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NEW METHODOLOGICAL APPROACHES OF TEACHING ECONOMIC SCIENCES

Új módszertani megközelítések a gazdaságtudományok oktatásában

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Abstract

This study asks how to reform and enhance the teaching methods of labour economics (as a theoretical subject), a discipline which is associated with a group of economic science subjects. The goal of this subject is to provide an overview of the functioning of the labour market, as well as the international and domestic situation regarding unemployment. After completing study on this subject, students may be able to understand labour market trends, and to provide an explanation of the different relationships, as the discipline demonstrates an approach involving the flexible treatment of knowledge. The study shows the development of educational package history and its examination of efficiency. Certain parts of these theory-oriented subjects will be used by students in their future work, therefore it is necessary to have practice-oriented education. This study (116 people by questionnaire survey) - which is only one component of the complex research - was designed to find out whether the subject of economics can be taught successfully by giving out individual tasks and group work. The assumption is made that the students prefer practice teaching form of any subject. At the same time among the methods used in practice, they prefer that require activation and creativity. Furthermore, the assumption is made that there is a difference in the perception of the subject between those students who just listened to labour economics, and those who had practice as well. It may be concluded that significant differences of opinion between respondents can be discovered in the subject of the assessment: students who studied the combined form expressed more positivity than those who only attended a lecture. Our hypotheses are confirmed.

Based on the results of this study, we plan to compile a collection of methodologies that can assist the practice-oriented education of any other economic science subject.

JEL code: I23

Keywords: higher education, teaching method, labour economics, practice-oriented training

Összefoglalás

A tanulmány arra keresi a választ, hogy miként lehet egy gazdaságtudományi tantárgycsoporthoz tartozó diszciplína – a munkagazdaságtan (mint elméleti tárgy) – oktatási módszereit megújítani. Ezen tárgy oktatásának az a célja, hogy áttekintést nyújtson a munkaerőpiac működéséről, a munkanélküliség nemzetközi és hazai helyzetéről. Mivel ennek az elmélet-orientált tantárgynak bizonyos részeit a hallgatók jövőben munkájukban felhasználják, így válik szükségessé, hogy oktatása gyakorlatorientált legyen. A tanulmány a tárgy oktatásához kidolgozott oktatócsomag kidolgozásának előzményeit és hatékonyságának vizsgálatát mutatja be. A vizsgálat – mely egy komplex kutatás egyik komponense csupán - célja az volt, hogy 116 fő kérdőíves felmérésével feltérképezze, hogy önálló feladatok és csoportmunka segítségével sikeresen oktatható-e egy gazdaságtudományi tárgy. A feltevés szerint a hallgatók az oktatási formák közül a gyakorlatot kedvelik inkább, bármely tárgy esetében, valamint a gyakorlatokon alkalmazott módszerek közül, azokat részesítik előnyben, amelyek aktivizálnak és igénylik a kreativitást. Feltételezzük továbbá, hogy eltérés van a tantárgy megítélésében azon hallgatók között, akik csak előadás, illetve akik gyakorlat formájában is tanulták

a munkagazdaságtant. Hipotéziseink megerősítést nyertek. A vizsgálat eredményeire alapozva a tantárgy oktatásához olyan módszertani gyűjtemény összeállítását tervezzük, amely bármely más gazdaságtudományi tárgy gyakorlatorientált

oktatását is segítheti.

Kulcsszavak: felsőoktatás, oktatásmódszertan, munkagazdaságtan, gyakorlatorientált képzés

Introduction and theoretical background

Since the beginning of the 20th century the increase in student numbers of higher education has been characteristic on world economic level, which reached a mass level in the 60s. Namely, after the second World War, a generation that was born due to the economic recovery by this time logged on to higher education. By the end of the '80s due to becoming adults of the second generation of baby boomers the number of students increased again. On the one hand that was the result of parents with higher education, on the other hand, the governments of the States believed in the expansion of higher education a kind of solution, as a result of the economic downturn at that time one of the ways of avoiding unemployment had caused further education.

Between 1970 and 2005 the number of students became three to five times higher in developed countries. The expansion had two clear effect. First, higher education became multisectoral. It needed to meet the needs of the labour market, which required a skilled workforce, which is immediately applicable. Thus, a non-university type institutions were set up to put the students in less time out of the labour market and significantly cheaper. These institutions often only meet regional expectations, because they were able to quickly respond to demand. Actually we can talk about higher education as a concept from this time. On the other hand, heterogeneity became characteristic. This means that it opened the possibility of higher education participation of disadvantaged groups or vocational high school graduates. (HRUBOS, 2006; POLÓNYI, 2009)

The situation was somewhat different in Hungary because the surging participation in higher education was typical. Hungary switched to Soviet model in the 40s and '50s, and that time the number of students aligned with the national economic plans. So, after the initial increase, from 1954 headcount reduction occurred. Later the government increased the number of students due to shortage of professionals in the 1960s, so the number of students was doubled until 1965. By the end of the '60s the number dropped again as a result of the planned economy. By the late 1980s, the higher education population in Hungary was far behind European countries. The reason for this was that the quotas were followed for specialized workforce. (POLÓNYI, 2011)

After the political changes the number of students began to grow again, but in the second half of the '90s it began a new wane due to the problems of funding and fear of overproduction. In 2000s the introduction of the Bologna Process resulted again mass emissions of higher education. The expansion of higher education was one part of Bologna Process which needed fundamental change. Besides increasing Europe's competitiveness, the expansion was greater emphasis in the reform started by Bologna Declaration in 1999 (HRUBOS, 2006).

Nowadays the incredible growth of knowledge and the widespread of information and knowledge delivery systems require the use of new teaching methods in worldwide. From time to time theories and hypotheses crop up which announced a new method appearance,

such as Problem-Solving Method, Project Method, Total Physical Response (TPR) or Education Through Action or Education Through Work Method. (A Problem-Solving approach formulated by Dewey, is based on the principle that learning should be built on problem-solving, on expedient activities and on the students' interest. The Project Method, which was developed by Kilpatrick, is based on the students' interest and joint work of teachers and students. Education Through Action or Education Through Work Method is the result of initiatives of Lay, Decroly and Kerschensteiner. Variants of this method include independent student work by the textbooks, independent student's observations and practical work, as well as programmed education.)

It can be stated that although the programmed education did not spread to the extent that the method makers had imagined, or the team work did not squeeze out the frontal work completely either, and the technical means are not able to replace the work of the teachers, however, the current textbooks are more modern than the ones before twenty-five years, and teaching is more colourful, varied than it was before the "methodical fashion".

Higher education is characterized by hard-defined pedagogical peculiarities and specific problems. It is necessary to find solutions for the effective training of an increased number of students in order to provide them with education that gives them useful knowledge. (OLLÉ, 2009; LENCSE, 2010; EUROPEAN COMMISSION, 2012)

While higher education researchers definitively classify part-time students as adults, and recommend the application of tools and methods proposed by the andragogy science during the training. However, this categorization is not so clear in the case of full-time students. It is difficult to decide in their case whether the proven tools and methods of the education of children or the training of adults lead to a more effective implementation of training objective. (BODNÁR, 2009; ZRINSZKY, 2009; BAÇA, 2014)

Andragogy stresses the importance of self-management, the use of abundant experience, the defining role of practical needs, problem orientation, an equal partnership between teacher and student, and cooperation in understanding problems. (ZRINSZKY, 2009; HROZKOVÁ, 2015)

It is a common experience among part-time students that they have issues with self-management: they expect the teacher to tell them what to do and when, to recommend scientific literature to them, and to ask them only about the textbook material during exams. However, there are many young people among the full-time training students (especially in later semesters) whose independence and self-regulated learning skills are at a higher level, who are ambitious, and have an aspiring personality. Many of them have a job and experience in workforce market and in their profession. They need a strong teacher-student partnership, and mutual recognition of knowledge, experience and skills (GYÓRFYNÉ, 2012; CSEHNÉ, 2013; FLORCZYKIEWICZ, 2014).

Material and methods

During testing at the Szent István University, we found that it is not good to give everything in the framework of the lectures/theoretical lessons. The lecture has no task to transfer symmetrically the knowledge which can be found in textbooks and scientific literatures. The possibility of introducing practice/seminar was prompted because it closely belongs to lecture as these two forms distinctively are alloyed in the teaching of the subject. As a result, it became necessary to structure the learning material, depending on a variety of topics needs more practical or theoretical processing.

At present, in case of Labour Economics the lecture and seminar (practice) are organically connected. In theoretical lessons the professor introduces students to the facts, in the seminars

they themselves are aware of them. The lecture shows them it all, the practice the details. The labour market is the sum of relationships relating to the sale and purchase of labour. Labour economics examines these phenomena. Knowledge of the labour market is essential for students studying human resources; it therefore appears to be an independent discipline in the education program. The goal of teaching Labour Economics is to provide an overview of the functioning of the labour market, as well as the international and domestic situation relating to unemployment. After completing study of this subject, students may be able to understand labour market trends, to provide an explanation the different relationships which convey approach besides flexible knowledge as well. Certain parts of these theory-oriented subjects will be used by students in their future careers. It is therefore necessary to carry out practice-oriented education.

Labour Economics is taught during a single semester at the university. The syllabus structure means that the principles of economics are taught during the second half of the training. According to the syllabus, students should be aware of the organization and economic regulations of labour service systems. During the practical training they learn the techniques for dealing with unemployment, and, relating to this, the potential economic and organizational possibilities.

The most important topics provided by the course are: economic description of the labour market, its features and actors; working time; the concept of the workforce and its structure; causes of unemployment, development and operation of security systems; the system and the role of labour relations; and the situation of particularly vulnerable groups in the labour market.

The knowledge that should be gained by students is theoretical, and its application in practice is difficult for even well-educated economic experts. Application of knowledge cannot happen statically: in their future work the students must take into account the specific geographic, economic, environmental changes, and economic bearing capacity of the client. In addition to the dynamic approach, understanding the forecasting functions of economic indicators is a necessity, because the prognosis of unemployment has a major impact. Little research and few test results are available about such application of the economic knowledge.

The role of the labour market has changed drastically in recent years, and therefore we need to change the techniques used in higher education in order to find the correct approach for this. This change is also required for any other known material. Because the institutions behind the movement of the labour market are also very volatile, education based on independent thinking must now provide the main mode of information processing. These requirements are self-evident: one need only to think about concepts such as labour market reconciliation, the regional labour market policy, and the situation of specific groups in the labour market. The modernization of higher education requires a partnership with the teacher-student relationship, beyond which it cannot be questioned education philosophical currents are hidden from Plato to Dewey...

Pilot studies

First, the students had to collect their favourite subjects which they had learned during their studies. Respondents could give multiple responses, and finally they listed 18 favourite subjects. Those subjects are in the first six places, which are studied in seminar too. 36.6% of them chose the labour market studies as their favourite subject, so it was the third most popular subject among students. Then we asked the students to mark which educational form are preferred (theoretical or practice) regardless of the subjects, and explain the reasons for their answers. 116 responses were received, and many of them did not add any reason. The 95 respondents (82%) preferred practice, and 20 (18%) the lecture. One student does not mind the form of education (Fig. 1).

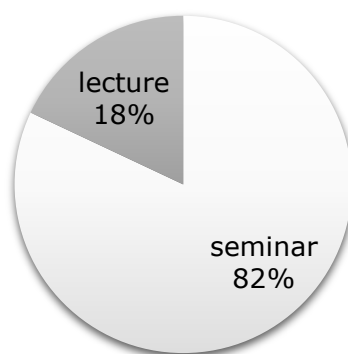


Figure 1: **The distribution of students according to the popular forms of education (%)**
Source: own elaboration

The practice-lovers often wrote: it makes me active, unbound, informal, provides me more thorough knowledge. The major advantages of the theoretical lesson are: much more knowledge could be transferred and they do not require so much attention. Students believed that both forms make the teaching process diverse. There is no fundamental difference in terms of the reasons among students of studying in different levels and forms. Still, it can be noted that participants in MA studies, who have much more experience in learning, say about lecture: you can recognize the connections, and about the practice: you can clarify the 'dark' parts. They also highlight the importance of the team leaders. This suggests that the synthesis is very important for them in the learning process. Table 1 includes all reason. There are some surprising answers (e.g. lecture is better, because I really like to write), and some suggestive ones (in that case practice is better than lecture when the team leader is well-prepared).

Table 1: **Reasons for students regarding popularity of education forms and according to training forms**

Training forms Year	Theoretical lesson/ Lecture	Practice/Seminar
Full-time B. Sc.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Because I really like to write - A lot of new material - Interesting - Not picking - Must passively participate in them - Require only little attention 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Deepen the knowledge - Informal - Good atmosphere - Playful - Easier to remember things - Encourages activity - Livelier, more interesting - More motivated to think - It is possible to express their own opinion
Correspondence courses B.Sc.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - So you do not need to pay attention - Gives a lot of new knowledge - A note-learners - Diversifying education 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Deepen the knowledge - Activates - Good feeling to work together - Unbound - Learning by playing - You do not need to take notes - Not boring
Master's (postgraduate)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - To recognize the connections here - Summed up - Gives a lot of new information 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Clarified the 'dark' parts - Material is imprinted better - Promotes understanding of the theory - Activates - Varied - Unbound - If you are a well-prepared group leader

Source: own elaboration

In the following, the students were asked to mark the preferred methods used in practices of different subjects. The list below (Table 2) contains a variety of methods in descending order, according to how many people (and the percentage of respondents), liked.

Table 2: Popularity (frequency) of the teaching methods used in the practices/seminars

		Number of nominations (People)	Proportion of nominations (%)
1	Brainstorming	139	65
2	Text writing	123	57
3	Puzzle	115	53
4	Fill the worksheets	74	34
5	Photos, pictures	55	26
6	Table analysis	48	22
7	A panel discussion/Talk	44	20
8	Graphs making	41	19
9	Sentence completion	40	18
10	Depiction	36	16
11	Text analysis	35	16
12	Join	31	14
13	Situational game	29	13
14	Abstracts	16	7
15	Weighting	10	5

Source: own elaboration

Based on the opinion of students you can see that the favoured methods are brainstorming, text writing and puzzle. The thematic processing of the learning material could only partially follow them. The least popular methods were abstracts and weighting. Unlike other subjects, the labour market knowledge syllabus does not allow the frequent use of these methods. According to the results by type of training, it is striking that there are no differences in popularity of brainstorming and text writing. The puzzle is nominated in higher proportion among full-time students; analysis of the work with photos, images and tables are rather fond of correspondence students; and making a graph of full-time students; a pictorial representation only loved by higher year full-time students.

Breakdown by years you can realize that the puzzle is classified as less favoured methods of first year students. Sentence completion and fill the worksheets were nominated by higher grades students. Full-time students often use pictorial representation due to the high number of practical lessons, it is likely that is why they prefer. In contrast, students participating in distance education make a poster just twice during their practices. The work with photos and pictures - one of the most commonly used visual method – is popular among correspondent students. The reason probably is that visualization helps adult students understand the curriculum, find correlations, make synthesis. The graduate students have obtained the creativity of synthesis in their previous studies, therefore they do not particularly need it. Full-time students often meet this method in the lectures, therefore they did not realize its importance. Solving the puzzle requires practice, which first year students have even less.

Based on these studies, the following conclusions are interesting:

- The most preferred subjects are the combined ones (theory and practice). So, the practice helps to like the subject.
- The popularity of practice – lecture as a teaching form is: 82:18.

- Methods marked by students confirm their needs for activity and creativity.

Based on this, the purpose of the research connecting with the subject knowledge was to work out the modalities and check their effectiveness, which allow the practice-oriented education of the labour market and the development of educational package. The developed training package includes just one course curriculum.

Making the training package. Scenario of practices/seminars of the labour market knowledge

The package was designed to start the conversation with the student and instructor. It is important that each component will be able to awaken thoughts and associations, and encourage to ask questions and communicate personal experiences. The instructor's role is to prepare the wording of the questions that manages the processing, and giving answers of expected questions. The team leader/instructor will be able to transfer the educational values of the training package if he also is able to relive the treats of students. During the communication the instructor can complete the information conveyed by tools, if the previous experiences of students allow it, or their interest demand it. Conversations related to treats and experiences can be in all lectures and practices without audio-visual presentation. A key role of the training package is the common experience. If all members of a group experience something together, everyone can join in the conversation, everyone can be a question or a message. The labour market knowledge course syllabus enabled and required a multi-faceted presentation. This is shown by past experience according to which acquisition of the subject in the past caused difficulties for the students because in the processing of the learning material we could not rely on impressions from their everyday lives. Preparation of the training package was important, because knowledge of the labour market is central in whole terms of education, since it is establishing and awareness-raising. The construction of package meant the following tasks:

- Choosing the appropriate tools in accordance with the pedagogical aspirations of training
- Finding those topics of the labour market knowledge whose processing by multi-instrument ensemble promise useful lessons in other areas as well
- Writing of scenarios, drafting of information carriers
- Monitoring the effectiveness of the training package (A part of the trial showed the shortcomings of the initial variation, on the other hand, had an interesting experience)

The basic tenet of educational psychology is that the qualities and skills must evolve by activity. Therefore, the information carriers shall be designed that the tasks force the activity of students and so it would have positive repercussions on the development of their attributes and skills. Drafting the scenario, it was special attention on material parts located at the meeting point of other subjects (sociology, counselling, economic policy, regional disparities, psychology). Furthermore, it is important to have these complex presentation highlighting their integrating roles.

The developed training package includes just one course curriculum:

- plenary session (PS)
- pair work (P)
- individual work (I)
- team work (T)
- and take turns teaching guidance.

It can be found at Table 3 the consolidated scenario of the course practices, which includes the theme, the structure, the methods used, the forms of work, equipment and materials used.

Table 3: Consolidated scenario of practices/seminars

Theme	Structure	Methods	Forms	Equipment and materials
Presentation of the labour market	1. Work-related associations 2. Relationship of psychology and unemployment 3. Effect of long-term unemployment	Brainstorming Text analysis Talk	PS T PL	Blackboard Cards Magazine Graph
Working hours	1. Definition of working time 2. The formation of working time 3. Reasons for the reduction of working time 4. Systems of working hours 5. The work schedule	Puzzle Worksheet Talk Join Brainstorming	T I PS T PS	Word cards Worksheet Books Word cards Flipchart
Structure of labour force	1. Sectoral and regional distribution of labour force 2. Qualification and stock distribution of labour force	Table analysis Graphs making	I P	Table Table
Source of labour force	1. Factors affecting the size of the human resources 2. Development of the domestic labour force	Brainstorming Talk	PS PS	Pasteboard Cards Video
Movement of labour force	1. Definition of labour force mobility 2. Characteristics of the workplace change	Text writing Completing sentences	T I	Audio cassettes Flipchart Worksheet
Information flow in the market	1. Cordless telephone/mobile phone 2. State labour exchange 3. CV writing 4. Writing job ads	Situational game Puzzle Text writing Brainstorming	P T I T	Audio cassettes Word cards Flipchart Flipchart
Imbalance in the market	1. Definition of unemployment 2. Types of unemployment 3. Global unemployment 4. Full employment	Completing sentences Join Brainstorming Puzzle	I T PS T	Worksheet Word cards Flipchart Word cards
Unemployment in the EU	1. Unemployment rate in EU countries 2. Employment costs	Graphs making Table analysis Brainstorming	P I T	Table Table Pasteboard
Unemployment in Hungary	1. Appearance of unemployment 2. Development of unemployment 3. Assistance to the unemployed	Talk Graphs making Brainstorming	PS T P	Figure Magazine Table Pasteboard
Statistical records	1. Statistical data collection 2. Institutional statistics 3. Definition of an unemployed 4. Labour sheet 5. Statistical nomenclatures	Puzzle Talk Text writing Table analysis Brainstorming	T PS T P PS	Word cards Book Flipchart Table Flipchart
Regional labour market policy	1. Employment crisis 2. Place of the regional policy 3. Regional programs 4. Crisis regions	Talk Depiction Work by photos Puzzle	PS T PS P	Book Pasteboard Map Word cards
Atypical forms of employment	1. Application forms 2. Helping family members 3. Casual workers 4. Part-time workers	Talk Brainstorming Table analysis Graphs making	PS T P I	Pasteboard Cards Table Table
Repetition	1. Crossword 2. Matching, abbreviations	Fill the worksheets	I I	Worksheet Worksheet

Source: own elaboration

Results

Evaluation of the training package

There were two main goals of preparing this training package: to help the students to study more efficiently and the teachers to teach more easily and willingly. All this, however, had to be verified. We also needed to establish that the training package is operational, it allows you to teach and whether we can learn from it. During the experimental trials it revealed that certain images, texts or methods were substantively incorrect, ambiguous, difficult to manage them and might need a couple of new elements to insert. It was established that one or the other method, material or device should be used differently as well. A number of novel methodological ideas arose in experiences of trying. The efficiency study was meant to reveal shortcomings and merits as well. The assumption is made that there are significant differences between students' perception of the subject, depending on whether the subject previously learned in the form of a traditional lecture or teaching methods as described in the package.

At the time of collecting the data for the study, average age of the students was 20, which is considered to be critical in terms of adult education: most students enter higher education immediately after high school. Many things can only be learned in childhood, but by contrast there are some things that only adults can learn, because only then do they have the necessary experience and knowledge. During the teaching of this subject, we intend to attempt these two aspects at the same time. Based on experience, we propose changing the processing of theoretical lessons by the method of process measurement, which is the maintenance and constant redefinition of concepts that carry important information. Presumably, these two approaches will be successful when combined in education. In the teaching of this subject we also plan to use methodological approaches that are used in traditional academic education.

We asked the opinions of graduate students in connection with the subject of Labour Economics. According to our assumption, there is a difference in the perception of the subject depending on the form the students were taught. The size of the test sample was 116 people. 63 of the students ("Group A", 54%) had both theoretical lessons and practice/seminars in these subjects, 53 students of them ("Group B", 46%) had only theoretical lectures and no practical ones. Processing of the data will be done by comparing these two groups.

Initially, the students had to list their favourite subjects during their studies. The respondents were able to give multiple responses. 16 popular subjects were listed. Labour Economics was in third place (25%) among preferred subjects. A notable difference can be observed between the opinions of the two groups regarding the popularity of the subject. 34.4% of Group A listed this subject as their favourite subject, so this is the third most popular subject among those students. Whereas for Group B, only 10.1% classified the subject Labour Economics as a favourite subject, making it the sixth most popular subject among those students.

The second question concerned the students' specific attitude toward the subject Labour Economics. They had to reply with predefined responses on a 5-grade Likert scale. Looking at all of the examined samples, the attitude value of responses is 3.6, suggesting that the attitude of 71.3% of students is positive towards the subject. Thus, the attitude of subjects is overall positive, but there is a significant difference between the two groups' reviews (Table 4), according to whether their training was practice/seminars (where students have to work and be active, and group work was done) or presentations/theoretical lessons (the transfer of knowledge happens in frontal form). The attitude value was 4 and 3.05 respectively, which is

a significant difference. 78% of students in Group A viewed the subject positively, and 53% of those in Group B. However, there are five times more students in Group B whose attitude is negative towards Labour Economics compared to Group A. There were no respondents in Group B who stated that they valued this subject at the highest level, while more than a quarter of the participants in Group A who had studied with practice marked this category with a high score.

Table 4. The distribution of the opinions of the two student groups about their relationship of this subject (%)

Responses	Group A Had practice	Group B Had no practice
Really did not want	3.5	14.5
Did not like	3.5	16.5
Indifferent	15	16
Quite liked	51.5	53
Loved	26.5	0

Source: own elaboration

Next we examined the need for practice/seminars: those who had practice/seminars in Labour Economics (Group A), and how much they agreed that practice/seminars were necessary; the same was asked of those who did not have practice (Group B), and how much would be required. Nearly half of the total sample considered that the subject better suits the training system, if it comes in the form of practice/seminars as well. According to 18.4% of all students, practice is not needed. Three-quarters of students (75.5%) were positive about practice/seminars, and only one fifth of them (20.4%) thought negatively. The students' answers, of course, differed according to whether they had practice/seminars of the subject Labour Economics (Table 5) or not.

Table 5: Distribution of the opinions of the two student groups about the need for practice/seminar (%)

Responses	Group A Had practice	Group B Had no practice
No, because this is a theoretical subject	13,3	26,5
No, because I do not like practical exercises	3,3	0
I am uncertain	3,3	5,5
Yes, because I like practical exercises	30	21
Yes, because it better matched teaching of the subject	50	47

Source: own elaboration

The Group A attitude value was 3.9, while it was 3.6 in Group B. In Group A, according to 50% of the students (31 people) practice/seminars were necessary, because the subject fitted better into teaching of the subject. Another 30% (19 people) thought that practice was necessary, because they tend to like that form of education. Only 3.3% of the respondents (two people) were uncertain, and 3.3% (2 people) believed that there is no need to have practice/seminars in this subject, because they do not like this form of education. In Group A, 13.3% of respondents (8 people) said there was no need for practice/seminars, since Labour Economics is a theoretical subject.

In Group B, 47% of students (25 people) thought that practice/seminars would have been necessary, as it better fitted into the course. A further 21% (11 people) thought that it was necessary to practice, because they enjoy practical subjects. Only 5.5% of the respondents (three people) were uncertain regarding the issue, while the other students (26.5% - 14 people) thought practice/seminar was unnecessary, as it is a theoretical subject. It is interesting that no one marked the answer that they do not like educational practice/seminars. There is a striking difference between the opinions of these two groups in the first answer. Out of those who had no practice, twice as many think that there is no need for practice/seminars due to the theoretical nature of the subject than those who participated in the practices/seminars.

There is an outstanding similarity between opinions of the two groups in the fifth answer. Half of the students believe that it is necessary to have practice/seminars as an education form, because the subject is better suited to the training system.

The participants were able to give their opinions about the support of practice/seminar games in their preparations. The total sample attitude value is 3.6. 71.5% of respondents believed that participation in practice/seminars helped them a lot in their study, and only 8.2% felt it was not helpful. The attitude value for Group A was 3.56, and for Group B it was 3.2 (Table 6).

Table 6: Distribution of the opinions of the two student groups regarding support for practice/seminar games (%)

Responses	Group A Had practice	Group B Had no practice
Not at all	13.5	0
A bit	6.7	10.5
I am uncertain	6.7	21
Pretty much	56.4	52.7
Very much	16.7	15.8

Source: own elaboration

73% of those students who have had practice/seminars in Labour Economics stated that the practical exercises/games helped them prepare. 6.7% of them were unsure, and 6.7% also thought that it had helped them only a little. In this group, 13.5% felt that practical games did not help at all in their preparation.

Group B was asked whether, if they had participated in practice/seminars, how they felt this would have helped their preparation. 15.8% of the respondents thought that it would have been very helpful for preparation; according to 52.7% it would have helped quite a lot; 21% of students were uncertain on this issue; 10.5% thought that it would have been of only a little help; while no one thought that it would have been no help at all.

Comparing the opinions of the two groups, there is a significant difference in case of the first answer: out of those who had had no practice, no one believes that the practice would not have helped in the preparations, compared to 13.4% of the value of the other group. One fifth of those who had no practice/seminars are uncertain. For both groups positive responses are the highest, 68.4% in total, and there is no significant difference in opinion between the two groups. The students believe that if they are involved in practice/seminars, it will help them in their learning.

There was a significant difference in opinions between the two groups when we asked them about the names of methods used in practices/seminars. The members of the Group A listed mostly those methods which were actually applied in practices/seminars: worksheet filling (crossword), text processing, brainstorming, puzzles, pictorial representation (poster design), working with photos, images (mapping, comic books), writing text, matching, situational practices, adding methods used in other subjects such as 'word poker' and the preparation of case studies. There were no responses from the members of Group B, which is unsurprising, because they do not have the experience to imagine how this theoretical subject works in a practical way.

Summarizing the results of the audit questionnaires, our assumption - that there are significant differences between students in the perception of the subject - was confirmed. Those students who study the subject using a combined method (theoretical lessons and practices/seminars) have different opinions to those who have only had theoretical lessons. Nearly half of both groups think that the practice/seminar form of teaching is necessary for studying Labour Economics, because knowledge is gained more easily and to a higher standard this way.

Conclusions

The following conclusions are notable:

- Labour Economics is the third most popular subject among 28 subjects studied during the education process. Students who studied this subject in a combined form strongly prefer the subject (third place), compared to those who studied it only as theoretical classes (sixth place). Therefore, the practice/seminars as an educational form contributes to students liking this subject.
- More than half of students have a positive opinion about this subject. However, a positive reaction is one and a half times more positive from have who have experienced practices/seminars. In Group B no one said that they liked this subject very much, but more than a quarter of students who participated in practices/seminars marked this category with a full rating. Five times more students in Group B have a negative attitude towards Labour Economics than Group A.
- Of those who had no practice/seminars, twice as many of them believe that practice/seminars are not necessary because of the theoretical nature of the subject, compared to those who could participate in practices/seminars.
- Half of the students believe that practice/seminars is necessary as an education form, because the subject is better suited to the training system.
- The students believe that the fact that they take part in practice/seminars as part of teaching of this subject helps their learning.

During the observations, it was revealed that students had showed a clear improvement in those types of tasks, which occurred several times (table analysis, brainstorming, matching) during the semesters. From this we conclude that especially the recognition of relationships as basic skills developed in students. The results of the verification confirmed this recognition. The analysis of the midterm showed that students had completed the memorisation skills poorly, while the task of recognizing relationships they had achieved at a much higher level compared to the experience of previous years.

The tests clearly proved that the application of the training package is successful in case of other economic subjects as well. This study should be considered as part of a larger-scaled series of research. This research continuously measures the student's satisfaction, the subjects' usefulness and the proportion of subjects to the practice and theory. The database and its

results provide us a summary of the edifications towards possible reforms, changes and innovations. The aim is to provide students with marketable diplomas when they leave the higher education. For this they need advanced skills, which is what we try to give them by modern methods. All of this requires constant methodological review, and consequent revision of teaching in all subjects.

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