Metacognitive Strategies and Online Learning

Maria de Fátima Goulão

Universidade Aberta, Department of Education and Distance Learning

ABSTRACT

Knowing how to learn, thinking about one's own thinking is crucial in the learning system. We call this phenomenon Metacognition. It denotes a deep knowledge of the cognitive processes involved in learning and the control of them. This allow student autonomy. In a context of online learning we find that metacognition is an important factor for student success. Based on this assumption, we investigated to better understand the metacognitive strategies of a student group in an online environment. We also sought to know the influence that age and gender can have on this. We had a total sample of 475 students, both sexes. Its age varies between 21 and 64 years, whose average is 39.42, SD 8.34.

As instrument we used a scale composed of 20 items related to metacognitive strategies. Given the elements that constitute metacognition - knowledge about cognition (KC) and Regulation of cognition (RC) - we divide our scale into 2 groups. We obtained an overall of .949, KC of .898 and RC of .905. We found statistically significant differences in the 3 analyzes (General, KC and RC) in the variable gender. The same is not true for age. Through the X² test we found a significant association between the overall scale and age. Regarding gender, the values point to a dependence between variables. Based on these results it seems appropriate to continue to invest in this area to make students more competent in their learning process. That is, give students a greater ability to control goals and become more aware of their thinking process.

Keywords: adults; learning; metacognition; online learning; strategies