

THE IMPACTS OF AN ITINERANT ROUTINE AND ITS INFLUENCE ON THE MENTAL HEALTH AND ACADEMIC LIFE OF UNEB CAMPUS IV UNDERGRADUATES

LOS IMPACTOS DE UNA RUTINA ITINERADA Y SU INFLUENCIA EN LA SALUD MENTAL Y LA VIDA ACADÉMICA DE LOS ESTUDIANTES DEL CAMPUS IV DE LA UNEB

OS IMPACTOS DE UMA ROTINA ITINERANTE E SUA INFLUÊNCIA À SAÚDE MENTAL E À VIDA ACADÊMICA DE GRADUANDOS DA UNEB CAMPUS IV

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Abstract

This article goal is to know the profile of itinerant students on Uneb's IV Campus with regard to the impacts of this condition in your mental well being and in aspects of your academic life. Of quantitative character, the data collection instrument was configured as an online questionnaire, answered by 111 students, through the messaging app Whatsapp to the students from different semesters of the courses of Letters - English Language and Literature and Portuguese Language and Literature, Geography, History, Physical Education and Law, from the Humanities Department from the University of the state of Bahia- UNEB, which reside 17 different locations and where is the campus. With regard to roaming, it's observed that there is a growing concern in front of difficulties related to the path - as danger on the road, lack of security of the vehicles used - which, associated with academic activities aggravate the physical and mental tiredness. The sleep, feed and the lack of time to stay with family and friends reflect on the significant anxiety symptomatology. It is concluded that the path taken by the student itineraries to the University has significant impacts on their lives emotionally and academically, implying signs and symptoms predecessors of common mental disorders, as anxiety, fatigued, insomnia and headache. Therefore, it's necessary a better understanding on the part of the University of needs and peculiarities of these people in view of the guarantee of permanence and training quality.

Keywords; University education; Students; Mental health.

Resumen

El objetivo de este artículo es conocer el perfil de los estudiantes itinerantes del Campus IV de la UNEB en cuanto a los impactos de esta condición en su bienestar mental y aspectos de su vida académica. De carácter cuantitativo, el instrumento de recolección de datos se configuró como un cuestionario en línea, respondido por 111 estudiantes, a través de la aplicación de mensajes WhatsApp a estudiantes de diferentes semestres de los cursos de

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Letras - Lengua y Literatura Inglesa y Lengua y Literatura Portuguesa, Geografía, Historia, Educación Física y Derecho del Departamento de Ciencias Humanas de la Universidad del Estado de Bahía – UNEB, que residen en 17 localidades diferentes de donde está ubicado el Campus. Con respecto al roaming, existe una creciente preocupación por las dificultades relacionadas con la ruta -como la peligrosidad en la vía, la falta de seguridad de los vehículos utilizados- que, asociadas a las actividades académicas, agravan el cansancio físico y mental. El sueño, la alimentación y la falta de tiempo para estar con familiares y amigos se reflejan en síntomas significativos de ansiedad. Se concluye que el trayecto de los estudiantes itinerantes hacia la universidad impacta significativamente en su vida emocional y académica, implicando signos y síntomas precursores de los Trastornos Mentales Comunes (TMC), como ansiedad, fatiga, insomnio y cefalea. Por lo tanto, es necesario un mayor conocimiento por parte de la universidad de las necesidades y particularidades de este público, a fin de garantizar la permanencia y la calidad de la formación.

Palabras llave: Educación Superior; Estudiantes; Salud mental.

Resumo

O objetivo deste artigo é conhecer o perfil dos estudantes itinerantes do *Campus IV* da UNEB no que diz respeito aos impactos dessa condição em seu bem-estar mental e em aspectos de sua vida acadêmica. De caráter quantitativo, o instrumento de coleta dos dados configurou-se enquanto um questionário on-line, respondido por 111 estudantes, através do aplicativo de mensagem WhatsApp aos estudantes de diferentes semestres dos cursos de Letras – Língua Inglesa e Literatura e Língua Portuguesa e Literatura, Geografia, História, Educação Física e Direito do Departamento de Ciências Humanas da Universidade do Estado da Bahia – UNEB, os quais residem em 17 localidades diferentes de onde se situa o *Campus*. Sobre a itinerância, observa-se uma crescente preocupação diante das dificuldades relacionadas ao trajeto – como o perigo na estrada, a falta de segurança dos veículos utilizados –, que, associados às atividades acadêmicas, agravam o cansaço físico e mental. O sono, a alimentação e a falta de tempo para estar com a família e amigos refletem na significativa sintomatologia de ansiedade. Conclui-se que o trajeto realizado pelos estudantes itinerantes para a universidade impacta de forma expressiva suas vidas no quesito emocional e acadêmico, implicando sinais e sintomas precursores de Transtornos Mentais Comuns (TMC), como ansiedade, fadiga, insônia e cefaleia. Portanto, mantem-se necessário um maior entendimento por parte da universidade das necessidades e particularidades desse público, tendo em vista a garantia da permanência e da qualidade formativa.

Palavras-chave: Ensino Superior; Estudiantes; Saúde Mental.

Introduction

The choice of this study theme arises from the discussions held during the EDDuC Research Group, Studies in Teaching and University Discourse in Contemporaneity, which focuses, in particular, on the discussion about students from the lower classes who currently attend public higher education, but also from the trajectory of the authors as itinerant teachers and students of the Department, locus of this study.

Admission to higher education is a process experienced in different ways by individuals, as it involves intrinsic aspects - such as the ability to face adverse situations, intrapersonal knowledge, among others - as well as extrinsic aspects, such as the economic situation, support and the academic culture itself. It is a phase that entails numerous tensions generated by the beginning of a new stage of life, where new rules, new knowledge, ruptures in the conditions of existence, ruptures in affective and family life, in the forms of appropriation of knowledge are present, therefore, more complex than entering the university is to establish a permanence and to succeed in this path (COULON, 2008), which requires a careful look so that the student can not only remain, but also complete with quality his training at higher level.

In addition to the natural difficulties inherent to people entering undergraduate studies, there is a factor that greatly influences the students' training trajectory, student itinerancy, which is not characteristic of all higher education institutions, but which is quite strong in the university studied because it is located, most of its courses, in different territories of identity in the interior of the State of Bahia and is of a public nature, which attracts mainly those who cannot study in large centres for economic, family, among other reasons.

Itinerant in this study is conceived as a condition in which people who reside in a certain place migrate to another with the purpose of study, which is called by Geography as "commuting", a term that refers to the displacement between place of residence, whether municipality or state, and other locations with the purpose of study and work (JARDIM, 2011). Such commuting can occur daily or a few times a week.

The Department of Human Sciences (DCH4) is located in the city of Jacobina-BA, which is part of the Piemonte da Diamantina territory, bordering the cities of Mirangaba, Caém, Várzea Nova, Miguel Calmon, Serrolândia, Capim Grosso and Ouroândia. However, the itinerant students of the DCH4 are not limited to these locations, Quixabeira, Saúde and Umburanas, for example, are places that have undergraduates attending the various courses that run during the day and night in this Department.

It is clear that the geographical location of Jacobina-BA in relation to the other municipalities has contributed directly to the constant migration of students from these localities, but especially the fact that it was the first municipality in the region to receive a public university campus was what made it possible for this city to be the centre where most people interested in graduating from a public institution and cannot move to the metropolises converge.

Despite being a region characterised mainly by rural activities and people with little schooling, for almost forty years young people and adults have been seeking to acquire a higher level of knowledge, mainly due to increased competitiveness in the labour market and the increasing demand for higher education.

Some undergraduates, whose homes are not in the municipality where the Department is located, choose to live in Jacobina in order to contribute to the quality of their studies. However, many choose to commute on a daily basis due to factors such as the possibility of combining their studies with their working hours, family issues or even lack of financial resources to stay in another city.

Considering that many of them already work in their home municipalities and that such resources will even contribute to keeping them at university, they risk travelling distances that consume part of their daily time and impact on their lives, in terms of physical and emotional health and academic activities. It is important to mention that it is the students themselves or their families who are responsible for bearing the costs of travelling to the Department, since the municipal public authorities are increasingly less committed to this. In general, these transports are of poor quality, not offering safety and comfort, in addition to the drivers being the ones who determine the time that undergraduates can arrive or leave the institution, which makes it impossible or difficult for students to remain in extracurricular activities offered by the Campus and even to fulfil the entire class period.

Allied to this problem, it is also possible to mention roads in poor condition as another factor that hinders the formative trajectory of itinerant students. These aspects lead to an accumulation of academic activities, reduced leisure and rest time,

poor quality of food, even exceeding meal times, little time dedicated to family and loved ones, among others.

All these particularities are relevant and influence both the pedagogical process in the classroom and the performance of activities outside the academic environment. Thus, it is understood that the itinerancy, with regard to undergraduates, influences their academic training process and their mental health.

According to the World Health Organisation (WHO), mental health is a state of well-being in which the individual is able to use their own abilities, recover from routine stress, be productive and contribute to their community (WHO, 2001).

With regard to the discussion on the mental health of higher education students, it has been observed, in recent years, an increase in the number of events and articles that discuss mental health related to this specific public. With regard to research on this subject, it is possible to mention the works developed by Ariño, Bardagi (2018); Nogueira-Martins, Nogueira-Martins (2018); Sahão, Kienen (2021).

This interest is justified in view of the requirement for graduation, development of skills and abilities required in the world of work, which is increasingly limited in terms of vacancy and, at the same time, more demanding.

When analysing the research by Andrade et al. (2016, s/p), which, when addressing data referring to Minor Mental Disorders (MMD) - which refer to a "set of manifestations of psychic discomfort, of a non-specific character, with physiological and psychological repercussions that can generate limitations" - it was proven that this index is higher among university students, compared to other categories.

In Brazil, in public universities, the prevalence rates of MMD ranged from 25% (Cerchiari et al., 2005a) to 58% (Neves, & Dalgarrondo, 2007). In screening questionnaires, the main symptoms investigated are stress levels, psychosomatic disorders, irritability, fatigue and insomnia, among other possible ones. Horta et al. (2012), in a university in the south of the country, found a prevalence of 9.5% among professors, 19.5% among staff and 26.6% among students (ANDRADE et al., 2016, s/p).

Research carried out by European and North American countries shows that monitoring students' mental health is necessary. The first report of the National Epidemiological Study of Mental Health in Portugal in 2013 (NOGUEIRA, 2017) demonstrates the prevalence of anxiety disorders, mood, depression, alcohol abuse and dependence.

Regarding students, it is important to note that the focus of studies, in general, is centred on specific areas, with studies in the health area prevailing. However, as evidenced by the research of Neves and Dalgalarrodo (2007) and Cerchiari et al. (2005), a higher prevalence of MDT was found in students of the Humanities and Health Sciences courses.

In this regard, this study is interested in knowing the Common Mental Disorders (CMD) and more serious psychiatric disorders among itinerant undergraduate students, relating how mental health, itinerancy and academic activities are related and influence the student's training process and well-being.

According to Fiorotti (et al., 2010), CMDs are configured as minor psychiatric disorders, as they represent the least severe and most frequent mental disorder conditions. According to this work, CMD symptoms include:

Forgetfulness, difficulty in concentration and decision making, insomnia, irritability and fatigue, as well as somatic complaints (headache, lack of appetite, tremors, poor digestion, among others), but do not include psychotic disorders, chemical dependence or personality disorders. Being a carrier of CMD is a condition that does not imply formal psychiatric diagnosis, but represents enormous costs in terms of psychological distress and impact on relationships and quality of life, compromising performance in daily activities and constituting an important cause of absence from work, demand on health services and economic losses, being a potential substrate for the development of more serious disorders. (FIOROTTI, et al., 2010, p. 18).

It is noted that such symptoms influence the learning process and mental health of students and, therefore, deserve attention from researchers. Thus, it is argued that, from the perspective of the itinerant condition, the aforementioned factors contribute to mental suffering, can be aggravated or even triggered by the specificity of displacement.

It is necessary to point out that, even in the face of all this panorama described above, with regard to student itinerancy at UNEB, any research work on this theme is unknown. However, there is still scarce research that discusses teacher itinerancy, such as the studies carried out by Fialho (2005) and Soares (2009a, 2009b). Thus, it can be said that making efforts to also investigate itinerant students is of great relevance to the quality of training offered at university.

Methodology

This research is part of an umbrella research project, which was registered in Plataforma Brasil and received a favourable opinion from the Research Ethics Committee - CEP/UNEB, through CCAE number 81693417.2.0000.0057.

The methodological approach is quantitative and descriptive. Its quantitative character has the intention of ensuring the accuracy of the work performed, leading to a result with less chance of distortions (DALFOVO, 2008). The descriptive character is justified because, as proposed by Gil (1999), its main purpose is to describe the characteristics of a given population or phenomenon, establishing relationships between variables.

The study was developed through an online questionnaire prepared by the authors and validated by three ad-hoc researchers. The questions were systematised so that they could contribute to understanding the relationship between itinerancy, mental health and academic life.

Data collection was carried out using the Survio programme, which was used to electronically forward the questionnaire to the email addresses and WhatsApp messaging application of students enrolled in semester 2019.2. These contacts were provided through the Academic Secretariat of the Department of Human Sciences (DCH4). The sample was selected by convenience, taking as inclusion criteria undergraduate students enrolled in undergraduate and bachelor's degree courses, who have a routine of travelling to the Campus, without restriction to the semester, age, gender or shift in which they study.

The contributors of this study are seventy-four women (66.7%), and thirty-seven men (33.3%), totalling 111 contributors, aged between sixteen and fifty. This number corresponds to 88% of those who are considered itinerant, therefore, the data to be presented and discussed in this study are considered quite representative.

As for the semester in which they were enrolled at the time of the research, the indicative table below follows:

Table 1: Research participants by semester.

SEMESTRE	NÚMERO DE PARTICIPANTES
2°	1
3°	18
4°	5
5°	20
6°	16
7°	7
8°	16
9°	7
10°	7
Desemestralizado	4

Source: The authors, 2022.

Seventeen localities in the micro-region of Jacobina and Senhor do Bonfim, located in the centre of northern Bahia, were represented in this study through student participation. Thus, this research also covers all cities that have DCH4 students.

The aforementioned Department serves cities that are beyond its territory of identity, the Piemonte da Diamantina. Municipalities such as: América Dourada, Baixa Grande, Bonito, Caldeirão Grande, Central, Ipirá, Irecê, João Dourado, Lapão, Mairi, Morro do Chapéu, Mundo Novo, Pindobaçu, Piritiba, Quixabeira, São José do Jacuípe, Tapiramutá, Utinga, Várzea da Roça, Várzea do Poço, Capim Grosso, Senhor do Bonfim, among others have students enrolled in the courses offered by this institution.

The map of the municipalities that have students at the institution studied below aims to contribute to the reader's understanding of their location in relation to the Department's headquarters.

As can be seen, some of these locations are very far from Jacobina-BA and the journey, even when not daily, is tiring and expensive.



Figure 1 - Map of the municipalities that responded to the questionnaire.

Source: Blog Alécio Brandão. Available at: < <http://www.blogjovanesales.com.br/bacia-do-paramirim-descoberta-de-minerios-pode-potencializar-economia-da-regiao/>>. Accessed on: 15 June 2022.

“Let Me Present Myself, That I Have Just Arrived”: Getting to know the research participants.

In order to get closer to and understand the characteristics of the research subjects, we first sought to identify, through sociodemographic aspects, data that would allow us to know where the itinerant students of UNEB-DCH4 come from and who they are.

According to the answers obtained, students from fourteen cities (17) and districts travel daily to study in the city of Jacobina - Ba, residing, in their vast majority, 77.5%, in urban location, while a small percentage comes from the rural environment, 22.5%.

Chat 1. Number of participants by location and distance from the DCH4 headquarters municipality.

City	Number Students	Kilometres travelled
Serrolândia	30	48km
Miguel Calmon	19	30 km
Capim Grosso	12	60 km
Quixabeira	8	62 km
Mirangaba	7	32 km
Zona rural de Jacobina	6	5-20 km
Várzea do Poço	6	62 km
Saúde	5	30 km
Caldeirão Grande	4	40 km
Junco – Município de Jacobina	3	43 km
Caém	3	31 km
Paraíso – Município de Jacobina	3	29 km
Pindobaçu	1	72 km
Várzea Nova	1	64 km
Ourolândia	1	65 km
Senho do Bonfim	1	90 km
Morro do Chapéu	1	110 km
Total: 17 localidades	111 Estudantes	

Source: The authors, 2022.

It is observed that the localities with the highest number of students - Serrolândia, Miguel Calmon and Capim Grosso - are closer, between 30 and 45 km from the city of Jacobina, which indicates a greater ease of travel. The more distant municipalities require students to find ways to make this journey, such as using two transports or hitchhiking, as highlighted by the contributors of this research. Itinerant students travel different routes on this journey, with 59.5% travelling less than 50 km; while 37.7% travel 50 to 100 km between their home and the institution's headquarters; and 0.9% travel more than 150 km. These distances travelled on a daily basis cause damage to physical and mental health.

With regard to the participants in this study and the relationship between their home and their chosen degree programme, the table below shows that itinerant students are represented in all the Department's courses.

Chat 2. Number of participants per course.

Course	Studentes	Shift
Physical Education	31	Daytime
Geography	22	Evening
History	17	Evening and Night
Literature, English Language and Literatures	15	Evening and Night
Law	14	Morning and Evening
Vernacular Literature	12	Evening and Night

Source: The authors, 2022.

This diversity makes it possible to infer that there is not exactly a modality or course of preference for itinerant students, but that some factors interfere in these choices, such as: shift offered, number of places available, time of implementation, among others. The expressive majority of students in the Physical Education course is justified by some reasons, among them, because it is one of the newest to be implemented in the Department, which means that there is a greater need for professionals in the region; occur in the daytime; and, given the importance that the practice of physical activities has assumed in contemporary times, it becomes attractive as a possible field of professional activity. Regarding the Letters with English and Literatures course, it is the degree with the lowest number of places available.

Of the participating students, 66.7% are female, while 33.3% are male students. These figures corroborate the national average, since, according to data from the National Institute for Educational Studies and Research Anísio Teixeira (Inep), the percentage of women who entered higher education between 2010 and 2019 exceeded that of men, since 43% of women are graduates of the course, while men represent only 35%.

Regarding the age group of students, 58.6% are between twenty and twenty-five years old, while 16.2% are in the 16 to 20 age group, 10.8% are 25 to 30 years old. 10.8% are aged 30 to 40, and only 3.6% of the sample is over forty years old. According to the 5th National Survey on the Socioeconomic and Cultural Profile of Undergraduate Students of the IFES - 2018, carried out by the National Association of Directors of Federal Higher Education Institutions (ANDIFES), the average age of undergraduate students remained stable for a significant period in the range of 25 years or more, with a resumption of the group of under 20 years only from 2018. However, our travelling student population remains at the national average.

Regarding marital status, most students declare themselves single, with a percentage of 79.3%; 9.9% are married and only 23.4% have children. Linked to all the factors that imply being an undergraduate student, assuming parenthood makes this process even more challenging, as it is necessary to manage even better the academic journey with personal life, so that the construction of ties is not impaired, as well as not bringing losses to the student's professional training, because, as

shown by research carried out in the same Department (MENDES, 2021) with women who assumed motherhood in training, it is quite complex to manage motherhood and academic life, even because many of them need to associate them with work to support themselves and their children.

With regard to colour and/or ethnicity, 49.5% of the students surveyed described themselves as black, 36.9% as brown and only 12.6% as white. According to the FONAPRACE report (2018), there have been significant changes in the colour and race composition of black students in public institutions, data from 2003 show that 59.4% were white students and became 43.3% in 2018. The study also shows that this change occurred with the implementation of affirmative policies in federal universities from 2005, spreading over the years throughout the federal education system.

This study would be no different, since it is about students from a university in Bahia, which is the state where the largest black population outside the African continent is concentrated, which reflects that they are also mostly from the lower classes, and that, despite the existing policies, they do not enter university as soon as they finish high school, thus explaining the growing age group from 20 years old.

Therefore, the travelling students of the State University of Bahia presented here are mostly women, black, aged 20 or over, and mostly single. This public is represented by people from seventeen locations, including fourteen cities and two districts in the interior of Bahia.

- Roaming as a condition of a group of students

With regard to one of the central issues of this study, itinerancy, the challenges encountered by the student when exercising a daily routine of travelling to the university are brought to light. One of the first questions asked was about the reasons that led these students to enter a degree programme at UNEB-DCH4. Among the numerous alternatives pointed out, the most relevant for this choice is the possibility of taking a course close to the city where you live and, then, the fact that it is a public institution. It is understood that, even in the face of the burden entailed by displacement, studying in this Department constitutes the most viable possibility for this public to access a higher education diploma.

Regarding the frequency with which students travel, the study shows that almost all itinerant students, 95.5%, make this journey daily, which generates a very significant index in relation to the objectives of this research. The others do not do so because they are more advanced in the course and have already completed most of the components and are more dedicated to the preparation of the Course Conclusion Work (TCC), Supervised Internship, among others.

When comparing the data referring to the distance of the municipalities where they reside and the Campus headquarters, described above, and the percentage that travel daily, it is perceived that it is very exhausting such a route, in addition to consuming a lot of time daily on the road - which could be invested in studies, leisure, rest, among others -, some courses work even on Saturdays, being restricted to Sunday the only free day of this trip.

Regarding the reasons that led students to exercise such a routine, the financial aspect was pointed out as a determining factor for this choice, since the cost of living to reside in the city where the Department is based would be much higher. Another reason that deserves to be highlighted is the fact that it is the only public university closest to all the locations mapped by the research. It should be noted that the financial issue permeates such choices.

When asked about the difficulties encountered when travelling, 67.6% of the students stated that they existed, with the danger of accidents being the situation most often mentioned as generating fear (68.8%). Lack of vehicle maintenance, driver misconduct and worn-out roads are the main problems that generate this anguish. Living with this situation is a potent stressor, as it interferes with the fulfilment of the schedule of getting to the university - to perform their academic obligations - at their workplace and at home, to rest or perform other activities, but it is characterised as a factor of malaise, mainly because it puts the students' lives at risk.

Regarding the challenges of living in a different location from the one where they study, 84.7% of people stated the existence of adversities, pointing to physical fatigue in the face of the journey, with 74.4% of the responses, and the daily

commute, 71.1%, as the main causes of these difficulties. This exhaustion, mentioned by students, also stems from the need to perform extra-class tasks, in addition to working to provide for the family or themselves. Therefore, all these specificities, in addition to causing emotional damage, have an impact on the completion of the course, as many students end up evading or abandoning their academic training.

Still with regard to the adversities encountered, a large part of the undergraduates, 82.9%, say they are excluded from curricular and extracurricular activities, not restricted to class times, because they live in another location, as well as 88.2% feel difficulty in participating in events in different shifts, such as: field classes, extension activities, monitoring and study groups.

In many cases, not having a support point in the city where the university is located makes it even more difficult to participate in extra activities, as the student has to pay for meals and other expenses due to this additional time. It is important to note that the curriculum requires students to complete 200 hours of Complementary Course Activity (CCA) to graduate, so the inability to engage in these activities directly influences the academic training of itinerant students and their emotional condition.

- The mental health of travelling students

This topic will address how this characteristic of travelling, associated with academic demands, interferes with students' health, highlighting the symptoms and factors that affect emotional health.

The concept of health is approached here in an expanded way, so that it is aligned with a historical-cultural view of its actors and has the understanding that it is something intersectoral, which must be built by all (PEREIRA et al., 2021). Thus, when discussing the elements of this research, we consider diverse aspects such as age, displacement, economic conditions, but also the social and political responsibility of the University and the Department and its social subjects, especially considering that this condition of itinerancy is quite significant on the campus investigated.

Facundes and Ludemir (2005) point out that, since entering university, students may experience personal, academic and financial problems, thus increasing stress and anxiety levels (FERRAZ, PEREIRA, 2002). Fiorotti (et al., 2010) states that there are multiple predictive factors for CMDs (Common Mental Disorders), such as feeling overwhelmed, the presence of special situations during childhood and adolescence that indicate pre-existing mental suffering, changes in sleep patterns, poor assessment of school performance, difficulty making friends, thinking about dropping out and not receiving the emotional support they need.

One aspect affected by travelling and academic life is sleep. The study reveals that 38.7% of students maintain a recommended average sleep duration of six to seven hours per day, while 35.1% report sleeping five to six hours, 10.8% sleep eight hours or more, 9.9% four to five hours and 5.4% have less than five hours of sleep. An adequate sleep routine is essential for the well-being of the individual and for their learning process, giving them more disposition and spirit in the activities carried out, and for the travelling student who often wakes up very early or sleeps very late due to the displacement these benefits are limited.

Learning is a cognitive activity that occurs from the consolidation of memory, and sleep is of fundamental importance in this process. Understanding and treating disorders means achieving satisfactory performance in daily activities. Sleep interferes with mood, memory, attention, sensory registers, reasoning and cognitive aspects that relate a person to their environment. Alterations in sleep produce poor quality cognitive performance and interfere with health, sometimes in a very serious way (VALLE; VALLE; REIMÃO, 2009).

In addition to sleep, food is also linked to the general well-being of the individual. 73.9% of the students surveyed reported maintaining a balanced eating routine, eating the main meals of the day, while 21.6% reported not eating due to lack of time, and 19.8% reported eating because they felt anxious. Some students report that the fact of leaving very early, or arriving home very late hinders their diet, because it is often necessary to eat at the university itself, and in the midst of the rush of classes, they make an inadequate and insufficient diet.

One element that stands out in the discussion on students' mental health is the economic factor, since, as 73.9% of students declare, the financial issue influences their mental well-being and reflects on their academic development. According to the participants, 71.2% have already had to leave university to attend to work commitments, generating, according to some students, anxious symptoms due to having to pay for their studies and travelling.

The lack of resources also influences participation in off-site events, as stated by 69% of participants, and the acquisition of materials for classes, 56%, and even to pay for the transport responsible for travelling, 40%. Not being able to afford such activities is something that influences students' academic life and their emotional well-being, as it is one of the decisive factors for permanence and quality of training and, despite the existence of student incentive programmes, it is observed that many assume double work and study to meet these expenses.

It can be observed that the requirement to complete higher education and the routine of students' lives have been responsible for a high level of stress and it is there that the presence of other emotional symptoms compatible with Common Mental Disorders (CMD) is also perceived.

Regarding the presence of CMD, the students participating in this study mentioned symptoms also pointed out by several studies regarding this morbidity, such as anxiety (81.1%), headache (64%), irritability (63.1%), insomnia (43.2%) and fatigue (33.3%). Such indices found may be influenced by a routine of displacement carried out by these students.

No history of mental disorders was mentioned in 72.1% of the target audience, however, among those who had this history (27.9%), the most reported disorder was anxiety (74.2%) and panic disorder (22.6%). In the studies carried out by Murakami et. al (2019); Costa and Moreira (2016) and Pena et. al (2021), in relation to university students, the presence of anxiety and depression is predominant, which allows identifying these symptoms as common, regardless of the period, course, or age of the students.

Guimarães (2022) defines anxiety, depression, stress and quality of life as the main indicators of health/disease among young people undergoing vocational training, and according to the author, these are four of the ten main causes of disability worldwide.

Regarding the difficulties faced, 81.1% of the students mentioned that they had already felt discouraged, mainly because they had to cope with the numerous academic tasks requested. This daily routine of "coming and going" can generate even greater wear and tear for the student, interfering with their emotional behaviour and their learning capacity, which also impairs their performance.

Another difficulty mentioned by most students, 61.6%, was having to reconcile study and work. The others, 45.3%, do not feel affected by this aspect. However, it is known that time is a factor that contributes to the realisation of activities with quality and necessary to experience leisure, rest and other important activities for the physical and mental well-being of the subjects.

We also asked whether students had ever had to leave the university due to any emotional or psychological problem and 35.1% answered yes, while 69.9% denied having experienced this type of difficulty. Those who responded positively reported that this behaviour was due to nervousness, physical symptoms, and concern, especially in relation to the demand for academic activities. According to Padovani et al. (2014), the demands and demands of academic life show that the student, since his entry into the institution, must present complex cognitive and emotional resources for the management of the demands of this new environment, that is, it is necessary that this environment provides a psychological apparatus as a way of preserving the mental health of these university students.

The fact of the fact of being in an environment where one can express feelings, inconstancies, concerns and/or opinions reflects directly on the student's well-being, because, when feeling welcomed by the institution, their academic performance will also be of high value, causing the other psychic and stress factors to decrease or at least have a lower weight.

It is known that an element that influences the mental health of individuals is being subjected to any type of prejudice. Students were asked if they had ever experienced this situation at university, and 82.9% denied it, demonstrating that this space is not characteristic of discrimination. However, of the 17.1% who claimed to be the target of prejudice, 42.1% pointed to the religious component and 31.6% to living in another location as the reasons why they are most affected. Two constitutive elements of the subject are noted, their religious condition and their territorial identity, as a target of prejudice, which affects their emotional dimension.

Specifically regarding the fact that they live in another locality, this prejudice is often due to a lack of commitment to their training, since their time at the institution is limited, sometimes having to arrive late and leave before the end of classes. It is noteworthy that 68.4% are the colleagues themselves who demonstrate these prejudices, but the rate of teachers scored on this question is also high, 47.4%, and needs to be reviewed.

When exercising a study routine in which, for a long period of time, it is necessary to stay away from home, the student creates a distance from family ties and friendship relationships, especially when reconciling study and work. Faced with this reality, 50.5% of undergraduates said they had little time to be with family and friends, while 40.5% pointed to the presence of these moments only on weekends, which makes us believe that this factor can also be a causative agent of stress, anxiety, among other symptoms that can lead to the triggering of different emotional problems.

According to 59.5% of the survey participants, their condition as a university student is a factor that causes the need for psychological monitoring, with the symptom of incapacity being the one that stands out the most, with 70.3% of the responses, followed by excessive activities, 59.4%, and degree of demand from teachers, with 45.3%. These data are confirmed by some reports:

For no apparent reason, I felt very sad and unmotivated and stopped going to class because of that. I think because of the difficulty of understanding a content and seeing that everyone was understanding it well, except me." Test, presentation of work, I panicked because of the anxiety and the moment of mourning I was experiencing.

Teacher went to give test and was aggressive. He kicked the rubbish bin, slammed the door hard. I got scared, I couldn't concentrate or answer the test that I had studied a lot. Even after the event, I was unable to move on with the subject. I'm always desperate when I'm taking tests, I have a blank, I get nervous, I want to cry and I can't answer anything, even though I've studied a lot. Total panic!

Worrying about not being able to do the activities.

Too many academic activities to do with little time to deliver.

Fear of exams, seminars, etc.

Inability to do the activities.

A student harassing female students during an internship, and the collegiate management at the time did nothing, claiming that the student has problems.

When I felt very pressured and exhausted; when I no longer had the strength to believe that I was capable and when during some seminars of which teachers blasted me in front of everyone, without measuring the words.

A teacher who demanded a lot!

From these statements it is possible to realise that academic demands and the attitude of teachers, as well as the self-image and attitudes of colleagues are factors that interfere with students' mental health and that require attention from the institution, especially at a time as delicate as this, when the level of suicide and depression is increasing considerably. Morin (2001, p. 15) states that "[...] the human condition should be the essential object of all teaching", which is disregarded, both by educational policies and by teachers, either by overestimating the acquisition of scientific content or by not investing in their relational knowledge as an important dimension of their pedagogical practice. ese university students.

When comparing the data obtained in Portugal with scholars from other nationalities, Nogueira (2017) finds that study methods and school difficulties, school performance, depression, low self-esteem, mood swings, exam anxiety and relational problems are quite present in universities. Thus, also in view of the elements signalled by the participants of our study, it is noted that the academic culture is permeated by beliefs, attitudes, rules, among other elements that influence the well-being of

students. However, it is known that the emotional factor influences the acquisition of knowledge and the university cannot disregard such issues.

According to Costa and Moreira (2016), the lack of necessary emotional support and the difficulty to answer questions due to shyness are factors that weaken the student and make him more likely to develop some disorder.

A positive element found is that 76.6% of the employees in this study consider that they have had a good adaptation to the institution, while 21.6% consider it excellent. However, 52.3% of those surveyed consider themselves properly integrated into the institution, while 47.7% do not yet feel so. Considering that 81.44% are attending at least the fifth semester, these data require attention, in the sense of monitoring these difficulties, especially given the characteristics of this work, itinerant students. In this sense, it is important to fill these gaps with regard to interpersonal relationships, since the time spent working and studying in another city distances them even more.

Given this reality, it is evident the need to carry out adequate psychological monitoring during graduation, in order to treat or prevent such symptoms. Regarding this question, 73.0% of the students surveyed claimed never to have carried out such monitoring, while 27% said yes, but those who responded negatively recognise the importance of this assistance during graduation.

As Pereira et al. (2021) states, although there are advances in the development of multiprofessional practices within educational spaces, the challenge presented to psychology professionals working in this context becomes evident, especially in the elaboration of actions consistent with the health needs of the subjects.

It is also noted that students are concerned about their physical and emotional health by noting the high participation in physical, religious and meditation activities. The frequency with which these activities are carried out, as shown in the table below, are considerable in view of travelling for study purposes and the existence of academic activities.

Table 4: Participation in activities that can influence the improvement of stress.

	Always	Sometimes	Never
Religious activity		27	53
Meditation		2	30
Physical activity		19	70

Source: The authors, 2022.

These statements show that there is an increasing concern among students about their mental health, especially with the excess of activities they need to handle during graduation and the high degree of demand from some teachers, who, according to the interviewees, do not take into account the students' personal characteristics and problems. According to Silveira et al. (2011, p. 253).

The presence of untreated psychiatric disorders can have significant implications for academic success[...] university students with serious mental pathologies face several barriers that interfere with their performance such as maintaining concentration, memorisation and motivation, deficits in executive functions (planning, organisation, decision-making), maintaining attendance, interacting with colleagues, stigma, among others.

Given this reality, it is essential to ensure that undergraduate students have mechanisms that enable their emotional well-being, so that their academic development is also satisfactory, so that this period of stay at university does not lead to bad experiences and does not generate sequelae for the individual's entire life.

According to Feldman et al. (2008) and Pereira et al. (2021), social support occurs through resources offered by all those around the person, providing tangible emotional support with the opportunity to share common interests, in situations where the individual feels understood and respected. It is also important to emphasise that the presence of this social support is not enough, but rather the perception that the person has of such presence, thus making this support effective.

The Department studied, in view of the denunciation of episodes of harassment, depression and suicide attempts by some students, offered psychological counselling to students, which has contributed to the well-being of this public. However, there is only one psychologist, with few vacancies available.

Final considerations

The elements collected in this research show a plurality of factors that affect the mental health and academic life of itinerant undergraduates, such as the concern and fear inherent in this displacement, accidents on the road, the breakdown of the vehicle used, the driver's misconduct, as well as other emotional issues, such as the lack of time to be with family and friends, and the curricular requirements in the face of an intense routine, having to reconcile, in many cases, study and work.

In relation to mental health, it is found that the journey made by students to the university triggers signs and symptoms predecessors of common mental disorders (CMD), such as anxiety, fatigue, insomnia and headache and, therefore, it is evident the need to broaden and deepen the discussions related to this theme, since psychological distress is increasingly common in this public, mainly due to the overload of studies and other aspects that can lead to course dropout and more serious emotional damage.

It is important to highlight, as evidenced in the characterisation of the students, that this is still a young audience and that the presence of these symptoms, which at the moment may not be characterised as of great seriousness, may worsen over the years, considering the strenuous situation to which they are subjected, due to itinerancy, such as displacement, irregular feeding, among others.

All these issues, which are not specific to itinerants, but aggravated by this specificity, cannot be analysed without considering the economic and social aspects that permeate the condition of these students and their families, as they influence the students' educational trajectory.

A greater understanding by the university about this public is necessary in order to know the specificities that they experience and influence their pedagogical process, making their stay at the university a successful experience and, for this, there must be a deepening of the discussions related to mental health and the academic performance of students as a whole, with regard to prevention, psychological monitoring and the guarantee of student permanence and training quality.

It is intended that this research contributes to the institution itself, by knowing the profile of itinerant students, to develop policies for this public with regard to the impacts of this itinerancy on the mental well-being and aspects of the student's academic life, since it is not possible to disregard the specificities of a university that is currently the largest public institution of higher education in the multicampi modality, located in different territories of the State of Bahia.

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