THE POSTER AS A FORM OF ACTIVE PARTICIPATION OF STUDENTS IN THE SCIENTIFIC MOVEMENT

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Abstract

One of the challenges today's academics face is how to implant the idea of scientific work in students, and how to point them to the possibility of gaining first professional experience through active participation in the student scientific movement. The scientific poster (or simply, the poster) is the tool used during active participation in seminars and conferences. The main goal of the paper is to present the research results and experiences of students of the University of Economics in Krakow, who presented their work in the form of a poster during scientific conferences in the years 2017-2018.

In 2017-2018, students of the University of Economics in Krakow actively participated in three scientific conferences organized at the Faculty of Management. Thanks to the involvement of scientists and teaching staff, students presented 70 posters. At the end of the events, a motivation and experience survey was conducted among students regarding their active participation in poster sessions. The questionnaire was developed in electronic form, and responses were obtained from 100% of the study group.

Developing the skills of preparing a science poster and its public presentation to match the audience, the type of conference or its thematic scope is a key element in promoting the idea of research work among students. The education program offers skills, competence and knowledge, but it is necessary to ensure student education in terms of selection of presentation tools. The correct preparation of a poster and its presentation should be an integral part of the tools for measuring the students’ knowledge - as final tests or examinations. The combination of original research work, the ability to pass the knowledge and public presentation is the triad of complementary elements of the future researcher's workshop.

Keywords: students, poster, education.

1 INTRODUCTION

Conferences are a major part of a scientist's life. They are an important forum, which connects the research community and serves as a platform for disseminating knowledge and establishing cooperation. However, we are in an era of rapid technological changes that affect the way in which the research community interacts and communicates science. Scientific conferences are not only social events for scientists. They are important contact points for networking in the area of science, knowledge transfer and career development ([1], [2]). Scientific conferences are an excellent forum for establishing contacts with both peers and experts in a given field. All this takes place between equals, since the pursuit of new knowledge is their common denominator ([3], [4]). Apart from lecture sessions, many conferences also offer student poster sessions ([5], [6], [7]).

Scientific work and the awareness of its importance should be promoted among students from the start of the education process. In other words, scientific knowledge instilled at a young age will provide students with the possibility to expand it in their future lives. Acquiring the skills related to the scientific process facilitates access to scientific information ([8]).

The main goal of the paper is to present the research results and experiences of students of the University of Economics in Krakow, who presented their work in the form of a poster during scientific conferences in the years 2017-2018.

2 METHODOLOGY

In 2017-2018, students of the University of Economics in Krakow actively participated in three scientific conferences organized at the Faculty of Management. Thanks to the involvement of scientists and teaching staff, students presented 70 posters. At the end of the events, a motivation and experience survey was conducted among students regarding their active participation in poster
sessions. The questionnaire was developed in electronic form, and responses were obtained from 100% of the study group.

3 RESULTS

3.1 The concept of poster sessions

A poster session is an element of a scientific conference involving a discussion of the publicly displayed science posters. Usually, poster sessions are planned as part of the science conference in such a way that they do not interfere with other forms of presentation, e.g. lecture sessions. The poster session allows audience interaction: it enables discussion between the viewers and with the author ([9], [10], [11]).

The main purpose of the poster presentation is to showcase own research or problems in which one is interested, and to interest the conference participants in a given topic, make direct contact with the viewers and also establishing interesting scientific contacts. Features of the poster are presented in Tab. 1.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Pos.</th>
<th>Characteristics of the poster</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.</td>
<td>Catches the viewers' attention</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.</td>
<td>Provides a concise overview of the research work (the process, the challenges)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.</td>
<td>Facilitates initiating a discussion</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.</td>
<td>Offers basic information and is self-explanatory</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.</td>
<td>Contains foundational information on a given topic, sufficient to understand it and ask further questions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6.</td>
<td>Is clear and easily-readable</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7.</td>
<td>It allows familiarizing with the topic in a short time (approx. 5 min., 10 min. in the optimistic variant)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Preparing a correct poster requires including elements that are basic for this form of communication, well considered content (interesting and important content depends on whether there is something to show from the factual side, anyone can judge it) and an appealing design.

3.2 Student scientific activity

Students of the University of Economics in Krakow are encouraged to actively participate in student poster sessions at scientific events organized at the University. The surveyed students participated in poster sessions at the following events:

- Innovative behaviors as the key to competitive business development (17/12/2017),
- International Scientific Conference of the Faculty of Management at Cracow University of Economics (29/05/2018),
- Determinants of enterprise development in a knowledge-based economy (13/12/2018).

The involvement of the University's scientific and teaching staff has contributed to the popularization of this form of academic activity among students. During classes, students were informed about the possibility of active participation in the conference, which required extra involvement, and often facing the challenge of preparing and presenting the poster for the first time ever. Expert supervision of academic staff included not only discussion to define the research topic and the purpose of the poster, but also selection of literature and visualization of the poster. All posters presented during the conferences were accepted by its scientific supervisors. The authors were students of full-time second-degree studies.

For 78% of students, poster activity during the conferences was a debut. 22% of (second-degree) students already had experience in this form of presentation of scientific work. Students with experience in poster sessions were also actively involved in student scientific clubs at the university.

The limitations associated with developing a poster mentioned by the students included: difficulties with defining the poster's topic so that it fits the scope of the conference (85.71%), graphic design...
(28.57%), choice of literature (24.29%) and time constraints (14.29%). The survey offered a multiple choice of answers, hence the results do not add up to 100%.

![Figure 1. Limitations in developing a poster according to students](image)

What is important, the students agreed that the motivation received from the tutors and their expert support was critical for the success of the poster presentations.

4 CONCLUSION

The audience in a poster session varies depending on the type of conference or its thematic scope. Developing the skills of preparing a science poster and its public presentation is a key element in promoting the idea of research work among students. The education program offers skills, competence and knowledge, but it is necessary to ensure student education in terms of selection of presentation tools. The correct preparation of a poster and its presentation should be an integral part of the tools for measuring the students’ knowledge - as final tests or examinations. The combination of original research work, the ability to pass the knowledge and public presentation is the triad of complementary elements of the future researcher's workshop.

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REFERENCES


