Evaluation of tutorial functions. The perception of tutoring

Evaluación de las funciones tutoriales. La percepción del tutorado

DELGADO, Virginia*† & GARCÍA, Juan Carlos

ID 1ˢᵗ Author: *Virginia, Delgado*

ID 1ˢᵗ Coauthor: *Juan Carlos, García*

Abstract

The High Education Institutions at the Country are interested in offering an integral formation to their students, so that, it is being used, as a monitoring strategy, the mentoring programs, which aim to provide support to the students in issues like permanency, academic performance, orientation about formalities, personal affairs, among other situations. The present work focuses on analyzing the perception that the students coursing TSU, and Undergraduate academic careers have about their mentors and the mentoring program. To perform this analysis, a qualitative-quantitative methodology was put into effect about the evaluation survey results made to the mentors during the May-August 2014, SeptemberDecember 2014 and January-April 2015 four-month terms, identifying perception tendencies from the students respect to their mentors and the mentoring activities that they perform, but also respect to the Institutional mentoring program. By means of the tendencies analysis of the evaluation during the last three four-month terms, and also considering comments about the mentoring functions, the goals are to reach a continuous improvement, to identifyproblems to be handled using training activities and the enhancement of the Institutional Mentoring Program contents.

Resumen

Las Instituciones de Educación Superior en el país, se encuentran interesadas en dar una formación integral a sus estudiantes, para lo cual, se está utilizando como estrategía de seguimiento los programas de tutorías, los cuales buscan brindar apoyo a los alumnos en cuestiones como: permanencia, desempeño académico, orientación a trámites, atención a necesidades personales, entre otras. El presente trabajo, tiene la finalidad de analizar la percepción del alumno de los niveles de TSU y Continuidad de la Universidad Tecnológica del Norte de Aguascalientes (UTNA) sobre el tutor y el programa de tutoría. Para realizar dicho análisis, se utilizó una metodología cuantitativa y cualitativa de los resultados de la encuesta de evaluación a tutores de los cuatrimestres Mayo-Agosto 2014; Septiembre-Diciembre 2014 y Enero-Abril 2015, identificando tendencias de la percepción que tienen los alumnos respecto del tutor y el ejercicio de las funciones tutoriales, así como del programa de tutoría. A través del análisis de tendencias de la evaluación en los últimos tres cuatrimestres, así como de los comentarios realizados a las funciones tutoriales, se pretende alcanzar una mejora continua, identificar áreas de mejora para atender mediante capacitación y la redefinición de los contenidos del Programa Institucional de Tutorias.

Perception, mentor, mentoring, mentoring activities

Percepción, Tutor, Tutoría, Funciones tutoriales

Citation: DELGADO, Virginia & GARCÍA, Juan Carlos. Evaluation of tutorial functions. The perception of tutoring. ECORFAN Journal-Republic of El Salvador. 2020. 6-11:15-24.

---

* Correspondence to Author (Email: virginia.delgado@utna.edu.mx)

† Researcher contributing first author.

Introduction

Evaluation is considered an important action in the quality of education. Higher-level educational institutions carry out actions that allow them to evaluate the educational service. Currently there is a culture of quality and evaluation to accredit the educational service that it provides in its different educational programs, including the exercise of tutorial functions. The UTNA carries out these actions, which are formalized, in its procedure, within its Quality Management System (QMS). In each semester, the tutors are evaluated by the students. It is an evaluation in digital format, which is declared in the SGC. This evaluation is a survey-type instrument with 12 statements that evaluate the tutor and four items of the tutoring program with a Likert-type scale.

The tutored student is considered the main client and the engine of the educational processes, therefore, it is convenient for continuous improvement, to carry out a quantitative and / or qualitative analysis of the student's perception, expressed in the evaluation instrument for tutors.

Methodology

A quantitative and qualitative analysis will be carried out of the results of the survey for the four-month period May-August 2014; September-December 2014 and January-April 2015. Identifying trends in the perception that students have regarding the tutor and the exercise of the tutorial functions as well as the tutoring program.

Through the trend analysis of the evaluation in the last three semesters, as well as the comments made to the tutorial functions, the main perceptions of the students regarding the tutoring and their tutors will be identified. With which the starting points will be obtained to establish training programs, lines of action and actions for continuous improvement of the tutorial functions.

Performance

Performance by tutor in general.

In general, the perception that the student has of the tutor is differentiated according to the semester.

On a scale where bad is 1 and 5 is excellent, we can see that the mean perception trend in the May-August 2014 four-month period was a score of 4.01; while in the September-December 2014 four-month period it fell to 3.76; For its part, the evaluation in the January-April 2015 four-month period was 3.79.
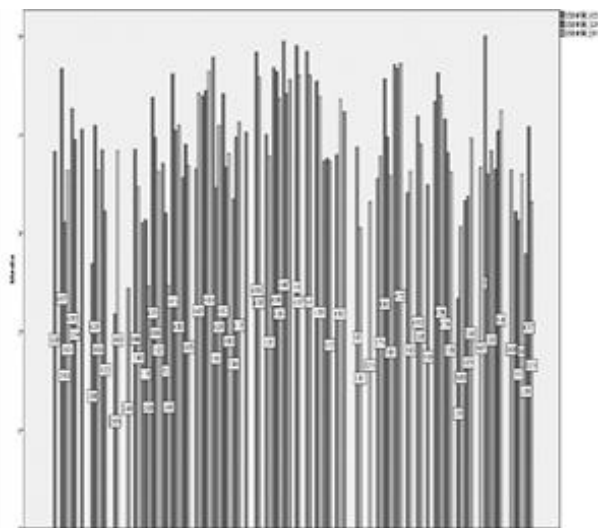
Graphic 1 General Perception of the performance of tutors

The correlation that exists in the evaluation made by the student with respect to his tutor can be observed, according to the semester he is studying. In the first two semester the student needs pertinent information that allows him to integrate into the educational community.

The correlation that exists in the evaluation made by the student with respect to his tutor can be observed, according to the semester he is studying. In the first two semester the student needs pertinent information that allows him to integrate into the educational community.

In the intermediate semesters it is important to consolidate and concentrate on the academic aspects, also, in the last semester the student is seeking to strengthen the professional part, since he is about to integrate into the labor sphere, through the stay.

CUATRIMESTRE SEPTIEMBRE-I ICIEMBRE 2014.						
	N	R	Min	Máx	$\bar{x}$	σ
Asistencia	1702	4	1	5	4.15	1.222
Confianza	1702	4	1	5	4.02	1.318
Atención	1702	4	1	5	4.15	1.244
Escucha	1702	4	1	5	4.15	1.240
Interés	1702	4	1	5	4.15	1.261
Respeto	1702	4	1	5	4.38	1.142
Orientación	1702	4	1	5	4.03	1.329
Hábitos_estudio	1702	4	1	5	3.95	1.343
Seguimiento	1702	4	1	5	4.05	1.324
Localizable	1702	4	1	5	3.44	1.683
Canalización	1702	4	1	5	4.10	1.303
Desempeño	1702	4	1	5	3.76	1.230
Mejorar_desempeño	1702	4	1	5	3.59	1.344
Integración	1702	4	1	5	3.64	1.414
Valores	1702	5	0	5	3.75	1.385
Programa	1702	5	0	5	3.67	1.281
Promedio general				3.94		

Table 1 Concentrate of statistics four-month period May-August 2014.

CUATRIMESTRE ENERO-A BRIL 2015.						
	N	R	Min	Máx	$\bar{x}$	σ
Asistencia	1397	5	0	5	4.30	1.160
Confianza	1397	5	0	5	4.15	1.298
Atención	1397	5	0	5	4.29	1.205
Escucha	1397	5	0	5	4.28	1.218
Interés	1397	5	0	5	4.29	1.219
Respeto	1397	5	0	5	4.44	1.091
Orientación	1397	5	0	5	4.26	1.232
Hábitos_estudio	1397	5	0	5	4.18	1.268
Seguimiento	1397	5	0	5	4.24	1.251
Localizable	1397	5	0	5	4.27	1.217
Canalización	1397	5	0	5	3.35	2.233
Desempeño	1397	5	0	5	3.79	1.230
Mejorar_desempeño	1397	5	0	5	3.69	1.299
Integración	1397	5	0	5	3.74	1.368
Valores	1397	5	0	5	3.84	1.364
Programa	1397	5	0	5	3.68	1.261
Promedio general				4.05		

Table 2 Concentrate of statistics four-month period September-December 2014.

In the first semester, students are in a process of integration into the university community, so the student's expectation is that the tutor provides timely information on aspects that allow them to travel through the university with enough information, feel part of the community, solve and satisfy their needs. The needs of the student and the care provided by the tutor are differentiated according to the semester, as is also observed by educational program.

Performance by sex

The tutorial functions can be performed with excellence by both men and women, considering the levels of TSU and Continuity; Being a man or a woman is not a condition for obtaining better or worse levels of performance in the practice of tutoring. In two of three four-month periods, men have a higher score than women, the differences are tiny, as is the difference observed in the four-month period where women are better evaluated than men, 3.89 on average against 3.78 obtained by women.
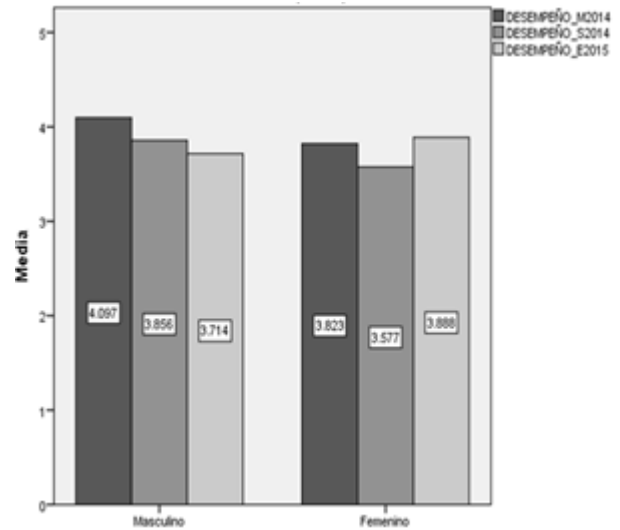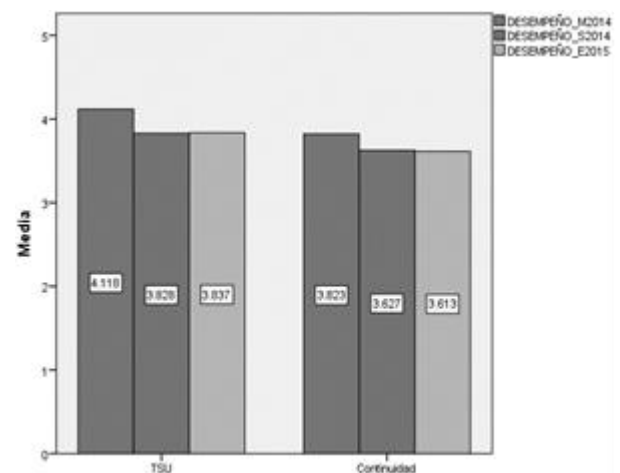

Graphic 2 Performance of tutors by sex

It is important to point out that the group of tutors, in the semester with the highest enrollment, September-December, is the lowest evaluation given to the tutors; in turn, in the January-April four-month period, it corresponds to men to obtain the lowest evaluation. It should be noted that the evaluation by sex and by level has a different behavior.

Performance by level

According to the educational level, students change their perception of tutoring. The evaluation of TSU students, specifically the performance of their tutor, is better perceived and evaluated than that derived from Continuity students. In TSU, the evaluation behavior is more stable, maximum 4.1 on average, minimum 3.8; the first average corresponds to the May-August semester and the second is observed in the January-April semester and not in the September-December semester, as could be expected due to the higher enrollment.
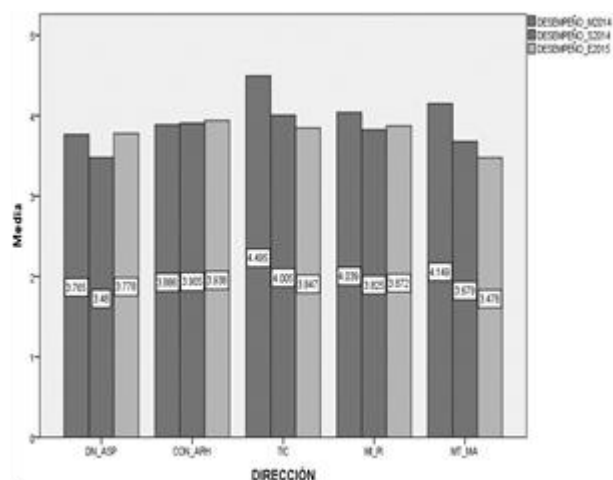

Graphic 3 Performance of tutors by educational level.

The perceptions that students have of the Continuity level are reflected in evaluations with a lower score than the one obtained in the TSU evaluations, especially the September-December semester and it is not until the May-August semester that students evaluate with better score to his tutors, 3.8 on average.

It should be noted that the Institutional Tutoring Program (PIT) contemplates group and individual tutoring for the TSU level, for students at the Continuity level only individual tutoring.

Performance by Academic Direction

The performance of the team of tutors by academic area and the profile of the student is to be considered. The monitoring that the tutor does to the students in the Information Technology (ICT) educational programs is reflected in the evaluation that is registered as one of the highest in relation to the rest of the academic areas with an average of 4.5 and contrasts with the evaluations of the areas of the semester September-December 2014 of the academic Programs of Business Development (DNM) and Sustainable and Protected Agriculture (ASP), Mechatronics (MT) and Automotive Mechanics (MA), despite high level of attention given to the students.

Graphic 4 Performance of tutors by Academic Direction

Confidence per quarter

According to the evaluations of the May-August semester, with an average score higher than 4, reaching 4.7, it is observed that the level of trust that students have in their tutor is higher than in the initial semesters, where the evaluation obtained is 4 or less in most of the Academic Directorates.
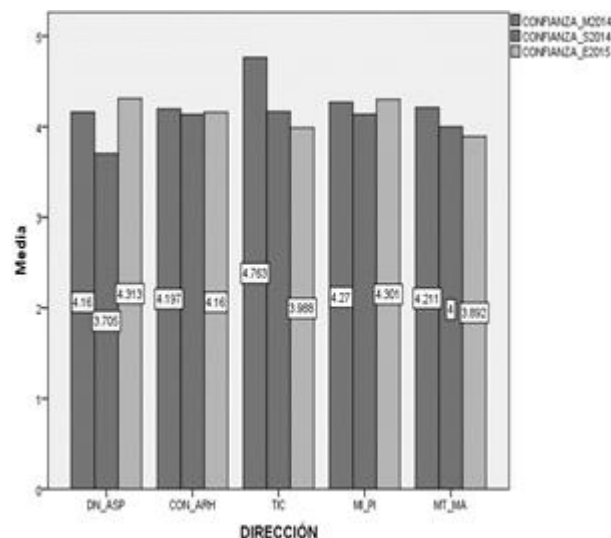
Graphic 5 Level of confidence in tutors per semester

Respect for semester

We can state that respect is an issue that is perceived as strong in the student-tutor relationship; This item is evaluated with scores of up to 4.8, with some focused exceptions. The ICT students perceive that the tutors of their program are the most respectful, considering also that in the May-August evaluation, the students have interacted with them for at least one year, having a greater knowledge of their role as a tutor.
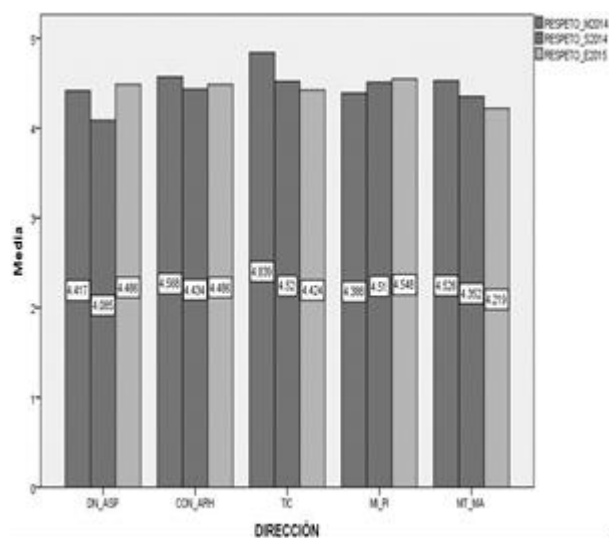
Graphic 6 Level of respect shown by tutors per semester

Orientation to procedures

The orientation to procedures is part of the tutorial functions, which according to the results of the evaluation represents an activity evaluated with an average higher than 4. The students perceive the existence of an important orientation on the part of their tutor.
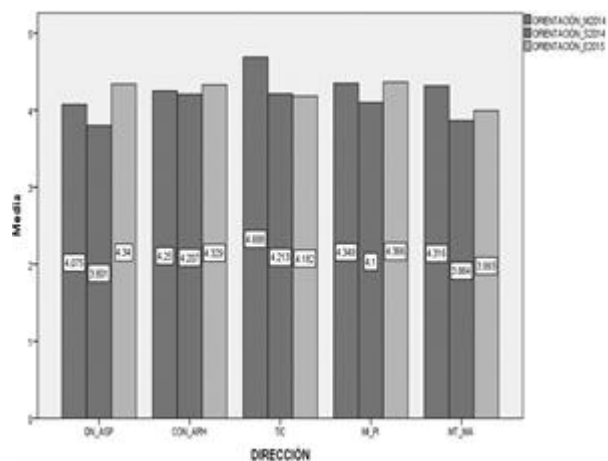
Graphic 7 Guidance provided by tutors per semester

Ease of locating the tutor

According to the student's perception, the tutor can be reached with a different score in each semester; The January-April evaluation stands out with scores higher than the other four-month periods, reaching maximum averages of 4.4. However, in the September-December semester, the student perceives that the tutor is less reachable, registering an evaluation of 3.6.
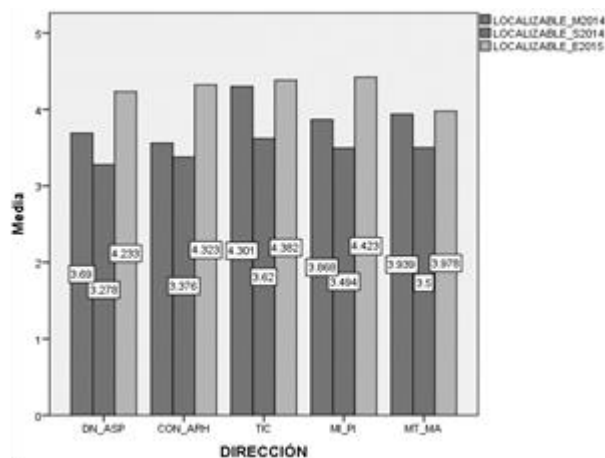
Graphic 8 Ease of locating the tutor per semester.

**General perception of the Institutional Tutoring Program (PIT)**

The perception of the Institutional Tutoring Program (PIT) is relatively low, with scores ranging from 3.3 to 4.1 and which contrast with the need for students to have a tutor to provide support or guidance when it comes to some individual or group problem.
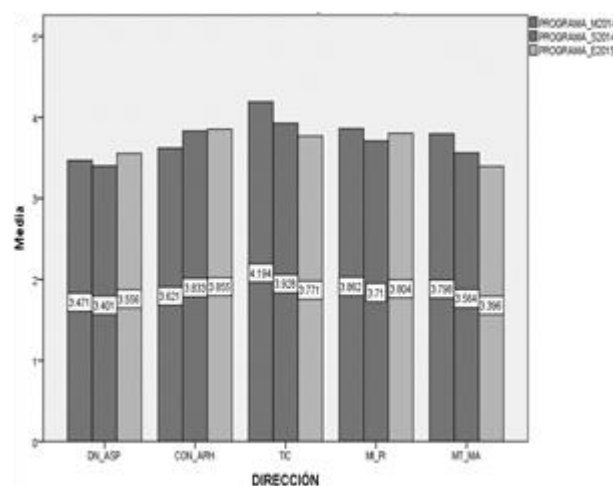
Graphic 9 General perception of the PIT by four-month period

PIT perception by level

The perception of the PIT has higher scores in the TSU level than in Continuity; in the latter it can be justified because it does not work with a group tutoring program, as it is done with students at the TSU level.
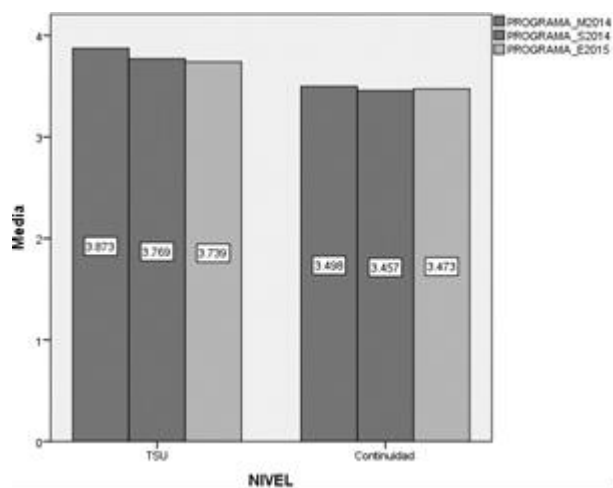

Graphic 10 Perception of the PIT by level.

Contrast of comments derived from the perception of the functions of the tutor
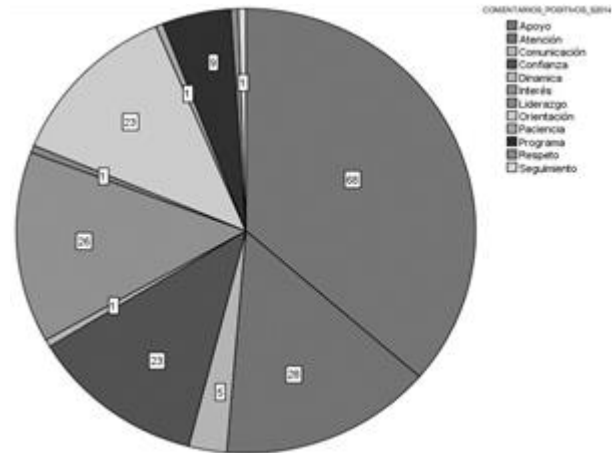
Considering that only 13 percent of the students, during the May-August 2014 semester, made a type of positive comment towards their tutors; Those comments that they perceive to have significant support from their tutor, the interest they have for them and that there is a climate of trust in their relationship stand out, which in total add up to 56 comments.

However, students refer to the patience, commitment and responsibility of the tutor, being those mentioned to a lesser extent as positive traits.
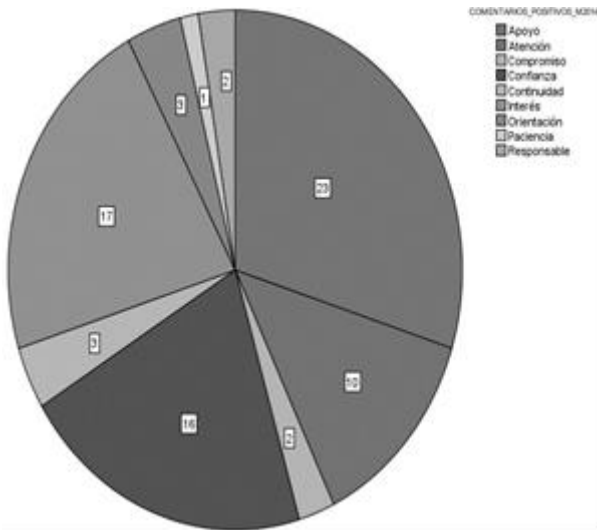
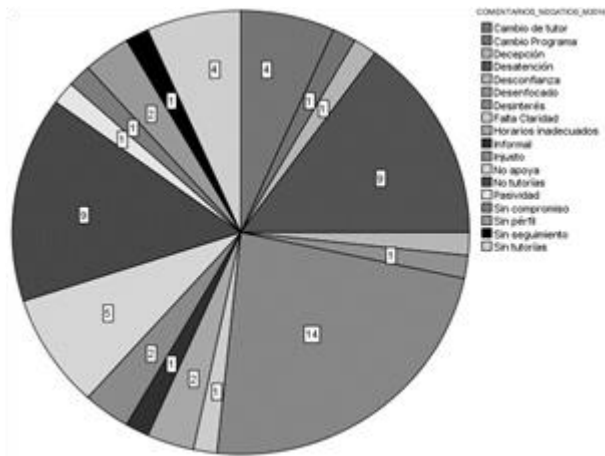**Graphic 11** Positive comments for the four-month period May-August 2014.

Of those comments made by students in the evaluation with a negative connotation, those who stated mainly referred to disinterest, inattention and not considering the tutoring session necessary, with a score of 32 comments, that is, little more than the average. half of the comments made by the students.

Graphic 12 Negative comments four-month period May-August 2014

In the September-December semester, students register a greater number of positive comments, reaching 187 mentions, standing out support, attention, trust, interest and guidance with a total of 100 positive comments as the areas that are best perceived, that is, 53 percent of the total.

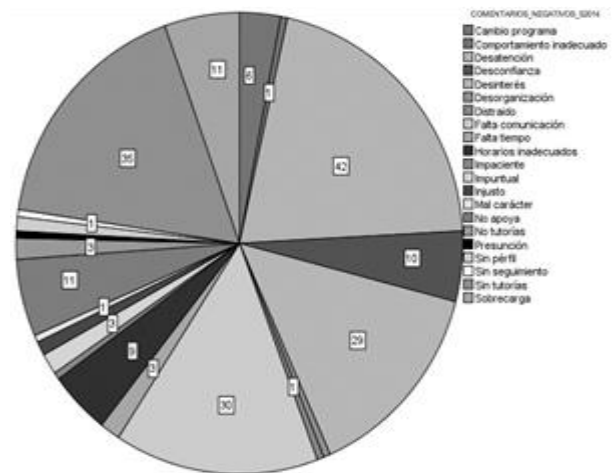**Graphic 13** Positive comments for the semester September-December 2014

The negative comments expressed by the students in the evaluation of the semester September-December 2014, are mainly focused on the issues of disorientation, disinterest, lack of communication and not having a tutoring session, with a score of 67 percent, that is, two out of every three of the comments made, the total being 203.

In a lesser proportion, although not less important, are the mentions referring to overload, inappropriate hours and lack of time, together with the comments of distrust and not support, which together add up to 44.
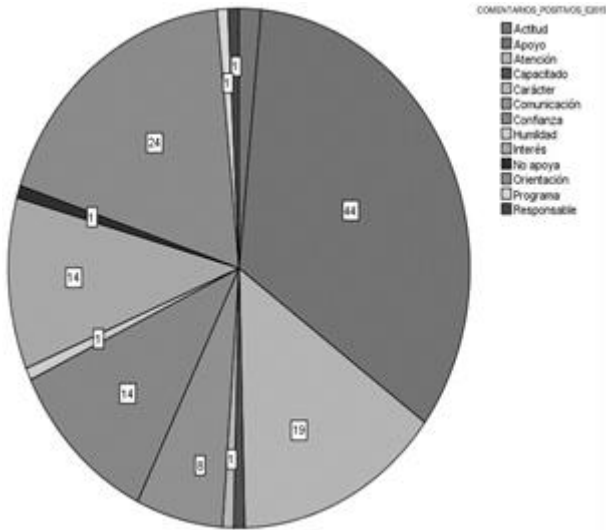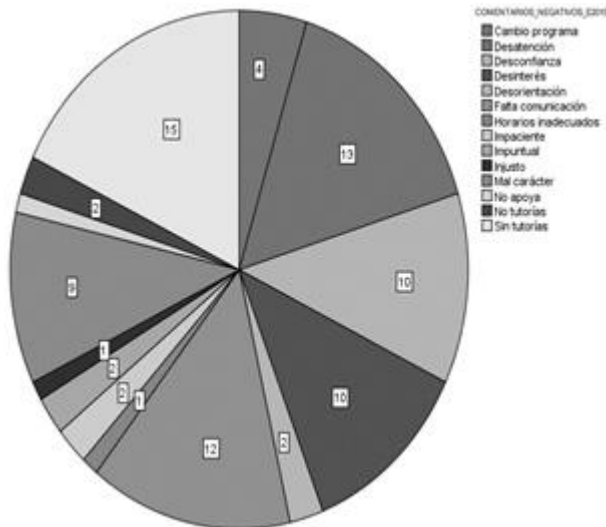

Graphic 14 Negative comments four-month period September-December 2014

As can be seen in the graph, of the 131 positive comments from the January-April 2015 quarter, we have 87 positive items related to support, care and guidance, this is two out of three. It is important to mention the aspects of trust and interest that present a considerable frequency.

Graphic 15 Positive comments for the four-month period January-April 2015

In the January-April 2015 four-month period, 84 negative comments were made, distinguishing those that refer to aspects such as no tutoring, inattention and lack of communication, which amount to 40 of them, that is, 50 percent of the comments. Likewise, disinterest, distrust and bad character stand out.

Graphic 16 Negative comments four-month period January-April 2015

Conclusions

In the May-August 2014 semester, regarding the question about the interest shown by the tutors, the results of the survey show an average rating of 4.32, which can be considered an acceptable rating, but without neglecting the comments made about it, in which it is reflected that there are students who perceive a certain level of disinterest, inattention and who do not want to have tutoring sessions.

Regarding the general evaluation, the respect item is striking, which has a high mean (4.52), and a dispersion of data, shown in the standard deviation of 0.984, which indicates that there is a homogeneous perception of the respect shown by the tutors.

Regarding the PIT, the average score obtained in this section deserves attention, since it barely reaches 3.74, together with the fact that in the comments, there are 15 negative comments about this same topic, which indicate that tutoring is not necessary or is requires making changes to the program.

In the semester September-December 2014, the highest mean can be found, again, in the row corresponding to Respect, with 4.38, with a standard deviation of 1.142, which can be classified as a satisfactory score, but not enough. It is worth noting the fact that in the comments made by the students, this aspect is not pointed out as positive, since they state that the "good" aspects are: support, attention, interest, trust and guidance.

The aspect with the lowest average qualification is the location of the tutor, since it only obtained an average score of 3.44, at the same time, it has a standard deviation of 1.683, which, compared with the rest of the information obtained, is a high deviation. It should be noted that this aspect is not mentioned in the negative evaluations indicated by the students, since they mention disorientation, disinterest, lack of communication and not having a tutoring session, among others.

In the January-April 2015 semester, respect is shown as a constant within the perception of the students in the tutors, since for the third consecutive semester, this concept is valued with the highest mean: 4.44 with a standard deviation of 1.091. The lowest average was obtained by the Canalization category, since it has a mean of only 3.35, and a standard deviation of 2.23; This value suggests that the data is highly polarized, that is, there are extremely high scores, but also very low.

As observed in the items of assistance, listening, and attention, shown in the table of statistics corresponding to the four-month period January-April 2015, there is a contradiction with what is expressed in the comments section, since neglect is pointed out as negative aspects , the lack of communication and the non-attendance of the tutor to the tutoring session.

Regarding the perception by sex, there is no difference in the perception of the tutorial function between male and female tutors. The variable sex of the tutor has no relevance in the results obtained by the evaluation survey of the tutorial function in the different semesters.

In turn, in the perception by level, it was observed that at the TSU level, the assessment towards tutoring is lower than at the Continuity level; Continuity students give greater importance to having a tutor to advise and guide them in academic, administrative and personal matters.

Regarding the perception by Academic Direction, the results of the evaluation show a positive perception of the tutor and the program, but that at the same time there are differences in this perception in accordance with the Academic Programs (Academic Direction) and the own profile student of each of them.

Regarding the trust that is had in the tutors, per semester, the level of trust that the students give to them increases over the course of the semesters, that is, higher levels of trust are obtained in the semester. May-August semester compared to September-December semester.

The data with which we worked belong to different generations; It will seek to give continuity to the analysis by following up on the generation in progress, to verify that the levels of confidence increase with the passage of the four-month periods. Likewise, according to the results of the evaluation, the guidance provided by the tutors represents an activity evaluated with an average higher than 4. The students perceive the existence of an important guidance from their tutor.

Regarding the easy location of the tutor, the perception that students have in this area results in a low evaluation, however, it is important to point out that, in the negative comments that they themselves make in the survey, they incorporate comments such as that the tutor has an overload of work, the hours are inadequate or there is not enough time to carry out the tutorials; These may be the determining factors for the difficulty in locating the tutor.

Finally, the perception of TSU students regarding the PIT is that it is not necessary to have a tutor or a tutoring program; On the other hand, the perception of Continuity students is that it is necessary to have tutors, a tutoring program and a schedule to carry them out. This perception is influenced by the differences between the ages and the employment situation of the students, since at the TSU level they are very young and most of them depend economically on their parents; In contrast, at the Continuity level, the number of students who are already working increases and therefore depends on themselves in the economic question, at the same time they present a higher degree of maturity.

Once the analysis of the perception of the PIT in the UTNA has been carried out, the following lines of action can be established as a pending agenda, both for the University and for the subsystem:

- Develop a PIT for the entire subsystem of technological and polytechnic universities, since this will allow a continuous evaluation of the follow-up given to the students of said subsystem, at the same time that it will affect substantive indicators such as: entry, permanence, graduation, degree, desertion, among others; which will strengthen the subsystem.

- Design, application and evaluation of tutoring procedures and formats that facilitate tutoring in all technological and polytechnic universities, in order to be included in the QMS of each institution, thereby increasing educational quality.

- Identify areas for improvement, both within the university and within the subsystem, which allow the establishment of a continuous and permanent training plan for all tutors in matters such as: study habits and techniques, active listening, interview, coaching, attention in crisis, bullying, gender equality, awareness in caring for the environment, among others.

Annexes

Annex 1 Instrument to evaluate tutoring performance

It is an evaluation in digital format, which is declared in the SGC. This evaluation is a survey-type instrument with 12 statements that evaluate the tutor and four items of the tutoring program with a Likert-type scale.

The questions asked to the students in the instrument to evaluate the PIT are transcribed.

1. Attend established sessions on time.

2. Build trust to communicate with me.

3. Show willingness to serve me.

4. You are willing to listen to me.

5. Show interest in academic and personal problems that affect my performance.

6. It is respectful in the deal.

7. Guides me for the completion of school procedures.

8. Guides me on study techniques and habits that help me improve my academic performance.

9. Follow up on the problems manifested in the group tutoring.

10. It is easy to locate your assigned tutor.

11. The tutor has channeled you sometime, when you have requested it.

12. In general, you consider that the performance of your tutor is.

13. It helped me improve my academic performance.

14. It helped me to feel more integrated to the University.

15. Stimulated knowledge and the construction of values.

16. In general, you consider that the Tutoring Program is:

Annex 2 Definitions

Educational evaluation: evaluation process of the educational service, in general, and of the tutorial functions in particular. Taking into account the aforementioned, it is appropriate, in general terms, the definition proposed by T. Tenbrink: Evaluation is the process of obtaining information and using it to form judgments that will in turn be used in decision-making (Elola & Toranzos, 2015).

Tutoring: Tutoring has been defined as a task that is carried out in educational institutions to offer a compensatory or remedial education for students who face academic difficulties (Romo, 2004). Tutoring is the "Process of academic, administrative and personal accompaniment, in a group and individual way, that the student is given full-time professors during their stay at the university, with the purpose of contributing to the improvement of academic performance and guiding them in matters administrative, academic and personal" (Universidad Tecnológica del Norte de Aguascalientes, 2015).

Tutor: Full-time professor who performs tutorial functions (Universidad Tecnológica del Norte de Aguascalientes, 2015).

Tutorial functions: The basic functions of a tutor are the following: study the characteristics of the assigned students (such as admission scores, grades, transcripts) and design a tutorial work plan. Give group and / or personal guidance in the three levels of tutorial attention to their assigned students. Refer to academic advising and other support services at the university. Monitor the performance and results of their students throughout their university career. Maintain contact with other tutors to exchange best practices (Gaitán, 2013)

References

Elola, N., & Toranzos, L. V. (1 de julio de 2015). Organización de Estados Iberoamericanos para la Educación, la Ciencia y la Cultura. Obtenido de http://www.oei.es

Gaitán, P. (2013). Hacia una definición de tutoría universitaria. México, D.F.: Universidad Iberoamericana.

Romo, A. (2004). La incorporación de los programas de tutoría en las instituciones de educación superior. México, D.F.: ANUIES.

Universidad Tecnológica del Norte de Aguascalientes. (2015). Sistema de Gestión de la Calidad. Rincón de Romos: UTNA.

ISSN-On line: 2414-4886
ECORFAN® All rights reserved.

DELGADO, Virginia & GARCÍA, Juan Carlos. Evaluation of tutorial functions. The perception of tutoring. ECORFAN Journal-Republic of El Salvador. 2020