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Introduction:

The health science college in the Brasília University (FS/UnB in Portuguese) presents distance education to teach the health area in undergraduate and graduate subjects.

Objective:

This research defined the study environment and interaction procedures between undergraduate and graduate students from health area in FS/UnB.

Methodology:

Study of exploratory nature powered by a quantifying approach. Sample of 133 students who answered the data collecting instrument (ICD in Portuguese) in the model of Likert scale of 11 points, from 0 to 10, and analyzed by the software SPSS version 17.0.

Results:

Scholars reached excellent quality, as long as all the items, in all the groups, showed values above 7. Thus, it was observed that both groups remained in the disciplines and the course for similar reasons. The study environment and interaction procedures were evaluated on the items that may have hindered or facilitated the permanence in the disciplines and rated course. Thus, it was observed that the answers of students, characterized as average, show both the quality of the study environment, as the promoters of interaction procedures. All items in both had mean and median values greater than 7, on a measure where 0 meant "hindered my permanency in the course / discipline" and 10 "not hindered my permanency in the course / discipline."

So, some items that can be considered as facilitating aspects for the student's permanence in the course are: computer use in different activities of the course / discipline in my everyday life; the reconciliation of discipline with other study activities and family commitments; the availability of the computer; the financial cost for printing of course materials, computer maintenance and to access the internet; conciliation with professional activities; access to the course on the internet and study of contents with the proposed regularity; the quality of the Internet connection and administrative messages sent; the reading volume on the computer screen; and the use of messages, forum and chat to communicate with tutors and colleagues.

Conclusion:

Although there are significant statistic differences between means, from students in undergraduate and graduate courses, the effects of were not significant, demonstrating that both groups remained in the subjects and course for similar reasons. The use of this education category is in agreement with the most up-to-date methodologies for educational and communication areas implemented nowadays, constituting as a genuine process of social transformation through education. The results can contribute to diminish students' evasion.

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keywords: distance education, higher education, instructional procedures, information and communication technologies.