

The possible relationship between SiSU and evasion in the first semesters of university courses

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ABSTRACT

This study aims to understand the dynamics established between the Unified Selection System (*Sistema de Seleção Unificada*) and the evasion, from the strategies of choice of the course, the nature of the motivations and the expectations regarding higher education, with students of the interdisciplinary bachelor of science and technology, health, humanities and arts of Federal University of Bahia (*Universidade Federal da Bahia*), which were introduced in 2016. The research adopted the design of an exploratory study, with a quantitative and qualitative approach, using an online questionnaire, developed solely for this purpose and discussing the results from the qualitative analysis. It should be noted that students use various strategies of choice during the Unified Selection System, but use interdisciplinary bachelor, mostly, as a gateway to vocational courses. Three motivational aspects were found for admission to the university: perceived social support, personal motivation and the job market. As for expectations, students expect to enjoy more of Federal University of Bahia and its benefits than the course itself.

KEYWORDS

evasion; higher education; Unified Selection System; interdisciplinary bachelor; professional choosing.

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A POSSÍVEL RELAÇÃO ENTRE O SISU E A EVASÃO NOS PRIMEIROS SEMESTRES DOS CURSOS UNIVERSITÁRIOS

RESUMO

O estudo tem como objetivo compreender a dinâmica estabelecida entre o Sistema de Seleção Unificada e a evasão, mediante as estratégias de escolha do curso, da natureza das motivações e das expectativas em relação ao ensino superior, com estudantes dos bacharelados interdisciplinares de ciência e tecnologia, saúde, humanidades e artes da Universidade Federal da Bahia, ingressantes em 2016. Adotou-se o delineamento de estudo exploratório, com abordagem quantitativa e qualitativa, utilizando questionário *on-line* desenvolvido unicamente para esse fim, sendo discutidos os resultados provenientes da análise qualitativa. Destaca-se que os estudantes recorrem a diversas estratégias de escolha pelo Sistema de Seleção Unificada, mas utilizam o bacharelado interdisciplinar, majoritariamente, como porta de entrada para os cursos profissionalizantes. Foram encontrados três aspectos motivadores para ingresso na universidade: o suporte social percebido, a motivação pessoal e o mercado de trabalho. Quanto às expectativas, os estudantes esperam usufruir mais da Universidade Federal da Bahia e de seus benefícios do que do curso em si.

PALAVRAS-CHAVE

evasão; ensino superior; Sistema de Seleção Unificada; bacharelado interdisciplinar; escolha profissional.

LA POSIBLE RELACIÓN ENTRE EL SISU Y LA EVASIÓN EN LOS PRIMEROS SEMESTRES DE LOS CURSOS UNIVERSITARIOS

RESUMEN

El objetivo del estudio es comprender la dinámica establecida entre el Sistema de Selección Unificado (*Sistema de Seleção Unificada*) y la evasión escolar, a partir de las estrategias de elección del curso, de la naturaleza de las motivaciones y de las expectativas en relación con la enseñanza superior, con estudiantes de los bachilleratos interdisciplinarios de ciencia y tecnología, salud, humanidades y artes en Universidad Federal de Bahia (*Universidade Federal da Bahia*), ingresando en 2016. Se adoptó el delineamiento de estudio exploratorio, con abordaje cuantitativo y cualitativo, se utilizó un cuestionario online, desarrollado únicamente para ese fin y se discutirán los resultados provenientes del análisis cualitativo. Se destaca que los estudiantes utilizan diversas estrategias de elección durante el Sistema de Selección Unificado, pero utilizan el bachillerato interdisciplinario, mayoritariamente, como puerta de entrada a cursos profesionales. Se encontraron tres aspectos motivadores para ingresar a la universidad: el soporte social percibido, la motivación y el mercado laboral. En cuanto a las expectativas, los estudiantes esperan usufructuar de la Universidad Federal de Bahia y sus beneficios más que el curso en sí.

PALABRAS CLAVE

evasión; enseñanza superior; Sistema de Selección Unificado; bachillerato interdisciplinario; elija profesional.

INTRODUCTION

Brazilian higher education has been studied and discussed in its different aspects for some decades and as rapid social changes pose new challenges, discussions keep being renewed.

In recent years, the expansion of the capacity of students in Brazilian higher education is a goal that requires a lot of effort and investment. Expanding the participation of young Brazilians in the university is an urgent and imperative need. In 2005 we had an embarrassing inclusion rate for young people between 18 and 24 years old, in higher education of 11.5%, one of the lowest in Latin America (Neves, Raizer and Fachineto, 2007). In the 2017 Higher Education Census, we reached a rate of 19.7%, a much more comfortable position, guaranteeing the expansion and democratization of access to higher education, but not yet ideal for a country with our gross domestic product (GDP) of 2.93 trillion dollars in 2019, making it the seventh largest economy in the world.

If, on the one hand, we move forward in overcoming a difficult problem, on the other hand, we are faced with other equally worrying situations: adjustments in teaching methodologies to serve a public with characteristics and needs very different from the public that traditionally had access to higher education, the expansion of the physical structure of universities, and, mainly, the difficulties in maintaining students, especially those considered socially vulnerable. Although these difficulties can, to a large extent, be associated with the causes of dropout in the Brazilian universities, they are insufficient to explain the problem of dropout itself.

Dropout in higher education is not a new phenomenon. There is great difficulty in controlling and reducing these rates and, in Brazil, in particular, it has been increasing in recent years, reaching 49% in 2015, according to the Census of Higher Education (Brasil, 2015).

One of the factors that can influence dropout rates is the ways of access to universities. Once that the expansion of enrollment capacity at university results in selection processes that offer greater or lesser ease of access, and this can facilitate the entry of more immature students who are still insecure about their professional choices. The Unified Selection System (*Sistema de Seleção Unificada* – SiSU), for example, created in 2010 through normative ordinance no. 2 of January 26th, by the Ministry of Education (*Ministério da Educação* – MEC), aimed to unify the selection process for entering Brazilian higher education. The process has a dynamic functioning that allows the candidate to have access to all Brazilian universities that choose SiSU as a selection method. Thus, candidates can make changes in the process of choosing the undergraduate course, insofar as they check their classification over a week (deadline stipulated annually by the MEC), according to the points obtained in the National High School Exam (*Exame Nacional do Ensino Médio* – ENEM). The choice based on this process ends up falling into the undergraduate course in which the amount of points obtained in ENEM was sufficient for their classification, producing, as a result, the entry of young people into the university without the vocation for the courses they chose.

In 2009, the Federal University of Bahia (*Universidade Federal da Bahia – UFBA*) created a new type of undergraduate course: the interdisciplinary bachelor's. Idealized as the first cycle of university education, interdisciplinary bachelor's would be an alternative to minimize the problem of professional choice, as young people would access the university in one of these courses and, only later, when more mature, they would choose a professional degree. This type of undergraduate course was created to try to remodel the university structure with regard to its access and objectives. Students start the first phase of three cycles, being able to cover different paths during their academic trajectory: go to the second cycle through a professional course; proceed to the third cycle through a postgraduate course (master's or doctorate); or even complete the first cycle and join the job market with a higher education degree.

Interdisciplinary bachelor's courses, thus, should have an effect on the professional choices of students enrolled in higher education, whose main characteristics would be the freedom to choose and organize their university education, discussing and exploring possibilities, until deciding on a course of a professional character (from the second cycle). Therefore, the possibilities offered by the specificities of a course such as an interdisciplinary bachelor's degree could promote not only the link with the institution, but also link with professional groups, establishing the necessary conditions to support the student's academic trajectory. Thus, the interdisciplinary bachelor's would correct the situation created by the SiSU way of access, allowing students to reorient their choice with time, reducing dropout rates, as Tinto (1975) defends. Do students perceive the bias produced by SiSU regarding their professional choice and seek interdisciplinary bachelor's degrees as a way to correct or minimize this problem? In other words, is the choice of interdisciplinary bachelor's understood as a first step that would enable students to make choices, at a later moment, in a more mature and consistent way through a professional university degree?

This work aimed to understand the mechanisms used by students enrolled in the interdisciplinary bachelor's to access universities through SiSU. Understanding the strategies used to choose the interdisciplinary bachelor's, and the nature of students' motivations and expectations in relation to their chosen undergraduate course and higher education, will be important to come up with ways to intervene in the first semester of courses to reduce dropout rates.

In addition to this introduction, this article has a theoretical basis, which will address the effects of SiSU in higher education and the concept of dropout. Next, the methods and procedures used to carry out the research are explained, and finally, the results and conclusions.

Since the 1980s, the selection process to access Brazilian higher education has been discussed and, since then, it has undergone significant changes. These discussions, as pointed out by Santos (2013, p. 63), "in addition to recommending more autonomy to the institutions to carry out the process, also exposed its fragility as a democratizing agent".

Over time, the entrance exam ended up favoring just a portion of the population, comprised of the upper-middle and upper economic classes, due to having

access to the best elementary and high schools, in addition to the preparatory courses for the entrance exam. Santos (2013) also indicates that the creation of exams such as the entrance exam would require arduous preparation of the student to achieve the necessary grades and that not everyone could afford this process financially.

In part, SiSU appears as a response to the consequences of the old entrance exam, in a context of expansion and democratization of higher education, in an attempt to establish education as a public good (Dias Sobrinho, 2013, p. 109). SiSU, therefore, is the computerized system, managed by MEC, through which public institutions of higher education offer the possibility to candidates participating in ENEM, a test carried out for the whole of Brazil on the same date and which can be used for different purposes, such as high school evaluation, as a selection criterion for scholarships from the University for All Program (*Programa Universidade para Todos – ProUni*), for admission to public high education institutions (HEI), to prove completion of high school or to obtain some type of student financing (Brasil, 2010).

In a way, the SiSU has positive aspects, such as, for example, more chances of accessing higher education, better use of the enrollment capacity from the various participating universities, but on the other hand, it also has negative aspects, such as, for example, small interest or motivation from students, and a high level of dissatisfaction during the course chosen. As Backes (2015, p. 81-82) indicates, the dynamics of choosing SiSU allows mobility between universities and courses, especially for students who were unable to get approved in their first option. However, this dynamic can generate administrative and pedagogical disorders for HEI, since a significant portion of applicants end up choosing the course whose score in ENEM allowed them access to, without the necessary interest and motivation to pursue it.

HEI are now dealing with already known events, though they were not so expressive, such as the difficulty in filling their enrollment capacity even in the most popular courses, being necessary to issue multiple calls for candidates. A brief analysis of this scenario in the years 2015 to 2017, at UFBA, shows that it may be necessary to make up to five calls, even for competitive undergraduate courses, such as engineering, law, medicine, and psychology.

The study by Carvalho and Oliveira (2014, p. 110), with undergraduate courses at the Federal University of Mato Grosso do Sul (*Universidade Federal de Mato Grosso do Sul – UFMS*), also points in this direction when it states that:

[...] there are cases of up to sixth call, for students who did not make the first choice for a Degree in History and UFMS, seem to be more susceptible to dropping out. This has been reflected in dropout rates in a shorter period of time, even in the first academic semester.

From the candidates' point of view, having multiple call lists means ease of entry, after all, they are called to occupy vacancies that will probably not be filled. Perhaps for this reason, candidates may be under the impression that, at any time they wish to, they will be able to join higher education and, therefore, they do not see a problem in joining a course that they did not intend to join and without

expecting that this course will carry out professionally and, as a result, will not be motivated to pursue it to the end. According to Vieira (2010, p. 164), this situation may be at the base of the

[...] reorientations, changes in the undergraduate course, transfers which delay the school path, that is, which translate into experiences institutionally defined as “failure” or “abandonment”, but which are subjectively appreciated by their protagonists as an experimental discovery of itself. The non-sequentiality of school paths, far from being experienced as “failure”, can therefore represent a step in the search for personal fulfillment.

This moment can be understood as an experimentation or as an exploratory behavior, according to the definition of Teixeira, Bardagi, and Hutz (2007), who consider it to be an important behavior in the maturation of the student’s self-concept and vocation.

According to Pereira (1996, p. 23), from an institutional point of view, this period of confirmation of choice can be classified as a time of “fluctuation” or “mobility”, which is when students leave the undergraduate courses, but remain at the university. In fact, a part of these students, dissatisfied with the choice they made, switch courses at the same university. However, another portion leaves the university, which may mean migration to another institution or even abandoning the undergraduate course, thus characterizing dropout.

The “dropout” concept is the subject of complex analyses by different authors and, in the educational environment, there is still little consensus. As Andrade (2014, p. 70) shows, “the concept acquires variable interpretations according to specific interests and visions, shaped by priority and distinct actors that act directly in this process”.

Originally, the dropout concept, according to Santos and Silva (2011, p. 252), meant escape, avoidance, and diversion, but it can be understood as disengagement, failure, abandonment or giving up. The authors bring the idea that “disengagement” and “failure” refer to the malfunction of teaching and is one of the possible reactions to the environment and its contingencies. While the terms “abandonment” and “giving up” are related to individual decisions, that is, the terms refer to the different factors that lead to dropout and precisely for that reason, their use is not neutral in the field of higher education (Santos and Silva, 2011).

In a historical analysis of dropout, Andrade (2014) presents a scenario in which the theme starts to be treated as failure or something negative, but then, dropping out starts to be understood, by some authors, as a possibly necessary step in the trajectory of these students in search of an answer about themselves (Santos and Silva, 2011; Teixeira, Bardagi and Hutz, 2007). It is interesting to note that the discussion on dropout, in most of the studies presented so far, begins before the creation of SiSU; however, this new selection system has expanded the possibility of experimentation and universities, which did not have structures to deal with this phenomenon, find themselves in a situation of difficult management.

Still, on the difficulty in defining what dropout is, Andrade (2014, p. 70-74) reinforces the diversity of perspectives on the subject and says that the term dropout is used in different contexts as if referring to the same phenomenon. Nevertheless, it is not possible to treat school and higher education dropout in the same way. In this same sense, within higher education, dropout is also understood in different ways, however, some authors, such as Castro and Teixeira (2013, p. 200), try to work with the dropout ideas of undergraduate courses or universities, which is, respectively, when students migrate from one course to another within the same institution or when they migrate from the institution without necessarily changing courses and, finally, with system evasion, when students simply move away from the higher education system.

Regarding the reasons that result in students' dropping out, Castro and Teixeira (2013, p. 202-205) systematized some important factors that are useful for analyzing this phenomenon and that will be grouped here into categories named according to the objectives of the work, in order to make the understanding didactic.

Initially, there is the category of personal motivation, which includes motivation for the success and accomplishment of academic tasks, and persistence and commitment to the goals established by students themselves, such as obtaining a higher education degree.

The second category can be understood as the institution's power of influence. Part of this category is the commitment that students have with the institution and that involves trust and satisfaction with regard to the choice of both the institution and the undergraduate course. In addition, there are institutional factors that involve the availability of resources that favor students' permanence, such as the conditions for financial support and benefits, the form of selection, the difficulty in accessing, and even the prestige of the institution.

In the third and last category, the social support perceived by the student during his choice process is grouped, which involves the support or not of family members and peers, and social engagement, which means determining whether the feeling of belonging to the university environment and the quality of the relationships established in that place are favorable for the establishment of affective bonds, factors that act in the dropout decision by students.

In an attempt to explain the phenomenon, Tinto (1975) presents a model, based on Durkeim's theory of suicide and economic cost-benefit theory, highlighting two elements as important predictors of dropout: the link of belonging to the university and the prospect of social gain or rise with the profession. These two aspects are strictly related to students' access to higher education, more specifically to the experiences in the first semesters of the course.

Thus, there are many reasons for the dropout. Some already known and well-studied, others, however, need better understanding. It is certainly a complex problem and cannot be perfectly explained without considering its multiple causes. In addition, the situation changes with time and the difficulties experienced by one generation can change completely in the next generation. In such a way that the elements considered to cause dropout for students joining a given year, may lose their strength to students joining the following year. Still, understanding the strategies

used by students to join higher education, as well as knowing their motivations and expectations in relation to the chosen course will be important to understand the dynamics of dropout, and to seek solutions to this serious problem.

METHODS

To achieve the proposed objective, the research adopted the design of an exploratory study, using mixed methods, as defined by Creswell and Clark (2013), but for the purposes of this article, only the results from the qualitative analysis will be presented and discussed.

In order to compose the desired sample for the study, all students joining the interdisciplinary bachelor's degrees (science and technology, health, humanities, and arts) at UFBA, were selected in the academic year of 2016. After the project of research being presented and authorized by the director of the Institute of Humanities, Arts and Science, and technology, the students' emails were provided by the academic course coordination. In this way, students were contacted via e-mail and invited to participate in the study.

Those who responded positively to the invitation were automatically directed to a completely anonymous online survey and, after reading the consent form presented and agreeing to participate in the study, they obtained access to answer the questionnaire. From the total number of respondents, students who did not choose interdisciplinary bachelor's as their first option during SiSU were selected, that is, those students who were unable to get approved in the initially desired undergraduate course.

The instrument used, developed especially for this purpose, was a questionnaire that, after the validation stage, was made available online. The questionnaire, consisting of 11 multiple choice questions, was divided into two parts. The first part, with five multiple choice questions, sought to find out, about students' history, whether they had already completed another degree or participated in other selection processes, and whether the interdisciplinary bachelor's was their first choice, or an alternative depending on the score obtained in SiSU. The second part, with six multiple choice questions, with three of these questions having the space for open answers, explored the choice strategies used during SiSU and also the motivations and expectations in relation to the current undergraduate course and higher education. In the open questions, the participant could write freely in a space provided, if the answer options previously presented were not enough.

In total, 1,270 e-mail invitations were sent out, and 205 students answered the survey, which is equivalent to 16.14% of the total. After answering the first questions and going through the first stage, which served to select the desired sample, the final number of 128 (10.1%) questionnaires answered was reached.

Open and closed responses were analyzed qualitatively, seeking to identify the relationship of respondents with the chosen undergraduate course, motivation, and future expectations regarding university education.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Regarding the choice of the undergraduate course through SiSU, 62.44% of respondents (n=128) said they were not in the program they wanted. Therefore, they chose the interdisciplinary bachelor's as an alternative to join higher education, according to the points obtained in ENEM. If this relationship is true for the other students, approximately 5,000 people, the proportion of students who had access to these undergraduate courses as dissatisfied and repentant is rather large.

In the second part of the questionnaire, the strategies these students who made an unwanted choice used during SiSU were explored, in addition to what were their motivations for entering higher education and what their expectations regarding the chosen undergraduate course. The three questions that dealt with these subjects were multiple-choice, making it possible to mark more than one alternative from a list with possible options, in addition to an "Other" space, which enabled personal answers for those who did not feel contemplated by the previous options.

In the following sessions, the respondents' statements are found, we use "Q+n" to identify the questions and "R+n" for the respondents, example: question 1, respondent 2 – Q1R2.

STRATEGIES FOR CHOOSING A DEGREE

When analyzing the open answers to the question about which strategies were used during SiSU, we found a diversity of realities and paths chosen by these students that, thus, justified their choice. Some of these answers refer to the doubt about which course to choose and, in this case, the interdisciplinary bachelor's is seen and used as a possibility to answer their indecisions:

Actually, as I wasn't sure about wanting to take the Social Communication course, I chose to take the interdisciplinary bachelor's for science and technology because I thought I might want something else in another area. (Q9R8)

I used the interdisciplinary bachelor's as a preparation and identifier if I really wanted to take on chemical engineering or psychology. (Q9R9)

It is observed that the interdisciplinary bachelor's fulfills an objective clearly foreseen in the project to create these courses, namely: to enable the student to experience university life, to join the institution and, only later, to choose a linear progression (professionalizing) course, that would be the objective of a next stage in the academic trajectory. In linear progression courses, the closer contact with the areas of professional practice, places students, from an early age, in a position to confirm their professional choices, sometimes resulting in the course being abandoned because they do not realize the possible alternatives to join the job market, based on what is presented to them at the university.

On the other hand, respondents seek the interdisciplinary bachelor's as a gateway for a particular degree program or practice area they want or, at least, to get closer to that goal, as exemplified in the words of a respondent.

I took ENEM as a test, because I had never done it before...I passed SiSU, in the interdisciplinary bachelor's health course...and since it is already within the area I intend to study, I decided to try it and venture out. (Q9R6)

Another factor highlighted for these students to opt for the interdisciplinary bachelor's program is its differentiated pedagogical proposal, which allows greater curricular freedom for students within the university:

I was accepted by the IFBA [Federal Institution of Bahia] (*Instituto Federal de Educação, Ciência e Tecnologia da Bahia*) in electrical engineering and in UFBA in science and technology interdisciplinary bachelor's. The proposal of the interdisciplinary bachelor's and the university itself made me decide for this course I am now. (Q9R1)

In other words, students had to manage their decisions to achieve what they want, whether using the interdisciplinary bachelor's in an instrumental way, as a way to access the university (a first step to join a high competition course), or trying to get closer to the area or subject who is most interested, handling this, which is characterized as an exploratory behavior, in the search for information and knowledge about oneself and about the university environment (Teixeira, Bardagi and Hutz, 2007).

Even given the instrumental character of the previous strategies, the curricular structure of the interdisciplinary bachelor's can be useful in this type of situation. However, the proportion of 32% (n=25) of students who are on the waiting list for another course, hoping to qualify, and thus leave the IB, is large. These can dropout the interdisciplinary bachelor's at any time if they are called to the other undergraduate course they wanted.

One of the respondents, still on the strategies used, responds in the option "Other" that their choice was a direct result of a problem faced during SiSU, saying that:

The SiSU rule of not changing between options 1 or 2, due to the lack of signaling and obtaining this information in an intuitive way, harmed me, because I had been accepted in my desired course in the 2nd option and I couldn't change it, which was extremely frustrating. (Q9R2)

Despite finding answers like the one mentioned above, in relation to a problem of understanding about the functioning of SiSU, the results indicate that a considerable part of students are preparing for SiSU, thinking about what choices should be made, resulting in more conscious strategies, and this is a process that can lead to a reorientation of the path and even a longer path, a process that can

be counted as a dropout, but that makes students the protagonists of their own personal accomplishment, as pointed out by Vieira (2010, p. 164).

Finally, 15% (n=19) of the respondents chose to be approved regardless of the undergraduate course and the university. For these students, the challenge of staying in the undergraduate course and at the university must be even greater, after all, they joined in so as not to miss the opportunity of access, without having created any commitment to the institution or the course, a phenomenon already studied by Castro and Teixeira (2013). In this case, students would be subject to abandon or give up as a form of dropout, their decision would be based on personal issues and not necessarily with the university structure and its contingencies (Santos and Silva, 2011, p. 255-256).

MOTIVATION

Based on the answers, the question about motivation can be grouped into two of the categories from the study by Castro and Teixeira (2013), which are the perceived social support and personal motivation, in addition to a third grouping, the result of the answers themselves, which it is the influence of the labor market. Thus, the first aspect to understand the respondents' motivation for entering and staying in higher education deals with the students' individual desire to develop themselves.

The open responses explain the existence of a personal motivation directed toward academic formation; for personal, academic, and even social development, as for example, by saying why they decided to join higher education:

I want to acquire more mature knowledge that allows me to improve as an individual and as a professional. (Q10R2)

Personal fulfillment. (Q10R8)

Complementarity. I already have other degrees. (Q10R15)

I want to change the world, positively. (Q10R23)

Then, the family appears as a great motivator for joining higher education in the responses of the students surveyed, either to improve the economic condition of them all or because they want to give them pride. Combined with family motivation, obtaining the recognition and support of other people in the social circle of these students, as well as the encouragement of friends who have already joined the higher system, results in the social support perceived by students during their time of choice and dropout. The role of family members and peers is a factor present in the stability of the academic path, as highlighted by Castro and Teixeira (2013, p. 202-208).

Among the written responses, the one that best exemplifies these aspects, was the narrative transcribed below:

My greatest desire and aptitude is to deepen my studies on the sciences of humanities since elementary school, in addition to having been educated and raised in a society with the idea that I should get into higher education if I wanted to be “successful” or to have a “good life” and not having many other opportunities to invest in a future outside higher education. (Q10R17)

Regarding the influence of the labor market on the academic path, Santos and Silva (2011, p. 256-257) draw attention to the fact that these students often seek independence from their families and that work competes with obtaining a degree, making students choose one of the two paths and weaken his trajectory, resulting in the system dropout.

In addition, other students reinforce the great need to access the university and the influence of the labor market when deciding on their life trajectories:

The best way to join the job market today. (Q10R22)

Because in order to be able to have a life considered “nicer” in this country, it is almost mandatory to join higher education. (Q10R16)

Not having a degree is not easy in Brazil. (Q10R6)

It is possible to perceive that among students, there is the perception that higher education is the easiest way to the job market and to survive, and that there is widespread psychological pressure on Brazilian society to obtain a higher education degree. This is one of the factors that can help to understand why so many students choose to take an undergraduate course they did not plan, a phenomenon enhanced by the possibilities offered by SiSU.

It is clear, then, that family and friends are given external reasons for joining the university, the closest people, therefore, exert influence on students’ decision. On the other hand, the desire to qualify, to develop attributes such as independence, personal fulfillment, and social status, and to seize opportunities, even if it does not exactly match what was planned, constitutes the personal motivation of the students surveyed.

Finally, there is the perception that the job market has demanded increasingly qualified professionals and that not only the degree, but also the prestige of the university institution, lead to an easier way to join this market. Hence the perception that obtaining a university degree is mandatory for those who desire professional success. Still, it is worth remembering that the job market is an unstable variable in the motivation of students to choose the undergraduate course, as it depends heavily on the country’s economic situation.

EXPECTATIONS

The third and last question analyzed allowed to investigate the expectations regarding interdisciplinary bachelor’s courses that students are taking. The answers found give greater confidence in the findings of the previous question, on motiva-

tion, demonstrating that students really hope to join the job market, that is, there is the idea, among students, that obtaining a degree is a guarantee of employability.

This idea is reinforced by the respondents when they speak openly about this question, saying that when they join the interdisciplinary bachelor's, they expect:

Having a job if I can't surf professionally. (Q11R7)

Having no problems joining the job market. (Q11R10)

The perception that obtaining a university degree contributes to employability has a real basis when checking the data organized by the Center for Management and Strategic Studies (*Centro de Gestão e Estudos Estratégicos – CGEE*), which in 2016 published a broad study on the situation of Brazilian masters and doctors in the job market. The data collected indicate that, in 2014, the proportion of masters and doctors who had formal jobs was, respectively, around 65.8 and 75.5% (CGEE, 2016 p. 117-160).

In addition to the interest in the job market, there is also an interest in joining professional courses in the second cycle of education, a topic that is an important issue for interdisciplinary bachelor's students, especially for those who want courses with greater social desirability and competition, like Medicine, Law or Psychology, some statements help to understand this situation, when students say they expect:

To be admitted into the medical course. (Q11R2)

Switch to the course I really want. (Q11R4)

Another important aspect to be considered is that these students have more general expectations that go beyond the limits of the course and extend to the university, which means that part of the students' expectations could be met in any other university course, it would be enough to just enter a university, for example, the expectations of enjoying the benefits of being a university student, having the opportunity to exchange or establish networking with people in their areas of interest.

On the other hand, a part of the answers about the expectations for the interdisciplinary bachelor's comes to fill the gap found until then, which is the motivation specifically in relation to the interdisciplinary bachelor's, saying that when participating in the interdisciplinary bachelor's, they expect to:

Take advantage of the opportunity to gain knowledge about the multiplicity of topics that the interdisciplinary bachelor's in Humanities offers and consequently know a specific branch in the area of humanities and social sciences to specialize and guarantee a stable profession in the job market. (Q11R5)

Learn a lot from the freedom that the interdisciplinary bachelor's provides. (Q11R7)

Of the respondents, 69% (n=87) of them hope to obtain in-depth knowledge on a given topic, that is, they believe that the undergraduate course will be able to promote interdisciplinary study on a topic, but that they will also have the opportunity to deepen it. These last answers, open and closed, resume the commitment to the undergraduate course, treated by Castro and Teixeira (2013), as a factor of great impact on the stability of the academic path, however, there are still few responses that follow this path.

CONCLUSIONS

In summary, this study allowed to identify and understand some of the strategies used by students of interdisciplinary bachelor's courses at UFBA to make their choices through SiSU and how their motivations and expectations are related to this process, showing a change in the dynamics of the factors that supported the choice for a university course in traditional selection processes and, consequently, the possible repercussions on the dynamics of dropout.

Regarding strategies, students use the interdisciplinary bachelor's as a strategy to access the university, aiming, through the interdisciplinary bachelor's, to join professional and postgraduate courses and the job market.

The choices made in this way, which we can understand as an unwanted or frustrated choice, identified three groups of motivational factors that may have some impact on dropout: the social support perceived by the student, especially those closest to him, such as family and friends; the perception that the labor market requires increasingly qualified professionals; and the perception that higher education is a mandatory and easier way to be absorbed by this market. In addition, personal motivators, such as commitment to your own goals; the desire to grow as a person, intellectually or for financial reasons; and personal satisfaction for being inserted in higher education, were also highlighted.

In the same sense of the strategies and motivations, the expectations of these students behave in a similar way. The characteristics referring to the formation and theoretical curriculum of the interdisciplinary bachelor's are still little addressed to the point of constituting a strong expectation from students. In this regard, the desire to move on to the second cycle of training and to join the job market are expectations that are more strongly pointed out.

The results allow us to conclude that the facilitation of access to higher education, especially through a system that allows to adjust the amount of points obtained by the candidate to the competition for certain courses, increases the chance of getting into unwanted courses, which will lead these students to a distant relationship with the course, without the bonds considered necessary for institutional affiliation, as Coulon (2008) argues, and for articulation with the professional field, both considered necessary and fundamental elements for students to remain at the university, according to Tinto (1975).

In the case of HEI organized in three cycles, the first cycle has the role of facilitating institutional bonds, providing students with the support of colleagues and professors, thus expanding their social support network (family and friends). In

addition, it is equally important to provide the necessary information for students to decide about their professional career, either joining the job market directly after the first cycle course, or a professional course, for later entry into the job market. The possibility for students to prepare for work, planning their life more widely, is the second condition proposed by Tinto (1975).

These issues are clearly planned in UFBA's interdisciplinary bachelor's projects, including professional guidance as one of their training axis. Dropout rates, however, denounce that perhaps these goals are not being fully achieved.

In the case of HEI not organized in cycles, whose entries are direct in professional courses, such as medicine, engineering, architecture, etc., the challenge becomes even greater, as it will be necessary in the first semesters of the course to address broader issues related to life project and professional career development. During this period, it will be necessary to promote what is foreseen in the interdisciplinary bachelor's projects: promoting institutional affiliation (so that students feel they belong to the university community), expanding their social support network and, at the same time, providing experiences that bring them closer to professional practice and, thus, facilitating the bond with their profession.

At the request of the House of Representatives, Gilioli (2016) carried out a technical study on dropout in Federal Institutions of Higher Education (*Instituições Federais de Ensino Superior*) and deals with the influence of SiSU in this process, arguing that the adoption of this new selection model did not cause major changes in the amount of dropout. In fact, the data analyzed here do not point out the direct responsibility of SiSU on evasion. However, it is possible to perceive that the freedom and the logic of selection adopted by SiSU facilitate the entry of students with still immature professional choices, requiring, therefore, an action already within the university that offers the minimum conditions for students to proceed in the achievement of their projects. Due to the characteristics of our population, with very low *per capita* income, the concern falls predominantly on the minimum subsistence conditions (transportation, food, housing). Thus, public policies are aimed at guaranteeing such conditions, undoubtedly important for the support of students from less favored classes. However, the data show the need for other equally important conditions for the maintenance of students in the university and in the chosen courses.

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