



RESEARCH ARTICLE

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DISTANCE EDUCATION: PERCEPTION OF STUDENTS OF AN INSTITUTION DEVOID OF THE NORTHEASTERN BACKWOODS

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ABSTRACT

This article aims to analyze the perception of students regarding the teaching in the modality of distance education (EaD), describing the changes of paradigm student/teacher/tutor, discussing whether this new methodology enables more empowering to the student in the exchange of knowledge with the facilitator, presented the challenges faced in interpersonal relationship, student/tutor in the teaching and learning process. This research is a descriptive, exploratory, approach a case study in a private institution of higher education in the interior of the northeast of Brazil. With the use of an instrument for data collection, a semi-structured questionnaire, qualitative, where students will present the perception about the modality of distance education that coexist in your course. The results showed that the perception of students, they have difficulty come EaD modality in terms of trade between tutors and other students, opting for preference to traditional teaching by adding more in the learning process. They also pointed out as an obstacle to the learning process the lack of the mastery of technology to handle the platform.

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INTRODUCTION

Since there is a gap between the demands of the market for professional training and the ability of the traditional methods of teaching in fill it, then, a need for new models and technologies as a complement to this teaching method, so that it can fit the new demand. In this context, the emergence of new teaching methodologies, comes as an imperative to remedy this gap training. Immersed in a globalised world and innovative, the professional needs to be ready to face new challenges that emerge from this reality. This dynamism, brought by this structural transformation has brought problems for the professionals who need to be able to solve them, and for this, they need a proper training and updated to oppose to the challenges of this new scenario. The society demand for professionals in profile creative and innovative, flexible to change in the way of positioning itself as compared to a fickle and dynamic scenario.

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More than this, there is a recovery of the collectivity to which these professionals use their knowledge and your skills on behalf of the Community in which they are inserted, which have a humanitarian vision and who are pro active before the problems that permeate our reality. In this context, we noticed that the higher education in Brazil is experiencing a change in their dynamics of teaching. The table static and mechanistic, that persisted since the years of the Jesuits (ANASTASIOU, 2001), is forced, by this new economic world, to give space to forms of differentiated teaching, bringing the student for this new prism, giving the same role and responsibility for their learning, causing him to interact, within the academic space, with situations that you will find in society within your area, in the dynamics and the cyclic speed in the world. We understand then that in the context of changes and adaptations it is essential to use new tools and methods in teaching, and it is within this framework that the distance education emerges as a complement to traditional teaching, giving more dynamism and bringing the students a role in their professional training. The Distance Education (EaD) is not something recent in

Brazil, quite the contrary, second Hermida (2006) the modality old exists in Brazil of 1904, when International Schools (representation of a North American organization) launched some correspondence courses in the country. However, the distance education in Brazil has always been characterized by being used by professionalizing courses and courses are free, not if characterizing as a modality inserted within the reality of graduate courses. The big change when it comes to distance education happens in 1996, when the same had their citation in the text of the Law of National Education Bases and Guidelines (BRAZIL, 1996). After this founding process, where the foundations of Distance Education in higher education were exposed, the EAD courses gained another dimension and from there to here grow steeply, acquiring more amplitude in the courses offered and in order to offer them. In this scenario, enters into another sphere, ownership of the student as a participant of the EaD, which as harasim (2006), are faced with a new reality and which, in the majority of cases, it is difficult to accept. With this if faced with a scenario of frustrations of students and tutors in the EAD motivated by several factors: lack of help or immediate response on the part of teachers or colleagues, ambiguous instructions in the course, technical issues, inadequacy of the pedagogical model of cognitive styles, personal characteristics of students and difficulties associated with aspects of the vital situation of students (social aspects, family and personal). For both this article aims to analyze the perception of students of the institution of education in the perception of the modality of education distance education (EaD), describing the difficulty of student/teacher/tutor, discussing the methodology as a means of empowerment of this student in the teaching-learning process and the exchange of knowledge with the facilitator.

In the face of so many questions and with the proposal to be at the forefront of education providing the differential of innovative and efficient way, a private institution of the northeastern backwoods - Brazil gave top in 2018 as an innovative activity, the provision of curricular units in the modality of distance learning (ODL), Marco This, of paramount importance for the courses on this partition. Having said that, this research has as objective to analyze the perception of students regarding the teaching in the modality of EaD, describing the changes of paradigm student/teacher, discussing whether this new methodology brings more interaction for the course and allows the students greater empowerment in the exchange of knowledge with the facilitator, presented the challenges faced in interpersonal relations student/tutor in the teaching and learning process, aiming to expand the opportunities for student learning and allowing changes in teaching practices and forms of teaching and learning.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

The methodology of this study is qualitative and quantitative character, not obtain a more in-depth analysis on this topic. It is understood that in a scientific research, the quantitative and qualitative treatments of the results can be complementary, enriching the analysis and the final discussions (MINAYO, 1997). It is a descriptive, explanatory notes, a case study of intentional, this aspect it seeks a bibliographic caught in the survey done on the work already done in this same approach, contributing in this way in the presentation of data updated and relevant to the theme chosen. Having as inclusion criterion for students enrolled in the course of directors attending ODL and components that accept freely and willingly participate in such

research and as a criterion for exclusion students with registration inactive, if they are of maternity or health certificate, who are not enrolled in disciplines ODL and who for whatever reason do not accept to participate in the research. The instrument for data collection was used a semi-structured questionnaire, applied to the students of the undergraduate course of directors face a semi-private institution of the northeastern backwoods, in the month of April and May 2019. This instrument was composed of two stages, the first set of socio-demographic data and the second part was asked to students on the theme proposed in this article. These students live in their course with both modalities of teaching, i.e., presences curricular units and units that are in the modality of EaD. The course is composed of eight periods and has a total population of 230 students, data from the first half of 2019. For the sample were separated students into two groups for the implementation of data collection instrument, with the goal of understanding the perception of the same as teaching EaD. The first group is students at the beginning of the course (first and second periods), totaling a sample of 60 students and the second group students at the end stroke (seventh and eighth periods), totaling a sample of 32 students.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

92 students participated in the study, divided into two groups, students in the first year of the course, totaling a sample of 60 participants and students of the last year of the course totaling a sample of 32 participants. This session will consist of the following topics: sociodemographic aspects and aspects related to the theme of research.

Sociodemographic aspects of learners: For the 92 participants in the research was noted a population of 50% of men and 50% of women, according to Table 01, which are mostly in the age range between 18 to 25 years (82%), the other 18% are between 26 and 35 years. In relation to marital status, there is a prevalence of students (85%) Singles, and students were married and divorced and reach 15% of the total number of interviewees. The inep (2017) published the Indicators of Quality of Higher Education in 2015, which reports that the number of singles in higher education that year was 68.9%, an average below the local reality studied. This is also due to the fact that the age of the local students are predominantly below 25 years of age.

Table 1. Demographic data of learners

Variables	Reference Absolute	Reference Concerning
Genre		
Literacy	46	50%
Male	46	50%
Age Range		
18 to 25 years	76	82%
26 to 35 years	16	18%
Marital Status		
Beds (a)	78	85%
Married (a)	11	12%
Divorced (a)	3	3%
Monthly Income		
1 to 2 minimum wages	67	73%
2 to 4 minimum wages	14	15%
Up to 5 minimum wages	11	12%
Total	92	100%

Source: Prepared by the authors, 2019

As the income if measured that 73% of the sample is in the range between 1 to 2 minimum wages, 15% earn

between 2 and 4 minimum wages and the rest of the students, 12% earn up to 5 minimum wages, these figures well below which shows the average presented by inep (2017), who reported that 46% of students graduates have family income between 1.5 and 4.5 minimum wages. This local reality, lower income, directly affects the digital and social inclusion of these students of the northeastern backwoods.

Aspects related to the theme of the study: In this topic, the questionnaire was composed of 12 multiple-choice questions, this questionnaire created by the author of the research, where the interviewee answered about their perception regarding the modality EaD, in the most diverse aspects which compose it (Guardian, methods, time, Tools) and then will be made a comparative analysis of the perception of this student of beginning and completion of the course. It was examined whether there is, in the perception of students, difference in teacher interaction with the student in relation to ease (or not) to remedy any doubt. Students understand that there are major difficulties to remedy a doubt with the tutor the distance than with the teacher within a classroom. It was also found that for 81% of students, the interaction was made in the classroom may not be replaced by the interaction performed in chats and forums of AVA (virtual learning environment). These difficulties are intimately linked to the new dynamic that teaching in the modality EaD impose to the student. It must be active in the search for information and need to work autonomously and proactively, in favor of the construction of their knowledge. To belloni (1999) the concept of independent learning implies a dimension of direction and determination that is not easily performed by many students of EaD, since without the direct assistance of teacher the student needs to study alone and be responsible for their learning process.

For 68% of the respondents the modality EaD is not more attractive than the face-to-face modality involves more students, so that only 26% of the students considered the lessons EaD more attractive than the classroom instruction. When questioned about the possibility to visualize more advantages regarding the flexibility of schedules to attend a classroom, there was a slight preference for flexibility enabled by EaD modality (56%), the remaining 44% prefer a schedule grid pre set, which is available in the traditional modality. When asked if you notice that there is the same academic rigor in curricular units the distance (EaD) that exists in the classroom modality, students realize that there is not the same rigor (76% of respondents), believe themselves to be more malleable a curricular unit in the modality of EaD. According to Tortoreli (2011) This is motivated because due to lack of information means that the modality ODL and easy handling, but requires the students to be more responsible, committed, discipline, self-management, role in the constant search of formation of knowledge in your area of expertise, skills and competencies. It was found that according to the student's perception there is a big difference in the interaction of the teacher in the classroom to classroom modality, in relation to the student's interaction with the tutor/teacher in the modality of EaD, getting the tutor more distant from the students. In addition, also replied that they did not believe to be possible to emulate this interaction within the AVA, leaving a gap, and a great challenge for the modality EaD. It is up to the tutor/teacher convey to the students that the technological tool used is an evolution of the classroom, agreeing with belloni (2006), who stressed the importance of the means of communication and its evolution in the teacher-student

interaction. It appears also that for 76% of the respondents the lack of field of technological resources, hinders their utilization in the modality of EaD, in the same way that for 65% of the interviewees, there is a lesser degree of concentration of the student when you're watching your lesson in the modality of EaD. It is perceived that the student has difficulty in dealing with the technology required by EaD modality, being that the mastery of these technological tools is essential for the best use of the method. Viera (2007) affirms that the EaD methodology is based on a permanent dialog with the learner and tutor and between students, precluding the idea first classroom Classroom with fixed schedules, that when executed efficiently enhances and enriches the knowledge construction proposed. Finally, 50% of respondents for more autonomy of the student in the learning process when it is inserted in the modality of teaching EaD, for 40% of the autonomy is the same that occurs in a classroom modality and 10% did not know how to answer. The teachers of this institution should seek forward these students at the heart of education at a distance, which is the autonomy of the student in the learning process and how it needs to participate and be an active agent of his own process of construction of knowledge. Second Belloni (1999) and Petri (2000) motivation, self-confidence and the participation of the apprentice are conditions *sine qua non* for success in studies in EAD, the student needs to really engage with the course. Giving emphasis to all the results compiled in the research, has become as relevant the fact that the non-identification of differences in the perception of the student beginner to the student concluding, objectives proposed in this study. This is the result of the fact that the modality EaD have said their deployment in this educational institution just a year ago, giving the concluding (with four years of study) the same contact time with the new methodology that the student beginner, not allowing even greater familiarity.

Final Considerations

Before the submitted must be noted that the students of this institution of the northeastern backwoods faces a range of difficulties in dealing with the new mode of education proposed by the institution, these barriers begin with the difficulty of the student to use the platform to access the EaD. The lack of field of technological tools is a major problem faced by students, according to the same "considerably hinders the student learning", at this point shall be borne by the institution decrease this *gap* knowledge to optimize the best use of the tool by learners. For the participants of this research to classroom modality is more engaging and more attractive that the modality EaD, this obstacle is a direct consequence of the fact that this student has witnessed throughout their educational journey being inserted in live mode, i.e., the traditional. It created a generation of students, with a format inserted in the learning process, direct, teacher-student, with difficulties and rigidities, which needs to be redefined to shape a new reality of market scenario. According to the majority of the students interviewed the Virtual Learning Environment (AVA) cannot emulate the interactions that they perform in the room with the teacher. The student/teacher ratio is not fully replaced by student/tutor. This leads to one of the problems highlighted by the interviewees, who in the modality EaD hinders the interaction and withdrawal of students' doubts, this obstacle brings significant consequences in the learning process of those who need simplified access to the facilitator to help in doubts that might exist, this is a facilitator

a teacher or a tutor. The institution studied deployed the modality EaD a year ago, this did not realize the differences in the perception of the student beginner and concluding, since these two groups has at the same time participation of EaD platform, having no time for familiarisation differently to the method. The result of this research suggests that the process of implementing EaD modality requires efforts from all parties involved, the institution, teachers, tutors and students. The institution is to provide adequate training to their teachers and tutors, as well as create a virtual learning environment in a simple and intuitive package that facilitates the navigation of the students. The teacher/tutor up to assume the role of facilitator throughout this process, understand the challenges posed by this new modality of teaching, as well as understand the difficulties of the students and help to resolve them. Finally, the students, it is necessary to a broad understanding of the new demands that he be imposed, and assume its role as a protagonist in the process of their teaching learning.

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