

**MANAGING COORDINATOR, EDUCATIONAL OR ENTREPRENEURIAL
COORDINATOR: COURSE COORDINATOR PROFILE ANALYSIS AT PRIVATE
HEIS**

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ABSTRACT

Higher Education dynamics is impacted by political, economic and financial interference. In parallel, the Ministry of Education and Culture (*MEC*) is strict in its reviews to ensure Brazilian higher education is appreciated and promoted. The purpose of this study is to identify the profile of Course Coordinators and factors that might improve, at the surveyed HEIs, this professional's relationship with students, teaching staff and Directors. Literature was searched and reviewed so as to collect subject matter pertaining issues. A quantitative research approach was employed and objectives were of exploratory descriptive nature since this technique ensures extended comprehension of the investigated phenomenon, whilst data was gathered via personal interviews. The object of investigation comprised all Course Coordinators of the Estácio/Natal Group in Brazil's four units. The survey's tool comprises: 13 closed questions to identify the Coordinator's profile; 17 questions with a 5 point Likert score scale to identify the entrepreneurial profile; 42 also resorting to a 5 point Likert score scale to measure the dimensions of the Coordinator's activities and 4 open, optional questions to measure difficulties and possibilities that impact the development of an entrepreneurial course management approach. The study employed both a statistical method (data analysis) and descriptive statistics. Findings lead to the conclusion that information and knowledge gathered support

researched HEIs in their overcoming of challenges, amongst which encouraging strategic course management and innovation, focused on implementing a new vision of the Course Coordinator, as professionals that master how to balance management and pedagogical skills, whilst innovating by resorting to entrepreneurial competencies.

KEY-WORDS: Higher Education. Course Coordinator. Entrepreneur.

**COORDENADOR GESTOR, COORDENADOR PEDAGÓGICO OU
COORDENADOR EMPREENDEDOR: ANÁLISE DO PERFIL DE
COORDENADORES DE CURSO EM IES PRIVADA.**

RESUMO

A dinâmica da Educação Superior sofre interferências políticas, econômicas e financeiras. Em paralelo, há forte avaliação do MEC sobre as necessidades de uma valorização e promoção da educação superior brasileira. Este artigo objetiva identificar o perfil dos coordenadores de curso bem como fatores que podem melhorar a relação deste profissional, dentro das IES pesquisadas, com seus alunos, docentes, Diretores. Foi realizada uma pesquisa bibliográfica, com finalidade de coletar assuntos relacionados a temática. A abordagem da pesquisa é quantitativa. Quanto aos objetivos é exploratória descritiva, por proporcionar maior compreensão do fenômeno investigado. Com levantamento de dados através de entrevista pessoal. O objeto de investigação compreende todos os coordenadores de curso das quatro unidades do Grupo Estácio/Natal. O instrumento da pesquisa é composto de 13 questões fechadas para identificação do perfil do coordenador, 17 questões com escala de Likert de 5 pontos para identificação do perfil empreendedor, 42 questões com escala de Likert de 5 pontos que mediu as dimensões da atividade do coordenador, 4 questões abertas e

opcional, que mediu as dificuldades e possibilidades que impactam no desenvolvimento do empreendedorismo na gestão dos cursos. Foi utilizado como método estatístico (análise de dados) e a estatística descritiva. Conclui-se que as informações e conhecimentos coletados contribuam para que as IES pesquisadas superem desafios como promover uma gestão estratégica e de inovação dos cursos com foco na implantação de uma nova visão do coordenador de curso, como profissional que saiba equilibrar as habilidades de gestão, pedagógicas e inovar com competências empreendedoras.

PALAVRAS-CHAVES: Educação Superior. Coordenador de Curso. Empreendedor.

1 INTRODUCTION

Worldwide trends, currently represented by information technology, globalization, knowledge, services, quality, productivity and competitiveness, impact organizational behaviour before the marketplace and comprise the set of aspects deemed vital to position companies well beyond their competition given their product and/or service offerings.

Educational advances and the new scenario marked by the inclusion of the opening of capital (public offerings) has spotlighted at Educational Institutions and in special, privately owned Higher Educational entities, the concern with the improvement of the quality and construction of educational value in the era of knowledge.

Educational services import an identity that is represented by a Higher Education Institution's (HEI's) brand name. Services marketing applied to HEIs arise as a strategic tool that is capable of breaking down all the characteristics that comprise the formation of this kind of service.

The quest for excellence in education - via professionalized management - leverages the strategic standing of Course Coordinators. Managed by the Coordinator, the course or "business unit" calls for a very comprehensive professional profile. The human being - a resource alongside well-structured processes and interaction with innovative technology models - has captured the spotlight and sometimes, at successful and innovative companies, is deemed a sustainable competitive advantage.

Thus, the relevance Coordinators pose, as education professionals challenged to engage in a changing teaching and learning mode environment, becomes increasing embedded within the quest for competencies and skills that creative and innovative management of higher education courses and their respective HEIs requires.

Colombo and Cardim (2010) advocate that given the obligation to meet models imposed by the Ministry of Education and Culture (*MEC*), most private HEIs have accommodated themselves into simplified structures whereby the

Course Coordinator is the core player who is simultaneously responsible and pushed to account for the course's success and consequently, that of the institution. Thus the research problem arises: what is the typical Course Coordinator profile and which factors might improve this professional's relationship at the researched HEIs, with students, teaching staff and Directors?

This study permeates the HEI's environment and in special poses to encourage the development of potential Course Coordinators that emerge within the teaching-learning process and in the management and innovation of higher education courses. The analysis gathers elements of this activity and also assigns entrepreneurship characteristics' indexes to Coordinator profiles.

To this effect, bibliographical research was conducted to collect theme related topics centring on concepts and panoramas that pertain to higher education, Course Coordinator and entrepreneurial profiles. The elected research approach was quantitative and the study's objectives were of exploratory descriptive nature since this ensures greater comprehension of both the investigated phenomena and the understanding of the relationships between the herein investigated concepts. The study also comprised the gathering of data via personal interviews given this technique enables the study of organizational and managerial field related attributes.

The structure employed to present the study begins with an Introduction, followed by the Theoretical Framework (Chapter 1) which includes the discussion of a brief overview on the field of higher education. Subsequently, the Course Coordinator, as the study's prime object, is extensively analysed and final observations are discussed from an entrepreneurial standpoint. Chapter 2 comprises the study's Methodology, including the planning of the survey, which in turn covers the execution, gathering of data and the analysis of findings and information (Chapter 3) so as to ground the conclusions and recommendations presented in Chapter 4. Finally, all bibliographical references that contributed to the theoretical foundation of this study are herein presented.

Expectations include this study motivates educational scholars and managers to contribute and reform higher education from a qualitative perspective. However, this must ensure the population's social and cultural

needs are met via quality educational offers that embed culture, science and art within institutional plans whilst simultaneously enhancing HEIs' sustainability.

BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REVIEW

2.1 HIGHER EDUCATION

One finds contemporary higher education set within a context that features both economic reforms and a strong trend towards the internationalization of capital investments. The educational network expanded in such a massive manner that the same is no longer solely accountable for the higher education of students but rather, has shaped into a space of change, centred on continued education.

Libâneo, Oliveira and Toshi (2012) understand that world education reforms express this trend and identify HEIs as change centres. This in turn implies that quality at these spaces directly relates to the meeting of the population's social and cultural needs and that the pedagogical proposal socializes culture, science and arts as universal rights.

The assumptions of this scenario are associated with the fact that Higher Education is facing social and economic challenges and include the growing rise of the population's educational level and the quest for employability and competitiveness, both of which emerged as a result of the capitalist model. In an era of technology and information, the need for permanent and continued education emerges as knowledge becomes obsolete at increasingly shorter intervals of time. Educating within the framework set by this model raises the social status that a sound professional and intellectual background plays in the student's academic life, whereby one clearly notices the direct relation between: education, social ascendance and reduced poverty.

Announced during the World Conference on Higher Education, the United Nation's report for Education, Science and Culture (UNESCO) unveils to the general public that, given the complexity of current and forthcoming challenges, it is higher education's social responsibility to advance multifaceted knowledge

so as to comprise and address an assortment of issues that include cultural, scientific, economic and social dimensions.

According to Porto and Régnier (2003), studies and research have, on a global basis pointed towards the existence of an ample set of trends and transformational forces that are in full progress, particularly shifting: the characteristics of the higher education sector, the structure of the higher education sector, the relations of universities with society, the nature of the rendering of academic services and the way academic activities are executed.

The Brazilian higher education public policy is evidenced via the universalized access to education. The Law of Directives and Bases (*LDB*, Law Nr. 9.394 of December 20, 1996) that was approved after the 1968 Reform, landmarked the reformulation process of Brazil's higher educational system.

The Anísio Teixeira National Educational Studies and Research Institute (*Inep*) understands that the most relevant outcomes of this process are evidenced by the expansion of the system, of private institutions and in the stagnation of the growth of universities if one compares evolution in terms of: the number of faculties and university centres; growth in the number of institutions and courses in the North and North-eastern regions of the country; diversification of course types and modalities; difference in the relation between the quantity of openings offered and enrolled candidates; inclusion policies with views to increasing enrolment rates and teaching staff qualification so as to monitor, via these indexes, the segment's progress.

However, the current Brazilian higher education scenario poses challenges to HEIs that comprise a more extended scope than that pertaining to internal institutional improvements. According to Colombo & Cardim (2010) the effect of the set of pre-university educational fronts' poor performance consequently promotes a reduced rate of high school graduates, decreased dispute for openings and those students that are effectively approved at entrance examinations end up being poorly prepared to take higher education courses. Therefore, understanding the larger picture supports adequate internal planning to ensure this demand is likewise addressed.

According to the *PNE* (2011-2020) one of the targets and strategies to ensure the expansion of higher education is to deploy services at all educational

institutions in such a manner that quality standards are ensured by mastering knowledge, skills and attitudes that are deemed necessary for the development of citizenship in addition to provisioning each educational level, stage and modality with the appropriate resources.

Tachizawa and Andrade (1999) highlight that the “organizational configuration is a core element for attaining improved performance of an educational institution’s management process”.

Chart 1 summarizes a study published by Porto and Régnier (2003) which introduces the following higher education scenarios for the forthcoming twenty years:

TREND	CHARACTERISTIC
1. Change in Higher Education characteristics via the introduction of new elements	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - End of the geographic monopoly; - Change in the organizational model: the federate system of faculties and universities gives way to a knowledge industry that operates on a global, non-ruled market; - Ample, strong and vertically integrated universities give way to more specialized institutions, centred on the student, not the professor;
2. Change in the Higher Education segment’s structure	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Corporate universities - Instructional companies that render services to universities - Intermediating entities that link vendors to the student for financing, acquired knowledge certification, job hunting and other purposes. - Non-traditional organizations entering the higher education market: telecommunications, information, entertainment, NGO and third sector companies.
3. Change in the university’s relationship with society	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The University plays new roles in society: health, social care, economic development, entertainment, etc. - The University shall become more visible, vulnerable and subject to external control.
4. Change in the nature of the provisioning of academic services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Continued education - Asynchronous learning - Diversification of services given differentiation of audiences, needs and objectives (tailoring)
5. Change in the way academic activities are executed	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Production model featuring entertainment industry characteristics: less artisan, more mass market oriented - New technologies remove teachers from classrooms to take on new learning experience giving rise to managerial roles as the student’s consultant and coach - Digital convergence generates a new “library”: changes

	the preservation, dissemination and accessibility of knowledge - New university extension models shall require more immediate application of a large volume of knowledge
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Chart 1 : Higher education scenarios – 2003/2025

Source: Adapted from Porto and Régnier (2003).

In an increasingly evolving market, professionalizing educational management becomes essential since with the diversification of the teaching offer, operating with management ground on old models, not only falls behind addressing new legal requirements but also does not secure the competitive advantage HEIs require to survive in a globalized marketplace.

2.2 THE ENTREPRENEUR AND THE COURSE COORDINATOR

In the world of business where scenarios change rapidly, the entrepreneurial profile captures the spotlight for developing, amongst skills deemed core to innovative organizations, the ability to promptly adapt to shifts via proactive actions which in turn sustain the predicting of future scenarios.

Filion (1991) adds creativity, characterized by the ability to establish and attain objectives whilst remaining highly aware of the surrounding environment and resorting to this perception to identify business opportunities.

According to Dornelas (2012) an entrepreneur’s skills comprise three aspects or fields, namely: Technical, where one finds requirements such as knowing how to write, listen, capture information, being organized, a team worker, an effective leader, mastering subject matter specific technical know-how and having sound lecturing abilities; Personal Skills, are in turn understood as being the ability to take risks, to be disciplined, innovative, a visionary leader, persistent and change centred; and finally, Managerial Skills comprising functional areas that pertain to the creation, development and management of a new company, namely: marketing, administration, finance, operations, production whilst also calling for decision making, systemic vision and good negotiating abilities (Table 1).

Visionary	Vision of what the future of their business and life shall be like and most importantly: they have the ability to implement their dreams.
Know how to take decisions	Know how to take assertive, timely decisions particularly at times of adversity.
Make a difference	Transform something that's hard to define, an abstract idea into something solid, that works, making possibilities into reality (Kao, 1989; Kets de Vries, 1997). Know how to add value to services and products they place on the market.
Fully explore opportunities	For entrepreneurs, good ideas spring from things everyone can see and, via data and information, transform them into opportunities. They know chances improve when knowledge increases.
Determined and dynamic	Actions are implemented in full commitment, with a unique desire to "make things come about".
Devoted	Untiring and workaholic.
Optimistic and passionate	Love work. Optimism ensures they always envision success instead of imagining failure.
Independent, they build their own fate	Wish to remain ahead of change and take ownership of their destiny. Want to coin something new and define their steps.
Make fortunes	Believe money is a consequence of success in business.
Team leaders and builders	Have an unusual sense of leadership. They are both respected and loved by their employees.
Have networks	Know how to build a network of contacts that help them in the company's external environment.
Organized	Know how to obtain and allot material, human, technological and financial resources in a rational manner.
Plan	They plan each step of the business
Knowledge	Crave for knowledge and learn continuously since they know that the more they master the business, the more successful they shall be.
Take on risks	Know how to take on calculated risks and how to manage them, evaluating the true some chances of success.
Create value for society	Utilize their intellectual capital to create value for society, generating jobs, making the economy more dynamic and innovative, always resorting to creativity to seek solutions to improve people's lives.

TABLE 1 Characteristics of successful entrepreneurs

SOURCE: Adapted by the author from DORNELAS, p. 24, 2012

Dornelas (2012) understands that today is but the representation of the Entrepreneurship Era since entrepreneurs are eliminating commercial and

cultural barriers, shortening distances, globalizing and renewing economic concepts, creating new work relations and job openings, breaking paradigms and generating wealth for society. Penã (2012) further states that innovation is a strength that comes from entrepreneurship and its application.

The Law of Directives and Bases (LDB, Law Nr. 9.394 of December 20, 1996) that was approved after the 1968 Reform, assigns the responsibility for the direction and quality of higher education courses to Course Coordinators. According to Colombo,

The Course Coordinator thus became a Ministry of Education and Culture's (*MEC*) requirement that all kinds of HEIs must have in their organizational structure. The Course Coordinator is responsible for managing the unit in all of its academic and administrative aspects and according to *MEC*'s requirements, is primarily in charge of steering two collegiate bodies which each course must also feature: the course's collegiate and the structuring teaching nucleus (*NDE*). (COLOMBO, 2010, p.29).

For the Ministry of Education and Culture, the functions of a Course Coordinator must include: academic management commitment via pedagogical practices, the course's pedagogical project (*PPC*) and the course's continued improvement; education and experience in developing academic management skills, with academic and pedagogical competence in addition to experience beyond academic frontiers; dedication to academic administration so as to address the needs of the volume of students, teachers and institutional commitments; articulation and implementation of institutional management policies via the course's pedagogical project (*PPC*), the institutional development plan (*PDI*) and the institutional pedagogical plan's (*PPI*) objectives and targets and ensure structuring teaching nucleus (*NDE*) and collegiate participation.

Much the same way adopting administrative management policies is essential, the teaching model must also be tackled from a managerial, pedagogical and entrepreneurial standpoint so as to promote the courses' Pedagogical Projects and consequently ensure their qualitative improvement. To promote the institution's sustainable development, the Course Coordinator must have a holistic understanding of the challenge, be empowered and efficient when taking decisions, manage knowledge and behave like entrepreneur.

Furthermore, the Course Coordinator has to fully understand the true needs of his students and be able to articulate the promotion of changes since

globalization and fierce competition demand institutions act as agents that ensure sustainability. This ultimately means it's up to them to ensure there is an alignment between education and the more pressing professional interests of the institution's students. Under this new scenario, reorganizing the teaching platform emerges as a challenge for future education.

Children and youngsters shall have to face unprecedented challenges whether in the field of energy, cultural issues, in food – today one simultaneously comes across epidemics involving mass starvation on one hand and obesity on the other. Humanity shall have to master a huge and very tough agenda in the near future.

To this effect, the Course Coordinator shall have to perceive the course management's guidelines from a systemic standpoint, prioritizing and harmonizing the components that generate the best results.

To complement statements involving entrepreneurial behaviour, Ronit (2012) advocates the importance of transformational leadership skills, whereby emotional capabilities impact the leader's ability to manage their followers' emotions. The inference rests in entrepreneurs being capable of sharing their emotions with followers to such an extent they transfer their affections and passion to the same. This transfer contributes with follower emotional attachment and increases psychological, identity and commitment properties at both individual and corporate levels.

The Coordinator must be an acknowledged leader in the Course's field of knowledge. This mentioned leadership shall result from a grade that reflects the assessment of the Coordinator's internal or external peers. The level of acknowledgement might be local, regional, nationwide or even international. The same shall be acknowledged as a leader in the field of knowledge as the individual becomes a reference in the professional area of the Course he or she manages. If the perspective is that of the Course's core area of knowledge, it is obvious that this leader must be widely acknowledged for the articles he or she has published, the conferences the same is invited to lecture at, for his or her action at the respective professional category's council; in a nutshell, for his or her internal and external political action. A Course Coordinator, when systematically honoured by course graduates, shall have certainly positively addressed his/her function and should this acknowledgement surpass the HEIs' frontiers, all the better (ABMES, 2011, p. 19).

Transforming educational services into quality that the customer – the student – perceives, i.e., making it tangible, demands teachers internalize that the success of the educational process is a collective responsibility. They must represent the HEI's competitive strategies before students and promote the dissemination of the planned organizational culture so as to address the increasingly high level of global competitiveness.

The challenge in higher education course management requires strong innovative and entrepreneurial Coordinator skills so as to address social and work marketplace demands. Furthermore, they must both act as educators and facilitators of the development process of the community in which the HEI is inserted, promoting events that contribute with the same's professional advancement.

For Bessant & Tidd (2009) innovation and entrepreneurship go hand-in-hand and their successful practice requires three different perspectives, namely:

Personal or individual attributes that include a creative profile and the ability to identify, assess and develop new ideas and concepts. Social or collective factors that comprise the team, group and process contributions required to transform ideas and concepts into new products, services or businesses. Contextual factors are the environment and resources required to ensure the coining and growth of innovation and entrepreneurship (BESSANT & TIDD, 2009, p. 93).

Coordinators are also challenged to centre their research on local and practical needs unifying both to ensure the development of students as citizens. The reason for studying entrepreneurship rests in the need to awaken a global management, business innovation and individual autonomy vision amongst Coordinators and the need to routinely introduce entrepreneurial influence within companies, as advocated by Oliveira:

This requires all professionals at all institutions to turn innovation and entrepreneurship into a regular activity that works as an integral part of their day to day routines, as a practice in their own work and in that of their companies (OLIVEIRA, 2010, p. 115).

Coordinators ought to leave the course manager attitude behind and adopt entrepreneurial behaviours so as to, in as much as the management of the course is concerned, optimize how work is done and its outcomes, developing graduates that are capable of addressing the work marketplace. Matilde (2012)

further adds that learning and acquiring knowledge have proven to be of great importance to the entrepreneurial process which in turn is closely linked with innovation.

To this effect, the Course Coordinator must be perceived as an entrepreneur when the bar of the course is raised well beyond market complexities. For the forthcoming increasingly complex future to come, managerial skills shall no longer ensure success at educational institutions but rather, the mentioned set of abilities.

3 METHODOLOGY

Research specialists Freitas and Moscarola apply the concept of methodology to research as being: "a very powerful resource to collect, analyse and extract valuable information from both external and internal data" (FREITAS, MOSCAROLA, 2002, p. 78).

To attain the proposed objectives, the study's investigation comprises the analysis of four HEIs that belong to the Private Education Estácio Group located at the city of Natal in the Brazilian State of Rio Grande do Norte, namely: *Estácio Ponta Negra*, *Estácio Romualdo*, *Estácio Alexandrino* and *Estácio Zona Norte*. The study's universe consisted of the Course Coordinators of the private HEIs that belong to the Private Education Estácio Group.

The study's nature is characterized as an applied research since it analyses the Coordinator's profile. It was formed according to exploratory descriptive quantitative nature studies' criteria since the research comprises closed questions and induces the interviewee's thought process to freely reply about the subject matter. It is exploratory because this ensures greater comprehension of the investigated phenomenon. In the case of descriptive studies, Acevo and Nohara (2004) propose this approach to describe the studied phenomenon or the characteristics of a given group since it also allows for the comprehension of the relations between the concepts involving the studied issue.

Once the method was chosen, data was collected via personal interviews, employing a structured questionnaire. According to PINSONNEAULT and KRAEMER (1993) this approach is justified via requirements that are ground in the field of organizational and managerial studies.

The research tool or survey comprised 13 closed questions to identify the Coordinator profile, 17 questions using a 5 point score Likert scale to identify the Entrepreneur profile, 42 questions with a 5 point score Likert scale that measured the dimensions of the Coordinator's activities and finally, 4 open and optional questions that measured the difficulties and possibilities that impact the development of entrepreneurship in the management of courses. A direct collection of primary data was conducted, i.e., information was gathered directly at the source via interviews, using a structured questionnaire, that was not masked by closed questions but rather contained dichotomous, sequenced questions worded in accordance with the researched audience.

The investigation's timeframe, i.e., the period during which data was gathered via surveys occurred between October 28 and 31, 2013.

Data was quantitatively treated whereby opinions and information were presented using statistical and percentage resources and techniques.

4 DATA PRESENTATION AND ANALYSIS

With the purpose of understanding the profile of interviewees, the survey included 13 questions. Table 2 features the Coordinator's profile data collected from the researched HEIs.

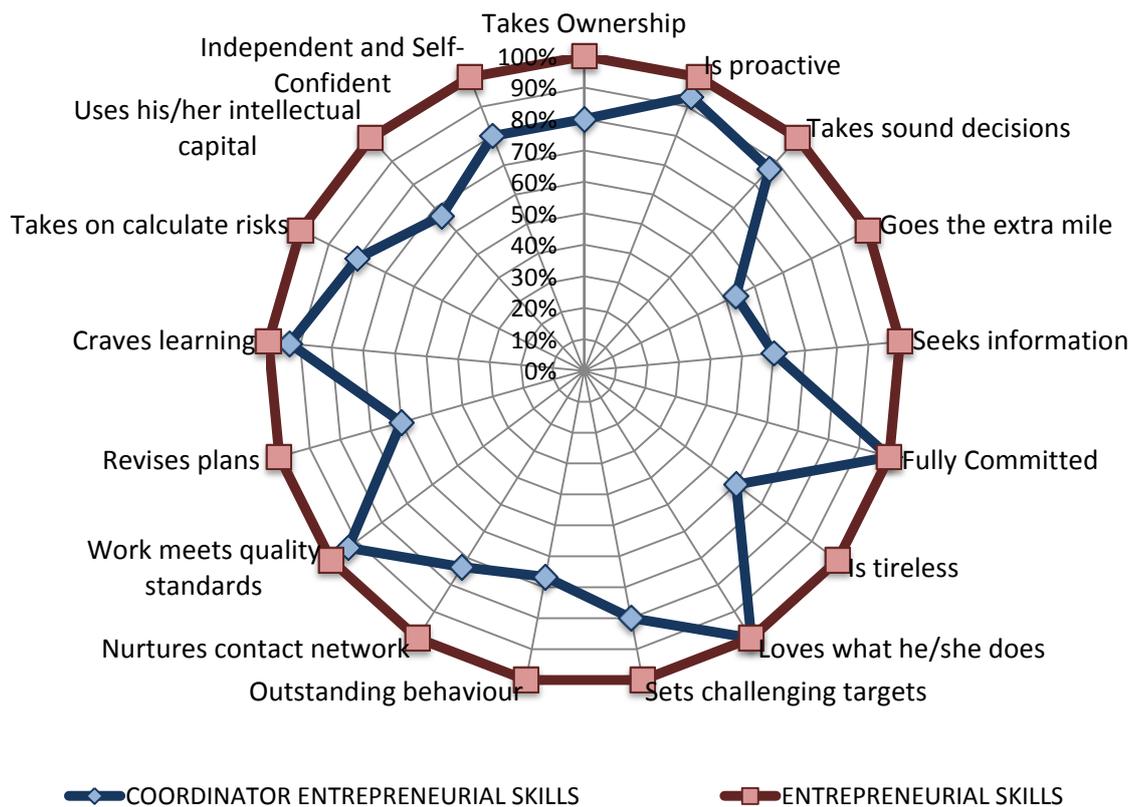
COORDINATOR PROFILE		
SOCIOECONOMIC DATA	RESULT	%
Age range	36 to 45 years	47%
Marital Status	Married	73%
Gender	Female	53%
Level of Education	Masters Degree	53%
Institution where the last degree was concluded	Federal University of Rio Grande do Norte	33%
Family income	R\$ 3.001,00 to R\$ 5.000,00	53%
Mode most employed to remain up-to-date as to contemporary world affairs	Web	39%

Weekly hour load devoted to managing the course	20h/a	33%
Weekly hour load devoted to teaching	6h/a to 10h/a	20%
Works at another company	YES	53%
Prior experience as Course Coordinator at other HEIs	NO	67%
Time as Course Coordinator	3 to 4 years	13%
Time as Higher Education Teacher	6 years	21%

TABLE 2 Coordinator Profile

Source: Prepared by the author as of primary data, 2013.

Graph 1 was prepared to compare the indexes of Entrepreneurial Characteristics versus Course Coordinator Entrepreneurial Characteristics. To this effect, the latter took the sum of “always” and “almost always” requirements into account to compile the amounts pictured in the illustration.



GRAPH 1: Comparison between Entrepreneurial Characteristics Indexes vs. Course Coordinators' Entrepreneurial Characteristics Indexes

Source: Prepared by the author as of primary data, 2013.

One notices that for higher than 70% indexes results represent the following characteristics:

- Is proactive and is ahead of the future – 93%;
- Develops or uses procedures and resources to ensure the work is concluded in good time or that it meets quality standards– 93%;
- Craves for knowledge and learns continuously being fully aware of the fact that the more one masters the business, the greater shall be the success – 93% (very positive index particularly given the need for regular updating to deliver classes, prepare content and academic events that keep pace with each trends as they arise over time);
- Behaves as an owner (takes ownership) at the company - 80%, (this result is in line with one of Estácio Group´s values where the corporate culture seeks to develop the collaborator´s mind-set so that professionals behave as if they own the institution);
- Takes the correct decisions in a timely manner, particularly at times of adversity – 87%. Since decision making is an important factor of deploying the role, this appears as a prospective point of improvement given that assertive decisions improve quality whilst incorrect decisions might drive rise to course management inconveniences;
- Establishes challenging goals and objectives that have personal significance – 80%;
- Takes on calculated risks and manages them, evaluating the actual chance of success – 80%, a considerable figure for this item given that this is one of the most characteristic skills involving entrepreneurship. Dornelas advocates that “Taking on risks directly relates to challenges. For the entrepreneur, the greater the challenge, the more exciting shall the entrepreneurial journey be ” (DORNELAS, 2012, p. 24);
- Is independent and self-confident even before discouraging outcomes – 80%;
- Nurtures their network of contacts – 73%. If one takes into account that networks are vital to contact the external community, this ability must be developed to extend contact with companies, students, suppliers and the community as a whole.

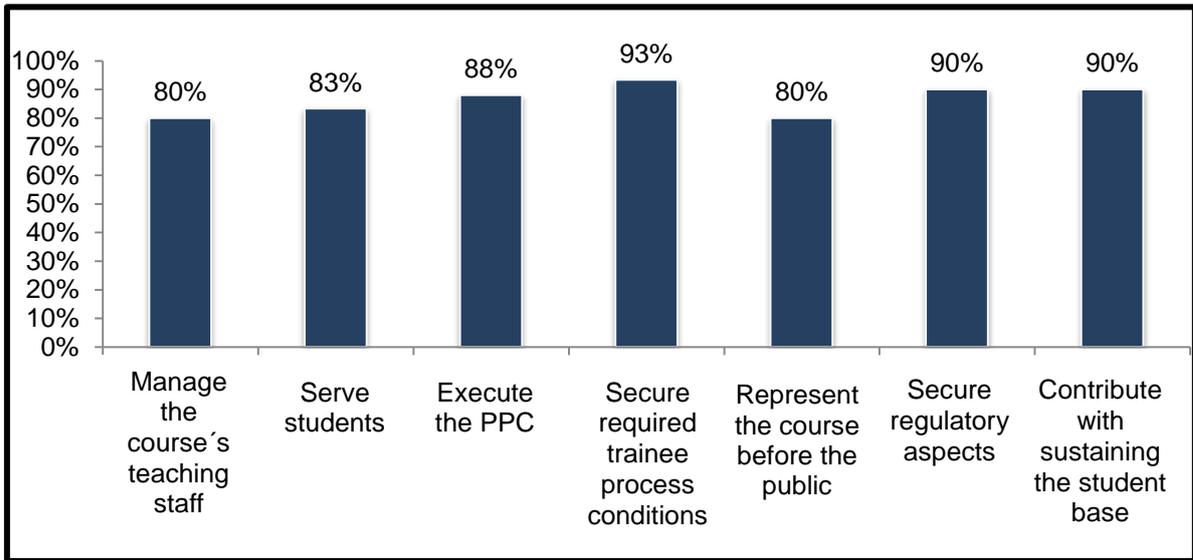
- Special mention: Executes activities with full commitment, with a desire to make things come about– 100%. This is the top best requirement assessed in comparison to the other questions. This is a very positive point indeed since it demonstrates to what extent Coordinators have embraced the activities the institution proposed;
- Is passionate for what they do, about their work – 100%.This is also a relevant figure since it demonstrates that the professional was correct when choosing this role. Dornelas understands that “this is the most important fuel that keeps entrepreneurs increasingly thrilled and self-determined, making them the best salesmen of their products and services” (DORNELAS, 2012, p. 24).

However, when it comes to indexes below 70%, the following outcomes were encountered:

- Their outstanding behaviour is a reference for the team– 67%;
- Uses their intellectual capital to create value for society, always resorting to creativity to seek solutions to improve the life of others– 67%;
- Continuously revises their plans keeping in mind results obtained and circumstantial changes – 60%. This approach needs to be revised since it impacts the path that must be followed to build plans that address the reality both the market and student educational needs expose;
- Is tireless and crazy about work (workaholic) – 60%;
- Seeks information to transform it into new business opportunities – 60%. This point deserves special mention in terms of course innovation management since information is core to both the decision making process and innovation management. As Hashimoto mentions “with the current level of competitiveness, companies no longer can afford to only save, cut expenses and tighten their belts. Growth and sustainability require companies to increase, combine, multiply and generate innovation as of identifying opportunities” (HASHIMOTO, 2013, p. 103);
- Exceeds limits and goes beyond the established, the extra mile – 53%. One notices that there has been a division in the percentage whereby 53% is positive and 46% is negative.

In as much as the Course Coordinator's functions are concerned, the data collection method was subdivided into attributions. Graphs 2 and 3 that follow comprise the analysis of functions and the dimensions of Coordinator activities.

Graph 2 features indexes that are at least 80% favourable.



GRAPH 2: Course Coordinator Functions

Source: Primary data, 2013.

In as much as the function or responsibility of managing the course's teaching staff is concerned, the 80% index found is deemed of great importance since it reveals the team is monitored and class room performance is analysed.

Servicing students, receiving them and seeing to their needs featured an 83% index. This demonstrates Coordinators provide guidance when it comes to including disciplines, making eventual changes on monthly fee values and the like. The latter refers to taking into account changes involving the inclusion/exclusion of disciplines deemed "in progress" (i.e., the student is attending them). Furthermore servicing students also involves addressing matters that solely pertain to the student's academic performance.

When analysing the "execution of the Course's Pedagogical Project" role, one notices that the sum of "always" and "almost always" replies exceeds 80% in all requirements.

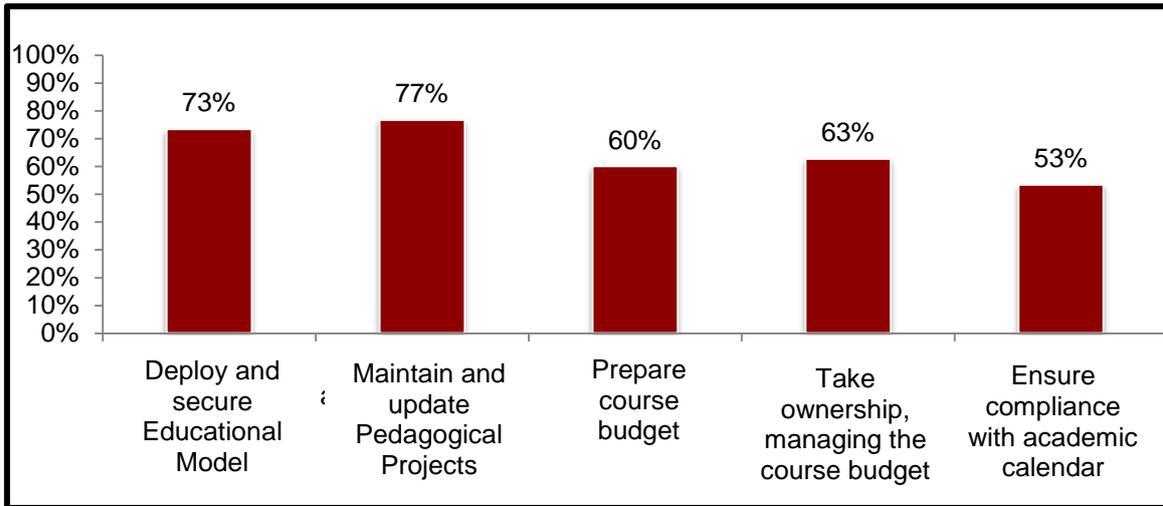
In as much as monitoring the trainee programs is concerned, positive indexes were encountered both in relation to the monitoring of punctuality and in terms of grades and attendance rate registry by teachers. The former resulted in 93% when "always" and "almost always" replies were added and the latter, 93% reported to always register the required information.

The evaluation that covered "representation of the course before the internal/external public" resulted in 80% and was deemed quite positive revealing the ability to articulate with audiences. This is a very important aspect to narrow the ties with the surrounding HEI community.

The requisite that covers addressing the course's regulatory aspects unveiled the following result when "always" and "almost always" answers were added: 80% claimed to host MEC's evaluation committees and to structure and maintain the course's NDE (Structuring Teaching Staff Nucleus), in addition to collecting information for the preparation of documents, compiling of the pedagogical project (evidence), promoting, preparing and enhancing both student and teaching staff awareness as to the role of the National Student Performance Exam - *Enade*.

Findings also revealed that the "contribution to maintain the student base" is strongly monitored considering the 90% index of favourability, evidencing Coordinator concern in mitigating evasion and closely following the admittance of new students.

Graph 3 represents the indexes that presented less than 78% of favourability and are deemed of prime concern so corrective actions may be introduced to ensure course management efficiency.



GRAPH 3 Coordinator Functions

Source: Primary Data, 2013.

In as much as introducing and executing Estácio's Educational Model is concerned, one notes that a more detailed verification of the factors that interfere in this activity is needed, if one takes into account the relevance they pose to the development of the educational program the institution sets out to deliver.

The illustration also reveals that the function "maintain and update Pedagogical Projects" features a slightly higher index than the previous responsibility. Nevertheless, it also needs to be improved since this assignment is directly associated with academic development and the need to continuously build and update the course's Pedagogical Project as a source of planning and improvement of course offerings.

In relation to the previous indexes, those that pertain to budget preparation and management were lower, respectively 60% and 63%. The activity is mostly characterized by administrative issues involving course management as opposed to calling for academic skills, but is essential to ensure the financial sustainability of courses.

Finally, with an even lower index, the function Ensure Compliance with the Academic Calendar represented 53%. This demands in-depth analysis given the fact this is a core course management activity.

To conclude the understanding of the survey's queries, results gathered from the open questions are subsequently presented. The purpose is to comprehend via replies offered by Course Coordinators, the factors that impact and conditions that contribute to the possibilities of one taking entrepreneurial initiatives throughout the course management process, as pictured by the results presented in Tables 3 and 4.

TABLE 3 Impairment(s) impacting course management entrepreneurial possibilities in terms of Coordinator functions

	POSSIBLE REPLIES	QTY.	%	TOTAL
Political	Policies are limited to Estácio in Rio de Janeiro without taking local peculiarities into account.	7	15%	19%
	Absence of policies enabling the preparation of courses deemed essential to the local community.	1	2%	
	Ensure teaching staff assiduity.	1	2%	
Managerial	Absence of knowledge and training in certain processes that must be urgently delivered	9	19%	27%
	Personnel management	1	2%	
	Many corporate actions	1	2%	
	Schedule <i>NDE</i> and collegiate meeting	1	2%	
	Many responsibilities	1	2%	
Academic	Hiring of teachers	4	8%	27%
	Excessive routine and volume of meetings	2	4%	
	Academic Coordinator adjustment with Course Coordinators	2	4%	
	Lack of didactic-pedagogical monitoring	2	4%	
	Lack of laboratories	1	2%	
	Implementation of Class Plan by teachers	1	2%	
	Evaluation tools	1	2%	
Institutional	Over-focus on processes and far too tight deadlines	4	8%	27%
	Limitation of financial resources	3	6%	
	Hourly amount paid for current class loads is below market average.	3	6%	
	Difficulties in communication	1	2%	
	Class room facilities (sound, board, multimedia...)	1	2%	
	Teaching staff plotting of grades, attendance rates and content	1	2%	
TOTAL		48	100%	100%

Source: Primary data, 2013.

From Table 3 one notes that these were 48 random statements of issues that impact entrepreneurial initiative possibilities when Coordinators manage courses. Furthermore, this is particularly the case – 27% - when deploying Managerial, Academic and Institutional skills.

In as much as the points mentioned within each of these most hindered functions, the following outcomes were compiled: the factor that most impacts Coordinator entrepreneurship – 19% - is “the absence of knowledge and training in certain processes that must urgently be delivered”, followed by 15% pertaining to “restricted to Estácio Rio’s policies; without taking local peculiarities into account” and by the hiring of professors (8%), excessive focus on processes and far too tight deadlines (8%), limitation of financial resources (6%) and amount paid for hourly class load below market average (6%). The remaining issues represented less than 5% of reported impairments to executing course coordination activities using an entrepreneurial approach.

TABLE 4 Benefit (s) and/or condition(s) that contribute with course management entrepreneurial possibilities in terms of Coordinator functions

	POSSIBLE REPLIES	QTY.	%	TOTAL
Political	Student incentive policies	1	3%	16%
	SGC (Job Position Management Section) Forum that encourages the discussion of national policies.	1	3%	
	Academic Coordination and National Coordination	1	3%	
	New management of the nucleus	1	3%	
	Teamwork	1	3%	
Managerial	Mastering of the business and access to information such as reports, etc.	3	10%	23%
	Management of essential sectors	1	3%	
	Contribution of Academic Coordination in problem solving and course planning	1	3%	
	Comprehensive vision	1	3%	
	Flexibility at course meetings and events	1	3%	
Academic	Continued education offered to teaching staff and Coordinators	3	10%	35%
	Openness to the management of academic activities	2	6%	
	Excellent qualification of teaching staff	1	3%	
	Contribution of teaching staff to course formation	1	3%	
	Access to the Secretarial Office	1	3%	

	Continuous capture and systematic monitoring	1	3%	
	Estácio's Educational Model	1	3%	
	Presence of pedagogues, in addition to Coordinators being available to ponder teaching-learning matters.	1	3%	
Institutional	Meritocracy incentive policies	2	6%	26%
	Institutional tools (reports)	2	6%	
	HEIs' premises	1	3%	
	Interest and availability to understand course demands	1	3%	
	Timetable/working schedule flexibility	1	3%	
	Development of an entrepreneurship culture	1	3%	
TOTAL		31	100%	100%

Source: Primary data, 2013.

As to the benefits and/or conditions that contribute with the possibilities of applying entrepreneurial skills to educational course management, Coordinator replies to open questions were grouped and treated revealing that the most mentioned were: Academic (35%), Institutional (26%) followed by Managerial with 23%. Amongst each function's sub items, citations include: 10% "mastering of the business and access to information such as reports ..."; 10% "continued education offered to teaching staff and coordinators"; 6% "openness for the managing of academic activities" and 6% "policies to encourage meritocracy". The remaining issues raised by interviewees primarily represent 3% of the sum total gathered, featuring a far too scattered and diversified content for grouping purposes.

5 CONCLUSIONS

Findings enabled full comprehension of proposed objectives as of this study's focal purpose, i.e., becoming acquainted with the profile of Course Coordinators. From this understanding one notices that the actions that are proposed and discussed in the next section are far better ground considering that information on both profile and behaviour was gathered to this effect.

To complement the researched theme, outcomes also enabled the comprehension of the activity's dimensions, impairments and conditions that

impact the ability to apply entrepreneurship actions to course management, from the perspective of those in charge of the assignment, i.e., the Course Coordinators. Finally, findings also eased evaluation of the relationship between Coordinator profiles and that of entrepreneurs.

Whatever the corporate strategy, one cannot merely count market and competition information without previously understanding their own organization, its strengths and weaknesses, the opportunities and threats offered by the environment and about the very managers who are posted in the strategic front line deploying innovation centred activities.

Additionally, these findings bear significance and are aligned with the context covered throughout the entire herein discussed theoretical framework since they result from the processing of carefully treated data, to ensure both relevance and true added value, in support of current and future decisions.

Davidow and Malone (1992) state that advances in information processing shall serve as the company's dynamo; furthermore, in the forthcoming years, incremental differences in the ability companies have to acquire, distribute, store, analyse and call upon actions based on information, shall determine who wins and who loses in the war for clients. A company's ability to operate and coin products and services shall depend on how well it collects, processes, integrates and masters the mentioned information.

Information in turn, springs from processed data. Thus, to this effect, information is herein understood as the analyses of determined data for a specific purpose. In this study specifically, this in turn centres on a concern involving competitiveness and innovation management at the researched Higher Education Institutions once information is deemed vital to support decisions and strongly influences the behaviour of Course Coordinators.

Entrepreneurship has captured the spotlight and become increasingly important for the economy of many countries. This justifies understanding the profile of the entrepreneur who, via a specific set of skills, forefronts and draws attention to the importance of this professional in corporate organizational structures, currently referred to as an "intra-preneur" or "corporate entrepreneur".

Peiris (2012) understands that the entrepreneur is an integral part of the opportunity for development process. If adequately explored, with their knowledge, capabilities and learnings entrepreneurs generate added value to customers promoting corporate evolution. This is achieved by adapting, building and integrating knowledge from an entrepreneur's perspective which thus coins a sustainable competitive advantage for the company.

Under this context, researched HEIs ought to deploy entrepreneurship culture dissemination practices in the surroundings of the activities that Course Coordinators develop, taking discussions on the theme to corporate strategic levels so as to complement the managerial actions conducted in the form of institutional policies. This results in gains in terms of quality, innovation and competitiveness.

5.1 RECOMENDATIONS

An assortment of challenges permeates the environment of Higher Education Institutions and this study highlights the importance of managing courses centring attention on innovation and competitiveness.

Based on the herein presented conclusions and on the discussion of the study's queries, findings revealed that the issues that call for greater attention are:

- Full comprehension of Coordinator profiles is important to thereafter propose new management modes that best suit both individual and collective behaviour and to this effect, implement entrepreneurial actions;
- 67% of Coordinators did not have prior coordinating experience at other HEIs and in the current course, 62% have been conducting this activity as Course Coordinators within a range of 4 months to 2 and a half years' worth of experience. This is complemented by results collected from the replies to the set of open questions whereby interviewees were asked to identify impairments that hindered their entrepreneurial ability. Featuring the highest score, 19% replied that the absence of knowledge and training

in certain institutional processes posed difficulties. Investigations reveal that attention is needed to ensure professionals fully internalize the entire scope of dimensions the activity requires, particularly if one takes into account the direct relationship between information and the setting of competitive differentials and coining of innovation;

- The Pedagogical Project, as per Graph 3, is the course's essence and findings revealed that this index is unfavourable in terms of keeping the same updated. This calls for more consistent planning so that the *PPC* becomes an instrument of innovation of course activities;
- In the quest for actions that foster entrepreneurial attitudes, special attention ought to be given to improving the following indexes: the Coordinator's behaviour emerges as a reference for the team – 67%; the Coordinator uses his/her intellectual capital to create value for society and always resorts to creativity to coin solutions that improve people's lives – 67%; the Coordinator constantly revises his/her plans taking results obtained and circumstantial changes into account – 60%; the Coordinator is tireless and loves his/her work – 60%; the Coordinator seeks information to transform the same into new business opportunities – 60% and finally, Coordinators exceed boundaries and go the extra mile – 53%;
- In as much as Coordinator functions are concerned, the following macro-functions that scored above 20% when "sometimes", "hardly ever" and "never" replies were added, call for special attention: Implant and ensure the Educational Model – 20%; Maintain and update Pedagogical Projects – 23,5%; Prepare the Course Budget – 40%; Take ownership of the budget, managing it as if the Coordinator were the owner – 36,4% and Ensure compliance with the Academic Calendar – 40,5%.

Although this study enabled the attaining of the desired outcomes, the intent rests in furthering investigations via future studies, so as to foster greater discussion on entrepreneurial culture within HEIs. Certainly the theme can no longer be overlooked if one takes into account the need to ensure business sustainability via innovation and the development of entrepreneurial practices.

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