

## **Percepción de profesores-tutores y maestrantes de la DAEA-UJAT, en cuanto a las competencias y funciones que deben desarrollar éstos en el proceso formativo de los estudios de posgrado**

*Perception of teachers and masters students from DAEA-UJAT, regarding the competences and functions which they must develop during the formative process in a postgraduate course of study*

*Percepção de professores-tutores e docentes do DAEA-UJAT, quanto às competências e funções que devem desenvolver no processo de formação de pós-graduados*

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### **Resumen**

El objetivo de este trabajo fue conocer la opinión de profesores, estudiantes y coordinadores de dos maestrías relacionadas con la educación en torno a las funciones que debe cumplir un tutor, rol esencial para que los maestrantes puedan culminar con éxito el proceso formativo que siguen en un posgrado. Para ello, la presente investigación se sustentó en una visión holística e integral de la acción tutorial y en el método de la teoría de roles (Deutsch y Krauss, 2001). Los participantes fueron estudiantes, docentes y coordinadores de dos maestrías de la División Académica de Educación (DAEA) y Artes de la Universidad Juárez Autónoma de Tabasco. Con base en las opiniones recabadas, se puede inferir que todos los implicados en los programas de posgrado seleccionados expresaron que es indispensable que la DAEA cuente con un programa de capacitación para tutores de posgrado que se enfoque en el estudio, la consolidación y el desarrollo de las funciones, roles, perfiles, organización, currículos y aspectos psicopedagógicos que se vinculan con la acción tutorial.

**Palabras claves:** Estrategia, formación, pedagógica, posgrado, tutores, tutorías.

### **Abstract**

The objective of this work was to know the opinion of teachers, students and coordinators from two different masters related to education regarding to the functions that a tutor must fulfill; essential role so the teachers can successfully conclude the formative process in a postgraduate course of study. In order to do that, the present investigation was based on a holistic and integral vision from the tutorial action and the method of role theory (Deutsch and Krauss, 2001). The participants were teachers, students and coordinators from two different masters of la División Académica de Educación (DAEA) y Artes from Universidad Juárez Autónoma de Tabasco.

Based on the opinions collected, it can be inferred that everyone involved and selected in the programs of this a postgraduate course pointed out that it is indispensable for DAEA to have a training program for graduate mentors focused on the study, consolidation and development of the functions, roles, profiles, organization, curricula and psychopedagogical aspects that are linked to the tutorial action.

**Keywords:** strategy, training, pedagogical, postgraduates, tutors, tutorials.

### **Resumo**

O objetivo deste estudo foi conhecer a opinião de professores, alunos e coordenadores de dois diplomas de mestrado relacionados com a educação em torno das funções a serem cumpridas por um papel essencial tutor para o Grande e pode concluir com êxito o processo de formação após uma pós-graduação Para o efeito, esta pesquisa foi baseada em uma visão holística e abrangente do tutorial e o método da teoria do papel (Deutsch e Krauss, 2001). Os participantes eram estudantes, professores e coordenadores de graus Divisão de dois de mestrado acadêmico Educação (DAEA) e Artes da Universidad Autonoma de Juarez Tabasco. Com base nas opiniões recolhidas, podemos inferir que todos os envolvidos nos programas de pós-graduação selecionados afirmou que é essencial que a contagem DAEA em um programa de formação de

professores de pós-graduação se concentra no estudo, consolidação e desenvolvimento de funções, papéis, perfis, organização curricular e aspectos de psicologia educacionais relacionados com o tutorial.

**Palavras-chave:** Estratégia, formação, pedagogia, pós-graduação, tutores, tutoriais.

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## Introduction

The globalization and the paradigmatic reordering of the present demand substantial transformations in the educational environment so that people can develop successfully in the labor market. In this regard, institutions such as the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) (2008) have made efforts in Mexico to make necessary adaptations and reforms to the country's educational programs, especially postgraduate ones, as the responsibility of this level training is to provide society with the indispensable tools to transform reality. This is achieved by developing in the professionals their teaching, extension, research and, fundamentally, tutoring, an essential role for the disciplinary, investigative and scientific advice of the specialists.

For this, not only must have financial resources, infrastructure, technology and bibliographic heritage in a framework of policies and decisions that affect the dynamics of organizing, transmitting and producing knowledge, but also should promote a culture based on research, where tutors with a greater academic and research production can share their knowledge. In the specific case of Mexico, in fact, some of the key elements that can be promoted to work in the training of tutors have been recognized, for example:

- Training purposes.
- Learning conception.
- Methodological processes.
- Development of competencies.
- Action and communication alternatives.

- Academic-administrative conditions.

These training criteria, however, contrast with some programs that have been created as a result of a series of experiential workshops that have tried to discover which of the aforementioned elements have impacted their postgraduate programs.

## **Background**

In all these Institutions of Higher Education, by statute, the Tutorial function was established as one more activity of the professors, with the purpose of supporting the students in an integral way and at the same time achieving an educational quality and efficiency, all in response to the perspective raised by international organizations focused on this sector, such as UNESCO in its World Declaration on Higher Education in the XXI Century: Vision and Action (1998) who believes that teaching staff should be available to students, with the purpose of guiding them in their studies. Indicating among the various responsibilities that the teacher must assume, that of "providing when appropriate, guidance and advice, recovery courses, training for study and other forms of support for students, including measures to improve their living conditions" (ANUIES, 2000)

Leaving aside the impromptu attempts to work in the formation of tutors, a series of systematized studies and experiences are described below, which have genuinely been concerned with forming the tutors in the best possible way. In this sense, we can name the case of the National Autonomous University of Mexico (UNAM), where a workshop for postgraduate tutors in Administration Sciences has been offered, which was applied to a group of twelve master and doctoral tutors during a period of 15 hours. The purpose of this was to gather experiences and exchange opinions to systematize and specify the functions, knowledge, skills, attitudes and requirements necessary to perform successfully in that role; contributing to the recognition of the importance of the process of tutoring practices, as a contribution to the development and consolidation of postgraduate studies in experimental sciences through the analysis of training practices and processes.

The results of this work showed that one of the most decisive factors for the development of the postgraduate course was tutoring, since this empowers students' autonomy through a teaching model that seeks to be direct, immediate and personal.

Likewise, the work stands out Academic competences of the postgraduate tutors in earth sciences of UNAM, GEOS, Unión Geofísica Mexicana, AC, carried out by García, Laguna, Campos, Ruiz and Martínez (2001), in the master's degree and doctorate in Earth sciences. This investigation consisted of analyzing each of the functions, activities, knowledge, skills, attitudes and values required to successfully perform the tutorial activity, of which the competences related to research, communication, forecasting and personal treatment stood out. as well as the performance of its functions in the process of orientation of the thesis student.

Another important study is that carried out at UNAM by De la Cruz and Abreu (2017), who evaluated the complexity of the tutoring processes at the postgraduate level, which led them to propose and clarify the roles and functions that they perform. they must assume in their tutorial work.

On the other hand, in Thesis Counseling in the postgraduate course, López and Farfán (2005) reported that the process of advising thesis and degree work was influenced by the social context, the institution and the lack of motivation of the participants. , while Assessment of tutoring in postgraduate studies: construction and validity (De la Cruz and Abreu 2017) identified some of the requirements demanded by students of their future tutors. This work was carried out through interviews with a sample of 194 applicants to enter the programs of Medical Sciences and Health Sciences of the UNAM. The results showed that the participants expected from their tutors skills in the field of teaching, as well as sensitivity to serve as academic counselors in the course of the investigation.

Expectations of teachers and postgraduate students in front of the tutoring (López & Ortega 2006) of the University of Guadalajara, focused on the richness of the expectations of each of these actors in what they expect and contemplate is the tutoring at this level; taking the aspects of: time, orientation, publication, research, thesis, among others.

However, in the specific case of the Universidad Juárez Autónoma de Tabasco (UJAT), it is worth noting that although this house of studies includes the tutorial system in the various postgraduate programs of the Academic Division of Education and Arts (DAEA) and in the Strategic Development Plan 2006-2016, in the Institutional Development Plan 2012-2016, as well as in the study regulations and curricular

guidelines, reality indicates that in practice there is no clear follow-up of this important work.

Due to this, it is intended to know if the teachers of the DAEA programs have the necessary training to exercise the role of tutors. Raising the questions: what are the international and national trends in relation to the function of tutoring? and what are the theoretical foundations that underlie the training and functions that the tutor who works in the DAEA-UJAT master's degree programs must assume to contribute to a quality training process in the students who pursue their masters?

### **Roles of the tutor**

One of the most significant roles for any graduate is the tutors, because on these professionals fall many of the responsibilities that are related to the guidance, monitoring and successful completion of the research that must be developed by all students. For this, the tutor must be an integral professional, since he must be trained not only in the area of research chosen by the student, but also in other facets related to psychosocial aspects and interpersonal relationships. This is evidenced in the different roles that a tutor must fulfill, which are listed below:

1. Teacher role: Facilitates the acquisition, construction and systematization of knowledge, as well as intellectual and procedural skills.
2. Role of psychosocial support: Offers psychological help to resolve, together with the tutor, conflicting situations during their training. It also encourages personal and professional development.
3. Coach role: Coaches in the acquisition of intellectual, pragmatic and research skills.
4. Role of academic advisor: Acts as a link between the tutorate and the study program in matters of standards, planning, financing, scholarships, graduation requirements, etc.
5. Role of sponsor: Help through their knowledge in the area, prestige and network of colleagues so that the tutor has better opportunities to develop their research,

present their findings in academic communities and obtain better job promotions.

6. Role of socializer: Transfers the norms, values, practices, attitudes, etc., of the profession and incorporates the tutorate into groups of peers and experts.
7. Role of researcher: Stimulates the formation of intellectual and moral attitudes towards science and contributes to the search for scientific truth.

These roles, of course, can be developed through various activities (eg courses, workshops, diploma courses, etc.) that can provide the tutor with a series of theoretical, practical and methodological elements that will allow him to fulfill an action integral tutorial, that is, sustained not only in the knowledge of technological and methodological tools proper to determine discipline, but also in the development of human principles and values, which are also indispensable to facilitate the investigative orientation process.

While it is true that these changes must be present in all educational levels, special mention requires the higher level and postgraduate studies which today face great challenges in the educational process of their students, as these educational institutions society They have been assigned the mission of being spaces where the human cadres of professionals that generate and disseminate knowledge based on integral development are formed. Specifically, the postgraduate studies stand out in this commitment of the IES, for which "they have adopted the research scientific as its essential objective, considering that this really reflects a narrow vision of science and the potential and needs of intellectual development of man and society ... "(Balmaseda & Castro 2010).

This is in accordance with what is stated in the National Postgraduate Program in Quality (PNPC) of Mexico, where the consolidation of the postgraduate course is highlighted through the training of its researchers and professionals to provide quality education (Consejo Mexicano of Postgraduate Studies [Comepo], 2005). In this sense, it should be emphasized that the training at the highest level of the tutors also affects the instruction of future postgraduates.

The tutorial action, therefore, should focus on generating alternatives of attention that affect the integral formation of the tutors, which can be achieved through scientific production, the creation of research and academic networks, as well as through the management, development and obtaining the degree. In this process, tutors should create spaces in which students can, in a systematic and intentional way, assimilate, rehearse and experiment with certain tasks, which should focus on getting a professional aware of their own practice to respond to problems of your reality.

In Mexico, the National Council of Science and Technology mentions on the axis focused on Mentoring, which is a category considered as an element of quality and indispensable evaluator requirement with which all postgraduate studies must count, to be evaluated by the agencies evaluators and certifiers, since the tutorial plays a key role that will allow the development and conclusion in time and form of the studies at this level, as it is an action that facilitates, guides and trains the students during their academic formation (CONACyT, 2010)

Given the above, it can be said that the present research is based on a holistic and comprehensive view of the tutorial action and the method of role theory where both the tutor and the student have different functions that must be developed in a complex process and dynamic (Deutsch y Krauss, 2001, De la Cruz y Abreu, 2004).

## **Materials and methods**

This research was based on the quantitative and qualitative paradigm (integral, bimodal), since the object of study was approached from a mixed model, which represents the highest degree of integration of both approaches. The chosen participants were the following:

- 23 2nd and 4th students, section A, of the Master's Degree in Teaching of the DAEA of the UJAT.
- 19 1st and 3rd students, section A, of the MA in Education of the DAEA of the UJAT.
- 7 teachers and 2 coordinators of the mentioned masters.



The theoretical methods used were scientific modeling, which facilitated obtaining the model of the pedagogical strategy and the existing relationships between its various components. Also, from the empirical method, the pre-experiment was used in order to assess the degree of knowledge and commitment of the tutors for exercising their work according to the context studied.

For this, instruments such as the questionnaire were used, which "consists of a set of questions about one or more variables to measure" (Hernández, Fernández and Baptista, 2014, page 217) This was used to know the opinion and expectations of the students in relation to the responsibility, the knowledge, the profile of aptitudes and the functions that they expect from their tutors. This means that the questionnaire was structured with the following four units of analysis:

- a. Conceptualization of the postgraduate tutorial action.
- b. Profile, role and function of the tutor.
- c. Personal experience of your tutorial process.
- d. Advantages and disadvantages of being a tutor.

The final questionnaire was made up of a total of 18 questions distributed in multiple choice, dichotomous, cascading, closed and open questions.

The second instrument used was the qualitative face-to-face interview, since it provides the opportunity to know in depth the opinion of the subjects interviewed. Specifically, we worked with the semi-structured interview, which is based "on a guide of issues or questions and the interviewer is free to introduce additional questions to specify concepts or obtain more information about the desired data" (Hernández, Fernández and Baptista, 2014, page 403) This instrument was used to find out what was the teachers' perception of the tutorial action in the framework of the DAEA-UJAT training programs. This interview, therefore, was designed with a total of 20 questions that focused on the following aspects:

- a. Professional identification data.
- b. Conceptualization of the postgraduate tutorial action.
- c. Profile, role and function of a tutor.
- d. Personal experience of your tutorial process.
- e. Differences between tutor and advisor.

f. Advantages and disadvantages of the postgraduate tutorial action.

With both instruments, a pilot test was carried out to validate its reliability and to make the necessary corrections. Then, with the data collected in the final instruments, we proceeded to model a training strategy for postgraduate tutors, which was submitted to the evaluation of experts. The composition of the group of specialists was 10 teachers (6 teachers and 4 doctors in the disciplines of Education, Management, Planning and Educational Administration, Psychology and Organizational Studies). All of them had more than 6 years of experience as teachers at the graduate level.

## Results

From the comparative results of the questionnaires applied to the teachers, it can be affirmed that 45% of students of 1st semester and 67% of 3rd semester of the master's degree in Education, as well as 50% of 2nd semester and 78% of the 4th semester of the Master's Degree in Teaching considered that tutoring is a task that should serve as a comprehensive and far-reaching support, whose purposes and goals should influence a better education and quality in postgraduate education.

On the other hand, regarding the tutor's profile, 50% of 1st semester students and 37% of 3rd semester of the Master's degree in Education, as well as 67% of 2nd semester and 67% of 4th grade Semester of the Masters in Teaching they felt that the tutor should have teaching and research experience, as well as a balance between the affective and cognitive relationship to have capacity and mastery of the process of tutoring.

In addition to this, the professors who work in the postgraduate course indicated that the tutors must have experience in teaching and research, and have the equivalent degree in which they are collaborating. Also, be part of the collaboration networks to link the teachers in the research, and be interested in being responsible for a certain number of students. Also, have professional ethics, be constantly updated and work in an interdisciplinary way to create, transform and disseminate knowledge in society.

On the other hand, all the respondents of the 1st and 3rd semesters of the Master's Degree in Education, as well as all of the second semesters of the Master's Degree in Teaching expressed that they would be interested in having a tutor during the

postgraduate training , while 11% of the students of 4th semester of Teaching were not sure of having this support.

On the benefits of these tutorials, 37% of students of 1st semester and 60% of 3rd semester of the Master's degree in Education, as well as 56% of 2nd semester and 22% of 4th semester of the master's degree in Teaching they said that it would serve to encourage their ability to rediscover new alternatives to knowledge-concerns, which would enhance them in the various disciplinary areas in which they are formed.

With regard to tutoring and counseling, 80% of students in 1st semester and 100% in 3rd semester of the Master's in Education, as well as 90% in 2nd semester and 67% in 4th semester of the Masters in Teaching considered that there were differences between both actions, since tutoring implies a more complex, integral and humanistic process in terms of the subject's information, while the counseling only focuses on guiding in some aspects of the thesis.

For their part, the professors interviewed mentioned that the figure of the tutor can not be merged with that of the advisor, since both, although complementary, must be applied separately; in this sense, they felt that the advisor would carry out the research work with the student, while the tutor would cover this work in a broader sense, without specifying what the role or work of the tutor would be in that process. For the expert the figure of the tutor and the advisor should not be confused, because the tutor plays his role in a more personal way with the intention of working in the training of students and in achieving the degree.

Likewise, it should be noted that the teachers interviewed commented that the lack of time prevents fulfilling the tasks of tutoring, so that most of them only serve as guides in the development of the theses, although with the passage of time they stop doing it. Likewise, they pointed out that this function does not appear established in the postgraduate institutional programs, so they are free to exercise it or leave it aside. For this reason, scenarios should be created that allow tutors to be available, as this would increase the terminal and graduate degree efficiency, as well as the formative quality of the teachers.

Regarding the type of attention of the tutors, 50% of students of 1st semester and 50% of 3rd semester of the Master's Degree in Education considered that this should be an individualized action, while 67% of students of 4. Semester of the Masters in Teaching expressed that they required a tutor to guide them in research projects. This

complaint is justified because the teachers must submit a research project as a final part of their graduate training.

For this reason, the students were consulted if they would like a tutoring program for postgraduate studies. The data collected indicated that all the respondents would support this type of initiative, although it is worth mentioning that 11% of the teachers in the 4th semester in Teaching responded negatively.

Regarding this questioning, the opinion of the professors should be added, who indicated that they had not received specific training for tutoring at the graduate level, although they did have a bachelor's degree. They also added that their work as teachers in the aforementioned masters was required by the institution.

Regarding the managers interviewed, it can be said that they felt that the functions that the tutors had to fulfill were related to the bibliographic orientation and the guide of research works. They also considered that tutors should be full-time professors with registered or institutionalized research projects; even belong to collaborative networks linking with other national academics, as well as having the ability to identify and offer guidance in relation to the academic, emotional and psychological aspects of the student.

## **Conclusions**

Based on the opinions gathered, it can be inferred that all those involved in the master's degrees selected in this work expressed that it is essential that the DAEA have a training program for graduate mentors that focuses on the study, consolidation and development of the functions, roles, profiles, organization, curricula and psychopedagogical aspects that are linked to the tutorial action.

A proposal for the training of tutors, therefore, should be based on the situational diagnosis and the analysis of the curricular guidelines of the masters analyzed. In this way, we can work on raising awareness of the importance of the tutorial action and proposing lines of action that focus on the investigative and disciplinary field. Likewise, to stipulate in a compulsory and well-defined manner within the institutional curricula of these programs the responsibilities that the tutor must perform, since in this way the teachers and tutors will be able to fulfill the level of commitment and quality

established. This will allow strengthening the preparation of the postgraduate teaching staff in terms of the tutorial action.

Indeed, postgraduate programs, in general, require professors broad competences not only in the field of teaching, but also in research and human relations. For this, programs that seek to achieve relevance, equity and quality should be encouraged to contribute to the development of management processes that impact continuous improvement. In this sense, importance must be given to the content of learning and the way to develop it, with teachers-tutors who conduct efficiently and effectively, and with theoretical and practical foundations the teaching and learning process.

The teacher-tutor, therefore, must know how to use the theoretical, psychopedagogical, didactic and instrumental elements to create real conditions that allow the graduate student to enhance their knowledge and develop their creativity, responsibility, commitment, sensitivity and awareness.

This means that postgraduate tutoring should be understood as an activity of a formative and dynamic character of the students' learning, based on a flexible and integrating model, that allows to interrelate functions to promote an integral formation based on the social and professional projection of the graduates.

That is why, in the specific case of the DAEA, it is urgent that the postgraduate teachers conceive in a positive way the process of the tutorial action, because in this way the barriers that slow down the processes of academic formation of the students can be broken. This means that the DAEA graduate teacher must recognize that the tutorial action is a continuous requirement of professional training in which academic, personal and vocational implications converge.

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