

Teaching of International Relations in Distance Learning: the Experience of the Public Administration Course

Ensino de Relações Internacionais na Modalidade a Distância: a Experiência do Curso de Administração Pública Semipresencial

ISSN 2177-8310
DOI: 10.18264/eadf.v10i2.1770

Daniel Neto Francisco

Universidade Federal Rural do Rio de Janeiro. Campus Universitário UFRRJ, BR-465, Km 7 – Seropédica – RJ – Brasil.
dnetofrancisco@gmail.com

Abstract

The present work has as main objective to analyze the integrative tools in the development of ranged education in the discipline of International Relations, within the scope of the semi-presential course in Public Administration at the Universidade Federal Fluminense (UFF). Which is offered in partnership with the Rio de Janeiro's Ranged Superior Education Association (CEDERJ). Such an analysis is necessary due to the expansion of distance education in Brazil as an educational inclusion tool; and, especially in the space in question, of consolidating dialogical teaching channels focused on International Relations. Which have an interdisciplinary and comprehensive character, in addition to adding to the programmatic content of the discipline, several fields of training knowledge of public managers from the perspective of the international sphere. For this, the same semi-structured questionnaire was applied to students participating in the discipline in the first semester of the years 2017 and 2019. In this sense, it is possible to verify that the discipline of International Relations (IR) of the Public Administration course offers standard virtual instruments Moodle / Cederj's system, such as Distance Activities (ADs) and other standard instruments (notice board, tutoring room, among others), in addition to some additional instruments such as: the use of chats, and the adoption of videos, texts and blogs as complementary materials. In general, students consider the subject to be very interactive. However, fundamental spaces, such as the tutoring room, are still not perceived as effective for the promotion of dialogues and the construction of new knowledge.

Keywords: Semi-presential teaching. Interactive tools. Moodle.



Received 18/ 02/ 2020
Accepted 07/ 12/ 2020
Published 08/ 12/ 2020

HOW TO CITE THIS ARTICLE

ABNT: FRANCISCO, N. D. Ensino de Relações Internacionais na Modalidade a distância: a Experiência do Curso de Administração Pública Semipresencial. Educação. **EaD em Foco**, v. 10, n. 2, e1077, 2020. doi: <https://doi.org/10.18264/eadf.v10i2.1077>

Ensino de Relações Internacionais na Modalidade a Distância: a Experiência do Curso de Administração Pública Semipresencial

Resumo

O presente trabalho tem como objetivo principal analisar as ferramentas integrativas no desenvolvimento do Ensino a Distância (EaD) na disciplina de Relações Internacionais, no âmbito do curso semipresencial de Administração Pública da Universidade Federal Fluminense (UFF), que é oferecido em parceria com o Centro de Educação a distância do Rio de Janeiro (CEDERJ). Tal análise faz-se necessária devido à expansão do EaD no Brasil como ferramenta de inclusão educacional e, especialmente no espaço em questão, de consolidação de canais dialógicos de ensino voltados para as Relações Internacionais. Que possuem um caráter interdisciplinar e abrangente, além de agregar ao conteúdo programático da disciplina, diversos campos do conhecimento formativo dos gestores públicos sob a perspectiva da esfera internacional. Para isto, foi aplicado o mesmo questionário semiestruturado para os alunos participantes da disciplina no primeiro semestre dos anos de 2017 e 2019. Neste sentido, é possível verificar que a disciplina de Relações Internacionais (RI) do curso de Administração Pública semipresencial oferece instrumentos virtuais padrões do sistema Moodle/CEDERJ, como as Atividades a distância (ADs) e outros instrumentos padrões (quadro de avisos, sala de tutoria, entre outros), além de alguns instrumentos adicionais como: o uso de chats, e a adoção de vídeos, textos e blogs como materiais complementares. De maneira geral, os alunos consideram que a disciplina é bastante interativa. No entanto, espaços fundamentais, como a sala de tutoria ainda não são percebidos como efetivos para a promoção de diálogos e a construção de novos conhecimentos.

Palavras-chave: *Ensino semipresencial. Ferramentas interativas. Moodle.*

1. Introduction

This article has as main proposal to analyze the integrative tools used in the international relations course of the Public Administration course, offered by the Fluminense Federal University in partnership with the Center for Distance Education of the State of Rio de Janeiro (CEDERJ). The article is divided into: a) to present a brief retrospective on the implementation of EaD - Distance Learning (Distance Learning) in Brazil; b) to present the institutional structure of CEDERJ and the Public Administration course in the distance modality; c) to analyze the tools and instruments offered in the dynamics of the discipline of International Relations and the perception of students about these online channels.

The discipline of International Relations for a semi-face-to-face course in Public Administration holds in itself a series of distinctions and possibilities that are not pointed out in the literature on the construction of Teaching EaD (ROSALIN, et. al., 2017; FRANCE, et. al., 2019), or even in the promotion of tools for the FIELD of IR. Thus, this investigation seeks to evidence the analysis on the implementation of tools and instruments used in the development of the discipline. Being inserted in a multidisciplinary course, traditionally linked to the field of management training, and which involves the practice of public management. The chair is designed to promote reflections around the formation, dynamics and interactions of nation states. Thus,

this research seeks to promote an overview of how the tools of EaD teaching have been applied in this discipline. In such a way, it talks with the field and distinct theoretical currents, covering a menu different from the traditional one in economics courses, for example. It deals, in addition to the perspective of classical theories in the field of inter-state relations, such as the schools of Realism, Liberalism, Globalism and Structuralism,(GILPIN, 1981; JATOBÁ, LESSA, OLIVEIRA, 2013). By promoting spaces for reflection on debates related to the practice of public managers in processes and phenomena related to internal and external policy; international organizations and their relations with political processes (RODRIGUES, 2012). And issues related to the specificities of Brazil, given its insertion in multilateralism (FERNANDES, SIMÃO, 2019). Although it does not contemplate contemporary debates of great relevance on the emergence of theories and models of colonial action, and the promotion of alternative paths that reflect on the country's insertion in multilateralism and its regional relations in Latin America (DA ROSA MUÑOZ, SPODE, 2019). A limiting factor of the discipline is its low workload, which largely limits the inclusion of more in-depth themes.

As a methodology for obtaining the data, two semi-structured questionnaires were applied to students enrolled in the International Relations course of the Public Administration course. The questionnaires were applied in the first semester of 2017 and 2019, with the objective of promoting an overview of the students' perspective on the discipline of International Relations and in relation to the instruments and techniques applied in this.

2. CEDERJ and the Public Administration Course

The Center for Distance Education of the State of Rio de Janeiro (CEDERJ) was established in 2000, through a consortium established between some Brazilian higher education institutions such as the Federal Institute of Rio de Janeiro (IFRJ), the Fluminense Federal University (UFF), the Federal University of Rio de Janeiro (UFRJ), the Federal Rural University of Rio de Janeiro (UFRRJ), the Federal University of the State of Rio de Janeiro (UNIRIO), the State University of Norte Fluminense (UENF) and the State University of Rio de Janeiro (UERJ). CEDERJ comes with the purpose of expanding the higher education network of the state of Rio de Janeiro, with free and distance education.

The institution was formulated for distance learning with the objective of expanding the network of public universities in cities in the interior of the state, but is also present in municipalities in the Metropolitan Region of Rio de Janeiro. In all, the institution currently has 34 teaching centers. CEDERJ has 03 poles in the city of Rio de Janeiro: Campo Grande, Maracanã and Rocinha. Located respectively in the Zones: West, North and South Zone. The other 31 poles are in the other regions of Rio de Janeiro, 05 in the Middle Paraíba Region, 02 in the Central-South Fluminense Region, 01 in the Ilha Grande Bay Region, 10 in the Metropolitan Region, 04 in the Serrana Region, 02 in the Coastal Lowland Region, 03 in the Northern Fluminense Region, and 04 poles in the Fluminense Northwest Region. And it includes all administrative regions of the state, representing in each pole a different range of courses (CEDERJ, 2020).

CEDERJ's Bachelor of Public Administration: "aims to create a national profile of public managers that contemplates a global view of administrative actions and government policies in order to exercise management at the regional and national levels" (CEDERJ, 2018). The course covers a multidisciplinary menu, with disciplines of administrative sciences such as: Administration Theories I and II; Organization, Processes and Decision-Making; Information and Communication Systems in the Public Sector; People Management in the Public Sector; Quality Management in the Public Sector, Operations Management and Logistics, among others. The grid still covers the area of economics, with disciplines of Macroeconomics and Brazilian Economics; and social sciences such as: Organizational Psychology, Philosophy and Ethics, Organizational Sociology, and Political Science. In addition to legal disciplines: Public and Private Law Institutions; Administrative Law and Regulatory Management.

The IR discipline is inserted in a set of multidisciplinary chairs that bring together multiple competencies for the formation of the public administrator. As the chairs of Negotiation and Arbitration, Technology and Innovation, Public Policies and Society, Environmental Management and Sustainability.

The public administration course offered by UFF/CEDERJ begins its activities in 2011. Inserted in the National Program of Training in Public Administration (PNAP), training program and expansion of the staff of Brazilian civil servants in its various spheres. Within the Scope of the PNAP, the Brazilian government has developed the implementation of higher education schools aimed at improving personnel for the public machine. The PNAP, at the same time, aims to generate professionals at the most diverse federative levels and in different locations with “a national profile of public managers” (CEDERJ, 2018). But they also have a training according to regional demands and characteristics, aiming to improve public services in the face of regional specificities.

In response to the growing demand for qualification courses and improvement of the national public servants’ staff. The PNAP is oriented to meet this contingency mainly with the offer of face-to-face and distance courses. Given the lack of courses accredited by the Ministry of Education for the purpose of providing this category of teaching. The growth perspective of EaD and semi-face-to-face courses is tied to the scenario of greater informatization of society, and, at the same time, by the expansion of professional and personal activities through virtual platforms.

Issues relating to online participation or discussion forums, or the ability to produce a deepening debate through these platforms are still issues addressed by various analyses from the role of tutors (or mediators) (TRACTENBERG, TRACTENBERG, 2007;). Even about the role of these, as active or passive agents in promoting interaction in online forums, as highlighted by Pedro and Razera (2018). Even in specialization courses, the challenges of distance and semi-face-to-face education can be perceived in a latent way, demanding, for example, appropriate curricula (THIELMANN, et. al. 2015).

France, et. Al. (2019) point out that the use of forums and chats should consider the specificities of the target audience and its lived realities. For such a space to be a space that provides reflections and is open to the speeches and positions of the students, making it an instrument of dialogical and inclusive fact. Chats should go beyond the proposition of a problematizing theme.

Regarding the specific dynamics of the discipline of International Relations, it is necessary to highlight its adaptation to the virtual environment and to the main concepts and discussions of the public administration menu. The main objective is to point out how interstate dynamics are not limited to the role of government agents in the diplomatic field. Other actors such as: International Non-Governmental Organizations, International Institutions and transnational companies also operate in this plan. And they cannot be overlooked by public managers, even on local scales. On the other hand, the small space of a discipline limits the inclusion of relevant themes such as the construction of praxis and action models from the decolonial approach. An important dimension for the reflection of the Brazilian positioning, as rosa Muñoz and Spode (2019) point out.

The discipline of International Relations is in the curricular matrix of the Public Administration course with the objective of fostering an analysis of the composition of the contemporary international system. The chair brings theoretical debates about relevant events that have occupied the government agenda since the 1990s such as the formation of economic blocs, globalization and economic liberalism, the increasing relevance of international organizations and non-governmental organizations. In addition to addressing some current issues, such as regional conflicts, international terrorism and other phenomena that have gained transterritorial dimensions, such as the environment, terrorism, human rights and public security.

In addition to the themes, the discipline encompasses some theoretical references more related to the field of interstate relations, based mainly on references such as war and conflict (CLAUSEWITZ, 2003). And to the process of formation of the Modern State and theoretical definitions linked to its dynamics, such as the monopoly of state force (FOUCAULT, 2002; RODRIGUES, 2012).

International Relations is a subject offered to students of the eighth period of the public administration course of the distance modality, accounting for 60 credits. Offered every six months, and with an average of about 150 students enrolled per school period, of which, of this total, about 80/90 students actively participated. Like the other disciplines of the semi-face-to-face course, it is coordinated by UFF de Volta Redonda, and by teachers linked to it. And it follows the standard of CEDERJ disciplines, where the main interaction tool is the Moodle platform. Interactions between students, tutors and teachers are established through Moodle. For Sabbatini (2007) Moodle possesses of the fundamental components: "a central server in an IP network, which houses scripts, software, directories, databases, etc. and clients of access to a virtual environment" (SABBATINI, 2007, p. 01). The Moodle system offers a virtual environment with various tools and instructional designers. In this sense, the educational institutions that use the platform adapt their environment according to their needs. In the case of CEDERJ, each discipline is responsible for a discipline coordinator, who is responsible for configuring virtual tools according to the discipline menu and the specific demand for each program content.

Despite the relevance of the platform as the channel that provides communication channels through the Internet, it is necessary to highlight the importance of other elements that integrate the space of construction of learning via the Internet. For this, the tools of the Virtual Learning Environment (AVA) should be able to promote elements such as: greater attractiveness to students, more dynamic responses and the promotion of collaboration in the online environment, as stated by Barros, Bezerra and Cunha (2019). One point to promote this dynamic of the AVA is the promotion of "gamified methodologies". It is important to emphasize that "gamification uses game mechanics in an educational context" (BARROS, BEZERRA, CUNHA, 2019).

However, it should be emphasized that the application of gamification tools, or integration at more advanced levels, are still little used in the contexts of distance education or semi-face-to-face teaching. According to data from the 2018 EaD Census, the main resource used in the EaD system is tele classes. Used in 92.6% in distance courses and in 81.8% of semi-face-to-face courses. The second most used tool in the virtual learning environment is digital texts. That are made available to students in different formats (articles, handouts, book chapters, etc.) in 83.7% of EaD courses, and in 78.2% in semi-face-to-face courses (CENSO EAD-2018, 2020).

Also according to the data obtained by the EaD-2018 Census, the third most used instrument in learning environments are e-books. And the fourth most used instrument are complementary videos, which are not in tele class formats, but which help in the contextualization of concepts, terms and debates about the topics addressed in the disciplines of the EaD courses (CENSO EAD-2018, 2020).

And more than just having such devices, it is of fundamental importance that teachers, tutors and mediators (i.e., the entire professional team that takes the knowledge) have the skills and skills to manage these tools. As Tractenberg and Tractenberg (2007) point out, the competencies of professionals working in the distance learning environment must corroborate so that the platform's innovations and interaction channels can be spaces for effective action. And that they not only exist without clear operational reasons. Pucinelli (2018) deepens the debate by clarifying the role of the tutor as one who must follow the spaces of discussion, having an active action that can motivate and lead the debate. But without muffling the need for the students' prominence. Tutors should moderate processes: "(...) in the management of participation, in the creation of more appropriate tools and techniques in the evaluation of the participation and construction of the group's knowledge" (PUCINELLI, 2018, p. 42). It is inherent to

the participatory process to realize that there is no linearity in the construction of these spaces. Similarly, the processes of knowledge construction; therefore, it is important to establish appropriate instruments and spaces for a dynamic construction of participatory processes and social involvement for collective interaction by knowledge (PEDRO, RAZERA, 2018).

Among the various educational resources of the EaD environment, it is relevant to affirm the position of teaching materials (online books, handouts in pdf format, texts and scientific articles, among others). Rosalin, et. Al. (2017) emphasize that the role of teaching materials - in their different forms - is fundamental to bring new references and knowledge to students. With regard to printed didactic material, it is appropriate to emphasize that its existence, even in the modalities of Teaching EaD, favor students because they do not necessarily have to access the contents studied only by the virtual environment.

In this way, the integration between printed and non-printed teaching materials can be considered as fundamental importance. Where online materials should be arranged through the appropriate interactive tools, facilitating accessibility, navigability, and integration between students of different profiles.

3. Methodology

This article has a qualitative character, because it seeks to understand the perception of the students of the discipline of International Relations about the tools implemented in its dynamics. The interview process was conducted during the last week of each semester: 2018.1 and 2019.1. Semi-structured questionnaires were applied, composed of questions, using the gradation of the Likert Scale. It was applied to students active in the discipline of International Relations. In both semesters, the questionnaires were made available in the last week of classes.

We sought to quantify the indication of the respondents and establish a given standard from the respondent's classes. However, in all questions there was the possibility of adding comments to closed answers. In this sense, the interviewees could add their understandings and impressions. The questionnaires were applied electronically with the google forms tool,

The analysis of the collected data was guided by discourse analysis, based on Bardin's theory (1994), in order to promote a systematization (categorization) of the messages elaborated by the students, supporting a qualitative systematization (MEDEIROS, AMORIM, 2017) that aims to trace a visualization of the positions of the respondents to the questions raised. However, it also aligned itself with the "Theory of Social Action", when analyzing the understanding of a given subject about a given context bringing qualitative perceptions (ALENCAR, 2002). Thus, the "conditions" (problems and limiting in the dynamics of the discipline) and the "means" (instruments and efficient channels according to the students) are used.

For the analysis of the collected data, we used the categorization from the years in which the questionnaires were applied. Discourse analysis was also used based on the categorization of keywords that were found in the answers of the students' open questions. The method used for the selection of the categories of analysis was established from the Theory of Social Action (ALENCAR, 2002). And content analysis, according to Bardin (1994), seeking to understand the aspects reported in discursive questions, and, analyzing the quantitative dynamics of closed answers.

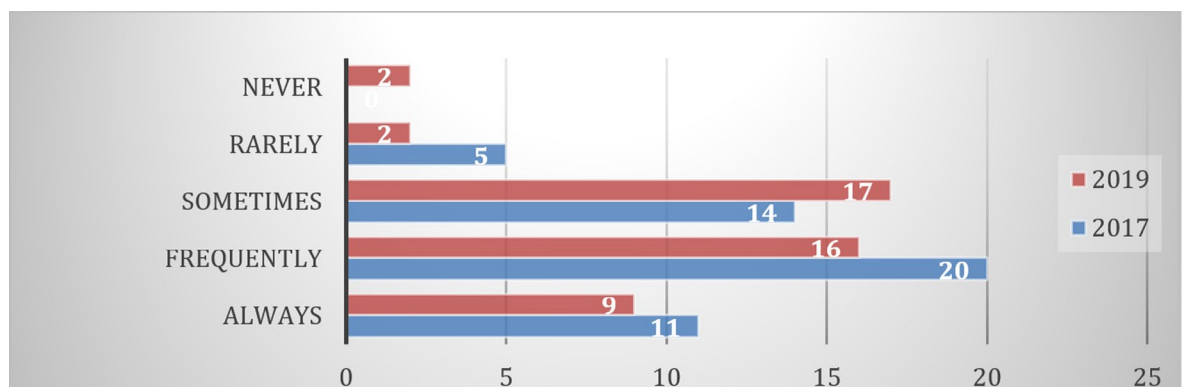
4. Results and Discussions

Next, there are the interactive tools used in the discipline of International Relations and their role in the interaction process from the analysis of the students.

The tutoring room consists of the main tool of interaction between students, teacher and tutor. The proposal of the tutoring room is to offer a channel of easy access to all, where questions can be asked on any subject within the discipline. In addition to enabling the registration of students' doubts at any time - since the tutoring room is available 24 hours - this communication channel can also be an important channel that can provide a dynamic channel of distance learning, providing the interaction of students who have similar doubts or questions.

Through the tutoring room, there is the instrument of proposing discussion forums on a given topic. An element that can make the online learning environment more attractive and collaborative, based on the participation of students. The approximation of the realities and observation of the students helps in the resolution of doubts. Another teaching tool used in the discipline is the use of "news boards" related to subjects of the discipline. An element that favors the connection between theory and practice, elucidating the relevance of matter and its debates in everyday situations.

In general, the students interviewed classified the relevance of the "News Board" tool of the discipline as a very relevant element in the understanding of concepts addressed within the chair. Students were asked if "Tools such as international relations news help to understand the content of the discipline?". And the chart below summarizes students' responses:

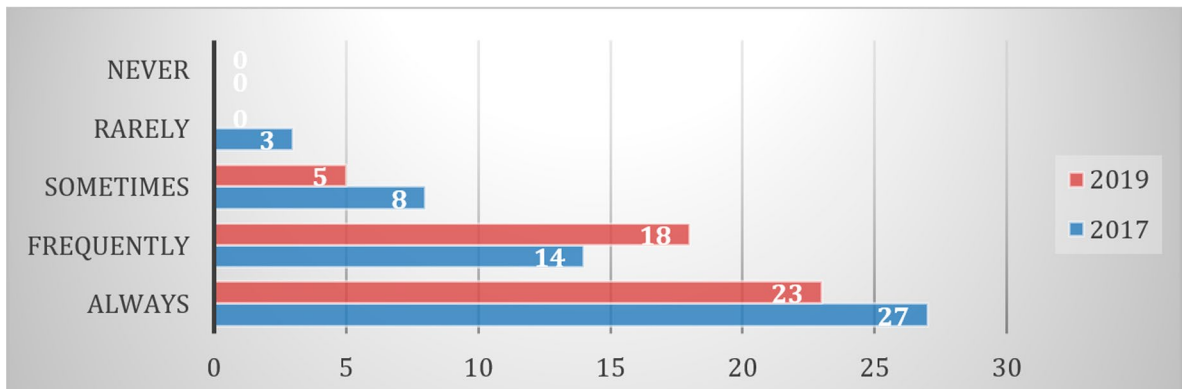


Graph 1: Relevance of the International Relations News Board.

Source: Prepared by the author.

It is noted that of the 52 students interviewed in 2017, about 21.15% note that the "News Board" tool is always relevant for the assimilation of themes related to international relations. Another 38.46% believe that the tool is quite relevant. And 26.92% classify the tool as not very relevant; and 9.61% state that rarely does this instrument help in understanding themes related to the discipline. Among the 2019 students, about 36.95% classified the news board tool as not very relevant. While another 34.78% pointed out the tool as very relevant in the dynamics of the discipline.

Other instruments, such as videos, texts and blogs, were analyzed from the question: "Videos, texts and blogs complementary to the basic material help in understanding the discipline?". Despite being categorized as complementary, they are also used in the very menu of the discipline, aiming to diversify the teaching instruments and channels and promote, through the platform, the distance a more dynamic teaching space. And part of the students interviewed always considers relevant the inclusion of these tools in the process of understanding the themes in International Relations. As the chart below denotes:



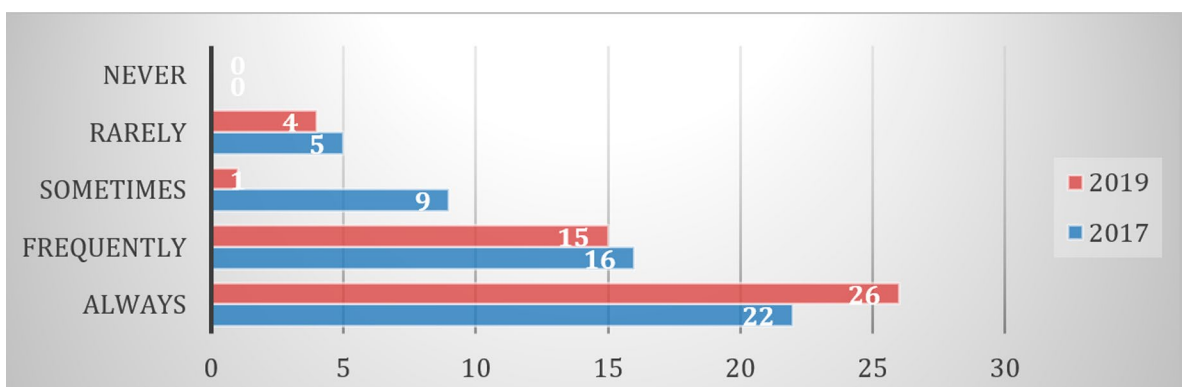
Graphic 2: Relevance of complementary materials: videos, texts and blogs.

Source: Prepared by the author.

For respondents in the 2017 class, about 51.92% noted that other tools such as videos, texts and complementary blogs always help in assimilating the topics addressed in the discipline. Another 23.92% consider that such materials help a lot. Among the respondents in the class of 2019, 50% stated that such instruments are always relevant. And about 39.13% pointed out that complementary tools are very relevant for understanding the content of international relations and other theories addressed throughout the discipline. And only 10.87% stated that these tools are of little relevant.

Another point analyzed in the questionnaire with the two classes was the relevance of Distance Activities (ADs) in learning themes parallel to the basic content of the discipline. Among the students in the 2017 class, about 34.61% consider ADs not very relevant in learning topics parallel to the basic content of the discipline. Another 21.15% evaluate DA as rarely relevant, while 15.38% note that ADs never help in the learning process of topics related to the discipline's menu. On the other hand, 19.23% of the interviewees stated that Distance Activities are very relevant in learning these themes, and 9.61% point out that these activities are always relevant in learning. With the respondents of 2019, it was found that about 43.48% of the students consider the ADs little relevant for the understanding of the themes related to the menu of the discipline. Another 23.91% consider the activities rarely relevant, and 17.40% consider that these evaluation instruments never help. And another 21.74% consider ADs as very relevant instruments.

Regarding the interactive elements of the platform, we were asked if "Do the interactive elements as a whole of CEDERJ's platform meet your expectations as a student?". In the discipline of International Relations are used: a) the spaces of classes; b) online chat tools; and, c) the polls of the discipline; it is noted that in both years the students considered such tools as always relevant for the interaction and dynamic of the same.



Graphic 3: Relevance of the interactive elements of the CEDERJ platform.

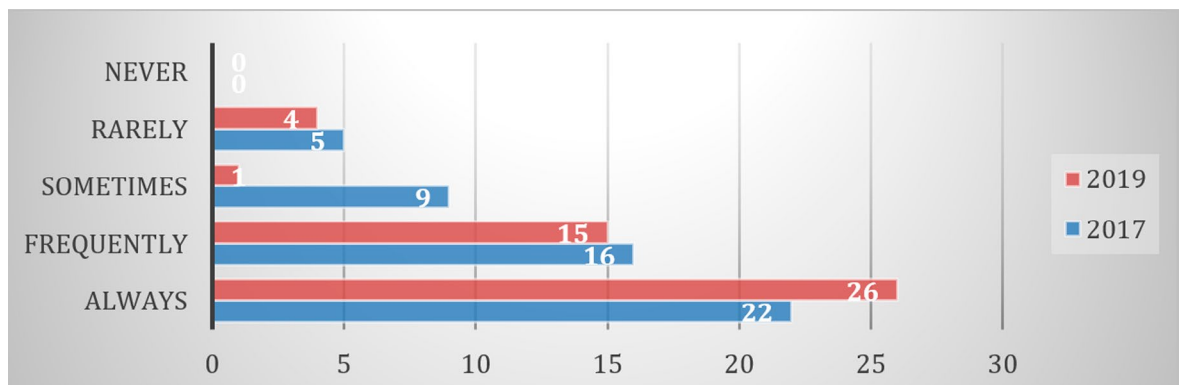
Source: Prepared by the author.

Among the notes, we noticed the importance of classroom spaces, as a “guiding” tool in studies. Especially among the students in the class of 2019. Among the observations of the students of 2017, it is noted the highlight given by the students to the use of online chats. Since these are pointed out as a “integrating” tool.

It can be highlighted that in both classes the interactive elements of CEDERJ’s Moodle platform were always considered satisfactory. According to the students in the class of 2017, approximately 42.31% consider the platform and its tools interactive. Another 30.77% classify it as very interactive. And, 17.31% consider the platform as noninteractive. Only 9.61% classified the interactive elements of the platform as rarely interactive. For the students of the class of 2019, about 56.52% classified the elements of the CEDERJ platform always interactive. Another 32.61% highlighted the platform’s instruments as very interactive. And only 8.69% consider such elements as rarely interactive.

It is important to note that no student of both years considered the Moodle platform as a never-interactive instrument. As Sabbatini (2007) denotes, the Moodle platform is based on constructivism, and has great emphasis on the interaction between students and teachers. Dynamic that corroborates the promotion of content sharing, so that they become knowledge. One point that favors the dynamics of the platform is the possibility of inserting a series of interactive tools, of different models and structures. From synchronous texts and videos to discussion chats.

About the relevance of the tutoring room as a space for discussions and sharing of knowledge among students, it was noted that for respondents of both years the space is shown, respectively, as: rarely and little interactive. Note in the chart below as rarely interactive:



Graphic 4: Level of understanding of the tutoring room as a discussion environment.

Source: Prepared by the author.

Most students in 2019 highlighted the tutoring room as a little or rarely understood environment as a discussion environment (60.86%). Among 2017 students, 36.95% classified the environment as a space that rarely promotes discussions. While about 26.08% pointed to the space of the tutoring room as a space that never promotes discussions. In general, the dynamics of the tutoring room ends up being limited to specific questions such as: the removal of specific questions focused on the content of the discipline, issues related to the calendar, and issues focused on evaluative activities. Thus, another point to be reflected is about the possibility of establishing more interactive elements in the environment of the tutoring room. As Vêras (2007) points out, the promotion of discussions among individuals who share the virtual environment is important to promote greater articulation between them. To establish in this, a more fluid space, going beyond the simple relationship between questions and answers.

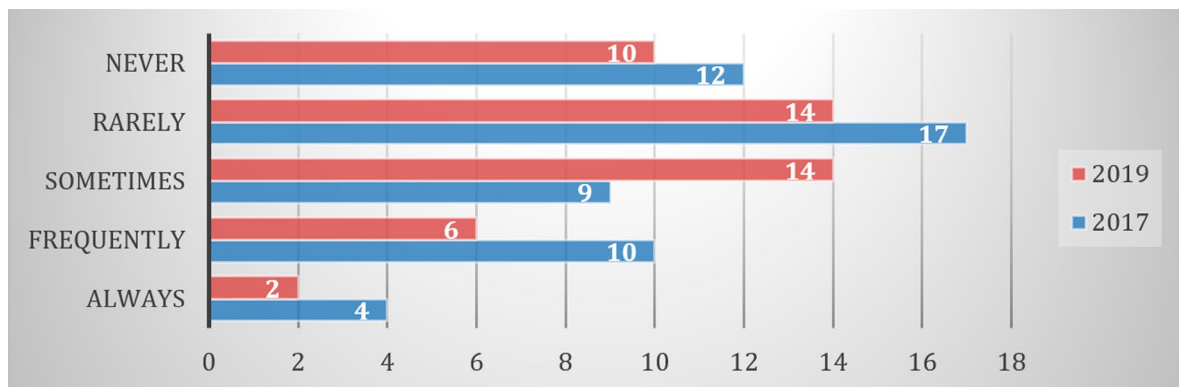
The promotion of interaction, especially among students, is important to establish the relevance and protagonism of students in their own formative scenarios. From exchanges of information, experiences

and knowledge. This, according to V eras (2007), removes the central role of distance learning of tutors, who should conduct the process of discussions.

Still considering the tutoring room, we sought to understand its relevance to the removal of doubts as a channel of rapid communication between students, tutoring and coordination of the discipline. Thus, he was asked if "does the tutoring room of the Discipline of International Relations offer him the necessary answers in a timely manner?".

According to the students of the year 2017, the level of responses in the tutoring room was quite skilled for about 34.61% of the students interviewed. Another 26.92% highlighted the communication of the tutoring room as ineffective. And about 19.23% rated the communication time of the tutoring room as always skilled. Among the students of 2019, about 43.37% of the respondents classified the level of communication of the tutoring room as very skilled. And 36.95% classified it as unskilled.

Regarding the interaction of IR teaching within the public administration course, the students were asked: "Do you believe that CEDERJ's distance international relations discipline is interactive?". The next graph summarizes the students' understanding of the degree of interaction of the discipline:



Graphic 5: Interaction level of the International Relations discipline.

Source: Prepared by the author.

Among the students of 2017, about 51.93% pointed out that the discipline is very interactive. While about 21.15% rated it as always interactive. Relevant points, because the interaction between individuals through the virtual environment is one of the main challenges of distance learning. For Catapan (2010), didactic material must go beyond the informational dynamics (of providing information), it should be able to promote critical knowledge, from the interaction between the individual and their social, political and economic realities; making it able to promote change in these scenarios.

According to the responses of the students of the discipline, the promotion of interaction is perceived from various instruments and activities. The chats promoted on the platform to present current issues that occur in the scenario of international relations is one of these. Another point listed as an instrument for online interaction is the forums established through the tutoring room. But, according to the placement of the students, it ends up having a more aspect related to the contents and theories of the discipline, limiting itself to more restricted subjects of "academic" nature. While chats would play a more relevant role in understanding this social dynamic of social relations over the life of each.

Some of the chats promoted between 2017 and 2019 were: discussion on terrorist attacks; issues related to the environment and the action of developed countries; brazil's contemporary role as a regional leader in South America. What is evident is that the articulation between theoretical elements and practical knowledge establishes a greater dynamics to the discipline. Tractenberg and Tractenberg (2007) elucidate the importance of the professional working in the EaD to establish competencies at

various levels, including: technological skills (proper use of tools), and facilitating skills (in promoting and coordinating discussions). In this way, bring together aspects of didactics to the implementation of new tools for the consolidation of discussion spaces in online platforms.

For 2019 students, about 52.17% classified the discipline as a very interactive environment. Another 28.26% classified the discipline as not interactive. And, 13.04% pointed to it as always interactive. It is important to highlight that in both years analyzed, most students pointed to the discipline of International Relations as very interactive based on their perceptions. Nevertheless, it is necessary to highlight the complexity of measuring participatory processes within digital platforms. This is because the registration of clicks or virtual actions cannot always be translated as qualifying interaction actions. Another point is the difficulty of measuring the quality of this detected interaction. Given that the perception of quality should be very well defined from precise analytical categories. And not only highlighted by technical-bureaucratic instruments that do not consider the active role of students, or even the effectiveness of these.

The interaction between student-trainers and student-students are fundamental components in the teaching-learning process from different perspectives that approach the phenomenon of distance education. Guarezi and Matos (2009) elucidate that it is essential to promote a more effective use of learning spaces, bringing students to a collective construction of knowledge, through informational channels.

The tools and dynamics of interactions applied in the discipline of International Relations were considered under the perception of the students of the discipline. Thus, it considered its conceptions of interactivity under the educational instruments and practices adopted during each school period, in the first semester of 2017 and in the first half of 2019. It is worth mentioning that in each of these periods different contents and themes were applied in the tools, as in online chats.

An important role of chats is to discuss issues under discussion in the area of IR during the period in which they are promoted. This dynamic is a point that helps in the commitment of students to participate in these spaces, even without mandatory, since participation in these had no computed grade. It was identified from the speech of the participants of the forums that a positive point was the dynamics used where the students themselves would insert, from the proposed theme, what questions would be discussed. Among the proposals for improving the tool, two close proposals were listed: 1) to open votes for the topics of the discipline's chats; 2) insert complementary content, such as videos that introduce the topic into debate; or, contents of other authors, experts and researchers on the subject. This second proposal is interesting because it seeks an integration between the activity of the discipline with research actions and the sharing of analyses of other investigative groups and research in the field of International Relations.

5. Conclusions

Among the issues addressed, it is important to point out that the space of the discipline of International Relations in the course of semi-face-to-face Public Administration encompasses a multifaceted dynamic, as it encompasses fields of theoretical science of inter-state relations and some debates inherent to the practice of the public manager in the field. In this way, the chair is positioned between the theory and analysis of contemporary conjunctures, seeking to develop an approximation of students to the main challenges of public administration in the face of international transformations and phenomena.

For the promotion of this exercise, via Moodle platform, some essential tools are used such as the news board and the use of complementary content, texts and blogs. The news board brings practical topics of the present to the programmatic contents of the discipline, showing students how these themes have practical relevance in the lives of public managers.

Other instruments already used in the platform help in the conduction of the discipline, however, the perception of the students denotes that the space of the tutoring room is not yet recognized as a field where shared knowledge is produced. A factor that highlights the challenge of THE in promoting spaces for integration and promotion of new knowledge from dialogical actions among students, tutors and teachers - another relevant aspect regarding ADs and their functionality, which should be used as an instrument to align experiences with programmatic content. However, it is still necessary, in the students' perception, to promote greater connection between these.

One note is the use of chats, such as channels of interaction and sharing of knowledge. However, they are limited to previously defined themes that are discussed in a previously defined period, still in the discipline schedule. This allows, on the one hand, the planning of the participation of those involved. But on the other hand, it ends up greatly limiting interactions in a given time period. Nevertheless, the instrumentalization of interactive forms and channels that bring the practice of international relations closer to is seen by most students as fundamental elements for the dynamization and consolidation of knowledge and theories.

In general, gamification tools are not used or that insert more practical actions within the discipline. A point that can be developed, with a view to the possibility of building new learning scenarios, through practical channels that correlate games, applications and other electronic means capable of promoting greater integration between theoretical knowledge and applied activities such as: diplomatic mediation (or interinstitutional), project development or data capture, indicators and national scenarios.

In addition to the dynamics posed between the agents involved in the EaD processes and the informational and interactional tools, a more solid advance in the analysis of their efficiency is necessary. Similarly, the research agenda around teaching tools should move towards not only scoring the presence or absence of such channels on online platforms, but also consolidating qualitative methodological indicators and instruments that advance in understanding the functioning and capabilities and limitations of these instruments. One path pointed out is the very perception of the agents involved in this process - tutors, mediators, teachers and students of the EaD system.

References

- ALENCAR, E. **Análise do significado: roteiro de aula**. [S.l.: s.n.], 2002. 20 f. *Mimeo*.
- BARROS, J., BEZERRA, T., CUNHA, M. **Uma revisão sistemática da literatura sobre gamificação no ambiente virtual de aprendizagem (AVA) Moodle e seus impactos no processo de ensino-aprendizagem**. In: Anais da XIX Escola Regional de Computação Bahia, Alagoas e Sergipe. SBC. 2019. p. 546-555
- CENSO DIGITAL EAD.BR 2018. **Relatório analítico da aprendizagem a distância no Brasil**. Disponível em: http://abed.org.br/arquivos/CENSO_DIGITAL_EAD_2018_PORTUGUES.pdf Acessado em: 10 de dezembro de 2019.
- CENTRO DE EDUCAÇÃO A DISTÂNCIA DO ESTADO DO RIO DE JANEIRO. Nossos Cursos. Disponível em: <http://cederj.edu.br/cederj/cursos/administracao-publica/> Acessado em 05 de fev. 2020.
- CATAPAN, A. H. **Uma metodologia para elaboração de material didático para EAD**. Congresso Internacional de Educação a distância. Florianópolis, 2010.
- CLAUSEWITZ, C. **Da guerra**. São Paulo: Martins Fontes, 2003.
- DA ROSA MUÑOZ, L.; SPODE, R. Pensamento com teoria: alternativas para o campo de Relações Internacionais no Brasil e na Índia. **Monções: Revista de Relações Internacionais da UFGD**, v. 8, n. 15, 2019. p. 336-365

- FERNANDES, S.; SIMÃO, L. **O multilateralismo: conceitos e práticas no século XXI**. Imprensa da Universidade de Coimbra, 2019.
- FOUCAULT, M. **Em defesa da sociedade**. São Paulo: Martins Fontes, 2002.
- FRANÇA, C. M.; DE OLIVEIRA, J.; KFORI, S. F. Contribuições dos Fóruns de Discussão em um Curso de Educação a Distância, na Modalidade Blended Learning, ofertado na Rede Pública do Estado do Paraná. **EAD em Foco**. v. 9, n. 1, 2019.
- GILPIN, R. **War and Change in World Politics**. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. 1981.
- GUAREZI, R. D. C. M.; MATOS, M. M. de. **Educação a distância sem segredos**. Ibepex 2009.
- JATOBÁ, D.; LESSA, A. C.; OLIVEIRA, H. A. de. (Coords.). **Teoria das Relações Internacionais**. v. 2. São Paulo: Saraiva, 2013.
- PEDRO, N.; RAZERA, F. A influência do papel do tutor na interação em fóruns de discussão: um estudo em EaD com base na análise de redes sociais. **Revista e-Curriculum**, v. 16, n. 2, 2018. p. 467-493
- PUCINELLI, R. H. **Caracterização e análise de interações em fóruns de discussão de professores de ciências em formação continuada on-line**. 2018. Tese de Doutorado. Universidade de São Paulo.
- RODRIGUES, T. M. de S. **Relações Internacionais**. 2ª Ed. Florianópolis: UFSC/CAPES-UAB, 2012.
- ROSALIN, B. C. M.; CRUZ, J. A. S.; DE MATTOS, M. B. G. A importância do material didático no ensino a distância. **Revista on line de Política e Gestão Educacional**, 2017, p. 814-830.
- SABBATINI, R. M. E. **Ambiente de Ensino e Aprendizagem via internet: a plataforma moodle**. Campinas: Instituto Edumed, 2007.
- THIELMANN, R.; et. al. **Desafios da Educação a Distância em Cursos de Especialização: a experiência da Universidade Federal Fluminense com o PNAP**. 2015.
- TRACTENBERG, L.; TRACTENBERG, R. **Seis competências essenciais da docência online independente**. CONGRESSO ABED. 2007.
- VÉRAS, S. C. L. M. O tutor como coadjuvante no processo de aquisição de conhecimento. **TE em Revista**. Brasília, v. 1, n. 1, jan/dez 2007. p. 55-72