The quality of teaching in the midst of the coronavirus pandemic (Covid 19) at a Public University in the Amazon

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ABSTRACT

Distance learning through Virtual Learning Environments (VLE) has grown significantly in the educational scenario, transforming the traditional dynamics of teaching and learning. The Coronavirus Pandemic (COVID-19), which began in 2020, has driven drastic changes in education, forcing institutions such as the State University of Pará to adopt remote teaching to ensure the continuity of academic activities. This study aims to analyze the perception of academics about the quality of remote teaching during the pandemic. The research addresses the necessary adaptations, including the use of video classes and digital platforms, highlighting challenges and benefits perceived by students in this new emergency educational model.

Keywords: Distance learning, Virtual Learning Environments (VLE), Covid-19 pandemic, Educational adaptation, Quality of teaching.

INTRODUCTION

Distance learning through Virtual Learning Environments (VLE) has been gaining ground in the current education market, becoming a teaching model on the rise, enabling significant impacts on traditional education, bringing changes in the way of teaching and learning, both in part of the teacher and the student, thus generating different modes of knowledge production and relationship between teacher and student. Distance learning seeks to integrate and streamline multiple media, languages and the various digital resources that exist in the virtual world, with the objective of developing people's interaction with knowledge in cyberspace (SALVADOR, 2016).

The year 2020 was a watershed in society worldwide pre-pandemic and post-pandemic, a delicate scenario extended in several areas due to the Coronavirus Pandemic (COVID-19), being something new and unknown to face it is being demanded changes in society's behavior, being habits and peculiarities of everyone's life. On January 30, 2020, the World Health Organization (WHO) declared a Public Health Emergency of International Concern (GOV, 2020). In Brazil, the existence of community transmission of COVID-19 was declared in March by the Ministry of Health (2020), in view of this new reality it was

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necessary to make adaptations to continue life, according to the limitations of the current moment, in the area of education, remote teaching was the solution found to continue classes, As schools, educational institutions remained closed to maintain social distancing, at home teachers and students had to adapt, and reinvent themselves to ensure knowledge, several mechanisms were used to record video classes, activities sent by the through social networks, as well as the use of remote digital teaching platforms, who played a leading role in this process (GÓES; CASSIANO, 2020).

During this period, the courses in the area of health also sought better adaptations to continue the classes and not literally stop the studies. In this context, the University of the State of Pará, as well as other universities, educational institutions, academic centers and schools around the world used remote teaching as a way to continue classes.

OBJECTIVE

To analyze the quality of remote teaching in the midst of the Coronavirus Pandemic (COVID-19) from the perspective of academics from the State University of Pará.

METHODOLOGY

This work was developed through a qualitative approach. The qualitative research line states that a phenomenon can be better understood in the context in which it occurs and of which it is a part, so this work will analyze the perceptions of academics from the University of the State of Pará about remote teaching in the pandemic (GODOY, 1995a, pg. 21).

The research application process took place through focus groups in interviews with a semi-structured script. Semi-structured interviews require a script composition with general topics selected and elaborated in such a way to be addressed with all interviewees.

After data collection, the content of the interviews was transcribed and then the content was analyzed, where the words and their meanings, the context in which the ideas were placed, the internal consistency, the frequency and extent of the comments, the specificity of the answers and the importance of identifying great ideas were considered.

Data analysis was performed according to the content analysis technique of Bardin (2009), which organizes them into three phases: 1) pre-analysis, 2) exploration of the material and 3) treatment of the results, inference and interpretation.

DEVELOPMENT

The coronavirus, SARS-CoV-2 first emerged in the southwestern region of China around December 31, 2019, being responsible for the Coronavirus Pandemic (COVID-19) (MARANHÃO &

SENHORAS, 2020). Consequently, the beginning of 2020 was marked by a delicate scenario in several areas due to the Coronavirus Pandemic (COVID-19), which required changes in society's behavior to cope with it. On January 30, 2020, the World Health Organization (WHO) declared a Public Health Emergency of International Concern (GOV, 2020). In Brazil, the existence of community transmission of COVID-19 was declared in March by the Ministry of Health (2020).

Being considered an international public health emergency, it was necessary to make significant changes in all sectors, several actions were adopted to prevail social isolation, through Federal, State and Municipal decrees, being the closure of commerce and schools, the release of activities only that are essential, considered indispensable to meet the needs of the population. Around the world, similar measures have been taken by other countries, as well as the need to rethink strategies and methods for coping with the disease, as well as for the continuity of the school term in educational institutions (FIORATTI, 2020; FIRMIDA, 2020).

Due to the suspension of face-to-face teaching activities around the world, there was a need for teachers and students to migrate to the online reality , transferring methodologies and pedagogical practices typical of the physical learning territories, in what has been called emergency remote teaching. This is an important transition phase in which teachers have made themselves available to learn, record video lessons and use videoconferencing systems, such as *Skype*, *Google Hangout* or *Zoom* , and learning platforms, such as *Moodle, Microsoft Teams* or Google *Classroom.* (MOREIRA; MONTEIRO, 2015).

It is noteworthy that Blended Learning, or better known as *Blended Learning*, refers to a methodology that integrates the face-to-face method, in the classroom and with the teacher's interaction with online learning, using digital technologies to enable access to knowledge with the student's control of time and pace. *Blended Learning* has been seen as the best option for contemporary education, combining technology, autonomy of studies and applied practices (CHRISTENSEN; HORN; STAKER, 2013).

In the current context, in which we are still adapting, it should be noted that society as a whole had a short period of time to learn how to use digital platforms, whose objective is to meet the needs of students in the modality of remote learning. It is noted that there is a need to rethink Brazilian education regarding the new educational technologies available, to improve and associate face-to-face teaching with the online modality in order to contemplate remote teaching (FIORI, GOI, 2020).

Through this study, students reported that distance learning is easy in relation to the student's displacement, since classes can be taught remotely, classes can be scheduled more easily, according to the availability of time of the teacher and students. With this, there is the possibility for students and teachers to connect in different cities, states, countries. Thus, allowing greater access to knowledge and transfer of information.

On the other hand, during remote classes there were difficulties in relation to technological means that negatively influenced student learning, this context is explained in the study by Nascimento et al., (2020), where they point out that there is a significant portion of students, mainly from public education, who do not have the minimum technological resources necessary to follow activities of the remote teaching modality, such as smartphone, notebook and tablet, in addition to the absence of internet and TV signal.

Nascimento et al., (2020), also point out that students who could not study remotely during this period would be at a disadvantage compared to those who could have access to remote learning. The negative consequences are numerous in relation to the removal of these students from educational institutions.

It is analyzed that this group of students most affected are those who are already at a disadvantage in terms of opportunities due to worse economic and social conditions than those of students with access to remote learning (NASCIMENTO et al., 2020).

FINAL THOUGHTS

In view of the present study, it was noted that the pandemic reality brought many challenges, one of them was to attend classes through a screen, without face-to-face contact with the teacher and other colleagues. The environment in which the student is inserted most of the time hinders their learning, and they reported difficulties in adapting to this reality. This reality is in line with the study by Silva et al., (2021), where most of these students are distant, apathetic and unmotivated for studies due to socioeconomic and technological difficulties, linked to the lack of emotional preparation, triggering anxiety, depression and other emotional disorders.

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