



## **Senac University Center Leveling Program – An Experience that Integrates Knowledge and Creativity**

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### **Abstract**

*In Brazil, all levels of education present a historical deficiency and this situation was worsened during the pandemic that occurred in 2020, with one of the impacts on Higher Education Institutions being the learning gap presented by incoming students, who had part of the content of the High school committed to the absence of basic subject classes. According to Barreto (2013), the deficiencies brought by the student, especially with regard to reading and interpreting texts and writing, are perceived in the most varied areas of university knowledge and involve the entire academic career. This fact contributes, therefore, to high rates of poor university training, a negative factor that leads us to reflect on ways to improve the quality of education and, consequently, reduce social inequality, seeking possible solutions to these difficulties faced by students entering education. higher. Faced with this situation, the Centro Universitário Senac, located in São Paulo, with 38 undergraduate courses from different areas of knowledge and around 8,000 students, improved its leveling activities, seeking to develop more attractive and differentiated activities, in addition to preparing the teaching staff. to work through these difficulties. The Leveling Program aims to enhance the knowledge of incoming students in the areas of mathematics, chemistry, physics, Portuguese language, communication and expression and the production of academic work, reducing learning difficulties in higher education courses and contributing to their academic journey. The schedule of activities is announced to incoming students at the beginning of the semester, in a Virtual Welcome Space and face-to-face workshops, cultural Literature events and installations with tips and content are held in campus environments, such as a literary staircase with poems on the steps, panel on mathematics on the Demoiselle plane exposed with campus and a giant periodic table in a student commons area. In this way, this work aims to share the actions and results obtained by our Leveling Program, in reducing students' difficulties in the learning process, and consequently, in reducing evasion, and also in encouraging reading, something that contributes to professional training of students in all areas of knowledge.*

**Keywords:** *Higher Education; leveling; knowledge; creativity*

### **Introduction**

The learning difficulties of students entering higher education are something that has drawn the attention of institutions across the country. This situation can be influenced by several factors and this study considered them to understand the causes for the subsequent development of strategies that would minimize their impacts on the learning process of students on the Institution's undergraduate courses.

One of the prominent factors is undoubtedly the learning gap in secondary education present in the Brazilian context, especially in this post-pandemic period. According to Nunes (2015), it is common to note that basic education, especially secondary education in Brazil, regarding the appropriation of knowledge by students is not effective enough to prepare students for university life successfully, even considering the cases in which that these students have been approved in university selection processes. These limitations, understood here in terms of the appropriation of some basic education content, result in gaps in learning, causing problems such as failures and even dropouts from graduation[1]. This situation worsened after the pandemic, as according to Gatti (2020) it forced children, adolescents and young people to change their relational and movement habits, to study remotely, some with good conditions, with access to the internet, with the necessary support (computer, tablet or cell phones), but many do not have these facilities, or have them with restrictions (for example, no internet or computer network or other support, possession of prepaid cell phones with little access to networks; a single cell phone in the family, etc.), including those without any conditions



to use the technological supports chosen to support face-to-face mode. Added to these conditions is the large number of students who were unable to count on more effective support from their parents due to their educational level, or because they worked in priority sectors during isolation, or for other reasons. Furthermore, there was a situation of students dependent on educational networks that themselves were unable to offer their curricula remotely. Also, curricular issues were suspended, such as practical activities, laboratory activities, field activities and internships in professional secondary education.[2]

In addition to the difficulty in accessing education, social isolation generated an emotional impact on students, impacting the relationships and interactivity necessary in university activities.

There is a consensus in educational studies about the impact of this delay in secondary education and the pandemic on the learning process of students entering higher education and these difficulties affect the development of basic skills, such as reading, writing, mathematics and critical thinking.

In addition to the gap in teaching, other factors that impact learning in Higher Education are: the transition, which can be challenging in terms of autonomy, time management, and adaptation to more independent teaching methods and; Students may come from different socioeconomic and educational backgrounds, which can result in gaps in knowledge and skills.

## Goal

The present work aimed to analyze the main factors that generate difficulties in the learning process of students entering undergraduate courses at Centro Universitário Senac, São Paulo, Brazil and to develop educational resources and strategies that help students in this process.

## Methodology

Considering the main and new factors in the learning difficulties of students entering higher education at the Institution, it was necessary to improve the Institutional Leveling Program, which was already in operation by holding workshops to reinforce knowledge of basic sciences such as mathematics, physics and chemistry, in addition to the Portuguese language and communication and expression. In this action, the following activities were implemented:

1. Diversity in areas of activity: by covering subjects such as mathematics, chemistry, physics, Portuguese language, communication and expression, in addition to the production of academic work, the program addresses various dimensions of knowledge, meeting the diverse needs of students.
2. Differentiated and Attractive Activities: the strategy of developing more attractive and differentiated activities, such as in-person workshops, cultural literature events and themed installations, is innovative. This not only contributes to learning, but also creates a stimulating and motivating academic environment.
4. Reading Encouragement: Encouraging reading is an important component, not only to improve students' reading and interpretation skills, but also to promote a culture of continuous learning and personal development.
5. Virtual and In-Person Integration: the combination of in-person and virtual activities reflects a contemporary approach, taking into account changes in teaching and learning modalities.
6. Themed Environments on Campus: Creating themed environments, such as the literary ladder and the giant periodic table, not only provides a visual and interactive experience, but also makes learning more tangible and accessible.

In addition to including these actions in the Program, a group of teachers was organized to plan and develop the actions.

## Results

The organization of a group of teachers responsible for the Leveling Program actions was fundamental and improved the pedagogical quality of the activities.

Differentiated actions in the Program generated an increase in the number of participants in activities and greater student engagement. Material to publicize the program was created in the Students' Virtual Environment (figure 1), artistic and literary interventions were printed on the walls (figure 2) and on the stairs of the Campus (figure 3) and practical and creative workshops were carried out using the structure and artistic works of the Campus (figure 4).



Figure 1: Poster of the Leveling Program in the students' virtual environment



Figure 2: posters about reading in the Campus corridors

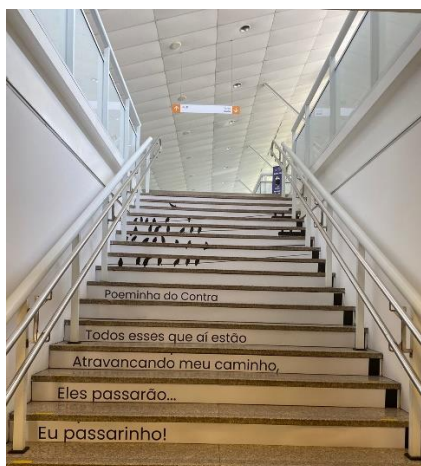


Figure 3: poem on the Campus stairs

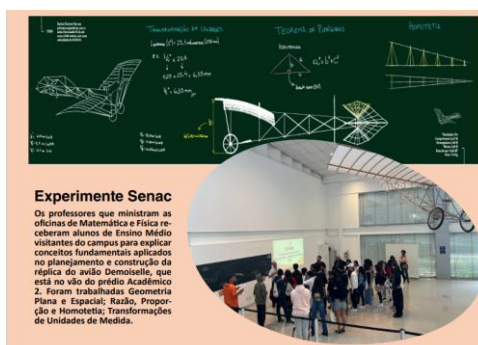


Figure 4: practical mathematics workshops with the Demoiselle plane installed on the Campus



All of these actions are evaluated every six months and we organize an annual e-book to share the Program's activities and results (figure 5).



Figure 5: Leveling Program ebook

## Considerations

Sharing the Program's actions also aims to increase teacher engagement, as, during our self-evaluation process, we understand that the actions are fundamental and have contributed greatly to institutional support for students, but the preparation of teachers to deal with these difficulties in classroom will be much more effective.

The emphasis on preparing teaching staff to deal with students' difficulties is crucial and that is why the Program will implement actions aimed at teachers in its next cycle.

In this way, we consider that the success of a Leveling Program comes from the effective participation of the Institution, teachers and students. This makes it possible to resolve initial difficulties and provide quality higher education.

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