

Research article

Contexts Articulation for Teaching in Management: Competitive performance of organizations

Articulación de Contextos para la enseñanza de la Administración: Desempeño competitivo de las organizaciones

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Abstract

Introduction: The Articulation of Contexts for Teaching in Administration - Competitive Performance of Organizations Project is part of the studies developed by the University to create new practices and pedagogical structures for undergraduate and graduate courses at the University. Structured around three stages, the project aimed to consolidate students' knowledge of the fundamentals of the competitive performance of organizations. **Methodology:** The study used participant observation to examine the impact of new teaching methods on student engagement and learning at a Brazilian university. Researchers collected data through classroom observations, engagement reports, field notes, and interviews. Thematic analysis identified vital factors influencing engagement, such as teaching methods and classroom interactions. **Results-Discussions:** The project integrated subjects to analyze businesses and consumers, develop various products, end with the CRM proposal in the

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companies studied, provide practical learning, and prepare students for the market. **Conclusions:** Students applied theory to real problems through the expected products, developing critical thinking, collaborative skills, and management competencies. Disciplinary integration and effective practice consolidated an effective teaching model aligned with market demands.

Keywords: competition; business organization; intelligence systems; business environment; active teaching methodologies; articulation of contexts; teaching project; administration.

Resumen

Introducción: El Proyecto Articulación de Contextos para la enseñanza en Administración - Desempeño competitivo de las organizaciones se enmarca en los estudios desarrollados por la Universidad (PUC-SP) para crear nuevas prácticas y estructuras pedagógicas para los cursos de grado y posgrado de la Universidad. Estructurado en tres etapas, el proyecto tuvo como objetivo consolidar el conocimiento de los estudiantes sobre los fundamentos del desempeño competitivo de las organizaciones. **Metodología:** El estudio utilizó la observación participante para examinar el impacto de los nuevos métodos de enseñanza en la participación y el aprendizaje de los estudiantes en una universidad brasileña. Los investigadores recopilaron datos a través de observaciones en el aula, informes de participación, notas de campo y entrevistas. El análisis temático identificó factores vitales que influyen en la participación, como los métodos de enseñanza y las interacciones en el aula. **Resultados-Discusión:** El proyecto integró disciplinas para analizar negocios y consumidores, desarrollando varios productos, finalizando con la propuesta de CRM en las empresas estudiadas, brindando aprendizaje práctico, preparando a los estudiantes para el mercado. **Conclusiones:** A través de los productos esperados, los estudiantes aplicaron la teoría a problemas reales, desarrollando pensamiento crítico, habilidades colaborativas y habilidades gerenciales. La integración disciplinar y la práctica efectiva consolidaron un modelo de enseñanza eficaz y alineado con las demandas del mercado.

Palabras clave: competencia; organización del negocio; sistemas de inteligencia; ambiente de negocios; metodologías de enseñanza activa; articulación de contextos; proyecto docente; administración.

1. Introduction

The Project Articulation of Contexts for Teaching in Administration—Competitive Performance of Organizations is part of the studies developed by the Pontifical Catholic University of São Paulo—PUC-SP. This project, which results from the collective efforts of our faculty, researchers, and students in business administration and higher education, aims to create new practices and pedagogical structures for the University's undergraduate and graduate courses.

Specifically, the Competitive Performance of Organizations project was developed in the second semester of the undergraduate course in administration at PUC-SP and involves the following Curricula: Marketing Intelligence, Statistics I, Practices in Technological Tools for Data Analysis, and PPPO II—Research, Projects, and Practices in Organizations II.

The articulation (integration) of subjects in higher education has been widely discussed in recent decades, especially in administration. The complexity of modern organizations' challenges requires professionals with a holistic vision and interdisciplinary skills. This paper

reviews the existing literature on integrating subjects in higher education in business administration, highlighting the main concepts, benefits, challenges, and examples of successful practices.

Gimenez et al. (2020) analyzed the alignment between the competencies taught in business schools in Brazil and the competencies required by the 21st-century job market. Based on the analysis of 23 cases that won the ANGRAD Innovation Award in 2018, it was found that the initiatives most aligned with 21st-century competencies were based on robust projects, their methodologies, and the active involvement of teachers and students. Less aligned initiatives should have used practical cases. Most projects focused on regional integration and developing socio-relational skills, but none addressed comfort with using technology.

Gaggy and Fischer (2014) researched the practice of interdisciplinarity in business administration teaching at a higher education institution in Bahia, using a Qualitative and Quantitative approach. Data collected through questionnaires and interviews reveal that teachers and students perceive interdisciplinarity as beneficial, improving students' learning, systemic, analytical, and critical thinking, and expanding technical and interpersonal skills. It is concluded that, even without structured organizational support, interdisciplinarity is an effective tool to improve students' learning and performance in higher education.

Santos et al. (2022) studied stimuli and obstacles to using Active Methodologies (AMs) in Administration teaching based on a quantitative survey of 126 teachers from nine federal institutions in southern Brazil. The results indicated that teaching attitude and institutional support are the central stimuli for using AMS, while teacher training is the main obstacle. This factor encouraged their use despite the increased workload related to AMs. The study suggests ways to alleviate this effort and offers contributions to implementing and using AMs in Administration teaching and beyond.

Costa et al. (2023) analyzed students' perceptions of collaborative methodologies in the Administration and Bilingual Executive Secretariat courses at the Federal University of Paraíba. Using a quantitative approach and questionnaires, the results show that although students in both courses have a similar understanding of these methodologies, the frequency of use differs, affecting their contribution to learning. This collaborative approach engages students and fosters a sense of involvement in their learning process.

Specifically, the present study aims to develop transversal skills by integrating subjects through critical thinking, teamwork, and problem-solving. It also aims to develop a holistic view of management, relating content from different areas of knowledge and developing a more comprehensive understanding of organizations and their challenges. Finally, it aims to better prepare students in the Administration course at PUC-SP for the job market, with curricular integration bringing theory closer to practice, preparing students for the day-to-day challenges of companies. This approach enhances their academic experience and equips them with the skills and knowledge necessary for their future careers, instilling a sense of motivation and inspiration.

2. Methodology

This study employs a qualitative research design, specifically participant observation, to examine how new pedagogical practices influence undergraduate student engagement and learning.

2.1 Research Design

This approach aims to provide an in-depth understanding of student behaviors, interactions, and responses to different teaching methods by immersing the researchers in the classroom environment.

Participant observation was the primary research method. The researchers immersed themselves in various classroom settings, observing and interacting with students and instructors. This approach supported collecting detailed information about student behaviors, interactions, and responses to different pedagogical practices.

2.1.1 Study Settings

The study was conducted across the undergraduate business administration course at the Pontifical Catholic University of Sao Paulo, Brazil. The subjects involved were Marketing Intelligence, Statistics I, Practices in Technological Tools for Data Analysis, and PPPO II—Research, Projects, and Practices in Organizations II, and instructional methods, including traditional lectures, flipped classrooms, and laboratory settings. It was developed from August to December 2023.

2.1.2 Participants

This included undergraduate students enrolled in the selected subjects and their instructors. Participation was voluntary, and informed consent was obtained from all participants. The study aims to include a diverse sample of students to ensure the generalizability of findings.

The sample was selected through purposive sampling to ensure a diverse representation of academic subjects (mentioned above), class sizes, and student demographics.

2.2 Data Collection

Data collection involved a combination of participant classroom observation, experience sampling method, field notes, and interviews.

Participant Classroom Observations: The researchers attended and observed a series of classes for each selected subject. The observations focused on student engagement behaviors, such as participation, attentiveness, interaction with peers and instructors, group dynamics, and individual student behaviors. This included attending lectures, tutorials, and laboratory sessions. The researchers took detailed field notes during each session.

Experience Sampling Method (ESM): Building on the approach used in Khan (2014), the ESM was employed to collect real-time data on student engagement and perceptions of learning. Students received periodic prompts to report their engagement and activities throughout the subjects.

Field notes: Detailed field notes were maintained to record observations, reflections, and contextual information. These notes captured the nuances of classroom dynamics, student engagement levels, and the implementation of pedagogical practices.

Interviews: Five students and two faculty members were interviewed in depth to gather additional insights into student perceptions, experiences, and challenges. The interviews explored students' engagement levels, responses to different teaching methods, and faculty

perspectives on student engagement and learning. They were audio-recorded and transcribed for analysis.

2.3 Data Analysis

The collected data was analyzed using thematic analysis to identify patterns, themes, and relationships between student engagement, pedagogical practices, and learning outcomes. The researchers examined field notes, interview transcripts, and classroom observations to extract critical findings. This involves coding the data to identify recurring themes and patterns related to student engagement and pedagogical practices (Kahu, 2013; Vallée, 2017; Zepke, 2015).

2.3.1 Key Factors to Explore

Pedagogical Practices: The study investigated how different teaching methods, such as active learning, inquiry-based labs, and blended learning, impact student engagement and learning outcomes (Vaughan, 2014; Zepke, 2015).

Student-Teacher Interaction: The role of student-teacher relationships and the quality of interactions were examined to influence engagement (Cents-Boonstra et al., 2020; Kahu, 2013).

Classroom Environment: The physical and social aspects of the classroom environment, including seating arrangements and peer interactions, were considered (Cents-Boonstra et al., 2020; Kahn, 2014).

Intrinsic Motivation and Self-Esteem: The study explored how inherent motivation and classroom self-esteem contributed to engagement and perceived learning (Silva & Pantoja, 2023; Vallée, 2017). This study employed participant observation and a mixed methods approach to provide a comprehensive understanding of how new pedagogical practices can enhance undergraduate student engagement and improve learning outcomes. The findings will offer actionable insights for educators seeking to foster a more engaging and effective learning environment.

2.4 Ethical Considerations

This study adhered to strict ethical guidelines, including obtaining informed consent from participants, ensuring confidentiality, and protecting participant anonymity. The researchers established rapport with students and faculty to foster trust and open communication.

2.5 Limitations

Participant observation is time-consuming and requires a significant commitment from the researchers. Additionally, the researcher's presence in the classroom may influence student behavior. To mitigate this, the researchers maintained a low-key observational role and established rapport with participants.

3. The Context Articulation Project

The teaching project is the guiding thread of the contents of the Curricular Units identified above, as far as possible, and presupposes intervention in organizations (companies) chosen by the students who agree to participate in the project. Students must organize themselves

into groups of between four and six members (some exceptions are permitted depending on specific needs identified in forming the groups). Group activities will be carried out both in face-to-face and online meetings, in addition to field visits to be carried out by the students for intervention in the chosen companies or even in specific group meetings for developing and preparing materials inherent to the work. However, each student must prepare in advance, and at each stage, their contribution to the group's work. This preparation of the student's contribution should provide the necessary flexibility for cases in which the student(s) is/are enrolled in only some of the Curricular Units that make up the project. Thus, the teaching project should be understood as a proposal for organizing and developing the contents of the different Curricular Units among themselves and should include students' participation in the knowledge construction process. Understanding the dynamics of markets and their competitive context is one of the central themes of the manager of organizations, especially from the marketing perspective. The project, therefore, should follow this path, and the challenge proposed to students is "How to make organizations more competitive?".

To develop this process of knowledge construction, the following activities are proposed at each stage of the project: situations that may generate problems appropriate to the cognitive level of the students, discussion of the questions and hypotheses raised by the groups, to establish a direction for action; preparation of projects and experiments with the effective participation of students; collection of information through different resources, primarily through practical activities that, whenever possible, should involve experimental control; conditions for collective discussion using various techniques for analyzing information and testing hypotheses, and the presentation of the results of the multiple stages.

During the project's development, it will be possible to articulate the methodological strategies and the conceptual, procedural, and attitudinal contents of the Curricular Units that make up the project. Due to the central proposal of the project – the competitive performance of organizations – and as a way of consolidating knowledge, the project was divided into three stages, which are already mentioned and will be detailed later.

Another expectation of the proposal is the development of relevant content connected to the reality of organizations, allowing both students and teachers involved to deepen the content and, mainly, effectively master the concepts worked on.

On the other hand, production does not mean doing something completely new. The proposal's most essential aspect is students' effective participation in the construction of knowledge, with the selection and adaptation of materials to the teaching objectives constituting critical activities for professional training.

Organizations/companies eligible for group intervention can focus on consumer and industrial products (tangible goods or services), such as companies with multiple and diversified product lines, such as the group.

The project begins with two preliminary activities: the formation of groups and the selection of companies that will be the object of study for the groups. Each activity must be delivered that meets the criteria and requirements presented below.

Preliminary Delivery 1 – EP1 [formation of groups]

The groups must use the form in Annex 1 to inform the composition of the group, which must comply with the following criteria:

- Free choice among the students enrolled in the Curricular Units;
- Six members per group, with adjustments of ± 1 member permitted;
- The members must be enrolled mainly in the same classes of the Curricular Units that make up the project;
- Students who are taking any Curricular Unit that is part of the project in isolation may not be part of the group, and they must be assigned specific activities that aim to replace the assessment that makes up the project;
- The groups may not be changed throughout the semester;
- Each group must indicate a leader and a rapporteur for the group;
- The rapporteurs will be the students responsible for making the group's deliveries (only the rapporteur will make the deliveries; no other group member should submit material related to the activities developed).
- Preliminary Delivery 2 – EP2 [selection of companies]
- The choice of the company to be studied by the group must be informed in Annex 2 and must meet the following requirements:
 - The group must make preliminary contact with the company and obtain the “acceptance” of the person responsible for the company to participate in the project;
 - The person responsible for the company must agree to hold at least two meetings with the group (one of which must be in person) and be willing to collaborate with the group;
 - The company is not obliged to provide information that is considered confidential by the company;
 - If requested by the company, the professor responsible for the project may provide a statement on the project's objectives and procedures and a group presentation.

Once the Preliminary Stages are completed, the project begins, as established in its structure.

3.1. Stages of the teaching project

The project is structured in stages, aiming to provide progressive knowledge acquisition. The knowledge acquired in one stage serves as a basis for gaining knowledge in the next stage, and so on. The project is divided into three phases, which are described below.

3.1.1. Stage 1 – Analysis of the organization's business environment

Context

Understanding how business environment forces can affect organizational performance is a constant challenge for organizational managers, especially marketing managers. Market analysis aims to understand the environment in which a company operates so that the best strategic marketing decisions can be made (Kotler & Keller, 2019).

Analyzing an organization's business environment is an assessment of the external context that affects the company, including economic, political, social, technological, legal, and environmental factors. This analysis is essential for companies to understand the forces and trends that shape their external environment and, thus, to make more informed and effective strategic decisions (Ferreira et al., 2021).

Assessing the business environment can help companies identify growth opportunities and adapt to changes and threats that may affect their financial or operational performance. It can also help companies anticipate changes in regulatory or tax policies, consumer preferences, or technological trends.

Furthermore, business environment analysis can identify competitors and other relevant market players and the forces driving competition and industry performance. This can help companies develop more effective business strategies and remain competitive. It is a critical tool for strategic planning and marketing decision-making in an organization that can cope with the constant changes in its business environment (Las Casas, 2019).

Rationale

Business environment analysis is a crucial management activity for the success of any company. It allows us to understand the distribution of forces acting in the market (usually the companies that offer products and services, the consumers or customers who buy these products or services, and several other factors, such as regulation, technology, economy, government, weaknesses, opportunities and threats (known as SWOT analysis) that affect the company's performance. This understanding allows companies to develop more effective strategies and make informed decisions.

Analysis of the business environment is also essential to keep up with market trends and changes, including technological developments, consumer preferences, and competition. This allows companies to adapt quickly to environmental changes and remain competitive (Fontes, 2019).

In addition, business environment analysis helps companies identify opportunities for growth and expansion. It can be used to identify new markets, products, or revenue sources, maximizing companies' chances of long-term success.

In short, business environment analysis is essential to any company's strategic planning. It provides valuable information that helps companies make informed decisions, adapt to market changes, and identify new growth opportunities.

Problematization

Analyzing the business environment is complex and challenging for organizational managers since it involves collecting, analyzing, and interpreting information from various sources and sectors.

Managers face many challenges when analyzing the business environment. They need to deal with large volumes and varieties of information, be aware of rapid and constant changes in the business environment, understand the complexity of data, overcome geographical barriers, and have limited access to some information. Overcoming these challenges is essential to developing effective strategies and making informed decisions for the organization's success.

At this stage of the work, the group's challenge is to identify how the forces are distributed in the organization's environment. Specifically, the problem to be studied is: What is the business environment in the organization's current sector? How are the competitive forces distributed? What are the organization's main problems now and in the near future (one year)?

Objectives

The objective of this stage is to understand the business environment in which the company operates, seeking to understand the main forces that shape the competitive scope of the sector.

In this stage, the groups must prepare an analysis of the business environment of the respective companies selected to carry out the project. They must prepare a detailed description of the characteristics of the sector in which the company operates, highlighting environmental factors, such as political, economic, social, and technological forces (PEST Analysis). Identify the leading players in the sector and the distribution of competitive forces among the companies competing in the market. The groups must conclude the stage by carrying out a SWOT Analysis.

Product [E1B]

For this stage, groups will be required to develop the following products:

- PEST Analysis
- SWOT Analysis

Groups may perform additional analyses to improve their understanding of the competitive context of the organization under study, such as the Market Attractiveness Matrix – GE and the Ansof Opportunity Matrix, among others.

3.1.2. Stage 2 – Identifying the target audience profile (consumer or customer)

Context

Identifying the target audience profile is analyzing and understanding the characteristics and needs of the customers, consumers, or users that a company wishes to serve.

Understanding the target audience profile empowers the company to steer its marketing and sales strategies confidently. This involves grasping the essence of the company's ideal customers, their desires and needs, behavioral patterns, and preferred communication channels, among other pertinent information (Limeira, 2018).

Identifying the target audience profile is a fundamental process for the success of any company, allowing it to direct its marketing and sales efforts more effectively and develop products and services that are more suited to customer needs. It also provides the direction of marketing efforts, focusing on the aspects to which the target audience attributes the most outstanding value and importance, creating messages in communications that are more attractive to the public. Identifying the target audience profile can help identify market opportunities the company still needs to explore, such as new customer segments and unmet needs (Lindstrom, 2018).

Justification

Identifying the target audience profile is essential for any company's success. The target audience is the group of people who most identify with the company's product or service and are willing to buy it. Identifying this profile is important because it allows the company to direct its marketing and sales strategies more effectively, reaching the right people and maximizing its results (Sharda et al., 2019).

Understanding the target audience profile is not just important; it is a strategic advantage. It allows the company to segment the market more effectively, craft more potent marketing and sales campaigns, reduce costs, foster customer loyalty, spot new business opportunities, and maximize its results. A company that truly knows its target audience has a competitive edge in the market and a higher chance of achieving success.

Problematization

While analyzing the target audience profile presents its own challenges, managers must overcome them. They need to navigate the diversity of the public, stay abreast of changes in public behavior, gather accurate and representative data, integrate different data sources, and conduct intricate analyses of the data collected. Overcoming these challenges is essential for developing effective marketing strategies and meeting the target audience's needs.

For this stage of the work, the challenge for students is to know the profile of the company's target audience that the groups are studying, how they structure their purchasing decisions, and the main factors that influence this decision. Thus, the problem to be studied is: What is/are the main factor(s) influencing the decision of the buyer of the product of the organization studied? What paths does the target audience take between the emergence of the need and the discarding of the product? What relationship does the target audience establish with the organization studied?

Objectives

This stage aims to gain in-depth knowledge of the consumer, user, or client profile. Describe, in as much detail as possible, the profile of the target audience, which may be the consumer (in the case of a tangible consumer goods company), the user (in the case of a service company), or the client (in the case of companies in the industrial/business sector). The study should focus on the decision-making process of the client/user/customer, their central purchasing decision factors, and the main variables influencing the purchasing process to enable the development of the products proposed for this stage.

Product [E2B]

For this stage, groups will be required to develop the following products:

- Persona Building;
- Creating the Customer Purchase Journey;
- Identifying the organization's NPS;
- Defining performance metrics.

3.1.3. Stage 3 - CRM Project Development

Stage 3's content involves developing a relationship program with the company's target audience (identified in the previous stage), which may be the consumer, user, or client, depending on the case.

Context

CRM stands for Customer Relationship Management and is a set of strategies and tools to manage customer relationships to create a lasting and valuable bond for both parties (Zenone, 2019).

A CRM program is a powerful tool that aims to improve the customer's experience with the company, ensuring that their needs are met and that they feel valued. This is done by collecting and analyzing information about the customer, allowing the company to customize its products and services according to each person's needs and preferences, increasing satisfaction and brand loyalty. It also significantly increases the effectiveness of marketing

campaigns, creating more effective marketing campaigns and targeting offers and messages in a more precise and relevant way. By customizing product and service offerings according to customer needs, companies can increase the chances of conversion and additional sales, increasing revenue. With automated customer service and sales processes, companies can reduce operating costs, increasing efficiency and productivity. Perhaps most excitingly, with a robust customer information system, companies can identify business opportunities, such as new products or services that meet their needs, opening new avenues for growth and success (Maróstica et al., 2021; Nique et al., 2017).

Justification

The competitive position of companies has always been a significant challenge for marketing managers, mainly because product differentiation has become increasingly tricky and ephemeral since the mastery of information and production methods has allowed companies to reproduce these differentials, often achieved with high investments in Research and Development. Thus, in most cases, especially in consumer goods, the factor that sustains a competitive advantage lies in the level of relationship the company can establish with its target audience (consumers, users, or customers, depending on the case).

Establishing a customer relationship program, CRM is not just an option but a strategic necessity for any company aspiring to gain a lasting competitive advantage that is hard to replicate in the market.

CRM programs are not just tools but lifelines for companies. It helps improve customer service, increase customer loyalty, enhance the sales team's efficiency, reduce costs, identify business opportunities, and maximize results. A CRM program is indispensable for any company that values a close, lasting customer relationship.

Problematization

Developing a CRM customer relationship program has its challenges. Data collection, system integration, customization of the CRM program itself, and the privacy and security of the system data are among the key hurdles that must be overcome.

One of the biggest challenges for managers when developing a CRM program is ensuring that customer data is collected accurately and reliably. This can be challenging because customer data can be spread across different systems and departments within the organization. Another challenge is integrating CRM systems with other business systems, such as financial or logistics. Integration can be complex and requires managers to work with different vendors and technologies. An effective CRM program should be able to personalize the customer experience based on their data and preferences. However, meaningfully personalizing the customer experience can take time, especially for organizations with large customer bases. Managers must also ensure that customer data is secure and complies with privacy laws. This can be challenging in a world where cybersecurity threats are constantly evolving. For this stage of the work, the challenge for students is to develop a set of metrics that measure the competitive performance of the organization under study and a relationship program as the target audience. Thus, the problem to be studied is: What are the determining factors of good competitive performance in the sector in which the organization under study operates? How can ties in the relationship with the organization's target audience be strengthened?

Objectives

This stage aims to develop a set of metrics that assess the organization under study's competitive performance and a proposal for a CRM customer relationship program to establish solid and lasting ties with the organization's target audience (consumer, user, or client). The proposal should involve preparing key (critical) information that can provide the organization with superior competitive performance in its sector of activity.

Products [E3B]

For this stage, groups will be required to develop the following products:

- Develop a Customer Relationship Program – CRM proposal, highlighting key (critical) information to obtain the organization's competitive edge.

Activities

The set of activities to be developed in this stage is not just a task but a necessity. It involves coordinating between the Curricular Units (subjects) that make up the project proposal and establishing respective deadlines for carrying out said activities.

4. Results

The project under analysis, a comprehensive study on the competitive performance of organizations, was developed in the second semester of 2023. It involved first-year students enrolled in the second semester of the administration course at the Pontifical Catholic University of São Paulo in classes MA2 and MB2, totaling 62 (sixty-two) students, divided into nine groups. The companies selected for the group studies were Le Son (audio equipment), Visa (credit cards), Arkema (chemical products), M.Dias Branco (packaged foods), Impala (cosmetics), Red Bull (energy drinks), Ambev (beverages: beers and soft drinks), Tennessee (food: fresh meats), Mitre Realty (real estate developments).

The products and results of the three stages of the project "Articulation of Contexts for Teaching in Administration - Competitive Performance of Organizations" demonstrated a successful and tangible application of the theoretical concepts you have been learning in real business situations. This practical application is a testament to your growing competence in administration. Below, we discuss each result considering the theory of learning in higher education.

4.1. PEST and SWOT Analysis

Silva and Pantoja (2023) assert that learning is most effective when students actively construct their knowledge. Applying theoretical concepts in real business contexts, such as PEST and SWOT analyses, aligns with constructivist theory. This theory places a high value on practical experience, considering it fundamental to achieving a deep understanding (Medeiros et al., 2023).

Integrating different subjects like marketing and statistics facilitated an interdisciplinary approach. This approach, as advocated by Fontes (2016), promotes a holistic and critical view. It allows students to see the interconnectedness of knowledge and its broader perspective, thereby enhancing their learning experience.

4.2. Persona Building, Customer Purchase Journey, and NPS Identification

Creating the persona and describing the customer's buying journey demonstrate Problem-Based Learning (PBL). This teaching method involves students tackling real-world problems and devising practical solutions (Barrows & Tamblyn, 1980). PBL promotes critical thinking and problem-solving, both essential skills for management professionals.

Data collection and analysis were crucial in identifying the NPS. Additionally, collaborative learning was encouraged, with students working in groups to achieve common goals (Johnson & Johnson, 1999). This approach reinforces the teaching of theoretical concepts and fosters teamwork and communication skills, both of which are essential in the job market. This enhances the understanding of theoretical concepts and develops teamwork and communication skills, which are critical to the job market.

4.3. CRM Proposal

The sales funnel development and the CRM proposal are prime examples of the practical application of theoretical concepts. Fiorini et al. (2022) demonstrate that these active methodologies engage students in the learning process and require them to apply theoretical concepts in practical contexts. This promotes student autonomy and ensures the knowledge gained is relevant and applicable in real-world scenarios.

As Pinheiro et al. (2021) described, meaningful learning is a collaborative effort between students and educators. It occurs when new knowledge is substantially integrated into the student's knowledge. When developing CRM proposals, students apply marketing and customer relationship theories, and educators play a crucial role in guiding them to build new understandings of how these theories manifest themselves in business practice.

4.4. Pedagogical Impact of the Proposal

The project proposal highlighted the importance of integrated learning, where different subjects are taught and connected, promoting a systemic view of organizational problems (Jacobs, 1989). This is particularly relevant in the context of management, where interdependence between different areas of knowledge is crucial for organizational success.

In addition, the project is aligned with 21st-century competencies, which include critical thinking, problem-solving, collaboration, and effective communication (Binkley et al., 2012). Students develop these competencies by integrating subjects and practical applications, becoming professionals better prepared for the challenges of the job market.

5. Data Analysis and Discussion

This section presents the data collected during the qualitative phase of the research—the thematic analysis generated codes for connections, learning, and engagement. The following summary outlines the results of various data collection methods corresponding to the identified thematic codes.

5.1. Connections

As previously mentioned, four Curricular Units (subjects) were chosen to participate in the project. These subjects were selected because their curriculum aligned with the Articulation Project's proposal. Table 1 displays the subjects' codifications to facilitate the analyses.

Table 1.

Coding of the Curricular Units (subjects) participating in the project

Curricular Units (Subjects)	Code
Marketing Intelligence	Mkt I
Statistic I	Stat 1
Practices in Technological Tools for Data Analysis	P.DA
Research, Projects, and Practices in Organizations II	PPO2

Note: This table shows the codification used for each subject involved in the project – source: The authors (2024).

The analyses in this thematic field – “connections”, were carried out according to the different stages of the project, as described below:

5.1.1. Stage 1 Analysis of the organization's environment

Subjects involved: Mkt I, Est 1, and P.AD

Central activity: strategic analyses (PEST and SWOT)

View of students/groups: The project's importance was clearly understood, which made the use of statistics applied to real market situations and the support of technological tools to carry out the marketing analyses necessary to map the situation of the company we were studying more significant.

View of tutors: The quality of the analyses developed by the groups far exceeded what is expected in this type of activity. The student's high involvement and practical application of the concepts studied were apparent, greatly facilitating the group's work. This level of commitment and quality of work is genuinely appreciated and recognized.

5.1.2. Stage 2 Identifying the target audience

Subjects involved: Mkt I, Est 1, and PPO2

Central activity: understanding the company's target audience, consumer, or client behavior.

View of students/groups: Integrating the subjects' content made it easier to carry out the activities requested at this project stage. It was also enlightening to understand how scientific research (worked on in PPO2) and marketing research (Mkt I) work together better to develop the company's target audience profile.

View of tutors: The contribution of the subjects involved in this stage of the project simplified the development of the research to analyze the target audience's profile, the construction of the persona, and the purchasing journey. The quality of the work was outstanding.

5.1.3. Stage 3 Development of the CRM Project

Subjects involved: Mkt I, Est 1, PPO2 and P.AD

The central activity is developing a set of metrics and completing a CRM project for the company studied.

View of students/groups: By integrating all subjects, it became clear to us that CRM is much more than a sales or relationship tool – it is, in fact, a complete marketing management model.

View of tutors: Sharing the different stages in the construction of a CRM project with all the subjects involved in this stage provided a broader and more systemic view of the process, which resulted in consistently viable work connected to the reality of the company studied by the groups.

5.2. Learning

The analysis of the theme “learning” was carried out from the perspective of the project as a whole, regardless of the different stages around which it was structured. The project, which involved subjects such as [specific subjects], aimed to understand the degree of overall appropriation of the content in these subjects.

View of students/groups: The project's unique approach, which allowed us to study the various concepts and theories of the subjects in an integrated manner within a project linked to a company of our choice, was a game-changer. This approach made learning more concrete and improved our understanding of the connection between different knowledge constructs. We could identify variations in the theories studied with the reality of companies, which was a positive challenge that empowered us to seek alternative theories. The diverse teaching strategies adopted by the teachers were also instrumental in our learning, albeit demanding more commitment and effort from all the students involved in the group activities.

View of tutors: It was possible to observe the excellent level of content absorption that the students acquired through this teaching process. Learning was made much more accessible. The simultaneous involvement of different subjects also provided greater meaning for the students and us. This was evident by the level of questioning the students asked throughout most of the activities developed with the groups. Observing specific realities in the companies studied, such as [specific realities], was another fundamental point that gave more concrete meaning to the student's learning.

5.3. Engagement

Like the “learning” theme, the “engagement” theme was analyzed from the project's perspective in general without detailing the particularities of each stage. The fundamentals of this procedure are the same in both themes.

View of students/groups: The encouragement we received from all the teachers of the subjects in the project was inspiring. We felt challenged and responsible to find the necessary answers to meet these challenges. It was a demanding journey, but the sense of accomplishment we felt when our projects were well connected with the company we chose to study, making us feel a real-world relevance, was a powerful motivator. We are proud of our work and eager to repeat the experience.

View of tutors: The diversified teaching strategies, based mainly on active methodologies, were fundamental to achieving greater student engagement. Another factor that contributed to improving engagement was practical application, with the choice of a company so that students could analyze the reality corresponding to the content studied. This practical application involved [specific activities or tasks]. Furthermore, articulating contexts with integrating subjects that complemented each other in developing the teaching project was a preponderant factor in stimulating student engagement.

6. Conclusions

The discussion of the results of the project "Articulation of Contexts for Teaching in Administration - Competitive Performance of Organizations" reveals that the integration of subjects and the practical application of theoretical concepts in real contexts promote more profound and meaningful learning. Compared with the relevant theory of learning in higher education, it is observed that active methodologies, problem-based learning, and collaboration are fundamental for the development of complex skills and preparation for the job market. In this way, the project achieves its pedagogical objectives and offers an effective interdisciplinary teaching model in administration.

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