

Chapter 7 The impact of Virtual Tutoring on the students of the Faculty of Pedagogy of the Universidad Veracruzana

Capítulo 7 El impacto de la Tutoría Virtual en los estudiantes de la Facultad de Pedagogía de la Universidad Veracruzana

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DOI: 10.35429/H.2023.9.61.69

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D. Hernández, B. Tejero and L. Zaleta (AA. VV.) Tutoring, a form of virtual accompaniment. Handbooks-TI-©ECORFAN-Mexico, Campeche, 2023

Abstract

This paper is designed under the qualitative paradigm, in order to collect the perception together with the level of satisfaction of the students of the Faculty of Pedagogy of the Universidad Veracruzana, regarding the virtual tutoring service, carried out before the pandemic of COVID-19, which imposed virtuality as a new environment for the Academic Tutor, agent who, in a strategy of innovation of the tutorial practice had to be trained in the handling of digital tools, this because the tutorial moments were executed through distance modalities and in an asynchronous way. Adapting the technological resources, training and platforms of the University Institution, being the presence of a figure such as the Tutor, increasingly necessary in this new modality, where a sense of social and educational uncertainty prevailed.

Satisfaction, Innovation, Virtuality

Resumen

Este trabajo de investigación, se encuentra diseñado bajo el paradigma cualitativo, con el fin de recabar la percepción aunado al nivel de satisfacción de los alumnos de la Facultad de Pedagogía de la Universidad Veracruzana, respecto al servicio de tutorías virtuales, efectuadas ante la pandemia de COVID-19, que impuso la virtualidad como nuevo ambiente para el Tutor Académico, agente quien, en una estrategia de innovación de la práctica tutorial tuvo que capacitarse en el manejo de las herramientas digitales, esto a causa de que los momentos tutoriales se ejecutaron mediante modalidades a distancia y de manera asincrónica. Adecuando los recursos tecnológicos, formación y plataformas propias de la Institución Universitaria, siendo la presencia de una figura como el Tutor, cada vez más necesaria en esta nueva modalidad, donde prevalecía una sensación de incertidumbre social y educacional.

Satisfacción, Innovación, Virtualidad.

1. Introduction

Currently in the Faculty of Education, tutoring has become a space for reflection, analysis and transformation between the academic tutor and the student, evidenced in the purpose of virtual tutoring, which is to provide academic support for their comprehensive training. Since the COVID-19 pandemic, the panorama that we all knew changed, with this; the face-to-face modality was transferred to a screen and the roles in different areas were modified, generating a new environment for the Academic Tutor, who had to be trained in the handling of digital tools; This was due to the fact that the tutorial moments were carried out through distance modalities, adapting the forms and platforms of the University Institution, being the presence of a figure such as the Tutor increasingly necessary in this new modality, where social and student uncertainty prevailed.

Virtual tutoring not only played an academic role, but also formed part of the extracurricular moments of the students, as the tutor in the virtual modality was given the task of getting to know their students in all possible facets and thus have a deeper connection with their students, thus becoming the connecting entity of the student with the educational institution and other teachers.

During the height of the COVID-19 pandemic, the virtual tutoring modality was a fundamental contribution, due to the establishment of a distance education system that evolved efficiently and quickly, to the needs of the moment, even so, encountering numerous adversities from cognitive, social and even climatological.

2. Development

We can understand by tutoring, the set of strategies, which focus particularly on the student, for their academic and human procession, which allows the improvement in different areas during their stay at the university, in each of the tutorial moments, in which aspects that favour the student are covered.

As mentioned by Castillo, Torres and Gonzáles (2009) "the purpose of tutoring is to dynamise in a convenient way the relations between the educational system and society" (p.39), always understanding that students are the protagonists responsible for their academic and personal growth.

Throughout the students' academic career, tutoring is an important part of their development, since it structures the teaching process in an integral and specialised way. This new modality allowed the various agents to understand that tutoring is an environment that transcends the academic in order to develop guidance on student development, adapting didactic strategies in a digital environment. The new modality was also consecrated as a challenge for students, who, although considered mostly digital natives, faced factors that played against the efficient development of virtual tutoring, ranging from lack of connection, electronic equipment failures and even weather conditions.

Establishing virtual tutoring means establishing a relationship between tutor and student, without being physically close, but in search of a teaching that complements the student, from an academic, multidisciplinary and intrapersonal point of view.

3. Justification

The purpose of this research work is to make visible the experiences lived by the students of the Faculty of Education, evidencing their level of satisfaction during this event, the impact on their academic training and if there were irregularities or deficiencies in this practice, so that its development becomes more efficient as the reinsertion to the face-to-face activities is established by the student community and make visible the contrast of both practices, allowing to develop and evaluate the activities carried out in the virtuality, as a reference to those carried out in the educational institution.

At this stage, virtual tutoring ensured communication between tutor and student as a teaching method. Within an academic context, we identify tutoring as an element that is executed in conjunction with the teaching activity, with the aim of developing an integral practice of education, as it integrates aspects such as knowledge and experiences from the student's personal perspective.

4. Objectives

General objective

To identify the degree of satisfaction of the students of the Faculty of Education with the Virtual Tutorials.

Specific objectives

- To show the perspective of the student community regarding the development of virtual tutoring.
- To find out the level of commitment of the academic tutors in the virtual tutoring process.
- To identify the practices carried out during the sessions and their impact on the students.

5. Methodology

Since the semesters of gradual reintegration to face-to-face activities, the desire to identify the degree of efficiency and impact of a formative activity such as tutoring in the students of the Faculty of Pedagogy of the Universidad Veracruzana in the city of Poza Rica has become imperative.

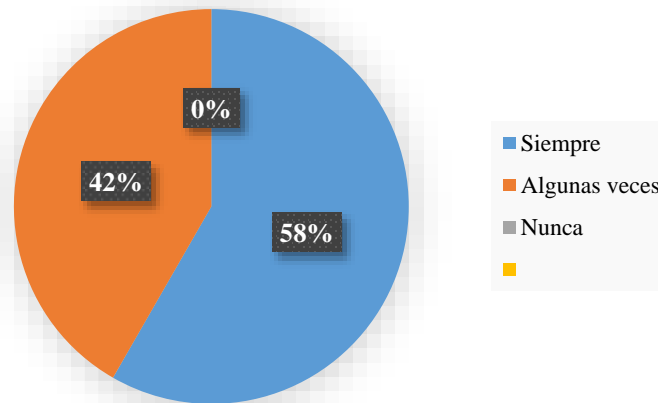
For the development of this research, the methodology used was quantitative, within a positivist-empiricist paradigmatic approach, providing the quantification of data, an approach whose tendency, as King, Keohane and Verba (2000) state "is usually based on numerical measures of certain aspects of phenomena to reach a general description or test causal hypotheses" (p.14).

In addition to this, the survey was used as a research technique, which makes it possible to observe the facts through the assessment of the responses that are forged by the respondents or interviewees themselves, this instrument designed was digitised on the Google FORMS platform, for the socialisation and resolution of a sample of the student community belonging to the different semesters that make it up.

6. Results

Graph 1.1 Percentage of students who maintained communication with the Academic Tutor

Did you maintain communication with your academic tutor during the virtual period?

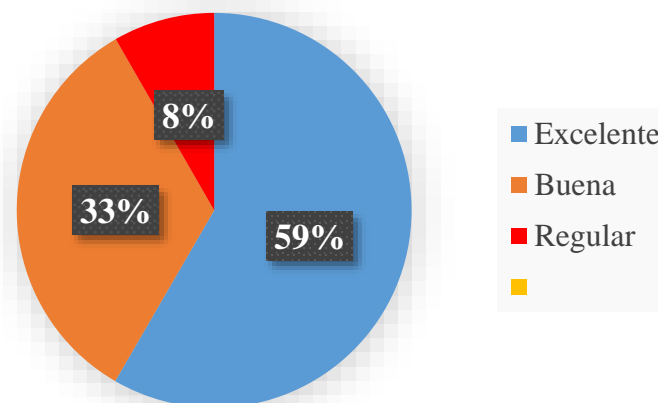


Source: Own Elaboration

According to the graph 1, it is positively evidenced that communication was always maintained between tutors and students in the virtual world, in 58% of the students surveyed. This is complemented by the 42% of the surveyed students who answered Sometimes, regarding the communication with their Academic Tutor during the tutoring sessions.

Figure 1.2 Communication and interaction during virtual sessions

How was the communication and interaction with your Academic Tutor during the virtual sessions?

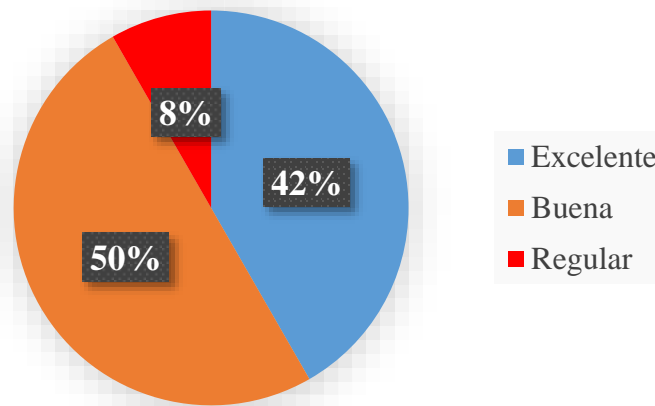


Source: Own Elaboration

59% of the students maintained excellent communication and interaction with their Academic Tutor during the virtual sessions, together with 33% who considered the communication with their tutor to be good, while 8% of the respondents reported this practice as regular.

Graph 1.3 Virtual tutoring support

How was the Virtual Tutoring support during the COVID-19 pandemic?

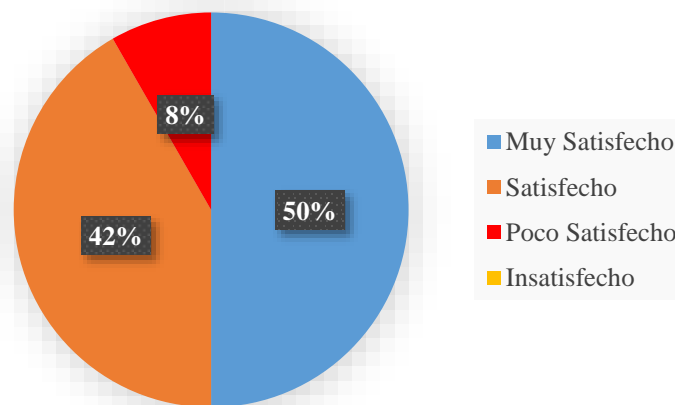


Source: Own Elaboration

According to this graph, 50% of the students surveyed stated that the support provided by the Virtual Tutoring during the pandemic was good, complemented by 42% who rated it as excellent, while only 8% of all those surveyed stated that this practice was fair.

Graph 1.4 Satisfaction with the work of Virtual Tutoring

How satisfied were you with the Virtual Academic Tutoring offered to you during the COVID-19 pandemic?

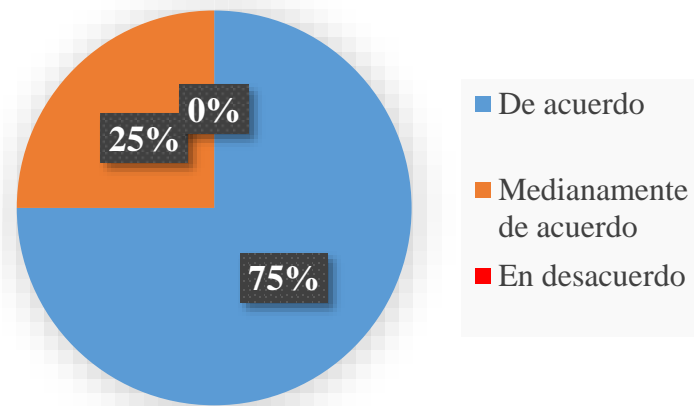


Source: Own Elaboration

The corresponding graph shows that, of the students surveyed, 50% of those present are very satisfied with their Virtual Tutoring, in addition to 42% who state that they are only satisfied, in contrast to the 8% whose position is not very satisfied with the tutoring offered during the pandemic.

Graph 1.5 Topics addressed and their relevance in the Tutoring

Do you consider that the issues addressed during your online tutoring were resolved?

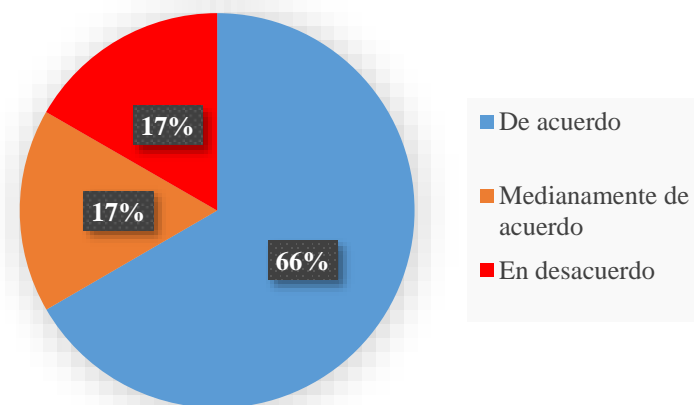


Source: Own Elaboration

According to what is shown in the graph, 75% of those surveyed state that they agree that the issues dealt with during the virtual sessions were resolved by their academic tutors, in addition to the 25% who state that they agree with this premise to a moderate degree.

Graph 1.6 Virtual tutoring as a support for the student's integral development

Do you consider that the Academic Tutorials in their virtual modality were a significant support for your comprehensive training?

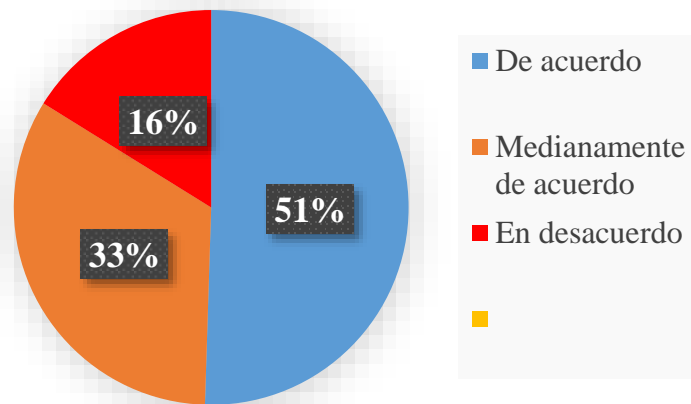


Source: Own Elaboration

It is noteworthy to show that, of the students surveyed, 66% consider that the tutorials in their virtual modality were a significant support in their comprehensive training, complemented by 17% who consider that they moderately agree with the premise and 17% whose position is in disagreement with what was stated.

Graph 1.7 The climate during Virtual Tutorials

During your Virtual Tutoring, did the climate of trust established by your Academic Tutor allow you to express your concerns and disagreements?

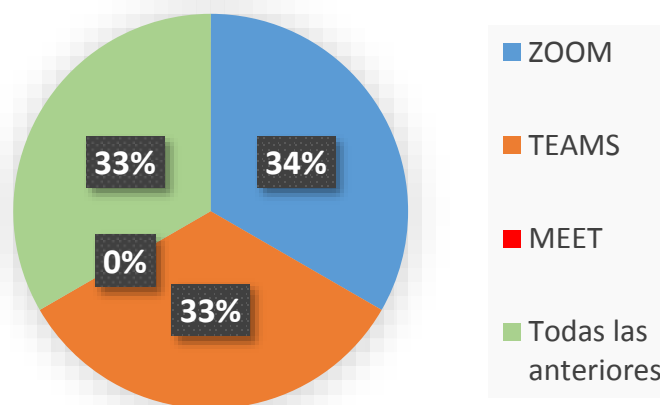


Source: Own Elaboration

According to the graph, 51% of the respondents agree with the premise that the Academic Tutor established a climate of trust to express concerns and disagreements, while 33% of the respondents positioned moderately agree with what was stated, while 16% disagreed with what was stated in the question.

Graph 1.8 Technological tools for tutoring

What technological tools did your academic tutor use to carry out the tutoring?



Source: Own Elaboration

The graph above shows a balance in the ZOOM and Microsoft Teams platforms, which, as shown in each one, 33% of the students surveyed responded that they were the technological tools used by their Academic Tutor to carry out the virtual tutoring sessions.

Table 1 The Impact of Virtual Tutoring on Comprehensive Training

How virtual Academic Tutoring impacted on your comprehensive training?	
EFP-01	Well, it was a great support because we could not see each other in person and by connecting we had our doubts solved and we had support from our tutor, even by message he always answered us.
EFP-02	I don't consider that at this stage it has contributed to my education, maybe the first semesters when I didn't know many aspects of the course could have been fundamental, but now I'm about to graduate and I don't need the support any more.
EFP-03	Both the virtual and the face-to-face, my tutor has never changed his way of giving his tutorials, in both modalities there was a great impact on me personally as he was always my guide for my academic stay at all times.
EFP-04	Positively.
EFP-05	In a positive way as it helped me to have a better vision of my career in terms of the different doubts that arose during my academic training.
EFP-06	It seems to me to be a very good option rather than the face-to-face one, as they dedicate more time and attention to resolving doubts and concerns.
EFP-07	Being virtual was a big change, but thanks to my tutor and my willingness in terms of connection hours to talk, we really had no complications to carry out the tutoring process excellently.
EFP-08	It was good, I enjoyed working this way.
EFP-09	She kept me up to date with academic issues.
EFP-10	I consider that it was very bad because I was made to fall behind a semester because of it.
EFP-11	From my point of view it didn't change that much.
EFP-12	It helped me a lot, as my tutor always solved my doubts.

Source; Own Elaboration

7. Conclusions

- With the information gathered and the experience of this stage of virtuality and the gradual reinsertion to the new normality, it is possible to conclude that the figure of the tutor, in this training environment, is vital, specifically in an institution like this, where the curriculum has a comprehensive paradigm in the training of each student, not only providing knowledge but achieving the full development of each one.
- The result of the data collection instrument allows us to interpret a positive impact for the student community of the Faculty, by means of the graphs the attention to the personal and academic needs of the students was visible in most cases, evidencing the level of commitment of the academic tutors in the process of virtual tutoring, together with a practice of deeper communication, since an ideal climate was established for the sessions in the asynchronous environment, denoting a level of satisfaction greater than 90%, with respect to the participating sample.
- The general objective was achieved by identifying the degree of satisfaction of the students of the Faculty of Education with the Virtual Tutorials, with 91.7% of the students surveyed having a positive degree of satisfaction. Together with the perspective of the student community regarding the development of virtual tutoring, as shown by the results of questions 6 and 9.
- This environment allowed for better communication with the academic tutors, in personalised sessions and with greater accompaniment that were satisfactory so that there really was an atmosphere of trust that generated in turn, a real significant support for each student for their integral formation.
- 8 Proposals for Improvement
- In addition to this, one of the possible proposals for improvement would lie in the following:
- Formative training in the use of different platforms aimed at the institution's teachers.
- Although there is training in the use of these digital tools, it is focused on two specific ones, ZOOM and Microsoft Teams, which are ideal for educational applications, but with deficiencies and without exploiting all the resources they possess.

- The integration of virtual tutoring as a complementary modality to face-to-face tutoring.
- This is in order to develop that space for communication with greater depth and more individualised attention to the academic and intrapersonal problems of each student throughout the school period.
- Diversification of topics exposed in the tutoring sessions, to support the integral formation of the student with greater scope.

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