RESEARCH ARTICLE

THE SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY THROUGH TUTORING AT THE UNIVERSITY.

Claudia Guzmán Zarate1, Fernández Álvarez Mónica1, Jaqueline Guadalupe Guerrero Ceh2, Leonor Escalante Pla1, Karla Villaseñor Palma1 and María del Carmen De la Luz Lanzagorta1.

1. Autonomous University of Puebla.
2. Autonomous University of Campeche.

Abstract

The study presents the proposal of a pedagogical strategy that can contribute to the formation of social responsibility of university students through tutoring. Tutoring is understood as the function that accompanies the student throughout his or her academic trajectory and that addresses the dimensions of the student’s integral formation: academic, personal, social and labor. Firstly, the diagnosis of the current situation of tutoring and its contribution to social responsibility is presented. It is proposed as a research hypothesis: The implementation of a pedagogical strategy, sustained on a model focused on a pro-social performance, committed and connoted from the tutorial action, can favor the formation of social responsibility in university students. The strategy was developed in three phases and the main results of its application are presented. The pre-experiment was done in the degree in Educational Processes (DEP) of the Autonomous University of Puebla in Mexico.

Introduction:

The term of social responsibility comes originally from business organizations; however the university to be considered as an organization must perform this function. For this reason, multiple activities have been carried out over time to make possible to assume this commitment, conforming extension departments and university linkage, in the Autonomous University of Puebla (BUAP) in México, it has been proposed from the structure of a model of social integration. This model in its principles raises the true relationship of the school with the society, however, its performance only remains in sporadic actions without adequate planning, lacking of evaluation and systematization of all its processes. According to De la Calle, Giménez (2011), it’s not enough that there is university responsibility, university students must be trained to exercise it, therefore they propose the development of the responsibility of the university students and for the achievement of the same, training spaces must be opened and they must be developed throughout the stay of the students in the institutions.

So the tutoring to be conceived as a pedagogical strategy that permeates the curriculum in a transversal way, through an accompaniment to the student that contributes to their integral formation, can be one that supports the formation of the student’s social responsibility, added to the curricular and extracurricular process itself.
Faced with this challenge and commitment, this work presents a proposal on how to form the social responsibility of students through three phases, conformed by a set of actions in various training spaces, including the tutorial action. A pre-experiment was made and the main results are presented.

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**Tutoring and social responsibility:**

Superior level education faces multiple demands, that’s why the pedagogical processes at universities must contribute to a formation; capable of: innovate, transform, train competent individuals, prepared for life, autonomous and able to be socially responsible citizens. This implies potentiating committed socialization, so the subject is incorporated in a critical, autonomous, freeway and can contribute to the common benefit (De la Calle, 2010; Rodríguez, 2002; Magendzo, 2001).

Higher Education (HE) is expected to involve with the globalized context, but without ignoring the immediate context, to assume the social leadership that implies facing the commitments and the main problems that affect humanity. All of this in order to make proposals for the assurance of the welfare of the population, in conjunction with the community (UNESCO, 2009).

Delors (1996) points out that education is the path to integral formation and that includes the ability to observe oneself and learn to coexist with others in solidarity, for the achievement of a conscious and active citizenship. To do this, it’s essential to favor all the dimensions of the individual in the HE, placing special emphasis on the social and personal aspects.

Therefore, it’s imperative to redefine school trajectories, for that matter, educational guidance and tutoring include in their basic foundations the possibility of personalizing education through the incorporation and enforcement of the tutorial action (Álvarez, 2002; BUAP, 2007; Romo, 2011, 2015; Sánchez, Manzano, Ríos y Suárez, 2011; Fernández y Guzmán, 2013). It’s known that the purpose of the tutorial action is to contribute to the integral formation of the students; it implies an accompaniment that produces meaning, where the student interprets his activity, his social position and acts accordingly.

The educational system has the function of preparing each individual for their social role, assume their responsibility to others, their professional and cultural activity, teaching them their rights and obligations, as well as molding them in social skills. This must be addressed from all the areas and subjects of the syllabus, but also transversally to the curriculum, relying on the different actors. In this manner, the tutor is an essential figure who must be aware of his/her role within the institutional system and have the necessary skills to boost the relations between the society and the students, in order to favor the understanding of society from which the students are part (Moncada y Gómez, 2012; Ballesteros et. al., 2002).

However, the integral tutorial action doesn’t constitute a priority in universities, since the exercise of an academic and administrative tutorship prevails, even though it’s recognized that the tutorial process impacts on the formation, both of the student and the teacher/tutor, by how much can it favor the academic performance, personal development, professional orientation, work, the attention to diversity, but above all, social welfare, which allows a timely intervention (Álvarez, 2015; Arbizu, 2005).

In this matter, social responsibility and the integration of students into society are framed as characteristics of the BUAP in the University Model Minerva-UUM-, in the Institutional Development Plan 2013-2017 (IDP, 2013) and are enunciated in the mission of the BUAP (BUAP, 2014), when it’s stated that it’s a public institution, committed to the integral formation of critical and reflective professionals and citizens, capable of generating, adapting, recreating, innovating and applying knowledge of social relevance. It also promotes inclusion, equal opportunities and linking, to favor the creation of a proactive and productive society. These principles appear in the Social Integration Model (BUAP, 2007), where one of the main objectives is: integrate the university spaces with social spaces in order to generate human development environments that, through education and citizen participation, promote social commitment and a critical and free thinking.
In literature, significant contributions are rescued to respond to the need for future university graduated to be socially responsible. The main antecedents of this study are the investigations of Gaete (2012), Martí (2011), Domínguez and Rama (2012), Sacco (2009), González (2011; cited in Capllonch and Monzonís, 2015); Munguía (2011), Vallaey (2014, 2013, 2008, 2007) that exalt the relations between university, society and community, with emphasis on the notion of university social responsibility.

However, the closest studies to the present come from De la Calle (2010) and De la Calle and Giménez (2011), who distinguish between university social responsibility and social responsibility of the college student. This last construct is argued in the present work and conceived as a competence to be developed in the student body, from the action of the university tutor, which distinguishes the present research from precursor studies.

Likewise, it’s recognized the urgency of the development of contextualized pedagogical variants, that rescue the integral formation from the tutorship, from the socialization of the subjects, the interactions between teachers and students, the daily practices inside and outside the classroom, orienting activities and tasks where the students express their commitment as individuals, members of a family, a community, a university and a society.

Diagnosis: -
The main results of the diagnosis made to students of the Bachelor’s degree in Educational Processes of the BUAP were the following:
1. The UMM contemplates the figure of the tutor and the importance of its role in the integral formation of the student, from a constructivist vision, with a sociocultural and humanistic orientation.
2. Mentoring is considered to be transversal to the curriculum, although this isn’t coherently concrete in the practice.
3. Social responsibility is considered as one of the functions of the BUAP.
4. The small unity of action of the agents that intervene in the formation of the university student is appreciated.
5. The previous social education, aimed to students, has been very deficient.
6. It identifies a limited role and commitment achieved in university students.
7. There are certain kinds of supports received from the actions of the teacher/tutor, to contribute to the committed social formation.
8. Poor orientation from the family and the community to the students for social commitment.
9. There is a need of an integral pedagogical project where the different actors participate and that contributes to the formation of the university student, allowing him/her to be socially responsible.

Therefore, in this research is defined as a problem: the insufficiencies in the training of the university student related to the establishment of an active commitment to society. These insufficiencies can be identified, and at the same time solved, with various processes; however, the process recognized as the object of this research is the tutorial action in the university field, oriented to the social dimension of formation. The aforementioned is justified by referring to a training process that involves a wider vision than the classroom, which is an accompaniment to the student that contributes to their integral formation; in such a way that responds to the need to have guidance for the exercise of the profession, from the commitment to others and their environment.

As an objective: the assessment of the effectiveness of a pedagogical strategy for the formation of social responsibility in university students, from the tutorial action.

It’s proposed as a research hypothesis: the implementation of a pedagogical strategy, based on a pro-social action committed and connoted from the tutorial action, can favor the formation of social responsibility in university students.

Pedagogical strategy for the formation of social responsibility in university students, from the tutorial action: -
Its general objective is: To favor the formation of social responsibility in university students, through tutorial action.

For its implementation, the requirements are:
1. The commitment of students-tutors and community.
2. That the tutorial action constitutes an authentic learning process.
3. Co-participation (school-society) for the achievement of the committed formation of the student.
4. Training of the tutor and that understands the different dimensions in which it can affect the training of the student, including social.

The strategy is conceived to be developed in three phases:

**Diagnostic and awareness-raising phase associated with the student’s social responsibility through the tutorial action:**

**Objective:**
Identify the current development of social responsibility competence in university students to plan the formation of the same, through tutoring and engage the students about the implications of a socially responsible participation with the community.

**Actions:**
1. SWOT analysis.
2. Dialogue (tutor - tutored - community) to identify the main social problems.
3. Reflection with the student to inquire about the role of the university institutions and his own as a student, actor and promoter of social responsibility.
4. Characterization of a student profile, sensitive and aware of their role as an individual committed to society.

**Phase of execution of socio-educational projects through collaborative participation:**

which is specified from the action guided by the tutor

**Objective:**
Plan and develop socio-educational projects oriented from the tutorial action, focused on solving social problems.

**Actions:**
1. Assignment of guide tutor(s) for the construction strategy of the socio-educational projects plan linked to the social contexts in each of its phases.
2. Supervision and support in the design and application of diagnostic instruments.
3. Presentation of learning situations to solve the main social problems.
4. Actions to motivate, support and monitor the team and the project in each phase.

**Verification phase of the transformation of the educational-social reality from the participatory evaluation:**

**Objective:**
To assess the relevance of the results of the participation of college students with socio-educational projects in vulnerable contexts, which account for the transformation of the educational and social reality and of the learning achieved in the students, guided by the tutors.

**Actions:**
1. Verification of the development of social responsibility through the tutorial action, through valuation scales, self-assessment scales, observation and other instruments.
2. Evaluation of the final report of the socio-educational project.
3. Presentation of the results in the institutions, communities or vulnerable groups with which work was done to feed the intervention process.
4. Self-evaluation of students from the transformation of the contexts in which they intervened.
5. Conformation of support networks with other tutors, dependencies, institutions and community.

The process of evaluating the strategy involves each of the phases of the same. Given the transcendence of the tutorial action in the educational model, it’s necessary that those involved in the strategy participate in the evaluation process.

**Main results:**
It was decided to carry out an experiment, in the pre-experimental variant, to verify the validity of the pedagogical strategy. An intentional sample of 26 students from the DEP of the BUAP that represent 12% of the population was taken. The results presented in the pre-experiment consider the period from 2016 to 2017. Since tutoring, in each school year projects are carried out to intervene in different areas of the community. The selected group includes
students from different semesters of the DEP. The methodology is through socio-educational projects, experiential and playful methodology. The duration of the experiment was approximately seven months.

![Diagram](image)

**Scheme 1:** Population and sample of students of the DEP.

The pre-experiment considers three stages, the first is diagnostic, the second is intervening and the third is evaluation - improvement. A rating scale (Annex 1) and self-assessment (Annex 2) were used to verify the development of phases 2 and 3 of the social responsibility formation process.

The main preliminary qualitative results of the application of the strategy were:
1. Understand that the tutorial action can promote the integral formation of the student.
2. It shows that social responsibility can be formed through tutoring, developing socio-educational projects during the student's stay at the university.
3. The students became sensitized and committed with vulnerable sectors of the community, by assuming social responsibility as professionals.
4. The students faced complex situations that sometimes they could solve independently and in others the tutor guided and accompanied them so that the students could reflect on the possible strategic actions.
5. They were able to listen, reflect, be empathic, patient, loving, make decisions, and at the same time they strengthened their character, when facing complex and challenging environments.
6. They designed and managed, together with the tutor and their classmates, socio-training projects.
7. They evaluated in a participative way: self-evaluation, co-evaluation and / or hetero-evaluation.

Below are the main results of the self-assessment of the formative process of the students who participated.
The results obtained and reflected in the evaluation allow to corroborate that the strategy is viable for the formation of social responsibility in the students of the DEP. However, along the way it must be refined and adapted to multiple factors that have not always allowed developing what was planned, in addition to being subject to various actors who respond in a different way to learning situations.

The third phase of the strategy was, by simple inspection, the least developed through the strategy, because it refers to more complex knowledge, which implies more time for its promotion, more accompaniment and the gradual maturity of the students who participated.

Reflections:
1. The diagnosis evidenced the insufficiency in the formation of the social responsibility of the students of the superior level and the little accompaniment through the tutorial action to guide this process. However, it revealed the interest of educational actors to improve this process.
2. A pedagogical strategy was designed and implemented, consisting of three phases, a diagnosis and awareness-raising associated with the SR of the university student, the execution of the socio-educational projects
through collaborative participation and the verification phase of the transformation of the educational-social reality from participatory evaluation.

3. A pre-experiment was carried out, which made it possible to demonstrate, through a participatory, flexible and continuous evaluation, that the formation of social responsibility competence of superior level students was contributed through the tutorial action.

Recommendations:-
1. It is suggested to generalize the pedagogical intervention through the strategy provided, extending it to the other programs of the faculty, of the BUAP; as well as other universities.
2. Recommend the continuity of the presented study, by analyzing the formation of other professional skills of the university student linked to the social dimension of the training process.
3. Follow up on the proposal from the tutorial action, with a view to covering formal and non-formal contexts in a systematic way.
4. Continue working on the development of the strategy with the intention of improving it, adapting it to the needs of the student and society.

Appendix 1:- Scale of assessment of the process of formation of social responsibility (phase 2 and 3)

**Objective:** Identify the training process of social responsibility competence through the participant observation of the tutors in the project implementation sessions.

**Phase 2:- Design of transversal educational projects of social impact in a collaborative and reflective way**

| Levels                                                                 | High level of performance | Medium level of performance | Low level of performance | Very low level of performance |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------|----------------------------|--------------------------|-------------------------------|
| Identifies short, medium and long-term opportunities for the promotion of responsibility with society, through the development of strategic actions. |                           |                           |                          |                               |
| Hierarchizes the problems detected from the diagnosis of the context, to design the training projects from the different areas of the curriculum. |                           |                           |                          |                               |
| Elaborates creative and innovative proposals (training projects) that can be developed to solve the main social problems. |                           |                           |                          |                               |
| Analyze the fundamental components of the social impact training projects and the methodologies to intervene and evaluate in the chosen context. |                           |                           |                          |                               |
| Prepares and follows up collaboratively the action plan concerning to the interdisciplinary projects. |                           |                           |                          |                               |
| Establishes bonds in interdisciplinary groups in a collaborative, face-to-face or virtual way. |                           |                           |                          |                               |

**Phase 3: Autonomous and ethical action in the social transformation of its environment**

| Manages and participates in personal and social development spaces, in formal and non-formal contexts. |                       |                           |                          |                               |
| It assumes and promotes a responsible, participative and shared leadership with the different discussion groups, about the procedures for the construction of social responsibility. |                       |                           |                          |                               |
It takes strategic decisions from its own professional action, in order to contribute to improving justice, equality, tolerance and respect in society.

Participates and coordinates the execution of activities and joint projects as a team, with acceptance and respect for differences and in accordance with shared objectives of common interest.

It manages the approach to social problems, trying to achieve a balance between the individual welfare and community’s one.

Dialogue and learn from people with different points of view, manners and characteristics.

It exhibits a pro-social behavior inside and outside the university, with respect to multiculturalism, to the improvement of the quality of life of the people and the care of the environment.

Evaluates participative and permanently the pro-social action in the different projects made out, to follow up on it and make it part of his daily actions.

Appendix 2: Scale of self-assessment of the degree of participation of the university and of the tutorial action for the development in the formation of the competence social responsibility

**Objective:**
The student values the degree of social participation of the university and the tutorial action for the formation of social responsibility.

**Nomenclature:**
Totally agree=TA, Agree=A, Partially agree=PA, Partially disagree=PD, Disagree=D, Totally disagree=TD

**Before:**

| Indicator                                                                 | TA | A  | PA | PD | D  | TD |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------------|----|----|----|----|----|----|
| The university gives me an ethical and civic education that allows me to be a socially responsible person. |    |    |    |    |    |    |
| The university motivates me to put myself in the place of others and to react against the social, political and economic injustices present in my immediate context. |    |    |    |    |    |    |
| The different subjects of the career are updated and respond to the social needs of my environment. |    |    |    |    |    |    |
| My formation allows me to be an active citizen and solve problems in my community. |    |    |    |    |    |    |
| The university allows me to face real problems in vulnerable sectors. |    |    |    |    |    |    |
| From the tutorial action I have participated in social projects outside the university. |    |    |    |    |    |    |
| From the tutorial action, the knowledge of other subjects is linked to understand social problems. |    |    |    |    |    |    |
| Within the tutoring I have had the opportunity to do research applied to the solution of social problems. |    |    |    |    |    |    |

**Source:** Adaptation Vallaey (2009)

**After:**

| Indicator                                                                 | TA | A  | PA | PD | D  | TD |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------------|----|----|----|----|----|----|
| The tutorial action has contributed to my training being comprehensive, human, and |    |    |    |    |    |    |
In the university through socio-educational projects, the tutor's guide motivates me to put myself in the place of others and react against the social, political and economic injustices present in my immediate context.

The different subjects of the career are updated and respond to the social needs of my environment.

My training allowed me to be an active citizen and solve problems in my community.

Within the guided projects from the tutoring I have had the opportunity to face real problems in vulnerable sectors.

From the tutorial action I have participated in social projects outside the university.

From the tutorial action, the knowledge of other subjects is linked to understand social problems.

Within the tutoring I have had the opportunity to do research applied to the solution of social problems.

I have had meetings with external social actors to discuss social issues and plan projects.

Source: Adaptation Vallaeys (2009)

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