

Intellectual capital and distance education: the experience of the open university of Brazil in the municipality of Camaçari, Bahia

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ABSTRACT

The main objective of this research is to evaluate the influence of intellectual human capital transformation, from the student's perception, through the Open University of Brazil's distance education in the municipality of Camaçari, which is an industrial hub in the metropolitan area of Salvador, Bahia. At this rate, education and development are closely connected, pondering previous studies where this approach is present. Meanwhile, distance education (DE) streamlines through its capillarity in several regions altering the perception and the way of transmitting knowledge. Additionally, it enables significant changes if we relate the human capital and the field of study, considering cultural, ethical and social aspects. From a methodological point of view, descriptive research has been chosen, using qualitative inquiry. In relation to the methodological process, the Survey method research has been used. This study is justified due to the dimension in which the distance education has been widespread in Brazil and worldwide. As it is a regulated model by the superior instances of education in Brazil, and thus a more detailed one, it deserves more emphasis, once it often approaches DE, human capital and the region where it lies in. Following this understanding, studying the activities of the Open University of Brazil (OUB) in Camaçari, contributes to the perception of changes in the logic of education offer in the distance model, deployment in culture in a general scope and the perception of social freedoms in the object region of study. Hence, it is evident that the DE conducted by OUB in Camaçari gives rise to conditions for training and improving human capital taking into account its urban and social infrastructure, among other factors that combined, foster fertile ground to mitigate the social asymmetries while expanding individual freedoms and the progress of the region.

Keywords: camaçari, distance education, economic growth, human capital, open university of Brazil.

1 INTRODUCTION

The main objective of this study is to investigate distance education in a regional context and relate it to the human capital theory. In relation to the reactions risen after getting to know Schultz's thoughts (1963), it is understood that the theorists that deal with social freedoms and perceive education as a factor that instigates social dynamics, have been to a certain extent influenced by the human capital theory. More precisely, in the piece "O Valor Econômico da Educação". At this point we must ratify that this study does not intend to discourse on the economic theories in an epistemological analysis, even though there are questions that will be dealt with in a transversal way, not bringing theoretical currents which are the basis of economic Science in, but discussing about the resources which have been destined to education, specifically the modality offered as distance education (DE) in the Universidade Aberta do Brasil (UAB), located in the industrial hub of Camaçari, in the state of Bahia, being that the chosen territorial landmark for this investigation. For better understanding, this article has been divided into three sections. The first one is the introduction, which basically discourses on the investigation objectives and the dimension of higher education in the State of Bahia. The second one will analyse distance education, human capital and its developments in the educational economy in a regional context. The third one will present the empirical research and its evidences. The fourth, and last, will deal with the conclusions.

Taking over the introductory analysis about higher education in Bahia, its dynamics must be highlighted within the state, not as the main object of this investigation, notwithstanding the belief that the expansion, the current multipolar characteristic of education in the state of Bahia, is only possible because of the movement classified as the higher education internalization. In this work, the dynamics of education for the countryside of the State of Bahia, is addressed in a transversal way, being nevertheless authentic, mainly after the authorization and implementation of the Universidade do Estado da Bahia (UNEB), the awareness of the fundamental and fertile ground advent in which we can currently observe the capillarity of distance education strongly advance within all the territory in Bahia. "Boaventura (2009: 17)".

Taking up the objectives of the research, Distance Education (EAD), linked to the human capital theory, in the students perceptions and its unfoldings at the UAB, in the municipality of Camaçari, is the core of this investigation. Following this tendency, motivation derives from the reflexions and analysis upon the best practices in the field of distance higher education, perceptions, students reactions, professors, tutors and mainly the relations with income, job market and human capital development, considering the municipality of Camaçari in the state of Bahia as its territorial scope.

In face of what has already been said, the basis of empirical knowledge and the researcher's professional experience and support in the theme's choice, this article questions to what extent distance

education through the Universidade Aberta do Brasil (UAB), in the student's perception, influences as a transformation factor in the human capital transformation within the municipality of Camaçari, Bahia.

The region, territorial scope of this investigation, the municipality of Camaçari, is located 51km far from the Capital of Bahia, Salvador, and holds 784,7 km² of territorial área, being 42km of coastal zone, enclosed in the metropolitan region of Salvador (RMS) which is formed by the municipalities of Camaçari, Candeias, Dias d'Ávila, Itaparica, Lauro de Freitas, Madre de Deus, Mata de São João, Pojuca, Salvador, São Francisco do Conde, São Sebastião do Passé, Simões Filho e Vera Cruz. According to the Demographic Census of 2010 "IBGE (2010)", Camaçari held 242.970 inhabitants, therefore being the fourth municipality in terms of population in the state. In terms of households, 231.973 inhabitants lived in urban áreas, 10.997 in rural ones, and the percentage of urbanization was 95,5%. In terms of gender, the female population corresponds to 120.704 (49,7%) inhabitants. Camaçari holds business ventures such as Ford, Braskem, Bridgestone Firestone (market leader in the tyre industry worldwide), and Caraíba Metais, Brazil's main copper producer.

In terms of higher education, eleven educational institutions in Camaçari offer distance education and the State University of Bahia (UNEB), the Federal University of Bahia (UFBA), the Federal University of Paraíba (UFPB), the Federal University of Ouro Preto (UFOP) and the Rural Federal University of Pernambuco (UFRPE), participate in the UAB system in Camaçari.

Analyzing the human capital as one of the important factors in the regional development process, this study serves as an evaluation tool to determine if distance education is in fact capable of mitigating social inequalities existing in the municipality of Camaçari.

From a methodological point of view the Descriptive Survey was chosen, and turning to the qualitative research with some quantitative co-relations, this epistemological cut has proved to be more adequate to the objectives of the study. Within this compass, the social fact may be substantiated through observations, registers and analysis in search of knowledge obtained directly from the reality, by interpreting significative samples. The "Babbie (2005)" Survey research has been used. The purpose of the investigation proposal, points at the applied research in the sense of fostering scientific knowledge about the object of study and eliciting new investigations. Aiming at the development of this scientific communication, we will move to the next topic which will analyze the human capital and the economy of education.

2 HUMAN CAPITAL AND EDUCATION ECONOMY

The relation between human capital and education is a reflection that has its origins in the first conferences given by Theodore Schultz in the 60's, which brought the economy closer to education.

Following this path, other theorists that held previous speeches from Schultz were highlighted, as to a certain extent, have contributed to the construction of the human capital theory.

In this sense, Marshall considered in terms of national character, the intellectual and ethical attributes as the most valuable commodities in the production function. Marshall defends being in the face of one of the most decisive ingredients in the economic growth recipe. Therefore, to him, the quality of the man is what mattered the most.

This way, one may assume that, in contemporaneity, the job markets are in constant need of technological development towards promoting not only economic growth but also, guaranteeing the continuity in solutions, noted in the fields of health and education, being these embodied in the intent of mitigating the social inequalities which are the most evident in periferic countries, “Marshall (1985)”.

While analyzing Marshall’s thoughts (1985), we see the man allied to the production factors. “Fonseca (1992: 65)” thinks that “a specific aspect within Marshall’s microeconomic policy recommendations, refers to his analysis and discussion over the role of human capital investment as a way of eradicating mass poverty, and in the process of development”.

Following the initial routes of this study, after having discussed aspects and variations of the economists that marked the first perceptions of the economic value in education, we will talk about the conceptual basis of the human capital theory. This analysis is mainly backed by the epistemological findings of the American economist Theodore Willian Schultz. We understand that Schultz was responsible for perceiving a gap in the economic theories towards the economic efforts with a view to knowledge, its cost in the different spheres and the return provided by the individuals after the acquisition of competencies and habilities through education.

In this sense, the human capital theory is believed to have been diffused after the first publications that dealt with Schult’s findings in the Journal of Political Economy. The theory talks about the set of gained knowledge, either from formal or informal education, obtained from the social and cultural experiences of the individuals. This theoretical framework provides not only intelectual growth but also increases the possibilities of absortion in the job market in concordance with regional demands, “Schultz (1973a: 18)”.

Still following “Schultz (1973b)” understanding, there’s a direct connection between human capital and income distribution. “The alteration of investments in human capital is a basic fact towards the reduction of inequalities in income distribution” “Schultz (1973b: 82)”.

Subsequently, others approached the human capital theory relating it to education. One of the contemporary exponents, also known as a Nobel Prize of Economy in 1992, specially due to his theoretical findings regarding human capital analysis and his aproximations with education, is the economist Gary

Becker who expressed his convictions in the human capital theory at his founding piece, “Human Capital: a theoretical and empirical analysis”, with special reference to education (1993).

In Brazil, the economist Cláudio de Moura Castro had already approximated the theme of education and its unfoldings towards economic development in his work, *Desenvolvimento Econômico, Educação e Educabilidade* “Castro (1976)”.

Considering the evident search for the understanding of the unfoldings on the education in the local economy, it is assured that the economy of education deserves the special attention given by the theoreticians due to its high cost. In order to be analyzed in a multidimensional perspective, both costs with formation and opportunities from the point of view of individual choices, must be perceived and analyzed in consonance with the region demands. In other terms, the high cost of knowledge acquisition must be proportional to its return, being that initially they must return to the individuals, and then progress to the social tissue.

In the meantime, the compensation that the individuals may obtain through instruction and /or the acquisition of competencies and abilities as personal investment has not been considered. The latter, once absorbed, will benefit at first the own individual who will unfold via knowledge, intellectual gains. Individuals who own knowledge may access more specialized job posts, more productivity, more financial gains, adding to it the guarantee of individual freedoms, which are substantive in sense of economic growth in *lato sensu* “Sen (2010: 33)”.

It is assured then, that the consequence of possible economical benefits arise from the access to new job markets, as a result of formation. It is understood that it is not possible to dissociate individual gains from the apprehension of knowledge and aspirations of freedom guarantees. “Schultz (1973a: 53)”.

In this line of thought, it is understood that human capital is a result of the investment made in men. As consequences, there will be unfoldings in a broad sense, as well as alterations in the dynamics of culture and knowledge apprehension. The human capital theory presents, among other aspects, the degree of the community capacitation for qualified jobs. This dynamics unfolds in the use of new Technologies and in a certain degree of innovation in both public and private spheres. “Fonseca (1992: 79)”.

As previously discussed, the classical economic thinkers treated economic growth by basically highlighting its classical tripartite relationship (land, labor and capital). In counterpoint to it, as Schultz advocates, “Schultz (1973a: 12)”, the economies of other countries with natural resources shortage developed to a great extent, due to this lack of resources. On account of this hindrance, there has been the need of the development of new technologies that could overlay geographical nature, such as the lack of a productive territorial strip. Therefore, it is ensured that distance education (DE) presents itself as an option from the capilarity point of view, regarding the possibility of offering education without frontiers.

Directing the analysis on the economic growth and approximating it to the Human Capital theory, we verify that the perception of the investment vector is inexorable under the view of capital stock leveraging, aiming at raising income, mitigating social inequalities, whilst it is understood that there are other important variables related to development.

In a certain economy, the additional income fluxes reflect the economic growth and represent a certain function of the classes and amount of investment. Therefore, a classification towards investment as an activity that is subjected to the decisions taken in both public and private spheres is needed. “Schultz (1973a: 16)”.

Thus, providing access to new job posts from the knowledge acquired, allows better results through the intellectual competences acquired through new trainings/formation. As “Verhine (2015: 30)” well ensures, education and training may generate value in the form of abilities and knowledge and as a consequence it may increase one’s productive and intellectual capacities. Nevertheless, in his study he mentions that, during the first half of the twentieth century, lines of thoughts that followed this kind of bias were not only scarce but also sporadic.

Investments in education may be analysed individually or collectively. In other words, these are potentially valuable for both individual and Society as a whole. If investment in education is perceived as a spiral, it generates knowledge and abilities that reverberate in job market access. It is considered that acquired knowledge, even not formally, unfolds into productivity, income and freedoms, moving and feeding back the individual and the social tissue.

The dynamics of the gains obtained by the investment into human capital, provided by investment in education, being that formal or informal, will foster the construction of knowledge that by implication will allow the development of new abilities. These qualities will reflect in the increase of productivity and in its turn it will boost greater gains in relation to the income and the substantial freedoms of the individual who will benefit through time. “Verhine (2015: 31) Sen (2010: 17)”.

In face of what has already been exposed, we advocate that the gains in human capital go beyond the economy, reaching in great measure the acceptance not only related to rentability, as long as there is a social perception regarding other forms of capital. As examples of these other forms, there is the formation resulting from both tacit and explicit points of view, health care which is related to the expenses they generate, and virtues such as punctuality and honesty which are also forms of capital expression. “Becker (1993:15)”.

That said, we will naturally move to the section on the analysis and interpretation of this data investigation.

3 PRESENTATION AND DISCUSSION OF RESULTS

Once the economy of education and its unfoldings in relation to the distance education offered in the municipality of Camaçari have been discussed, nearing them in great measure to the support of authors who base their analysis over the human capital theory, we then move towards the discussion of the empirical results phase as it has already been mentioned in the introduction of this paper.

In a fundamental way, the basis in which the data has been collected is highlighted and the Survey chosen method is ratified. In this scenario, the way the chosen instrument for data collection, the questionnaire, is composed and divided, is described. This one was composed by 37 questions, divided into 5 blocks: identification data, perception over the course and formation/qualification; personal attributes; the unfoldings of the distance education course at the UAB under a professional perspective; current situation of the students in the job market.

This way, having had access to 73 students on campus and anchored on the main theory of limits which admits that 40 studied cases are the bare minimum for a consistent perception of a tendency, 20 initial cases were collected. This served as data for a first analysis and testing of the chosen instrument. At the second moment, 53 more cases were collected. On the basis of the total number of investigated cases, we moved towards the database construction phase, assured that the number of studied cases was enough for a consistent perception of a tendency.

To compose the work, the answers were grouped at a municipal level in two large geographical units, the metropolitan region of Salvador (RMS) and the countryside, aiming at facilitating the analysis in the empirical field.

The analysis of the data, originated from the databases generated through the questionnaires answered by the students who attend the UAB, Camaçari Campus, Bahia. We must emphasize that this analysis followed the same rationale as the applied questionnaire, from the point of view of the blocks that stratified the instrument which was defined for the data collection.

In other terms, the questionnaire was the broadest it could be, from the point of view of possibilities, once the empirical field, in the first analysis, has proved to be of little specificity. As a corollary, the built database evidenced multiple possibilities of information. In this article, five frames are presented. According to this model, the correlated data was the result of an accurate analysis in the sense of scrutinizing the collected information and presenting it with the proper considerations, in the perspective of favouring comprehension and fostering a consistent synthesis, notably within the conclusions and recommendations. Additionally, from the methodological point of view, all the reactions that were inserted in the field of subjective answers in the questionnaire have been taken into consideration during the interpretation and inference moments of this section, as well as the narratives from the interviewees at the moment of the data collection.

Frame 1 — Percentual distribution of the Distance Education (EAD) Students of the UAB, according to age and gender — Camaçari — 2015

Age range (Years)	Gende		
	Total	Male	Female
Up to 24	6,3%	7,3%	6,8%
From 25 to 29	12,5%	17,1%	14,9%
From 30 to 39	37,5%	43,9%	40,5%
From 40 to 49	31,3%	17,1%	23,0%
50 +	12,5%	14,6%	13,5%
Total	100,0%	100,0%	100,0%

Source: author’s elaboration, 2015.

Based on the first frame, it is perceived that the female students aged between 30 to 39 years old are the main predominance in the courses offered at UAB, on the Camaçari campus, during the mentioned period. It is argued then that there is a tendency at UAB that the enrolled students are undergraduates after having taken care of their families and children’s education, who are now seeking for explicit knowledge; already graduated students searching for a new graduation, or yet, Sensu Lato or Stricto Sensu students, looking for new graduations.

Frame 2 — Percentual distribution of the Distance Education (EAD) Students of the UAB, according to birthplace and residence — Camaçari — 2015

Birthplace	Residence		
	RMS ¹	Countryside	Total
Metropolitan Region of Salvador, Bahia	71,2%	25,0%	66,2%
A municipality from another Federation unity	9,1%	25,0%	10,8%
A municipality in the countryside of Bahia	19,7%	50,0%	23,0%
Total	100,0%	100,0%	100,0%

Source: author’s elaboration, 2015.

Note¹: Metropolitan Region of Salvador.

The variables used in frame two emphasize relevant questions in terms of the development in the region, which is the object of this study. 71,2% of the students at UAB in Camaçari were born in the metropolitan region of Salvador and currently reside in the metropolitan area of Salvador, whilst 50% of the students who were born in municipalities in the countryside still reside there.

There are two important questions that must be addressed. The first is related to the other students who currently reside in the countryside of Bahia. 50% were born in the countryside and the other 50% are split among other Federation units and the metropolitan region of Salvador (RMS); and, from a macro point of view, the correlated variables show that the majority of the UAB students live in the metropolitan region of Salvador, RMS. In these terms, we defend that investment in education returns, taking into

consideration the timing of the data collection and its analysis, 100% towards the metropolitan region of Salvador (RMS) and the other municipalities in the countryside of Bahia. It is highlighted that even the other 10,8% of the students who were born in other Federation units, currently reside in the metropolitan region of Salvador or in other municipalities in the State of Bahia. Therefore, based on the studied theoretical referential, there is a perception that the investments which aim at promoting ways of mitigating social inequalities, while also seeking for promoting improvements in the level of human capital in the region, have reached their target in great measure so far.

Still imbued with this same thought, we may infer that the program and the partnerships among the municipality, the MEC (Ministry of Education and Culture), and the universities have been putting a lot of effort in order to guarantee that the demands of regional loco formation are observed.

Through this analysis, it is perceived that the context of higher education and of the region where it is inserted is being boosted, empowering students with knowledges and enabling them in at least two aspects: Education in terms of development of a solid basis for thinking attributes happens in good terms, despite Foucault's thought in the perception of aligning education and growth.

Another question to be discussed is related to the region which seems to be completely connected to the individuals who live there and at the same time are students, heads of families and spouses. At this point, it is important to establish a counterpoint with the founding theory "Rolim (2009: 33)", which emphasizes the importance of the perception regarding where the university is settled. In other terms, the university must not be analyzed without convergently analyzing the region where it is inserted. The regional aspects are of utmost importance to the envision of the magnitude of the university intervention within the social spheres.

Frame 3 — Percentual distribution of Distance Education (EAD) Students of the UAB, according to admission criteria (easiness) and affinity with the chosen area of study— Camaçari — 2015

Easy admissions	Affinity with chosen area of study					Total
	Very relevant	Relevant	Neutral	Irrelevant	Very irrelevant	
Very relevant	22,2%	5,0%	0,0%	0,0%	0,0%	10,8%
Relevant	33,3%	42,5%	50,0%	0,0%	0,0%	36,5%
Neutral	7,4%	15,0%	50,0%	0,0%	33,3%	13,5%
Irrelevant	14,8%	25,0%	0,0%	100,0%	33,3%	23,0%
Very irrelevant	22,2%	12,5%	0,0%	0,0%	33,3%	16,2%
Total	100,0%	100,0%	100,0%	100,0%	100,0%	100,0%

Source: author's elaboration, 2015.

Questions related to the perception of the students regarding the UAB course, Camaçari Campus, will now be discussed. In this correlation, we seek to understand the perception of the student in consonance with the chosen course. In other terms, we want to know if there is proximity between the easiness in admission and affinity with the chosen course. Using the database, we may infer that 36,5% of the students who have answered the questionnaire find the easiness to be admitted in the course, to some extent, to be relevant.

In second analysis, 42,5% of the students who considered the affinity with the course to be relevant, also do so with easy admissions. Therefore, it is advocated that there is an approximation, to a certain extent, between access to higher education in the Distance Education modality, at UAB, in the municipality of Camaçari, to the need for formation or expectations towards specific formation/graduation, in the perception of the student, considering his/her life perspective.

It is also advocated that this inference has as its bases the perception of the student who keeps his/her expectations and cultural aspects. In other words, the need of formation perceived by the municipality, which is in compliance with the student's expectations and the job market, is assured.

Frame 4 — Percentual distribution of Distance Education (EAD) Students of the UAB, according to degrees of relevance of distance education modality and degree obtention — Camaçari — 2015

Distance modality	Degree obtention					Total
	Very relevant	Relevant	Neutral	Irrelevant	Very irrelevant	
Very relevant	36,4%	17,6%	28,6%	14,3%	50,0%	25,7%
Relevant	50,0%	55,9%	42,9%	42,9%	25,0%	50,0%
Neutral	0,0%	17,6%	28,6%	14,3%	25,0%	13,5%
Irrelevant	4,5%	5,9%	0,0%	28,6%	0,0%	6,8%
Very Irrelevant	9,1%	2,9%	0,0%	0,0%	0,0%	4,1%
Total	100,0%	100,0%	100,0%	100,0%	100,0%	100,0%

Source: author's elaboration, 2015.

It may be verified that 50% of the UAB students in the municipality of Camaçari understand as relevant the distance education modality (DE), related to the obtention of a diploma, whereas 25,7% find it very relevant. It must be ratified that graduation and lato sensu specialization students were the target of this research.

Thus, it may be inferred that the students who do not find the obtention of a diploma relevant, have already got a higher education one, lato sensu or stricto sensu specialization and are in search of new job posts, which will be offered in face of this new graduation/formation. As "Schultz (1973b: 19)" addresses, when he says that organized education however, is not only committed to producing "instruction". In this way, the most important thing to the educational context is the dedication towards creating favorable

conditions to foster knowledge, in face of one's personal interest in overcoming his/her curriculum learning.

Frame 5 — Percentual distribution of Distance Education (EAD) Students of the UAB, according relevance of chosen course and job opportunities — Camaçari — 2015

Job promotion	Job promotion				Very irrelevant	Total
	Very relevant	Relevant	Neutral	Irrelevant		
Very Relevant	37,0%	16,1%	10,0%	33,3%	0,0%	23,0%
Relevant	29,6%	41,9%	0,0%	0,0%	0,0%	28,4%
Neutral	14,8%	16,1%	50,0%	0,0%	33,3%	20,3%
Irrelevant	11,1%	12,9%	20,0%	33,3%	0,0%	13,5%
Very Irrelevant	7,4%	12,9%	20,0%	33,3%	66,7%	14,9%
Total	100,0%	100,0%	100,0%	100,0%	100,0%	100,0%

Source: author's elaboration, 2015.

With regard to the data referred to the job market, it is verified that the same 51,4% of the students who answered the questionnaires understand that the UAB course is relevant or very relevant if the promotion at the job post is a variable. It is noticed that 37% of the students perceive as very relevant the opportunities in the job market that may arise with the insertion of the Distance Education Course at UAB and also understand as very relevant the convergence in relation to job promotion. This way, students see as an upward mobility opportunity in the job market, in terms of financial gains and/or recognition, besides the possibility of entering new and different markets from the ones they are currently working at.

It is ratified that frames four and five are correlated when considering the perception of the students in relation to the job market. Within this compass, "Verhine (2015: 30)" assures that education, in this case, the distance one, promotes new job posts opportunities through acquired knowledges and intellectual abilities, obtained from this new formations/graduations. In this sense, education and training are driving forces for the generation of value in form of abilities and knowledges.

4 CONCLUSIONS

Once the founding referential has been analysed, and the analysis of the empirical data has been presented, we move forward to the conclusions, mainly evidentiating that education cannot be investigated aside from the individual and his cultural formation. In this specific case, we dealt with two public universities that are inserted in the Universidade Aberta do Brasil (UAB) system. Having highlighted the above throughout this investigation, the approximation of education with the regional human capital development, object of this research, has been ratified. This perception was structured by taking the amplitude and capillarity of the Distance Education (EAD) model into consideration.

In this regard, it is believed that fostering higher education in the countryside of Bahia, greatly promoted by the creation of the State University of Bahia (UNEB), was the first consistent insertion in the sense of training professionals for the growth of the regions which held their campi. Secondly, distance education, largely disseminated worldwide, comes as a second wave to be now analyzed, the state of Bahia (with an extensive territorial strip, around 560.000 km², its four hundred and seventeen municipalities and the lack of prepared professionals who are also aware of their importance in social tissue), is also analyzed.

Examining the municipality of Camaçari, through the Demographic Census of 2010 “IBGE (2010)” data, an index of 0,694 of human development (IDH) is observed. Its economic structure is backed up by industry, commerce, and service, notwithstanding the headquartered industries in the region. Knowing the data related to the existing job posts and the needs of formation, the Municipal Executive Board may access the MEC (Ministry of Education and Culture) through the Higher Education Personnel Improvement Coordination (CAPES), in the sense of verifying which institutions in the country’s territory offer courses that the region considers needed for their development and progress.

At the UAB campus in Camaçari, distinct pedagogical models have been observed. In other terms, depending on the UAB system, the university which signs an agreement, offers its own pedagogical model. Therefore, it may be concluded that this condition beneficiates the students who enroll in the courses they desire, still considering the face-to-face demand each course has.

It is concluded that, from the distance education modality (DE) offered by UAB learning point of view, there is more educational achievement in terms of content when the tutor is present and engaged with the students. It shall be highlighted that besides the students’ answers on this matter, the performance of the face-to-face tutors and their rapport with the students in the encounters was also verified. Through them the collection of the data was made possible.

Bringing the discussion upon the importance of the UAB for the municipality of Camaçari closer, it is perceived that when the performance as a means of aproximating the student to knowledge via well known universities is taken into consideration, it becomes a diferencial that can be notably seen in the economic activity of the region, if the specialization lato sensu courses offered at the campus. Another question which may corroborate with this understanding has close relation to the public and the free offer of the UAB courses in Camaçari. As a consequence of this kind of offer, the inclusion of individuals who cannot afford to attend a face-to-face public university is embraced.

The importance of the distance education (DE) offered by the UAB in the municipality of Camaçari, in the logic of human capital and region, includes social freedoms. To these, the undisputed relation which brings the theoreticians who not only discuss the economy within education but also

education and social freedoms, named “The reason of efficiency” by “Sen (2010)”, when addressing his concepts of development for freedom.

We must ratify that distance education (DE) is regulated by the MEC (Ministry of Education and Culture) via INEP, as well as face-to-face courses. Therefore, the study of such educational model is recommended as it is understood that only higher education is capable of leveling social inequalities and bringing individuals closer to knowledge, aiming at social progress.

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