ENADE Performance of Business Students: An Analysis between Public and Private Institutions

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Abstract

Evaluating students' academic performance in undergraduate programs is essential since it allows verifying whether Higher Education Institutions - HEIs are training qualified professionals for the labor market. Students' academic performance is measured by the Ministry of Education and Culture (MEC) through the National Student Performance Exam (ENADE). This article aims at comparing if the performance of business students of Higher Education Institutions is different according to their category - public or private. In order to do so, a descriptive quantitative study and research on secondary data were conducted. 4.089 appropriate data for the study were collected regarding public and private Higher Education Institutions whose students took part in ENADE in 2006, 2009 and 2012. By means of Multiple Correspondence Analyses (MCA), it has been verified that, in general, the academic performance of students in public Higher Education Institutions presents better results than those in private Higher Education Institutions.

Keywords: Higher Education Institutions, ENADE, Business, Correspondence analysis.

1. Introduction

Higher Education Institutions in Brazil can be divided into two categories, i.e., public or private. While the public sector is more bureaucratic, with slower decision-making processes due to the link with the public agencies that maintain them, higher education in the private sector is perceived more dynamically, constantly attentive to technological innovations and competitive opportunities in the commercialized context that took over education after its expansion.

The expansion of higher education by means of Higher Education Institutions (HEIs), whether public or private, has brought to people greater opportunities for access to higher education. Along with these changes, education professionals need to be better prepared pedagogically to teach with quality in the educational field. Still, the HEIs found themselves facing many challenges, besides having to meet the increasing demand of vacancies; they also need to certify the quality of the courses they offer.

With the expansion of education, there was a necessary to measure the quality of higher education, particularly with respect to private educational institutions. One of the ways that the Ministry of Education and Culture (MEC) created for this purpose was the National Student Performance Exam, better known in Brazil as ENADE. This research is important in order to identify whether the administrative category of the higher education institution (public and private) have any influence on the performance of students in ENADE. (Chui, Ahmad, Bassim, & Zaimi, 2016; Stadtlober, 2010; Yarmohammadian, Mozaffary, & Esfahani, 2011).

Visualizing this higher educational context, the expansion, the administrative and pedagogical methodologies and also the measurement and quality control tools, the following question arises: Does the academic performance in business programs differ between students in public and private institutions? This article aims at comparing if the performance of business students in public and private Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) differs according to the category of the HEIs. Thus, it aims at comparing if one category can be better than the other, influencing the academic performance.

Given the overall importance of the aforementioned theme, this article is divided into five topics. The first is this introduction. The topic covers the two types of Higher Education Institutions in Brazil, differentiating the public and private education systems and explaining the expansion of Higher Education in the country. Sub-topic 2.1 - Higher Education and the Business Program - deals with the regulation of the Business Higher Education Program in Brazil, and is followed by the sub-topic 2.2 National Student Performance Exam - ENADE, which deals with the importance of ENADE regarding the quality of higher education. The third topic, Methodology, describes methodological procedures used for the analysis of results, which is described in chapter four. At last, topic five presents the final considerations of this article, together with the limitations of the study. Finally, the consulted references which served as the background and bibliographic foundation for the construction of this article are presented.

2. Higher Education Institutions in Brazil

The higher education system in Brazil is composed of two types of institutions, the public sector which is free and the private sector. This conventional concept attributed to the higher education system, consisting of formal institutions, characterized as public and private by the Ministry of Education and Culture (MEC) does not diminish its dynamic character. Each sector, whether public or private, presents continuities and ruptures regarding their own development patterns in Brazil.(Sampaio, 2011).

In the 90s, there were 918 Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) in Brazil. Of these, 696 were private and 222 public. Only fourteen years later, in 2004, the number of higher education institutions increased to 2050, 1842 of them private and 208 of them public. It can be observed that in 1990, 75.81% of the national HEIs were private and in 2004 this number increased to 89.85%, representing a significant increase in 14 years. (Tomaz, Teixeira, & Porém, 2016) Data provided by INEP in 2013 indicate that private HEIs add up to 92% of the total number of existing HEIs which are operating in the country. The data extracted from the 2013 Census of Higher Education show that private institutions account for about 66% of the programs offered in Brazil and almost 74% of total the total number of enrollments (Tomaz et al., 2016).

With the rapid growth of higher education programs and the high demand for them, public institutions could not support this demand and made room for private institutions of higher education. It can be noticed that, in the last twenty-five years, there has been significant growth of higher education in the country through educational institutions, especially private ones. This increase, however, is not consistent with quality and competence in teaching and learning. There are positive and negative points in this growth, and the low attendance of students during the programs, the low assessment of learning and the low teaching quality are a reflection of the high academic dropout rate, high dropout rate of qualified teachers and underpayment to education professionals (Canopf, Festinalli, & Ichikawa, 2005; Silva, Silva, & Freitas., 2013; Stadtlober, 2010; Takahashi, 2010).

Decree 2.207 of 15 April 1997, known as LDB – Nova Lei de Diretrizes e Bases (Law of Directives and Basis for National Education - LDBNE) brought changes to reorganize the Brazilian higher education system. One example was that private institutions of higher education could now be constituted as profit-making entities, in addition to changing their framework classification into categories such as universities, university centers, integrated colleges, institutes or higher education school. Together with these changes, the demands regarding teacher education have increased, such as Master's and Doctorate's degrees, aiming at increasing quality in higher education (Canopf et al., 2005; Lombardi, Traverso, Leite, Carvalho, & Caro, 2011;Tomaz et al., 2016).

The privatization of higher education has changed the focus and values of private institutions, which started acting as producers of educational services and transforming students into customers (Paiva, Costa, Silva, & Dias, 2016; Silva et al., 2013). The way higher education expanded, and the approaching of private institutions has transformed higher education into a commerce where the public and private sectors competed in attracting students. With the high competitiveness of the education sector, for the institutions of higher education, students were no longer being seen as students but they had become clients of an institution (Garcia, Nicolini, & Andrade, 2014; Oliveira & Sauerbronn, 2007; Yousapronpaiboon, 2014).

The performance in private institutions is manifested in the form of results, favoring the efficiency and profitability, adding the management and production performance. Individualities are integrated in this joint production thus forming the collective performance, which represents the HEI. Appropriate work environments, with specific training, discipline and command help achieve the desired performance. It is possible to realize the importance of objectivity in order to ensure quality performance (Vieira & Vieira, 2003).

In the public sector, performance has distinct characteristics, since the people who are responsible for this performance are strongly linked to the stability of employment independently from productivity. Because of their transient and political nature, the higher orders in these institutions often create instabilities in performance motivation. The delay in the introduction of new technologies, organizational restructuring, and innovative management models challenge the performance of public institutions and lead to reflections in slow processes. Over the years and without impacting changes, the public school system has shaped and consolidated its own culture of performance. This academic cultural performance influences the pace of development of public higher education institutions (Vieira & Vieira, 2003).

The high investment in private HEIs in the country through large educational networks caused several changes in the scope of the private sector itself and brought new questions to be added to the old ones in the debate regarding higher education in Brazil. The old questions address the public and private duality, referring to the quality of the programs, the teachers working conditions among other failures of the private sector compared to the public sector. New issues emerge from the scenario formed due to the presence of large groups of higher education. They refer, for example, to conflicts of management of the different cultures between the previous maintainers and new leaders of large groups, the fragmentation of the representation of the sector's interests and its effects on the relationship established with the Ministry of Education and Culture (MEC) and other regulatory agencies in the Brazilian higher education system (Sampaio, 2011).

2.1 Higher Education and Business Program.

The first business programs appeared in the United States and France. One of the reasons why business programs arose primarily in these countries may be linked to the fact that the first authors of business theories Taylor and Fayol were respectively from the United States and France (Fischer & Silva, 2008; Takahashi, 2010). In Brazil the first business programs recorded date back from 1902, in Rio de Janeiro and São Paulo, however, the influence of the Taylor's and Fayol's theories, in Brazil in this period, resonated for engineering programs(Coelho & Nicolini, 2014; Oliveira & Sauerbronn, 2007).

The standardization of higher education programs in Brazil happened with the creation of the Ministry of Education around the year of 1930. The expansion of higher education in business in the country began only from the year of 1960, since then the administrator role began to be regularized at a higher level. Thus, in 1966 the first business program curriculum was established. From these regulations, and the expansion of the program throughout the country, a larger portion of the population began to have access to higher education. That is, for an increasing number of people the dream of a degree in higher education became possible, including personal fulfillment and social advancement. (Oliveira & Sauerbronn, 2007; Takahashi, 2010).

Due to uncontrolled expansion of higher education in Brazil around 1970s, the Federal Education Council temporarily suspend authorizations for the provision of higher education. The release of the authorizations was only normalized after a review of the rules that regulated the programs (Oliveira & Sauerbronn, 2007).

The rapid growth of higher education only indicates a significant increase in the offer of programs, but does not guarantee their quality. Consequently, this advancement in higher education led MEC to create means by which there could be an evaluation of the quality of the education offered, i.e., the verification of the contents of basic and specific knowledge regarding company management, skills and abilities related to the behavior of the administration professional that are being taught in university programs. (Ferreras-Méndez, Fernández-Mesa, Alegre, & Sevilla-Pavón, 2012; Oliveira & Sauerbronn, 2007).

2.2 National Student Performance Exam – ENADE

The National System for Assisting Higher Education – in Portuguese: Sistema Nacional de Avaliação do Ensino Superior, SINAES – was created in 2004 by means of Law 10.861. The main objective of NSAHE is to ensure the evaluation process of higher education institutions – HEIs – of general programs, as well as student performance assessments. (Barbosa, Freire, & Crisóstomo, 2011; Griboski, 2012).

After creating the NSAHE, student performance assessment started to be carried out via the National Student Performance Exam - ENADE. This test consists of 40 questions divided into two steps. The first consists of 10 general knowledge questions and the second of 30 specific knowledge questions. The two stages consist of objective and essay questions. In addition to it, an online socio-economic questionnaire must be answered by the student prior to the test. The time available for students to take the exam is four hours (Barbosa et al., 2011; Bittencourt, Casartelli, Viali, & Rodrigues, 2008).

The National Student Performance Exam is conducted by the National Institute for Educational Research – in Portuguese: Institu to Nacional de Pesquis as Educacionais - INEP, which is an agency under the Ministry of Education which is responsible for the evaluation of the basic and higher education (Griboski, 2012). ENADE allows an assessment of competences and skills acquired by students over the years of the program. Besides, it enables the acquisition of information regarding students' thought on their current educational institution (Verhine, Dantas, & Soares, 2006).

Several changes have been made in ENADE in order to improve the quality of the examination, from the start to the end of this study. According to Vehine, Dantas and Soares (2016), Brazil is the only country that maintains the assessment of students in a mandatory and annual ways. Thus, ENADE is carried out periodically and from the year of 2010 on, it became a mandatory requirement for the students who were selected to take it. These comprise freshmen who have accomplished 0-25% of the minimum duration of the program and students who have completed at least 80% of the program (Barbosa et al., 2011; INEP, 2016).

ENADE is one of the tools to measure the quality of higher education in Brazil. Some educational institutions, both public and private, have been working in promoting academic awareness regarding the importance of this evaluation. However, performance may be influenced, since the motivations students have for taking the test can influence the answers given and make them not become an indication of the reality of their learning. Factors which can influence academic performance include individual factors such as personality and external factors such as the profile of the institution, qualification of teachers and structure of institutions (Griboski, 2012; Lemos & Miranda, 2015; Zhou, 2015).

When comparing the performance of students between public and private institutions, according to Bittencourt et. al. (2008), the students who are best prepared are the ones in public institutions. This fact is given by the amount of reduced vacancies for public education.

3. Methodology

In order to answer this article's question, which consists in comparing the performance between business students from public and private High Education Institutions (HEIs), and checking if they differ depending on the category of the HEIs, this study is characterized as descriptive and documental, since it conceives situations where the researcher intends to explore the phenomenon or find relationships between variables, but cannot manipulate the presumed causes or whatever the methods of collection and analysis of the database are (Cresswell, 2007). In addition to this, the conduction of a quantitative analysis was chosen, given that it is a study that aims to quantify the data.

The survey was conducted regarding the topics Education Institution and Public and Private Higher Education, ENADE – National Student Performance Exam, Higher Education Degree in Business in several national bases, with published articles linked to ANPAD - National Association of Post-graduation and Research in Administration - and main business journals such as the Contemporary Administration Magazine (Revista de Administração Contemporânea - RAC). The international databases utilized were Science Direct, Emeral Insight and Google Scholar. The bibliographic research consists of expanding the studies on a determined topic and is a way to add and gather knowledge (Kitchenham et al., 2009; Noruzi & Arsenault, 2013).

Data collection comprised the months of June and July of the first semester of 2016 in which the secondary data regarding the business program students who took the three last ENADE tests (2006, 2009 and 2012) was conducted by consultation the website of INEP directly where the data is made available by the agency. The data which refer to the 2015 test were not available yet. Therefore, they are not part of the sample of this study.

For the data analysis, a Correspondence Analysis, or CA as it is also known, was applied. CA enables the visualization of associations through perceptual maps that show the proximity of the categories of variables. CA basically has two stages for analysis: 1) calculus of the measure of association and 2) creation of the perceptual map. For the first, the chi-square test is used to standardize the frequency values and form the basis for the associations. After standardizing the values, CA generates measures in form distance to represent the degree of association assigned by the chi-square in dimensional space, thus forming a graphical representation designed in a flat shape of the multi-dimensional relationships between the categories of the studied variables (Fávero, Belfiore, Silva, & Chan, 2009).

In the first aforementioned step Chi-Square is calculated, which is given by equation 1.

$$\chi^2 = \sum_{i,j} \frac{(O_{ij} - E_{ij})^2}{E_{ij}} \qquad (1)$$

In which:

O_{ij} = $n_{ij,}$ *represents the number of real observations in the cell (i,j)*
E_{ij} = $np_{ij,}$ *represents the expected number of observations in the cell (i,j)*

After standardizing the results by the Chi-Square value, the next step is to develop a contingency table or cross table from which one can obtain the values of the distances, then generating the degree of association in dimensional space. According to Fávero et. al (2009), AC "is an interesting technique where there are many categories in lines or in columns, as it graphically represents, by means of a perceptual map, the relationship between them, arranging the most similar categories next to each other." In this study, AC was applied in order to analyze the differences in the map. When the number of variables and categories is not large, the chi-square test is used to assess whether the information contained in the table's lines is independent or not from the information contained in the columns.

Mathematically, a contingency table is assumed, as the form in table 1.

The correspondence matrix is a P matrix P of p × q dimension constructed in $p_{ij} = \frac{n_{ij}}{n}$ proportions. The profile of the lines of the matrix is a diagonal matrix denoted by $D_{r'}$, whose diagonal elements are $r' = \left(\frac{n_{1.}}{n} \; \frac{n_{2.}}{n} \ldots \frac{n_{p.}}{n} \right)$. The profile of the columns of the matrix is also diagonal, denoted $D_{c'}$, whose diagonal elements are equal to $c' = \left(\frac{n_{.1}}{n} \; \frac{n_{.2}}{n} \ldots \frac{n_{.q}}{n} \right)$. Considering the matrix $\tilde{P} = P - rc'$ this matrix has entries such as $\left(p_{ij} - \frac{n_{.i}}{n} \times \frac{n_{.j}}{n} \right)$, i.e., according to Mingoti (2005, p. 259) "they represent a comparison of the proportion observed within each cell of the table with that expected under a model in which the variables X and Y are independent." Indeed, the multiple correspondence analyses can be treated by the analysis of the main components, decomposing the matrix on its eigen values and eigenvectors.

The main coordinates of the matrix lines $\tilde{P}$ are given by $Y_{p\times q} = D_r^{-1} A_{p\times q} \Lambda_{k\times k}$ and the main coordinates of the columns are given by $Z_{p\times q} = D_r^{-1} B_{p\times q} \Lambda_{k\times k}$. Mingoti (2005, p. 260) states that "the two first main lines and columns coordinates are the most representative in terms of association" that exist between the variables X and Y. While carrying out the descriptive analysis of the data, a favorable number for conducting the study was verified, in which 3,614 were usable collected data corresponding to private institutions and 475 were usable collected data corresponding to public institutions, totalizing 4,089 appropriate data for the study, regarding higher education institutions from which students took ENADE in 2006, 2009 and 2012 (INEP, 2016.). The High Education Institutions which did not have grades in the examination, classified as "SC", were excluded from the sample, totalizing 3,634 cases in three years.

With these data, the AC was run through the statistical SPSS software version 21. Initially, the analysis was conducted year-by-year in order to check the results of each ENADE and shortly after, the data was analyzed altogether, in which it is possible to verify the differences in performance in the next section called results analysis.

4. Results Analysis

Initially, the data were observed by regions, where it may be noted that the regions with the highest number of higher education institutions participating in ENADE in the three analyzed years were the South and Southeast regions. In the South, there were 891 higher education institutions participating in ENADE and, in the Southeast, there were 1820 higher education institutions participating in ENADE. The region with the lowest number of participating institutions was the Northern region.

Then, in order to identify the average performance of students in ENADE, the average of the obtained results of the test was calculated by each state. These data are shown in Table 2.

It is observed that public institutions of higher education in the South and Northeast, in the general average, had higher results when compared to the other regions whereas the Northern region has the lowest overall average. When compared to the overall averages of the private institutions, the South region has a higher average among all the regions with a score of 2.9. The region with the lowest average among private institutions, excluding the North, is the Midwest region.

To answer the research question of this study, data were analyzed by statistical analysis AC with all the participant higher education institutions, separating them into public and private categories. The crossing of the data was carried out between the higher education institutions and the grade obtained in ENADE. Therefore, an analysis was performed for each year.

From the results of the crosschecking between public and private higher education institutions with academic performance in ENADE in 2006, it can be seen in Figure 1 that private HEIs obtained grades 1, 2 and 3 in ENADE. However, the public HEIs were closer to grade 5, and grade 4 was isolated, with no associations with any HEIs in the study of that year. This indicates that even in the first year that the test was carried out, and without much experience of how it would be carried out, public institutions had a higher grade in relation to private institutions.

In the results obtained in the year of 2009, the private higher education institutions maintained their performance similar to the previously analyzed year, with grades 2 and 3, showing only a greater distance from their worst performance, grade 1. When observing public HEIs during that year, the grade was well diversified, with no significant direct association with any concept. Concepts 1, 4 and 5 were not directly associated with any of the institutions, showing that the various institutions that obtained those grades did not present strong similar characteristics.

It can be seen in Figure 3 that the results obtained are similar when compared to results from 2006. The performance of the students of public higher education institutions is closer to the grade 4, while private HEIs showed grades 1, 2 and 3. With the result of the conducted analyzes, it is possible to observe a regular performance in the grades of higher education institutions. Public HEIs presented a superior performance, with grades 4 and 5, while private HEIs presented a maximum grade of, in general, 3. Below in Figure 4 it is possible to see this result, in which the analysis was run through with all years.

Thus, the results of this analysis corroborate the author Bittencourt et. al. (2008). In his study, the author makes an analysis related to the IDC, which corresponds to the Index of Performance Change, in which he justifies the superior performance of students in public institutions by the fact that the grade in ENADE is one of the factors that influence the calculation of the concept IDC. Thus, HEIs that have higher concepts in ENADE are more likely to increase the IDC of the institution.

5. Final Remarks

With the conducted analyses, it was possible to achieve the objective of the research, which was to compare if the performance between business students of public and private HEIs was different depending on the category of HEI they attended. The first conducted analysis was the comparison between the averages by areas in Brazil, where it was possible to identify the high performance of public higher education institutions in all regions. To highlight, the regions that achieved higher average are the South and Northeast, with an overall average of 3,7. However, when comparing the average of private HEIs, the region that stood out was the South region again with an overall average of 2, 9.

After conducting the analysis of the averages, the data were analyzed by means of AC. In 2006, the public HEIs showed a higher relation with grade 5 and private HEIs with lower grades from 1 to 3. In the following ENADE test, in 2009, public HEIs showed a more homogeneous performance, not presenting a direct relationship with any concept. In the ENADE test held in the year of 2012, the results were similar to ones of 2009. However, the performance of public HEIs is closer to grade 4 and private HEIs continued to maintain their performance similar to the ENADE tests of the previous years.

When performing AC with all the years, it was possible to observe the homogeneity in the results obtained in the analysis of each year, where public HEIs presented a higher performance in all years and all regions. Therefore, this study confirms previous studies conducted by Bittencourt et. al. (2008).

For future research, the continuity of this study by the subsequent results of academic performance in ENADE as well as the analysis of replication for other courses is suggested, in order to verify if the performance of the students of public HEIs remains high or if the performance is a feature of Business programs only.

	Variable Y						
		1	2	3	...	q	Total
Variable X	1	n_{11}	n_{12}	n_{13}	...	n_{1q}	$n_{1.}$
	2	n_{21}	n_{22}	n_{23}	...	n_{2q}	$n_{2.}$
	3	n_{31}	n_{32}	n_{33}	...	n_{3q}	$n_{3.}$
	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
	P	n_{p1}	n_{p2}	n_{p3}		n_{pq}	$n_{p.}$
Total		$n_{.1}$	$n_{.2}$	$n_{.3}$	...	$n_{.q}$	$n_{..}=n$

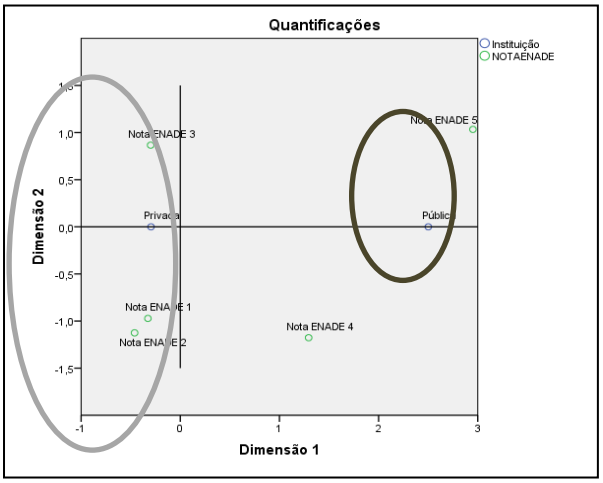
Source: FÁVERO et al., 2009.

Table 1: Contingency Table

REGION	**INSTITUTION**	**AVARAGE**
SOUTH	PUBLIC	3,7
	PRIVATE	2,9
SOUTHEAST	PUBLIC	3,6
	PRIVATE	2,8
MIDWEST	PUBLIC	3,5
	PRIVATE	2,3
NORTH	PUBLIC	3
	PRIVATE	2,4
NORTHEST	PUBLIC	3,7
	PRIVATE	2,6

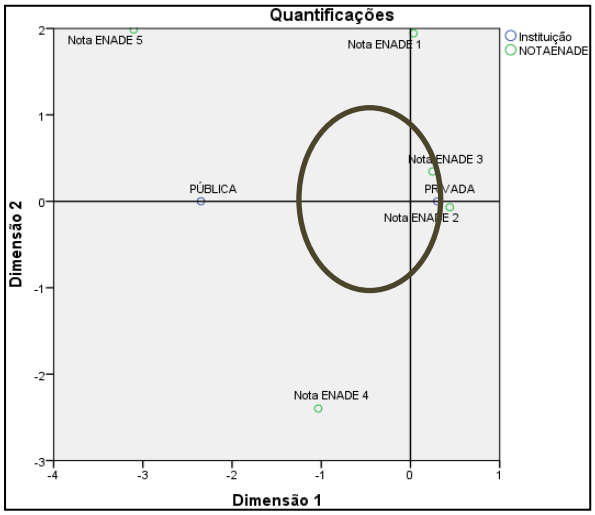
Source: Research Data

Table 2: Average per region



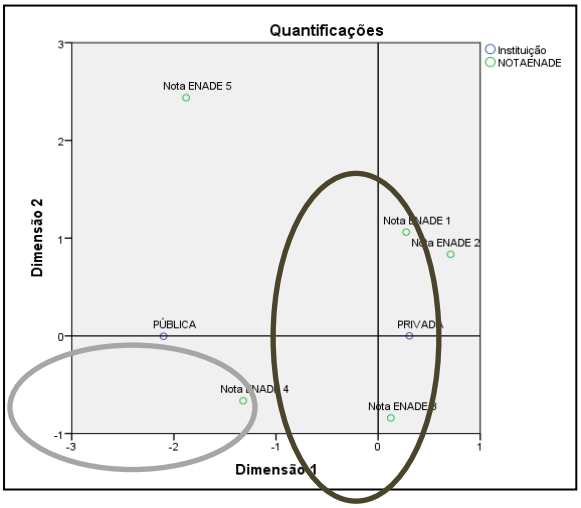
Source: Research data

Figure: ENADE Performance 2006.



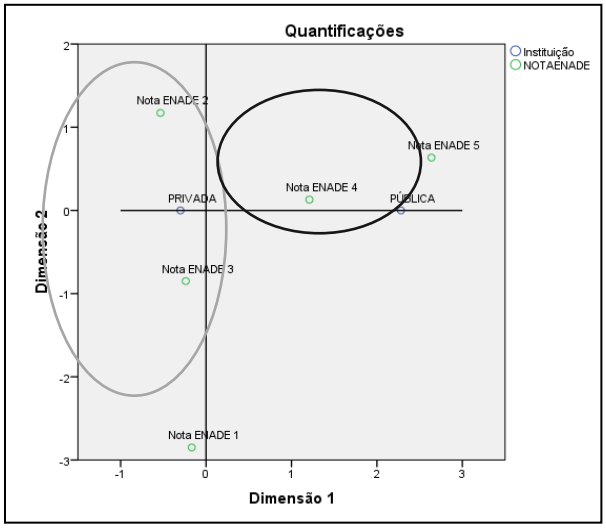
Source: Research data

Figure 2: ENADE Performance 2009.



Source: Research data

Figure 3: ENADE Performance 2012.



Source: Research data

Figure 4: ENADE Performance 2006, 2009 and 2012.

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