

SECTION: ARTICLES

Permanence in public higher education: the resulting experience of a Policy for Monitoring Students Academic Performance¹

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ABSTRACT

The expansion of public higher education in Brazil is followed by a series of challenges. Among all, there are those related to students permanence and successful conclusion of their undergraduate courses. Several factors have been associated to permanence or evasion from higher education, for example: academic engagement, extra-class activities participation, network of friends, college guidance, satisfaction with the chosen career, performance in academic disciplines and socioeconomic circumstances. Thus, the objective of this article is to present the Academic Performance Monitoring Program for undergraduate students. It has started in 2016, at a public Brazilian university. The objective also includes data analysis about dismissal, dropout, conclusion and permanence of students (who entered college between 2010 and 2019), supported and not supported by the program. The results indicate less dropout and greater continuity in the courses among the students being monitored, emphasizing the importance of the academic monitoring strategy developed.

Keywords: Higher education. Academic monitoring. Academic performance. Student permanence. Dropout.

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Permanencia en la educación superior pública: la experiencia de una Política para Supervisar el Desempeño Académico

RESUMEN

La expansión de la educación superior en Brasil es seguida por una serie de desafíos. Hay aquellos relacionados con la permanencia de los estudiantes y la finalización exitosa de carreras profesionales. Varios factores se asocian a la permanencia o abandono de la educación superior, como el compromiso académico, participación en actividades extra-clase, red de amigos, orientación recibida de la universidad, satisfacción con la carrera, desempeño en las disciplinas académicas y circunstancias socioeconómicas. Por eso, el objetivo de este artículo es presentar el Programa de Supervisión del Desempeño Académico para estudiantes de grado. Se inició en 2016, se desarrolló en una universidad pública de Brasil y se analizaron datos sobre la discontinuidad, abandono, conclusión y permanencia de los estudiantes, con y sin apoyo del programa, que ingresaron a la universidad entre 2010 y 2019. Los resultados indican una menor tasa de abandono y mayor continuidad en la realización de carreras, entre los estudiantes que se están supervisando, enfatizando la importancia de la estrategia desarrollada de supervisión académica.

Palabras clave: Educación superior. Supervisión académica. Desempeño académico. Permanencia estudiantil. Abandono.

Permanência na educação superior pública: experiência de Política de Acompanhamento do Desempenho Acadêmico de estudantes

RESUMO

A expansão da educação superior pública no Brasil é acompanhada de uma série de desafios, entre eles os ligados à permanência dos estudantes e à conclusão com êxito dos cursos de graduação. Diversos fatores têm sido relacionados à permanência ou à evasão, dentre eles, engajamento acadêmico, participação em atividades extraclasse, rede de amigos, orientação recebida do corpo docente, satisfação com a carreira escolhida, desempenho nas disciplinas e situação socioeconômica. O objetivo deste artigo é apresentar um Programa de Acompanhamento do Desempenho Acadêmico de estudantes de graduação iniciado em 2016, numa universidade pública brasileira, e analisar dados de desligamento, desistência, conclusão e continuidade no curso de ingressantes entre 2010 e 2019, acompanhados e não acompanhados pelo referido programa. Os resultados indicam menor evasão e maior continuidade nos cursos entre os estudantes acompanhados, ressaltando a importância da estratégia de acompanhamento acadêmico desenvolvida.

Palavras-chave: Educação superior. Acompanhamento acadêmico. Desempenho acadêmico. Permanência do estudante. Evasão.

INTRODUCTION

Brazilian higher education presents an overly complex and diverse scenario, especially from the end of the 1990s on, with the advent of the disorderly expansion of private Higher Education Institutions (IESs), orchestrated by the market and without direct regulation of the State.

In order to expose this scenery and analyzing the 2016 Higher Education Census, published by the National Institute for Educational Research (Inep) (BRAZIL, 2017), we used the following data: a) the number of enrollments in higher education in 2016 exceeded the mark of 8 million in 2,407 IESs; b) most of these enrollments was made in the Southeast and Northeast regions of the country; c) from the total enrollments, 12.3% are carried out in public IESs and 87.7% in private IESs; d) there was a 375.2% increase in the number of enrollments between 2006 and 2016 in distance-learning graduation courses. Considering only the year of 2018, in the same way, we notice that the number of enrollments in public higher education in Brazil was 580,936, which represents 16.9% of the total enrollments, in contrast, 83.1% of the enrollments were made in private networks, profit and non-profit ones (BRASIL, 2019a).

From a point of view, this new scenario of expansion of vacancies in graduation courses favored the access⁴ to higher education, on the other hand, it brought implications and challenges related to student's development and conclusion of graduation studies. Thus, this article is restricted to conditions of permanence of the students in the institution and the completion of their professional qualification.

We intend to analyze aspects related to the difficulties of completing higher education and the reasons why retention and dropout occur, as well as presenting the experience of academic monitoring developed under our coordination in a public higher education institution. Thus, the article was organized in three parts: the first, designed to contextualize the study problem; the second, aimed at presenting the theoretical-methodological key-ideas of the experience we experimented in the last three years within the institution in which we work as professors and managers; and the third, dedicated to the final considerations.

⁴ Different from the democratization of higher education, considering that the offer of places is limited to a significant percentage.

CONTEXTUALIZATION OF THE STUDY: FROM THE SIMPLIFICATION OF THE ACCESS TO HIGHER EDUCATION TO THE COMPLEX PERMANENCE IN HIGHER EDUCATION

To better understand our perception of access and permanence of students in Brazilian public universities, it is necessary to consider education as a social right in contrast to the idea of education as a commercial service, in which the State assumes less and less of its public role and much more of a teaching supervisor (SILVA, 2012).

The statistics summarized in the introduction indicate that the trend towards the commercialization of higher education has grown over the years, oscillating between partial and total privatization, and articulating three institutional modalities: public supply with private financing, private supply with public financing and private supply with private financing (SILVA, 2012).

Despite the implementation of these policies for the commercialization of education from 2003 on, it is noticed, at the same time, an advance of the Federal Educational Institutions (Ifes) regarding the expansion of the number of vacancies offered and the system of quotes as a democratization of the access, the creation of a possible assistance for the students in order to guarantee their permanence, and improvements in basic structures for the teaching, research and extension.

In this context of policies aimed to public higher education, it is observed that, since then, there has been a visible concern of the federal government with the permanence of students. This concern is almost exclusively related to financial aspect, represented by the allocation of scholarships to students and tax exemption to private higher education institutions, and sometimes by the budget decentralization to scholarships allocation to students enrolled in the Federal Institutions (IFES), through the National Student Assistance Program (PNAES) (BRASIL, 2010). Among the objectives of this program, we can highlight providing conditions of access and permanence in the perspective of social inclusion and democratization of education and, analyze, plan and promote actions aimed at reducing dropout rates and university retention, when motivated by socioeconomic factors.

Beyond the intentionalities of these policies, both democratization of access and conditions of permanence were guided as priorities in the management of education (2016-2020) of the Brazilian public university, which is the target of this article, and both were understood as particular concepts built on social relations and on social and institutional actions. It is not about universal constructs, but concepts that must be understood both in terms of institutional daily life and through specific knowledge related to incoming students and the difficulties they face while attending graduation. Among the common obstacles to permanence that we identified, those related to learning or academic performance were

recurrent. In this case, it is undeniable that retention has prevented the guarantees of permanence, impacting dropout.

Retention and dropout as obstacles to permanence

Still in 2018, the inverse point of access, represented by the number of graduated in higher education (1,264,288, of which 20.5% were in public institutions), contrasted with the number of enrollments (12,036,773 students, of which 21,7% in the public network). As for the total number of enrollments in 2018, including public and private institutions, 10.7% took a leave of absence, 18.1% were canceled and 0.9% were transferred to another graduation course within the same institution (BRASIL, 2019b). Considering these last three rates as potential dropout indicators from higher education, around 30% of the enrollments were in this risk situation in 2018.

Dropout in higher education can be divided into three types: dropout from undergraduate courses, from educational institutions and from higher education systems (BRASIL, 1996). This situation of potential dropout from higher education is multidetermined and several studies have pointed out variables which have an impact on this process, such as: students personal and social matters, expectations and requirements regarding academic performance, adaptation to the new environment and the new complexity of learning, which is different from the precedent school context, dissatisfaction with professional choice, commitment with the course, relationship with professors and classmates, performance in the subjects (BARDAGI; HUTZ, 2012; JOHNSON; NUSSBAUM, 2012; LEHMAN, 2014; OLIVEIRA et al., 2018; SANTOS; MOGNON; LIMA; CUNHA, 2011).

Studies focused on understanding university dropout are present in different parts of the world, but surely, issues related to historical, social and economic contextualization in geographic region, in which the institutions are located, need to be considered as central issues in the analysis. Thus, contributing to a deeper understanding of the socioeconomic and cultural profile of undergraduate students from brazilian IFES, in 2018 a broad study was developed, published in 2019, and it involved 424,128 students, which corresponds to 35.34% of the total enrollments in the first semester of the courses in the institutions (ASSOCIAÇÃO NACIONAL DOS DIRIGENTES DAS INSTITUIÇÕES FEDERAIS DE ENSINO SUPERIOR, 2019).

Among collected and analyzed information, students identified the main difficulties that interfere in academic performance: lack of discipline and study habit (28.4%), financial difficulties (24.7%), too much schoolwork (23.7%), emotional problems (23.7%), travel time to university (18.9%), adaptation to new situations (16%), family relationships (15.2%), social or interpersonal relationships (13.8%), learning difficulties (13.4%), excessive workload

(12.6%), professor-student relationship (12.5%), loving and/or marital relationship (9.6%), difficulties in acquiring school supplies (8.6%), health problems (5.9%), discrimination and prejudice (4.6%), psychological violence and/or moral harassment (3.7%), conflicts related to personal values and/or religious values (3%), maternity or paternity (2.8%), situation of a physical violence (0.8%) and situation of a sexual violence (0.7%).

In the same survey, 52.8% of the students reported having already thought about dropping out the course, with a greater concentration among students whose family has monthly per capita income up to 1.5 minimum wages and among unemployed students. Among graduation courses, this percentage is lower in courses such as Medicine, Dentistry and Law. The reasons they consider for dropping out were: financial distress (32.7%), level of demands (29.7%), difficulty in reconciling work and study (23.6%), physical and/or mental health problems (21.2%), professional area (19.6%), difficulties of personal relationship in the course (19.1%), incompatibility with the course (18.8%), dissatisfaction with the quality of the course (18, 4%), family problems (16%) and harassment, bullying, discrimination or prejudice (4.8%).

A POSSIBLE COPING WITH RETENTION AND DROPOUT: A REPORT OF AN EXPERIENCE LIVED IN AN IFES

Within the challenges launched to academic performance while at the university, it is indisputable the importance of an institutional follow-up proposal to collaborate with the promotion of conditions that make feasible the graduation. Thus, to contribute fulfilling these needs, we will present in this section the description of the Academic Performance Monitoring Program (ADA) to undergraduate students, as well as the description of the data obtained from the Academic System of the university, that we brought into discussion.

The Academic Performance Monitoring Program itself

Based on the assertions indicated in the introduction, it was adopted and developed, in a Brazilian public university, a proposal that aimed to contribute to academic success and to the permanence of undergraduate students, replacing the university's previous strategy, which was centered on dismissing students who did not reach a satisfactory performance.

The referred Academic Performance Monitoring Program, with intervention during the course, began in late 2016, in the context of a graduation management which also developed other policies related to the stages that encompass choosing the course, entering university, and monitoring former students. Thus, the ADA was developed aiming to favor the conclusion of the course, prioritizing the articulation with other policies. We still emphasize that, considering the importance of cooperation for the process of knowledge

construction by all the actors involved, in addition to those which focused on the students, other actions were also developed encompassing professors and public servants training, as well as training for managers directly involved with the graduation process.

Therefore, the ADA is divided into two strategies: 1) Studies Monitoring Plan (PAE), which consists of development of integrated actions between the Dean of Undergraduate Students Office (Prograd) and the collegiate body, with the objective of preventing dismissal, dropout, and retention of students; 2) Curricular Integration Plan (PIC), referring to the planning between the student and the collegiate body considering the appropriated steps for a curricular integration. Students are nominated annually to participate in one of the programs, a list with their names is generated by the university academic system. In this system, interfaces were created specifically to favor the functioning of the ADA, since they meet the following criteria: a) PAE - rhythm report showing less than the expected time for completion in the interval between the suggested duration and the maximum duration of the course, 5three failures in the same discipline and/or dropping out⁶ of the course for one semester; b) PIC - abandonment of the course for two semesters, noncompliance with what was planned in the previous PAE and/or extrapolation of the duration suggested for completing the course.

Thus, both PAE and PIC are following-up strategies that intend to identify and offer appropriate strategies according to the needs of the students. PAE documents are always built-in agreements between the student and his course collegiate body. Studies of academic follow-up show that several variables related to performance, previously mentioned, must be considered in the development of an action, prioritizing what is most relevant according to the context in which the students, the course and the IES itself are inserted. Bardagi and Hutz (2005) also emphasize that general initiatives by universities must be integrated with initiatives from educational units, aiming in providing interventions for specific difficulties according to area, course, or student groups.

Therefore, important variables for the permanence of students in undergraduate courses were identified: relationship with the professors, with academic monitors, with study groups, with student entities or friends; participation in academic activities beyond traditional classes; good performance in the disciplines (SORIA; STUBBLEFIELD, 2015); socioeconomic level; social integration degree in the university community; academic

⁵ Suggested course duration refers to the ideal time indicated in the Curricular Pedagogical Project to fulfill the subjects and complete the course (eg, eight semesters), while the maximum duration corresponds to the time limit for completion of the course, defined in this university as the suggested duration plus 50% (for a course with a suggested duration of eight semesters, the maximum duration will be 12 semesters).

⁶ Abandonment is understood as the student's non-enrollment in the academic semester, remaining without any connection with the university during such period.

expectations; family organization (HUNT et al., 2012); adaptation to the university during the first year (MATTE; SARTORI; PEREIRA, 2019); career guidance and construction of professional identity (BARDAGI; HUTZ, 2005).

To enable proposals to integrate the monitoring of studies which are components of ADA, Prograd encouraged projects aimed at intervening in retention, dismissal and/or dropout in undergraduate courses, as well as intending to trigger a process of pedagogical innovation, providing critical reflection on the teaching-learning process, within two specific programs published in annual notices: Institutional Program for Academic Support and Teaching Projects. In these Projects, professors submit proposals to be implemented during the school year, giving priority to those proposals whose audience were students attending disciplines whose rate of failure were above 50%, which involved different undergraduate courses and/or were aimed to students with disabilities.

Considering these general objectives, the first group of developed projects offered tutoring in basic disciplines with a non-professional core, with a high failure rate; the second group built materials and methods for the production of knowledge in disciplines or for specific audiences; the third group, in turn, sought to build skills for final work in undergraduate courses; and, finally, the fourth group of projects promoted actions of welcoming and accompanying incoming students, just as it collaborated with the development of relational skills which also contributes for the experiencing of a university life.

Prograd also encourages that different actions, which are under its responsibility, can be articulated in the construction and maintenance of the academic monitoring police like, in the teacher's training, in the Tutorial Education Program (PET) and in the registration and academic control. This initiative was possible because the objective was not isolated in the action of a unique group of people, but it was part of a real policy for guiding the process developed for the construction of knowledge within the university (FIGUEIREDO, 2020).

In this way, it is also necessary to mention the partnership with other sectors of the university. The policy for monitoring academic performance developed at the institution always included in its beginning an orientation and training meeting with the coordinators of the collegiate body, those responsible for the inviting, planning, and inserting the student in PAE or PIC program, and monitoring its effectiveness. In these meetings, administrative and academic aspects related to the policy were addressed, always highlighting the importance of the coordinator for the more specific analysis of the course context and the situation of each student. The meetings were scheduled by the teaching centers and, usually, the manager of the teaching center and the academic administrative team, also participated.

The research of the National Association of Directors of Federal Institutions of Higher Education (Andifes), previously mentioned, shows that socioeconomic and psychosocial issues strongly interfere in the conclusion of the undergraduate course, which can be perceived when students mention the main difficulties in academic performance and the factors that lead them to think about abandoning the course (ANDIFES, 2019). Thus, another important orientation of the ADA was the referral of students to the Dean of Student Affairs and Citizenship Office (PROAECI) when any of the above issues was identified. Such rectory is responsible, considering the organizational structure of this university, for the psychosocial monitoring of undergraduate students and for the distribution of government aid according to the National Student Assistance Program (BRASIL, 2010).

Then, we will present data from the ADA articulating them with information concerning continuity, completion, and dropout of undergraduate students.

THE MOST SIGNIFICANT DATA GENERATED BY ADA PROGRAM

In order to carry out the analysis that constitutes the objective of this work, we obtained a document with information about the new students at the university being criteria of inclusion used in this study: a) face-to-face course; b) year of entry between 2010 and 2019 (with enrollment interval with the highest number of PAE and PIC registrations); c) admission form (entrance exam, reoption and SisU). We identified 44,298 undergraduate student records. The variables studied were:

1. PAE and/or PIC (yes or no) - if there is registration in the university system of any student participation in one of the forms of monitoring.
2. Academic situation - information about the student's current academic situation at the university. As values, we analyzed: dropout - student voluntary request for leaving the IES; dismissal - The IES itself is responsible for the cancellation of the student's register, it is considered in the study reasons like dropout, three failures in the same discipline, non-compliance with study plans and exceeding the maximum period for curricular integration; graduate - completion of the undergraduate course; and activity - continuity in the undergraduate course. Particularly were excluded situations such as dismissal, due to court decision or due to extinction of the course, death, internal reoption of the course and transfer to another institution.

Possible analyzes that indicate cultural and pedagogical changes

The descriptive characterization of the sample encompassing 44,298 student records at the IES, in relation to the variable PAE/PIC and also the ways of leaving the university, will be

presented regarding the university in general and, later, in relation to each Academic Administrative Center, in which the undergraduate courses are organized.

YEAR	Participation in PAE/PIC		No participation in PAE/PIC	
	F	%	F	%
2010	380	8.82	3926	91.18
2011	716	15.80	3816	84.20
2012	1147	27.03	3096	72.97
2013	1803	44.71	2230	55.29
2014	2207	54.01	1879	45.99
2015	1943	49.25	2002	50.75
2016	2137	50.63	2084	49.37
2017	2760	58.86	1929	41.14
2018	2103	40.41	3101	59.59
2019	478	9.49	4561	90.51

Table 1 – Frequency and percentage of newcomers between 2010 and 2019 with registered PAE/PIC

Source: elaborated by the authors, 2020.

We underline that ADA, of which PAE and PIC are the central strategies for monitoring, was instituted from the end of 2016 on. Therefore, students entering in 2010, 2011 and 2012 and inserted in the monitoring program probably had already exceeded the maximum term to complete the courses. We also observed that, among those enrolled from 2013 to 2018, the percentage of follow-up records is higher than 40%, and, in some years (2014, 2016 and 2017), it was higher than 50%. The number of registrations related to new entrants in 2019 is quite small because, at the time of data collection, they had only completed the first semester or year in the courses, without sufficient academic information to identify the need for inclusion in the monitoring policy, when necessary.

Entrance year	PAE/PIC	Dropout		Dismissal		Graduated		Active	
		F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%
2010	Participação	10	2.63	78	20.53	263	69.21	29	7.63
	Não participação	598	15.56	924	24.04	2321	60.40	0	0
2011	Participação	17	2.38	108	15.13	508	71.15	81	11.34
	Não participação	633	16.93	1046	27.97	2061	55.11	0	0
2012	Participação	29	2.38	85	15.13	779	71.15	250	11.34
	Não participação	462	15.42	994	33.18	1540	51.40	0	0
2013	Participação	51	2.86	115	6.44	1088	60.92	532	29.79
	Não participação	443	20.60	734	34.14	972	45.21	1	1.00
2014	Participação	98	4.52	133	6.14	855	39.46	1081	49.88
	Não participação	343	19.88	592	34.32	780	45.22	10	0.58
2015	Participação	147	7.94	136	7.34	238	12.85	1331	71.87
	Não participação	336	18.63	286	15.85	646	35.81	536	29.71
2016	Participação	227	11.31	52	2.59	23	1.15	1705	84.95
	Não participação	210	10.90	170	8.82	239	12.40	1308	67.88
2017	Participação	364	13.94	12	0.50	2	0.08	2233	85.49
	Não participação	173	9.82	46	2.61	15	0.85	1527	86.71
2018	Participação	213	10.29	1	0.05	12	0.58	1844	89.08
	Não participação	295	10.2	0	0	7	0.24	2590	89.56
2019	Participação	29	6.11	0	0	4	0.84	442	93.05
	Não participação	437	9.64	0	0	2	0.04	4092	90.31
Total	Participação	1185	7.79	721	4.74	3772	24.81	9528	62.66
	Não participação	3930	14.36	4792	17.51	8583	31.36	10064	36.77

Table 2 – Frequency and percentage of academic status of newcomers between 2010 and 2019 with and without participation in the monitoring program PAE / PIC

Source: elaborated by the authors, 2020.

The analysis of the four forms of academic situation considered in this study shows that the percentage of dropouts and dismissals is, for the most part, lower among students academically monitored through PAE and/or PIC, except the dropouts in 2016, 2017 and 2018 and the dismissal in 2018, which, however, presents very close or almost identical percentages between the two groups. The percentage of students who completed the undergraduate course is higher among those accompanied by the program in most years of entry, except for those entering between 2014 and 2017. In relation to the percentage of active students in the university, only the years of entry of 2017 and 2018 do not present higher percentages for the students monitored, although the values are very close.

Considering the total number of students, we observed that the number of graduates is higher among those who do not have a follow-up plan, however most of the students who received follow-up are still active at the university, because they are still attending graduation. Thus, emphasizing that the ADA was recently implemented (2016), it is very

likely that in the coming years the number of graduates will also be higher among the students being monitored.

In addition to this general characterization of the students, we will also present the data for each teaching center on the four campuses:⁷ 1) Headquarters: Arts (CAr) - courses such as Visual Arts and Design; Exact Sciences (CCE) - Chemistry, Physics, Mathematics and Statistics; Human and Natural Sciences (CCHN) - courses such as Philosophy and Psychology; Legal and Economic Sciences (CCJE) - courses such as Management and Law; Education (CE) - Pedagogy and Rural Education; Physical Education and Sports (CEFD) - Physical Education; Technological (CT) - courses such as Civil Engineering and Electrical Engineering; 2) Campus 2, in the metropolitan region: Health Sciences (CCS) - courses such as Nursing and Medicine; 3) Northern region of the state: Centro Universitário Norte do Espírito Santo (Ceunes) - courses such as Agronomy and Petroleum Engineering; 4) Southern region of the state: Agricultural Sciences and Engineering (CCAEE) - courses such as Veterinary Medicine and Animal Science; Exact, Natural and Health Sciences (CCENS) - courses such as Geology and Nutrition.

⁷ The IES currently offers 103 undergraduate courses and, not to list them all, in most centers only a few courses will be mentioned. It is also worth noticing that several courses are offered in bachelor and teacher-training degrees, such as Mathematics, Chemistry, Physics, Biological Sciences, Geography and Social Sciences, among others.

Teaching Center	PAE/PIC	Drop Out		Dismissal		Graduated		Active	
		F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%
CAr	Participation	61	3.53	228	13.20	624	36.13	814	47.13
	No participation	187	7.47	324	12.93	678	27.07	1316	52.53
CCAÉ	Participation	79	11.13	1	0.14	171	24.08	459	64.65
	No participation	282	17.31	206	12.65	473	29.04	668	41.01
CCE	Participation	147	18.65	9	1.14	117	14.85	515	65.36
	No participation	356	31.48	325	28.74	264	23.34	186	16.45
CCENS	Participation	136	11.14	22	1.80	199	16.30	864	70.76
	No participation	558	23.47	617	25.96	426	17.92	776	32.65
CCHN	Participation	122	5.65	97	4.49	553	25.59	1389	64.28
	No participation	415	10.76	725	18.80	1452	37.66	1264	32.78
CCJE	Participation	144	5.23	149	5.41	819	29.75	1641	59.61
	No participation	616	11.22	1185	21.59	1766	32.18	1921	35.00
CCS	Participation	70	5.30	59	4.47	356	26.95	836	63.29
	No participation	209	7.21	204	7.04	1290	44.50	1196	41.26
CE	Participation	17	6.07	21	7.50	81	28.93	161	57.50
	No participation	52	5.66	59	6.42	422	45.92	386	42.00
CEFD	Participation	16	3.07	61	11.71	182	34.93	262	50.29
	No participation	79	7.89	133	13.29	394	39.36	395	39.46
CEUNES	Participation	240	10.82	54	2.43	302	13.61	1623	73.14
	No participation	880	26.68	748	22.68	686	20.80	984	29.84
CT	Participation	153	10.17	20	1.33	368	24.45	964	64.05
	No participation	296	13.06	266	11.74	732	32.30	972	42.89

Table 3 - Frequency and percentage of dropouts, dismissals, graduates and assets with and without participation in monitoring PAE/PIC by education center, in relation to the total number of new entrants between 2010 and 2019

Source: elaborated by the authors, 2020

When observing the percentage of PAE and PIC records, considering the total number of students (% N), we noticed that CAr and CCE had the highest figures. Distant from any simplistic comparison, it should be emphasized that the reasons for students having difficulties, and, with this, demands for monitoring, may be different among individuals, courses, centers, and university campuses. Therefore, it is necessary, as highlighted by Bardagi and Hutz (2005), that there must be an integrated development of general strategies at the IES strategies as well as specific ones by each teaching unit.

At CAr, a large part of retention and dropout occurs in the final work subjects to complete the course. Thus, one of the projects of the Institutional Academic Support Program

supported by the academic follow-up actions had as objective, the practice of reading and writing in visual arts specifically, addressing concepts and methodologies of research in arts for the construction of textual production in the academic context (COSTA; DIAS, 2020). The CCE, on the other hand, traditionally offers courses with a high rate of dropping out - Mathematics, Physics, Chemistry and Statistics - which is due, in large part, to their complex cognitive content in higher education and to the perception of being difficult to achieve a professional insertion outside the field of undergraduate teaching. A study on dropout in the Chemistry course, for example, shows that one of the factors mentioned by students as a reason for dropping out is the difficulty in the transition of the contents of the area between basic and higher education (CUNHA; TUNES; SILVA, 2001). In addition, the dropout rate is generally higher in courses of lesser social prestige, with expectations of careers with low salaries, such as undergraduate degrees, and difficulties in obtaining a job (ANDIFES, 2019; BARDAGI; HUTZ, 2005).

In addition, Table 3 shows that, among these students monitored academically, the percentage of dismissals is higher in CAR, while the percentage of dropouts is higher in CCE. However, the percentage of monitored and trained students is also higher in CAR. The percentages of students contemplated by the ADA and without dropout are higher in CEUNES and CCENS, both located on campuses in the countryside of Espírito Santo. This information is important because, in the countryside, in addition to adapting to higher education (MATTE; SARTORI; PEREIRA, 2019; SANTOS; MOGNON; LIMA; CUNHA, 2011), acclimatization to life in a new city, often distant from the family, can also contribute to dropout. To intervene in this issue, one of the projects developed since 2016 at CEUNES, for example, refers to welcoming the incoming student, providing information on the functioning of the university and the course, as well as on the organization of the city, public transport and student republics, among others (BRITO, 2019).

Furthermore, in all teaching centers, more than 75% of students accompanied by PAE and / or PIC did not leave their courses, which can be seen by adding the rates of graduates and without dropping out. Thus, as evidenced in other studies, there is a great importance that the IESs prioritize, in their planning, institutional development of monitoring programs in order to intervene in the reduction of the rates of dropping out and academic failure, enhancing the rate of completion of higher education courses (BARDAGI; HUTZ, 2005).

Table 3 also shows that the highest percentage of students who are not monitored by ADA is in the CE. In addition, in this group of students without PAE and PIC, the highest percentage of dropouts, as well as among those monitored, is found at the CCE, a center that also concentrates the highest percentage of dismissals. We emphasize that, among students not accompanied by PAE and PIC, about 50% of them drop out (drop out or are dismissed) in

three centers: CCE, CCENS and Ceunes. This percentage is much higher, compared to the national average of 30%, identified with risk of dropping out from Inep data for 2018 (BRASIL, 2019b). In relation to the Exact Sciences courses present in these three teaching centers, other national studies also indicate alarming data. A study on dropout among students of the Physics course from another Ifes showed an average annual dropout of 55.27% (MOURA; MANDARINO; SILVA, 2020), while another study that analyzed dropout and completion data, in a degree course in Mathematics from a third Ifes, in an interval of 30 years, showed a dropout rate of 80% (BITTAR et al., 2012).

The comparison of the dropout indicative percentages (dropout and conclusion), between students with and without academic monitoring by PAE and PIC, shows that the number of dismissals is higher among unaccompanied students compared to those followed in eight teaching centers (CCAIE, CCE, CCENS, CCHN, CCJE, CCS, CEUNES and CT). In one center the percentages are very close (CAR) and in only two teaching centers this percentage is lower among the monitored students (CE and CEFD). In the analysis of the dropout percentage in all centers, the rate is higher among unaccompanied students in relation to those followed, except for the CE. It is noted, therefore, the contribution of the program, both in staying in undergraduate courses and in its complementary aspect, namely, in reducing dropout.

FINAL CONSIDERATIONS

Data from the academic system of the university, in general analysis and in the majority of teaching centers, allow the perception that students undergoing academic follow-up have a lower dropout rate (dropout and dismissal) and the numbers are also higher among those who still continue studying. However, it must be emphasized that ADA Program is still very recent at the university (three years only) and that, although the initial data are promising, it is necessary to conduct a longitudinal study to verify the effects over the next few years, especially in relation to the conclusion of courses by the students.

In our evaluation, it was of fundamental importance to guarantee the effectiveness of the program, the articulation of the Dean of Undergraduation with the academic collegiate and the competence in which these instances worked together; the establishment of a greater proximity to students; the professors' proposition and development of projects to solve specific difficulties identified in the courses; the constitution of a team with specific pedagogical training, responsible for the orientation meetings, which received suggestions and feedbacks according to their actions and the belief at the university shared with everyone, with the absence or minimization of negative expectations towards the performance students who entered through affirmative actions should have.

Still, in relation to ADA Program, we identified the importance of discussing the different strategies adopted by teaching centers or courses, seeking in contemplating particularities of the training and also the comparison between data from ADA and the previous policy, with monitoring by Study Plan, in order to investigate possible differences among the actions.

The analysis of each teaching center shows differences within the same university, emphasizing the need for special attention to courses from Exact Sciences Center, which presented a high dropout rate. We emphasize that this issue involves not only higher education, but its integration with previous stages of teaching and also with the expectation of a career, explaining the need for actions to be proposed also for entering the university and for its egress students.

In addition to the various studies on dropping out, we highlight the possibility of qualitative research aiming in interviewing the monitored students who completed their courses, graduated in order to understand how they perceive the monitoring results in their trajectories and identifying their potentialities, and not only the difficulties, in the higher education training process. Additionally, we emphasize that future studies can use the qualitative methodology to deepen the understanding about the students' engagement in participating from the program, as well as identify other variables that may be related to the results, such as socioeconomic level, way they have entered the university, socio-historical context in the year of entry.

Finally, we hope that the considerations throughout the article contribute with the field of challenges related to permanence, originated widely from the expansion of higher education in Brazil. We firmly affirm that our commitment as members of public educational institutions, scientifically and socially referenced, must be extended to the democratization of academic possibilities for the conclusion of undergraduate courses.

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