

# Evasion in higher education: definitions and trajectories\*

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## Abstract

The evasion phenomenon is considered one of the Ministry of Education main concerns and seen as a target to be tackled or an index to be reduced. The term appears in some public policies for Higher Education, such as REUNI (BRASIL, 2007), SINAES (BRASIL, 2004) and PNAES (BRASIL, 2010). However, the bibliographic research done in order to map a larger search called: Evasion, retention and permanence: social inclusion and the right to education has revealed that expert analysis and official documents are showing divergences and/or insufficiencies and brought together phenomena of different kind. The divergence has been based on criteria that almost never differentiated by causality or motivation for loss of bond with the institution. Indeed, the purpose of this article moves towards pointing out the limits of the current definitions about evasion in Federal Higher Education, reinforcing the importance of definitions based on causalities and, finally, reaching an appropriate definition of evasion for the formulation and evaluation of policies for Federal Higher Education. For this, it was decided to make a mapping of the bibliographic production on the subject, a brief retrieval of official documents about the topic and the specialized bibliography and then launch a suggestion for the debate about evasion, in the understanding of this phenomenon as a social indicator.

## Keywords

Evasion – Higher education – Public policies.

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<https://doi.org/10.1590/S1678-4634202147228764>

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## Introduction

Evasion is among the main attentions of the Ministry of Education (MEC), in any levels of education. It is also present as a concern in several policies for federal higher education such as the Restructuring and Expansion Plans for Federal Universities - REUNI (BRASIL, 2007), the National System for the Evaluation of Higher Education, SINAES (BRASIL, 2004) and the National Student Assistance Plan - PNAES (BRASIL, 2010), becoming a target to be hit or an index to be reduced, mainly because it represents, in some way, the institutional failure.

It is assumed that policies that combat evasion, as well as any other public policies, must start from a diagnosis, or an assessment (HOWLETT; RAMESH; PERL, 2013) in which data and evidence about the social problem are considered. Surely, the volume, the nature, the causality related to the phenomenon of disconnection from higher education were in the sight of these policies' managers. However, the bibliographic survey made for this research revealed a certain level of dissonance between what has been named, measured and explained. At this moment, three relevant questions seem to emerge. The first one, in the field of definition, inquire what is called evasion in federal higher education. The second enquiry, clearly dependent on the first, attentive to its extension, requires knowledge about its size and numbers. And finally, the last one, already more advanced and accustomed to higher stages of formulation, would seek solutions.

This article is especially interested in the first aspect, more specifically the importance of an appropriate evasion definition for the formulation and evaluation of policies for federal higher education, since without it, the measurement and quantification will not take unequivocally ownership of the phenomenon as well as the formulated policies will not have a well-defined target. What justifies an article to devote itself to the definition of evasion is, precisely, the fact that the bibliography and official documents have shown divergences and brought together phenomena of different natures. And, perhaps the most worrying dimension, have been based on disagreement about criteria that almost never differ by causality or by motivation of the loss of link with the institution. As a rule, the forms for termination are emphasized and the reasons for that, neglected. The reason for evasion, it is believed, could only be extracted from surveys with graduates, who almost never appear to subsidize the field reflections.

The result, as one might expect, show generic definitions, covering almost all types of bond loss as evasion. Taking to the same account deaths, exchange of courses, expulsion, dismissal, leaving due to lack of vocation, financial problems, curricular problems, illness, among many others. Each of these reasons may or may not pose a problem, and each of them may require a different type of approach, measurement and public policy.

In effect, the objective of this article is to point out the limits of the current definitions for evasion in federal higher education, reinforce the importance of definitions based on causalities and finally, bring a suggestion to the debate. So, the first theoretical challenge would be to define evasion, that is, to give its direct, precise and normative meaning, identifying their cases. It was decided to present the text in two parts, before the

final considerations. On one hand, a quick look over official documents about the topic and the specialized bibliography and, on the other, the suggestion of a new definition for evasion from its causalities.

### **Evasion on regulatory frameworks: inaccuracies**

The defined outline for this article dates from three important legal frameworks. The 1996 National Education Guidelines and Bases Law, the institutionalization of the Higher Education Assessment from 2004, and the Plan Support Program for Education Restructuring and Expansion of Federal Universities - REUNI, from 2007. In what do these three legislations influence a definition of evasion? What definitions do they bring?

First of all, it is necessary to problematize this reading using what in fact would represent the goal of Higher Education. According to article 43 of the LDB - Law of Education Guidelines and Bases (Law No. 9.394/96), the purposes of Higher Education would precisely be:

I - to stimulate cultural creation and the development of the scientific and reflective thinking; II - to train graduates in the different areas of knowledge, [...]; III - to encourage research and investigation work aiming at the development of science and technology and the creation and diffusion of culture, and, thus, develop the understanding of man and the environment in which he lives; IV - to promote the dissemination of cultural, scientific and technical knowledges that constitute humanity heritage and communicate knowledge through teaching, publications or other forms of communication; V - to arouse the permanent desire for cultural and professional improvement [...]; VI - to stimulate knowledge of the world's current problems, [...]; VII - to promote extension, open to the participation of the population, [...]; VIII - to act in favor of universalization and improvement of the basic education, [...]. (BRASIL, 1996, n.p).

Thus, Law 9.394/96 does not list the purposes of Higher Education in a hierarchical or conditioned way, leading to the belief that the legislator's interest was to equalize them. This being true, the fact that out of the eight purposes, only one relates strictly to job training. The second one. In all of the others, it is possible for the student to fully or almost fully develop them during the course without necessarily obtaining a diploma. This is not due to the fact that LDB is negligent as to the diploma issuing, but the fact of not reducing the university activity to the manufacturing of graduates or training the workforce. That said, the content of the aforementioned law assigns the university a prominent role in the civilizing process, in the direction of a more just, democratic, developed and plural society. Assessing success or university failure should strictly take into account all purposes, without reducing the size of the market. Likewise, any other university phenomena, such as evasion, should be subjected to judgments taking into account the range of purposes for which the system is intended.

In turn, Law No. 10.861/2004 which establishes the National System for the Assessment of Higher Education - SINAES, was an important legal framework, as it

systematized the bases and foundations for the creation of a Higher Education evaluation policy, with the following objectives:

[...] improving the *quality of higher education*, orienting expansion of its offer, *the permanent increase of its institutional academic and social effectiveness* and, especially, the promotion of deepening the *social commitments and responsibilities* of higher education institutions, by enhancing their mission, promotion of democratic values, respect for difference and diversity, the affirmation of autonomy and institutional identity. (BRASIL, 2004, n.p., emphasis added).

Efficiency and effectiveness are terms used here to define Higher Education quality improvement. Such terms, although they seem to be synonymous, bring differences in their definitions, as it would require from that legislation, the definition to which it refers.

Its use is usually intensive in public policy evaluation programs as Costa and Castanhar (2003) explain about UNICEF (United Nations International Children's Emergency Fund) guidelines. In line with Costa and Castanhar (2003), it is recognized as Unicef's guidance for establishing criteria for: efficiency, b) effectiveness, c) outcomes (impacts), d) user satisfaction, e) cost-effectiveness analysis, f) sustainability and g) equity. Efficiency, in this perspective, evaluates the best possible cost/benefit ratio in order to achieve the objectives set out in the program. Effectiveness, according to the authors, assesses the degree to which the program achieves its objectives and goals. And finally, outcomes. It evaluates whether the project has (positive) effects on the environment in which it intervened in technical, economic, socio-cultural, institutional and environmental issues. They look like definitions with a technical dimension, but they are important in creating an evaluation system. Hence, the need to define these terms.

Despite the absence of an explicit definition in the Law, these definitions are used to understand the criteria and principles of such quality improvement: a higher education institutions responsibility. This aspect becomes latent when proposing to evaluate the concept of evasion, since, from this scenario, it is not possible to dissociate it from this responsibility announced in the Law.

Reiterating what was analyzed above, the text of the Law presents in its article 3, the institutional dimensions that should be considered in the scope of the evaluation. Among them, two are considered very relevant to this evasion context:

[...] *the social responsibility of the institution*, especially considered in regards of *its contribution to social inclusion*, economic and social development, the defense of the environment, cultural memory, artistic production and cultural heritage, as well as the dimension of student attendance policies. (BRASIL, 2004, n.p., emphasis added).

What is intended to be demonstrated through this regulatory framework is that the creation of a higher education assessment system is closely related to the aims and principles of its institution and that they are already declared in the national legislation as dimensions of its evaluation process.

But what is the relationship between the concept of evasion and the SINAES legislation? The relationship is established by its beginning. There is no way to define evasion without it being clear on which referential we start from. Thus, we established this as the second regulatory framework in that we will appropriate the following principles: social responsibility, democratic values, respect for difference and diversity, aiming at a more just society. These legal principles are associated with a vision from the University in which students are the protagonists. From this perspective, the students are the reason for the institutions core and ending activities. Therefore, it is based on the SINAES principles, detailing the place in which the student category is seen in the context of Brazilian public universities.

It is also worth noting that from the documents that make up SINAES, the “Guidelines for the Institutions Self-Assessment Roadmap” (2004), the word evasion appears twice. The first refers to the description of the actions planned by IES in which the “definition of working groups composition, serving the main segments of the academic community (evaluation of graduates and/or teachers; evasion study, etc.);” (BRASIL, 2004, p. 10) presents itself as one of the actions. The evasion study, in this case, is the responsibility of the working groups to be created by the IES in its self-assessment. The second time, the word appears in the item “Student service policies” in which they are presented as part of the basic and common core:

Study mechanisms/systematics and analysis of data on freshmen, evasion/abandonment, average completion times, graduations, teacher/student relationship and other studies aiming at improving educational activities. (BRASIL, 2004, p. 33).

SINAES fragility in relation to evasion is the lack of any evaluative indicator and/or analysis criteria that can identify and evaluate the institutional measures data on evasion in any of the 5 axes of the External Institutional Assessment Instrument (2017). Self-assessment appears as an institutional action, but it will not be evaluated at another time by SINAES. Perhaps this inconsistency provokes the theoretical questions and methodological aspects that we will point out in this article. Little appears in documents guidelines, but at the same time, it presents itself as an important number for the public budget in Higher Education.

Despite the announced absences, Decree nº 6.096/2007, which institutes the Support Program for Restructuring and Expansion Plans for Federal Universities – REUNI, that brings in its guidelines:

I- reduction of evasion rates, occupation of idle vacancies and increase of admission slots, especially at night; II - *expansion of student mobility*, with the implementation of curricular regimes and title systems that *enable the construction of training itineraries* through use of credits and the movement of students between institutions, higher education courses and programs; [...] V - expansion of health policies student inclusion and assistance; [...]. (BRASIL, 2007, n.p., emphasis added).

Based on this framework, it is opened the need and observation of the Institutions that have joined REUNI, by reducing evasion rates and expanding student mobility, which announces a definition in which evasion is understood and differentiated from mobility. Indeed, even though the expansion program for federal institutions aims at reducing evasion rates, the definition of evasion itself is not clear. As much as the booklets are resorted, documents complementary to the implementation, there will be no term accuracy. Thus, indefinitely, federal institutions are left to their own devices, without a general orientation bringing them light to know what to measure and what to combat.

Thus, these three regulatory frameworks, namely Law nº 9.394 / 96 (LDB), Law nº 10.861/2004 (SINAES) and Decree No. 6.096/2007 (REUNI), with their absences and presences intended to be the reference for the analysis and definition of evasion, an objective that we comply with in the next section.

### **Bibliographic survey: definitions and concepts**

Initially, it is interesting to present a synthetic mapping of bibliographic production found about evasion. Its medium features have a striking predominance of case studies covering states, institutions<sup>2</sup>, courses<sup>3</sup> or student categories. Furthermore, with greater difficulty, works with national approaches and totalizing pretensions<sup>4</sup>, as well as reviews of the bibliography of the field<sup>5</sup> are found.

Before the survey, it was expected to find a larger number of works in journals, mainly because of the conception premise that evasion is a recurring theme in the attention of Federal Institutions of Higher Education – IFES managers, associations and the Ministry of Education itself. In 2017, in a search on the Scielo website ([www.scielo.br](http://www.scielo.br)) using the evasion and higher education search keys for any field, you can get 14 articles as an answer. When the same research is done based on CAPES data ([www.catalogodeteses.capes.gov.br](http://www.catalogodeteses.capes.gov.br)), the number of studies is impressive, since there are 97,821 master's theses and 28,843 theses from doctorates. A quick look at the title list shows that predominance of case studies.

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**2-** (FURTADO; ALVES, 2012), (SANTOS JUNIOR *et al.*, 2015), (VELLOSO; CARDOSO, 2008), (ASSIS, 2013), (BONFIM, 2014), (ADACHI, 2009), (DAVOK; BERNARD, 2016), (VELOSO; ALMEIDA, 2013), (SANTOS JUNIOR *et al.*, 2016), (RODRIGUEZ, 2011), (SANTOS JUNIOR, 2015a).

**3-** (CORRÊA; NORONHA; MIURA, 2004), (ALMEIDA; SCHIMIGUEL, 2012), (RANGEL *et al.*, 2013), (CAMPELLO; LINS, 2008).

**4-** (AMBIEL, 2015; SPECIAL COMMITTEE ON EVASION STUDIES, 1996), (GILIOLI, 2016), (RISTOFF, 1999), (SANTOS; SILVA, 2011), (SANTOS JUNIOR, 2015b), (SILVA FILHO *et al.*, 2007).

**5-** (BAGGI; LOPES, 2011), (BARDAGI; HUTZ, 2014).

**Chart 01** - List of works and their definition of evasion

WORK	DEFINITION
Tinto (1975)	It seems that a good part of the studies on evasion take the 1975 article by Vicent Tinto as a reference (BARDAGI; HUTZ, 2014), which focused on interactional analysis, looking for the roots of evasion in relationship between external factors, personal factors, resulting in the level of social and academic integration. Parallel to anomie and suicide.
Bueno (1993)	The word evasion may mean an active posture of the student who decides to shut down on his own responsibility. The word exclusion implies the admission of a school responsibility and everything that the school fence for not having mechanisms to harness and direct the adolescent who presents himself for vocational training.
Special commission of evasion studies (1996, p. 56)	1) Evasion from the course would be that which occurs when the student disconnects from higher education in different situations, such as: abandonment (no longer to enroll), withdrawal (official), transfer or re-option (change of course), exclusion by institutional norm; 2) evasion from the institution would be when the student leaves the institution where he is enrolled; and 3) evasion from the system would happen when the student permanently or temporarily abandons higher education.
Kira (1998)	Loss or escape of university students.
Ristoff (1999, p. 127-8)	Treated as abandonment of studies, exclusion. Should always be treated in the context of institutional assessment, evasion is not always a waste. Migration between courses is treated as mobility.
Polydoro (2000)	Evasion from the course, when the course is abandoned without its conclusion and evasion from the system, when abandonment refers to the university system.
Gaioso (2005)	Interruption in the study cycle.
---	"Final withdrawal from the student at any stage of the course"
Silva Filho <i>et al.</i> (2006)	The losses of students who start but do not finish their courses are a social, academic and economic waste. In the public sector, invested public resources without due return. The average annual evasion measures the percentage of students enrolled in a teaching, in an IES, or in a course that, having not graduated, also did not enroll the following year (or the following semester, if the goal was to follow what happens in semester courses). Total evasion measures the number of students who, having entered a certain course, IES or education system, did not obtain the diploma at the end of a certain number of years.
Cardoso (2008)	"Apparent evasion refers to students who left the university without completion of the course and without formalizing transfer to another university. Mobility is the exchange of courses within the institution itself or the transfer to another IES, both registered with UnB. Added these two types, we have what we could call total evasion, which it is usually reported in the abandonment statistics".
Adachi (2009, p. 94-5)	The cases of students disconnected from the courses, either at the request of the institution or at the request of the student and, by graduated, those students who, within the academic institution norms, have fulfilled the curricular integration deadlines, obtaining the undergraduate course. The cases of new entrants who carried out some type of internal transfer, either through the course re-option processes and/or shift, and who completed their courses, even UFMG not considering this situation as such, they were all taken for evaders. Therefore, it was considered that the re-option of course shift depend on the existence of vacancies and thus the occupation of a particular place in a course was preceded by a student termination.
Junior <i>et al.</i> (2015)	The dropout student is understood to be one who leaves the course before its conclusion.
Baggi; Lopes (2011)	"Student's departure from the institution before completing the course" (p. 370).

Source: Own elaboration.

It is initially noticeable that most definitions use different expressions. However, they align themselves in the description of evasion as simply the loss of bond, the exit from the institution, course abandonment, termination - from the course, institution or system, be they voluntary acts or not.

Of the presented definitions, only Bueno (1993), Ristoff (1999) and, partially<sup>6</sup> Cardoso (2008) warn that bond losses require nuance, distinguishing between phenomena and separating them between problems or not. Problems for public policies are unwanted situations for which the community look for improvement, after all a public policy is born to oppose a public problem (SECCHI, 2016). Indeed, for what other reason would we be concerned about the loss of student bond with the university system? Now, only if the loss of bond represents, in some proportion, a public problem.

In a model case, for Silva Filho *et al.* (2007), every evasion represents social, academic and economic waste. Stuck on the idea that public investment is carried out aiming at the conclusion or the diploma, the authors claim for due return on the expense, condemning any loss of bonds.

Therefore, it is strange that a good part of the bibliography specialized in evasion do not analyze it in the light of the purposes of higher education, restricting its reflection to the maintenance of the link with a course, institution or system. Notwithstanding the evident limit mentioned above, when leading the reflection for the simple loss of the bond, the bibliography also does not do it based on its causes or its motivators. They meet articles, dissertations and theses that list possible causes. Others even place them as objects but they do not affect the object itself, they only decorate it.

It is believed that a good starting point would be to consider Dilvo Ristoff (1999). The author is aware of the fact that, evasion is a phenomenon normally analyzed in an isolated way, as if it had a life of its own and was not related to the rest of social and institutional life. In his view, the dominant analysis sees evasion as exclusion, as loss or escape, ignoring what could actually be the results of the aspirations of human beings who are in the IFES and who are not always aligned with the limits of our institutions. Thus:

[...] a significant portion of what we call evasion, however, is not exclusion, but mobility, it is not an escape, but a search; it is not wasteful, but investment; it is not a failure - neither of the student, nor of the teacher, nor of the course or institution - but an attempt to seek success or happiness, taking advantage of the relationships that the natural growth process of individuals does about their true potential. (RISTOFF, 1997, p. 27).

What Ristoff (1997) advocates for is the notion that the acts of dismissal from a course, institution or education system can contain a multitude of causes, among them the very option for a life other than the university life and which, in itself, would be legitimate and might not express institutional disabilities. It is reasonable to imagine that a student changes course for varied reasons, but as an example we could highlight the case of a premature entry into higher education, even without the most important notions

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**6-** It is said partially, because it recognizes the distinction between evasion and mobility, but uses both to analyze total evasion.



about the curriculum, the academic opportunities, the knowledge to be accessed, the areas of expertise and the market labor conditions.

During the first semesters, in contact with other experiences, most clarity could reorient the course choice. Why the *flight* from one course to another would be interpreted as a problem? Would it not be permissible for an ideal course without shortcomings, be passed over to another due to clarified late preferences? And should that signal a problem to be tackled, mobilizing brains and resources? Would the university and life itself not be diminished by raising armies against mobility between courses?

### **Evasion and its causalities: the whys**

In search of the characterization of the phenomenon from its causality, it is worthwhile to use the work of Morosini (2009), who carried out a survey about evasion in Qualis A and B journals between 2000 and 2011 and realized that in general articles it is pointed out as the main causes of the so-called “evasion”: a) the financial aspects related to the student’s personal or family life; b) aspects related to the choice of the course, past expectations for admission, level of satisfaction with the course and with the university; c) interpersonal aspects - relationship difficulties with colleagues and teachers; d) aspects related to the performance in academic subjects and tasks - approval, failure and repetition rates; e) social aspects, such as low social prestige of the course, profession and chosen university; f) the incompatibility between study schedules with other activities, such as work; g) family aspects such as responsibilities for children and dependents, family support with studies, etc.; and h) the low level of motivation and commitment to the course.

Obviously, these eight main recurring causes in the bibliography would not put an end to the list of motivations. The number of reasons, it is known, is much greater than that. Even without the use of research with graduates, therefore, as a hypothesis, the Final Report of the Special Commission created by the MEC in 1996 in order to diagnose the phenomenon (SESU / MEC; ANDIFES; ABRUEM, 1996), aggregates the numerous causes into three major groups, which are: a) factors referring to the individual characteristics of the student; b) internal institutional factors; and c) external institutional factors.

There are more than 40 possible motivators listed by the commission. No one knows for sure what is the weight of each of them, nor their spatial or temporal variation. It can only be concluded that, if they are correct, they are reasons of very different natures, equally demanding distinct diagnoses and policies. If a shutdown is directly related to the course curriculum, diagnosis and prognosis should point to incompatibilities and necessary revisions, indicating the educational institution itself as the subject of the action. However, if the problem is located in the job market of a particular profession, then, what should the institution do? If, perhaps, the student’s family has moved to another territory and forced the loss of bond, what reflection should the university take on its responsibilities? Or, more directly, where is its failure located? Therefore, first of all, it is necessary to observe the evasion from its causes, separating what would be the public problems to be faced.

More than that, still assuming that the Commission was right in the hypothesis causes, it would not be an exaggeration to assume that some of the motivators may appear combined, therefore, causing the shutdown. Concomitant family and pedagogical problems, paired with individual and institutional ones, could add, feed and boost that. Such as in social inequalities, where social markers such as income, skin color, gender, sexual orientation, etc., can compose systems that combine and amplify inequities, the drivers of bond loss as well. Under these circumstances and depending on conjugation, evasion should be a concomitant object of different courses policies. Possibly different pro-rectory, or maybe even different ministries.

However, it appears that the distinction made by the Commission still requires reflection. First, it must be said that the survey of causality came to be through a research with graduates, so that it is not known exactly what actually causes evasion in the country. On the other hand, the Commission allocates motivators whose causal links seem inappropriate. See, when referring to external factors, the report points, for example, students' financial difficulties. At this point, it is known that assistance student policy is a university policy whose main objective is to guarantee permanence, combating inequalities and preserving the right to education (BRASIL, 2010b). So, if the evasion is justified by the student's financial difficulties, we are certainly facing an internal factor with external links. However, in that case, it would not be possible to exempt the institution.

It can also be said of several of the motivators that were allocated to individual factors. For them, the Commission took causes such as learning problems, relationship difficulties and low prestige of the university. It does not take much effort to imagine that learning problems may stem from the educational practice of the institution or the teacher, or that relationship difficulties stem from harassment relationships, or even that the institution's lack of credit results in wrong decisions by managers. Again, it is facing a categorization that was not adequate in the distinction and allocation of motivators.

## **Evasion formulas: how to measure**

One should not lose focus on what is central, that is, the implications of a multiplicity of factors about diagnoses and measurements of the evasion phenomenon. It is clear that a definition of evasion that is so general as to describe simply the loss of the bond cannot be produced because that definition does not say much about the phenomenon. Nor can it, based on such a definition, create an indicator that quantifies the phenomenon, because its results will also say little or nothing about what you want to know. As a matter of fact, as Ristoff (1999) warns, they may stir up the biased reading of the university crisis. Regarding the debate on the phenomenon measurement, it is worth mentioning the Freitas master's thesis (2016), aimed at presenting and analyzing the different ways to measure evasion. The author starts from the observation that:

[...] the evasion calculation varies according to the way the concept is defined. When the definition of evasion and the way it is measured are not consistent and clear, there may be errors

in interpretation, impossibility of comparisons and, therefore, generate risks of decisions and incorrect or even unnecessary referrals. (FREITAS, 2016, *apud* LEHR *et al.*, 2014, p. 14).

Certainly, evasion measurement has to quantify the phenomenon that is defined as evasion. In other words, if a vague definition is produced, capable of encompassing different natures, fatally, a vast number of occurrences would be accounted for. Disparate, immiscible, and thus insignificant ones. Accordingly, Freitas (2016, p. 23) argues that:

[...] when a change in the occurrence of phenomena, such as the decrease in the number of evasion cases, it is necessary to look for ways to intervene, which must be based on the understanding of the causes, reasons or conditions associated with the phenomenon.

With success, Freitas (2016) realizes that part of the instruments for measuring evasion takes as inputs, the total data of graduations, aggregated data of freshmen, vacancies, graduates etc., without the individual monitoring of each dropout. That said, using divisions between numerators and denominators, formulas tend to indicate dropout rates or percentages, often understood as success percentages or failure. Others, aiming at measuring absolute values of dropouts and not fees, resort to the same inputs, using aggregated data. When such data is used to instrumentalize the calculation, it is inevitable that the stories, trajectories, specificities and, mainly, the differential causes would be diluted.

In order to facilitate the visualization of the formulas, you can use the table 01 that gathers the works, its definitions of evasion and the respective formulas.

**Table 01** - Balance sheet on the measurement of evasion

WORK	DEFINITION	FORMULA
Paredes (1994)	It uses the "concept of course performance", which is "calculated as the ratio between the degrees and the vacancies offered".	$\%E = 100\% - \frac{\text{degrees}}{\text{vacancies}}$
Silva Filho <i>et al.</i> (2007)	Total evasion measures the number of students who, having entered a certain course, IES or education system, did not obtain a diploma at the end of a certain number of years.	$E_n = 1 - \frac{(M_n - I_n)}{(M_{n-1} - C_{n-1})}$
Special Evasion Studies Commission (1996)	Students who, at the end of the full generation period, had not graduated and were no longer linked to the course in question	$\%E = \frac{N_i - N_{i-1} - N_i}{N_i} \times 100$
Braga <i>et al.</i> (2003)	Class data that were still within the maximum time for payment, being called by these authors as "incomplete generation".	$\%E = 100\% - \% \text{undergraduates} - 0,06 \times (100\% - \% \text{undergraduates})$
Serpa; Pinto (2000)	Evaded as the variation in enrollments excluding freshmen and graduates.	$E_x = I_{x+1} - (M_{x+1} - M_x) - C_x$

Source: Freitas (2016). Own elaboration.

In spite of recognizing the intellectual effort, the sophistication of the measurement mechanisms and its academic and official legitimacy (once used by educational institutions, research institutes and policy-making bodies), all formulas start from the conception that evasion is a residue, a product of incomplete graduation and a loss. In none of them is there a concern to discriminate against any sort of bond loss from their causalities, again, because they dilute all the particularities in a large aggregate.

To understand how this happens at a local level, that is, in a federal institution of higher education, the Federal University of Uberlândia - UFU will be taken as a case. In its yearbook, it is possible to see the synopsis of its main numbers, among which evasion rates are found. In order to reach them, the institution uses the formula of Silva *et al.* (2007), available in the table 01, taking advantage of its merits and its difficulties. Readers will find nothing more than a failure rate in the document. Only when there is access to the university database that some discrimination regarding the forms or categories of evasion can be observed. UFU, for its control, records evasions from the categories: 1) Dismissal, 2) Abandonment<sup>7</sup>, 3) Evasion, 4) Official Evasion, 5) Dismissal<sup>8</sup>, 6) Cancellation by rejection, 7) Cancellation by income rejection, 8) Cancellation of Registration - Security Warrant, 9) Internal Transfer, 10) Transferred and 11) Death.

Looking at them in full, one has the impression that there are markers of different natures. Isolating the first four, there is an interest in registering the disconnection modus operandi, the way to operating, without valuing causes or motivations. The fifth category, dismissal, is related to the extrapolation of deadlines for completing the course, which naturally refer to the retention phenomenon that, for itself, would merit further research. Categories 6, 7 and 8 concern about disconnection by non-compliance with legal requirements, accompanied by administrative or judicial proceedings. For that, the bond is broken under those conditions. The student should have been able to enroll irregularly, perhaps revealing an administrative failure or injunctions. Out of the numbers 9 and 10 there are mobilities, as understood by Ristoff (1999), Bueno (1993) and Cardoso (2008). In this case, given the arguments previously exposed, it seems possible to dispense more lines to demonstrate that transfers would not necessarily represent signals of institutional failures. However, the reason for the transfer could indicate disappointments with the course or with the institution, but for that, UFU's characterization would also not throw light on the fact because it would need the student to point out his reasons. Lastly, death. This one, although fortunately has the smallest numbers, only in very rare circumstances would have a causal connection with the institutional routine.

## **Risking a suggestion: final considerations**

From what has been seen, evasion is a social indicator which measure or measurement operation has followed the generality of the definition. Problematizing measurement does not fit in this work anymore, but it at least points out a possible way out of definition.

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**7-** Course abandonment: non-renewal of enrollment by the student in curricular components after registration lockout periods have expired.

**8-** Dismissal: loss of connection with UFU due to failure to complete the course within the maximum Pedagogical Project time or due to insufficient academic performance.

Apparently, if the gap found concerns about the absence of the presentation of causalities for the phenomenon, it seems that the possible way would be to carry out research with significant samples of dropouts. Technically, all IFES would be able to undertake an action like this, since there is intellectual capacity, academic activities record, selection mechanisms, access to the sample and, finally, potential for analysis.

Once the reasons were raised, they would be grouped into large groups by similar nature and there would be a portrait of the tinted phenomenon, allowing a reflection on the different occurrences and pointing out equally different solutions. As can be seen, few were the academic works that dedicated themselves to map the phenomenon in this way, and more, little or almost none is their influence on the measurement process. It is obvious that once the evasion accounting is changed, its magnitudes will be reviewed, separating, a priori, what can be called a social problem from what it would not be.

Taking advantage of the research that was dedicated to the search for the causal nexuses of disconnections, it would be possible to build other parameters in order to think about evasion. Tuned to that, this article suggests the use of an alternative nomenclature. One should not lose sight of the fact that a notion of evasion has been consolidated in the academy as well as public management. For the purpose of maintaining a dialogue with this tradition, without avoiding the mission of including what concerns this article, evasion will be taken like any disconnection from the course, institution or higher education system. However, a necessary typology is proposed to ponder what should be taken as a social problem. Having used the typology, it is imagined that a political and methodological wedge might be placed in the debate about this topic.

That said, it would be called *evasion by exclusion*<sup>9</sup>, the loss of the link with the course, institution or higher education system originated by institutional distortions in their didactic and curricular structures or by institutional inability to combat vulnerabilities and guarantee the right to education.

Taken in this way, it would only be evasion by exclusion the loss of bond that presents itself as a social problem, an institutional failure, an inability of the State to guarantee access to a right. Therefore, initiatives to correct the problem would fall on the institution itself, without bringing phenomena that are not problems, or problems that are beyond its purview.

In turn, it would be called *evasion by insertion*<sup>10</sup>, the transit of students between courses, institutions or higher education systems originated by the search for new opportunities. In the case of an action originated by the individual search for new opportunities, without direct link with the quality of the course or institution and responding to the human desire of the search for happiness, such a movement would not be taken as a problem and, therefore, would not require correction initiatives.

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**9-** Possible motivators for evasion by exclusion would be: teaching practice by professors; bloated, repetitive and disjointed resumes; distance between theory and practice; difficulties in the teaching-learning relationship; few or inaccessible academic opportunities; institutional culture of teaching devaluation in the graduation; insufficient support structure for undergraduate education (teaching laboratories, computing, etc.); insufficient support service for undergraduate education, social vulnerabilities (income, gender, race, violence, prejudice, discrimination, disability), maternity and paternity without student care coverage.

**10-** Possible motivators for evasion by insertion would be: low prestige of the profession; low profession wages; pressure from family or friends; professional future expectations; search for security; discovery of other interests.

Finally, it is suggested the name *evasion due to externalities*<sup>11</sup>, the loss of link with the course, institution or higher education system due to external, involuntary and force majeure causes.

Despite the fact that, it seems that the new typology can adequately respond to the purpose raised here, it is known that its fire test should occur in an empirical research with dropouts, through which it will be possible to observe its impacts on measurement and evaluation of public policies. This test is ordered for the sequel and will animate another article soon.

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*Received on: September 15th, 2019*  
*Approved on: November 12th, 2019*

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