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MARYNA SHLENOVA,

PhD in Philology, Associate Professor, Acting Head of the Department of Ukrainian Language and Language Communication, National Aerospace University "Kharkiv Aviation Institute", Kharkiv, Ukraine

Шленьова Марина Геннадіївна,

кандидатка філологічних наук, доцентка, в. о. завідувачки кафедри української мови та мовної комунікації, Національний аерокосмічний університет «Харківський авіаційний інститут», м. Харків, Україна

E-mail: m.shleneva@khai.edu

ORCID iD: <https://orcid.org/0000-0003-4297-6872>



OLENA GRECHANYK,

Associate Professor, Candidate of Pedagogical Sciences, Head of the Department of Management and Economics, H. S. Skovoroda Kharkiv National Pedagogical University, Kharkiv, Ukraine

Гречаник Олена Євгенівна,

кандидатка педагогічних наук, доцентка, завідувачка кафедри менеджменту та економіки, Харківський національний педагогічний університет імені Г. С. Сковороди, м. Харків, Україна

E-mail: grechaniklena@ukr.net

ORCID iD: <https://orcid.org/0000-0002-4671-0724>

QUASI-PROFESSIONAL EDUCATIONAL ENVIRONMENT IN THE PROFESSIONAL TRAINING OF FUTURE MANAGERS

A The article provides a thorough theoretical and methodological substantiation of the essence and pedagogical potential of the quasi-professional educational environment as a system-forming factor in the professional training of future managers in higher education institutions. The relevance of the study is driven by the need to transform the traditional educational paradigm in the context of the digital economy, increasing uncertainty of managerial processes, and rising demands for specialists' adaptability. The authors argue that the traditional reproductive learning model, focused on transmitting normative knowledge, fails to ensure the formation of holistic managerial competence capable of functioning under conditions of risk and multivariate decision-making.

Based on the analysis of scientific discourse and a comparison of traditional and quasi-professional training models, it is determined that the quasi-professional educational environment is a specially organized intermediate space integrating educational, quasi-professional, and professional contexts. It is proven that the methodological foundation of such an environment is the unity of activity-based, contextual, simulation, and reflective approaches. This facilitates the student's gradual transition from a passive information consumer to an active subject of professional activity.

The paper reveals the specifics of modeling managerial activity, which, unlike stable algorithmic procedures, is characterized by non-linearity, communicative tension, and the need for decision-making under incomplete information. A system of quasi-professional managerial tasks, lacking unambiguous solutions and requiring the learner to engage in complex situational analysis, strategic thinking, and assume responsibility for the consequences of chosen actions, is defined as a key mechanism of professional development.

The conclusions state that implementing a quasi-professional educational environment bridges the gap between theoretical training and real practice, ensuring the formation of a new type of manager – reflective, adaptive, capable of critical thinking, and effective action amidst dynamic organizational changes.

Keywords: quasi-professional educational environment; professional training; contextual learning; simulation modeling; managerial reflection; activity-based approach; decision-making; business simulations

КВАЗИПРОФЕСІЙНЕ ОСВІТНЄ СЕРЕДОВИЩЕ У ПРОФЕСІЙНІЙ ПІДГОТОВЦІ МАЙБУТНІХ МЕНЕДЖЕРІВ

S Здійснено ґрунтовне теоретико-методологічне обґрунтування сутності та педагогічного потенціалу квазіпрофесійного освітнього середовища як системоутворювального чинника професійної підготовки майбутніх менеджерів у закладах вищої освіти. Актуальність дослідження зумовлена необхідністю трансформації традиційної освітньої парадигми в умовах цифрової економіки, зростання невизначеності управлінських процесів і підвищення вимог до адаптивності фахівців. Автори доводять, що традиційна репродуктивна модель навчання, зорієнтована на трансляцію нормативних знань, не забезпечує формування цілісної управлінської компетентності, здатної функціонувати в умовах ризику та багатоваріантності рішень.

На основі аналізу наукового дискурсу та порівняння традиційної й квазіпрофесійної моделей підготовки визначено, що квазіпрофесійне освітнє середовище є спеціально організованим проміжним простором, який інтегрує навчальний,

квазіпрофесійний і професійний контексти. Доведено, що методологічним фундаментом такого середовища виступає єдність діяльнісного, контекстного, імітаційного та рефлексивного підходів. Це дозволяє здійснювати поступовий перехід студента від позиції пасивного споживача інформації до позиції активного суб'єкта професійної діяльності.

У роботі розкрито специфіку моделювання управлінської діяльності, яка, на відміну від стабільних алгоритмічних процедур, характеризується нелінійністю, комунікативною напруженістю та необхідністю прийняття рішень в умовах неповної інформації. Ключовим механізмом професійного становлення визначено систему квазіпрофесійних управлінських завдань, що не мають однозначних рішень і вимагають від здобувача комплексного аналізу ситуації, стратегічного мислення та відповідальності за наслідки обраних дій.

У висновках стверджується, що впровадження квазіпрофесійного освітнього середовища дозволяє подолати розрив між теоретичною підготовкою та реальною практикою, забезпечуючи формування менеджера нового типу – рефлексивного, адаптивного, здатного до критичного мислення та ефективної діяльності в умовах динамічних організаційних змін.

Ключові слова: квазіпрофесійне освітнє середовище; професійна підготовка; контекстне навчання; імітаційне моделювання; управлінська рефлексія; діяльнісний підхід; прийняття рішень; бізнес-симуляції

Statement of the problem. The establishment of a quasi-professional educational environment in the professional training of future managers has become increasingly pertinent amidst the transformation of the modern economy, the digitalization of management processes, and the rising uncertainty surrounding managerial decisions. Contemporary managers function less as mere repositories of normative knowledge and more as active agents of complex professional activity, which unfolds under conditions of high variability, risk, communicative pressure, and the necessity for rapid decision-making. Consequently, the traditional training model, focused primarily on the reproductive assimilation of theoretical material and the fragmented practice of isolated skills, proves insufficient for cultivating holistic managerial competence.

Analysis of previous studies and publications. Contemporary scientific discourse highlights a shift toward an activity-context paradigm, in which training is viewed as an immersion into the model of future professional activity. Drawing on the works of N. Huzii [5] and T. Aktar et al. [1], the quasi-professional environment is interpreted as an intermediate space that replicates the essential characteristics of real-world activity. It facilitates the gradual formation of professional thinking and strategies without a complete transfer to a workplace setting.

Adapting the quasi-professional environment to manager training requires reconceptualizing the specific nature of managerial activity. In contrast to the relative stability of pedagogical interaction, managerial work occurs within a dynamic environment driven by market and technological fluctuations. Managers are compelled to operate under conditions of uncertainty, time constraints, and high responsibility, posing unique challenges for their professional training.

H. Mintzberg [7] describes managerial activity as a series of fragmented, often intermittent actions, requiring managers to constantly switch between roles such as leader, coordinator, analyst, communicator, and crisis manager. Conversely, P. Drucker [3] emphasizes the necessity of developing a manager's ability to think strategically, view the organization as a holistic system, and make decisions while considering long-term consequences. In this context, the quasi-professional educational environment emerges not merely as a collection of teaching methods, but as a distinct pedagogical reality. Within this space, the student-manager gradually internalizes the logic of managerial thinking, the underlying structure of professional actions.

An essential feature of a quasi-professional environment in the training of future managers is its simulation-based and contextual nature. This entails not the mechanical reproduction of individual management procedures, but rather the creation of training situations that closely resemble real management challenges, where students are not provided with a ready-made algorithm of actions. As emphasized by F. Estrada et al. [4], it is precisely the absence of rigidly defined models that compels students to mobilize their existing theoretical knowledge, integrate it with their own experience, analyze the situation, and independently construct a behavioral model. In management education, this manifests through the resolution of quasi-professional management tasks related to strategic decision-making, personnel management, conflict resolution, business model development, and crisis response.

It is important to emphasize that a quasi-professional educational environment transcends the mere application of active teaching methods; instead, it necessitates a comprehensive transformation of the educational process. Within this framework, the teacher shifts from the role of a knowledge transmitter to that of an experience moderator and dialogue partner, while the student acquires professional agency, assuming responsibility for the justification and consequences of their decisions.

In a quasi-professional environment, the reflective component becomes crucial. As noted by D. Schon [8] and C. Sugrue [11], professional competence is impossible without reflection-in-action and reflection-on-action. For future managers, this implies the ability to analyze the logic and effectiveness of their decisions and to adjust their behavior accordingly. The environment allows them to safely 'enact' complex scenarios and conduct an in-depth analysis of the results without posing a risk to a real organization.

The quasi-professional educational environment in the training of future managers emerges as a complex pedagogical system aimed at bridging the gap between management theory and real-world practice. It facilitates the integration of knowledge, skills, values, and professional experience, creating conditions for the development of the manager as a reflective, responsible, and adaptive professional agent. It is within this environment that the transition from academic learning to quasi-professional activity occurs, laying the foundation for the successful professional self-actualization of graduates in the modern organizational landscape.

A theoretical and methodological understanding of the quasi-professional educational environment in the training of future managers is impossible without reference to the activity-based paradigm. In modern pedagogical science, this paradigm is considered the foundation for designing educational systems focused on the formation of professional agency. In the work of M. Shlenova [9], activity acts as a system-forming factor in personality development, where knowledge, skills, and values acquire meaning only when integrated into practice. Applying this concept to management education entails a fundamental shift in approaches to organizing the educational process: future managers are developed not by accumulating information about management, but by engaging in quasi-professional activities that replicate the logic, intensity, and contradictions of real managerial processes.

The increasing demands placed on modern managers are substantiated by the research of M. Shlenova & O. Grechanyk [10], who emphasize that effective management today is unattainable without developed leadership qualities, the capacity to foster an environment of trust, and an individualized approach to staff. It is precisely these competencies, essential for navigating bureaucratic challenges and ensuring the professional development of the team, that must be cultivated under conditions approximating real-life practice, a requirement facilitated by the quasi-professional environment.

The activity-based approach within a quasi-professional environment conceptualizes training as a holistic process of forming managerial action, which is critical given the absence of definitive algorithms in management. Drawing on H. Mintzberg's [6] assertion that management is mastered primarily through the 'living' of decision-making situations, we conclude that the quasi-professional environment provides the necessary safe conditions for acquiring such practical experience.

As I. Androshchuk et al. [2] observe, in contextual learning, professional activity is introduced not as a collection of isolated fragments, but as a holistic context that defines the educational content. For managers, this entails creating scenarios where managerial decisions are made in inextricable connection with economic, legal, and ethical aspects. Here, context ceases to be mere background and becomes an active factor in the interpretation and evaluation of actions.

In his monograph, V. Vyhrushch [12] emphasizes that contextual learning in a quasi-professional environment must be multi-level, combining educational, quasi-professional, and professional contexts. In the realm of management education, this manifests as a gradual increase in task complexity: from the analysis of typical management situations to the modeling of complex organizational development scenarios under conditions of uncertainty. This logic allows future managers not only to master specific management tools but also to form a systemic vision of the organization as an open, dynamic system.

The simulation paradigm seamlessly complements the activity-based and contextual approaches, providing the opportunity to replicate key characteristics of management activities within the learning process. Simulation in a quasi-professional educational environment is not limited to

role-playing in its simplified sense; rather, it involves the creation of complex management simulations in which students are compelled to act under conditions of time constraints, conflicting interests, and incomplete information. As J. Zhou & W. Guo [13] point out, simulation in professional training promotes flexible thinking, adaptability, and the ability to transfer knowledge to new situations.

Simulation models for managers cover a wide range of scenarios, from strategic planning to crisis management. They serve a dual function: allowing for the testing of strategies and facilitating reflection on the consequences of actions, which qualitatively distinguishes this approach from simple skills training.

We posit that the unity of the activity-based, contextual, simulation, and reflective paradigms constitutes the theoretical foundation of the quasi-professional environment. Their integration overcomes the fragmentation of traditional education, ensuring the formation of holistic managerial thinking and responsibility. This facilitates the transition from a purely educational model to a model of professional development aligned with the actual needs of the managerial environment.

The aim of this article is to theoretically substantiate the quasi-professional educational environment as a system-forming factor in the professional training of future managers, as well as to elucidate its pedagogical potential in fostering managerial thinking, a reflective stance, and readiness for professional decision-making under conditions of uncertainty and dynamic organizational change.

Presentation of the main material. The development of a quasi-professional educational environment in the professional training of future managers is inextricably linked to a reconceptualization of the content and functions of educational tasks. These tasks cease to serve merely as a means of testing the retention of theoretical material and instead emerge as a central mechanism for professional development. In this context, quasi-professional management tasks, which are based on the simulation of authentic management situations and require students to assume an active decision-making role, are of paramount importance. Unlike traditional educational tasks, which typically feature a single definitive answer, quasi-professional tasks are characterized by multivariate solutions, conditions of uncertainty, and the necessity to balance the divergent interests of various stakeholders.

The absence of a rigid algorithmic structure is a defining feature of the quasi-professional task, compelling students to mobilize their cognitive and reflective resources. In management education, such tasks act as model 'nodes' of professional activity, concentrating key functions ranging from situational analysis to the control and evaluation of results. It is through the resolution of these tasks that students develop an awareness of the complexity of management, which transcends formal procedures.

Modeling management activities within a quasi-professional environment entails not the replication of isolated functions, but the creation of holistic decision-making scenarios under conditions approximating reality. Given the non-linear nature

of management, such modeling reproduces the dynamics of change and communication through a synthesis of case studies, simulations, business games, and project-based activities.

Within the framework of quasi-professional modeling of management activities, decision-making situations characterized by risk and uncertainty assume a pivotal role. Such scenarios are emblematic of modern management practices operating within the contemporary business environment. Engaging future managers in the resolution of quasi-professional tasks-ranging from crisis management and organizational restructuring to change and conflict management-facilitates the cultivation of strategic thinking and the capacity to act effectively under constraints of time and resources. Crucially, importance is attached not only to the final outcome of the managerial decision but also to the decision-making process itself, which is subsequently subjected to reflective analysis.

The implementation of quasi-professional management tasks demonstrates that their efficacy is contingent upon systematic and consistent application. Isolated, episodically employed simulation exercises are insufficient for ensuring the sustainable development of managerial competence. Conversely, a systematically organized quasi-professional environment, wherein academic disciplines are integrated around shared managerial problems and scenarios, fosters the conditions necessary for students to develop a holistic professional vision. In this sense, quasi-professional tasks fulfill not only an educational function but also a worldview function, instilling in future managers an appreciation for the social responsibility inherent in managerial decisions.

To achieve a scholarly understanding of the distinctions between traditional and quasi-professional training models for future managers, it is pertinent to refer to a comparative analysis of the key characteristics of the educational process, which is presented in the form of a summary in table 1:

Table 1

A comparative analysis of the key characteristics of the educational process

Comparison criterion	Traditional training of future managers	Quasi-professional educational environment
Orientation of learning	Acquisition of theoretical knowledge in management	Formation of managerial activity
Role of the student	Passive consumer of information	Active subject of managerial decisions
Type of learning tasks	Reproductive, algorithmic	Quasi-professional, multi-variant
Nature of errors	Sign of insufficient knowledge	Source of professional analysis and development
Role of the teacher	Knowledge translator, controller	Moderator, facilitator of professional experience
Outcome of training	Set of competencies	Formed managerial thinking

The table illustrates a fundamental shift in the logic of professional training for future managers within a quasi-professional educational environment. This entails not merely replacing one set of methods with another, but rather a transformation of the educational paradigm itself, wherein learning assumes the characteristics of professional activity, and professional activity becomes the subject of intentional pedagogical modeling. This approach facilitates bridging the gap between academic training and the demands of real-world management practice-a challenge traditionally regarded as one of the key deficits in management education.

Quasi-professional management tasks and the modeling of managerial activities constitute central elements of the quasi-professional educational environment. Through their systematic application, students develop the capacity to comprehensively analyze management situations, make informed decisions, and assume responsibility for their consequences. In this process, learning gradually evolves into a form of professional self-determination, establishing a foundation for the graduates' future effective managerial performance.

A quasi-professional educational environment cannot be fully realized without considering the collaborative nature of contemporary managerial activity, wherein the majority of decisions are made not individually, but through team interaction. Management in modern organizations increasingly manifests as the result of collective cognition, the alignment of perspectives, and negotiation practices. This necessitates the cultivation of future managers' ability to collaborate effectively, assume leadership roles, and remain open to alternative viewpoints. In this context, the quasi-professional educational environment functions as a socio-professional space where students acquire not only the instrumental facets of management but also the culture of managerial interaction

We emphasize that an effective manager is cultivated not merely through individual achievements, but primarily through the ability to organize collaborative activities and direct the team's potential toward achieving strategic goals. Consequently, within a quasi-professional environment, it is advisable to create conditions for the implementation of group management projects, wherein students assume various managerial roles, rotating them according to the situation, and analyzing the consequences of such rotation. This practice enables future managers to grasp the relative nature of formal status and the significance of informal leadership, which is a hallmark of modern organizations.

Managerial reflection assumes a pivotal role in the formation of a quasi-professional educational environment, serving as a mechanism for developing awareness of one's actions during team interaction. The reflective analysis of collaborative activities allows students not only to evaluate the efficacy of their decisions but also to identify latent communication barriers, areas of conflict, and informal power structures within the team. It is through reflection that professional action becomes conscious, transforming from a reactive impulse into the result of a deliberate choice. This is of fundamental importance in management education, as managerial errors are frequently

attributed not to a deficit of knowledge, but to unconscious communicative and behavioral patterns.

In this context, the quasi-professional environment functions as a space for safe experimentation, where students can test diverse management styles, communication strategies, and leadership models without risk to actual organizations. Analyzing their own actions and those of their colleagues in group management simulations fosters the development of metacognitive skills, enabling future managers to understand not only 'what' and 'how' they execute tasks, but also 'why' they opt for specific managerial decisions. It is this capacity for deep reflection that distinguishes a professionally mature manager from a mere executor of managerial directives.

A critical component of the modern quasi-professional educational environment is the utilization of digital simulations and virtualized management models, which allow for the dynamic replication of complex organizational processes. Digital platforms designed for business simulations, project management, and financial decision modeling facilitate the integration of large datasets, variable environmental parameters, and scenario-based events into the learning process. We contend that the digitalization of education not only expands the instructional repertoire, but also fundamentally transforms the nature of professional training, shifting the emphasis from the mere reproduction of knowledge to its application within a dynamic reality.

For future managers, engagement in digital simulations facilitates the development of skills in strategic thinking, risk analysis, and the forecasting of managerial decision outcomes. However, it is crucial to emphasize that the efficacy of such simulations is contingent upon their seamless integration into the overall logic of the quasi-professional environment, rather than their use in isolation. Digital tools should not serve as an end in themselves, but rather as a means to enhance opportunities for reflection, collaboration, and the synthesis of theoretical knowledge with practical experience.

Business games and startup models warrant particular attention as forms of quasi-professional activity for future managers. Within these models, students are engaged in the full cycle of management activities—ranging from idea generation and market analysis to strategy development, resource management, and performance evaluation. Participation in such activities fosters the cultivation of entrepreneurial thinking, initiative, and a preparedness to assume responsibility for the outcomes of one's decisions. In a quasi-professional environment, startup models function as an integrative platform, synthesizing the economic, managerial, communicative, and ethical dimensions of professional training.

Teamwork, managerial reflection, digital simulations, business games, and startup models constitute an interconnected set of tools that underpin the functioning of a quasi-professional educational environment in the training of future managers. Their integration enables the transformation of the educational process into a sphere of professional experience, where learning assumes the characteristics of management practice, and management practice becomes the subject of

pedagogical reflection. It is within this environment that a new type of manager is cultivated: reflective, adaptive, and capable of effective interaction within complex organizational systems.

Conceptualizing the quasi-professional educational environment in the training of future managers allows us to view it not merely as a pedagogical innovation, but as a systemic response to the challenges confronting modern management education amidst socio-economic instability, digital transformation, and the increasing complexity of organizational processes. In this context, the quasi-professional environment emerges as a distinct form of educational reality, within which a gradual transition from academic to professional activity occurs, accompanied by the formation of managerial thinking, value orientations, and the reflective stance of the future manager.

A defining characteristic of the quasi-professional educational environment is its capacity to integrate diverse levels of professional experience into a unified educational space. Within such an environment, theoretical knowledge of management, economics, organizational behavior, and strategic management ceases to exist as isolated informational units; instead, it acquires functional significance only through its application to the resolution of quasi-professional management tasks. It is through this integration that knowledge is transformed into a professionally vital resource, and learning evolves into a form of professional self-affirmation for the student.

The axiological dimension of the quasi-professional educational environment is of paramount importance in the context of the professional training of future managers. Management activity is inherently bound to decision-making that entails social, economic, and ethical consequences; therefore, the cultivation of professional responsibility and value orientations constitutes an integral component of managerial training. Within the quasi-professional environment, students are afforded the opportunity not only to evaluate the efficacy of management decisions but also to analyze their alignment with ethical standards, corporate culture, and social expectations. Such experience contributes to the development of the manager as a socially responsible professional agent.

The quasi-professional educational environment also facilitates the development of an individual management style among future managers. Through iterative engagement in diverse management situations—including participation in team projects, digital simulations, and business games—students gradually gain insight into their own strengths and weaknesses, as well as their predispositions toward specific management roles and strategies. The reflective processing of this experience enables future managers not merely to emulate existing management models, but to forge their own professional identity, which is a prerequisite for successful adaptation to varied organizational contexts.

Conclusions. In a broader scientific and pedagogical context, the quasi-professional educational environment should be conceptualized as an effective mechanism for bridging the traditional dichotomy between academic education and professional practice. This approach facilitates the gradual professional development of future managers, significantly

mitigating stress during adaptation to real-world working conditions and enhancing graduates' readiness for complex managerial decision-making. This aligns seamlessly with contemporary trends in higher education, which prioritize the cultivation of specialists capable of critical thinking, lifelong learning, and effective interaction within dynamic socio-economic systems.

Thus, the quasi-professional educational environment in the training of managers emerges as a multidimensional pedagogical phenomenon that organically synthesizes activity-based, contextual, simulation, and reflective components into a unified

system of professional development. The implementation of such an environment enables a fundamental transformation of the educational process: a shift from the paradigm of knowledge transmission to the domain of professional experience acquisition. Within this domain, not only are individual competencies cultivated, but also holistic managerial thinking, professional responsibility, and a preparedness to act under conditions of uncertainty. Precisely herein lies the strategic potential of the quasi-professional environment for modernizing the content and forms of training in higher education institutions.

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