

Pedagogical sciences

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**THEORETICAL AND PRACTICAL RECOMMENDATIONS FOR
DEVELOPING THE MANAGERIAL COMPETENCIES OF THE
TOURISM STUDENTS WITHIN SPORT EDUCATIONAL INSTITUTIONS**

Summary: Tourism development should be sustainable in terms of environmental aspects, economically viable and profitable and equitable from ethical and socially aspects. For tourism to contribute to the sustainable development of the national economy, it must integrate natural, cultural and human components. Tourism education and training refer to the acquirement of professional skills necessary for practicing the named activity. The educational management at all levels of decision-making process shall combine the specialization training with the management training in order to better face the problems from the performed activity.

Key words: tourism development, sustainability, management, competencies, sport, students, reserach.

Today, the tourism product is becoming more complex and difficult to promote, the legal framework becomes an increasingly important component in terms of markets internationalization, while tourism enterprises are acting within increasingly complex framework. The main efforts are focused on reducing costs and increasing profits. As a result, appears a need for introducing scientific management practices in the work of specialized organizations as a means of

action against the growing pressures faced by tourism field. (Cosmescu I. tourism. Bucharest: Edit. Economic, 1998).

The practice shows that within the tourism field, are very frequent such cases when employees considered as being effective at their posts, from a while begin to fulfill their responsibilities with increasing difficulty (V. Lefter, Deaconu A., C. Marinaş, PuiaR. Managementul resurselor umane. Teorie și practică. Braşov: Ed. Economică, 2008) and their performance are reduced.

Table 1. Main reasons why employees do not obtain performance (elaborated by author)

Reasons	
<p>Lack of abilities:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Never had; • Practice is needed; • Can not be applied 	It is primarily the responsibility of the employer – he must provide trainings
<p>Lack of information:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • doesn't know the expectations of the employer; • doesn't know updated information; • can't apply the information. 	Also, it is the responsibility of the employer – he must provide the information or train the employees on how to use or collect available information.
<p>Motivational aspects:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • things and people that are part of the employee's work environment is faced as a punishment measure (employee feels as working in a hostile environment); • attitudes and personal problems. 	Shared responsibility of the employer and employee - requires bilateral discussion
<p>Personal problems:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • substance abuse; • emotional health; • physical health; • lifestyle. 	Employee's responsibility – must solve his problems from the personal life
<p>Environmental problems :</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • unrealistic standards; • incomplete job description; • inadequate work means; • inadequate or incomplete work procedures (Jones, 1993) 	Employer responsibility - necessary to review some aspects.

For a long time, the tourism administration was a kind of management that directly bore the footprint of the manager's personality. In the past, within the tourism branch, few administrators could be considered *managers* in the current meaning of the term. Investments were small, human resource management issues were almost unrecognized, mostly were family businesses. Referring to an empirical level, management is the ability to provide passenger comfort (Talwar P., *Travel And Tourism Management (4 Vols.)*, Volume 1, Gyan Publishing House, 2006).

In the last period, the Moldovan tourism, as a result of the transition to the market economy, experienced a certain level of development, but there are some weaknesses embodied by: converting travel agencies in channels targeting local labor force for various employments for foreign markets, and not for a performance tourism; tourism market distortions; inefficient legal regulatory framework, difficult to interpret; poor training of the managers in tourism marketing and basic trades; tough competition for investments; degradation of the tourism interest objects; inadequate access routes to tourism objectives; undesignated parking areas for buses and cars; lack of basic conditions for receiving tourists: lack of kiosks with promotional materials, souvenirs and handicrafts; religious communities guides do not have adequate training in communication with visitors and do not possess international languages; practically are missing billboards which contain objectives schemes; there are no promotional materials and leaflets for self guiding; insufficient tax exemptions for economic agents which sponsor or invest in the rehabilitation of tourism monuments and objectives etc.

Nowadays, tourism has become an important activity as others held in the different key sectors of the worldwide economy (industry, agriculture, trade). The motivational achievements constitute a fundamental need that influence the managerial behavior (Barbu Gh. *International tourism an integral part of foreign*

economic relations. Tourism in the national economy. Bucharest: Sport-Tourism, 1981). This need determines, in particular young specialists to obtain an entrepreneurial, managerial position which will ensure a certain level of satisfaction.

Not infrequently, managers, regardless of the hierarchical level, are the ones who face a set of circumstances or opportunities less certain, having to take the risk, responsibility for carrying the decision (Budevici-Alison L. Budevici A . Efficiency and effectiveness in the management of organizations. in: materials of International Scientific Conference "perspectives of modern contemporary society impacts on physical education and sport." Chisinau, 2006, p.396-403). Spread risks have social, financial, deontological ethics, legislation nature , etc. In this context, it is argued that leaders are those individuals with ingenuity and creative spirit, with original thinking, able to find ideas and solutions being oriented to improvisation and new ideas, and can identify effective solutions for problems solving (Ellis CW Management Skills for New Managers, New York, Atlanta, Brussels, Chicago, Mexico City, San Francisco, Shanghai, Tokyo, Toronto, Washington, DC: American Management Association, 2005).

The objectives of profile training of specialists may consist of: improving the capacity of problem solving, execution of certain tasks, solving new tasks, improving communication skills, preparing changes, etc. Schematic this process that can be shown as reflected in Figure 1:

Figure 1: The objectives of specialists training



In the Republic of Moldova, the training in tourism is performed within the state and private higher education institutions. Thus, according to Article 24 from the Tourism Law nr.798-XIV of 11.02.2000 "the tourism training is performed within higher education and postgraduate public and private institutions, accredited under the law". The staff providing tourism services can activate within the field only after graduating the specialized courses. Determination of the priority directions of scientific research and management in tourism is the competence of the National Tourism Agency. The training of the tourism staff is achieved through the specialized courses based on programs developed by the Tourism Agency of the Republic of Moldova (www.turism-studii.md). Firstly, the specialized training in tourism is ensured within higher education institutions where the courses include practical and theoretical issues referring to accommodation and catering sectors. In some universities, students are encouraged to start small businesses of private entrepreneurs during the educational process. Generally, tourism education and training refer to the acquirement of professional skills necessary to practice professions / occupations referred to those from the classifier. The acquirement of the professional skills from the field can be achieved within formal, non-formal and informal methods. Education and formal training in tourism is realized within education establishments with tourism profile or within entities which integrated into academic curricula the tourism education course (Barbu Gh. International tourism an integral part of foreign economic relations . Tourism in the national economy. Bucharest: Sport-Tourism, 1981). The non-formal method of tourism skills training means practicing tourism specific activities directly from the workplace or by self-instruction. Through informal way of acquiring professional skills may be understood the uninstitutionalized, unstructured and unsystematic training arrangements with different sources of socio-educational, society or work environment.

Thus, were established some elements for establishing the program for management development (Figure 2).

Figure 2.

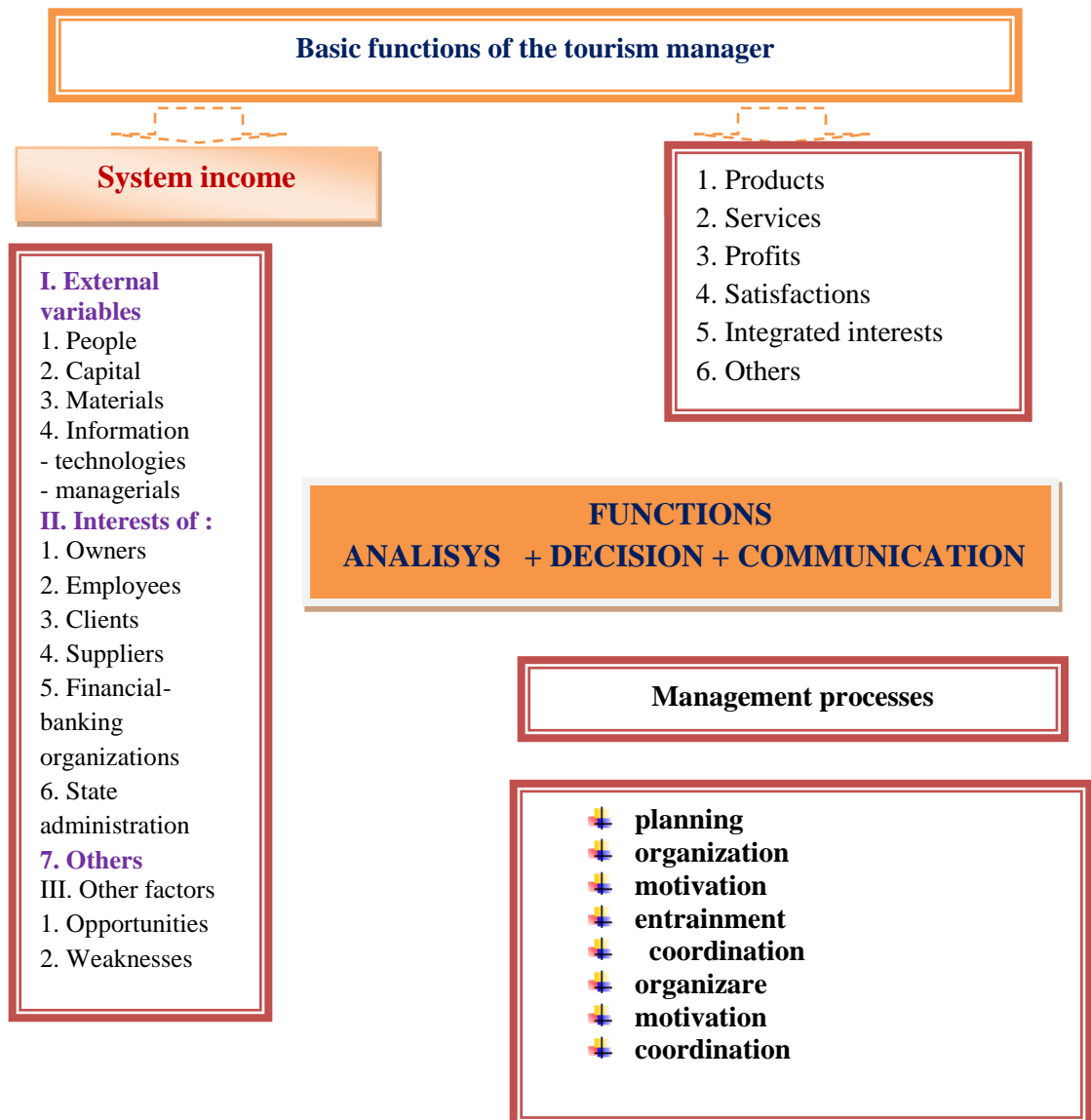


In order to identify the importance of management competencies for the success of tourism activity, and namely the performance of personnel employed within the field, was conducted a research within the State University of Physical Training and Sport from Republic of Moldova, during the period 2012-2016, having as sample the students from sport faculty, specialization Tourism with the reason to:

1. study the current theory and practices for formation management skills of future employees in the tourism industry.
2. design and develop the contents of the „Heritage Tourism” course curriculum.
3. determine the impact of a new theoretical course on building the theoretical knowledge according to the demand of required professional and management skills in the reference system from the field.
4. develop a new content for the “Heritage Tourism” course which shall contain a practical component, an efficient method to train students from the physical education and sport faculties (“Tourism” specialization) and help them acquire management skills.
5. experimental test acquired management skills.

The option for selected research theme was focused on a large number of factors, such as: requests from tourism managerial practice and the interest for its scientific development; the complexity and relevance of the theme for the field of physical culture and tourism; accessibility to bibliographic sources of documentation; existence of actual conditions, real research opportunities;

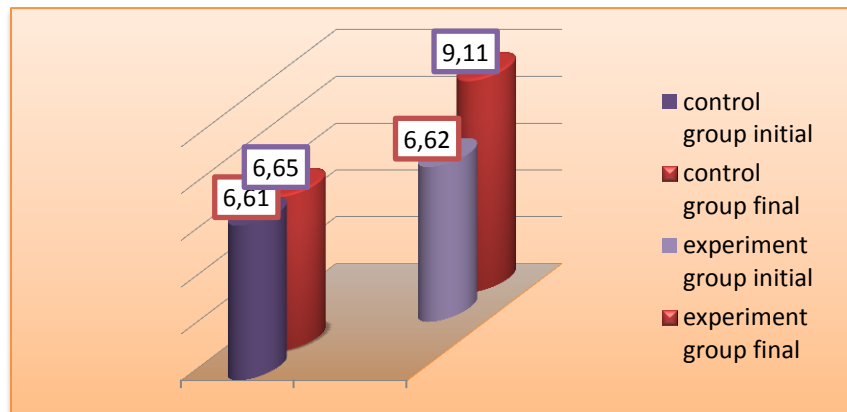
For the present research were proved to be relevant the following scientific methods: bibliographical study ;pedagogical observation; questionnaire survey; measurement and evaluation;experiment; statistical and mathematical methods; graphical and tabular method.



The evaluation of results and average marks obtained by students from the sport faculty, "Tourism Heritage" discipline in its primary version during the winter session (school year 2012-2013) 53 students is reflected in the above table:

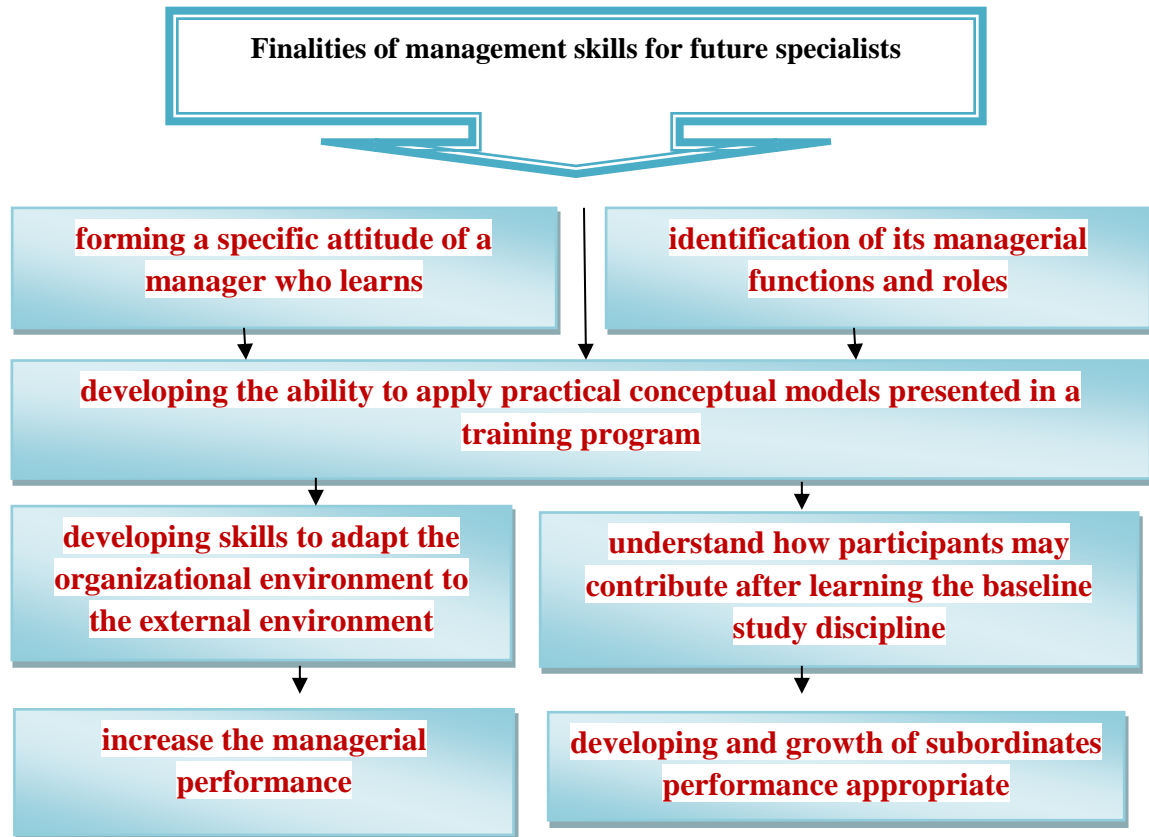
Mark	„ 5”	„6”	„ 7”	„8”	„9”	„10”	Average mark
Results' evaluation	6	7	2	3	1	-	6,61
	30	42	14	24	9	-	

Based on the conducted research, on the analysis and generalization of opinions about the content of the curriculum for the course "Tourism Heritage " appeared the need for modifying the contents of the basic course taught for the specialty Tourism from the State University of physical training and sport from Moldova, introducing the management component within the specialization themes.



The increased results obtained by the experimental group are due to the new method of conducting the seminars, specialized practice within the economic agents (with which the university has partnered) and the emphasis on acquiring the managerial skills by using models of good practice. However, the activities were focused on developing students' abilities and practical skills towards accumulation

of profile knowledge oriented to the understanding of the principles of sustainable sport tourism.



The research contributes to the improvement of the quality of the methodological support provided to tourism students.

Theoretical value of the research - processing, structuring and consolidation of the existing theoretical information; determination of the set of management skills for future employees in the tourism industry, the need to improve the curriculum of the "Heritage Tourism" course in line with the job opportunities on the labor market.

Practical value is given by the possibility to apply the acquired management skills particularly in the management of entities operating mainly in the tourism industry. The developed set of management skills will also contribute to the

delivery and promotion of knowledge management in this sector, to increasing responsibility, to developing a customer-oriented tourism and the marketing of quality products/services.

Application of research findings. The findings of this research have been approved and presented during research communication sessions in Chisinau, Galati and in various industry magazines, including Theory and Art of Physical Education in School, Chisinau; Science of Physical Culture, Chisinau; Current Challenges to Improvement of Physical Culture Education System: International Scientific Conference Dedicated to the World Quality Day, Chisinau, USEFS, 2014; Sports, Education, Culture – Interdisciplinary Approaches in Scientific Research: International Scientific Conference, Galați, „Dunarea de Jos” University of Galați, 2015.

As a result of the concluded research, were formulated a number of theoretical – practical recommendations to be implemented by sport educational institutions within the faculty/specialization „Tourism”:

1. In the context of the tourism product plurivalence, it is recommended to update the study programs within the tourism specialty, to take account of a clear analysis of the needs of tourism enterprises, the needs for continuous improvement of employees, thus the success and efficiency are directly depending on what must be taught, why, by whom and how.

2. It is recommended that the specialized training to be focused both on individual units and on the commercial sector society . Continuous training in foreign languages is a priority need. For many categories of personnel in tourism, the ability to speak foreign languages is the first required skill. Integration in the tourism field of specialists with managerial and lingual abilities and skills will help to increase the quality level of tourism services and will play an important role in

stimulating the creation of new research methods and shaping a tourism industry and cultural development.

3. For developing managerial skills, directors (managers) of tourism entities will have to face continuous changes designed for leading to a service-oriented tourism. Also, they must possess an inventive and creative spirit, critical, original thinking, able to find ideas and solutions while being oriented towards improvisation and new ideas, able to identify effective solutions for solving national tourism problems.

4. For the development of tourism industry based on cultural elements it is necessary to strengthen the partnerships between research field, central authorities, local public authorities, travel agencies thus promoting the idea of valorisation and preservation of the cultural treasures.

5. The training of qualified specialist supposes their training for technical skills at the work place in order to contribute, in turn, to training of young specialists, thus introducing a long term training program. In this context, it is recommended to apply a non-formal learning at the workplace by this certainly contributing to the acquisition of professional skills and managerial success in line with current requirements of tourism reforms and models of best practices taken from agencies which already gained profit and significant achievements.

6. It is recommended the initiation, authorization and accreditation of training programs for the tourism employees by certain suppliers related to professions / occupations from the tourism, hotels, restaurants and national tourism heritage sector. The effectiveness of these programs will be proven only if these are based on a clear analysis of the needs of tourism enterprises, taking into account the need for continuous improvement of tourism employees and general objectives.

7. Occupational standards are necessary for ensuring the quality of human resource training, identification of qualifications needed by the labor market and linking initial and continuing vocational training to labor market requirements.

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