

A Perspective of the Research in Supervised Internship in Distance Courses in Higher Education in Brazil

Um Panorama da Pesquisa em Disciplinas de Estágio Supervisionado em Cursos Superiores a Distância no Brasil

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Abstract

This study aimed at characterizing the research in Supervised Internship in Distance Education courses in Brazil. By means of a literature review, the main characteristics of the studies carried out so far were identified. This study observed that most studies were experience reports and that such reports mainly concern courses that are offered 100% online, in public universities, in teaching courses, especially in the area of Pedagogy. As contributions of this study, it can be highlighted that, besides this landscape of publications, the study also identified research gaps, such as the lack of studies in Management courses, in private universities and in blended courses, which is a strong trend in distance learning in Brazil.

Keywords: Distance education, Supervised internship, Internship, Teacher training.



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Resumo

Este estudo teve como objetivo traçar um panorama da pesquisa em Estágio Supervisionado em cursos superiores a distância no Brasil. Por meio de uma revisão da literatura, foram identificadas as principais características dos estudos realizados até então. O estudo observou uma concentração de trabalhos publicados do tipo relato de experiência e que tais relatos se concentram em cursos 100% a distância, ministrados em universidades públicas, em cursos de licenciatura e formação de professores, sobretudo na área de Pedagogia. Como contribuições deste trabalho, destaca-se, além da observação desse panorama de publicações, a identificação de lacunas de pesquisa na área, como a falta de relatos da orientação de estágio em cursos da área de Gestão, em universidades particulares e ainda abrangendo a modalidade semipresencial, uma tendência para as universidades no Brasil.

Palavras-chave: *Educação a distância, Estágio supervisionado, Estágio curricular, Formação de professores.*

1. Introduction

The concern with the internship goes back to the origins of teacher training courses. It reports on concerns about issues related to the relationship between theory and practice, content and form, disciplinary knowledge and pedagogical knowledge, training space and professional practice space (Neto & Santiago, 2015). A little different from teaching practice, the internship is a stage of the professional training developed by the student in the future field of work, structured, mediated, guided, monitored and evaluated by the training institution supervised by the institution that is the field of study (Will, 2012). The Supervised Internship (SI) is, therefore, any activity that allows the student to acquire specific professional experience and that contributes effectively to its absorption by the job market. Experiences of coexistence can be considered in a work environment with fulfillment of tasks with established deadlines, work in a hierarchical environment and with cooperative or corporatist components. The purpose of the Supervised Internship is to provide the student with the opportunity to apply their academic knowledge in situations of classical professional practice, creating the possibility of exercising their skills. It is hoped that, with this, the student will have the option to incorporate practical attitudes and acquire a critical view of his / her professional field of work (Oliveira & Cunha, 2006). SI is of paramount importance in any area of activity, and can be understood as a moment of approximation with its field of professional activity, since it is of utmost importance the articulation between theory and practice for the construction of knowledge (Freire & Lima, 2013). The Internship should be understood as a curricular component and a training practice that goes through the training process, extending throughout the professional training course, in which a relationship between the initial training space and the professional work space becomes effective. the responsibility of a team of teachers (Neto & Santiago, 2015).

The orientation of the internship practice assumes different names in each course or area of knowledge. In this text, the term Supervised Stage will be used, but it is emphasized that names like Curricular Internship, Oriented Stage or even Teaching Practices can be used and are found in academic papers on the subject. In any case, in all cases, this discipline is considered as the pre-professional space in which

the student has direct contact with the school field of training and their daily life. Under the supervision of a teacher of the training institution, the internship allows the accomplishment of diverse activities in the field of work, aiming the understanding of its organization and dynamics (Neto & Santiago, 2015). The internship allows practical studies, requiring students to posture and articulation in the teaching and learning process and knowledge of work practices, being a probationary period. Thus, the learning and experience acquired at that moment support the formation of their global vision, market and academic life (Cruz, 2012).

In distance courses, questions arise about how the Supervised Internship should be conducted. At first, SI in Distance Education (DE) does not have the on-site supervision of the tutor teacher because the course is distance. Therefore, in many cases, supervision is carried out through evaluation instruments, control cards and a very close partnership with the organizations in which the student is inserted (Medina & Prudente, 2012). There are other authors, however, who believe that even in distance courses the curricular internship must be carried out in presential moments, as well as some other activities (Santos & Sabbatini, 2013). In any case, the Supervised Internship is a proposal that is only feasible collectively. The actions to be developed come from a systemic process that requires multidisciplinary teams that act in a harmonious way. The construction of knowledge increasingly takes place in a collaborative way, based on co-authorship and networking (Will, 2012). In addition, the DE teacher or trainer needs to acquire knowledge related to the digital culture. The DE demands from the teacher a new look regarding education, since it has different characteristics from those of traditional teaching (Santos & Sabbatini, 2013).

Despite the evolution and expansion of distance courses in Brazil, there are still few studies on Supervised Internship, even though this discipline is so important for the training of university graduates. In this way, it is necessary to understand how the practice and the research in Supervised Internship in distance courses in the country has been carried out. Therefore, this study aims to conduct an exploratory study to characterize the research in supervised internship in distance courses in Brazil. Through a review of the literature, the main characteristics of the studies carried out up until then were identified. In this way, we intend to identify gaps and research opportunities that may contribute to the advancement of the area.

The remainder of this article is organized as follows: Section 2 presents the theoretical framework, advancing in the understanding of topics related to the Supervised Internship in the DE. Section 3 describes the methodology used in this study, while Section 4 presents the results of this work. Section 5 presents conclusions of the paper, its limitations and possibilities of future work.

2. The Distance Supervised Internship

The stage is configured as a field of knowledge and should not be reduced to an instrumental practical activity. Through it, interaction occurs with the social field and the development of educational practices. The Stage is considered a space conducive to reflection, an opportunity to associate practice with theory. The practice of the curricular internship is extremely important for the students in formation, because it is the moment to observe the reality of the organizations and institutions, allowing the opportunity to reflect on the theory learned during the course, associating with its practice contextually (Freire & Lima, 2013). In many courses, the internship is not an optional activity, but one of the preconditions for obtaining the diploma. It is essential and understood as the learning time that, through a period of duration, a student remains somewhere or craft to learn to practice and then to practice (Medina & Prudente, 2012). The Supervised Internship, when well guided by those responsible, can feed the student's desire for practical experience, theory and for disseminating this knowledge (Cruz, 2012).

The internship is thus a special form of theoretical and practical training that takes place in formal and / or non-formal educational institutions, in which the trainee effectively assumes the role of teacher

and performs other activities inherent in the educational routine, developing his / her competencies (Will, 2012). It is easy to understand that the Supervised Internship, perhaps more than other curricular components, brings this mutuality, in which those who teach and those who learn are the subjects of a process – rather than formation, construction and creation (Oliveira & Cunha, 2006). In this way, it is intended to facilitate and at the same time to value the Academic Internship as a pedagogical activity, aiming to provide the student with the opportunity to verify or apply theories learned in the content of the various disciplines in order to achieve real achievement in their studies (Cruz, 2012). Finally, with the practice of the internship it is possible to build the profile of the professional, seeking to intervene in the reality of a critical way, increasing knowledge, skills and competences. The internship should be based on research, reflection and participation, broadening its curricular formation, associating theory and practice. It should be a moment of research and action in the face of school reality (Freire & Lima, 2013).

Although it is not the focus of this study, it is important to emphasize that there is a set of official documents that regulate the Supervised Internship of teacher training courses, such as the Law on Guidelines and Bases of Education (LDBEN) – Law n. 9,394/ 96; the National Curricular Guidelines; and Law n°. 11.788/ 08, which deals with the student placement in Brazil (Medina & Prudente, 2012).

The stages in the distance modality still bear much resemblance to the traditional teaching format and involve planning, observation, and, in the case of undergraduate teachers, teaching (Kanashiro, Noal, Rocha & Burigato, 2011). In Distance Education, internship practice is a constant challenge, considering the role of undergraduate courses in teacher education for basic education (Silva, Freitas & Alcoforado, 2010). However, considering that the DE student is, in general, also a worker, there are a number of difficulties for the realization of stages (Kanashiro et al., 2011).

The field of teacher training in the DE mode has been gaining space today and has been sought by a significant portion of the public seeking the higher education diploma. The reasons why this demand is growing can be discussed both in the context of higher education policies and also by the socio-educational issues specifically addressed by distance learning courses (Pierro, Santos & Drummond, 2012). The stage should be seen as a fundamental curricular component in the training of students and teachers, especially because it facilitates the articulation between theory and practice and, thus, potentiates the construction of teacher identity (Cruz, 2012). The trainee should be aware of the challenges posed to the teaching profession, but first and foremost the stage should be a satisfactory moment of teaching and learning, including the difficulties faced by the profession. It is possible that the trainee does not fully understand the professional practice at the internship stage, as it is insufficient for the trainee to understand the complex problems he will face at school, in his daily life as a professional (Feldkercher, 2011), but not for this is no longer an important moment of practice and contact with professional life.

3. Methodology

This work can be characterized as an exploratory study, carried out by means of a review of the literature with the objective of identifying researches and practical experiences in disciplines of Remotely supervised Internship. Unlike other literature reviews, especially the systematic ones, which restrict searches for articles in databases or journals, this study chose to broaden the search domain for the web in general, aiming to find a greater number of studies that address experiences and studies on distance-supervised internship in Brazil. Initially, the searches were conducted in qualified journals in the area of Education: *Linhas Críticas*, *EAD em Foco* e *Revista de Novas Tecnologias na Educação*. However, the number of articles found in these journals was small, which motivated the expansion of the search for the entire web. The search tool used at that time was Google Scholar. This same procedure was adopted in the work of Wangenheim, Kochanski & Savi (2009).

The search was performed using the search string “stage” AND (“virtual” OR “distance”). As a criterion of inclusion, the studies needed to address theoretical themes about the internship or reports of experience in disciplines of Distance-supervised Internship. The results returned by the search engine were processed as follows: the titles were read and, if necessary, the abstracts to identify if the work met the defined inclusion criteria. The works that met the criteria were read completely; some characteristics of the study were analyzed and are presented in the next section.

4. Results and Discussion

After the research, sixteen studies met the inclusion criteria defined in the work planning. Some data from these studies are presented in Table 1 and discussed below. In summary, it can be observed that most studies:

- adopted the experience reporting methodology;
- Adopted as study courses in 100% distance mode;
- was held in public universities;
- was held in undergraduate courses, most of which were in Pedagogy courses.

Table 1: Revision results

Reference	Methodology	Modality	Private/ Public	Graduation/ Bachelor's degree	Course Field
(Silva et al., 2010)	Experience Report	DE	Public	Graduation	Computing
(Moraes, 2015)	Experience Report	DE	Public	Graduation	Languages
(Pierro et al., 2012)	Experience Report	Blended learning	Public	Graduation	Pedagogy
(Medina & Prudente, 2012)	Experience Report	DE	Private	Graduation	Physical Education
(Cruz, 2012)	Conceptual	-	-	-	-
(Raabe & Cybis, 2004)	Experience Report	DE	Public	Bachelor's	Information Systems/ Usability Engineering
(Feldkercher, 2011)	Experience Report	Classroom lesson and DE	Public	Graduation	Mathematics
(Oliveira & Cunha, 2006)	Experience Report	DE	Public	Graduation	Pedagogy
(Patatt, 2010)	Experience Report	DE	Public	Graduation	Languages
(Kanashiro et al., 2011)	Experience Report	DE	Public	Graduation	Languages, Mathematics and Pedagogy
(Santos & Sabbatini, 2013)	Experience Report	DE	Public	Graduation	Pedagogy

(Will, 2012)	Experience Report	DE	Private	Graduation	Pedagogy
(Lima, 2012)	Conceptual	-	-	-	-
(Freire & Lima, 2013)	Experience Report	DE	Public	Graduation	-
(Ziede, Charczuk & Nevado, 2011)	Experience Report	DE	Public	Graduation	Pedagogy
(Neto & Santiago, 2015)	Experience Report	DE	Public	Graduation	Pedagogia

Supervised Internship is a fundamental component in undergraduate courses. In the National Curriculum Guidelines of these courses, the Supervised Internship is a professional transition process that seeks to link two logics (education and work) and which gives the student the opportunity to train the skills and abilities that he already has under the supervision of a professional in the area & Prudente, 2012). Thus, the Supervised Internship should allow an experiential and interactive involvement of the licenciandos with the school institution, creating learning conditions that can foster the acquisition of professional knowledge (Pierro et al., 2012). The Supervised Internship is important because it aims to build a new teacher, something essential in training disciplines, either in undergraduate or specialization (Cruz, 2012).

By the practicality of the Internship disciplines, it is understood as natural the existence of many reports of experience found in this study. However, the results point to gaps that can be explored in studies and future reports, such as the concentration of studies in public universities and courses 100% at a distance. As private universities concentrate most distance learning courses, according to the Abed Census of 2016/2017 (Abed, 2017), it is crucial to understand how Supervisory Internships take place at these universities and share experiences. This same census observes the 51% growth in the supply of ED in private institutions between 2011 and 2015. In addition, with the increase of semipresencial courses, aimed at 23% of the researched institutions, it becomes very relevant to understand how the discipline of Internship can be given in this type of modality and what methodological resources have been used.

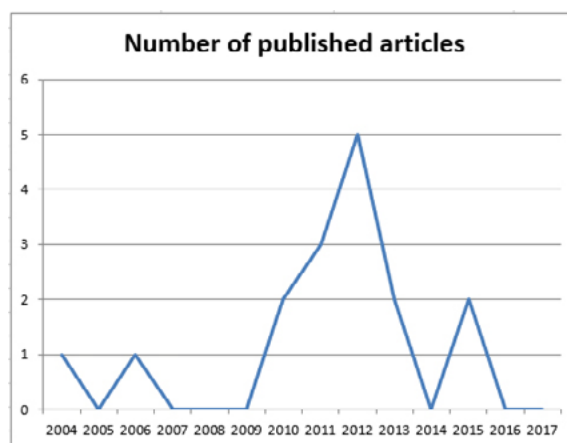
Finally, it can be observed that there are no reports of experience on Supervised Internship in courses of Management, such as Administration or Accounting Sciences. According to the Abed Census of 2016/2017, the Administration course is the second most sought distance course in Brazil. In addition, it is a course in which students can quickly enter the job market. In this way, monitoring how their internship activities have been carried out and how the courses have implemented such discipline, with the possibility of discussing different techniques, is of fundamental importance.

It was also possible to identify some differences that such studies point out among the disciplines of Supervised Internship in distance courses and in face-to-face courses. There are differences among the pedagogical resources used: while in the face-to-face courses, the use of face-to-face classes was cited, in the distance courses, webconference, videotape, use of virtual learning environment (Feldkercher, 2011) and online diary (Ziede et al. 2011). It should be emphasized that quality didactic material should be formative and non-instructive, that in its planning there may be interventions, criticisms, questions and use of different media (Oliveira & Cunha, 2006). In addition, in virtual teaching, the student has the possibility to organize his / her study time (Freire & Lima, 2013) and to resort to virtual tutors.

However, there are also similarities between the disciplines, such as detailed documentation requirements and the need for life insurance for the student in the period of completion of their internship hours (Freire & Lima, 2013). There are still techniques that can be used in both modalities, like participatory observation in the exercise of the stage; the critical reflection and the analogy of the aspects observed with the theoretical referential addressed in the course (Oliveira & Cunha, 2006). As negative aspects of

the Supervised Internship carried out at a distance, there were reports of difficulties of a more careful follow-up with the students, with the granting institutions and the developed actions, the lack of structure for practical workshops, absence or lack of communication with the academics (Freire & Lima, 2013).

To show the evolution of the research in recent years, Graph 1 presents the number of articles published per year, within the sample analyzed in this study. It can be observed that the articles are concentrated between the years of 2010 and 2013, and studies published in the last two years have not been observed.



Graphic 1: Articles published per year.

5. Conclusion / Final Considerations

The objective of this study was to carry out an exploratory study to characterize the research on Supervised Internship in distance courses in Brazil. Through a review of the literature, the main characteristics of the studies carried out up until then were identified. The study observed a concentration of published works of the type of experience report and that such reports are concentrated in 100% distance courses, taught in public universities, undergraduate courses and teacher training, especially in the area of Pedagogy. As a contribution of this work, besides the observation of this panorama of publications, the identification of research gaps in the area, such as the lack of reports of the orientation of Internship in courses of the Management area, in private universities and covering the blended modality, a trend for universities in Brazil. As limitations of this work, it is possible to highlight the fact that the research was carried out on the web, which may make it difficult to limit a more specific scope for the search. Initially, the searches were conducted in qualified journals in the area of Education, such as *Linhas Críticas*, *EAD em Foco* and *Revista de Novas Tecnologias na Educação*. However, the number of articles found in these journals was small, which motivated the expansion of the search for the entire web. In any case, the study points out relevant trends and gaps for Supervised Internship research. In addition, other more specific scientific bases, such as, SciELO, Edubase, Periódicos Capes and the collections of publications of great public universities that share their master's and doctoral researches can be used.

As future work, we intend to investigate the practice of Supervised Internship in courses of Management, such as Administration and Accounting Sciences at a distance, seeking to verify what methods have been applied in such courses. Another line of promising research is the study of this subject in blended courses.

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