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CHALLENGES TO BE SOLVED IN DISTANCE LEARNING AT THE SUPERIOR SCHOOL OF COMMERCE AND ADMINISTRATION SANTO TOMÁS UNIT OF `` INSTITUTO POLITÉCNICO NACIONAL ``

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Abstract: This presentation is about an investigation carried out by the Academic Subdirector and teachers of the Higher School of Commerce and Administration, Santo Tomás Unit (ESCASTO), of `` Instituto Politécnico Nacional `` (IPN). In a descriptive investigation whose objective was to investigate the student's opinion about the distance education program they are studying and in relation to the interaction that is established when working together with other people. A Likert-type questionnaire was built with 39 items. It was published on the platform for two months and students were invited to respond to it. An n = 35 students of Public Accounting and n = 25 students of the degree in Commercial Relations were obtained.

The main findings allow us to conclude that the students are happy to study a distance program, they are motivated, however, not all of them like to work in heterogeneous groups or do collaborative work.

Keywords: Distance learning degrees, Opinion on EAD programs, EAD Investigation

INTRODUCTION

The 21st century is considered a historical axis that will surely guide educational concepts and practices for many years. There is an educational paradigm that, although it preserves the traditional position, is influenced both by globalization with all its repercussions in the conception of what the economy and interaction are, covering aspects of social life, as well as by the use of Technologies of Information and Communication (ICT). All this has had an impact on the conception and functions of teachers and students. It has gone from having an education controlled by the teacher, as the owner of knowledge and a passive student, to having leading actors in which the teacher is considered a social actor, who moves in a macro-organization,

having a greater repercussion and their professionalism (Aguerrondo, 2010). In the case of students, their active role in the construction of knowledge is highlighted, either in face-to-face or distance (or non-school) models. They are given responsibility in their autonomous learning and in the participation they have in working with others and getting to do it collaboratively both in person and through a computer in unconventional programs.

THE EDUCATIONAL FACT AND ITS ACTORS

The participants in the educational situation have been influenced in their doing both by the current paradigms, expressed in the pedagogical models and in the management that has become information that is available to everyone. Hence the importance of the skills and knowledge that are the focus of institutional educational models in all areas, including the social and administrative sciences (Olea, Badillo, & Enríquez, 2011). The programs have changed, many educational institutions have implemented distance and blended programs, along with face-to-face ones, and student mobility from one model to another has developed. All this has been accompanied by the current type of communication in which digital hypertext is used, which takes up cultural expressions resulting from human interaction (Castells, 2010).

According to Rodríguez-Hoyos and Calvo (2010), electronic and mixed learning have gained importance in the educational field. In Mexico, the educational programs of the Ministry of Public Education since the end of the 20th century have expressed interest in open and distance education as a way to expand coverage and combat the lag, which also with the development of skills in the use of ICT favors their insertion in the knowledge

society (García 2007). So, returning to Rama (2009) who classifies as “i” competencies those essential to live in today’s society, he points out the one that corresponds to interaction, in addition to ten others, among which stand out computing, informational, international and innovative.

In this sense, students are required to develop skills to work in heterogeneous groups, whose members may differ in terms of gender, age, marital status, academic training, economic situation, political context or place of origin, among other aspects. That they have the ability to do collaborative work that allows them to confront other points of view and be able to solve -with the help of teachers- the problems that may arise and thus reduce the dissatisfaction that not adapting to *working together* can cause.

In non-conventional programs, it is important that participants learn to work collaboratively. Therefore, according to Panitz (2001), collaborative learning requires that the group enjoy a certain autonomy to decide the way in which it will work, since the students establish the way in which they are going to interact (learn) and make decisions about it. In the case of cooperative work, it is advisable for the teacher to structure the activities, maintaining control of the interactions of the results that are planned to be obtained. Both types of learning are based on the theoretical proposal of constructivism; the student discovers knowledge and transforms it into concepts with which he can relate, building-reconstructing his learning and applying it to her experiences.

Panitz, in 2004, mentions that there are different social and psychological benefits as repercussions in the development of collaborative work since it favors the student’s metacognition (controls their progress personally); They present students with the possibility of analyzing different situations

from points of view different from their own, so they learn to play various roles, including being able to direct, all of which has an impact on their own satisfaction with their learning, avoiding (or reducing, as the case may be) anxiety levels.

It is worth mentioning that the age of the student also influences since teachers can be considered as models in which the emotional part is important since through the interaction that they promote in their students at a distance and that they do through a technological platform or by email and even by mobile phone, requires having a relevant management of intelligence and emotional competence that results in the behavior and desire to work of their students (Lira and Vela, 2013).

But contextualizing what refers to this research, it must be said that the Superior School of Commerce and Administration, Santo Tomás unit of the IPN, since 2008 began the work inherent to the development of non-school models, in addition to the degrees in models school or face-to-face. Hence, the distance-learning degree in International Trade was launched in 2009 and later the degrees in Public Accounting, Commercial Relations and International Business and recently the Administration and Business Development. So, starting in 2013, research has been carried out with the objective of analyzing the perception that students enrolled in their distance degrees have regarding the way in which they work, in addition to the specific tasks of their academic figures (teachers) and the repercussions that all this has in themselves. What is presented here is the opinion of the students only of the first two degrees, but specifically in what corresponds to what they think about the program they are studying, the fulfillment of expectations and the interaction, which through collaborative work, has been tried to

develop.

METHODOLOGICAL STRATEGY

This paper only presents partial data that correspond to the degrees in Public Accounting (CP) and Commercial Relations (LRC). At present, work is being done on the rest of the degrees and at the beginning of 2016 the study of the characteristics of the students assigned to these programs has begun, since there is an interest in having information on the protagonists of the non-school models. ESCA ST.

It was based on the *assumption* that students who are studying any of the distance education degrees at the Escuela Superior de Comercio y Administración consider that it is a good program, which develops skills to work in a group, which has an impact on their future entry into the university work market.

According to the variables, the aspects that were established as a good program were that they were convinced of the model, that they considered themselves motivated, that they recommended the program and that they felt proud to be part of the school. Regarding that the *program favored their insertion in the field of work* it is that they learned to interact with heterogeneous groups, in addition to developing a taste for doing tasks in collaboration with their peers.

Student sample. Since the questionnaire was published on the platform, students were invited to respond to it, using a sample of volunteer subjects. They were asked for their general data to be able to make the groups and take them as a reference for interpretation. At the end of September 2013, it was possible to specify an $n = 35$ CP students and an $n = 25$ LRC students.

Questionnaire used to collect information. A Likert-type questionnaire was developed with four types of responses (agree, totally agree, disagree and totally disagree), which

was made up of 39 items, which, in addition to the student's own aspects, asked about the functions made by their teachers.

The questionnaire was piloted in 116 students of the four degrees (Public Accounting and Commercial Relations, International Business and International Trade) and there were no suggestions regarding modification of the items. Reliability was calculated, obtaining $\alpha = .847$.

ANALYSIS OF RESULTS

Based on the data issued by the students, according to Table 1, it can be said that the programs of the Higher School of Commerce and Administration, Santo Tomás unit (ESCASTO) with distance educational models (not schooled) are of interest for both females and males. These are young students who are studying their degree in a period of time normal to that covered in school programs, since 52% of the students in Public Accounting are between 20 and 29 years old and for this same age cut, the 48% of Business Relations students.

Regarding the levels they are studying, the vast majority of the students of both degrees are enrolled in the first three levels, just as they were born and live in Mexico City and in federal entities in the center of the country. With a slightly smaller percentage, 87% on average, they work. It can be observed that there are more Public Accounting students (24%) who have other studies, be it bachelor's degrees, technical careers, accounting assistant or office work; Compared to the members of the LRC sample, only three of them have studied programs before enrolling in the distance degree (one has a bachelor's degree and there are two who have a technical degree).

As can be seen, according to graph 1, in the two degrees there is an opinion that it was a good decision to do the studies at a distance.

However, the 9% who did not agree with this are women who work and perhaps because of their work and personal occupations they have little time to study at a distance.

According to graph 2, for a little more than half of the Public Accounting students (58%) and for 40% of Commercial Relations, they consider that the distance modality is not easier than the face-to-face one.

Regarding whether the students feel motivated, it can be seen in graph 3 that almost all of them perceive it as such, except for a Public Accounting student who is one of the people who said she was not convinced that she had decided to do distance studies.

Now, regarding the development of competence to work in heterogeneous groups, the data is presented in graph 4.

It can be affirmed that almost all the students did not find it problematic to work on their homework with classmates of different ages, occupations and genders. A minimum amount, 10.5% on average of the two degrees, could not adapt, detecting that they are students who work and possibly having fixed hours prevents them from agreeing since the conditions of the members of the groups are different.

It is interesting to note, according to graph 5, that it is difficult for the students of the two degrees to have interaction as a way of working (28% for LRC and 40% for CP) since they need to accept interdependence to carry out any activity. and respect the contributions of colleagues. This constitutes one of the challenges to address since we currently live in a network society and the inhabitants of the world are seen as a general citizenry where interaction is privileged -as competition- in which human beings seek their identity. but within the planetary community (Morín, 1999).

Finally, in this analysis we want to touch on what is related to the level of belonging that

the students assigned to these degrees can feel.

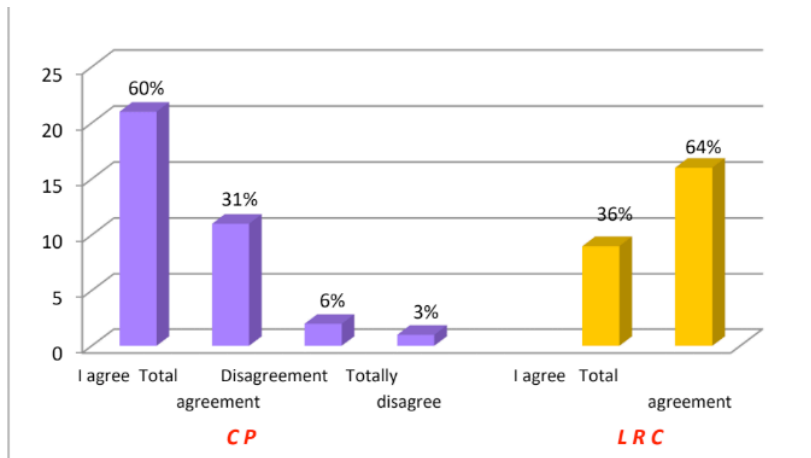
Based on the data in graph 6, it is concluded that 87%, on average of the two degrees, are proud to study at the National Polytechnic Institute. However, 18% of the members of the sample, enrolled in PC, are not satisfied (half of them are male, all of them work -except one who does not- and their ages fluctuate between 20 and 29 years, only one student is in the age range of 30 to 34 years). In the case of 8% of LRC students, their ages are between 20 and 29 years old and one does not work. Here, more action is required on the part of the teachers in terms of creating an accepting school environment that is reinforced more frequently and in which through cohesion, understood as the result of the process of identification and adaptation of the members of the courses, develop and/or strengthen the belonging, and thus the pride, of being part of the polytechnic community.

CONCLUSIONS

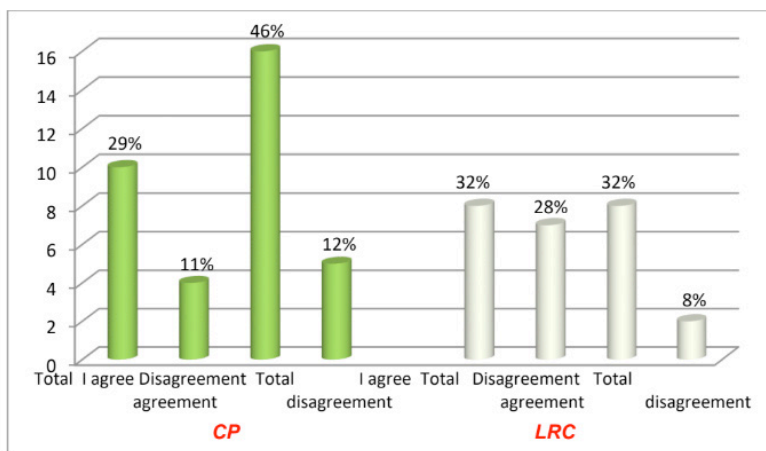
- The students that integrated the CP and LRC samples are young people who are happy to study in a non-school program; they are motivated, although distance programs are not easier than face-to-face ones, as is sometimes thought.
- The majority feel proud of being polytechnics, although the authorities think that they have the challenge of making this the feeling of all the members of the community.
- It was also identified as a challenge for the programs to be able to sensitize the students in carrying out learning activities in heterogeneous groups.
- The most important challenge identified, a task to be carried out by the academic areas, is to arouse interest and make students have collaborative work as part of their pattern of behavior and

Rubrics that characterize the students		% Accounting public	%Business relationships
Gender	Female	54	52
	Male	46	48
Age	20-24 years	29	32
	25-29 years	23	16
	30-34 years	14	12
	35-39 years	6	20
	40-44 years	9	8
	45 or over	19	12
They take levels 1,2 or 3		91	84
They were born in Mexico City or the center of the country		97	94
Live in DF or center of the country		97	96
They have other studies		24	12
They work as well as study		86	88

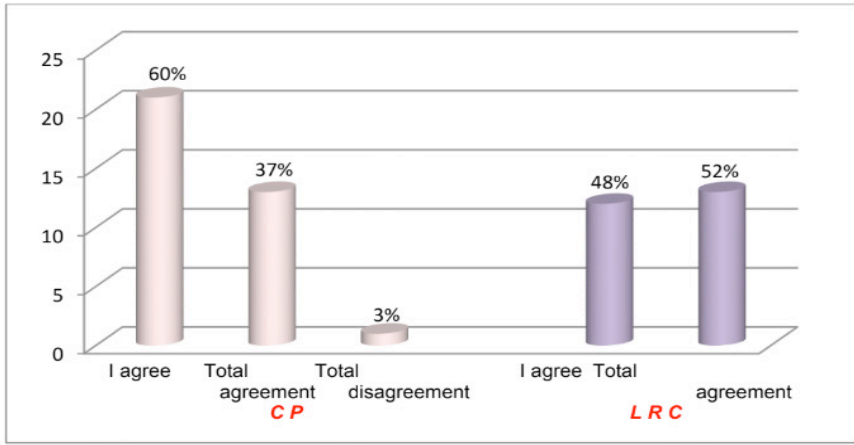
Table 1. General characteristics of the students who responded



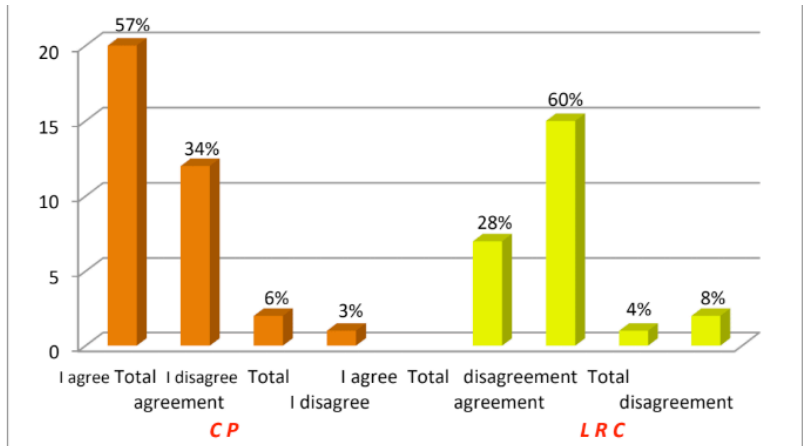
Graph 1. Convincing students to do a distance program.



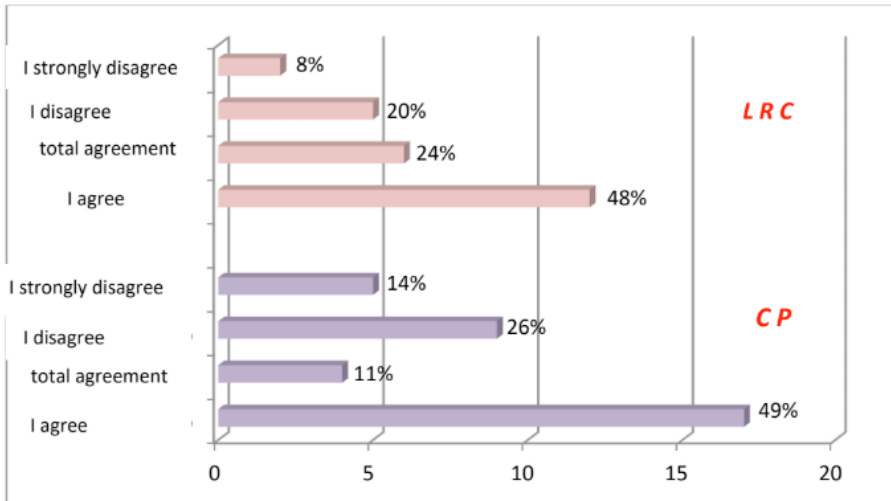
Graph 2. Distance programs are considered to be easier.



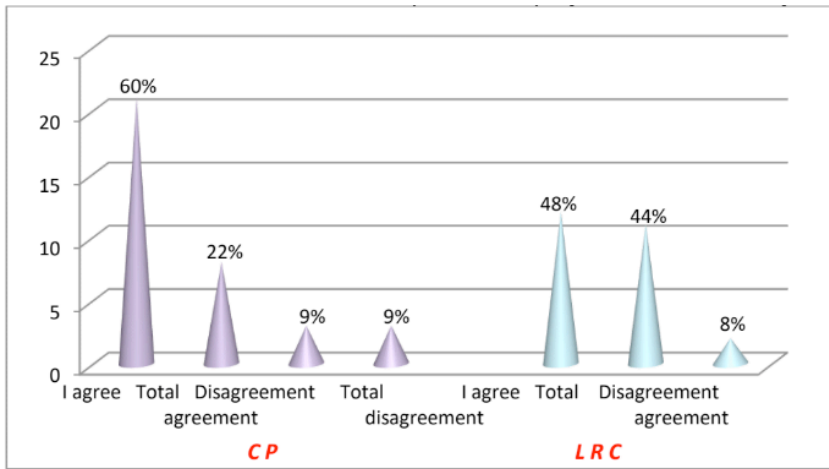
Graph 3. Student motivation.



Graph 4. Carrying out tasks with heterogeneous groups



Graph 5. I like to do collaborative work



Graph 6. Pride that the student feels to be part of the polytechnic community

attitudes. You are in a planetary village and with the use of technology a network society has developed that is the one that

survives in the 21st century and you must be prepared to live in it.

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