



Proposal for anonymous tutoring as a complementary service to university support

Propuesta de tutoría anónima como servicio complementario al acompañamiento universitario

Proposition de tutorat anonyme comme service complémentaire au soutien universitaire

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ABSTRACT

Introduction: Tutoring services in university higher education have had increasing visibility within the reforms and adaptations implemented in the search to guarantee accompaniment, support and overcome difficulties and problems that condition or limit the professional training process. **Objective:** to develop a proposal for anonymous tutoring as a complementary service to university accompaniment at a public university. **Method:** the research was descriptive projective with a purposeful descriptive transectional design. The population was 4685 students from Universidad Nacional del Santa, and 202 were the sample. The questionnaire applied had a reliability of 0.96 and made it possible to collect information necessary for the analysis from its five dimensions: four dimensions on the situation of tutoring at Universidad Nacional del Santa (tutor, personal, academic, and professional sphere) and a dimension on the demand for the anonymous tutoring service. **Result:** Regarding the levels of students' perception of the current situation of university accompaniment at Universidad Nacional del Santa, 46% are at a medium level. Regarding the dimension related to the professional field, 54% of the students have a medium to low perception. It was found that 93.6% of students demand the anonymous tutoring service. **Conclusions:** the proposal contemplates the regulatory, technical, and scientific foundations on the topic and its viability, constituting a novelty and valuable contribution to student well-being in the university environment.

Keywords: Students, Research, Population, Mentoring, Perception

RESUMEN

Introducción: el servicio de tutoría en la educación superior universitaria ha tenido una creciente visibilidad dentro de las reformas y adecuaciones implementadas en la búsqueda de garantizar el acompañamiento, apoyo y superación de dificultades y problemas que condicionen o limiten el proceso de formación profesional. **Objetivo:** elaborar una propuesta de tutoría anónima como servicio complementario al acompañamiento universitario en una universidad pública. **Método:** la investigación fue descriptiva proyectiva con un diseño transeccional descriptivo propositivo, donde 4685 estudiantes de la Universidad Nacional del Santa fueron la población y 202 la muestra. El cuestionario aplicado contó con una confiabilidad de 0,96 y permitió recabar información necesaria para el análisis desde sus cinco dimensiones; cuatro dimensiones sobre la situación de la tutoría en la Universidad Nacional del Santa (tutor, ámbito personal, académico y profesional) y una dimensión sobre la demanda del servicio de tutoría anónima. **Resultado:** En cuanto a los niveles de percepción de los estudiantes sobre la situación actual del acompañamiento universitario en la Universidad Nacional del Santa, el 46% se encuentra en nivel medio; respecto a la dimensión relacionada con el ámbito profesional, el 54% de los estudiantes tienen una percepción de media a baja. Se obtuvo que el del 93,6% de los estudiantes demandan el servicio de tutoría anónima. **Conclusiones:** se genera una propuesta que contempla los fundamentos normativos, técnicos y científicos sobre el tema y la

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viabilidad de su implementación; lo cual constituye una novedad y valioso aporte al bienestar estudiantil en el ámbito universitario.

Palabras clave: Estudiantes, Investigación, Población, Tutoría, Percepción

RÉSUMÉ

Introduction: le service de tutorat dans l'enseignement supérieur universitaire a eu une visibilité croissante dans le cadre des réformes et adaptations mises en œuvre dans la recherche de garantir l'accompagnement, le soutien et le dépassement des difficultés et des problèmes qui conditionnent ou limitent le processus de formation professionnelle. **Objectif:** développer une proposition de tutorat anonyme comme service complémentaire à l'accompagnement universitaire dans une université publique. **Méthode:** la recherche était de type descriptif et projectif avec un plan transectionnel descriptif ciblé, où 4 685 étudiants de l'Université Nationale de Santa constituaient la population et 202 l'échantillon. Le questionnaire appliqué avait une fiabilité de 0,96 et a permis de recueillir les informations nécessaires à l'analyse à partir de ses cinq dimensions; quatre dimensions sur la situation du tutorat à l'Universidad Nacional del Santa (tuteur, sphère personnelle, académique et professionnelle) et une dimension sur la demande de service de tutorat anonyme. **Résultat:** Concernant les niveaux de perception des étudiants sur la situation actuelle de l'accompagnement universitaire à l'Universidad Nacional del Santa, 46% se situent à un niveau moyen. Concernant la dimension liée au domaine professionnel, 54% des étudiants ont une perception moyenne à faible. Il a été constaté que 93,6% des étudiants demandent le service de tutorat anonyme. **Conclusions:** une proposition est générée qui envisage les fondements réglementaires, techniques et scientifiques du sujet et la viabilité de sa mise en œuvre; ce qui constitue une nouveauté et une contribution précieuse au bien-être des étudiants en milieu universitaire.

Mots clés: Étudiants, Recherche, Population, Mentorat, Perception

INTRODUCTION

At the VI International University Meeting: Student Insertion and Permanence in Higher Education, Domínguez¹ states that student retention is a pressing issue in the world of higher education; according to the New York Times, one in three American students drops out in the first year, and 56% of those who enter a career do not graduate. The study specifies, among other causes, the lack of support from teachers and counselors, family or work conflicts, the lousy university environment, and doubts about whether or not they chose the right career.

In the university system, tutorial action is part of the teaching function, which allows personalized and comprehensive attention to students to mitigate the anxiety evident in the study cycle, support institutional integration, and promote quality learning. Its execution includes interviews and group work, the development of social skills is encouraged, and continuous motivation is promoted, among other actions. The care needs are varied due to the diversity of students and the stages of the

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university career, such as the initial phase of admission, the study process, and insertion into the professional stage.² The definition of tutoring is broad and depends on those who participate in the tutorial action; there is individual, group, teacher-student, and student-student tutoring, and they are differentiated into academic, professional, and personal tutoring.³

The research is called Conditioning Aspects of University Tutoring. A comparative study was developed to analyze the tutorial action from the perspective of students in two different universities, one European (Universidad de Jaén, Spain) and another American (Universidad Agustín Maza, Argentina), with particular attention to the Tutorial Action Plans (PAT). The methodology used was a non-experimental descriptive-correlational design that would allow the comparison of relevant information from the two universities. The study was conducted with first-year students (866) selected through non-probabilistic sampling. The data were collected through a questionnaire whose internal consistency had a reliability of 0.93. It was concluded that not many studies demonstrate the reality of university tutoring. Therefore, the study gave guidelines on student satisfaction, the impact of tutorial action plans, and aspects that improve educational quality.⁴

As part of the results, there is approval of the parts that have to do with the PAT and tutoring, but there are difficulties regarding tutoring using digital tools. Furthermore, there are differences between those who actively participate in the university's tutoring initiatives and those who only attend punctually. Finally, students have a good perception of the university's intention to implement a PAT that allows comprehensive training and the constant commitment of teachers to their tutorial function. American universities have better results in designing and implementing the PAT and tutoring, and European universities use digital tools for tutorial action more efficiently.⁴

The study experience has confirmed how decisive and crucial Tutoring and Educational Guidance is. Every day, more students have testimonies and particular stories highlighting the assertive accompaniment and support of their teachers with whom they have exchanged ideas, opinions, perspectives, decisions, experiences, and emotions that define their future. Cuzó *et al.*⁵ (2020) suggest that it is necessary to reconsider and revalue the figure of the university professor as a tutor in the current context, who must possess his function's technical expertise and specific skills to enhance the tutorial relationship with the student: active listening, conflict management, teamwork, and time planning to know the student, beyond the superficial knowledge that you usually have.

The problems in the university stage require tutoring according to the demands of the students; University tutoring is still far from supporting the development of emotional and social skills that directly affect professional training and the future development of society⁶. Escalante, in his study entitled University dropout: an unresolved problem in Peru, developed at the Universidad Señor de Sipán, concludes that it is necessary to "reflect that not only is dropout attributable to economic and family factors but it can also be caused by motivation and vocation to the level of confidence of the teachers."⁷

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In the case of the Universidad Nacional del Santa-Perú, in a study developed by Alegre *et al.*⁵ Proposal for a support program for teacher tutors at the Universidad Nacional del Santa - UNS, which data were obtained from a sample of 61 students of the X cycle in the 2018 II semester and 30 teachers from different study programs of the university, on the demands regarding the profile of the Tutor teacher and the needs for improvement in the work of tutoring respectively and also considering the regulatory and guiding elements of the Tutoring and Counseling service at the UNS, among other results, it was obtained that there are regulatory guidelines regarding the functions and responsibilities of the permanent commissions and the tutor teachers assigned for each cycle of studies in each professional career.

However, the service does not have an operational mentoring management system that ensures adequate development. Another aspect that stands out is that the teachers who assume tutoring do not always have humanistic training and preparation that guarantees their optimal performance for this function. In this sense, it is necessary not only to have a tutoring management system under its dimensions of care but also to have a proposal for improvement that ensures the profile of the tutor teachers to guarantee timely and appropriate attention to the students. Also, the detection of services that complement this system to contemplate possible risks and foresee possible alerts in the university stage's insertion, development, and consolidation process.

Anonymous tutoring as a complementary service to university accompaniment arises as an alternative that aims to provide support and attention to an essential sector of the student population that demands more private attention and that, for some reason, requires absolute confidentiality. Although anonymous attention services have until now been used to make complaints and claims, taking care of the integrity and exposure of the complainant's data. Currently, there are services such as Psonrie that provide online psychological therapy in which users can access support and professional accompaniment necessary to face the challenges of daily life more positively and effectively. Today, it is one of the best psychology applications that combines technology and psychology to offer innovative services. This App provides encrypted communication and an anonymous profile so that users can discuss any topic without fear of exposing their identity or the content of their conversations. This system, which has a cost for care, has been growing significantly and turns out to be more attractive to users than online spaces with complimentary care.

In this regard, a study by Grens⁸ indicates that medical errors through a system that does not impose penalties and respects "anonymity" generates more complaints than the traditional method. An evaluation in the United States after its implementation in a children's hospital in North Carolina showed that the number of errors reported grew from five to 86 per year. Since 1999, when the Institute of Medicine said that 100,000 Americans die each year from medical mistakes, American healthcare facilities have strengthened strategies to identify them and improve patient safety. As can be seen, some factors can determine the search for timely assistance without risk for the user and a greater probability for the server to improve and guarantee quality service.

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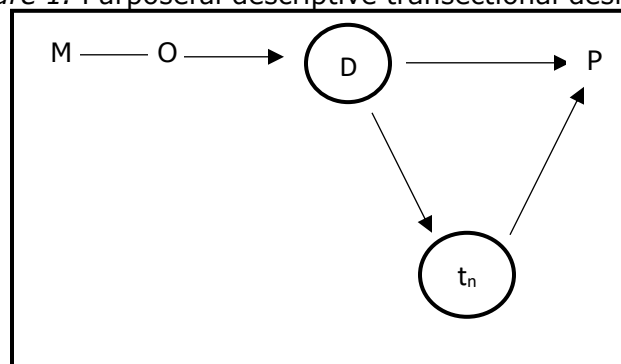
University students go through various experiences that require continuous attention to cope with academic tasks, personal problems, and professional expectations; some are not emotionally prepared to make their problems evident. Many of the situations are even often related to violence; Trujillo and Pastor-Gosálbez⁹ point out that, in the case of psychological violence, "socially, attacks of this type tend to be minimized, so these have obvious harmful effects for those who suffer them, such as the deterioration of self-esteem and personal security." Today, students do not usually tell their experiences due to social stigmas for fear of discrimination; to this end, the proposal to implement anonymous tutoring as a complementary service to university accompaniment would be of significant contribution to the solution and management of adverse circumstances that affect the professional training of students.

Consequently, considering the importance of the tutorial action as a favorable factor for adaptation and transit in the university context, the general objective of this article is to develop a proposal for anonymous tutoring as a complementary service to university accompaniment in a public university.

METHOD

The research was projective with a propositional descriptive transectional design. The study is based on an inquiry process that culminates with a proposed solution. This process begins with exploration; it involves describing, explaining, and offering an alternative for change without the need to execute what is proposed; it proposes solutions to a given situation based on a process of inquiry.¹⁰ Hurtado¹¹ also says that projective investigations "design the action plans for subsequent investigations." Due to the descriptive nature of the study, a hypothesis was not established. However, the projective scope of this holistic research is preceded by the predictive phase of the study, so the results were anticipated. Subsequently, it was possible to respond with each of the stated objectives from an approach, as seen in Figure 1.

Figure 1. Purposeful descriptive transectional design.



Source: Stela¹².

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Where:

M: Sample

O: Assessment of the gender approach

D: Diagnosis and evaluation

t_n: Theories analysis and substantiation to prepare a proposal.

Q: "Anonymous Mentoring."

The study variable was operationalized, university accompaniment, referring to the existing tutoring at Universidad Nacional del Santa. The study begins with a description of the current situation of university accompaniment and continues with the analysis of the five dimensions: The tutor, personal sphere, academic sphere, professional sphere, and the demand for the anonymous tutoring service, considered as specific objectives of This research, describe the current situation of tutoring as university support.

The population comprised 4,685 students enrolled in the 2022 II Semester, from which a definitive sample of 202 students enrolled in the three faculties: Sciences, Engineering and Education, and Engineering Humanities of Universidad Nacional del Santa. The indicated sample was determined by stratified sampling since it is applied when the total research population is vast and heterogeneous, and specific subgroups can be highlighted.¹³

The pilot sample defined to carry out the Cronbach's Alpha analysis was 75 students, which was carried out to conduct the reliability analysis of the data collection instrument. The questionnaire obtained a reliability of 0.96, allowing the collection of information necessary to analyze it from five dimensions: 4 dimensions on the situation of tutoring at UNS (the tutor, personal, academic, and professional area) and a dimension related to the demand for the anonymous tutoring service. It should be noted that the research instrument was authored by one of the researchers, Dr. Maribel Alegre Jara, and validated by the judgment of 3 experts.

Cronbach's Alpha was calculated more than once for different random samples of the pilot size, giving similar results, so the present work has the robustness to continue with the research topic.

1. Dimension or Factor 1 – About the Tutor.
2. Dimension or Factor 2 – Personal Area.
3. Dimension or Factor 3 – Academic Field.
4. Dimension or Factor 4 – Professional Field.
5. Dimension or Factor 5 – On the demand for the anonymous tutoring service.

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The results of these dimensions are reflected in the average scale answered by the students. It is decided to use the sum between the questions corresponding to each factor and show the student's perception in each dimension. The measurement scale used in collecting information is as follows: (S = Always (4), CS = Almost always (3), AV = Sometimes (2), N = Never (1)), considering the assessment levels: Low, Medium, and High.

During the research, the corresponding ethical aspects were considered, especially during the information gathering stage; the anonymity of the students, confidentiality, and beneficence was ensured since the information processing results will be well used and relevant to the research proposal.

RESULTS

University education is subject to compliance with the essential quality conditions that ensure a large percentage of students become professionals and enter the workforce. Therefore, it is necessary to have an anonymous tutoring system that guarantees the permanence and completion of university studies. The present study conducted an initial diagnosis through a survey where information was collected about the tutor, personal, academic, and professional scope of tutoring, and the demand for the anonymous tutoring service. The results of the first four dimensions allowed us to know the reality of tutoring at the Universidad Nacional del Santa from the perception of the sample. In contrast, the last dimension reported the student's perception of the demand for anonymous tutoring to complement the already offered university accompaniment service.

Table 1. Levels of student's perception of the current situation of university accompaniment at Universidad Nacional del Santa.

Levels	Students	
	No.	%
Low	34	16.8
Medium	94	46.5
High	74	36.6
Total	202	100.0

Regarding the student's perception of the current situation of university support at the UNS, it can be seen that 16.8% (34) report a low level and 46.5% (94) say a medium level, which shows that the highest percentage of students is not receiving adequate university support and considers a good tutoring service necessary in their professional training. (See Table 1).

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When carrying out a more thorough descriptive analysis of each dimension, thereby responding to the results of the study based on the specific objectives regarding the characteristics of the tutoring service at UNS, the students from the three faculties that constituted the sample answered a series of questions about the tutor, which allowed us to obtain the following result.

Table 2. Levels of student’s perception of the tutor in university accompaniment at Universidad Nacional del Santa.

Levels	Students	
	No.	%
Low	16	7.9
Medium	109	54.0
High	77	38.1
Total	202	100.0

Regarding the student’s perception of the role of the tutor in university accompaniment, the results show that the highest percentage has a medium and low perception (61.9%), indicating that the tutoring work is not carried out properly, that is, it does not respond to the demands of the students, and they do not feel supported in the academic, professional and personal aspects. (Table 2).

Table 3. Levels of student’s perception of the personal sphere in university accompaniment at Universidad Nacional del Santa.

Levels	Students	
	No.	%
Low	44	21.8
Medium	82	40.6
High	76	37.6
Total	202	100.0

Regarding the guidance that students receive regarding the personal sphere in the teacher's tutorial work, it can be observed that 62.4% of the students have a medium and low perception, which indicates that the tutor must provide adequate spaces for students to express their concerns, interests, and emotions that lead to commitments to personal improvement. (Table 3).

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Table 4. Levels of student’s perception of the academic field in university accompaniment at Universidad Nacional del Santa.

Levels	Students	
	No.	%
Low	42	20.8
Medium	62	30.7
High	98	48.5
Total	202	100.0

Concerning the academic field, 51.5% of the students indicated a medium and low perception regarding monitoring academic work, methodology, use of appropriate resources and materials, continuous evaluation, and mutual support. However, 48.5% of students consider university support in the academic field adequate. (Table 4).

Table 5. Levels of student’s perception of the professional field in university accompaniment at Universidad Nacional del Santa.

Levels	Students	
	No.	%
Low	47	23.3
Medium	62	30.7
High	93	46.0
Total	202	100.0

Regarding the dimension related to the professional field, 54% of the students have a medium to low perception, evidencing that the tutorial work continues to have difficulties in terms of guidance for the fulfillment of goals, student integration, and review of professional choice, among other related matters. (Table 5).

Table 6. Levels of student’s perception of the demand for anonymous tutoring at Universidad Nacional del Santa.

Levels	Students	
	No.	%
Low	13	6.4
Half	70	34.7
High	119	58.9
Total	202	100.0

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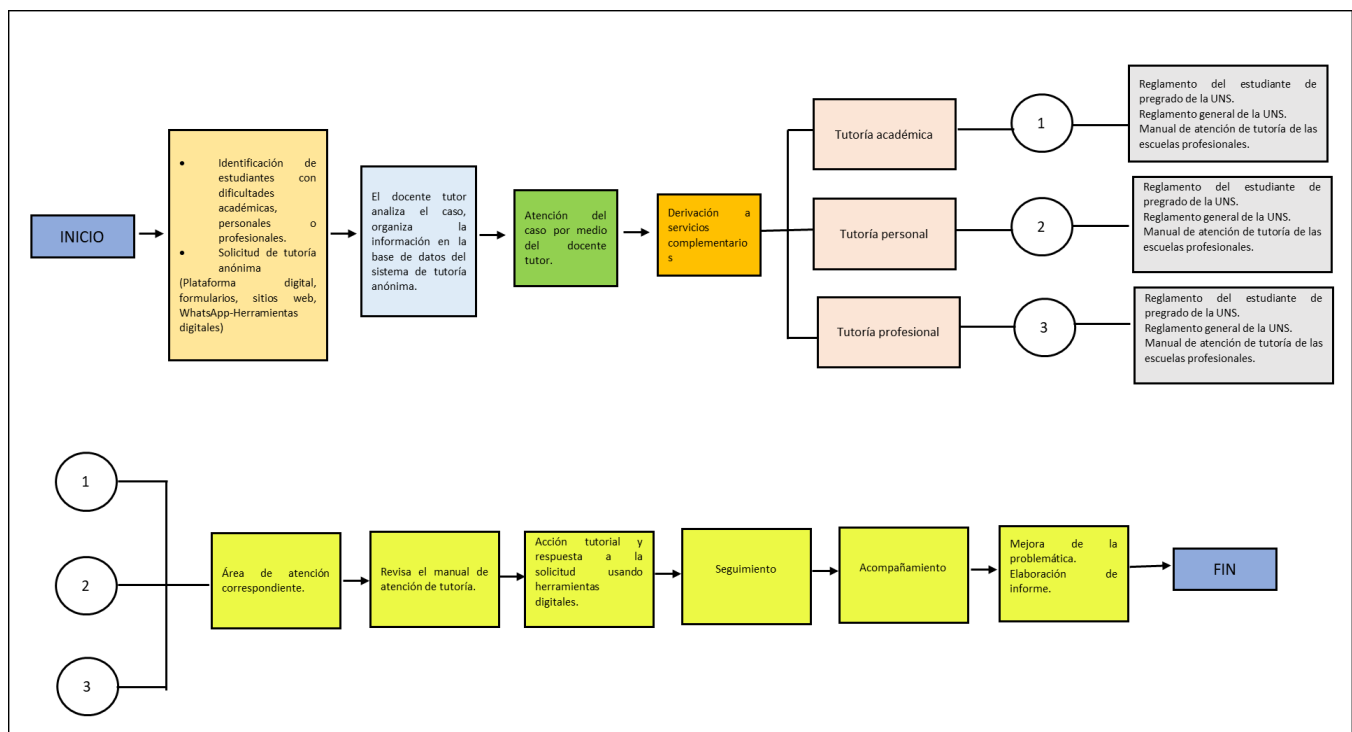
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Tables 2, 3, 4, 5, and 6 present the results of the five dimensions or factors. A certain tendency of the first four dimensions to a medium and low perception can be corroborated. This allows us to conclude descriptively that the aspects evaluated continue to show difficulties in fulfilling the teacher's tutorial work in the personal, academic, and professional spheres. Regarding the opinion of the experienced tutor given by the university, it can be deduced that students expect more from tutoring at their university. In dimension 5, a demand of 93.6% (medium and high) was obtained regarding anonymous tutoring, which is optimal and beneficial for the study. (Table 6).

The proposal for anonymous tutoring as a complementary service to university accompaniment in a public university in Nuevo Chimbote has considered the demand of students regarding the attention received, the evaluation of teaching performance, the diagnosis of the existing guidelines at the university, as well as the proposal of the teachers that constitutes support to carry out their work, including a novelty and significant contribution to student well-being.

Below is the graphic design of the proposal for its subsequent implementation.

Figure 2. Proposal for anonymous tutoring as a complementary service to university accompaniment.



Source: self-made

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DISCUSSION

Today, university tutoring requires a management system with the dimensions of attention that contemplates proposals for improvement to ensure the profile of tutor teachers guarantees timely and appropriate attention to students. Another fundamental aspect is to consider possible risks. I foresee possible alerts in the university stage's insertion, development, and consolidation. Anonymous tutoring as a complementary service to university accompaniment arises as an alternative that aims to provide support and attention to an essential sector of the student population that demands more private attention and that, for some reason, requires absolute confidentiality.

The study by Martínez *et al.*¹⁴ specifies that the highest percentage of students require comprehensive tutoring for their learning process at the university stage, and they also believe that there must be commitments made by the institutional management, faculty, and students that allow a successful transition in life. University is considered the most important in vocational training. However, tutoring requires content, planning, and inclusive elements improvement. In this research, when analyzing the student's perception of university accompaniment at the UNS, it can be seen that the highest percentage of students do not receive adequate university accompaniment and consider a good tutoring service necessary in their professional training.

Arbizu *et al.*¹⁵ specify that tutoring is an instrument linked to university teaching that has not continually developed its potential in Spanish universities. Various studies point out the essentially bureaucratic nature that tutoring has had until now in the context of Universities. This study shows that the tutoring work is not carried out properly; that is, it does not respond to the demands of the students, and they do not feel supported in the academic, professional, and personal aspects.

About the guidance that students receive regarding the personal sphere in the teacher's tutorial work, this research shows that students have a medium and low perception regarding the tutor's profile in their work of providing adequate spaces for students to express their concerns, interests, emotions that lead to commitments to personal improvement. About the academic field, Coila *et al.*¹⁶ specify that university tutoring is a dynamic factor in all aspects of student training, an integral part of the teaching function that requires continuous and direct tutor-tutor contact for optimal student learning and fosters a critical, reflective, and independent scientist. Moreno-Zagal *et al.*¹⁷ emphasize that the importance, design, development, and implementation of tutoring must focus on dynamic processes, empathy, motivation, and orientation that tend to independence, self-affirmation, self-management, and autonomy while being able to work horizontally in a collaborative, cooperative and network manner.

Regarding the dimension related to the professional field, the highest percentage of students report a medium to low perception regarding the actions planned in the tutorial work that guides them in meeting goals, student integration, and review of professional choice, among other related things. The study clarifies the panorama regarding the tutoring situation from the users' perspective: the

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students. According to Vivez and Salazar¹⁸, positive Tutoring relationships with experienced professors improve students' satisfaction with their degree, increase their confidence, and allow them to form their professional identity in a safe and enriching environment.

In this context, the research obtained a medium to high demand regarding anonymous tutoring, which constitutes a need to be addressed and a possibility of deeper analysis from different perspectives. The proposal for unknown tutoring as a complementary service to university accompaniment at a public university in Nuevo Chimbote responds to the demand expressed by students in the search for an individualized and confidential attention mechanism.

CONCLUSIONS

The description of the current tutoring situation reveals that the highest percentage of students require university support, whose tutorial action is committed to comprehensive professional training.

The students' perception regarding the first four dimensions of the study was mainly at a low and medium level, which showed that university accompaniment must rethink its functionality, provide spaces for dialogue, and train attention in the personal, academic, and professional areas.

The perception of the students regarding the last dimension of the study predominated at a medium and high level, so there is a significant demand for anonymous tutoring as a complementary service to university accompaniment in such a way as to support the students in university adaptation and integration that guarantees quality professional training.

The proposal for anonymous tutoring as a complementary service to university accompaniment was developed based on the analysis of the information obtained during this study, which made it possible to guarantee that the proposal is coherent with the needs of the study population and by the existing knowledge and previous experiences so that the proposal ensures the benefits that are projected for the student users of this service.

FINANCING

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CONFLICTS OF INTEREST

No conflicts of interest are declared.

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LETTER OF AUTHORIZATION FOR PUBLICATION AND DISTRIBUTION

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principles of scientific research and bioethics approved by their institution's ethics committee.

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9. I have limited all references to the Vancouver style and have not committed plagiarism.
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Conflict of interests

No conflicts of interest are declared.

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