Psychosocial Educational Guidance Center as a retention and permanence strategy

Centro de Orientación Psicosocial Educativo como estrategia de retención y permanencia
Centro de Orientação Psicoeducacional como estratégia de retenção e permanência

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Abstract

Introduction: In the CCAV de Facatativá Virtual Care Community Center of the National Open and Distance University (UNAD), students with difficulties in their academic process have been identified, reflected in low historical average, repetitive loss of courses, long stay at the institution with little progress in their studies making it difficult to complete their professional training; Therefore, the need arises to create a Retention and Permanence strategy that allows support for students from the academic and personal spheres, which is why the Psychosocial Educational Guidance Center (COPE) was created. **Objective:** Create COPE as a retention and permanence strategy where timely attention is provided regarding the difficulties presented in the development of the educational process of CCAV de Facatativá students. **Methodology:** Qualitative research, with action research design, protocols, contact formats, semi-structured interviews, field notes and questionnaires were used to collect information. **Results:** Of the 49 users, 16 % were first-time students who continued their professionalization project with the university; 84 % corresponded to former students, of whom 81 % continued their academic process, and finally, 2 % of users decided to give up their academic training. **Conclusions:** It contributed to the promotion of personal reflection of users, and the potentialization of their personal resources, favoring the change of thoughts, emotions and/or behaviors in favor of greater academic and personal well-being.

Keywords: Psychological intervention; Pedagogical orientation; University student; Psychology of education; School performance

Resumen

Introducción: En el Centro Comunitario de Atención Virtual (CCAV) de Facatativá de la Universidad Nacional Abierta y a Distancia (UNAD), se han identificado estudiantes con dificultades en su proceso académico, reflejado en bajo promedio histórico, pérdida repetitiva de cursos y larga permanencia en la institución con poco avance en sus estudios, lo cual ha dificultado la finalización de su formación profesional. Por ello, surge la necesidad de crear una estrategia de retención y permanencia que permita el acompañamiento a los estudiantes desde los ámbitos académico y personal, razón por la cual se crea el Centro de Orientación Psicosocial Educativa (COPE). **Objetivo:** Crear el COPE como una estrategia de retención y permanencia en la que se brinde la atención oportuna respecto de las dificultades presentadas en el desarrollo del proceso educativo de los estudiantes del CCAV de Facatativá. **Metodología:** Investigación de tipo cualitativo, con diseño investigación-acción; para la recolección de información, se utilizaron protocolos, formatos de contacto, entrevista semiestructurada, anotaciones de campo y cuestionarios. **Resultados:** De los 49 usuarios, el 16 % correspondió a estudiantes de primera matrícula que continuaron su proyecto de profesionalización con la UNAD; el 84 % a estudiantes antiguos, de los cuales un 81 % dio continuidad a su proceso académico y, finalmente, un 2 % de los usuarios decidió desistir de su formación académica. **Conclusiones:** Se contribuyó a la promoción de la reflexión personal de los usuarios y a la potencialización de sus recursos personales, lo cual favoreció el cambio de pensamientos, emociones o comportamientos en pro de un mayor bienestar académico y personal.

Palabras clave: Intervención psicológica; Orientación pedagógica; Estudiante universitario; Psicología de la educación; Rendimiento escolar

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Resumen

Introducción: No Centro Comunitário de Atendimento Virtual CCAV de Facatativá da Universidade Nacional Aberta e a Distância (UNAD), foram identificados alunos com dificuldades em seu processo acadêmico, refletidos em baixa média histórica, perdas repetitivas de cursos, longa permanência na instituição com pouco progresso em os estudos dificultam a conclusão da formação profissional; Assim, surge a necessidade de criar uma estratégia de Retenção e Permanência que permita apoiar os alunos do âmbito acadêmico e pessoal, razão pela qual foi criado o Centro de Orientação Educacional Psicossocial (COPE). **Objetivo:** Criar o COPE como estratégia de retenção e permanência onde seja dada atenção oportuna às dificuldades apresentadas no desenvolvimento do processo educativo dos alunos do CCAV de Facatativá. **Metodologia:** Pesquisa qualitativa, com desenho de pesquisa-ação, protocolos, formatos de contato, entrevistas semiestruturadas, notas de campo e questionários foram utilizados para coletar informações. **Resultados:** Dos 49 usuários, 16 % eram alunos ingressantes que deram continuidade ao projeto de profissionalização junto à universidade; 84 % correspondiam a ex-alunos, dos quais 81 % continuaram o processo acadêmico e, por fim, 2 % dos utilizadores decidiram desistir da formação académica. **Conclusões:** Contribuiu para a promoção da reflexão pessoal dos utilizadores, e a potencialização dos seus recursos pessoais, favorecendo a mudança de pensamentos, emoções e/ou comportamentos em prol de um maior bem-estar académico e pessoal.

Palavras-chave: intervenção psicológica; aconselhamento educacional; estudante universitário; psicologia educacional; desempenho escolar.

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Introduction

There are students from various programs and academic periods who have encountered difficulties in their professional development and training at the Universidad Nacional Abierta y a Distancia (UNAD) in the Virtual Community Center (CCAV) in Facatativá. This problem is reflected in their low historical promise, frequent loss of courses, prolonged presence in the institution with little progress in their academic studies and multiple postponements with approved courses and difficulties to complete their professional training, the need for students to develop their autonomy to adapt to a pedagogical model that implies from the self-management of the academic exercise to respond to everyday circumstances, for example, relationship, family or work problems, as well as situations that involve decision-making, problem-solving processes or the development of adaptive coping strategies that allow balance in psychosocial functioning, which have also been identified as one of the challenges they must face since their entry and permanence at UNAD.

Therefore, the Center for Psychosocial Educational Guidance (COPE) was created as a retention and permanence strategy that aims to offer psychosocial guidance at the educational level with a particular focus on students who have been identified with an academic difficulty and who can find a way to learn and work on strategies to improve their academic performance and, in turn, have the opportunity to channel the life circumstances that have been affecting them.

To this end, the study was conducted under a qualitative approach and an action research design which, as mentioned by García (2023, p. 196), combines the principles of qualitative research and the action research method. This approach involves the active participation of the participants in the research process, which allows for a deeper and more contextualized understanding of the phenomenon studied.

Action research corresponds to a strategy that facilitates participatory reflection, in such a way that it has an impact on the development of self-awareness, which allows people to improve their own processes. Thus, from this perspective, joint action fosters collaborative advocacy scenarios to improve well-being and quality of life (Gutiérrez and Arce, 2015).

Theoretical framework

The objective of educational psychology is to generate information to produce practical knowledge in relation to the teaching-learning processes in educational environments in order to improve them, that is to say, that the people who acquire it have an enormous benefit and those who teach it have an enormous duty. From this perspective, educational psychology emphasizes the integration of traditional contents to facilitate the apprehension of global educational phenomena, through an articulating look that seeks the contributions of various areas of knowledge, such as history, sociology, among others, which could lead to a concept that links education with psychology (Paz Guerra and Peña Herrera, 2020).

Thus, as mentioned by Tomás Miguel and Gutiérrez Sanmartín (2019), educational psychology studies the elements that influence learning, whether individual characteristics such as autonomy and self-management, or environmental variables such as the support of teachers, parents and peers.

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For this reason, the COPE strategy seeks to provide comprehensive support to students with low academic performance by strengthening their life areas, which, as mentioned above, includes not only factors associated with their individual area, but also with their social environment. As pointed out by Gutiérrez-Monsalve et al. (2021), there are three variables associated with academic performance and learning processes differentiated among pedagogical, institutional and sociodemographic variables, including the student's own factors (physical, cognitive and affective development), socio-familial factors (family habits that affect their education) and factors of the educational context (teaching praxis). Thus, these categories influence academic success.

For its part, learning can be measured in various ways, including through academic performance, which, according to Gutiérrez-Monsalve et al. (2021), has been defined as a value attributed to the learning results of university students in a specific area and which, when compared with the level of knowledge expected of their peers, constitutes a criterion for defining academic achievement or failure.

Thus, academic performance is influenced by variables that are framed in the con- ductual, affective and cognitive dimensions related to the students' areas of life. From this perspective, it is important to establish a comprehensive accompaniment that allows the university student to acquire self-management and autonomy skills, which will result in protective factors that will prevent the increase of academic difficulties, as mentioned by Tomás Miguel and Gutiérrez Sanmartín (2019), who emphasize the relevance of "academic involvement" as a prevention strategy against dropout.

On the other hand, the design and implementation of psychosocial strategies in the educational environment and educational guidance have become extremely relevant in university environments, since they allow the integration of actions that promote well-being not only at a personal level, but also in the student's interaction relationships with other systems. Thus, a series of actions aimed at the psychosocial well-being of university students promotes the mitigation of risk factors in the academic context. In this regard, Leal Soto (2005) refers that in the academic context the psychosocial emerges in three dimensions: in a subsidiary way that frames the role of the educational institution as a vehicle of psychosocial support of initiatives derived from other instances; in an educational way that implies the entity's own work from which the psychosocial factors act as mediators of the pedagogical work, this can be called the psycho-educational, and, finally, from the psychosocial per se, due to the fact that at this level the institution is involved as a support network that is inserted in a larger social system.

Finally, psychosocial counseling deals with the study of interpersonal interactions that exist between human beings and their environment, promoting processes of influence and inter-influence in which psychosocial intervention covers all aspects of daily life and has a direct link with the human psyche. In turn, guidance is a support of the systemic process that is interwoven in a system of subject-subject links (interpersonal) and subject-conditions-entities links (socio-operational) given to all people for the achievement of vocational behaviors that prepare them for life through continuous intervention and techniques based on the principles of prevention, development and social intervention (Calviño, 2020).

Similarly, Herrera Rodríguez et al. (2014) define educational guidance as a set of support encounters aimed at students, focused on the development of their personal goals, with the purpose of addressing academic, emotional and social difficulties. This service can be conceived as

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as a flexible and adjustable resource according to the needs and particularities of the educational institution.

In accordance with the above, educational guidance aims to promote cooperative relationships and acquire social skills that allow the configuration of reciprocity among members of specific groups (Morales, 2020).

In accordance with the above, studies related to student retention and permanence have been conducted. As expressed by Velázquez Narváez and González Medina (2017), it was evidenced that students' own study strategies and self-regulation are linked to academic performance.

Quintero Velasco (2016) examines the causes of university dropout as a requirement for obtaining the degree of specialist in Higher Education by the UNAD by performing an ethnographic classification of students, identifies which situations related to family problems and economic difficulties motivate students to drop out, for which he proposes strategies for mitigating these that he calls academic, economic, social, institutional and socio-affective strategies.

The Psychosocial Orientation System (SOS), which is part of the Inclusive Access, Equity and Permanence Program (PAIEP) of Universidad Santiago de Chile, seeks to support and guide students in their process of insertion into academic life when non-academic factors interfere in achieving good academic performance. The SOS creates spaces in which students can grow or strengthen their per- sonal resources individually while remaining oriented in the academic sector in their life project; in addition, the SOS articulates the internal and external support network when appropriate (Moris, 2016).

Finally, the UNAD from the CCAV of Facatativá, in response to the needs evidenced in its student community that have a direct impact on retention and permanence due to low academic performance, arises as a COPE strategy, which has been designed from a psychology approach to provide tools to assist students in their personal and academic life processes. This is how the systemic approach under the strategic systemic model is taken as the structural basis to carry out the psychosocial accompaniment. According to Hornillos García (2019), the systemic approach is understood from a perspective of human problems as part of a system, in turn, as symptoms that arise in a complex context; it abandons the negative view of the problems and transforms it into a positive vision, in order to achieve that dysfunctional relationships generate an appropriate change; the systemic model focuses on family treatment and places the therapeutic emphasis on the modification of human contact patterns, since it considers that problems in this interaction are the origin of individual diseases and psychopathologies (Redondo Illescas, 2015).

In the same way, the systemic approach had its origin under the influence of different authors such as Nathan Ackerman, Frieda Fromm-Reichman, Stack Sullivan and Carl Rogers; however, it is in Gregory Bate- son in whom it finds its birth. This author, who belonged to the Mental Research Institute (MRI) of Palo Alto, formulated the double bind theory, in which different studies were carried out using some techniques, such as humor, play, family psychotherapy, hypnosis and the traits of the families of patients with schizophrenia. The work carried out at the MRI gave rise to other intervention approaches, an example being Salvador Minuchin's structural therapy, as well as a brief therapy approach developed by Lynn Segal, Weakland, Richard Fish and John Watzlawick. In turn, and under the RIM perspective, Jay Haley's strategic therapy emerges, whose main postulates are framed in human communication and communicational paradoxes.

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There is also evidence of the development of systemic family therapy in Latin America. In Argentina, in addition to Minuchin, there is María Cristina Ravazzola, who has developed her work on family violence, and the Systemic School of Argentina is identified for its interesting work in the training of therapists, under the tutelage of Marcelo Ceberio and Horacio Serebrinsky. Hatch, Maldonado and a Brazilian therapist contributed to the training of systemic family therapists in Ecuador; Hernández worked on the principles of brief therapy in Colombia, while Brenson focused on the crisis approach and psychological support (Ortiz Granja, 2008).

Methodology

Approach and design

The purpose of this qualitative research is to examine how different people perceive and experience the world around them, delving into their points of view, interpretations and meanings. In accordance with the above, Salazar-Escorcia (2020) mentions that the intention of qualitative studies is to carry out a systematic description of variables and phenomena from which to achieve an understanding of events, actions, norms, values, etc., from the perspective of the people being studied. Its design is action-research because its objective is to solve a concrete problem with the improvement of specific practices, focused on providing information to guide decision-making for certain structural processes; likewise, it will be oriented through the following phases: identification of the problem, elaboration of a plan, implementation and evaluation of said plan, and generation of the respective feedback from observing, thinking, acting and reviewing.

Population and sample

The population are the active students at UNAD enrolled in the CCAV of Facatativá from the different schools and programs. The sample taken was 49 students from the different schools, who present low academic performance according to the inclusion and exclusion criteria determined in the research process. This sampling is non-probabilistic as voluntary participants, case-type or by convenience.

Inclusion and exclusion criteria

For the inclusion of students to the COPE, the following criteria were determined:

- Be an active student of UNAD

- Historical average less than 3.0

- Longer time of permanence of the project in the curricular grid

- Having a greater number of failed credits than passed

credits As an exclusion criterion, the following is

determined:

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- Having a psychological pathology that is not being treated by a health professional.

Tools/instruments

Among the instruments used were protocols and formats for the initial assessment, follow-up and evaluation of the processes carried out with the students, through Excel matrices that were formulated for the identification and recognition of the current status of the students that served as a filter for the detection of the three inclusion criteria. In the same way, it was determined the summons to an academic committee to know the reasons for the student's academic status and make a referral to the COPE.

The attention was provided through five meetings to identify, evaluate and carry out the psychosocial counseling process. This action was developed through interviews to collect information that allowed the identification of the psychosocial problems for which the students accepted their involvement in the counseling process. Open-ended questionnaires were used to ascertain the perception of the psychosocial guidance provided with respect to the resolution or management of the difficult life situation. Data collection was based on field notes, non-participant observation, semi-structured interviews and documentary review. The instruments used for data analysis were transcription, analysis log and open coding.

Ethical considerations

Classification and minimization of research risk according to article 11 of Resolution 8430 of 1993 of the Ministry of Health. This research is classified as research with minimal risk, since it is a prospective study that involves the recording of data through the application of psycho-logical tests and interviews to generate a specific diagnosis. In this sense, the possible risk present is related to the handling of the information collected in the study population, for which, and in order to minimize this risk, the respective informed consent of the participants will be obtained by which they will authorize their participation with knowledge of the procedures, benefits and risks, on the one hand, and on the other hand, the researchers commit themselves to the ethical and legal handling of this information. For the selection of the study population, inclusion and exclusion criteria were defined that allowed the use of non-probabilistic sampling such as voluntary participants, case-type or by convenience, and thus meet the principle of justice. During the research process, no risks were generated for the integrity of the research group.

Maximization: ethical justification, benefit sharing and impact

In the case of the individuals who will participate in the research, the direct benefits have to do with the psychosocial support they will receive in the educational environment from different fronts, such as study habits, vocational orientation, resilience or coping strategies, This will allow them to improve their performance as university students in the program they are studying and avoid the loss of assignments, the postponement of courses or academic periods, as well as to achieve a balance in the different aspects of their lives that will allow them, in the midst of their reality and circumstances, to respond for the commitments they have acquired, not only in the field of university education.

On the other hand, for the educational institution, in this case UNAD, it is beneficial for the COPE to support the

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retention and permanence strategies of the CCAV of Facatativá, since it is configured as a scenario for accompanying students who present academic difficulties, the origin of which can be very varied. In this sense, it is required as a strategy to focus on specific cases of low performance and generate the respective accompaniment that allows students to improve their performance, remain at UNAD and complete their process. On the other hand, it is also important to emphasize that the COPE can identify psychosocial cases that require professional attention in order to make the respective referral, cases that would otherwise go unnoticed by UNAD in a high percentage.

The results obtained in the research will indicate whether, in the specific context of the CCAV of Facata- tivá, the COPE contributes as a retention and permanence strategy based on the accompaniment of students with academic difficulties and, in addition, can be proposed as a zonal strategy contributing to the institutional policy of student retention and permanence.

Informed consent

In order to guarantee respect for the principle of autonomy of the subjects participating in the research, the informed consent form for authorization of participation by minors and the informed consent form for adults are attached to this document.

Confidentiality, confidentiality, confidentiality, privacy and identity protection

All personal data collected in this study are confidential and were treated in accordance with Law 1581 of 2012. To this end, the information collected during the research was kept in the office destined for the attention of students of the COPE of the CCAV of Facatativá for a period of five years after its completion, which will be guarded by the principal investigator. The persons who will have access to the personal data of the participants in the research will be the psychologist director of the COPE and whoever they consider appropriate. The information on the results obtained from the information generated will be presented to the director of the center, who will prepare a report on the impact of the strategy.

Results

As a result, a retention and permanence strategy was created, the COPE and the implementation of its pilot plan, which provided an organizational structure and the application of formats and protocols in accordance with the particularities of the users/students who participated in it.

The epistemological, legal and methodological bases were constructed to support the COPE project, together with which care routes were established with the municipal entities to support students who receive care at the COPE and who, according to the professional's criteria, are recommended for therapeutic assistance.

Ten care protocols were prepared for users, in accordance with the problems identified:

1.   Coping strategies

2. Study habits
3. Assertive communication
4. Vocational orientation
5. Parenting Guidelines
6. Procrastination
7. Time habits
8. Emotion management
9. Stress management
10. Resilience

The systemic approach was determined under the strategic model and its intervention techniques for the adequate psychosocial accompaniment and oriented to the students for the approach of the implemented sessions, proposing solution strategies with clear and short-term goals, initially based on the failed attempted solutions (SIF), on which revision and orientation actions were proposed for a new implementation by the users or the creation of new strategies focused on the identified problem.

The implementation of the COPE pilot plan was carried out from 2021 to the first semester of 2023, serving 49 students/users, of which 81.6% corresponds to female students (40 females) and 18.4% corresponds to male students (9 males), as shown in Table 1.

In the initial evaluation phase and through observation, it became evident that the most recurrent problems of the users were the lack of organization of study time, which is subject to the adjustment between family and work time. At the same time, it was determined that women, more than men, have a deficit in time and a lack of understanding of the readings and course guides that they have enrolled in the UNAD because of their household and work duties.

Tabla 1.

Usuarios atendidos en el COPE

Periodo académico	Total de estudiantes por periodo académico	Total de estudiantes por año
16-1-2021	5 (2 hombres, 3 mujeres)	17 (5 hombres, 12 mujeres)
16-4-2021	12 (3 hombres, 9 mujeres)	
16-1-2022	8 (1 hombre, 7 mujeres)	20 (3 hombres, 17 mujeres)
16-4-2022	12 (2 hombres, 10 mujeres)	
16-1-2023	12 (1 hombre, 11 mujeres)	12 (1 hombre, 11 mujeres)
Total usuarios atendidos durante la investigación		**49 (9 hombres, 40 mujeres)**

Fuente: Elaboración propia.

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However, there is evidence that there are other factors in which the men show a lack of adaptation to the groups from the virtuality, that is, the groups in which they are assigned within the courses they have enrolled, where they avoid synchronous and asynchronous communication among UNAD colleagues, which hinders the achievement of the work assigned in UNAD. In addition, it is evident that,

As in women, there is a deficit in time for other activities related to home and work.

In the totality of the users attended, it was observed that 80% (39 students) have a full-time job, while 20% (10 students) were unemployed, but working informally. This is a determining factor in the reasons for consulting the COPE, since 100 % of the users stated that they had problems in organizing their time, which showed that their occupations did not allow them to devote as much time as they would like to their academic training. Some additional factors were also identified, such as a long commute from their homes to their workplaces, rotating shifts that alter the planning of schedules and work overload.

The following problems were identified in the attention provided to users/students (Table 2).

Table 2.

Description of problems addressed

Academic period	Total number of students served in the period	Login problems common to all users	Description of the problem
16-1-2021/16-4-2021	17	Time organization problems	The time available for academic activities is limited, and there are no established study habits, which hinders satisfactory progress in the academic process.
		Problems with parenting patterns	Users presented problems with parenting patterns. upbringing. Therefore, we seek to help the user to see his child from a different perspective, to identify the qualities that may not be perceptible due to intrafamily problems, managing to generate time habits in the user as a way to act assertively through routines to establish a systematized way of doing things.
		Low self-esteem	The users presented low levels of self-esteem, which affects each of the environments where they develop. It is important to provide support tools so that they can find in their values and capabilities the way to mitigate factors such as comparison with other people and self-judgments.
		Coping strategies Bereavement	management, one of the problems present in the These users, affects their ability to give continuity to life. The fact of not facing the loss of a loved one or not accepting his or her absence prevents users from moving forward in their academic, personal and emotional lives. It is important to provide support tools for each of them to find those values and qualities that their loved ones had, reflecting on them and applying them to their lives.
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Period	N	Problem	Description
16-1-2022/16-4-2022	20	Time organization problems	The time available for academic activities is limited, and there are no established study habits, which hinders satisfactory progress in the academic process.
		Coping strategies	Bereavement management, one of the problems present in these users, affects their ability to give continuity to life. The fact of not facing the loss of a loved one or not accepting his or her absence prevents users from moving forward in their academic, personal and emotional lives. It is important to provide support tools for each of them to find those values and qualities that their loved ones had, reflecting on them and applying them to their lives.
		Problems with study habits	Users with COPE accompaniment with poor study habits and ineffective strategies. In addition, they do not have adequate time management, presenting difficulties in their activities and low academic performance.
		Vocational Orientation	Users who are in semesters between the first and second semesters. The students are not confident and comfortable with the professional program they have enrolled in. Vocational orientation tests are applied, which show interest in other areas in order to make the right decisions, such as changing programs.
		Infections of Sexually Transmitted Infections (STIs)	One user was diagnosed with HIV, which generated a negative impact on the development of life, seeking support to deal with the situation exposed through close support networks and coping strategies.
		Gender-based violence (GBV)	A client reports aggression and abuse by her partner, which especially affects her academic performance due to the repeated loss of enrolled courses.
		Low self-esteem	The users presented low levels of self-esteem, which affects each of the environments where they develop. It is important to provide support tools so that they can find in their values and capabilities the way to mitigate factors such as comparison with other people and self-judgments.
16-1-2023	12	Emotional management problems	The various problems encountered by the users reflect inadequate emotional management and difficulty in coping in different aspects of life.
		Problems with study habits	Users with COPE accompaniment with poor study habits and ineffective strategies, in addition, do not have adequate time management, presenting difficulties in their activities and low academic performance.
		Anxiety or depression	Problem related to changes in life processes and of difficulty in emotional management.

Source: Own elaboration.

Time organization problems

Regarding the problem of time organization, one of the causes found is the virtual modality of the UNAD, since students/users do not have the necessary time to carry out academic activities, since there is no figure in the UNAD that demands an established study schedule; on the contrary, the student is given total autonomy to adapt his or her time to the needs of the institution.

The students have a variety of time-consuming responsibilities, so they put aside academic commitments to which more time should be devoted. Students have various responsibilities that demand time, so they put aside academic commitments to which more time should be devoted, and thus achieve the goals proposed by each course. One of the most common causes of the lack of organization of time and study habits is that users do not know how to use it correctly: the lack of a weekly schedule or calendar, setting specific objectives with each of the activities and the low understanding of guides make this problem one of the most common.

Low self-esteem

Low levels of self-esteem in users affect how they function in their environment, negatively impact the emotional, family and work aspects of the user, as well as provoke signs, such as comparison with others, mistreatment and negative thoughts towards themselves, that is, a negative evaluation of the self-concept.

One of the main causes of this problem is stagnation in the type of life one leads, i.e., lack of goals and objectives, very low life expectations, and a monotonous rhythm of life, neglecting hobbies and recreational activities.

Problems with parenting patterns

The lack of parenting guidelines for users with their children turns everyday situations into complex situations that get out of control and affect family life. Parenting guidelines help facilitate good family coexistence and the development of the skills of each of its members; children's autonomy facilitates the development of the parents' activities and generates tranquility in the home. One of the most common causes of parenting guidelines is that users do not know how to use them with the problems and behaviors that they face every day with their children; the reference they have of the parenting guidelines applied to themselves makes this one of the most frequent problems that occur.

Coping strategies

Major life events, positive or negative, can generate psychological stress. Most people experience pain or distress as a result of difficult events, such as divorce, miscarriage, death of a loved one, or loss of a job. Even events that many people consider good (such as getting married, having a child, and buying property) can cause severe stress. People may use a combination of behavior, thought and emotion to adapt to stress, depending on the scenario.

Sometimes it is difficult to adapt to new changes, to accept new ways of living and even to interact with others or to be more affective with loved ones; each stage of life tests many ways of seeing things, so it is important to know how to face each event in a positive way. In the users' processes, it was observed that there was a lack of coping strategies in situations such as death of loved ones, family problems, breakups, among others.

Subsequently, the support sessions begin in this phase: sessions 2, 3 and 4 of the process, in which use is made of the protocols selected for each case, using the resources offered by the techniques of the strategic systemic model. In this phase, several of the students/users drop out of the process.

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The lack of time to comply with the scheduled sessions was one of the reasons for the lack of time to comply with the scheduled sessions.

Description of interaction contexts

At the family level, it became evident that there are students with separated parents; in some of them, it is evident that there is little collaboration between spouses in relation to household activities. The users present expectations related to the home, their studies, and the type of work they want; in addition, during the sessions conducted by the COPE, effective actions for their fulfillment were reported.

At the economic level, it was identified that some students live in rural areas, which makes it difficult to connect to the Internet, and some of them have more than two jobs to support their families.

For the realization of the sessions with the users/students, it was imperative to use two protocols in most of them, in response to their particular needs, trying to find optimal solutions to the problems that impact their academic performance. It became evident that in most of the users/students a common need was identified, which was the lack of organization strategies and prioritization of their time for the realization of academic and personal activities.

As a consequence, the protocol most applied in the sessions was time and study habits, which has as its main objective to explain to the user the importance of time management for the adequate development of the courses and their activities, since good time and study habits generate in the users the autonomy that will allow them to improve their capacity to acquire and consolidate previous and old knowledge, as well as to plan and organize both academic and personal time.

Similarly, the second most applied protocol during the development of the sessions corresponded to coping strategies based on the needs of the users. Although its objective is to generate in the user/student strategies that promote improvement in their quality of life by consolidating their strengths and skills, coping or avoidance strategies are usually used when the user assumes that active coping should be postponed due to the need to organize and gather psychosocial resources before actively facing the situation, which are strategies focused on avoidance, distraction, taking distance from the stressful event or engaging in another activity to avoid thinking (Castagnetta, 2014).

Users' conclusions

During the final session, the conclusions of the users regarding the experience of the accompaniment provided by the COPE are evidenced, most of whom state that they had a positive impact, obtaining satisfactory results both in their academic processes and in their emotional states, with the COPE being a support network that helped them to highlight the difficulties that had affected them and prevented them from having a psychological wellbeing. A recapitulation was also made of important aspects for the progress and advancement of each user, the tools in each of the sessions carried out, based on which a reflection was made of the aspects that the user improved and those in which he still has shortcomings.

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During the service and accompaniment provided by COPE, some students/users dropped out of the process. The reasons for withdrawal vary for each student/user; however, there is a determining factor, which is the limited time each of them has to complete the sessions (Table 3).

Table 3.
Users' conclusions

Period	Conclusions expressed by the user in the final session
16-1-2021/16-4 2021	• The student/user states that she feels satisfied with the COPE support, since she was able to understand her problem and good strategies are generated in each session to mitigate it, which she puts into practice on a daily basis. She states that communication with her husband has improved, since she has more confidence and they have learned to listen to each other. • The student/user states that she is satisfied with the support provided by the COPE; she was able to recognize the main problem. She is satisfied with the tools and strategies provided, which were implemented throughout the process. • The student/user states that he/she feels more organized, and with the pertinent tools to advance from now on in his/her academic process, feels grateful for the COPE's support and hopes to continue in his/her process with greater autonomy. • The student/user states that he feels that the COPE accompaniment caused a significant impact, since he was able to understand his problem and generated very good strategies to mitigate it, which he puts into practice on a daily basis. He states that his psychological well-being improved, since he has greater self-confidence, he got rid of guilt and feels very motivated when thinking about his academic future. • The student/user reported an improvement in the organization of his time, as he considers that COPE helped him to have a new perspective on his academic process. • The student/user reported feeling a very important improvement, since he was able to understand how to act in his life to improve the difficulties he is going through, besides not allowing his emotional state to prevent him from setting goals and achieving them.
16-1-2022/16-4-2022	• Help with the platform and how to meet the challenges of UNAD. • Overall, I thought everything was great, as everything was done in a very assertive manner and I really enjoyed the process. • It helped me to strengthen my organizational difficulties regarding UNAD issues. • A good way for UNAD to help students. • It connects it to academia. • Making you feel like you are an important part of UNAD and that they care about their students being able to move forward with their educational process. It is a great support. Thank you very much. • The energy and motivation provided by the people who are part of COPE and the desire to move forward with your studies regardless of the adversities you face. • The empathy with which they provide support and their detailed analysis of each student to know what help is needed. • Attention, empathy and dedication to helping others. • The whole process was enjoyable, I believe that with some more process time, some specific support needed could be deepened.
16-1-2023	- The client expresses her gratitude for the support provided by the COPE during the five sessions; she refers that she will continue the process with psychology by her EPS and, in addition, she clarifies that she will continue with a good academic performance. • The user responds affirmatively with the process at COPE, in addition to expressing her gratitude for the process carried out and the help provided through each strategy and technique applied in each session, in addition to clarifying the career change, being part of her life project. • The user expresses her gratitude for the time spent in each session and recognizes the change she achieved since the beginning of the accompaniment in each of her areas and learning to manage her emotions. • The client states that the changes in her process have been very positive and have allowed her to see another point of view of life, as well as encouraged her to make decisions. She is grateful for the tools and wishes to continue with the COPE accompaniment process. • In the evaluation process, the client expresses complete satisfaction at having been able to solve the reason for the consultation with which she started. In addition, she mentions having acquired tools to adequately manage her next romantic relationships, since she feels self-confident and without the pressing need to have a partner to give her recognition. • The user recognizes a change of mentality, he manifests having found something new, a different opinion and approach to his situation. He had consulted three psychologists before and none had so thoroughly undermined his reason for consultation; he recognizes that he needs to continue with psychological support and start a detoxification process; he found it significant to find the cause of his problem in a personal aspect and not, as he thought, a philosophical-existential problem.

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• The user, through the tools worked on in the sessions, generates and adopts these strategies for time management according to his needs, avoiding being saturated with extra activities that may interfere in the development of his academic and personal commitments. He refers motivation to continue with his program and ends up thanking the process, highlighting how useful were the sessions and strategies to improve several aspects of his life and the significant progress obtained in this link to COPE.

Source: Own elaboration.

Finally, to demonstrate the impact of the strategy on retention and permanence at UNAD in the Facatativá CCAV, the individual academic records (RAI) of each of the users served were evaluated to determine the impact of the actions on the academic performance of the students. In this sense, it was possible to identify that, of the 49 users, 61% (30) achieved the approval of a higher percentage of enrolled courses than those they had been failing. Similarly, 22% of students (11) achieved 100% approval of their enrolled courses, which shows a clear improvement in performance related to the mitigation or overcoming of the life situations with which they entered the service; on the other hand, 16% of users (8) remained in their initial state, which reflects a low academic performance.

On the other hand, in terms of retention, of the 49 users, 8 (16 %) correspond to first-time (new) students, who, once the enrollment records were reviewed, continued their professionalization project with UNAD. Similarly, 84% (41) corresponded to former students, of whom 81% (40) continued their academic process, which had a positive impact on their permanence. And finally, 2% of the users attended (1) decided to discontinue their education with UNAD.

Discussion

For the creation of a strategy such as COPE, it was necessary to build an epis- temological basis within the framework of psychology. At the same time, it was important to determine the regulatory structure for the implementation of the program, given that its legal framework is based on interdisciplinarity, in consideration of the comprehensive care of the users who took part in these actions. In principle, the legal framework was one of the initial objectives as an action that would allow the strategy to be solidly structured; for this purpose, general aspects of the Political Constitution of Colombia were taken, passing through the legislation and decrees that underpin psychosocial care, telepsychology and mental health. Likewise, the guidelines for the creation and implementation of the COPE were framed in the institutional regulations, focusing on the principles for comprehensive unitary care issued by the Ministry of National Education (MinEducation).

Thus, in Article 117 of Law 30 of 1992, the Ministry of Education states that "higher education institutions must develop university welfare programs based on the physical, psycho-affective, spiritual and social development of students, faculty and administrative staff, whether from academic or emotional problems" (UNAD, n. d.).

In line with the above, UNAD, in the General Student Regulations, chapter 4, articles 18 and 19, stated as one of the purposes of university action "the implementation of actions for psychosocial intervention or accompaniment from pedagogical-didactic strategies aimed at strengthening the complementary integral formation in order to reduce academic risk factors, thus contributing to

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student retention and permanence" (UNAD, 2013).

Thus, COPE emerged as an action to respond to the institutional policy of retention and permanence, as well as a strategy for comprehensive attention focused on the needs of students as a mechanism for improving the quality and welfare of the student community. Today, UNAD has a high quality accreditation, which entails great challenges for the institution. In this sense, the implementation of actions aimed at accompanying and guiding its students, as well as promoting scenarios in which the institutional environment is ideal for the academic community, are an important pillar for the proper management of the institution, as mentioned by the National Council for Higher Education (CESU) in Agreement 3 of 2014, which establishes the guidelines for institutional accreditation:

A high quality institution has efficient and sufficient mechanisms and instruments to generate an institutional climate that favors the integral human development of the entire institutional community in all areas where it is present, generating sufficient curricular flexibility to make use of resources. Institutional wellbeing implies the existence of internal and environmental intervention programs that reduce psychosocial risk situations. (MinEducación, 2016, p. 17).

Thus, the COPE, in compliance with current institutional and national regulations, promoted actions aimed at the welfare of the academic community, mainly its students, which favored not only retention and permanence, but also the processes of orientation and psychosocial support. To this end, a structure was created based on processes and procedures that were condensed into various documents, such as guidelines and procedure guides, which provide a detailed and specific step-by-step description of the psychosocial care required. The purpose of this is to provide clear information that supports the induction of new practitioners or psychologists in the care of the sessions, becoming the main input for the management of formats and protocols that are fundamental for the construction of an adequate clinical history. In accordance with the above, it is necessary to mention that the COPE became a favorable scenario for the development of professional practice processes in psychology both in scenario 1 in areas such as education and the community and in scenario 2 with emphasis on the health area.

This is how the strategy is articulated with the regulations of the Ministry of Education in relation to the new model for training practice scenarios related to higher education programs in the area of health. This model defines the conditions in terms of quality that are a requirement for the realization of "training practices in health of higher education academic programs in clinical and non-clinical scenarios" (MinEducation, 2021).

The implementation of the pilot plan made it possible to demonstrate that the particular problems of each user served constitute a risk factor for poor academic performance, which is due to multiple causes that are not necessarily found in the spectrum of academic skills; factors of an emotional, family, social, economic and cultural nature are interwoven. This is stated by Gómez-Sán- chez et al. (2011), who mention that there are variables and indicators that influence academic performance, which can be classified into sociodemographic, academic, and family factors, among others. This is how the identification of students with little time due to their work obligations became the biggest problem identified in the COPE, from which other effects were derived that had an impact on other aspects; in this sense, working and studying at the same time has become, over time, a major problem for the COPE.

a growing dynamic that poses a challenge for institutions.

Moreno Jiménez and Báez León (2010) point out that the increase in workload has generated symptoms of discomfort related to work, and it is from this perspective that psychosocial risk is understood as "the interactions between work, the environment, the worker's satisfactions and conditions, his needs, culture and personal situation outside work" (p. 5).

In accordance with the above, it is necessary to mention:

The psychosocial alterations presented by working students are very varied, translated into various symptomatic manifestations. The ones they most referred to were physical; they expressed feeling exhaustion due to the fact of assuming two roles, to which are added related work conditions, such as shift management, having little time to sleep, in short, having to overexert themselves to attend both activities (Barreto Osma et al., 2019, p. 106). (Barreto Osma et al., 2019, p. 106).

Therefore, the application of protocols for time and study habits were the strategies that were mostly applied to a high percentage of users as a mechanism for mitigating factors related to work overload, also because students are not familiar with the UNAD model and methodology.

Finally, educational guidance generates links between the student and the educational institution, which translates into retention and permanence, and minimizes dropout. This is corroborated by Osorio et al. (2012), whose data indicate that university dropout is a worldwide phenomenon with economic, academic, social and professional ramifications. Likewise, these authors mention that dropout and graduation rates are phenomena that are part of retention and permanence, which are influenced by dynamics influenced by various factors (individual, socioeconomic, academic, family, and institutional). It is from this perspective that higher education institutions should focus on first-time students, as well as those who are in the academic process.

Conclusions

The proposed objectives of the construction of care protocols, epistemological bases, formats and evaluation scheme of the COPE of the CCAV of Facatativá as the main structure for the adequate care of users during the pilot plan were achieved.

The accompaniment provided is based on a confidential relationship between the counseling psychologist team, psychology student and user/student, with respect, empathy and adequate communication and implementation of techniques to determine the problem that generates the student's low personal and academic performance.

The sessions provided by the COPE contributed to the promotion of the users' personal reflection and the potentiation of personal resources, as well as to the transformation of attitudes, emotions or actions in favor of greater academic and personal wellbeing.

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The COPE was seen by the users as a strategy of great importance for the improvement of their academic processes and personal problems, which reinforces the users' sense of belonging to their educational institution as they feel that UNAD is interested in their academic results.

With the accompaniment provided to students/users from the COPE, the objective of carrying out action strategies to address the needs identified in those with low academic performance was achieved. At the end of the processes, highly satisfactory results were obtained, aimed at promoting reflection and motivation.

Through the practical exercise carried out, it became evident that 90% of the students/users who took part in the COPE presented problems of time organization, so it can be said that one of the major drawbacks of the students of the UNAD of the CCAV of Facatativá regarding their academic performance is directly related to the time available to them, either because of their work or family occupations, among others.

The abandonment of the accompaniment process occurred in most cases due to difficulties in the availability of the necessary time to carry out the sessions, which leads to the reflection of the importance of finding spaces in the day to day to take care of the aspects that affect the individual emotionally, which in turn impact other areas of adjustment, in this case, academic performance.

The impact of each of the actions proposed in the work plan on the population was evaluated by means of a satisfaction survey. This instrument was applied in the different spaces of participation of the educational actors, and as a result, the COPE exercise, a strategy designed and focused for the benefit of the educational community and the care of mental health, stands out in a satisfactory manner.

The educational psychosocial orientation strategy had a positive impact on retention and permanence in the CCAV of Facatativá, because it allowed students who presented academic difficulties derived from personal situations to maximize their resources to achieve a balance between their operating contexts (personal and academic), which resulted in them assuming with greater commitment their purpose of becoming professionals. It is precisely from this approach that the COPE generated the expected results, since the integral attention provided to the students allowed an improvement in their academic processes, which was reflected in the approval of the courses enrolled in each academic period, which contributed to their permanence. Likewise, the inclusion of first-time students in the strategy facilitated the retention processes, so that there was continuity in each of the academic programs enrolled.

Conflicts of interest

With this research development, no conflicts of interest are generated by the research group with respect to copyrights.

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