

# Regionality In Administration: How Is The Construct Widespread in Brazilian Higher Education?

## Regionalidade em Administração: como o construto está difundido no ensino superior brasileiro?

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### Abstract

Brazilian Administration courses should, according to the National Curriculum Guidelines (DCNs), include basic and complementary content aligned with historical and regional perspectives. The objective of this study was to analyze regionality as a construct present in Administration courses at the undergraduate level in public universities in the country. Through content analysis, course syllabi that received the maximum score on the National Student Performance Examination (ENADE) were analyzed, mapping regionality based on keywords: "region", "regionality", "regional", and "regionalism". Although the scope of the work does not reach the depth experienced in the classroom or different ways of interpreting regionality, with the presence of the regionality construct in only 45% of the pedagogical projects studied, 35% of mandatory courses, and 30% of elective courses, it is inferred that there is no wide dissemination and implementation of regionality, evidencing the distance for adaptation, treatment, and appreciation of the learning environment in the region.

**Keywords:** regionality, teaching, administration.

### Resumo

Os cursos de Administração no Brasil devem, conforme Diretrizes Curriculares Nacionais (DCNs), incluir conteúdos de formação básica e complementar alinhados com as perspectivas históricas e regionais. O objetivo deste estudo foi analisar a regionalidade enquanto construto presente nos cursos de Administração a nível de graduação pelas universidades públicas do país. Através da análise de conteúdo, foram analisadas ementas de cursos de administração que alcançaram conceito máximo no ENADE, mapeando regionalidade a partir das palavras-chave: "região", "regionalidade", "regional" e "regionalismo". Embora o escopo do trabalho não alcance aprofundamentos vivenciados no cotidiano da sala de aula ou formas diversas de se interpretar a regionalidade, com a presença do construto regionalidade em apenas 45% dos projetos pedagógicos pesquisados, 35% das disciplinas obrigatórias e 30% das optativas, infere-se não existir ampla difusão e implementação da regionalidade, evidenciando a distância para adequação, tratamento e valorização ao ambiente de aprendizagem da região.

**Palavras-chave:** regionalidade, ensino, administração.

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## 1 Introduction

The emergence of higher education in business administration in Brazil can be traced back to a developmentalist context, with its initial milestones being the establishment of the Escola Superior de Administração de Negócios (ESAN/SP) in 1941 and the Escola Brasileira de Administração Pública e de Empresas of Fundação Getúlio Vargas (EBAPE/FGV) establishing the first faculty in 1950 (Lima, 2020). In recent years, both the number of undergraduate courses (Souza-Silva et al., 2018) and *stricto sensu* graduate programs (Hoper Educação, 2019; Silva & Costa, 2014) have significantly increased. The 2018 Higher Education Census (CFA, 2019) data evidences this growth, showing a 105.4% increase in available spots between 2010 (just over 533,000) and 2018 (approximately 1.1 million).

Particularly after the 1970s, when changes no longer focused on a single organizational element and took on a multidimensional character encompassing social, economic, and political shifts that extended to the business world (Fischer, 2002), higher education institutions have observed modifications in the central teaching/learning axis (Silva & Leite, 2014). Moreover, globalization has brought about rapid changes, technological advancements, and worldwide commercial exchanges, necessitating a reorganization in company management (Pettinati, 2012).

In this context, the teacher assumes the role of managing the learning process and must develop the necessary competencies for effective teaching (Silva & Costa, 2014), which also involves fostering relevant competencies in future managers. The critical nature of this issue raises questions about academia's actual contribution to the development of these competencies and the direction of individuals towards action rather than a passive stance of merely reproducing content and mandatory minimum curricula (Nicolini, 2002).

In a more economically open society with the free exchange of goods and ideas, alliances and institutional arrangements based on the valorization of the local and regional have emerged (Gil, Oliva, & Gaspar, 2008), highlighting the need for discussions about regionality as a reaction to and consequence of globalization.

Regionality also inherently intertwines with the teaching process, as its presence in the National Curriculum Guidelines (DCNs) for undergraduate courses in Business Administration, which the Brazilian Ministry of Education and the National Council of Education of the Higher Education Chamber reformulated in 2020 (pending final approval), evidences.

According to the document, graduates of undergraduate courses in Business Administration must possess a set of skills that prepare them for the professional environment in accordance with the local, regional, national, or global characteristics of the market. Furthermore, the pedagogical projects of these courses must base themselves on effective and coherent interactions between the graduate and the market, taking into account the regional scope (Brazil, 2021).

Given the crucial role universities play in training graduates to be strategic assets for organizations, researchers have identified gaps in studies on practical models (Nunes, Barbosa, & Ferraz, 2009), as well as difficulties in both identifying the expected competencies of graduates and aligning Teaching Plans with the DCNs of the respective areas (Arantes & Normanha Filho, 2020).

Therefore, researching regionality in business administration education not only addresses these demands in the literature but also reconciles an essential practical aspect that, although inherent to organizational reality, is still somewhat disconnected from the theory and competencies taught in Business Administration programs (Arantes & Normanha Filho, 2020; Lima, 2020). Proposing a learning approach connected to contextual particularities (Lima & Silva, 2015) and driving professional performance aimed at local development (Lima, 2020) necessitates considering the regional effect and the students' learning environment (Lima, 2020)



As a means of uniting regionality—which is necessary and present in today's society—with the ontological, epistemological, and methodological aspects related to Business Administration education, along with its nuances, historical influences, and prominence in the current academic landscape, this article aims to answer how regionality, as a construct, is disseminated in Brazilian higher education. The research objective is to analyze the presence of regionality in Business Administration courses at public universities in the country.

To achieve this goal, the research will use methodological procedures inspired by Sousa and Valadão Junior (2013), replicating the use of content analysis but with an emphasis on analyzing regionality.

From a theoretical perspective, the contributions proposed by this work advance the dissemination of this concept, which is present in studies in the field, as a teaching agenda in the country. Bertero et al. (2013) highlight that future theories base themselves, among other things, on the local knowledge base applied to the explanation of specific local phenomena, underscoring the importance of understanding and discussing the need for regionality as a theoretical component of study.

From a practical standpoint, analyzing the dissemination of this construct aims to highlight the advancement of the theme in courses throughout the country. The need to encompass historical knowledge of the region and local needs as components of the curricular structure in Business Administration influences teaching methods, theoretical models, and even organizational practices. Expanding and adapting teaching strategies to the learning environment, such as relating the curriculum to regional particularities, is essential (Lima, 2020).

Allocating efforts and resources to generate contributions that enhance understanding and action on local problems can lead to a qualitative leap in local scientific production (Bertero et al., 2013). In this regard, public education policies should consider regional development actions, taking into account the context of knowledge application, ultimately resulting in better-qualified professionals to meet regional demands (Lima, 2020). Thus, from a social perspective, this work aims to expand the analysis of the necessary competencies for business administration professionals by incorporating aspects of regionality, given the relevance of this construct in the current scenario and broadening the focus to the entire student audience.

This article has the following structure: the current section introduces the theme, presents the problem statement, conceptualization, and objectives; the following sections cover the theoretical content guiding the proposed reflection with due support from the academic literature, the methodology used, the results and analyses, and finally, the concluding remarks.

## 2 Regionality

Discussions about regionality comprise concepts that, although parallel, are diverse and differ in their level of coverage. Haesbert (2010) proposes terms that exemplify this, involving and conceptualizing region as a concrete geographical element, regionalization as a process that involves differentiation and/or design of space in cohesive or articulated plots, and regionality, covering the symbolic dimensions of the region. The author further argues that these three elements face reconfigurations in a globalized world regarding the increasing complexity of their spatial delimitations and the relationships between the subjects and dimensions that build them.

While people understand the region as the matrix form of space organization, with its basic characteristic being the demarcation of a territory with precise limits, this concept undergoes changes and becomes understood as a part of space whose unity is given by the synthesis of the singular form of physical and human phenomena, and whose differentiation occurs from this singularity (Moreira, 2007).



According to Hettne (1999), regionality evolves, in general, in five stages, according to the characteristics of a region: 1) region as a geographical unit, bounded by physical barriers and ecological characteristics; 2) region as a social system, involving several relationships between groups from different localities; 3) region as a formal organization for cooperation in economic, cultural, military, and political sectors; 4) region as a civil society, formed from the promotion of social communication and convergence of values of a region departing from local organizational structures; 5) region as a historical formation with a specific identity, which can be expressed in the formation of microregions.

In this sense, human decisions and relationships also construct the region as a space. Thus, the type, number, and extents of relationships used to define a given region constitute it, and much of what people understand as a region exists only in a symbolic sense, that is, a regionality (Pozenato, 2003).

Gil et al. (2013) understand regionality as a type of collective consciousness capable of uniting the residents of a region around their common characteristics, such as culture, problems, and feelings. The same authors approach the concept of regionality by relating it to three dimensions: the cognitive dimension, consisting of the recognition of the physical elements that make up a region, its borders, organizations, and culture; the affective dimension, which encompasses aspects related to solidarity in relation to other individuals in the region and their specific needs; and the conative dimension, referring to participation in regional organizations and commitment to regional actions.

Thus, regionality encompasses common characteristics from a group of individuals that enable the identification of a specific region, implying the configuration of an authentic mentality of a region (Gil, Oliva, & Silva, 2007).

According to Gil, Oliva, and Silva (2007), social, historical, cultural, and ideological aspects, rather than geographical terms, now define regional borders, making them seen as real factors capable of constituting and developing a region. The authors explain that, in this way, all involved actors, such as public administration, private companies, and universities, must contribute with strategies capable of fostering the development of regionality.

Fleck (2011) considers Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) as active agents in regional and economic development, as they act as a support for the construction of developed regions and countries. Universities support the development of a region, being responsible for delivering to society individuals able to use the knowledge acquired for the benefit of collective development.

In this context, HEIs play a fundamental role in assisting the training needs of individuals present in the territory in which they are inserted, as a way to generate the necessary qualification for the progress of citizens and, consequently, of the region (Fleck, 2011). Relating the social and cultural environment in which the student is inserted is an important activity in any type of professional training (Lima, 2020).

Bethlem (1999) argues that the training of administrators must be attuned to the Brazilian business environment, and companies and universities must start observing the cultural, social, economic, and local political characteristics to study and implement management practices. For the author, the main objective of teaching Administration is to teach the best practice, characterized as something mobile that changes with the conditions of the environment.

Specifically, for administration courses in the country, DCNs determine a set of skills and competencies for undergraduate students to develop. These skills and abilities include, in addition to mastering the main techniques of administration, the critical, reflective, logical, ethical, analytical, and creative capacity necessary for students to pursue their profession (Kopelke & Boeira, 2016).

Furthermore, in light of these guidelines, the pedagogical project of the Management course should include contents of basic, professional, analytical, quantitative, and complementary training that reveal interrelations with local, regional, national, and global realities, from a historical and contextualized perspective of their applicability in the sphere of companies and the environment (Brazil, 2021).

The construction of the curriculum for the training of administrators needs to consider national, regional, and local interests, observing the diversity of students from a given locality and respecting the common curricular core determined by the DCNs (Pacheco, 2009).

The DCNs for the Administration course that entered into force in November 2021 emphasize the need for coherence with the professional environment for which the graduate is prepared, taking into account local and regional aspects, in order to predict the effective interaction with the labor market or future performance of graduates (Brazil, 2021).

The pedagogical projects of the Management courses need to consider the common aspects related to the course, in addition to issues that are in accordance with the needs of the students, based on the local, national, and world reality (Will & Pacheco, 2012).

The process of training in the Administration area also needs to enable the student to understand the dynamics of the local context, in order to become a more prepared professional, not only technically, but who has the ability to understand the social and cultural dynamics of the region context. This dynamic would help the professional to understand the dynamism and complexity of the necessary changes in the management of companies and their context in order to contribute to regional and economic development (Lima & Silva, 2019).

Nasu et al. (2021) argue that professionals trained in the business areas, such as administration and accounting, must have a clear view of their role within the company, as well as an overview of the various sectors of the company so that decision-making is assertive. This way, the academic training of these professionals needs to be solid, so that such a holistic perspective of the business can be absorbed, and thus executed.

The curricula of the HEI, understood as complex social constructions that constitute the identity of the educational practices of an institution, should enable technical, political, and ethical training (Macedo, 2002). However, in addition, the elaboration of academic projects of educational institutions must consider the potentialities of the region in order to characterize the demand and professional profile, being fundamental to consider the cultural, social environment and cognitive, behavioral, and demographic aspects that help in understanding the multifaceted and complex nature of the learning environment characteristic of the training of administrators (Lima & Silva, 2019).

An alignment must exist between the developed competencies in the management trainees with the competencies required by the labor market, taking into account the regional vocations in the process of training administrators. Since many of these future professionals will be able to work in the region where they study, the training offered by the institutions needs to contribute to the development of the skills and competencies required in this context (Silva, Nascimento, & Souza Neto, 2016). The regional characteristics of a place, such as cultural and social aspects, contribute to the teaching-learning process of the training of administrators, as they enhance the articulation between theory and practice (Lima & Silva, 2019).

Lima (2020) argues that administration education should expand and adapt its teaching methods to the regional learning environment, that is, a regionalized training that relates the local environment and teaching. Teaching Administration from a regional perspective can contribute to the creation of an identity of the profession in the region, in which professionals meet the needs of the local community, considering Administration as a system capable of adding value to organizations and, especially, to society.

Even if the DCNs offer a legal opening for undergraduate courses in administration to have their own identity, whether interdisciplinary, autonomous, flexible, and contextualized in the regional and global reality, in practice, a conservatism of curricular structures that lasts for decades without real and effective changes exists (Saraiva, 2011; Kopelke & Boeira, 2016).

The reality of undergraduate courses in Business Administration in Brazil seems to be far from the ideals desired in NCDs. The curricular matrices and pedagogical projects of the courses emphasize functional disciplines and management methodologies, adopting a strict market logic. As a consequence of this practice, the training offered makes students unable to reflect critically on the consequences of their actions in the workplace and in the environment as a whole (Kopelke & Boeira, 2016).

The identity of administration teaching can be characterized as tenuous and vague, since a transformation in culture demands time. The courses are linked to models of rhetoric and pragmatism, making it difficult to improve the identity image of teaching in Administration, especially in the issues related to the problematizations found in the locality (Lima, 2020).

In conclusion, the concept of regionality encompasses a multitude of aspects that go beyond mere geographical boundaries, including social, cultural, historical, and ideological factors. These elements play a crucial role in shaping the identity of a region and its inhabitants. Higher Education Institutions, particularly those offering courses in Business Administration, have a responsibility to consider these regional characteristics when designing their curricula and pedagogical projects.

By incorporating regional aspects into the training of future administrators, HEIs can contribute to the development of professionals who are not only technically competent but also attuned to the specific needs and challenges of their local communities. This approach can foster a stronger connection between theory and practice, enabling graduates to make more informed and context-specific decisions in their professional lives.

However, despite the legal framework provided by the DCNs, which allows for flexibility and contextualization in the design of administration courses, many institutions still adhere to conservative curricular structures that prioritize functional disciplines and market-oriented methodologies. This practice often results in a disconnect between the training offered and the real-world demands faced by professionals in their regional contexts.

To address this issue, HEIs must actively engage in a process of curricular reform that takes into account the regional vocations and the specific needs of the local community. This requires a collaborative effort involving all stakeholders, including public administration, private companies, and universities, to develop strategies that foster the development of regionality and promote a more contextualized approach to administration education.

By embracing regionality as a guiding principle in the training of future administrators, HEIs can contribute to the creation of a stronger professional identity, one that is rooted in the specific challenges and opportunities of the local context. This, in turn, can lead to the development of more effective and socially responsible management practices, ultimately benefiting not only the organizations in which these professionals work but also the wider community and society as a whole.

### 3 Methodology

This research is classified as exploratory and documentary. According to Saunders, Lewis, and Thornhill (2012), exploratory research is adaptable, flexible, and useful for clarifying the understanding of a problem, even when its nature is uncertain. For Gil (2002), documentary research is based on diverse and dispersed sources and has the advantage of



allowing the coverage of a much wider range of events than that eventually covered in direct research. This advantage becomes, according to the author, an essential device in the case of research such as this, which deals with data dispersed in documents of different public institutions of higher education.

The methodological construction of this work was guided by the proposal of Sousa and Valadão Junior's (2013) work, who analyzed the same type of document, namely, programs of the disciplines of undergraduate courses in Administration. In the basic work, five parameters of analysis and seventeen competencies were proposed to identify and analyze, through content analysis, programs of higher education courses in Administration, from the perspective of the contribution of the managerial competencies contemplated in the training of managers who wished to pursue international careers.

As a research method, the content analysis technique (Bardin, 1977) was chosen for the reading and interpretation of the programs and programmatic contents of the disciplines of the courses and their respective pedagogical projects, focusing on the object of this study – regionality as a guide in undergraduate courses in Administration.

The content analysis proposed by Bardin can be understood as a set of communications analysis techniques that aims, through systematic procedures and objectives of presentation of the themes of messages, to generate indicators that allow the knowledge of information regarding the conditions of production and reception of these messages (Bardin, 1977). This technique is understood as a set of methodological instruments that aim to analyze different content contributions, verbal or non-verbal, through a structuring of methods employed in data analysis (Sousa & Santos, 2020).

According to Bardin (1977), to perform content analysis, it is necessary to perform some steps, organized in three phases: pre-analysis; exploration of the material; and treatment of the results. The pre-analysis stage constitutes the moment of organizing the materials that will be used in the research, in order to make it operational. The exploration of the material is the phase related to the codification of the material and definition of the categories that will be analyzed and identification of the record units and context of the documents. The last stage consists of the treatment of results, inference, and interpretation, being the period in which reflexive and critical analyses are made by researchers (Bardin, 1977).

For the construction of the research corpus, we included the programs of the disciplines that make up the curriculum of the administration courses offered by public institutions, whose evaluation in the National Student Performance Exam – ENADE 2018 (the results of 2019 in this area were not disclosed until the moment of this research) has reached the maximum concept: 5, according to the reports published on the website of INEP (National Institute of Educational Studies and Research Anísio Teixeira). The evaluation area (Administration) and the institution's classification were obtained based on the same report.

According to data from the Enade Concept 2018, there are 1,765 management courses in the country, offered by 1,298 different institutions, of which 1,167 (90%) are private and 131 (10%) are public. From the total of these courses, only 79 reached the maximum concept (score 5) in the examination of this edition, of which 43 are offered by public institutions. Due to the duplication of data observed in three of the institutions present in the corpus, access to documents was performed in 38 courses, thus composing a corpus with 4,860 reports, 1,267 of them electronic.

Searches for documents via alternative data sources, such as the request for material by e-mail, were not performed, since the preliminary results of the base article demonstrated failure in this type of strategy.

As this study aimed to analyze regionality as a construct present in the courses and disciplines of Administration offered at the undergraduate level by public universities in the

country, from the identified material, the keywords "region," "regionality," "regional," and "regionalism" were used in the exploration of documents.

The steps performed in this research are explained in Chart 1 below and demonstrate what actions were taken based on the three phases of content analysis described by Bardin (1977):

**Table 1.** Stages of content analysis applied in this research.

Content Analysis Steps	Application in Search
Text handling	Mapping of the institutional sites of each HEI classified in the base of INEP, identifying the content and the way in which they are available.
Text analysis and categorization	In possession of <i>the links</i> , access and individual categorization were performed in two ways: those in which pedagogical projects, the programmatic contents of the courses and programs were available in the form of digital documents; and those in which the contents were presented in the form of electronic reports (on the website/link itself)
	Subsequently, the electronic search of the key terms ("region", "regionality", "regionalism", "regionalism") was carried out through the technological search devices available for each of the documents types;
Analysis of the data obtained	In the documents in which the presence of at least one of the keywords was identified, the analysis of the text itself and the categorization of the HEI were performed based on the type of discipline for which there was mention of the construct. Categories of Compulsory Disciplines, Optional Disciplines and Pedagogical Projects were considered here;
	In view of the data obtained, the following results were constructed in the results section.

Source: Prepared by the authors, based on Bardin (1977).

Based on the data obtained, an analysis of the dissemination of terms related to regionality in the administration courses was carried out, as well as the manner in which they are approached. The discussion about these findings is further elaborated in the following section.

#### 4 Presentation of Results

According to the information of the Quality Indicators of Higher Education available on the website of the National Institute of Educational Studies and Research Anísio Teixeira - INEP ([www.gov.br/inep](http://www.gov.br/inep)), no data is available for the Administration course in the publication held in 2019 (Concept Enade 2019). For this reason, this work considers the database released with the base date of 2018.

Figure 1 represents the geographical distribution of courses that meet the criteria defined by the research – offered by public HEIs and that have reached a score of 5 (maximum) in the ENADE of the respective year. This image relates the Brazilian states with the number of HEIs and presents a color gradient proportional to the amount.

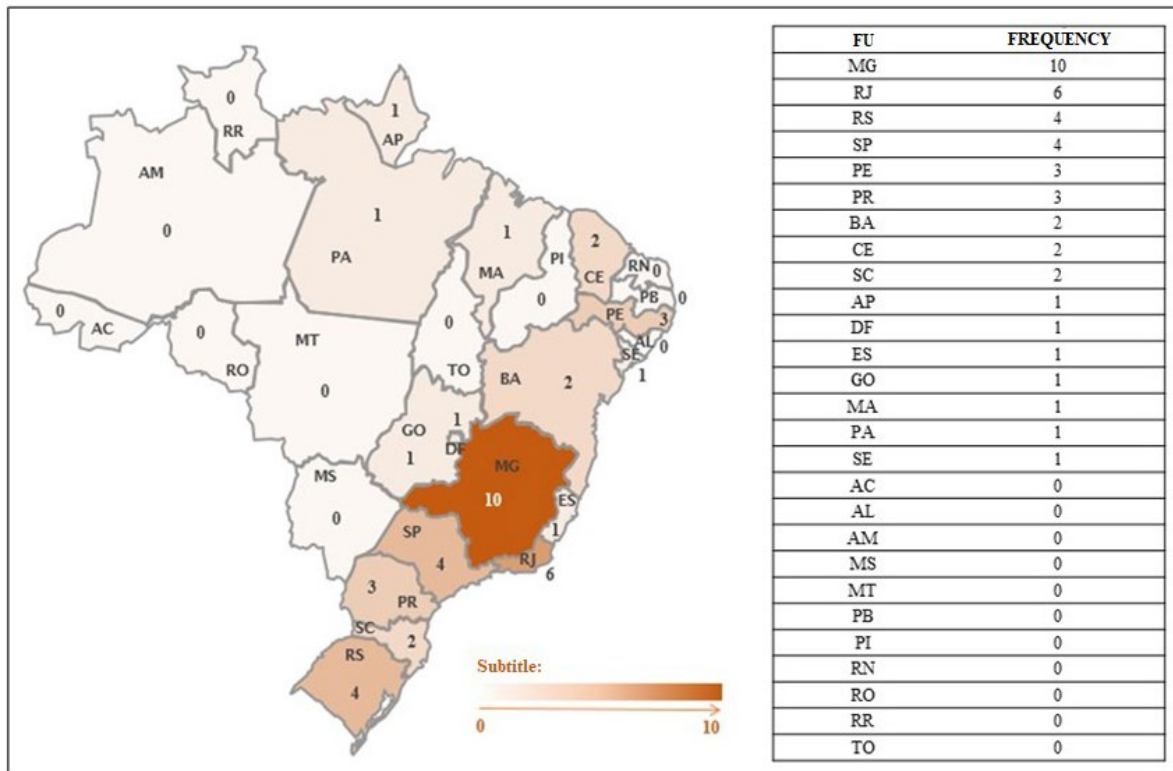
From its analysis, a concentration of 5 administration courses offered by Public HEIs in the states of Minas Gerais (10), Rio de Janeiro (6), São Paulo (4), and Rio Grande do Sul (4) stands out. Although there is a considerable frequency of 11 Brazilian states without any course that achieves such conditions, it is also possible to infer that at least one course in this concept is offered in all geographic regions of the country. In this regard, due to the frequency already highlighted, the Southeast region has the highest number of courses, with 21 (49%), followed





by the South and Northeast regions, with 9 courses (21%) each. The North and Midwest regions each record 2 courses, representing, together, 9% of the total sample.

**Figure 1.** Frequency of Management Courses, note 5 in ENADE (2018), offered by PUBLIC HEI.



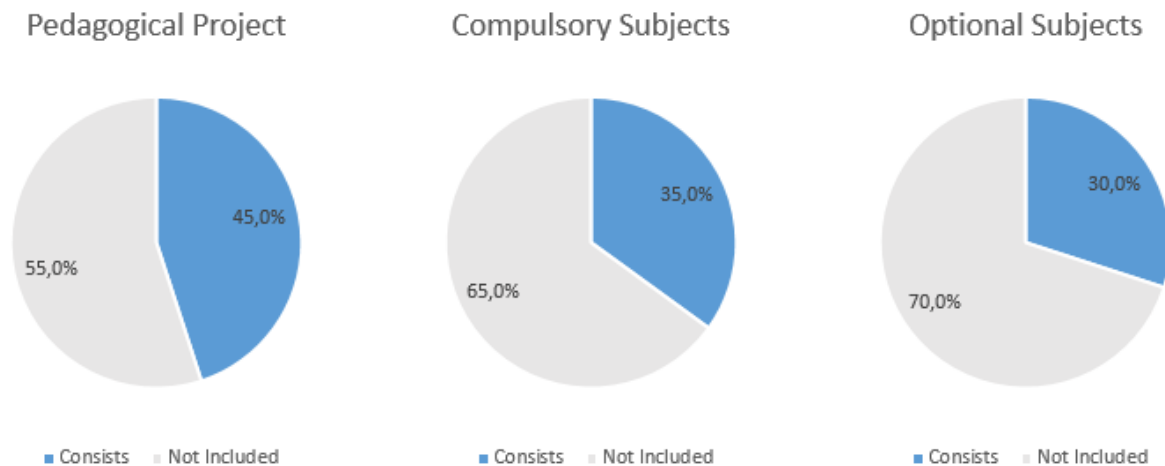
Source: Search Results (2021).

Although 43 courses were listed in the sample, the repetition of 3 HEIs was noticed: Federal University of Paraná, Federal University of Santa Maria, and Federal University of Ceará. In view of this occurrence, these HEIs were considered only once in the survey of the course programs, which would bring the total of courses analyzed to 40.

However, it is noteworthy that for the State University of Rio Grande do Sul and the Federal Rural University of Pernambuco, the programs were not located at the available addresses, totaling, therefore, 38 analyzed courses.

Figure 2 summarizes the data from the content analysis of the available programs.

**Figure 2.** Percentage of Administration Courses with mention of regionality in Programs, programmatic contents and / or Pedagogical Projects.



Source: Search Results (2021).

Based on these data, it is possible to observe that, although 45% of the courses analyzed relate the regionality construct (in any of the forms researched) in their pedagogical project, regionality effectively extends to only 35% when analyzing the programs of the compulsory disciplines and 30% when basing the content on the teaching proposal of the elective disciplines.

These data show that the absence of terms related to regionality in the pedagogical projects of the courses is in accordance with the one proposed in the first paragraph of NCDs, in which, in the general objectives of the course, there should be contextualization in relation to geographical and social issues (Brazil, 2021). The low frequency of the construct mention in the academic context denotes a challenge to the need for involvement of all agents of society, including the university itself, in the development of regionality (Fleck, 2011; Gil, Oliva, & Silva, 2007), compromising the main objective in administration: the tuned training of individuals to something that changes with the conditions of the environment (Bethlem, 1999). In a second analysis, it is necessary to verify the discrepancy of the distribution of the construct in the structure of the courses presented. As shown in Table 1, 12 institutions relate Regionality or its derivations only in the pedagogical project of the Management course, meaning it is not expressly addressed as content recorded in programs of both mandatory and optional disciplines. Added to this is the fact that 12 other institutions approach regionality in programs distributed throughout the course without pointing out this objective in pedagogical projects. Of these 12, three institutions mention regionality only in the programs of elective disciplines, and when it comes to mandatory subjects in the course curriculum, another 3 HEIs include regionality in isolation. Finally, 8 HEIs do not present any mention of the construct, either in the pedagogical project or in any of the available programs.

**Table 1.** Analysis of the Distribution of the Regional Ity Construct between the Pedagogical and Programs Projects in the Management Courses.

Pedagogical Project Only	In at least one of the discipline types	Compulsory Subjects Only	Optative Disciplines Only	No Mentions
12	12	3	3	8

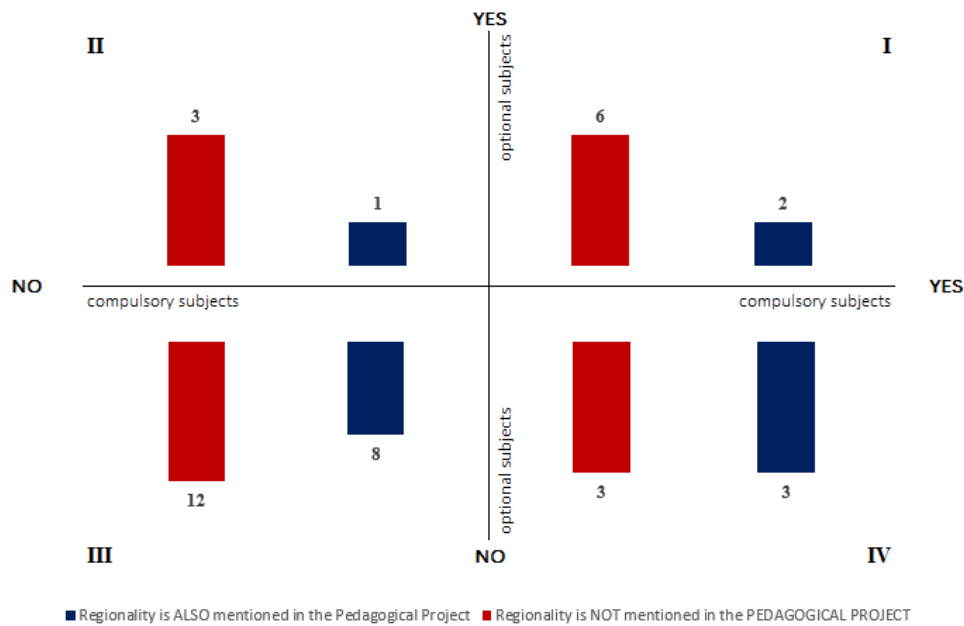
Source: Search Results (2021).



As evidenced in Figure 3, jointly contemplating pedagogical and mentoring projects, 14 institutions (quadrants I and IV) cite Regionality in Compulsory Disciplines (3 only in these programs; 3 in these programs and pedagogical projects; 2 in programs of both types and designs; and 6 only in the materials). These HEIs offer, in all, 20 disciplines in which the menu contemplates the regionality construct, meaning that, on average, 1.43 subjects per institution are directed to this content.

For the Elective Disciplines, 34 chairs are distributed in 12 institutions (quadrants I and II): 3 mention only in the electives; 2 in programs of both types and designs; 6 in both discipline scans; and 1 on the menu of the optional discipline and in the pedagogical project. On average, each HEI that has the regionality construct present in at least this modality contemplates it in 2.83 subjects.

**Figure 3.** Frequency of HEIs and Disciplines with mention of Regionality in Compulsory, Optional and Pedagogical Projects.



Number of Subjects Identified in each Quadrant					
	I	II	III	IV	TOTAL
Compulsory	9	-	-	11	20
Optional	29	5	-	-	34
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>38</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>54</b>

Source: Search Results (2021).

The data presented in Table 1 and Figure 3 show that the theme of regionality appears very subtly in the pedagogical projects and disciplines of the analyzed courses. This proves that the courses are operating in a way that is divergent from that proposed in the DCNs, which establish that pedagogical projects and curricular organization of the courses, which aggregates elective and mandatory disciplines, should contemplate contents that address issues related to the national reality, according to a contextualized perspective within organizations and the environment (Brazil, 2021). The mention of regionality in the text of NCDs certainly does not aim to bureaucratize or merely govern the scope of the courses' action in theory. Based on the relevance that regional characteristics have for the teaching-learning process (Lima & Silva, 2019), the emphasis is on the need to consider regional aspects in the preparation of the graduate for the market and their region of operation (BRASIL, 2021), so that the non-observance of these precepts impairs the student's understanding of the local dynamics, potentially leading to



failures in their preparation, comprehension capacity, and oriented action towards regional development (Lima & Silva, 2019).

Table 2, listed below, details the HEIs for which there is a mention of the regionality construct both in the pedagogical project and in the disciplines, respecting their classification (mandatory or optional).



**Table 2.** HEI and Disciplines with mention of the regionality construct.

(continues)

NAME OF IES	Head Office	Pedagogic Project	Compulsory Disciplines	Optative Disciplines
University of Brasilia	Brasília	Included	Not included	Not included
Federal University of Viçosa	Viçosa	Not included	Law Institutions	Entrepreneurship and Communication, International Relations and Special Topics in Health and Citizenship Policies
Santa Catarina State University Foundation	Florianópolis	Included	Not included	Not included
Federal University of São João Del Rei	São João Del Rei	Included	Environmental Management	Culture Economics, Creative Industry and Local Development, Strategic Tourism Management
State University of Rio de Janeiro	Rio de Janeiro	Not included	Contemporary Brazilian Economy	Not included
Federal University of Paraná	Curitiba	Not included	Not included	Not included
Fluminense Federal University	Niterói	Not included	Not included	Not included
Fluminense Federal University	Macaé	Not included	Not included	Sociology of organizations
Federal University of Minas Gerais	Belo Horizonte	Not included	Not included	Not included
Federal University of Bahia	Salvador	Included	Not included	Not included
Federal University of Pernambuco	Recife	Included	Management and Technological Innovation and Brazilian Economy	Not included
Federal University of Rio Grande do Sul	Porto Alegre	Not included	Loco-Regional Development Strategies	Not included
Federal University of Santa Maria	Santa Maria	Not included	Project Management	Human and Economic Geography, Small Business and Cooperativism, Interorganizational Networks, Corporate Social Responsibility, Social Responsibility and Business Networks, Planning in public and social organizations, Food and Beverage Management.
Federal University of Ceará	Fortaleza	Included	Socio-environmental Management	Not included

**Table two.** HEIs and Disciplines with mention of the regionality construct

(continues)

Federal University of Santa Catarina	Florianópolis	Not included	Not included	Not included
Federal University of Rio de Janeiro	Rio de Janeiro	Not included	Not included	Not included
Federal University of Itajubá – UNIFEI	Itajubá	Included	Not included	Regional Entrepreneurship and Business Consulting I
Federal Institute of Education, Science and Technology of Bahia	Salvador	Not included	Contemporary Brazilian Economy, Environment and Development, Regional Geography of the World Space, Geography of the Northeast, Afro-Brazilian History and Culture	Not included
Federal University of Sergipe	São Cristóvão	Not included	Government Planning	Regional Integration Theory and Processes
Federal University of Juiz de Fora	Juiz de Fora	Not included	Not included	Not included
Federal University of Lavras	Lavras	Not included	Supervised Internship	Development and Management of Family Agriculture; Rural Development and Public Policies; Gender Relations in the World of Work; Innovation and Competitiveness; International relations
Federal University of Vale do São Francisco Foundation	Petrolina	Included	Not included	Cooperativism and Agribusiness
Federal University of Goiás	Goiânia	Included	Not included	Not included
Fluminense Federal University	Volta Redonda	Not included	Integration Seminar	Not included
Federal Rural University of Rio De Janeiro	Seropédica	Not included	Not included	Municipal Administration and Economic Geography
Federal University of Maranhão	São Luis	Included	Not included	Not included
Federal University of Ouro Preto	Mariana	Included	Not included	Not included
Federal University of São Carlos	Sorocaba	Included	Not included	Not included

**Table two.** HEI and Disciplines with mention of the regionality construct.



(conclusion)

Federal University of Uberlândia	Uberlândia	Included	Special Marketing Topics 2	Not included
Federal University of Viçosa	Florestal	Not included	Law Institutions	Communication Entrepreneurship; International Relations; Special Topics in Health and Citizenship Policies
Federal University of São Paulo	Osasco	Not included	Brazilian Socioeconomic and Political Reality and Introduction to Actuarial and Accounting Studies	<i>Urban Policies</i> ; International Economy; Cities Lived, Cities Imagined; Urban Emergency: Debates on Cities; Urban Risk Management and Prevention; Brazilian Reality: Social, Geographical and Economic Formation.
Federal Technological University of Paraná	Curitiba	Not included	Not included	Not included
Federal Institute of Education, Science and Technology of Minas Gerais	Ouro Branco	Included	Not included	Not included
Federal Institute of Education, Science and Technology of São Paulo	São Roque	Included	Not included	Not included
Federal University of Amapá	Macapá	Included	Not included	Not included
Federal Rural University of the Amazon	Parauapebas	Not included	Not included	Not included
Federal Institute of Education, Science and Technology of Espírito Santo	Colatina	Included	Not included	Not included
Federal Institute of Education, Science and Technology of São Paulo	Jacareí	Included	Not included	Not included
<b>Notes:</b> Management courses offered by public HEIs with maximum grade in ENADE 2018 (object of this research)   Regionality as a construct, researched in any of the proposed forms: "region", "regionalism", "regionality", "regional".				

Source: Search Results (2021).



## 5 Results Discussions

The training of administrators should consider national, regional, and local interests, observing the plurality of the student profile in a given location (Pacheco, 2009). Silva, Nascimento, and Souza Neto (2016) stated that the competencies developed in Administration graduates need to be aligned with regional needs, as many of these future professionals will work in the region where they study. The training offered by institutions must be aligned with the regional context to contribute to the skills required in this context. Administration education aligned with a regional perspective can create an identity for the profession according to the characteristics of the locality, with professionals capable of serving the local community, generating value for organizations and, consequently, for society (Lima, 2020).

However, the data presented earlier indicate that the theme of regionality is addressed in less than half of the projects and disciplines. This number demonstrates the contrast in the importance given to regionality in the process of training administrators, as it is considered necessary content in the literature and DCNs, but in practice, the theme is vaguely alluded to.

In institutions where regionality is mentioned in the course syllabi, an average of 1.43 mandatory disciplines that contemplate regionality in their contents are offered, while in the scope of electives, this average is practically double (2.83). Regarding the documents in which mentions of regionality are made, 41% of the research corpus stands out with incomplete adoption of the term in terms of breadth, namely: in 12 of the HEIs (25%), the mentions were observed only in the pedagogical projects, without any citation in the syllabi of the offered disciplines, and another 8 (16%) do not make any type of record of regionality in the offered contents.

From these data, it is possible to infer, therefore, that compliance with the DCNs, in addition to not being duly and widely contemplated, when it is, is based mainly on the offer of elective disciplines which, by their very nature, may not necessarily compose the graduate's training curriculum and, for this reason, not effectively introduce the concept in their training.

It is thus perceived, as clarified by Kopelke and Boeira (2016), that Administration courses in Brazil are far from the ideals proposed in the DCNs, in which pedagogical projects and course syllabi are not oriented according to national guidelines. A consequence of this action, in which issues related to regionality are not addressed in undergraduate studies, is the training of administrators incapable of critically reflecting on their actions in the workplace and in the external environment as a whole, when not imbued with activities in which they do not perceive their real identity or even visualize effects and practical conciliation with effective local development.

HEIs, as essential agents for regional development (Fleck, 2011), have the imperative to contribute with strategies capable of fostering regionality (Gil, Oliva, & Silva, 2007) and, therefore, guide the training of their graduates by observing the specific aspects of the region in order to contribute to local management practices (Bethlem, 1999).

Thus, it is clear that, despite the relevance of this topic, regionality is not present in most of the best-evaluated courses in the country. This fact raises discussions and opportunities for refinement on this agenda, with a view and potential to contribute not only to the regulatory issues of education but also to the adequate and contextualized formation of curricula and future managers, whose field of action is diverse and significantly impacts the development of the society in question.

Administration education should expand and adapt its teaching parameters to the knowledge environment of the region. In this way, a regionalized training for the administrator is proposed as a way to allow a better interaction between the local environment and education (Lima, 2020). It is possible to think that one of the ways for management to differentiate itself



is still through "thinking globally," in a current context of globalization (Pettinati, 2012), but "acting locally," emphasizing the historical, cultural, social, and ideological characteristics of a specific region (Gil, Oliva, & Silva, 2007).

## 6 Final Considerations

The article considered, in its development, the current scenario of a significant increase in the offer of Administration courses in the country (Souza-Silva et al., 2018; Silva & Costa, 2014; CFA, 2019); the impacts of globalization, with emphasis on the reinforcement and the need for debate about regional issues (Gil, Oliva, & Gaspar, 2008); and also the regulatory proposals of the DCNs that guide the offer of these courses at the national level and indicate the need for contents that cover the analysis and adaptation to local and regional characteristics in the training of their graduates (Brazil, 2020).

Thus, the objective was to analyze the presence of the regionality construct in Administration courses and disciplines offered at the undergraduate level in the national scope, concentrating the research corpus on public universities with a maximum score (5) in ENADE. The data collected on the INEP portal pointed to 40 administration courses in institutions at this level of evaluation, considering the base date of 2018 (there was no evaluation of this course in the publication made by the agency in 2019). Of these 40 courses, we had access through the respective institutional websites to the syllabi of 38 universities, which then became the research sample.

Through content analysis, worked along the lines proposed by Bardin (1977), the terms "regionality," "region," "regionalism," and "regional" were searched in the composition of pedagogical projects and syllabi of the offered disciplines.

Responding to the research objective, it was found that, although regionality is proposed in the national curriculum guidelines, there is no wide dissemination and implementation of this construct in Administration courses in Brazil. Evidence of this is the presence of the construct in only 45% of the researched pedagogical projects and its unfolding to only 35% of mandatory disciplines and 30% of electives, which in principle does not demonstrate alignment with the necessary adaptation to the learning environment of the region and highlights the lack of treatment and valorization (Lima, 2020).

Limitations throughout the development of this work were: the manual search for terms related to regionality in various documents; the non-standardization of these documents and being restricted to materials displayed on the HEIs' websites. Furthermore, this work constitutes a document analysis and, therefore, may not reach any differences and/or deepening experienced in the day-to-day classroom or even the different ways of interpreting regionality (Hettne, 1999; Pozenato, 2003; Moreira, 2007) in each type of discipline and at different moments of the course. However, in view of such a possibility, the discussion regarding the transparency and real objective of the formulated and published documents could be raised, as they do not cover, if this were the case, the real universe, or even in the hypothesis of mentioning and proposing the theme without effective debate and deepening in the daily school life.

It is also pertinent to highlight the fact that, as in the base article by Sousa and Valadão Júnior (2013), only courses with the highest score in the national evaluation exam were considered in the work. The cut, although pertinent and justified, limits the scope of the work by not covering the comprehensive view of administration courses in the country and, thus, may not contemplate the eventual approach given to the regionality construct in courses with lower scores, including as a form of differentiation and development in view of their difficulty in competing with the best institutions and courses in the country.

Analyzing these contents in the context of their formulation and/or with a practical implication, observing the way in which the discipline is taught and whether, thus, there is

effectively presentation, debate, learning, and dissemination of the regionality construct (regardless of the formal mention of it) are opportunities for future research with the potential to add even more to the theme. Additionally, an analysis of the treatment of the theme in different types of institutions (public and private), or different levels of course evaluation, provides inputs for comparability between curricular proposals, giving rise to research aimed at analyzing the potential and differential of regionality as a curriculum. It is also opportune to unfold studies having regionality itself as a parameter, that is, an analysis of the presence, relevance, and regional reach of the courses and the attention dedicated by them to the theme as a work proposal.

Finally, and no less important, this research can support the decision-making process of specialists, professors, and course coordinators in the sense of raising the lack of presence of the regional reality theme in the curricula of Administration courses, even though it is an orientation of the DCNs.

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