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Archiving Tate: TICs for sharing educational experiences in museums

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Abstract
As museum education has developed as a field of study, many efforts have been made with the purpose of preserving its history and establishing a documentation and archiving system that strengthens its position as a discipline in the broader work that museums carry out. On one hand we have analyzed the necessities of Tate for making its educational activities more visible and meaningful. On the other we have studied what the TICs can offer to improve the access to Tate's educational history. The result has been the creation of an online archive to share the activities of Tate. This chapter explores the design, creation and evaluation of Tate's online archive. Firstly we introduce the Tate, followed by an analysis of the application of the TICs and a subsequent evaluation. The conclusions focus on determining whether the online museum education archive (meCHive) improves the visibility and meaningfulness of Tate's educational activities.

Keywords: museum, education, archive, online, participation.

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Resumen
Con el desarrollo de la educación en museos como campo de estudio, muchos esfuerzos se han hecho con el propósito de preservar su historia y establecer un sistema de documentación y archivo que fortalezca su posición como disciplina en el marco del trabajo desarrollado en los museos. Por un lado hemos analizado las necesidades de Tate con respecto a hacer sus actividades más visibles y significativas. Por otro hemos estudiado qué pueden aportar las TIC para mejorar el acceso a la historia educativa de la Tate. El resultado es la creación de un archivo online en el que la información relacionada con las actividades educativas de la Tate es compartida. Este capítulo explora el diseño, creación y evaluación del archivo Tate online. Primeramente introducimos la Tate como institución para después analizar la aplicación de las TIC en este caso. Finalmente concluimos con la evaluación del archivo. Las conclusiones se centran en determinar si el archivo de educación en museos (meCHive) online mejora la visibilidad y relevancia de las actividades educativas de la Tate.

Palabras clave: museo, educación, archivo, online, participación.

Introduction

As museum education has developed as a field of study, many efforts have been made with the purpose of preserving its history and establishing a documentation and archiving system that strengthens its position as a discipline in the broader work that museums carry out. Despite the big efforts that have been made, the museum education situation (its history, purpose and identity) is yet to be defined in many places.

During the four years this project has been carried out thanks to a Predoctoral Scholarship granted by the Complutense University of Madrid, we have elaborated an archival protocol for educational activities in museums. This protocol has been developed while analyzing the necessities of the museum education professionals as well as the concerns of those interested in studying the documentation produced around the educational experiences in museums. This protocol has been materialized in two prototypes that have two different formats: The first one is the archive as an online platform. The second one is the archive as an event. Both prototypes have served to see if the archive for educational activities improves the visibility and meaningfulness of two museums specifically: Tate and the Pedagogical Museum for Children's Art.

This chapter presents the Tate case study in its online format. Firstly we introduce the Tate case study. Secondly we present the TICs used to satisfy those needs and evaluate whether the online archive meets the requirements of the following hypothesis: The museum education archive (meCHive) for the documentation, organization and preservation of educational experiences improves the visibility and meaningfulness of the educational activity of Tate to others.

Tate as case study

Tate is the name of the institution that comprises four different Art galleries. Under the same direction, the four museums are Tate Britain and Tate Modern, in London; Tate Liverpool, and Tate St Ives in Cornwall. Tate Online (created 1998) has been considered the “fifth Tate site”. It is also worth mentioning that the Barbara Hepworth Museum and Sculpture Garden is part of the Tate family. Tate is not a government institution, but its main sponsor is the Department for Culture, Media and Sport.

The current network of Tate museums was completed in 2000 when Tate Modern opened to the public. Even if they are part of the same organization, each Tate has its own personality and focus:

- Tate Britain (London) was founded in 1897 as the National Gallery of British Art. In 1932 it was renamed the Tate Gallery after sugar magnate Henry Tate of Tate & Lyle, who had laid the foundations for the collection. It remained as Tate Gallery until 2000 when it was renamed as Tate Britain. Currently, it displays the collection of British art from 1500 to the present day. One of the Tate Britain’s most publicized art events is the awarding of the annual Turner Prize
- Tate Liverpool, founded in 1988, was created to display work from the Tate Collection. It comprises the national collection of British art from the year 1500 to the present day, and international modern art. The gallery also has a program of temporary exhibitions. Until 2003, Tate Liverpool was the largest gallery of modern and contemporary art in the UK outside London.
- Tate St Ives (Cornwall), founded in 1993, exhibits works by modern British artists. The Tate also manages another, earlier, property in St Ives, the Barbara Hepworth Museum and Sculpture Garden, which it opened in 1980.
- Tate Modern (London), founded in 2000, is probably the most well known of the four sites. It opened in 2000 and it is based in the former Bankside Power Station, in the Bankside area of the London Borough of Southwark. It houses the Tate’s collection of British and international modern and contemporary art from 1900 to the present day. It is one of the largest museums of modern and contemporary art in the world.

For the purposes of this research, we are considering the four Tate sites. However, due to the Tate archive features, most of the information we discuss in this text, come from events that happened at the founding Tate, now known as Tate Britain. The ideas presented in this case study are based on a collaborative and exploratory research project guided by Emily Pringle, Head of Learning Practice and Research at Tate.

Application of TICs to Tate Learning

At the Tate Archive at Tate Britain there is a rich documentation that gives the scaffolding to draw our own conclusions on what the history of education has been at Tate (Figure 1). However, there is a huge dependence on the archivists’ knowledge to find certain

materials, as even if one has an extended experience working with archives, some materials have proven difficult to find. As we have our experience in approaching the Tate archive and have discussed this experience with other researchers, the challenges when searching for certain materials were commonly shared. As a consequence there arose a natural necessity to create a finding aid and an external platform shared with other museum departments.

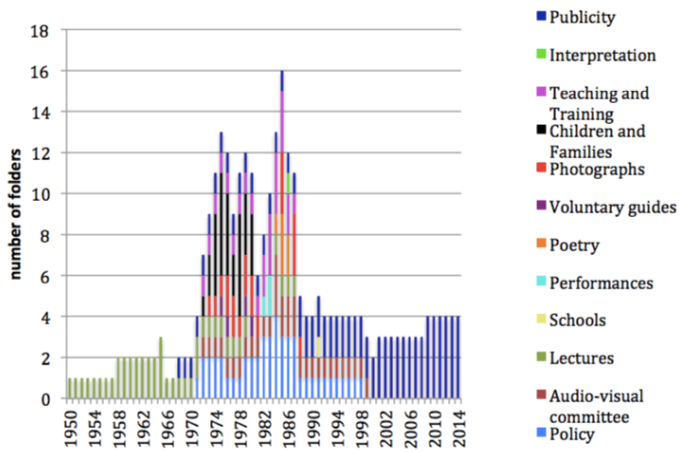

Figure 1. Material distribution in the Gallery Records

Finding aid

A finding aid, in the context of archival science, is a document containing detailed information about a specific collection of papers or records within an archive. Finding aids are used by researchers to determine whether information within a collection is relevant to their research. The finding aid for a collection is usually compiled by an archivist or librarian during archival processing. This excel finding aid (Figure 2) was created as a tool to improve the search of materials related to education that are at the Tate Gallery Records, the Tate Audio-Visual archive and the Engage Archive, as well as some documents found online that are relevant for Tate's educational history.

This finding aid includes all education-related materials from 1914 (when the first lecturer was appointed) to 2014. This means that the materials belonging to the first 100 years of education at Tate are easier to find through this finding aid. The excel document includes 77 sheets, each of them corresponding to a different year. As we have said, if this finding aid covers all remaining materials from 1914 to 2014 then, one may wonder, why aren't there 100 sheets. The reason behind that is that there are years in which nothing has been preserved. These periods include World War I (1914-1918), World War II (1939-1945) when educational activity was discontinued, and the remaining years between 1918 to 1960 have not all been documented and preserved. The bulk of the information belongs from 1960 to 1990.

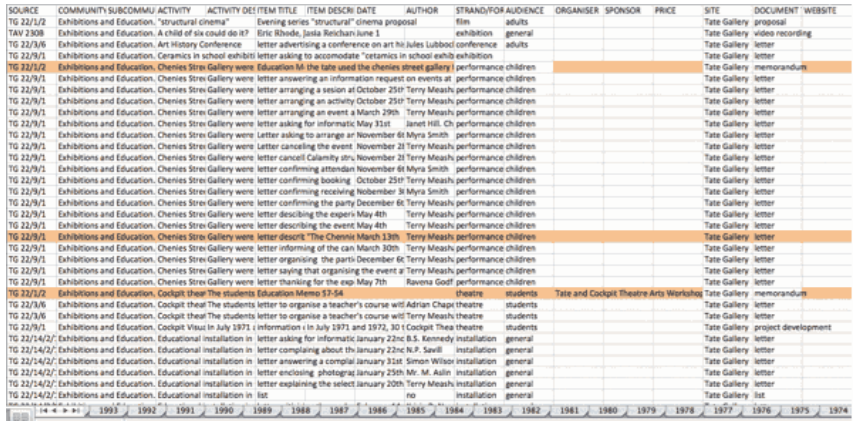

Figure 2. Finding Aid screenshot

External platform shared with other museum education departments

Once the finding aid was created, it was time to make it more accessible by other people. Once the physical archive had a finding aid ready for researchers, we realized that there was enough information about certain programs to make the activities understandable to online users. However, not all activities were clear in terms of context, ethos, goals and outcomes. Using the finding aid, we selected those activities that were more complete in terms of the amount of information available and the possibility of creating a self-explanatory capsule that could be the entry-way to the physical archive at Tate Britain.

We considered the copyright issues attached to broadcasting certain materials belonging to the Tate Archive on an online platform. Once all copyright issues were cleared up, we started creating the activity capsules that include radio broadcastings, interviews, photographs of the activities, recordings of the program audiences and paper clippings. We selected 21 activities to be displayed in the ACTIVITIES section of the museum education online archive (http://mechive.blogspot.co.uk) created within the framework of this project (Figure 3). All information is in both English and Spanish, and videos are subtitled in Spanish.

Figure 3. The Museum Education Archive (meCHive) screenshot

Evaluation of the online archive in the Tate case study

The evaluation of the online archive corresponds to an experimental design (Cea, 2010, p. 97) (Table 1) that includes:

- An experimental group that will be exposed to either the online archive and/or the event. This group passes two tests:

The first test (October 2015) is taken so as to know the general background and knowledge of the participant in account of the items evaluated. Their knowledge is the starting point of the research. Having that clear, this data serves to look for a suitable control group that is completely equivalent in this previous knowledge.

The second test (December 2015) is taken after a two-hour session in which the participant has the opportunity to explore the online platform and participate in it freely. After the two hours the participants take the test that asks the same questions as the first test and the information from it gives us the data we need to know about what changes have been produced. However, we cannot know if the changes have been produced thanks to the archive or to other stimulus. For that reason, we need an equivalent group to eliminate what might be considered the effects of other stimulus rather than the archive.

- A control group that it totally equivalent, except for the fact that is not exposed to either the online archive or the event. This group is chosen first through the common features that we can tell for belonging to a same community and secondly, through the first test that the experimental group carried out.

The first test (October 2015) is administered to more people than the ones considered in this study, as not all participants had the same features as the experimental test initial situation. These processes include both experimental manipulation and selection of control groups. Once the candidates were selected, no further action was taken until the second test.

The second test (December 2015) is exactly the same as the one the group takes in the first place. The difference between the results of the first test and the second capture the changes that the group undergoes without the influence of the online archive. This means that with this data, we are able to isolate the effects of the online archive completely.

This process has been repeated in three different groups so that we can have three different perspectives from three different kinds of users:

GROUP A: they are students of the MA in Art Education in Social and Cultural Institutions. This group is of interest given that they are considered to be future museum educators so they represent a highly likelihood to be interested in using a museum education archive.

GROUP B: they are students of the Basics of Didactics in Art Education (Fine Art degree at the Complutense University of Madrid). This group is of interest for this research because their members are not naturally interested in museum education but they come from the world of the arts and they have to attend a compulsory subject on Art Education.

GROUP C: they are students of Art, Creativity and Education, (Fine Art degree at the Complutense University of Madrid). The members of this group have in common attending a non-compulsory subject on Art Education. This means that they might be potentially interested in education in the context of museums (probably in gallery education). This makes them likely to be potential users.

Considering these three pairs, we expect to favor the causal relationship between the exposure to the archive and the visibility and meaningfulness of Tate educational materials for the experimental groups.

Table 1. Evaluation design

PARADIGM	Mixed		
STRATEGY	Analysis of the state of play		
DATA GATHERING TECHNIQUES	Survey		
SAMPLE	Group A Experimental (20 people) Control (20 people)	Group B Experimental (20 people) Control (20 people)	Group C Experimental (15 people) Control (15 people)
EXPECTED OUTCOMES	Having evidence for denying of confirming the hypothesis		

Does the online archive improve the "visibility" of the Tate's educational activities?

To see if the online archive makes "visible" (as stated in the hypothesis) the Tate's educational activities, we consider the difference of results between the experimental group in October, when they knew hadn't had any contact with the online archive and the answers to the same questions in December, after having had a 2-hour session working with the online platform. The answers to the questions that give us evidence of the change in visibility are:

Do you know what the Tate is?

In Group A, in October, 15 (79%) people of the experimental group knew what the Tate was while in December 18 (95%) participants knew what the Tate was. Both experimental and control groups had a similar evolution: In October, 15 (58%) people in both groups knew what the Tate was while in December in the control group all 19 (100%) participants knew what the Tate was and in the experimental group 18 knew what Tate was. In this sense, we cannot say that the meCHive online platform has made any difference in the results.

In Group B in October, 14 (70%) people of the control group knew what the Tate was. In the test that the participants answered in December the answer was exactly the same. However, in the experimental group in October, 15 (75%) people knew what the Tate was and in December, after using the Tate online platform, 19 (95%) people knew what the Tate was. In this sense, the interaction with the meCHive platform meant an increase in the 25% in the knowledge of what the Tate was.

In Group C in October 16 (80%) people of the control group knew what the Tate was. In the test taken in December, the participants' answers remained the same. However, in the experimental group in October 12 (63%) people knew what the Tate was and in December, after using the meCHive online platform, 18 (95%) people knew what the Tate was. In this sense, the interaction with the meCHive platform meant an increase in the 32% in the knowledge of what the Tate was.

How do you evaluate your knowledge on the EDUCATIONAL ACTIVITIES organized by the Tate?

In Group A, when asking the participants to evaluate their own knowledge on the Tate activities, the experimental group in October considered that 13 of them knew nothing and evaluated their knowledge with a 1, 4 evaluated their knowledge with a two, 1 with a 3 and 1 with a 4. In the control group 16 evaluated their knowledge with a 1, 2 with a 2 and a with a 1. As a result, both experimental and control groups have a median of 1,37. In December, the control group had the following distribution: 11 evaluated their knowledge with a 1, 5 with a 2 and 3 with a 3. The experimental group, after working with the online platform, had a distribution of: 4 evaluated their knowledge with a 1, 5 with a 2 and 7 with a 3. The control group median value of their knowledge in 1,58 while the experimental group valued their knowledge in 1'84. As a result, we can consider that the increase of their knowledge as a consequence of the use of the online archive is 0,26.

In Group B when asking the participants to evaluate their own knowledge on the Tate activities, the experimental group in October considered that 14 of them knew nothing and evaluated their knowledge with a 1, 4 evaluated their knowledge with a 2, 1 with a 3 and 1 with a 4. In December, after working with the archive the distribution was: 4 people evaluated their knowledge with a 1, 5 people with a 2, 7 people with a 3, 3 people with a 4 and 1 people with a 5. The median evaluation of knowledge in October was 1,24 while in December was 2,6. Therefore, there was an improvement of 1,36 points in the knowledge of the educational activities of the Tate in the experimental group. In the control group, in October, 10 valued their knowledge of the Tate as 1, 6 as 2 and 4 as 3. In December, the results remained the same. Therefore, there was no improvement. Which means that a 2,6 points of improvement in the knowledge about the Tate would be due to the effect of using the meCHive online platform.

In Group C when asking the participants to evaluate their own knowledge on the Tate activities, the experimental group in October considered that 14 of them knew nothing and evaluated their knowledge with a 1, 3 evaluated their knowledge with a 2 and 1 with a 3. In December, after working with the archive they distribution was: 8 people evaluated their knowledge with a 1, 6 people with a 2, 4 people with a 3 and 1 person with a 4. The median evaluation of knowledge in October was a 1,26 while in December it was 1,89. Therefore, there was an improvement of 0,65 points in the knowledge of the educational activities of the Tate in the experimental group. In the control group, in October 14 valued their knowledge of the Tate as 1, 5 as 2. In December, the results remained the same; therefore, there was no improvement. This means that a 0,65 point of improvement

in the knowledge about the Tate would be due to the effect of using the meCHive online platform.

Name the educational activities that you remember

In Group A while both control and experimental groups gave vague answers to this question in October, in December there is a remarkable change in the answers of the experimental group. In December, after interacting with the platform, there was a complex answer to this question, including programs like “Kidsplay”, “family games”, “exhibition for the blind”, “radio broadcast”,” Green Mountain”...

In Group B the answers to this question in the experimental group have changed remarkably from the answers received in October when no specific answer was given apart from “Liverpool”. The answers to this question were remarkably different in the control group and the experimental group. The experimental group exposed to the archive gave a more complete and developed answer in referring to more programs than the ones referred by the control group. “Poetry”, “performance”, “animation”, “sculpture, “video”, “blind”, “projection” were mentioned. More than specific programs, what was mentioned were the artistic mediums used in the educational programs. This can be due to the participants being Fine Art students.

In Group C the answers to this question in the experimental group have changed remarkably. No specific information was given until the experimental group’s last test. In it, specific information of the Tate programs was given: “sculpture for the blind”, “poetry”, “games”, “film floor” were the most mentioned programs.

Does the online archive improve the “meaningfulness” of Tate’s educational activities?

To see if the online archive makes “meaningful” (as stated in the hypothesis) the MuPAI’s educational activities, we consider the difference of results between the experimental group in October, when they knew hadn’t had any contact with the online archive and the answers to the same questions in December, after having had a 2-hour session working with the online platform. The answers to the questions that give us evidence of the change in meaningfulness are:

In case you know the ACTIVITIES organized by the Tate, has this had any influence on you?

In Group A, in this answer, in the experimental group in October only one participant answered “yes” (5%) while in December 7 (37%) people considered that knowing about the educational activities of the Tate had influenced them in some way. While the experimental group in December 7 (37%) people considered that knowing about the educational activities of the Tate had influenced them in some way, the control group no one (0%) considered that knowing about the Tate has had an influence on them. As a result, a 32% is the difference of the influence that can be attributed to the use of the meCHive online platform.

In Group B in this answer, the experimental group in October only 3 participants answered “yes” (15%) while in December 7 (35%) people considered that knowing about the educational activities of the Tate had influenced them in some way. While the experimental group in December 10 (50%) people considered that knowing about the educational activities of the Tate had influenced them in some way, the control group 4 (20%) people considered that knowing about the Tate has had an influence on them. This number remained the same in the test carried out in December. As a result, 15% is the difference of the influence that can be attributed to the use of the meCHive online platform.

In Group C in this answer, the experimental group in October only 2 participants answered “yes” (11%) while in December 8 (42%) people considered that knowing about the educational activities of the Tate had influenced them in some way. While the experimental group in December 8 (42%) people considered that knowing about the educational activities of the Tate had influenced them in some way, the control group 2 (11%) people considered that knowing about the Tate has had an influence on them. As a result, a 31% is the difference of the influence that can be attributed to the use of the meCHive online platform.

In the case that the answer is yes, in which way?

In Group A it influenced the users in thinking about museum education “history” differently, and broadening the kind of “activities” that were done in the past.

In Group B the experimental group considered that they had been influenced by the Tate activities had made them “think” and had “interested” them.

In Group C the experimental group considered that they had been influenced by the Tate activities in the idea of “interacting with audiences” and the possibility of considering museum education as a professional career to pursue. Some of them considered important basically knowing that the museum education profession “exists”.

In the case you know the educational activities of the Tate, what do you think the ethos of these activities is?

In Group A, the experimental group considered that they had been influenced by the Tate activities in thinking of “innovation” as a concept in museum education, considering the trajectory of the educational team. It also was pointed out that it was interesting the search for “interaction” in an institution like that. The control group only gave one insight on this that pointed out the “transversality” of the programs.

In Group B after using the platform, all participants attempted to define the ethos behind the Tate educational activities. “Risk” and “experimentation” were the most mentioned concepts to define the ethos behind the Tate’s educational activities. It is interesting to note that the activities included in the archive date from 1970s to 1980s.

In Group C after using the platform, only the experimental group was able to propose a different definition of the ethos of the Tate. In defining it, words like “innovation” and “risk”, in connection with interacting with “art”.

Do you think that the meCHive online archive makes the educational activity of Tate visible and meaningful?

In Group A, this question was only asked in December after using the meCHive online platform and all 19 participants (100%) considered that the meCHive online platform made the activities of the Tate visible and meaningful .

In Group B this question was only asked in December after using the meCHive online platform and all 20 participants (100%) considered that the meCHive online platform made the activities of the Tate visible and meaningful.

In Group C this question was only asked to the experimental group in December after using the meCHive online platform and 18 participants (95%) considered that the meCHive online platform made the activities of the Tate visible and meaningful.

When asked about the primary source of information of the Tate activities,

in Group A, 19 members of the control group considered that internet in general was their main source of information and only one considered it was the classroom. After using the online platform for 2 hours, 13 members of the experimental group considered that the meCHive online archive was their main source of information to know about the Tate activities, followed by a group of 3 that considered the Tate official website as their main source of information and two considered that the thesis was their primary source.

In Group B when asked about the primary source of information of the Tate activities, 5 members of the control group considered that the official website was their primary source. In the experimental group, after using the meCHive platform 15 members of the group considered that their main source of information to know about the Tate activities was the meCHive online archive, followed by 1 who considered the thesis, 3 the official website and 1 the published papers as main sources.

In Group C when asked about the primary source of information of the Tate activities, 1 member of the control group considered that the classroom was their primary source. In the experimental group, after using the meCHive platform 13 members of the group considered that their main source of information to know about the Tate activities was the meCHive online archive, followed by 5 who considered the official museum website the main source of information, 1 the classroom as main sources.

Conclusions

After a quantitative and qualitative user analysis we can confirm that the museum education archive for the documentation, organization and preservation of the educational experiences improves the visibility and meaningfulness of the educational activity of Tate. However, depending on the audience, the archive helps in making the activity more or less visible or meaningful.

However, neither the visibility nor the meaningfulness has risen from 0 to 100. First of all because we are talking about a widely known art center so that some participants might have been interested in the educational activities of this institution before their contact with the archive. Furthermore, the evaluation was taken after only two hours of contact with the online. After these two hours, the improvements in both visibility and meaningfulness have been remarkable. The data gathered in this study shows the potential of the platform for deepening the knowledge most users already have and making that knowledge meaningful.

These effects depend largely on the groups we have taken into consideration. As we have seen in the previous analysis, GROUP A was made up of people with a high interest in knowing about Tate's educational activities. This makes it a highly motivated group as well as being well informed from the beginning. In this case, the online prototype meCHive is less a tool for visibility (because the group already knew about the Tate and throughout the three months in which the evaluation was carried out, in many occasions this group received information from different sources) and more a tool for meaningfulness (because the materials found in the archive made the educational activities a resource that had influenced a large amount of the students). Even if of the total 37% of improvements in the influence of the Tate activities only a 32% can be attributed to the effect of the online archive, the Tate influence in this collective is more powerful.

In contrast, people who knew little about the Tate's educational activities formed the GROUP B. Through the use of the online platform, the Tate's educational activities became visible for them. This group represented the highest difference between their knowledge prior to and after the use of the online archive: 2,6. However, as their motivation for knowing about the activities was not high (they are Fine Art students studying a compulsory subject on education), the meCHive online platform has contributed to the meaningfulness of the educational activities of the Tate but to a lesser extent (15%).

GROUP C constituted a middle course in this study. As they were Fine Art students studying a non-compulsory subject on Art Education, some of them were highly motivated while others had chosen that subject simply because it fitted in their schedules. In any case, the visibility of Tate's educational activities improved greatly and this resulted in making them meaningful to the participants as a 31% of them stated.

Finally, it is important to remember the fact that this research has an internal validity given that we can establish relationships of causality between variables, when eliminating (or controlling) other alternative explanations. There is a lack of external validity due to the experimental manipulation (the alteration introduced by the researcher in the reality that analyzes). This makes the generalization of results of this research impossible. Furthermore, the subjects that took part in this evaluation were not randomly selected amongst those that constitute the universe or population of the study, but they are selected amongst the volunteers of an experiment. All that, added to the fact that we are not including a sample larger that 150 cases, limits the possibility of generalizing the results of the sample to different contexts other than the experimental.

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