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ANALYSIS OF THE ACADEMIC LITERATURE ON TUTORIAL ACTION AND SELF-REGULATION VARIABLES IN HIGHER EDUCATION: A CRITICAL REVIEW

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ABSTRACT

This review article presents a critical analysis of academic literature on tutoring in higher education, with a special focus on its conceptual development, main modalities and its relationship with educational quality and self-regulated learning. Based on a broad conceptual framework, the study examines the different definitions of university tutoring, the role of tutors and tutees, and the characteristics of the tutorial relationship from a humanistic, formative and guidance-oriented perspective. It also describes the main tutoring modalities – teaching-based, individual, group and peer tutoring – and their contribution to academic, socio-emotional and professional support for students. The analysis incorporates contributions from international organizations and national policies that position tutoring as a key strategy to enhance retention, academic performance and holistic student development in higher education institutions. The state of the art shows significant production on tutoring, study habits and learning strategies, but reveals a specific gap regarding the evaluation of tutorial action through observable variables in tutees, such as organization,

availability, responsibility, attention, fulfilment, importance and reality. The main contribution of this article is to systematize and articulate this theoretical corpus, providing a solid basis for future research aimed at operationalizing and assessing tutorial action in university contexts.

KEYWORDS: University Tutoring, Higher Education, Academic Support, Self-Regulated Learning.

1. INTRODUCTION

University tutoring is one of the most relevant strategies in the field of higher education, especially in the context of contemporary challenges such as student dropout, low retention, insufficient academic performance and the need to strengthen professional skills. In Latin America, university systems have recognized the importance of consolidating institutional tutoring programs that respond to student-centered educational models and oriented towards integral development. In this sense, organizations such as ANUIES, UNESCO, OECD and the World Bank have stressed the need to establish systematic mechanisms of academic accompaniment, in order to guide students in their training process, strengthen their autonomy and provide support in the face of academic, emotional or socioeconomic difficulties. The theoretical apparatus contained in the thesis that serves as the basis for this review presents a rigorous conceptual construction on variables that make up the ODRACIR process. This review offers a detailed and deeply descriptive analysis of each element, contextualizing its origin, evolution and meaning from different perspectives: pedagogical, psychological, institutional and sociocultural.

2. METHODOLOGY

This article uses a narrative, descriptive and critical literature review methodology. Unlike a strict systematic review, this methodological strategy allows for the integration of various academic sources, comparing them, grouping them into theoretical categories, and analyzing their contributions without the rigidity of quantitative criteria. The review included various academic databases, institutional papers, international reports, and classic literature on mentoring and self-regulation. Inclusion criteria were established based on thematic relevance, academic quality, conceptual contribution and topicality. Results of the review and analysis of the literature on tutorial action in higher education

2.1. General Conceptions of University Tutoring

The literature review shows that university tutoring has been consolidated as a process of formative accompaniment with strong humanistic inspiration. From this perspective, tutorial action seeks the integral enrichment of the student's person within a framework of individual and social values that favor adaptation, coexistence, service and cooperation, in a context of freedom and justice (García Tecua, in González & Romo, 2005).

At the international level, UNESCO conceives tutoring as a set of activities that generate learning situations and support the proper development of the academic process, with the purpose that students, guided and motivated, develop their own training process autonomously (UNESCO, cited in Arnaiz and Isus, 1998). This view is reinforced by definitions that underline tutoring as a process of personalized accompaniment, whose objective is to reduce failure, reduce dropout and favor permanence in studies (Pérez & Merino, 2009; ANUIES, 2000).

From an etymological point of view, the word tutoring comes from Latin and combines the elements *tueri* (to protect or watch), *-tor* (agent) and *-ia* (quality), which refers to the idea of "one who protects" or "one who watches over another" (Pérez, 2009). In higher education, this sense of care is articulated with the pedagogical function, in such a way that tutoring is understood as a teaching action of guidance with pedagogical and psychological components, aimed at the integral formation of the student and his social and professional projection (González, 2001; Ferrer, 2003).

Authors such as Levinson et al. (1978) emphasize that tutoring is a broader concept than the teaching-learning process centered on teaching, although it cannot be separated from it. The tutorial action is thus configured as a concretization of the integral guidance process, helping the student to know himself, his environment and to make reasoned decisions about his academic and professional career (Ferrer, 1994; Echeverría, 1997; Isus, 1995).

2.2. The Tutor, the Tutor and the Tutorial Relationship

From the literature reviewed, it can be deduced that the figure of the tutor is conceived as a teacher with specific competencies to accompany, guide and support the student in his or her training process. Tejada (1999, in Castro, 2014) defines it as a competent person who has the ability to solve problems in the student's teaching-learning process, contributing to reducing dropout and improving terminal efficiency.

Various authors emphasize the ethical, affective and relational dimension of the tutor. Saavedra (2005) points out that the tutor must possess ethical, moral, and spiritual qualities that allow him to "tune in" with the students and guide them towards the development of positive values and attitudes. The tutor's being is characterized by being affectionate without overprotecting, educating and at the same time close, tolerant without weakness,

understanding without naivety, vigilant without authoritarianism and reliable without being intrusive. At the level of know-how, the tutor is expected to help without substituting, to exercise authority without authoritarianism, to suggest without imposing and to demand without the need to punish.

The tutor is defined as any student who receives guidance and monitoring of their academic and socio-affective performance through a tutor, from their admission and throughout their school career. This relationship involves tutelage, guidance, assistance and support, through guidance and systematic advice (García, 2008).

Authors such as Zabalza (2003) and Rodríguez (2004) agree that the tutorial function should be understood as part of the teaching function, in a comprehensive and personalized educational approach. Through a close and systematic relationship, tutoring is aimed at students developing not only knowledge, but also competencies to self-direct their learning during their career and in their professional practice (García et al., 2005; Coriat & Sanz, 2005).

3. TUTORING MODALITIES: TEACHER, INDIVIDUAL, GROUP AND PEER

The review allows us to identify different tutoring modalities that have been implemented in the university context. In the Faculty of Accounting and Administration, at least group, individual, peer and distance tutorials are recognized.

Group tutoring is conceived as a space for communication in which students review and discuss, together, topics of interest or concern related to their academic performance. This modality strengthens the climate of empathy in the group, favors collaborative work and allows the tutor to observe the development of the students (ICEUABJO, 2010).

Individual tutoring is defined as personalized attention in which the tutor addresses aspects that affect the student's educational process, such as academic, personal or contextual problems. It requires session planning, recording of results and, when necessary, channeling to specialized services. This is a complex modality, especially in the first interviews, where it is necessary to overcome the initial mistrust to generate an effective bond of support.

Peer tutoring is understood as the accompaniment that one student performs to another, either at the same level or at a more advanced level. This modality enhances learning, self-esteem, security, and social

interaction, both for the tutor student and the mentee (Cardozo, 2011). Inspired by the notion of the Zone of Proximal Development (Vygotsky, 1989), peer tutoring allows the student to reach higher levels of understanding with the help of a peer in a similar context. Its implementation requires strategic and collaborative planning, as well as the selection and training of student tutors with academic and support skills.

3.1. Mentoring in International and National Education Policy Frameworks

The documentary analysis shows that tutorial action is not understood in isolation, but within the framework of international and national educational policies and models. At the global level, UNESCO has emphasized in its conferences of 1998 and 2009 the need to transform higher education through student-centered teaching models, the use of new methodologies and the promotion of autonomy in learning. Tutoring is inserted in this paradigm as an instrument to promote more flexible and relevant training trajectories.

For its part, the OECD has underlined the relevance of higher education for economic and social development, pointing to challenges in quality, equity and efficiency. Their reports recommend actions such as expanding the system, diversifying the offer, internationalizing and strengthening quality, which also involves support systems such as mentoring.

The World Bank, in documents such as *Higher Education in Developing Countries: Peril and Promise* (2000), highlights the need to redefine the role of the State, improve financing, optimize resources, strengthen the governance of institutions and update curricula, placing educational quality as a key element of development. In this context, tutoring is seen as a mechanism for academic support and permanence.

In Mexico, ANUIES (2000) proposes Institutional Tutoring Programs (PIT) as a strategy to address structural problems in higher education, such as lag, dropout, and low terminal efficiency. Documents such as the National Development Plan 2013–2018, the State Development Plan 2016–2022 and the Institutional Development Plan of the UABJO 2016–2020, as well as the Institutional Development Plan of the FCA 2016–2019, include educational quality, comprehensive student training and tutorial support as strategic axes, although they do not always translate into specific actions to strengthen tutoring programs.

3.1. Tutoring at the Faculty of Accounting and Administration of the UABJO

Within the framework of these policies, the Faculty of Accounting and Administration has developed its Tutorial Action Program, aimed at accompanying students in their academic career, meeting their needs and contributing to the reduction of failure and dropout rates. The program was approved by the Technical Council in 2009, in coherence with the UABJO's student-centered educational model.

However, the review of the FCA Institutional Development Plan 2016–2019 shows that, although axes such as quality education, linkage, innovation and management are contemplated, the specific actions for the strengthening of the Tutoring Program and academic advisory services are not sufficiently explicit. This tension between the discursive recognition of tutoring and its operational consolidation constitutes a relevant element to understand the need for more in-depth studies on its impact on the training of FCA students.

3.2. State Of the Art: Studies on Tutoring, Study Habits and Educational Quality

The analysis of the state of the art allows us to identify various research that addresses tutoring and variables associated with learning in higher education. Martínez (2017) studies peer tutoring at the Universidad Autónoma de Nuevo León, showing that this strategy improves academic performance, psychosocial skills, sense of responsibility, and student satisfaction, based on a collaborative model recognized by organizations such as UNESCO.

Romero (2014), at the Universidad Autónoma Indígena de México, analyzes a tutoring program with a deductive-inductive approach and concludes that tutoring comprises a systematic set of educational actions of an academic and personal nature, whose tutor-mentee commitment extends throughout the academic career and until obtaining the degree.

Badillo (2007), at the Universidad Veracruzana, applies the process of organization, planning, operation, and evaluation of the PIT and finds that tutoring is a viable strategy to improve the quality of higher education, contributing to student adaptation, reducing failure rates and lagging behind, and strengthening study skills.

The Tejupilco Professional Academic Unit (2016), at the Autonomous University of the State of Mexico, studies the relationship between study habits and academic performance, concluding that many

students focus on obtaining grades rather than on "learning to learn", which shows the need to reinforce self-regulation processes and learning strategies. In a similar vein, León (2014), at the University of Los Lagos, analyzes learning strategies in a competency-based model and points out that effective learning requires planning, self-regulation, and clear dissemination of the pedagogical model.

Finally, Quiroz (2007) reflects on professional competencies and quality in higher education, stressing that external quality assurance processes do not guarantee, by themselves, the quality of internal processes in institutions. This idea resonates with the need to evaluate tutoring programs in a more specific way and their impact on variables associated with student performance.

Overall, the state of the art reviewed shows a wide production on tutoring, study habits, learning strategies and educational quality, but it shows a specific gap: no studies have been found that explicitly propose and evaluate a set of variables observable in tutoring to assess the impact of tutoring in terms of Organization. Availability, Responsibility, Attention, Compliance, Importance and Reality. This theoretical-empirical gap justifies the relevance of articulating the ODRACIR model as a proposal to analyze tutorial action in the Faculty of Accounting and Administration of the UABJO and, potentially, in other institutions of higher education.

4. DISCUSSION

The review of the literature presented allows us to affirm that university tutorial action – understood as academic, personal and professional accompaniment of students – has been internationally consolidated as a key device for improving performance, permanence and the development of learning self-regulation skills. Experimental and quasi-experimental studies in different contexts have shown that well-structured tutoring programs are associated with significant increases in academic performance and with the reduction of achievement gaps between student groups. For example, research carried out in Colombia and Peru shows that students who participate in institutional tutoring programs obtain higher averages and better pass rates than those who do not receive this accompaniment (Orlandoni Merli et al., 2017; Pari-Orihuela et al., 2024).

Along the same lines, peer tutoring interventions in European universities have shown positive effects on both performance and psychosocial variables, such as the sense of responsibility, academic involvement, and self-esteem of tutor and mentee

students (Arco-Tirado et al., 2020).

A recent systematic review of peer mentoring and tutoring programs in higher education concludes that these experiences favor academic and social integration, reduce the feeling of isolation, and improve adaptation to university life, especially in first-generation or vulnerable student groups (Le et al., 2024).

These findings are in direct dialogue with the conception of tutoring that is included in the conceptual framework: a process of comprehensive accompaniment that articulates academic, personal and life project dimensions.

The theoretical review also underlines the formative nature of tutoring as a space to develop study habits, time organization, responsibility and commitment to the training path. This emphasis connects with the body of studies on self-regulated learning (SRL), which has grown significantly over the past decade. Recent meta-analyses show that SRL training programs aimed at university students produce positive effects of moderate magnitude on academic performance, the use of metacognitive strategies, and motivation (Theobald, 2021; Jansen et al., 2019).

In addition, systematic reviews in online and blended learning contexts indicate that strategies for planning, organizing, managing time, and monitoring one's own learning are consistently associated with better academic outcomes (Broadbent & Poon, 2015; Eggers et al., 2021).

From this perspective, the variables that the study proposes to evaluate tutorial action – organization, availability, responsibility and other associated dimensions – can be interpreted as concrete operationalizations of components of self-regulated learning. Recent research in face-to-face and blended higher education settings has highlighted that the perception of self-efficacy, organizational skills, and resource management (time, materials, teaching support) mediate the relationship between participation in training environments and academic success (Cigdem & Oncu, 2024; Cleary et al., 2020).

In this sense, the proposal to read the tutor through variables such as organization and responsibility contributes to translating the constructs of the international literature into observable indicators applied to an institutional tutoring program in a specific Latin American context.

On the other hand, recent studies on tutoring and academic advising confirm its relevance as an axis of student permanence and success policies. The monograph "Academic Advising and Tutoring for

Student Success in Higher Education" argues that tutoring is no longer a peripheral element and is at the centre of institutional strategies aimed at improving academic retention and progression (McIntosh et al., 2021).

Empirical research along the same lines shows that systematic interaction between tutors and students, when oriented towards the joint construction of realistic academic trajectories and the monitoring of risk indicators, is associated with higher pass rates and a lower probability of dropping out (Holland et al., 2020).

These results reinforce the importance of understanding tutoring not only as individual accompaniment, but as an articulated component of a student-centered educational model, as reflected in the institutional policy documents analyzed in your framework.

At the same time, the available evidence suggests that not all academic support interventions are equally effective or work equally in all contexts. A recent review of interventions aimed at reducing dropout in higher education shows that the programs with the greatest impact combine several elements: tutoring or academic mentoring, development of study skills, early risk monitoring, and articulation with financial and psychosocial supports (Ibsen & Rosholm, 2024; Johnson et al., 2022).

Likewise, some studies underline the need to adapt interventions to the characteristics of the student body (first generation, socioeconomic background, regional context) and to incorporate finer evaluation frameworks that go beyond global indicators of performance or dropout (Zane, 2025).

On this point, the study provides a relevant advance by proposing a set of specific variables to assess the impact of the tutorial action on dimensions such as organization, availability, responsibility and study habits of the tutor.

Overall, the review of the international literature supports the central premise of the study, since tutoring, conceived as a systematic and comprehensive process, has the potential to have a significant impact on the academic trajectory of students, especially in contexts with high failure and dropout rates. At the same time, the studies reviewed allow us to problematize the implementation of tutoring in the Faculty of Accounting and Administration of the UABJO, showing the importance of moving from a predominantly normative and declarative approach (plans, programs, guidelines) to a logic based on evidence and the systematic evaluation of results in the

tutoring. The proposal for the analysis of tutorial action based on variables such as organization, availability and responsibility is located precisely in this direction, opening the possibility of generating useful information for the redesign of the Comprehensive Tutoring Program and for its closer articulation with the educational models promoted by ANUIES, UNESCO, OECD and the national regulatory framework itself.

5. CONCLUSIONS

The theoretical review carried out allows us to affirm that tutorial action constitutes an essential component of contemporary educational models oriented towards student-centered learning and their integral formation. The different approaches analysed coincide in understanding tutoring as a process of systematic, personalised and guiding support that has a significant impact on academic performance, school permanence, university adaptation and the development of professional and socio-emotional skills. Likewise, the studies reviewed show that tutoring makes sense within institutional, normative, and organizational frameworks that conceive it as a strategy to improve educational quality and reduce achievement gaps, especially in contexts with high rates of failure, dropout, and inequalities of origin.

The literature also shows that tutoring

modalities—individual, group, teaching, and peer—provide differentiated benefits, but they all converge in enhancing student autonomy, self-regulated learning, and the construction of more solid academic trajectories. At the same time, recent research underscores the importance of considering dimensions such as organization, responsibility, availability, attention, and compliance as observable indicators of the impact of tutoring on the mentee, which offers opportunities to move towards more accurate and contextualized assessment models.

However, relevant gaps persist in the research, particularly in relation to the lack of comprehensive models that articulate the structural components of tutorial action with systematic measurements of its effectiveness from the student's perspective. The analysis carried out shows that empirical studies are still required to validate variables such as those proposed in the ODRACIR model and to facilitate the assessment of the real impact of tutoring on academic and personal development in Latin American institutions.

Overall, this review provides a robust conceptual basis for the understanding of university tutoring and highlights the need to move towards more rigorous evaluative approaches that allow strengthening institutional programs, optimizing their implementation and consolidating its role as a key strategy to guarantee permanence, meaningful learning and student success in higher education.

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