

AFFECTIVITY IN THE PROCESS OF DISTANCE TECHNICAL EDUCATION

Volta Redonda – RJ – Brazil - May 2011

Arnaldo Fonseca Borges - Fundação de Apoio à Escola Técnica - FAETEC –
profarnaldoborges@gmail.com

Salete Leone Ferreira - Centro Universitário de Volta Redonda – Fundação Oswaldo Aranha
- FOA – salete_leone@yahoo.com.br

Simone Fernandes Gonçalves - Instituto Federal de Educação Ciência e Tecnologia do
Rio de Janeiro - IFRJ – profsifernandes@hotmail.com

Rhanica Evelise Toledo Coutinho – Faculdade Sul Fluminense - FASF –
profarhanica@gmail.com

Educational Sector – Technological and High School Education

**Classification of Research Areas in EaD - Level Micro – Teaching and
Learning in EaD**

Nature – Research Report

Class - Scientific Investigation

ABSTRACT

This study aims in general to verify the perception of the importance of affection attached to the teacher-tutors of the Federal Institute of Education, Science and Technology - IFRJ – Campus Nilo Peçanha - Pinheiral / RJ. The proposition starts from the observation of survey data conducted by the School of Business Administration of Getulio Vargas Foundation - São Paulo , about the evasion rate in Superior Distance Education, in which the courses totally distance have higher dropout rate than the semi-presence courses. The hypothesis raised and confirmed in this study was based on the belief that the feature of high school student, who does not know the methodology of distance learning courses and do not have the maturity of graduate students, makes the use of affectivity by the teacher-tutor becomes a key to minimize the number of avoidance. The methodology used was literature research, case studies, qualitative research through interviews with the General Coordinator of IFRJ, dropout data provided by IFRJ and quantitative research using a questionnaire applied to 94 teachers-tutors of the IV Training Course for Educators in Distance Education on February 9th, 2011.

Keywords: distance education; evasion; affectivity

1 – Intro

With the advancement of technology, more precisely, of the Internet, along with the development of Information and Communication "[...] in the context of distance learning it has brought significant changes that go beyond the elimination of geographical distance"^[3], and occurred new possibilities of interaction between students, contents, teachers, access to different media and, especially, dissemination of knowledge.

Although the evolution and the possibilities created by technology are for growth of distance education, there are still many issues to be overcome by this form of teaching, as the case of dropout ^[7], especially at the beginning of the courses offered. Another factor that demands greater attention from teams that spread the knowledge in this area is in the form of treatment that must be given to students avoiding that they feel themselves alone because of the absence of face contact with teachers-tutors, being that, including, one of the reasons for dropout ^[6].

About the treatment of students, an alternative to establish warm and proximity, bases itself on the use of affect. Once relating affect with distance education it may be possible to establish better interaction and exchange, through the experience of feelings such as security, acceptance and respect among its members.

Based on the exposed, this study aims in general to verify the perception of the importance of affection attached to the teacher-tutors of the Federal Institute of Education, Science and Technology - IFRJ – Campus Nilo Pecanha - Pinheiral/RJ, on the IV Training Course for Educators in Distance Education Course (EAD). The proposition starts from the observation of survey data conducted by the School of Business Administration of Getulio Vargas Foundation - Sao Paulo, in 2005, about the evasion rate in higher distance education, in which the courses totally distance have higher dropout rate (30%) than the semi-presence courses (8%). It is believed by the hypothesis that the characteristic of high school students, who do not know the methodology of

distance learning courses and do not have the maturity of graduate students, makes the use of affection by the teacher-tutor becomes a fundamental key to minimize the number of dropout during the course.

2 - Theoretical Foundation

The Information and Communication Technologies boosted the distance education with the Internet, bringing the dissemination of knowledge and democratization. In this regard, ^[1] says aptly: "The incorporation of information and communication technology (TIC) by EAD has made this educational modality more complex due to the following features of digital technology: facilitate the interaction of people among themselves, of people with information available and the technologies in use; expand access to updated information, use search engines and selection of information, allow the register of processes and products, recovery, coordination and reformulation of information; support pedagogical mediation in synchronous or asynchronous processes, create spaces for representation of thought and knowledge production. "

Given this reality, we have the Virtual Learning Environment that leverages the considerations of ^[4], ^[10] as an active process, based on prior knowledge that are being studied. The learner filters and transforms new information, develop hypotheses and make decisions. It is understood that second ^[4], it shows how is the process of learning through distance education course, totally focused on the student, who becomes the craftsman of his knowledge. However, in this scenery, the teacher becomes as important as the student. For ^[6]: "Teachers are as important in this process as students because, depending on their expertise and their affective features, they directly influence the relations among the participants and the results of the whole educational process."

According to ^[6], attention is called towards the affective characteristics that tutors-teachers of distance education mode should possess or develop, because, as the author states, it directly influences the educational process. This process should be built in a space of exchange where there is interaction

and motivation, by the means of constant dialogue between the actors. Strengthens ^[7] " In dialogue practice there is construction of knowledge by both the educator and the learner and this construction is crossed by aspects, not only cognitive, but also affective.

2.1- Affectivity

According to ^[3] affectivity refers to a search. It is possible to obtain a better understanding of this sense looking at the origin of the word Affection - from the Latin *affecare*, that means "go back" ^[7]. ^[2] also substantiates the affectivity like a state of liveliness or mood, feelings, emotions and passions, and always reflects the ability to experience feelings and emotions, since affection influences thought and behavior of the individual. ^[2] states that affectivity gives to life the individual's way of relating and it is through the tone of mood that this person will see the world and reality. However, ^[8] adds that affection boosts human being towards the action and also that is fundamental for him to build actions, and needs to be encouraged, lived, provoked, as a component present in the interaction of the educational context, being able to take the student to search for new knowledge without losing the essence of knowing how to use them for life, in favor of the humans. ^[3] reinforces that by including affection in Distance Education many feelings are encouraged, which can be correlated with students participation when they feel themselves safe and respected for having taken a position about something. According to ^[7]: "In a virtual environment as the teacher maintains a dialogue with their students, through chat rooms, forums, emails, etc Keeping the students' interest alighted and dealing with the texts (messages) in a way that questions need to be faced, but also keeping a line of affection makes them (students) feel part of the process as a whole". As they feel part of the process they realized to be more confident and this tends to produce more and better posture, what helps them to remain on course.

To emphasize the importance of the teacher-tutor in the process of distance education was sought ^[5] definition: "The tutor is the student's closest

figure and the relationship between both groups is always structured in a quite considerable degree of affection." In this conjecture, it is necessary to understand the interrelationships that teachers and students - in the use of NICTs - within a context of teaching and learning can be affected by an essential component to learning: affection.

Therefore, we can look at ^[9] what is up to teacher-tutor do at EaD, motivate students for the course, create great expectations, establish trust and organize the learning process, where the meetings should be pleasant, interesting, engaging, facilitating the whole coming process.

2.2- Evasion

As presented, the role of the teacher-tutor becomes capital, mainly to prevent evasion, which according to ^[7] "[...] the withdrawal of the course, including those who, having enrolled, had never introduced or manifested themselves to colleagues and facilitators of the course, at any time. "

Evasion					
Classes	2009		2010		
	Public Service	Leisure	Public Service	Leisure	Community Health Agent
2009-2010	69,6%	63,6%	-	-	-
2010-2011	11,7%	20%	56,5%	66%	60%

Table 1. Evasion from Technical Courses of IFRJ

It draws attention the numbers of evasion at the initial classes of the Technical Courses in IFRJ, which are between 60% and 69.6% dropout. These numbers, besides to confirm the survey data from the School of Business Administration – Getúlio Vargas Foundation ^[7], 2005, (In EaD the dropout is 30%) it also show the double of the estimated in colleges.

3 - Methodology

The methodology applied consists of literature research and case study of E-Tec Brazil/ Federal Institute for Education, Science and Technology / RJ (IFRJ), qualitative research through interviews with the General Coordinator, documental research about the contents of the Training Course for Educators in EaD, dropout data and quantitative research through a questionnaire, applied individually and personally, along with 94 teachers- tutors, from IV Training

Course for Educators in EaD, on February 9, 2011, with a multiple choice question.

4 - Results Analysis

Tabulation of data from the questionnaire applied along with 94 teachers who attended the IV Training Course for Educators in EaD - IFRJ, which aimed to gather information related to the importance of affectivity in Distance Education Courses on the concepts of those professionals.

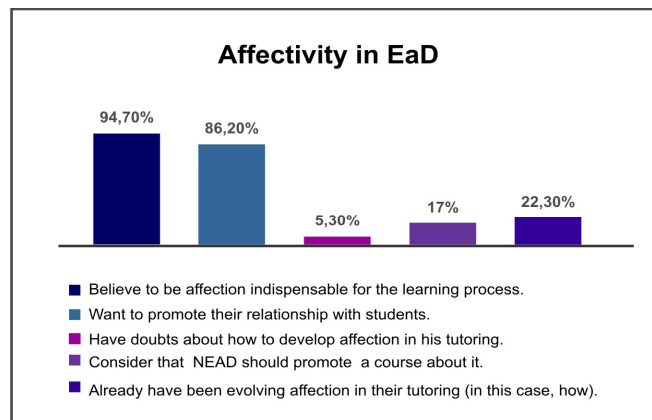


Chart 1. Affectivity in EaD

It was observed that 94.7% of teachers interviewed considered affection as an essential rule for the learning process and 86.2% are willing to promote it on their relationship with students. From those who have already been working in EaD, 22.3%, already evolve affection in their mentoring. Although outnumbered, 5.3% are unsure of how to develop affection and 17% consider important that courses can be performed about the subject. It is observed that numbers did not reach 100%. It is because respondents issued more than one answer.

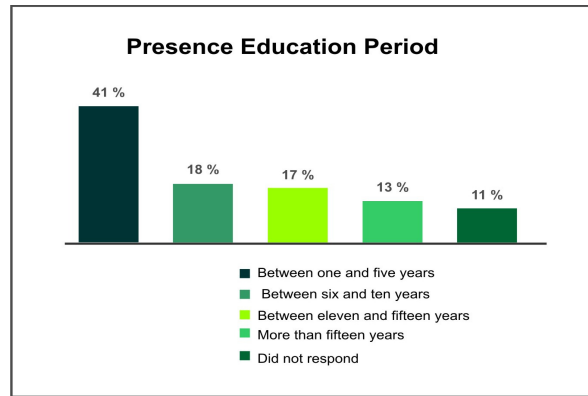


Chart 2. Presence Education Period

Most respondents, 41.4% , have been teaching in “classroom teaching” for between one and five years, followed by 18.1% between six and ten years and 17% have already been teaching for between eleven and fifteen years.

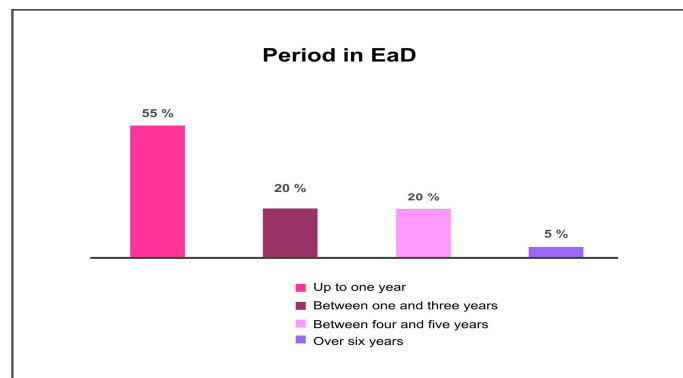


Chart 3. Period of teaching in EaD

In this matter it is clear that in relation to distance education those teachers are in the beginning, because in most cases, 55%, they have had only up to one year of practice. Among the respondents, 20% have already been working as tutors between one and three years and 20% between four and five years.

4.1- Interview with the EaD Coordinator – IFRJ

The history of this case study is based on an interview with Coordinator of Distance Education of the Federal Institute of Education, Science and Technology of Rio de Janeiro – IFRJ, on August 6, 2010. According to her account, the technical courses, in distance mode, semi-presence, belong to

the Program of Brazil Technical Open School System (Brazil E-TEC), established in 2008, from policies programs to expand the professional education of the Ministry of Education. She says there is a monitoring of the 'distance teachers- tutors' by the coordinators and teaching staff to ensure students' participation in the discussion forums, so that they can answer the questions clearly; also to certify whether they sorry about missing those forums when they are a period off or out, or when they do not fulfill their tasks. She emphasizes that affection is also stimulated during the training course for tutors. Another aspect reported by the Coordinator: "The high school students are different from those of EaD graduation, and the Institute's are even more, because most of them have been out of school for a long time and thus they become unsafe". She believes that affectivity contributes greatly for them to be motivated.

4.3- Training Course for Educators in EaD (2011.1)

UNIT	DATE	CONTENTS		
Unit I	Feb 5 to 12	Ambience	Practices at Moodle	EaD
Unit II	Feb 13 to 19	EaD actors	<i>Netiquettes</i>	Affectivity
Unit III	Feb 20 to 26	Moodle	Face meeting	EaD in Brazil
The total workload of the course is 80 hours				

Table 2. Training Course for Educators in EaD - IFRJ

In relation to the contents studied, the item affectivity is in Unit II, sharing the workload with other two subjects.

5- Conclusion

Data from the Federal Institute of Education, Science and Technology / RJ, about evasion, show that rates are very high, between 60% and 69.6%, that is, twice those found in the survey conducted by the School of Business Administration of Getúlio Vargas Foundation.

Regarding the data collected in the survey with 94 teachers of IV Training Course for Educators in EaD - IFRJ, although 94.7% of respondents considered to be essential to have affection for the learning process and 86.2% are willing to apply it, only 17% said consider important that the institution promotes courses concerning affectivity and only 5.3% reported being unsure about how to develop it. Other important data collected from those teachers, show that in

most cases, 55%, they have only one year of practice as teachers-tutors in EaD courses and from the 40% who already act in EaD, 22.3%, employ affection in their mentoring. These data demonstrate that IFRJ, besides the contents taught in the training course, must develop awareness actions, not only for those who are being hired, but also for teachers who have already been working in the institution for some time, concerning to the importance of applying affectivity with the students. On this subject - the teacher-tutor and affection - in accordance with the authors addressed, contextualizing the results found in the survey, it is suggested to the Institute to develop and implement a specific course related to affection or to increase the training course workload, which is now 80h, bringing up a more extensive unit. This measure tends to carry out greater security to teachers-tutors who will be coach theoretically and with examples of practical situations in which affection has made difference to student performance and motivation. Regarding the contents of the interview with the Coordinator of IFRJ, it demonstrates that the institution believes and invests in affection. However, if compared to the results of the responses of 94 teachers-tutors, it is possible to perceive that new actions should be taken as suggested above. Thus, the teaching staff will be able to get further understanding, related to the importance of affection and will tend to employ it more deeply. Furthermore, in relation to the “course levelness” applied by the institute it is believed that dropout rates tend to decrease, therefore it is interesting to make additional inquiries in a near future.

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