, capabilities, and attitudes to face situations and find solutions, developing the necessary competences for work and for life.

The students' perceptions were not different: for them, practice gains relevance and protagonism in the teaching-learning process. There is effective priority of practice over theory, to mobilize knowledge and arouse interest beyond the robustness of the challenge that, articulated with reality, culminates in the necessary commitment in classes. It is noticed the importance of the bond between the daily business management and the teaching objective: learn to be a manager.

Thus, the article demonstrates that the organizational studies allow thinking about practice in education and that the Teaching Case methodology combines all the necessary requirements for the learning to take place within school. If for organizations it is evident that informality is a source of learning because it is an essential locus of professional practice, in the school universe, the reproduction of the formal reality of the professional context allows this practice to be articulated in favor of students' learning.

We hope that other qualitative and quantitative studies shall expand the reflection concerning the importance of practice in the development of competences in young people. It is urgent to rethink the traditional content teaching model and the organizational studies, when transposed to education, have a lot to contribute. We also suggest broadening the application of the Teaching Case methodology not only at the Germinare School but also in other educational institutions of basic and higher levels, focusing in business administration. Ultimately, we recommend future studies that consider the contributions of Practice-Based Studies, aiming to reflect on the learning of management teachers, who have a strictly academic formation.

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