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## FIRST-GENERATION STUDENTS (F-GEN) IN BRAZILIAN HIGHER EDUCATION

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### Abstract

*The paper addresses, based on international and national bibliographic research, the concept of first-generation student (F-Gen) and his/her characteristics as it applies to the Brazilian context. It takes into account the results of Enade (Exame Nacional de Desempenho dos Estudantes) (2015, 2016, 2017) on the profile of the student, providing some indicators about diversity in Higher Education access by examining degree completion of first-generation college student (F-Gen) while contrasting it with that of continuing college students (C-Gen). The paper concludes discussing the complexity of the concept of being first generation, while suggesting ways how it can be used in assessing college participation in higher education.*

**FIRST-GENERATION STUDENT • HIGHER EDUCATION • ENADE • BRAZIL**

## ESTUDANTE DE PRIMEIRA GERAÇÃO (P-GER) NA EDUCAÇÃO SUPERIOR BRASILEIRA

### Resumo

*O texto discute, com fundamento em pesquisa bibliográfica internacional e nacional, o conceito de estudante de 1ª geração (P-Ger), suas características e como ele é aplicado no contexto brasileiro. Paralelamente, leva em consideração resultados do Exame Nacional de Desempenho dos Estudantes (Enade) (2015, 2016, 2017) sobre o perfil do estudante, fornecendo alguns indicadores quanto à diversidade no acesso à educação superior ao examinar estudantes P-Ger em relação a estudantes de geração contínua (C-Ger). Conclui sobre a complexidade do conceito em definir o que é ser de 1ª geração, enquanto sugere formas de como o conceito pode ser empregado para a avaliação e suas relações com a expansão da educação superior.*

**ESTUDANTE DE PRIMEIRA GERAÇÃO • EDUCAÇÃO SUPERIOR • ENADE • BRASIL**

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## ÉTUDIANTS DE PREMIÈRE GÉNÉRATION (P-GEN) DANS L'ENSEIGNEMENT SUPÉRIEUR BRÉSILIEN

### Résumé

*La notion d'étudiant de première génération (P-Gen), ses caractéristiques et son application dans le contexte brésilien sont abordés s'appuyant sur une bibliographie nationale et internationale. Cette étude prend en compte, en même temps, les résultats du Exame Nacional de Desempenho dos Estudantes (Enade) (2015, 2016, 2017) concernant le profil de ces étudiants, ce rapport fournit quelques indicateurs relatifs à la question de la diversité dans l'accès à l'enseignement supérieur et compare les étudiants diplômés de P-Gen à ceux de Génération continue (C-Gen). La conclusion souligne la complexité du concept de première génération et suggère des manières d'utiliser cette notion dans l'évaluation et son rapport avec l'expansion de l'Enseignement Supérieur.*

**ÉTUDIANT DE PREMIÈRE GÉNÉRATION • ENSEIGNEMENT SUPÉRIEUR • ENADE • BRÉSIL**

## ESTUDIANTE DE PRIMERA GENERACIÓN (P-GEN) EN LA EDUCACIÓN SUPERIOR BRASILEÑA

### Resumen

*El texto discute, con base en investigación bibliográfica internacional y nacional, el concepto de estudiante de primera generación (P-Gen), sus características y como él puede ser aplicado en el contexto brasileño. En paralelo, toma en consideración los resultados del Exame Nacional de Desempenho dos Estudantes (Enade) (2015, 2016, 2017) sobre el perfil del estudiante, forneciendo algunos identificadores de la diversidad en el acceso a la educación terciaria por estudiantes de P-Gen en relación a estudiantes de Generación continua (C-Gen), en graduandos en la educación superior. Concluye sobre la complejidad del concepto de ser de primera generación, en cuanto sugiere maneras de cómo puede ser usado para la evaluación y relaciones con la expansión en la Educación Superior.*

**ESTUDIANTE DE PRIMERA GENERACIÓN • P-GEN • EDUCACIÓN SUPERIOR • ENADE • BRASIL**

**A**MONG THE VARIOUS EMERGING ASPECTS THAT PERMEATE HIGHER EDUCATION, THERE is a new student profile, which is represented by students who come from groups considered to have “initial disadvantages” which, according to Felicetti and Morosini (2009, p. 12, own translation), are characteristics “which are beyond one’s control, such as race, sex, age, disability, family or socioeconomic situation”<sup>1</sup>. Meanwhile, there are students considered first-generation (F-Gen). This terminology is recent, even in countries in the northern hemisphere, specifically the United States, which has the most scientific research on F-Gen. Davis (2010) cites Hsiao (1992) as one of the first to use the term, but points out that it is still very difficult to identify F-Gen students. “This lack of what might appear to be basic demographic data is not the result of sloppy record keeping or even indifference, but more a function of the difficulties inherent in documenting first-generation student status”<sup>2</sup> (DAVIS, 2010, p. 2, own translation). In other words, while students in socioeconomic classes are identified by their income statement or that of their parents and guardians, and students from different

1 In the original: “que existem independentes do querer de cada um, tais como raça, sexo, idade, deficiências, família ou situação socioeconômica”.

2 In the original: “A falta, do que podem parecer ser os dados demográficos básicos, não é o resultado de um registro lento ou mesmo de indiferença, mas mais uma função das dificuldades inerentes à documentação”.

ethnic-racial groups are identified by self-declaration and/or genotype analysis, F-Gen students need documents to support college access or completion by their parents and/or other members of their family, relatives, etc., which are difficult to obtain.

In Brazil, F-Gen studies are recent and scarce. In this context, the present article reflects on First-Generation Students (F-Gen) in Brazilian Higher Education. To this end, it discusses the concept of first-generation students (F-Gen) and their characteristics, based on international and national bibliographic research. In parallel, it takes into consideration results from Exame Nacional de Estudantes (Enade), by Inep (Instituto Nacional de Estudos e Pesquisas Educacionais Anísio Teixeira), of the Ministério da Educação (MEC) on student profiles, identifying F-Gen or Continuing-Generation (C-Gen) students, among Brazilian undergraduate students finishing college. Subsequently, we present considerations on the complexity of the concept and its relations to higher education expansion.

## THE INTERNATIONAL PERSPECTIVE ON THE CONCEPT OF FIRST-GENERATION STUDENTS (F-GEN)

The classification and/or conception of first-generation students vary among authors. In the international context, that which prevails is the one assumed by Terenzini *et al.* (1996), Choy *et al.* (2000), Rodriguez (2003), Chen and Carroll (2005) and Ishitani (2006), who define first-generation students as being the first generation in their families to pursue Higher Education. Chen and Carroll (2005) and Umbricht (2012) classify first-generation students as those with a father and mother who do not have a college degree.

Davis (2010) adds another consideration regarding the complexity of the concept. These students can be classified as: 1) First-generation students whose parent(s) do not have a college degree; 2) Students whose parent(s) have some higher education; and 3) students whose parent(s) have a bachelor's or other college degree. Regarding the second type of student, the author claims that we could also discuss how many semesters the parents completed, how many credits, etc. Supporting these specific details with documents is very difficult. Therefore, the author arrives at the conclusion that first-generation students are those whose parents and/or guardians have not completed the four levels of undergraduate study. The author points out that what matters is the student "being competent and comfortable navigating the higher education landscape, about growing up in a home environment that promotes the college and university culture". In other words, "absence of the non-first-generation student experience is what first-generation student status is all about"<sup>3</sup> (DAVIS, 2010, p. 4, own translation).

<sup>3</sup> In the original: "navegar de forma competente e confortável no panorama da educação superior, se desenvolvendo num ambiente que promova a cultura universitária" [...] "a ausência da experiência do estudante que não é de primeira geração é o que o aluno de primeira geração necessita ter".

Despite the range of definitions, the National Center for Education Statistics of the United States recently published, in their report, basic definitions of student experiences at the secondary and tertiary level, between the ages of 25 and 34. For the National Center of Education Statistics, first-generation students “are defined as students whose parents both have had no postsecondary education experience and have a high school education or a lower level of educational attainment” (REDFORD; HOYER, 2017, p. 3). The Center defines continuing-generation students as those who have at least one parent with Higher Education.

These students have missed something and may appear to be shy, different and at times aimless, since they do not have parents and/or another family member with experience in the academic universe.

Housel and Harvey (2009), by referring to F-Gen as the invisibility factor, explore the following aspects as integral parts of this discriminatory classification: classism in academia and class segregation on the university campus; the effects of race, ethnicity and immigration on the F-Gen experience on campus; proposals for F-Gen support and service programs; emotional, academic and cultural adaptation to campus life; the role of support groups in helping F-Gen students in their first semester; tutoring for F-Gen students in their cultural transition period to university; and the impact of these students’ experiences on cultural and academic adaptation during the transition period.

The aforementioned authors recognize that some universities, in addition to having lower fees for low-income students (as a general rule, F-Gen), also offer support for other activities associated to the university. However, many F-Gen students feel socially, ethnically and emotionally marginalized on campus (ISHITANI, 2006). These conditions are difficult for institutions to identify because they result

[...] from unspoken cultural expectations and social mores. F-Gen students often lack social capital, such as overseas travel and exposure to cultural arts that wealthier students might take for granted. F-Gen students must often navigate the unwritten social rules of their peers, professors and academic administrators, many of whom have a middle- and upper- class backgrounds. (LUBRANO<sup>4</sup>, 2004, cited by HOUSEL; HARVEY, 2009, p. 15)

In the United States, Banning (2014) developed a study to answer the question “What can we learn from these doctoral theses, with first-generation university students as the main subjects, regarding research strategies, topics addressed and lessons learned?” The author examined one hundred and thirty-three abstracts, from 2003 to 2009, emphasizing that one of the main

concerns addressed in interpreting the results was the lack of publicizing these theses and, therefore, the lack of academic discussion in relation to first-generation university students in Higher Education. The complexity of the concept of F-Gen students was indicated among “lessons learned”, and that

[...] research in this arena should not proceed assuming that the first-generation student status acts alone, but intersects a variety of other possible characteristics, circumstances, and situations, both individual and environmental. (BANNING, 2014, p. 21)

The importance of assistance in study programs and the need to address the role of family support were also highlighted. The author suggests that to better understand the field of study on F-Gen, we must investigate the transition from high school to the college campus.

Somers, Woodhouse and Cofer (2004) studied the impact of background, aspirations, achievements, college experiences, and price on the persistence of first-generation (F-Gen) and continuing-generation (C-Gen) college students. The results indicate differences between the two groups: F-Gen students are more sensitive to financial aid and averse to student loans than their peers. However, variables such as high income, high scores and high averages on large-scale tests at the end of High School, and other similar evaluations, which are significantly and positively associated with persistence, in this study, did not influence the persistence of F-Gen students.

After examining a national sample, comparing the experiences of first-generation students with the experiences of continuing-generation students, Redford and Hoyer (2017) noted that F-Gen students were more likely to enter public universities, as well as for-profit universities. They also determined that F-Gen students had financial reasons as the main cause for leaving university. F-Gen students who completed High School ten years ago had a lower probability of getting their degree than continuing-generation students (20 vs. 42 %).

Davis (2010) identifies the following characteristics of F-Gen students: the lack of a college culture and the feeling of not being a college student. Regarding not being familiar with college culture, the author believes they are new to understanding privileged knowledge, the special language, and the subtle, verbal and non-verbal signals that, after they have mastered them, they become a member of any community or group subculture. The author cites the routine struggle of an F-Gen student to finish college with the following statement:

We managed through sheer hard work and courage. Once we found our footing, we asked questions and created our own support networks independent of our families who could not always give us the type of advice we needed. Like

many FGS, we may have lacked college preparation, but we possessed survival skills in spades. (DAVIS, 2010, p. 133)

Upon examining American publications on first-generation students, we found studies on the concept, characteristics and challenges for F-Gen students. Awareness and approaches for F-Gen students have been proposed, from institutional policies and support, to written materials that are primarily aimed at directors and/or university administrators. These proposals can be understood when we revisit the theoretical perspectives from the United States, a science aimed at the constructive, and not complaints. In the case in question, studies are not centered on discussing the major causes of the current state of F-Gen students and the shortcomings in addressing this group, but on seeking solutions to keep these students in Higher Education Institutions (HEIs). Consequently, the focus of the North American approach is directed at institutional strategies that help F-Gen students persist in their program. In sum, the majority of studies on F-Gen students comes with perspectives on student persistence in the program until completion.

## THE NATIONAL PERSPECTIVE ON THE CONCEPT OF F-GEN STUDENTS

In the Brazilian context, authors such as Figueiredo (2015), Pretto (2015), Valentim (2012), Felicetti (2011), Felicetti and Cabrera (2017) and Mello Neto (2015) specify, given the findings, that the concept of first generation means being the first in the family, without specifying the degree of kinship. While F-Gen students were not at the core of these authors' investigations, they present initial findings on the characteristics of some participants being first-generation students or graduates.

The target audience of the study by Figueiredo (2015) was Higher Education students from low-income backgrounds and, first-generation students were identified among them. The author points out that these students' parents did not have access to Higher Education and they were the biggest supporters for their children to keep studying, because they believe education can help them thrive and lead to professional success for their children.

Most of the students interviewed by Pretto (2015) were the first in their families to enter Higher Education. In the interview conducted, the author observes that these students, being the first in their family to attend college, became motivations for other members to continue their studies.

Among those interviewed, Valentim (2012) also found black graduates from a public university who represented the first generation in their family to finish college. In the statements provided, great emphasis was placed by those interviewed on the fact that they were the first in their family to get a college degree. In line with this, Felicetti (2011) and Felicetti and Cabrera (2017) highlight, in their interviews, the pride the participants felt in being the first in

their family to finish college, given that the subjects in Felicetti's studies were Higher Education graduates.

Mello Neto (2015) also had college graduates as interview subjects, with many of them having been selected due to being first-generation graduates. While Mello Neto (2015) intentionally interviewed first-generation graduates, Figueiredo (2015), Pretto (2015), Valentim (2012), Felicetti (2011) and Felicetti and Cabrera (2017) found these subjects within the greater scope of their research. These authors presented the concept of first generation in the family, without going into detail, contrary to how they are presented by international authors.

Some pioneering studies use census data, gathered by the Anísio Teixeira National Institute for Educational Studies and Research, autarchy of the Brazilian Ministry of Education (INEP and MEC, respective Portuguese acronyms). These studies aim to evaluate the affirmative action policies established in Brazil this century and their relation to student success measured by college graduation rates, using data from when they completed the National Student Exam (ENADE, acronym in Portuguese), at the end of college program.

An initial study was carried out by Griboski, Morosini and Somers (2013), called "O impacto de ações afirmativas sobre famílias de estudantes que representam a primeira geração de graduados"<sup>5</sup> ["the impact of affirmative actions on families of students who represent the first generation of graduates"]. The paper discusses the data of graduates in Pedagogy, participants in the 2011 ENADE. This study, national in scope, was original and relevant due to its emphasis on the first generation in Brazilian families who got their degree at an HEI. Among the results, they observed that most of the graduates were F-Gen, also characterized by older age groups than what would be considered prevalent at the college level, generally, 18-24 years old.

A second study was carried out on "Políticas afirmativas no Brasil e a persistência da primeira geração de formandos na área da Saúde"<sup>6</sup> ["Affirmative policies in Brazil and the persistence of first-generation graduates in the area of Health"] (MOROSINI; GRIBOSKY, 2014. F-Gen students, identified by the educational background of their mothers and fathers, were shown to have a significant presence in college. Regarding fathers, 42% had attended Primary Education, with 2/3 of them having completed years 1 through 5 (1st to 4th grades), 30% attended High School and 22% attended Higher Education. Regarding mothers, they had a slightly higher level of education than fathers: in Primary Education, the percentage is 36% and in High School 31%.

5 In this study, the expansion of Higher Education was considered one of the benchmarks of this century. In Brazil, policies have been proposed with the intention of broadening and democratizing access and to guarantee student retention in Higher Education. Among these policies, the programs that stood out are the University for All Program (2005) (ProUni, acronym in Portuguese) and the Student Financing Program (2001) (FIES, acronym in Portuguese), aimed at private Higher Education institutions; the racial Quota Program for students from public schools (2010) and the Program to Support Restructuring and Expansion Plans for Federal Universities (REUNI, acronym in Portuguese), aimed at public Higher Education institutions.

6 This study used data from the 2013 ENADE for Health programs in Brazil (Agronomy, Biomedicine, Physical Education, Nursing, Pharmacy, Physiotherapy, Phonoaudiology, Medicine, Veterinary Medicine, Nutrition, Dentistry, Social Work, Zootechnics, Technology in Agribusiness, Technology in Environmental Management, Technology in Hospital Management and Technology in Radiology).



More recently, Morosini and Griboski (2018) studied census data from the 2013 ENADE, in the area of Health, and reported on F-Gen students who had spent time abroad during college. 4,723 college exchange students were identified, of which the mother had no schooling (2.1%); primary education: years 1 to 5 (1st to 4th grades) (10%); primary education: years 6 to 9 (5th to 8th grades) (7.7%), and High School (25%). This shows that F-Gen students participate in internationalization processes, via mobility, and it contributes to the claim that democratizing policies for access and retention can contribute to the democratization of college.

Umbricht (2012) adds that the characteristics of first-generation students can be understood from two perspectives: ethnic-racial and gender characteristics, as well as characteristics related to Higher Education itself, that is, the grades of incoming HEI students, incoming student preparation, student commitment and form of admission. In this vein, Nuñez (1998) found that F-Gen students were closely associated to economic characteristics, being in the lowest quartile of income. McDonough (1997) observed that F-Gen students are less likely to continue Higher Education, which makes them less likely to have better salaries and, by extension, less likely to have children who finish college.

In a study of professors and college students in the Brazilian context, Schuh (2017) investigated the academic path of F-Gen college students in large, non-profit HEI undergraduate programs. 727 students participated, 4% of the total campus population, through an online questionnaire, and professors from different areas of expertise in the institution were interviewed. The results indicate the importance of student access to information regarding the possibilities that the university can offer them. The need to create institutional policies to support F-Gen students and foster an institutional connection in working with the academic community. It is also important for first-generation college students to participate in their own education and promote discussions on this topic.

## **FIRST-GENERATION STUDENTS IN BRAZIL AND THE ENADE**

The ENADE at the end of the undergraduate program is an obligatory curricular component of undergraduate programs and is composed of an exam to evaluate student performance; a student questionnaire that collects information to characterize their profile, as well as the context of their educational processes, in order to better understand student results on the Exam; a questionnaire on student perception of the exam and one on the program chair. Different areas of knowledge are evaluated every year, defined by the National Higher Education Evaluation Committee (CONAES, acronym in Portuguese). ENADE is applied in each area, at most, every three years.

The student questionnaire has three questions that identify whether there are any first-generation graduates. Two questions addressed the maximum level of education attained by the mother and father. The third question asked whether anyone in the family had studied in college. As such, this study deals

with microdata referring to student questionnaires from the 2015, 2016 and 2017 ENADE.

In 2015, the graduates who answered the questionnaire were those who received a bachelor's degree in Administration, Public Administration, Accounting Sciences, Economic Sciences, Communications - Journalism, Communications - Publicity and Advertising, Design, Law, Psychology, International Relations, Executive Secretary, Theology and Tourism. There were also those from programs that offered technologist degrees in Foreign Trade, Interior Design, Fashion Design, Graphic Design, Gastronomy, Commercial Management, Quality Management, Human Resources Management, Financial Management, Public Administration, Logistics, Marketing and Management Processes.

In 2016, the programs evaluated were those that offered a bachelor's degree in the following areas: Agronomy, Biomedicine, Physical Education, Nursing, Pharmacy, Physiotherapy, Phonoaudiology, Medicine, Veterinary Medicine, Nutrition, Dentistry, Social Work, Zootechnics. In 2016, they included programs for technologist degrees in the areas of Agribusiness, Aesthetics and Cosmetics, Environmental Management, Hospital Management and Radiology.

In 2017, programs that offered a bachelor's degree were evaluated in the following areas: Architecture and Urbanism, Environmental Engineering, Civil Engineering, Food Engineering, Computer Engineering, Control and Automation Engineering, Production Environment, Electrical Engineering, Forest Engineering, Mechanical Engineering, Chemical Engineering, and Engineering and Information Systems. The technologist programs that offered degrees were in the areas of Systems Analysis and Development, Industrial Production Management, Computer Networking and Information Technology Management. Moreover, bachelor's or teaching degrees were offered in the following areas: Computer Science, Biological Sciences, Social Sciences, Philosophy, Physics, Geography, History, Letters - Portuguese, Mathematics and Chemistry. And, finally, teaching degrees are offered in the following areas: Visual Arts, Physical Education, Letters - Portuguese and Spanish, Letters - Portuguese and English, Letters - English, Music and Pedagogy.

Analyzing the microdata from the 2015 ENADE, 2016 ENADE and 2017 ENADE on a national level, we were able to answer the following question: What percentage of college graduates who participated in the 2015, 2016 and 2017 cycles of ENADE are F-Gen? To this end, we identified three relevant questions on the questionnaire for the student to answer. One refers to the father's academic background and another to the mother's academic background, both with the following possible answers: ( ) None. ( ) Primary Education: Years 1 to 5 (1st to 4th grades). ( ) Primary Education: Years 6 to 9 (5th to 8th grades). ( ) High School. ( ) Higher Education - Undergraduate study. ( ) Graduate study. The third question is: Has anyone in your family completed a college program? With Yes or No options to choose from (ENADE, 2015, 2016 and 2017). For the purpose of this study, we classified F-Gen students as those whose mother, father or any other family member did not have a college education.

From ENADE-2015, 549,487 graduates participated, 32.4% of which were considered F-Gen students. In 2016, 216,044 participated in the ENADE, 38.8% of which were first generation. In ENADE-2017, 537,436 graduates participated, 34.1% of which were first-generation students. In other words, they had no family members (father, mother or any other family member) with higher education. We identified the answers that indicated the academic backgrounds of fathers and mothers with Higher Education - Undergraduate study and compared these results with the third question regarding having some family member with a college education. Given these percentages, we see a new student profile within the universe of Higher Education and, more importantly, F-Gen graduates within society. Moreover, those three questions on the Student Questionnaire allow us to infer that, in the Brazilian context, first-generation students are those who do not have anyone in their family with a college education.

Regarding the demographic characteristics of the first-generation graduates participating in the 2015, 2016 and 2017 ENADE, we can see in Table 1 that in these three years, women represented the majority of F-Gen graduates, with 59.7% in 2015, 74.6% in 2016 and 55% in 2017. It is worth highlighting the percentage of 74.6%, which represents almost 2/3 of the graduates in 2016. Regarding ethnic-racial identity, in the three years studied, the highest percentage among F-Gen graduates was white, with 53.2% in 2015, 45.2% in 2016 and 45.9% in 2017.

**TABLE 1**  
**DEMOGRAPHIC CHARACTERISTICS OF F-GEN GRADUATES IN THE 2015, 2016 AND 2017 ENADE**

		FIRST GENERATION		
		2015	2016	2017
SEX	Female	59.7%	74.6%	55%
	Male	40.3%	26.9%	45%
ETHNIC-RACIAL	White	53.2%	45.2%	45.9%
	Black	10.1%	11.6%	12.1%
	Mixed-race	34.7%	40.3%	39.1%
	Asian	1.5%	2.5%	2.4%
	Indigenous	0.6%	0.4%	0.5%

Source: Authors' elaboration based on ENADE microdata (MANUAL DO USUÁRIO, 2015, 2016, 2017).

The administrative category of the Higher Education Institution (HEI) where these F-Gen graduates were found was also analyzed, as can be seen in Table 2 below. In this table, we can see that the administrative category with a higher percentage of first-generation graduates among the total number of graduates were from private, for-profit HEIs, followed by private, non-profit HEIs. In 2015, the percentage of F-Gen graduates was 48.1% and 41.1% in for-profit and non-profit private HEIs, respectively. In 2016 and 2017, the percentages were lower, though they remain the highest among the categories. There was a statistical significance ( $p < 0.001$ ), which means that the possibility of these results

occurring by chance is minimal; therefore, there is a reason for this happening. In other words, there are factors in this context that contribute to F-Gen students entering and consequently finishing college in private institutions, whether for-profit or non-profit.

**TABLE 2**  
**DISTRIBUTION OF F-GEN GRADUATES ACCORDING TO THE ADMINISTRATIVE CATEGORY OF THE HEI IN RELATION TO ALL GRADUATE RESPONDENTS**

ADMINISTRATIVE CATEGORY	YEAR		
	2015	2016	2017
Federal Public	5.3%	12.1%	19.2%
State Public	3.7%	4.2%	11.6%
Municipal Public	1.5%	1.4%	1.1%
For-profit private	48.1%	44.0%	39.3%
Non-profit private	41.1%	38.0%	28.3%
Special <sup>7</sup>	0.4%	0.3%	0.5%
Chi-square (df)	3148.8(5)***	517.3(5)***	2714.3(5)***
Cramer's V	0.082	0.056	0.076

\*  $p < 0.001$ .

Source: Authors' elaboration based on ENADE microdata (MANUAL DO USUÁRIO, 2015, 2016, 2017).

One may predict, based on the evidence in Table 2, why there is a higher percentage of first-generation students in private institutions, whether for-profit or non-profit. That is, this question can be answered due to a new profile entering Higher Education, fostered by the University for All Program - ProUni<sup>8</sup> and/or by the possibility of financing by FIES<sup>9</sup>.

Table 3 shows the percentage of F-Gen graduates in each of the 6 administrative categories of Higher Education institutions. In 2015, for example, 21.4% of the graduates from federal public universities were F-Gen. It is important to note that in 2015, the higher percentage of F-Gen graduates (35.5%) was in for-profit private institutions, while the lower percentage of F-Gen graduates was in federal public institutions (21.4%). In 2016, the higher percentage (40.3%) was in non-profit private institutions and the lower percentage (32.6%) in state public institutions. In 2017, the higher percentage (41.3%) was in special institutions and the lower percentage (28.1%) in federal public institutions.

<sup>7</sup> Special (art. 242 Federal Constitution) - official educational institution created by state or municipal law, existing on the date of the proclamation of the Federal Constitution, which is not fully or predominantly maintained by public resources, and therefore, not free.

<sup>8</sup> The University for All Program (ProUni), Law N° 11.096, on January 13, 2005 is aimed at the concession of full and partial scholarships to Brazilians without a diploma, for study in private Higher Education institutions, whether for-profit or non-profit. According to article 1, §§ 1 and 2, of Law N° 11.096, full scholarships are provided to Brazilians with a monthly household income per capita that does not exceed up to one and a half times the minimum wage. For partial scholarships (50% or 25%), the monthly household income per capita must not exceed up to three times the minimum wage, according to criteria defined by the Ministry of Education (Brazil, 2005).

<sup>9</sup> The Student Financing Fund (FIES) is a program by the Ministry of Education aimed at funding undergraduate studies for students enrolled in non-free college programs according to Law 10.260/2001.

**TABLE 3**  
**DISTRIBUTION OF F-GEN GRADUATES ACCORDING TO THE ADMINISTRATIVE CATEGORY OF THE HEI**

ADMINISTRATIVE CATEGORY	YEAR		
	2015	2016	2017
Federal Public	21.4%	33.4%	28.1%
State Public	29.1%	32.6%	35.2%
Municipal Public	32.0%	39.2%	34.2%
For-profit Private	35.5%	40.1%	37.5%
Non-profit Private	31.6%	40.3%	34.3%
Special	28.0%	39.6%	41.3%
Chi-square (df)	3148.8(5)***	517.3(5)***	2714.3(5)***
Cramer's V	0.082	0.056	0.076

\*  $p < 0.001$

Source: Authors' elaboration based on ENADE microdata (MANUAL DO USUÁRIO, 2015, 2016, 2017).

Another important observation is that the percentage of first-generation graduates is higher in all administrative categories in 2015. There was also a statistically significant relation between the administrative categories and the F-Gen graduates.

## CONSIDERATIONS

Reflecting on the data presented in the analyses, and considering the programs evaluated in each cycle, we observed that in 2016, of the six administrative categories in question, 4 had a higher percentage of F-Gen graduates in comparison to 2015 and 2017. These results are revealing since, among the programs analyzed, we found some considered “elite”, such as medicine. In order to understand what happened, there must be studies to obtain the percentage of F-Gen graduates in each program.

Another important observation is that the percentage of first-generation graduates is higher in all administrative categories in 2015. Analyses of previous years are necessary, in order to better understand what has been happening over the years with this new student profile emerging in Brazilian education.

In addition to the analyses carried out here, other more advanced ones involving the universe of first-generation students and/or graduates are necessary. This can be done by associating the Student Questionnaire to the other questionnaires that are part of the ENADE evaluation package. Moreover, it enables comparative studies between F-Gen and C-Gen graduates, given that the universe of continuing-generation graduate respondents make up the highest percentage of all administrative categories presented. It also indicates the need for studies capable of identifying the possible relation between first-generation graduates and ProUni scholarship holders, as well as admission to Higher

Education institutions through quota systems or not. But the most important finding thus far is that a new graduate profile is emerging in Brazilian society, those who are from family households whose parents and other members do not have an academic background.

These initial studies in Brazil, based on national data, enable broader studies on F-Gen and, mainly, a broader research perspective on the universe of Higher Education students. This is justified since most research studies are focused on the concept, the characteristics and frequently on affirmative action policies that have expanded Higher Education in the country. In other words, these studies are dominated by a diagnostic perspective and, contrary to some countries, focus on establishing strategies for student admission, retention and completion in Higher Education. In this sense, from pro-positivism, the field of studies on F-Gen is emerging in Brazil; and, even in countries whose studies are more advanced, there are also possibilities to expand research approaches, since most studies associate F-Gen persistence with integration into the university culture.

In Brazil, studies with first-generation students are in early stages, suggesting a clear need for research involving this universe in order to establish pro-positive measures so that they can stay and finish college with excellence, beyond just getting in. Regarding future research, we recommend going beyond the relation between F-Gen and the expansion of higher education, in order to understand the relation with democratization and, more specifically, the relation between F-Gen and equity in higher education.

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