



Institutional Factor for Dropout in Higher Education: Analysis of Brazilian Academic Production

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ABSTRACT

The objective of this study is to analyze the scenario of dissertations and theses production on higher education dropout in the year 2000 to 2018, in order to identify and investigate if and how the institutional factor has been pointed out as one of the responsible for the phenomenon of dropout in Brazilian institutions. It's a qualitative research, known as the state of knowledge, resorting to the works in the banks of theses and dissertations of Brazilian Institute of Information on Science and Technology (Ibict) and Higher Education Personnel Improvement Coordination (Capes). We selected 267 dissertations and 32 theses, in which we analyze the titles, abstracts and keywords and, in some cases, there was a cross-sectional reading, involving the introduction and the final considerations. Subsequently, we identified 11 papers, which referred to the institutional factor, on which we performed the full reading. The theoretical framework starts from the perspective of student integration, by Tinto (1975), and Pedagogy of Affiliation, by Coulon (2017). The results indicate that: the main research trend refers to a case study in face-to-face courses of federal universities; dissertations and theses little explore the institutional factor for dropout. It is needed institutional policies for the control of dropout and researches that analyze the institutionalization of these policies in Brazilian institutions are important.

KEYWORDS

Dropout. Access and permanence. Educational policies.

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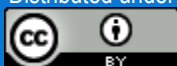
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Fator Institucional Para a Evasão na Educação Superior: Análise da Produção Acadêmica no Brasil

RESUMO

O objetivo do artigo é analisar o cenário da produção de dissertações e de teses sobre a evasão na educação superior no período de 2000 a 2018, com vistas a identificar se e como o fator institucional é apontado enquanto um dos responsáveis por esse fenômeno nas Instituições de Educação Superior (IES) no Brasil. Trata-se de uma pesquisa qualitativa, classificada na literatura como estado do conhecimento. Para a busca de trabalhos, recorreu-se aos bancos de dados do Instituto Brasileiro de Informação em Ciência e Tecnologia (Ibict) e da Coordenadoria de Aperfeiçoamento de Pessoal de Nível Superior (Capes). Foram selecionadas 267 dissertações e 32 teses, em que se procedeu a análise dos títulos, dos resumos e das palavras-chave e, em alguns casos, houve uma leitura transversal, envolvendo a introdução e as considerações finais. Posteriormente, identificou-se 11 trabalhos, que se referiam ao fator institucional, sobre os quais efetuou-se a leitura integral. O referencial teórico parte da perspectiva da integração do estudante, de Tinto (1975), e da Pedagogia da afiliação, de Coulon (2017). Os resultados apontam que a principal tendência de pesquisa se refere a estudo de caso em cursos presenciais de universidades federais e que o fator institucional para a evasão tem sido pouco explorado nas produções acadêmicas em nosso país. Considera-se, portanto, necessária a formulação de políticas institucionais para o controle da evasão, sendo oportunas as pesquisas que considerem o processo de institucionalização dessas ações nas IES brasileiras.

PALAVRAS-CHAVE

Abandono escolar. Acesso e permanência. Políticas educacionais.

Factor Institucional Para la Evasión en la Educación Superior: Análisis de la Producción Académica en Brasil

RESUMEN

Se pretende analizar el escenario de la producción de disertaciones y tesis sobre evasión en la educación superior en el período 2000 a 2018, con miras a identificar si y cómo el factor institucional viene siendo apuntado como uno de los responsables por el fenómeno de la evasión en las instituciones de educación superior brasileñas. Se trata de una investigación cualitativa del tipo estado del conocimiento, recurriendo a trabajos contenidos en los bancos de tesis y disertaciones del Instituto Brasileiro de Informação em Ciência e Tecnologia (Ibict) y de la Coordenadoria de Aperfeiçoamento de Pessoal de Nível Superior (Capes). Se seleccionaron 267 disertaciones y 32 tesis, en las que se analizaron los títulos, resúmenes y palabras clave y, en algunos casos, hubo una lectura transversal, que incluyó la introducción y las consideraciones finales. Posteriormente, se identificaron 11 producción, que se referían al factor institucional, en el que se realizó la lectura completa. El marco teórico comienza desde la perspectiva de la integración estudiantil, por Tinto (1975) y la Pedagogía de afiliación de Coulon (2017). Los resultados apuntan que: la principal tendencia de investigación se refiere al estudio de caso en cursos presenciales de universidades federales; el factor institucional para la evasión ha sido poco explotado en oportunas las investigaciones que analicen el proceso de institucionalización de esas políticas en las IES brasileñas.

PALABRAS CLAVE

Evasión. Acceso y permanencia. Políticas educativas.

Introduction

From the 2000s on, Brazil experienced a period of strong expansion in the possibilities of entry into higher education. With public incentives, government implemented actions, favoring an exponential growth in the number of students who entered the undergraduate courses of Higher Education Institutions (HEIs). The programs that stood out were: Student Financing Fund (Fies), 1999; University for All Program (Prouni), 2005; Open University of Brazil System (UAB), 2006; Federal Network of Professional, Scientific and Technological Education, 2008; University Program: Expand to the size of Brazil, 2004; and Program of Support for the Restructuring and Expansion Plans of the Federal Universities (Reuni), 2007. Also, the restructuring of the higher education system can be mentioned with the adoption of programs such as the Unified Selection System (Sisu) and the Quota Law (Law n.º 12.711/2012), which although not focused on expanding vacancies, enabled ways to diversify the socioeconomic profile of newcomers.

According to data from the National Institute for Educational Studies and Research “Anísio Teixeira” (Inep), in 2000 the number of students enrolled in Brazilian undergraduate courses was 2.694.245. In 2017, this number jumped to 8.286.663, which represents a growth of 207,60% in the period.

In this context of expansion, some phenomena acquire notoriety in the academic trajectory due to walking against the objectives provided for in educational policies. Among them, dropout, understood as the student's departure from the entrance course without completing it, is present in the higher education system as a whole. From the data reported in the Higher Education Statistical Synopses, published on Inep's website, it is possible to calculate the general average of dropout in the country's undergraduate courses¹, which in 2016 reached the rate of 22,83%. This number is similar to that found by Silva Filho *et al.* (2007) in the context of the first half of the 2000s, as the average was 22% between 2000 and 2005.

When analyzing the guidelines of the national policies of access and permanence in higher education, there is a mobilization in order to keep the student in the course of admission and to enable him the respective academic formation. For example, Decree n. 7.234/2010, which instituted the National Student Assistance Plan (Pnaes), intended to expand the conditions of stay of young people in federal public higher education. In addition, Normative Ordinance n. 25/2010 established the National Student Assistance Plan for State Public Higher Education Institutions (Pnaest) and provided for investments for the student's stay in state HEIs. These actions are in line with the National Education Plan (PNE) 2014-

¹ The methodology used for calculation is the same as that used by Silva Filho *et al.* (2007): $E(n) = 1 - [(M(n) - I(n)) / (M(n-1) - (C(n-1)))]$ where, $E(n)$ = annual dropout of courses or set of courses (in year n); $M(n)$ = enrollment (in year n); $I(n)$ = new entrants (in year n); $M(n-1)$ = enrollments from previous year n ; $C(n-1)$ = graduates of the year preceding n .

2024, since this document mentions the expansion of inclusion policies and student assistance in higher education.

The literature records the phenomenon of dropout as result of three factors: the individual, the internal to the institution (institutional factor) and the external to the institution (social factor) (BRASIL, 1997; TINTO, 1975). In this regard, according to Kipnis (2000, p. 110), HEIs, especially universities, “[...] should turn inward and increasingly need to know themselves and have research backing for the institutional decision-making process”. In this sense, the perspective focused on what institutions, within their autonomy, do to understand and control dropout becomes an important aspect for academic investigations.

Given the above, the aim of this paper is to analyze the scenario of the production of dissertations and theses on dropout in higher education from 2000 to 2018. In addition, the paper intends to identify if and how studies mention the institutional factor as one of the responsible for this situation in Brazilian HEIs. The period chosen is justified considering that the literature discusses the phenomenon of dropout more incisively as from 2000, and includes analyzes carried out until 2018, when the conclusion of the period of disclosure of the data can be considered in the bibliographic databases used in the present investigation².

This is a qualitative research known as the state of knowledge, which allows a broad view of scientific productions “[...] and a sequence that allows interested parties to understand the evolution of research in the area, as well as its characteristics and focus, in addition to identifying the remaining gaps (ROMANOWSKI; ENS, 2006, p. 41)”. This type of study has as its central purpose the mapping of works already carried out with the same theme, in order to justify the gaps that the researcher is proposing to fill in his research (VOSGERAU; ROMANOWSKI, 2014).

There are other states of knowledge in the literature, with general analyzes of dropout in higher education. Among them are: Santos Junior and Real (2017), who searched for dissertations, theses and articles produced between 1990 and the beginning of 2015, indicating the most researched categories about this phenomenon; Morosini *et al.* (2011), who analyzed a documentary corpus composed of 7 works produced from 2000 to 2011 and published in qualified journals with the Qualis system of the Higher Education Personnel Improvement Coordination (Capes); and Baggi and Lopes (2011), who presented a literature review on dropout in the context of institutional evaluation, which is the result of a dissertation that will be analyzed in this article.

These works do not focus on the institutional factor to control dropout, and this aspect is important to understand a relevant facet of the phenomenon, given the discussions already raised in the literature (KIPNIS, 2000; TINTO, 1975). Thus, the current study complements

² The graph 01 illustrates the distribution of the number of papers containing the research period.

the states of knowledge cited and proposes to contribute to the realization and expansion of researches that take dropout as an object.

For the investigation of academic works, we used the Brazilian Digital Library of Theses and Dissertations of the Brazilian Institute of Information on Science and Technology (BDTD/Ibict) and the Catalog of Theses and Dissertations of Capes. The search took place in October 2018, and afterwards, in April 2019, we selected other papers published in the databases in the last months of 2018. Using the descriptors “evasão”, “evasão educação superior” and “permanência estudantil”, we identified a corpus of analysis of 299 researches, among them: 267 master's dissertations and 32 doctoral theses. For the selection, we considered the title, the keywords and/or the abstract, and, when necessary, the introduction and the final considerations, collecting for analysis the productions that studied the phenomenon of dropout in higher education from any research perspective. Initially, we present the data broadly, seeking to show the growth of productions in the period considered and, for further discussion, we found that 11 studies analyze the institutional factor more clearly³. Regarding these, we proceeded with the full reading.

The theoretical framework comes from Tinto's (1975) conceptions of student integration and Coulon's (2017) pedagogy of affiliation, as they contribute to the understanding of the importance of considering the institutional factor for dropout. Although a multicausal process, the analysis from the perspective of the institution becomes relevant considering that the institutional specificities as well as local actions to control the phenomenon may be favoring the success in the academic trajectory, making it appropriate to understand from dissertations and theses how this process happens.

In addition, we seek to answer the following guiding questions: How is the scenario of the production of Brazilian dissertations and theses about dropout in higher education between 2000 and 2018 presented? How have the researches produced in this period approached the institutional factor as one of those responsible for the dropout in higher education?

The article contains three sections. The first one aims to present theoretical assumptions from the perspective of integration and student affiliation (TINTO, 1975; COULON, 2017). The second one shows the scenario of academic production on dropout in higher education, based on the dissertations and theses found. In the third section, we seek to verify the approaches given to the institutional factor as one of those responsible for dropout.

³ As an additional criterion, for the selection we considered the studies that studied the dropout not only in one course, but covering the set of classroom courses of one or more institutions, or those that dealt with a broader analysis of the phenomenon.

Precursors for Delineating the Institutional Factor for Dropout: Student Integration and Affiliation

Although, in Brazil, the discussion about dropout in higher education intensifies from the analysis period considered in this article and the phenomenon is characterized by multi-causal factors, there are studies conducted internationally that address previous theories and establish useful models for understanding the importance of the institutional factor.

Still in the 1970s, Vincent Tinto, American researcher, elaborated an explanatory longitudinal model for the various nuances that involve the aspects of permanence and student abandonment in higher education. Tinto's model, published in 1975, addressed issues relating to student integration. For the author, it is a determining factor in decision to leave or remain in the institution of admission. When the individual does not feel sufficiently integrated with the academic environment, there is the possibility of giving up continuing the course that entered. Similarly, when the institution does not act to favor this integration process, the problem of dropout may intensify.

For Tinto (1975), the course involving the student's trajectory begins before entering higher education, given that their individual characteristics, especially family influences, previous schooling, their abilities and skills contribute to the decision to remain or dropout. Understanding that the ways and causes for dropout are diverse, the author highlights two movements as preponderant.

In a first course, he considers the individual student questions. Following their entry, particularities regarding their commitment to achieve their own goals will influence intellectual development and academic performance. In turn, these aspects, linked to mechanisms of academic integration, establish new commitments and contribute to the decision to stay in the course, in the institution or to dropout.

In the second way, there are student commitments to the institution as important aspects, which are essential for determining levels of interaction with other people, which may be the classmates themselves or from other courses, as well as teachers, staff and other individuals related to educational life.

Such paths intersect and give the dropout phenomenon a multicausal feature. However, Tinto's contribution to the discussion of this paper lies in his argument about the institutional responsibilities for integration and the student's success towards completing the course he has entered. For the author, it is necessary for institutional managers to know the educational expectations of individuals who enter the higher education system, in order to broaden the understanding and control of dropout. In this sense, the promotion of actions that contribute to the integration of the student with the social-academic environment enables their involvement in daily practices of the institution, which, in Tinto's perspective, reduces the chances of dropout.

With another approach, there is in the literature the discussion inherent to a student affiliation in the institution, being Alain Coulon, French researcher, an exponent author for the discussion, which assumes that the biggest challenge is not in the means of entry to the university, but in the student's stay until the end of the course (COULON, 2017).

As highlighted by the theorist, the possibility of permanence involves an affiliation, in other words, a process that goes through three stages: the time of estrangement, the time of learning and the time of affiliation. The first period, the period of estrangement, occurs early on and involves ruptures with pre-entry issues. There is, in this sense, the overcoming related to the beginning of a new phase in the formative process, which goes through emotional, intellectual, cognitive issues, as well as inherent to institutional aspects, with a view to entering a new environment, with characteristics, norms and differentiated socializing. The learning time, in turn, refers to the first year of the course, a cut in which there is the adaptation of the individuals to the new context to which they insert themselves, and should understand that there is a new routine and it will be necessary to formulate strategies to exercise the student's craft. If this process impairs itself, it opens the way for the possibilities of dropout, that is, not adapted enough, the student may decide to abandon the course. Finally, the time of affiliation encompasses a period of maturity in which the academic understands and starts to act according to institutional rules, as well as creates an intellectual autonomy that allows him to establish strategies for success in the course.

In this process, to become effective, the student is not the only one with responsibilities. The institution needs to establish measures that support it and consider its potentialities. Therefore, it is necessary that HEIs establish a pedagogy of affiliation, seeking ultimately to allow academic support so that students can exercise a student's craft and achieve the desired under graduation.

Affiliation, in this context, is a result from the student's integration with the institution. After all the steps to create a sense of belonging and the student integrates yourself into the academic-social milieu, he/she moves towards affiliation. As highlighted by Coulon (2017), an affiliate acquires a new social status, moving into a more demanding and challenging teaching context. Who is not integrated and, therefore, unaffiliated, tends not to remain.

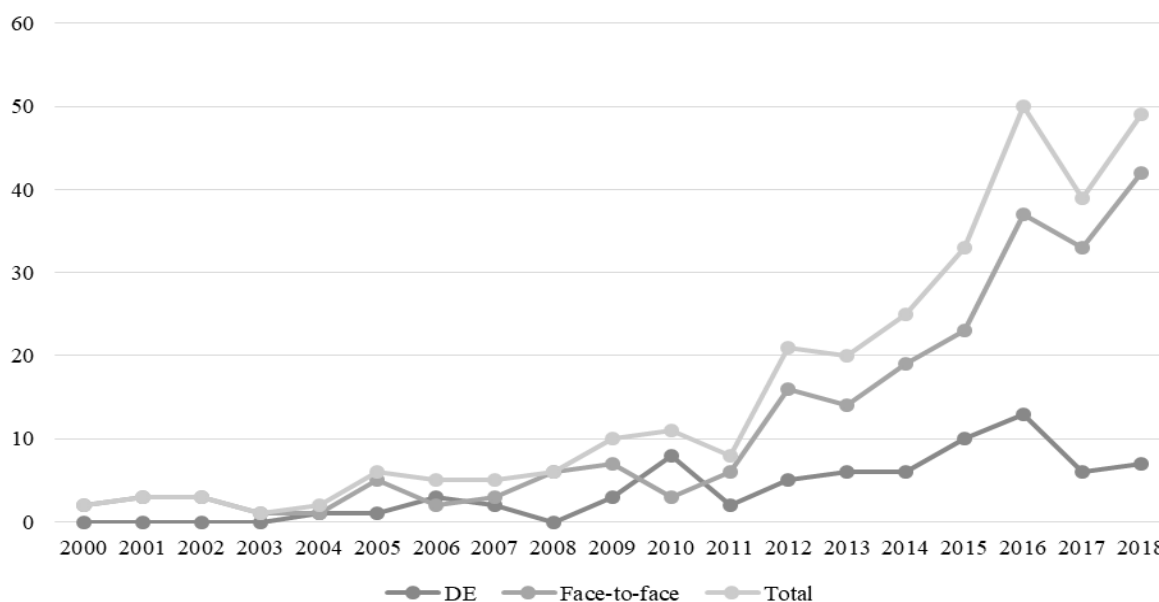
In this sense, HEIs must assume for themselves multiple responsibilities that allow new entrants the necessary means to carry out a process of integration and affiliation, at the risk of failing in their mission. Although they articulate with circumstances beyond the institutional competences, institutions actions contribute to the student's permanence and, as a result, control the dropout. Understanding the way of their insertion in national studies helps to improve investigations on the subject, and can even contribute to the development of institutional policies aimed at controlling dropout.

The Scenario of Academic Production on Higher Education Dropout From 2000 to 2018

Interest in studies that address the dropout process has increased prominently in national educational research. In the investigation, we observed there is a significant growth in the number of dissertations and theses studying the phenomenon, especially in the most recent period, revealing changes in the incipience of studies Silva (2013) attested.

Between 2000 and 2009, 43 studies had dropout as the object of analysis. From 2010 to 2018, this number was 256, which shows an increase around six times more studies investigating the situation under some focus, considering both the face-to-face undergraduate courses, as well as those offered in the distance modality.

Graph 01. Evolution of the number of Brazilian dissertations and theses on dropout in higher education from 2000 to 2018



Source: Own elaboration from the collected productions.

The scenario of expansion of higher education is associated with this evolution of work. The period of growth arranged coincides with the moment of greater effervescence of higher education in the country, with the implementation of expansion policies formulated for the public and private sectors, a process that allowed the transition to a mass system in Brazilian higher education⁴ (GOMES; MORAES, 2012; TROW, 2005), now serving diverse

⁴ According to Trow's classification (2005), a higher education system can be: elite (when it has net enrollment rate up to 15%; mass (when the rate is 16% to 50%); or universal access (when the rate exceeds 50%) Gomes and Moraes (2012) start from the gross enrollment rate and defend the thesis of the political construction of a mass system in Brazilian higher education from 2003, when the volume of enrollment exceeds 16%. According to data from the PNE Observatory, in 2019 the net enrollment rate is 21,5% and the gross rate is 44,4% (Available at: <https://www.observatoriodopne.org>. Accessed on: December 10, 2019).

socioeconomic groups. The most intense jumps in the number of works shown in graph 01 start to occur from 2011, reaching a higher peak in 2016 and 2018.

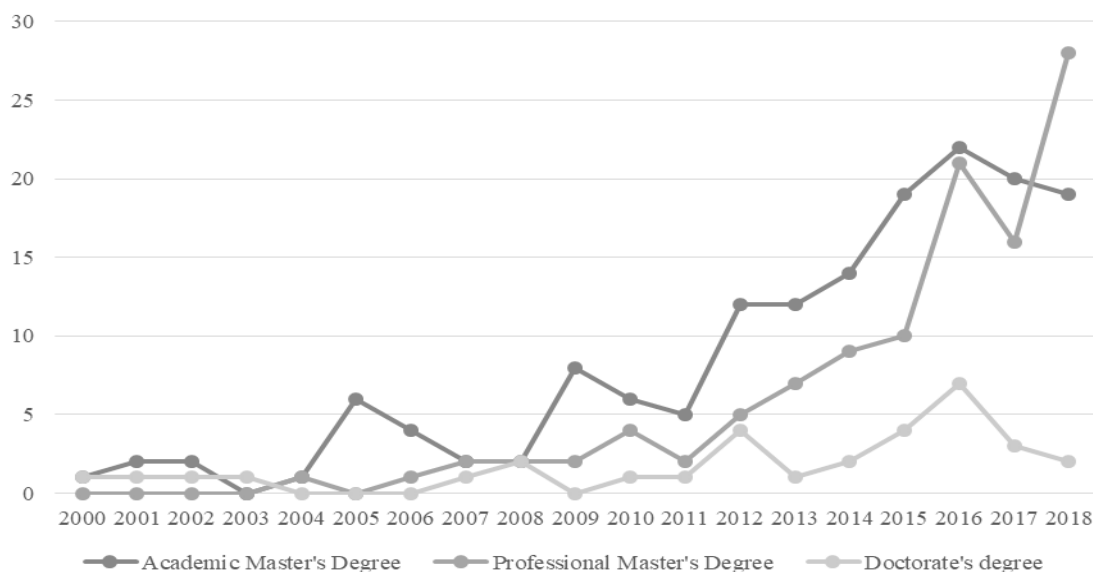
This relationship reveals the contradictions inherent in the expansion of higher education. Although the number of students who have successfully entered has evolved exponentially, there is a tendency for academic trajectory phenomena to expand. That is, as the process of students entering higher education intensifies, phenomena such as dropout, prolonged permanence and failures in curriculum components tend to evolve (SANTOS JUNIOR, 2016; ADACHI, 2017). Dropout becomes a strategic theme for research, especially case studies, with a view to understanding the characteristics of the phenomenon and proposing alternatives for its mitigation.

Although Distance Education (DE) has intensified as a teaching modality, especially since the creation of the Open University of Brazil System (UAB) in 2005, the graph 01 shows concerns about the phenomenon of dropout have been superior in face-to-face undergraduate courses, indicating that the dropout in DE is poorly studied. In total, 226 studies analyzed dropout in face-to-face mode and 73 focused on DE.

Another pertinent issue to highlight is relationship between the growth of work on dropout and process of postgraduate expansion in Brazil. In the period of highest elevation (2011-2018), shown in Graph 01, the number of *stricto sensu* graduate courses has evolved considerably. In 2011, the country had 2.738 academic master's degree, 338 professional master's degree and 1,615 doctorate's degree⁵. In 2018, the number increased to 3.636 master's degrees, 838 professional master's degrees and 2.381 academic doctorate's degree. The largest proportion of growth is observed in the context of professional master courses (147,93%), accompanied by academic doctorate (47,43%) and academic master courses (32,80%).

Professional master's degrees, in particular, have contributed to the growth of dropout studies. Analysis of the number of works produced under these courses over the years can reinforced this finding. Graph 2 shows the number of dissertations and theses related to academic master's, professional master's and doctorate's degrees per year.

⁵ Information collected on the Sucupira Platform website. Available at: <https://sucupira.capes.gov.br/sucupira/>. Accessed on: Apr. 05 2019.

Graph 02. Number of Brazilian dissertations and theses by level of origin in the period 2000 to 2018

Source: Own elaboration from the collected productions.

There is a growth in the number of works over the years, as already observed in Graph 01. However, Graph 2 shows the significant expansion of works from 2011 onwards occurs more intensely in the context master's, especially professionals. This data shows the process of postgraduate expansion, particularly of professional master's degrees, was favorable to the study of dropout, especially because one of the proposals of these courses is the analysis of problem situations in the institutional context. Dropout, as a phenomenon contrary to what the guidelines for higher education foresees, becomes evident and prominent in the field of academic research of postgraduate programs.

When comparing the works focused on face-to-face higher education, there is a greater number of studies referring to public institutions. From 227 works studying dropout in the face-to-face undergraduate courses, 70% chose public HEIs as research locus; 26% analyzed private HEIs; and 4% made a more general analysis, covering both public and private HEIs.

Although dropout in the private segment is higher, it is in relation to the public sector there is considerably more research on the subject. Private HEIs, according Silva Filho *et al.* (2007), use 2% to 6% of income for attracting new students through marketing strategies. By contrast, for authors, institutions that invest in measures to keep students already enrolled are rare. Therefore, national researches don't explore, yet, good prospects for further investigation into the phenomenon of dropout in private HEIs, while they give the greater attention to the public sector.

One aspect that associates with this finding is the fact there are more masters and doctorate courses in public universities (CIRANI; CAMPANARIO, SILVA, 2015), which

may be justifying the interest in conducting research taking into account their own institutions in which they operate.

Regarding classroom teaching in public HEIs, federal universities, as loci of analysis, concentrate the largest number of works (70%), followed by federal institutes (15%), state universities (14%) and municipal universities (1%).

Such data show a certain disproportion in relation to the research interest. This is another research perspective that deserves investigations. Case studies, with the purpose of understanding the phenomenon of dropout and contributing to the proposition of measures for its control, are pertinent to the individualized institutional contexts. Just as the dropout studies explore little private HEIs, state and municipal HEIs do not make up the academic analysis on dropout, which shows there are gaps in studies on these administrative categories.

Regarding the research focuses of the localized works, the outlined scenario shows there is a concentration of studies analyzing the case of one or more courses in the same institution (50,44% of the works), as well as research addressing other focuses, main ones being: intervention proposal and/or mechanism to understand dropout (7,52%); student assistance/stay policies (6,19%); predictors of dropout (5,75%); affirmative actions (3,98%) and academic trajectory (3,98%). Other investigations are diluted in other diverse issues, namely: study of dropout in more than one institution; dropout at Prouni and Fies; study of dropout in the Brazilian context; evaded profile; failure, retention and dropout; dropout and financial impact; registration locking; regional development and dropout; Sisu and dropout; avoidance measurement methodologies; Gather and dropout; dropout and gender; dropout, permanence and democratization of higher education; institutional factors associated with dropout; vestibular performance and permanence; dropout and student commitment; dropout and vocational behavior; dropout from the economic point of view; dropout and institutional assessment; bioethics and avoidance; dropout of course, institution and system; dropout and institutional costs; dropout in the international context; life project of the evaded; dropout and working student; and dropout and psychoanalysis.

In this sense, because it is a process of several interfaces and studied by different areas of knowledge, it is possible to visualize diversification of themes related to the study of dropout in dissertations and theses. For Alberti and Pereira (2018, p. 282), dropout, as a multifaceted and complex phenomenon, can be treated “[...] from various perspectives, whether by education, economics, psychology or sociology. Each will emphasize certain dimensions of the issue without exhausting the subject”. Therefore, although there is a relevant diversification of approaches in the dissertations and theses found, there are still unexplored facets of the phenomenon.

From the scenario observed throughout the section, the recurrent profile in academic papers on dropout in higher education is a case study referring to classroom course (s) in federal universities. However, there are still gaps, since although the studies already carried

out present results and analysis to understand the phenomenon, the general dropout data are still expressive. As noted in the introduction, the overall average for 2016 was 22,83%, slightly higher than that obtained by Silva Filho *et al.* (2007) for the years 2000 to 2005 (22%). However, if we considers local studies with calculation methodologies by institutional data from the academic trajectory, the institutional dropout data is approximately twice that indicated; or, for some areas, for example, the exact sciences, the dropout percentages are higher (above 50%) (SANTOS JUNIOR, 2016; LIVRAMENTO, 2012; ADACHI, 2017).

Although there are common causes for dropout (MOROSINI *et al.*, 2011), local characteristics also need to be considered to better understand the phenomenon and to define control strategies. In this sense, one cannot lose sight of the fact that the origins of dropout involve individual, institutional and social aspects. Regarding the daily life of institutions, individual and social factors, in a way, are beyond their control, compelling them to invest in institutional measures in order to compensate for losses due to other factors. As will be discussed later, studies focusing primarily on institutional factors are still incipient. The next section explores how authors delineate them in Brazilian dissertations and theses.

The Institutional Factor in Academic Research on Higher Education Dropout

The dropout in higher education is a complex and multidimensional process, characterized by several factors, differentiated and, at the same time, related. Beyond the external issues (individual and social aspects), the look from within the institutions acquires relevance to the understanding of academic phenomena. Research with this dimension of analysis has the potential to contribute to the formulation and implementation of institutional or national policies (KIPNIS, 2000).

Although initially a total of 299 works were found, that analyzed the dropout in some aspect, 11 of them (10 dissertations and 1 thesis) were chosen for full reading and further discussion, because they have, more clearly, focus on factors internal to the institutions.

The selected works address not only the institutional factor, but also contemplate diverse causes for the phenomenon. Regarding the factor discussed in this article, the researches are similar to each other, although they deal with different institutional realities.

Most investigations configure themselves as case studies, analyzing dropout in a single institution (SOUZA, 2017; RODRIGUES, 2012; LIVRAMENTO, 2012; FIALHO, 2014; CARVALHO, 2017; PALÁCIO, 2012; SOUZA, 2016). The other authors sought to understand broader issues, namely: dropout in the set of institutions (VOOS, 2016); dropout in Brazilian higher education (RAMOS, 2013); and literature review on dropout (SILVA, 2014; BAGGI, 2010).

The dissertation by Souza (2017) aimed to measure the dropout percentages and understand the reality of the phenomenon in face-to-face undergraduate courses at the Federal

University of Goiás (UFG). The author assumes that the factors contribute to the occurrence of dropout are academic-institutional, socio-political-economic and personal. As a result, she observes the socio-political-economic factors are the most cited as causing the phenomenon. However, she concludes the academic trajectory defines itself by a social point of view, but receive influence of the relationships defined in the academic environment and in the spaces occupied by students.

The academic-institutional factors, in this sense, are pointed out by the researcher as influencers in the occurrence of dropout, relating “[...] to the deficiencies of the Institution as an educational service provider, that is, of an academic order, such as structural problems, curricular deficiencies and teaching and administrative limitations” (SOUZA, 2017, p. 31).

When questioning incoming students at UFG about important actions for permanence, Souza (2017, p. 72) identified three answers most cited by them, in order of priorities, were: “monitors to assist in the subjects”, “cultural and art programming” and “sports and leisure”. Besides these actions, other factors the author mentions as important to favor the permanence in the university, such are “[...] questions related to the course, such as practical classes and offering a good structure by the University”.

It is possible to notice from the author's work that the actions cited by the academics, for the most part, escape the context of the broader assistance policies created by the government at the national level. In this sense, the results of his research indicate the institutional factor has a relevant weight for student permanence, inferring it compels the institution to formulate and implement its own measures to control dropout.

Dissertations of Rodrigues (2012), Livramento (2012), Fialho (2014) and Carvalho (2017) also point out actions to control dropout based on institutional policies.

Rodrigues' dissertation (2012) aimed to raise the dropout rate of the State College of Sciences and Letters of Campo Mourão, as well as to investigate the reasons that led to the abandonment.

The main causes pointed out are: the didactic-pedagogical questions of some teachers and the lack of conditions to encourage the student's permanence in the HEI. Rodrigues (2012) warns these are factors related to the institutional context, dealing with internal aspects of the institution, which own management mechanisms can control them. The author considers, although dropout can occur for personal reasons, it is important that its occurrence is not due to motivations the institutions could avoid.

In this regard, it is possible to consider that the institution needs to take precedence over the occurrence of the dropout phenomenon. That is, knowing part of the responsibility for non-permanence of the student belongs to the HEI, it needs to be aware the aspects of its functioning and its organization are determinant for the student to finish the course. Internal mobilization for the implementation of continuous dropout control policies has the potential to improve the management process and favor permanence.

Such policies may pervade diverse issues involve the entire institutional dynamic. Livramento (2012) focused on verifying the institutional point of view through the registration, observation, relationship and analysis of dropout as well as other phenomena arising from academia. As a result, she pointed out as control measures: the dissemination of the courses offered by the institution, especially in places where information is not easily reached; the offer of vacancies conditioned to the reality of working students, with leaner curricula; the increase of vacancies at night; the creation of courses whose need for professionals is required by the labor market; teachers' awareness of the importance of undergraduate teaching to promote better relationships between teachers and students.

Fialho (2014) also presents some indications of measures to contain dropout from the reality of the Federal University of Paraíba (UFPB). The objective was to study the dropout in the UFPB face-to-face undergraduate courses, trying to identify the manifestations in the period from 2007 to 2012 and what their impacts on the university management.

For the author, the institutional failure exists when the institution cannot keep the student until the end of the course, which covers several issues, “[...] from the teacher who could not exercise the role as a teacher, to the programs and plans established by HEI for not fulfilling the institutional mission of training its students ”(FIALHO, 2014, p. 51).

The measures pointed by Fialho (2014) to minimize dropout in the context of the analyzed institution are: the dissemination of the courses; the application of socioeconomic and cultural questionnaire at the time of enrollment, with the intention of identifying the profile of the student entering the institution's courses; the application of a questionnaire at the beginning, middle and end of the semester, with the objective of evaluating the satisfaction, dissatisfaction and expectation of the academic during the semester; student follow-up by the institution; the formation of a team responsible for identifying possible causes of course locks, transfers and cancellations; the creation of the figure of tutor teacher; the flexibility to change shifts by students; the restructuring of the curriculum, with the reduction of its rigidity and the use of disciplines in case of change of course.

Carvalho (2017) points some of these actions out. The author sought to describe the institutional factors associated with the phenomenon of dropout, analyzing the case of the Federal Institute of Education, Science and Technology of Goiás (IFGO), based on data extracted from the Higher Education Census. He verified to what extent the percentages of dropout in the institution studied were associated with the variables: course shift, course duration, type of institution, curriculum flexibility, pedagogical support, educational public policies and institutional evaluation. The results showed, for the case study, there are actions of pedagogical support and broader educational policies, such as the Pnaes, which the author indicates as important to control dropout. But for the other variables, Carvalho (2017) concludes they were not significant.

With biases more focused on student assistance through financial resources, the dissertations by Palácio (2012) and Souza (2016) bring contributions pointing to the need for

articulation between assistance policies and government resources, with those that can be formulated itself in the institutional level.

Palácio (2012) analyzed the actions, mostly of welfare nature, implemented at the Federal University of Ceará (UFC), considered by the author as essential for the student's permanence, namely: cost aid program; housing aid and university residence programs; sports incentive program, pedagogical and/or psychological student support program, medical/dental assistance; and university restaurant program.

In this sense, student assistance comprises a mechanism to consider. It is necessary to offer academics the means to have their social demands met by the institution, eliminating the dropout due to lack of financial resources to complete the course, as argued earlier by Livramento (2012).

Souza's dissertation (2016) went in a similar direction to the dissertation of Palácio (2012), however, she analyzed the student assistance policy for student permanence at the Federal University of Paraná (UFPR), from 2010 to 2014. The author considered the policy established in the institution studied, based on a national action such as the Pnaes, allows the offer of better conditions for the student with socioeconomic fragility to remain in the University. However, it is relevant to articulate this policy with other actions in order to enhance the permanence of the academic.

In this regard, we believe student assistance policies, such as those created for the public institutions (Pnaes and Pnaest), although their objective is to reduce dropout rates, cannot in themselves fulfill your mission. The phenomenon of dropout is multifaceted, not limited to the issue of economic vulnerability of students. In the conception of Recktenvald, Mattei and Pereira (2018, p. 420), the variables affect the issue of student permanence “[...] are much more numerous than a simple cause and effect relationship between Pnaes and dropout, for example”.

In this context, it is necessary to consider the institutions have the potential to go beyond the limits of the assistance policies and create a student support perspective with the formulation of their own policies that complement the broader actions and assist in the integration and affiliation.

We can apprehend the relationship between welfare policy and institutional action from the dissertation of Ramos (2013). The author analyzed the determinants of dropout in Brazilian higher education, taking as reference the year 2010. She performed a statistical analysis, using data from the Higher Education Census, to verify how individual and institutional factors influence the decision of the student in dropout.

Among the variables studied, the researcher points out “[...] the student who participates in some type of complementary training activity and who has scholarship or student funding is less likely to drop out” (RAMOS, 2013, p. 80), which are the aspects with

the greatest impact on reducing the probability of dropping out. The author indicates participating in such activity and receiving scholarship or student financing decreases the probability of dropout by 12,6% and 14,9%, respectively.

Ramos (2013) considers a joint effort between the government and the institution is necessary, so the academic adapts to the institution and reaches its formation. Furthermore, she argues combating dropout should be more than “[...] establishing strategies that avoid the socioeconomic waste involved in the issue, but mainly represents investment in policies to promote equal opportunities (RAMOS, 2013, p. 86)”.

Tinto’s (1975) and Coulon’s (2017) perspectives associate with this finding. The student, when integrated and affiliated with the institution, will tend to stay and complete the entrance course. That is, when the university provides conditions for the student to feel well related and formulates diverse institutional policies contemplate the realities experienced by the close individuals, increases the chance of achieving full access of the student, which enables the it enters, remains satisfactorily in the system and obtain its formation (SILVA; VELOSO, 2013).

This relationship between broader policies and institutional actions verifies itself in Silva's dissertation (2014). Based on bibliographic research, the author aimed to verify the outstanding aspects with respect to dropout, as well as to investigate the policies established by the State and the HEIs aimed at student access and permanence in higher education.

As a result, Silva (2014) indicates some factors associated with dropout, including: financial difficulties; high failure rate; uninteresting, outdated and poor quality teaching methodologies; poor faculty and administrative engagement in student retention; lack of student grants; poor basic educational structure; lack of concern of HEIs in analyzing/apprehending dropout factors.

As the work of Ramos (2013) already pointed out, Silva (2014) considers it is necessary to formulate institutional policy from the recognition of its own reality, based on the identification of the community needs the institution welcomes. The purpose of such a policy, in addition to meeting the internal demand presented, would be to help the student remain until the end of his/her course.

Voos’ thesis (2016) also brings relevant contributions in this regard. The author aimed to investigate, within the scope of the Community Universities part of the Santa Catarina Association of Educational Foundations (Acafe), the institutional policies of student permanence, in undergraduate courses, in the period 2009-2014.

The author discussed the need to include in the agenda the institutional policy focused on student permanence. In addition to welfare policies, the creation and implementation of institutional actions would favor the educational process, ensuring the completion of the course by university students. In this sense, for Voos (2016), it is necessary to break with the

bias of welfare and guardianship, being essential to establish means for the prevention, intervention and monitoring of higher education students, based on ensuring the right to education as a commonweal.

In this direction, the dissertation of Baggi (2010) aimed to discuss the production of studies on dropout in higher education in the BDTD/Ibict, focusing on institutional evaluation as a possibility to create programs to combat this phenomenon. For the author, the assessment of the institution is active for all members of the academic community and holds a privileged view of the university. Therefore, it could be a mechanism with broad capacity to contribute to the academic and administrative processes, acting on the correction of goals and objectives. In this sense, it could help in the anticipation of institutional procedures to avoid the occurrence of dropout.

Thus, based on the results of Baggi (2010) and the weighting of Kipnis (2000), it is argued that institutions would need to know themselves, in order to identify internal problems and propose programs for the improvement of undergraduate and, consequently, enable the student to complete the admission course.

The findings pointed out in the analyzed studies make it possible to infer the actions for student permanence formulated by the federal government for public higher education configure themselves as relevant measures for student permanence. However, as they have a general character, prioritizing assistance focused on the economic vulnerability of students, such measures do not consider the particularities of each institution, which should be contemplated by their own policies, from the understanding of the phenomena of the academic trajectory from the inside of HEIs. Institutions, in turn, can exert influence on social groups that enter higher education (ROCHA, 2005), contributing to the entrance, permanence and respective academic formation (SILVA; VELOSO, 2013).

Given the results obtained in the studies analyzed, it is clear institutions can consider and implements some actions, such as: curriculum flexibility; didactic-pedagogical teacher training program; dissemination of undergraduate courses to schools of basic education; concern with the integration of the student with the university environment; policy of systematic monitoring of students' academic trajectory; identification of the level of satisfaction of the students during their stay in the course; pedagogical support actions to the student; cultural, leisure and further training activities; program that addresses the cases of multiple and consecutive failures, among others.

Thus, as result, we found there are few discussions in Brazilian dissertations and theses about the institutional factor for dropout, but discussions located bring relevant data for better understanding of the phenomenon, as well as indicating the ways that can be successful for the formulation of institutional policies. Most of the investigations analyzed are case studies, showing there are still incipient researches that include systemic and broad analyzes of institutional aspects for dropout in Brazilian HEIs.

Final Considerations

There is a growing production of dissertations and theses on dropout in Brazilian higher education. The scenario presented shows the number of papers elaborated has followed the processes of expansion of undergraduate and postgraduate studies, which reveals dropout has become a research trend in Brazilian masters and doctorate courses.

Academic investigations focus more on the study of dropout in face-to-face courses at federal universities. Researches use other institutions, both public and private, as loci, as well as works referring to the DE. However, there are still little explored research perspectives, especially when involving the field of private, state and municipal HEIs.

Although there is a wide diversification in the focus of analysis in dissertations and theses localized, academic researches little explore institutional factor related to dropout. However, studies present analysis in this regard have similarities among themselves in attributing importance to this factor as one of those responsible for dropout. Such researchers also point out possible institutional causes for the phenomenon and strategies for the formulation of internal policies, which may support future investigations on the subject.

We considers it is necessary to institutionalize, within the scope of the HEI, a policy focused on the control of dropout and, consequently, on the expansion of the possibilities of permanence and completion of the course. However, the creation of isolated or generic actions is not enough. The process requires different strategies for the policy to be part of the routine within the institution and culminate in the reduction of dropout percentages observed in data released from national investigations.

Studies about process of institutionalization of these policies in Brazilian HEIs are timely and may contribute to the field of educational policies, as they would help to understand, in a systemic and individualized way, how the phenomenon of dropout has been behaving in different locations in the country, and to see how the HEIs reacts to it.

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