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**VIRTUAL CLASSROOMS AS PEDAGOGICAL MEDIATION IN**  
**TEACHING-LEARNING PROCESSES**

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***Abstract***

The general aim of this research was the one to identify the incidence of the virtual classrooms like mediation pedagogical in the process of education-learning of the students of the Facultad de Educación Virtual y a Distancia of the Corporación Universitaria Minuto de Dios, seat Bello, Colombia. To his time commissioned to describe how the educational of the Faculty implement strategies of virtual education for the acquisition of significant learnings by part of the students in the distinct courses that give. Methodologically, a Qualitative-phenomenological design was followed and Observation and Content Analysis were used as data collection techniques, and observation guides and analysis matrices as instruments. The study used four categories of analysis fundamentally: the planning, the use of multimedia resources the integration of the component of virtuality and the communication. The results showed that the educational do a basic utilisation of the diverse tools that has available in the platform Moodle to design strategies of virtual education that support his pedagogical process. At the end of the research the students recognised that to weigh that they exist new interactions and new channels of communication such as the forums, these do not give of constant way and are not the sufficiently effective so that they hit in new processes of learning.

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**Keywords:** Education, learning, strategies, virtual classrooms, virtuality.



## 1. Introduction

The new technologies of the information (TIC) have generated important changes in distinct social fields, inside these find the field of the education. The advent of the new forms in that it can establish the relation of education learning mediated by the TIC, it provides a new approach, a new look opposite to the occupation of the professor and of the pupil, of such luck that the hegemonic relations of the power of the word or of the master exhibition see for the time being compelled almost to his reinterpretation by the possibilities that methodologically provides the web. In this regard González (2003) ensures that the educational of today needs to confront to the groups of students, strengthened with a pedagogical training that endow it of sufficient elements to teach of suitable form. Besides, the educational has to consider the nature of the learning to be able to propose means of effective education that produce significant learnings.

Of this idea derives that the implementation of virtual strategies demand of the educator a different training where can transform his educational task in the generation of environments of learning that provide him to the student the necessary competitions to face the educational challenges. There they appear the virtual classrooms like new stage of training. Varón-Sierra (2012) emphasizes that virtual classrooms have an important differentiating element and it is the generation of autonomy in the student, are new forms of organisation of the school proposal that allow him to the educational and to the student surpass the barriers of time and space that in another moment limited the education.

On the other hand, Barberà, Badia, & Garganté (2005) emphasize that a virtual model initiates with a necessary mediation of the new technologies of the communication and that they themselves transform the ways of understanding the education when the physical spaces are not shared and when the mediation even can be asynchronous. Of such way the implementations of virtual strategies by part of the educational have to consider the mediation in this case of the virtual classrooms like possibility in the generation of learnings in the students.

## 2. Problem Statement

The problem that tackled the present research was the one to know the incidence of the virtual classrooms like mediation pedagogical in the process of education learning of the students of the Facultad de Educación Virtual y a Distancia of the Corporación Universitaria Minuto de Dios, seat Bello.

In the four programs with which explains the Faculty have been developed several strategies in the virtual classrooms, by such reason was important for this research, recognise until where these have been effective allowing that the students reach important conceptual developments. The problem sought to answer of how the virtual classrooms like pedagogic mediation contribute or not to the significant learning of the contents of the courses of the programs for the students and if the professor knows these advances, to support his strategies or to modify them thanks to the results that this research throws.

### Context

The research took place in Colombia, in the Department of Antioquia, Municipality of Bello. There it finds situated the Corporación Universitaria Minuto de Dios whose slogan is “Educación de Calidad al alcance de todos” (Quality Education available to everyone), mission that was inspired by his founder the Catholic priest Rafael García Herreros, the one who founded the corporation to educate to of people of

scarce economic resources. The university headquarters are located in urban zone of the Municipality, rely on facilities that have been modernizing and sheltering approximately five thousand students in schedules diurnally and nocturne from Monday until Friday, and in diurnal schedule on Saturdays and Sundays. In this last schedule we find the students of the Facultad de Educación Virtual y a Distancia who attend face-to-face tutoring once every two weeks.

The students' object of the research do part of the Facultad de Educación Virtual y a Distancia. This faculty composes of a program for the training of educational, that is the degree in Childish Pedagogy, and other three that are not part of the same area of study, as they are it Financial Administration, Public Accountancy and Administration in Occupational Health, which share the modality of virtual education to distance and thus they are ascribed to said faculty.

### **3. Research Questions**

The research answered to the question: Which is the incidence of the virtual classrooms like mediation pedagogical in the process of education learning of the students of the Facultad de Educación Virtual y a Distancia of the Corporación Universitaria Minuto de Dios, seat Bello?

#### **Questions subordinated**

- How they schedule the educational the strategies of education in the different courses of the academic programs of the Facultad de Educación Virtual y a Distancia, during the years 2017 and 2018?
- How they perceive the educational of the Facultad de Educación Virtual y a Distancia, during the year 2017, the implementation of the platforms Moodle for the education of the different courses given to his students?
- How they contrast the educational of the Facultad de Educación Virtual y a Distancia the attainments reached by the students, with the strategies of virtual education implemented in the different courses given during the years 2017 and 2018?

### **4. Purpose of the Study**

The present research had like fundamental pretence ask after which the incidence of the virtual classrooms like mediation is pedagogical in the process of education learning of the students of the Facultad de Educación Virtual y a Distancia of the Corporación Universitaria Minuto de Dios, seat Bello.

### **5. Research Methods**

The research carried out in the 2017 and 2018. The population of study were roughly two hundred students of the four programs and 24 educational that accompany these programs, with those who evaluated the virtual strategies developed in the courses and his impact in the learnings of the students.

### **5.1 Type of study and design of research**

The approach of this study was qualitative since it oriented in comprising the phenomena exploring them from the perspective of the participants in a natural environment and in relation with his context (Hernández, Fernández, & Baptista, 2006). The study was realized from a phenomenological perspective in that the aim was to analyze the values, experiences and meanings of the specific group of the chosen students. In this sense raised information of each one of the students in front of the utilisation of the virtual platform and in her the recognition in front of the strategies of education used by the educational to know the experiences that each one of them had when developing the courses and how perceived the learning in the students.

### **5.2 Population**

The population of study were roughly two hundred students of the four programs and 24 educational that accompany these programs.

### **5.3 Information gathering techniques**

The collection techniques of the present study consisted of an observation guide used with the students and the professors, the content analysis from the virtual classrooms and the collection of information from a semi-structured interview which had its respective guide.

The observation was carried out in the face-to-face tutorial meetings, trying to focus on the professor's performance in terms of the use of virtual strategies in the development of the meeting, as well as four categories for observation, the first of which makes reference to the planning of the meeting, the second is the use of multimedia resources that are made in it, the third condition is the integration of the component of virtuality in the teaching process and finally the condition of the communication component.

## **6. Findings**

The present analysis is based on the information collection instruments that were used for research, observation, semi-structured interview and content analysis of the virtual classrooms visited. Each analysis is done with a table of results, then a description of the contents of the table is made and finally an interpretation of the same.

### **6.1 descriptive Analyses of the results of the Observation:**

To continuation, present the results of the observation realised in the face-to-face meetings in which they determined four main categories that answered to the questions realised, these categories were: Planning, use of multimedia resources, integration of the component of virtuality, and Communication.

**Table 01.** Results obtained of the Observation 1 of professors

<b>1.Planning (C1)</b> Aims Materials Development	<b>2. Use of multimedia resources (C2)</b> Use Integration Support	<b>3. Integration of the component of virtuality (C3)</b>	<b>4. Communication (C4)</b>
(D1) The professor starts the meeting by stating the objectives of the tutoring and	(D1) In the face-to-face session there is the support of the virtual platform, in which	(D1) There is done constant reference to the tasks and	(D1) The professor establishes the mass media with which

<p>based on them defines the work to be developed on that day, the objectives are directly related to the content worked. (D1)                  Presents support materials in the virtual classroom such as a video and a PowerPoint presentation hosted in the virtual classroom from the beginning of the course and uses them fluently, although some of them were later for the knowledge of all students. (D1)                  The development of the meeting takes into account the use of resources that are on the platform although its integration into the learning processes of the students is not very clear.</p>	<p>a video of support for the work of the same appears above all. The participation of the group in the forum is also mentioned- (D1) Some detonating questions are used by the professor in the forum that had been proposed in the previous session, the professor takes as a basis those participations to start the discussion of the meeting. (D1) It is not clear how the resources put in the virtual classroom support the meeting, but it does not show how they are included in the development of the meeting and in what way they contribute to it.</p>	<p>assignments that are included on the part of the professor in the classroom or virtual platform. The professor uses the classroom for retro to feed the sent tasks and to converse in the meeting of the topics worked during the week that one worked by means of the virtual platform</p>	<p>they are counted from the virtual classroom, it is clear that, in the middle of the development of the course, it is mentioned and application of forums, of the mail that possesses the platform for the internal communication. The utilization is indexed in the meeting only of official channels.</p>
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### 6.1.1 Descriptive Analyses of the Table 1: Observation of professors.

In the Table 1 can observe that the educational in the face-to-face meetings that were observed possess clear the planning of the same and that besides attend to the aims of the course and of the meeting. The most remarkable subject has to see with the no observation of the integration of the component of virtuality in the middle of the process, in some of the meetings that were visited.

### 6.1.2 Interpretation of results of the Observation of professors.

Of the observation realised on the educational can interpret that, knowing the virtual methodology distance, implements the work from the virtual classroom and his resources use to accompany the process with the students, however, fits to stand out that no always are used and that do not leave to see with clarity which is the result that expects of the scope through the same.

To continuation, presents the table synthesis of the results obtained in the observation of the students in four face-to-face meetings, this observation also did in the virtual classrooms.

**Table 02.** Results obtained of the Observation of students

<b>1.Planning (C1) Aims Materials Development</b>	<b>2. Use of multimedia resources (C2) Use Integration Support</b>	<b>3. Integration of the component of virtuality (C3)</b>	<b>4. Communication (C4)</b>
<p>(Meeting 1) It is observed that there is knowledge of the objectives on the part of the students and that they work based on them, both those of the session and those of the course previously proposed in the virtual classroom. It is also perceived that there is recognition of the materials to be used, the development of</p>	<p>(Meeting 1) The support of virtual resources is not evident, although they are manifested in virtual classrooms, there is no appropriation of them in the meeting, without there being a transcendence in the learning process.                  (Meeting 2) The non-observance of multimedia</p>	<p>(Meeting 1) It is evident that the classroom has instructional material that contributes to the student, however, it is scarce the way in which you can delve into topics worked thanks to that material. In addition, it is not evident that this material generates new ways of</p>	<p>There is very little interaction between students and professors through the virtual classroom to enable the development of communication as a support to the virtuality process.                  This observation was</p>

<p>the session is appropriate based on what was previously planned. (Meeting 2) There is a constant in the work under the objectives that characterizes the whole encounter, in terms of the use of materials there is variation in the work from the students who charge a more relevant role. (Meeting 3) The use of the objectives as the orientation of the face-to-face meeting is properly observed. (Meeting 4) The development of precise tutoring of the objectives without being very clear about the developments that are reached.</p>	<p>resources remains, he has them, but the integration of them in the class process is unclear, unclear. (Meeting 3) The tutoring does not require the integration between the multimedia resources with which it counts and the explanations given to the students, they have a passive attitude towards these resources. (Meeting 4) The use of transmissionist methods in tutoring prevails without the virtual resources being a significant support</p>	<p>learning. (Meeting 2) In this meeting it is observed that the virtual components are used, but it is also not evident how they contribute directly to learning. (Meeting 3) It is not perceived that there is a direct integration of the virtuality components with the process. (Meeting 4) More sharply this meeting does not allow to visualize the articulation of the virtuality component to the students' learning.</p>	<p>made in a general way on the virtual platform during a space of fifteen days, it was also observed that interaction between the students themselves is not generated as a possibility of knowledge. Although there are spaces for communication over time that face-to-face meetings do not take place, their use is limited and is not evidence of effective communication to support learning.</p>
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## 6.2 Descriptive Analyses of the Table 2: Observation of students

The analysis of the table does following the same four categories, planning, use of multimedia resources, integration of the component of virtuality and communication. The first category can describe like a strong point, so much educational like students have clear the aims and work around the same, using the materials posed for the face-to-face meeting. As for the second category is observed that some inconsistencies appear provided that there is demonstrated that resources exist multimedia but the same ones are not used in any occasions and in others it is not clear of what way they rest or they should support the learning process of the students. In the third category, which it has to see with the integration of the component of virtuality there is coherence with the second one, and is that the paper is diffuse of this one in the process of the students, who value initially the resource, but demonstrate that his use is neither very frequent nor the most suitable. What is revealed also in the category of communication provided that, even having means for the interaction between professor and students and between companions, is not a strategy that mobilizes the learning, is used little and does not come out.

### Interpretation of results of the Observation of students

Of the previous table in the observation of the students can interpret that the planning so much of the course as of the meetings observed is good and that works with base in the same, what orients so much the process of education like the one of learning of the students and at the same time that answers to the expectation using virtual resources that expect are significant in the training of the students. Can say that the following categories of analysis so much of the multimedia resources, as of the integration of the component of virtuality and the communication expected between all the actors of the course, does not launch optimum results. The first because existing the means and the forms for the utilisation of multimedia resources, do not do frequently, or at least were not evident in the observations realised. The resources are available, but they were not significant in the meetings, which highlights that virtual education is not only because of having the means but should be used in the most appropriate way. The media can be at hand, but perhaps because of a difficulty in the order of the methodological and the lack of culture in the virtual,

they do not end up being very significant at the time of learning or are used only instructional or instrumental without taking advantage of the real potential that mimes can have. This is the case with the expected integration of the entire virtual component in the courses: a mechanical use of some basic tools that virtuality can offer is perceived, but it is not inserted in a significant way in new ways of learning and relating to the contents they generate, on the one hand, the recognition of the benefits that these may have, but at the same time, a limited use for training purposes.

Likewise, it is evident that the communication does not go beyond the scope of the training for the same reasons stated in the previous lines, since it remains at the level of the instrumental and basic that an internal mail or a participation forum can offer. Individual with very little interaction, not taking advantage of the possibility of networking or generating important discussions on the issues worked on, this is largely due to the culture of face-to-face education where virtual resources are not widely used and from which all students.

## 7. Conclusion

Virtuality as mediation for training appears in the scenario of new information technologies and provides various possibilities for the professor to generate other interactions with students, giving fundamental interest to those that can serve to develop other types of learning from of new forms of teaching, no longer focused on the keynote speeches of the professor alone but on the development of other materials that can motivate learning. It is a new way of teaching, but also of learning and that is supported by several successful experiences that have implemented appropriate virtual teaching models.

These models must put the professor as a generator of learning environments, in which the student is the one who develops most of the work thanks to the possible interactions from the virtual classroom, the courses of the Facultad de Educación Virtual y a Distancia of the Corporación Universitaria Minuto de Dios, seat Bello show the need for a correct implementation of the model to avoid the risk of leaving it alone in the implementation of digital materials which does not ensure a teaching-learning process from the virtual.

The risk of confusing digitization of materials with virtual education is latent since not having many scanned or digitized documents and sending and receiving emails is a virtual teaching model, nor can these be just the teaching-learning strategies, because as we have seen, these are only basic elements of virtuality, we will have to go further and delve into the tools that allow the real development of real spaces for interaction between virtuality and training.

On the other hand another important conclusion is the need that virtual strategies enable the generation of autonomy of the student against their training process, the various theoretical references used in the research make constant reference to this differentiating element of education from the virtual and not it was possible to show this in the information obtained since, since there are few strategies that stimulated the courses, it is not possible to speak about the fact that this autonomy is being achieved in the student body.

Hence, the scarce use of various resources of the platform itself and the equivocal way of virtualizing documents and various support materials with the true intention of a strategy in virtuality has become evident. This is an important point as a return to the institution that has allowed research as it is interesting

to review how this process is carried out and if it is really useful as a pedagogical mediation for the training of future professionals. In this sense, the resignification of the concept of virtual strategies from what has been found is imperative for the institution, since by confusing virtual strategies with virtualization, the formation of competent subjects that have been formed in a virtual model is put at risk. Distance and would leave them in a hypothetical work disadvantage compared to those that have been trained under the traditional face-to-face model.

One of the relevant issues as a conclusion of the project is that it is necessary to train professors and professors in virtual models, since if you want to work under these strategies, the first thing to do is to outline the conceptual boundaries that distinguish both face-to-face and the virtual modality, this to make it clear that the work strategies are different and that the means through which it is expected to achieve the training objectives are specific to each modality. At the same time, the training of students is important, given that many of them have been schooled from the classroom for most of their lives, and the paradigm shift upsets the school's imaginary and the role it plays in it.

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