

## PSYCHOLOGICAL ACCOMPANIMENT AND PERMANENCE IN UNIVERSITY STUDENTS

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### ABSTRACT

The study aims to establish the relationship between psychological support and university permanence, through the analysis of individual, academic and sociodemographic variables. The study followed an ex post-facto, descriptive correlational design with a census sampling of 520 students who have voluntarily attended psychological support. The information was obtained through a questionnaire that explores sociodemographic, academic and specific characteristics of psychological follow-up. Comparative and correlational analyzes were performed finding a positive relationship between permanence and brief psychological accompaniment in the face of situational crises. Additionally, it was concluded that university permanence is related to age, gender, semester, average, the reason for consultation and the therapeutic method developed in the psychological accompaniment process. The results were discussed in the light of background that have explained the phenomena of permanence and dropout in school context.

**Keywords:** Psychotherapy; school dropouts; student permanence.

### Acompañamiento psicológico y permanencia en estudiantes universitarios

#### RESUMEN

El estudio tiene como objetivo establecer la relación entre el acompañamiento psicológico y la permanencia estudiantil, mediante el análisis de las variables individuales, académicas y sociodemográficas. El estudio siguió un diseño Ex post-facto, de tipo descriptivo correlacional con un muestreo censal de 520 estudiantes quienes han asistido a acompañamiento psicológico de manera voluntaria. La información fue obtenida mediante un cuestionario que explora características sociodemográficas, académicas y específicas de seguimiento psicológico. Se realizaron análisis comparativos y correlacionales encontrando una relación positiva entre la permanencia y el acompañamiento psicológico breve ante crisis situacionales. Adicionalmente, se concluyó que la permanencia estudiantil se relaciona con la edad, el género, el semestre, el promedio, el motivo de consulta y el método terapéutico desarrollado en el proceso de acompañamiento psicológico. Se discutieron los resultados a la luz de antecedentes que han explicado los fenómenos de la permanencia y la deserción en contexto escolares.

**Palabras clave:** Psicoterapia; evasión escolar, permanencia estudiantil.

### Acompanhamento psicológico e permanência em estudantes universitários

#### RESUMO

O estudo tem como objetivo estabelecer a relação entre o acompanhamento psicológico e a permanência estudiantil, mediante a análise das variáveis individuais, acadêmicas e sóciodemográficas. O estudo seguiu um modelo *Ex post-facto*, de tipo descritivo com uma amostra de censo de 520 estudantes os quais se submeteram a acompanhamento psicológico de maneira voluntária. A informação foi obtida mediante um questionário que explora características sóciodemográficas, acadêmicas e específicas de seguimento psicológico. Realizaram-se análises comparativas e correlacionais encontrando uma relação positiva entre a permanência e o acompanhamento psicológico breve ante crises situacionais. Adicionalmente, concluiu-se que a permanência estudiantil se relaciona com a idade, o gênero, o semestre, a média, o motivo de consulta e o método terapêutico desenvolvido no processo de acompanhamento psicológico. Discutiram-se os resultados à luz de antecedentes que explicam os fenômenos da permanência e a deserção em contextos escolares.

**Palavras-chave:** Psicoterapia; evasão escolar; permanência estudiantil.

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## INTRODUCTION

Education is one of the fundamental pillars that guarantee the development of a country, however, it faces the problem of desertion, which is defined as the abandonment of academic training and it is associated with phenomena such as absenteeism and forced retirement. These events generate concern because they make successful academic training impossible (Rojas, 2009). In "Spain, the United States, France and Austria, the dropout rate ranges between 30 and 50%, Germany (20-25%), Switzerland (7-30%), Finland (10%) and the Netherlands (20- 30%)" (Lewis, 2000 cited by Vélez & López, 2004, p. 178). With regard to Latin America and the Caribbean, Guzmán et al. (2009), points out that in Chile the overall dropout rate corresponds to 53.7%, for Brazil 59%, in Bolivia the dropout rates are close to 63.3% while in Uruguay the dropout rate increases to 72%, and in Guatemala with the highest dropout rates are 86%.

In Colombia, the issue has achieved an interesting place in the discussion of public management, which has generated the initiative in the structuring of programs that expand access to higher education, however, dropout rates remain high, such as It is reported by the statistics of the Sistema Nacional de Información de la Educación Superior<sup>1</sup> (SPADIES), where in the latest report given by higher education institutions, a dropout rate of 9% for 2016 is recorded (Ministerio de Educación Nacional, 2017).

In the specific case of the department of Norte de Santander, dropout figures of 9.58% are evidenced, suggesting attention to this phenomenon as reflected in the Departmental Development Plan, which proposes an improvement in the quality and relevance of education generating access and permanence opportunities based on the particularities of this department (Villamizar, 2016).

As mentioned, dropout is a phenomenon that represents the abandonment of classrooms and the interruption of academic training, whether basic or professional (Páramo & Correa, 2012); furthermore, it is influenced by both internal and external causes of the individual (Vásquez, Castaño, Gallón, & Gómez, 2003). The time period that must elapse to be called desertion may vary according to different authors (Rodríguez & Londoño, 2011). However, the Ministerio de Educación Superior<sup>2</sup> has adopted the position proposed by Tinto (1989) and Giovagnoli (2002) of considering dropping out once two semesters of academic inactivity have been completed (Ministerio de Educación Nacional, 2008). Certainly, dropout is considered one of the most important problems in the Colombian educational

system, since the average dropout rate in the national territory is 46.10% in 2015, according to the SPADIES report that same year (Ministerio de Educación Nacional, 2015).

According to this, it is relevant to highlight the theories of desertion that were taken as the basis for the execution of the research and subsequent understanding of the phenomenon, in this way the approaches of Tinto (1987 cited in Donoso & Schiefelbein, 2007 are taken into account ), which refer to the fact that students use "exchange theory" in the construction of their social and academic integration, that is, that for the student to remain in the institution, they must perceive that personal costs such as effort and dedication, they are low compared to the benefits generated by student permanence. However, the student will tend to drop out if other activities that generate greater rewards are recognized.

Likewise, Bean and Metzner (1985) are taken up, who argue that student dropout is similar to productivity and explains the importance of behavioral intentions (stay or leave) since it announces persistence behavior. This author's model assumes that behavioral intentions are shaped by a process where attitudes are formed by beliefs and in the same sense the attitudes influence behavioral intentions. It also maintains that beliefs are affected by the situations that the student experiences in relation to the different components of an institution (quality of courses and friends) (Cabrera, Betancourt, Tomás, Álvarez & González, 2006). It is relevant to note that Cabrera, Nora and Castañeda (1993) consider that although these models seem to be opposite, in reality there is complementarity between them and in turn overlap in some aspects. This is how they propose an integrated model that emphasizes the sociological and psychological processes of the behavior of the student's persistence in the university.

However, with the intention that these theories were applicable in the national territory in an appropriate way for the diversity of the context, whose complexity requires, to a large extent, a differential approach, the Ministerio de Educación Nacional, together with other collaborators, it has developed a model that manages to address the problem from different dimensions; management model for student retention and graduation, whose intention is to define guidelines, strategies and instruments in eight work areas, to strengthen the institutional capacity to create programs that guarantee the graduation of students. The components of the model are: Positioning and formalization, Information culture, Joint work with Secondary Education Institutions, Student support programs, Family commitment, Resource management and collaborative work, which are guided by seven principles that correspond to universality, prevention,

<sup>1</sup> National Higher Education Information System.

<sup>2</sup> Ministry of Higher Education.

comprehensiveness, relevance, sustainability, effectiveness and efficiency (Ministry of National Education, 2015).

On the other hand, within the review at the causal level of the phenomenon, it is identified that the highest dropout percentage is found in the first semesters of the degree (Cabrera, Betancourt, Tomás, Álvarez, & González, 2006). Similarly, the study counseling and support program was identified, in learning strategies and psychological support as a program used by universities in order to increase the retention and academic performance of students (Cabrera et al., 2006). This contribution includes an added value and it is the consideration of psychological support within retention strategies for students, which leads to infer about the relevance of making the relationship between the variables of dropout and psychological support, which in turn allows accompany and intervene in students relevant aspects such as stress, related to unhealthy behaviors (Riveros, Rubio, Candelario, & Magín, 2013; Reyes, Castañeda, & Pabón, 2012). Likewise, pregnancy, depression, dysfunctional or disintegrated family, lack of communication, addictions, low moods, among others, have been identified; as factors that influence academic performance and dropout (Cruz, Barrientos, García, & Hernández, 2010).

In this regard, Mori (2014) refers that institutional characteristics are one of the first dropout factors, followed by vocational, academic and finally economic interests, being a phenomenon that can be explained through various variables, which can whether or not they are related, changing the conception that economic factors occupied the first place in the causes of desertion, generating the impossibility of continuing in the program (Vélez & López, 2004; Marín, Infante, & Troyano 2000).

On the other hand, Osorio, Bolance and Caicedo (2012), carry out a classification of factors that affect the students' dropout-graduation, summarizing them in: individual characteristics, academic situation, institutional and socio-economic variables. In addition, it is considered among the causes of school dropout not only the factors that are theoretically supported, but also those supported from a regional dimension, which accepts the analysis and behavior of these factors in the face of the particularities of the context, such as formal and informal working conditions, the existence of illicit crops, the high mobility of its inhabitants and the absence of academic offerings in various sectors of the region, which in the end turn out to be elements immersed in the context that warn that the school dropout in this region of the country is critical (Valero et al., 2016).

Regarding the above, Valero et al., (2016) analyze student dropout from the border situation, taking

into account that it is the most dynamic border from the political, commercial sphere and migratory flows. Identifying different dimensions that contain various determinants for desertion such as the border situation and weaknesses in terms of basic skills and low academic results, loss of subjects, characteristics and structure of the organization.

In this way, it is appropriate to take into account other aspects that generate dissatisfaction in the student, which lead him/her to make the decision to interrupt his/her university education; aspects such as psychological ones. Likewise, Davis (2009) performs a meta-analysis in which he reviews the results of 72 studies on mood, revealing that both positive (joy, tranquility) and negative (anger, worry, anxiety) mood are related with certain functions that can favor academic performance since both states of mind are functional. However, negative mood at some level is linked to stress. Psychotherapy promotes the achievement of changes or modifications in behavior, adaptation to the environment, physical and mental health, the integrity of the psychological identity and the biopsychosocial well-being of people and groups, such as the couple or the family (Santibáñez, Román & Vinet, 2009).

The foregoing is highlighted on the basis that the support or counseling service plays a fundamental role in students, understanding that university life can trigger psychological problems that do not allow adequate adaptation to the educational environment and generate a weakening of the resources of education coping with difficult situations that can arise in any of the areas of daily life (Guzmán et al, 2009) is more, it can function as a precedent for application in other universities in the city that present the same problem.

Therefore, the purpose of this study was to analyze the relationship between psychological support and student retention, taking into account particular aspects of support such as frequency, focus, type of care, among other aspects that could be taken into account both in the accompaniment dynamics of the universities, as well as, for future studies that contribute to one of the fundamental aspects to be taken into account in education, which is the fact that students complete their academic programs within the time established for it.

## METHOD

The study was developed through an Ex post-facto design, since data previously collected by a private university was used as part of its accompaniment and student welfare processes. The sample corresponds to 520 university students who have attended orientation by the university welfare service with a census-type sample, which was made up of 73.3% women and 26.3 men, with a mean age of 22.37 (SD = 5.52),

day shift (59%) and night (41%), with an average socio-economic level of 2, which in Colombia is classified as low. The information was collected using a quantitative survey-type instrument with 22 items where the sociodemographic characteristics of the student, academic information and characteristics of the psychological monitoring process were recorded, where the number of sessions, therapeutic approach, techniques used and categories of the reason for the consultation, which were classified according to the academic, family, personal and affective-emotional dimensions. Given the nature of the variables provided by the instrument, analyzes were carried out using non-parametric statistics for correlations and comparisons, while the descriptive results were expressed in frequencies and proportions. For data processing, the statistical package IBM SPSS v.21 was used.

### RESULTS

It was possible to identify the relationship between the individual variables of the sample together with their permanence in the academic project, these results, evidenced in Table 1, show that the marital status and the socio-economic stratum do not represent a statistically significant correlation with the variable of permanence, and that, on the contrary, the variables of age and sex are significantly correlated with that of permanence, being their level of correlation (.016) and (.002) respectively.

Now, considering that the correlation is inversely proportional, it follows that, in terms of age, the result obtained translates that the older the student is, the shorter his/her permanence, and in relation to the individual variable of sex, whose the result is evidenced more explicitly in Table 2, it is shown that, of the total number of students who dropped out, the majority

are women, since they represent 64.8% compared to men with 35.2%. The same values allow observing the result in terms of the totality of students who attended psychological counseling, in this way, it is obtained that of 100% of women, 76.0% presented permanence, while 100% of men, those who remained reflect a figure of 63.5%, thus, the highest dropout rate is presented by male students.

Similarly, Table 3 shows that the average and semester variables are significantly correlated with permanence in a directly proportional way, that is, the higher the average and the longer semester, the more permanence. Additionally, in Table 4 it is identified that of the total number of dropouts, 55.6% belongs to students of the night shift and the remaining to the day shift.

Now, with respect to the academic program (Table 5), the values show that of 520 students who attended psychological support, the majority belongs to the psychology, law and social work programs, with a number of 312, 95 and 85 students respectively.

Likewise, when relating the variables of psychological support and permanence, the following results were established: firstly, Table 6 shows that the number of sessions of psychological support was not statistically significant in relation to permanence.

Next, in Table 7, it was found that the highest dropout rate occurred in students who manifested affective-emotional and family difficulties that together exceed half of the group of dropouts.

On the other hand, in relation to the approach used in psychological accompaniment, it is necessary that both the cognitive-behavioral, as well as, the systemic and humanistic, allowed permanence in more than 65% of the consultants, the cognitive-behavioral approach being more used as was evidence in Table 8.

**Table 1.** Correlation Sociodemographic variables and permanence.

Spearman's Rho		Permanence
Age	Correlation coefficient	<b>-.094*</b>
	Sig.	.016
Sex	Correlation coefficient	<b>-.123**</b>
	Sig.	.002
Civil status	Correlation coefficient	.000
	Sig.	,499
Socioeconomic Stratum	Correlation coefficient	,016
	Sig.	,350

\*. The correlation is significant at the 0.05 level.

\*\* . The correlation is significant at the 0.01 level.

**Table 2.** Correlation sex and permanence.

			Permanence	
			No	Yes
Sex	<i>Femenale</i>	Count	92	291
		% Inside Sex	24.0%	76.0%
		% Inside Permanence	64.8%	77.0%
	<i>Male</i>	Count	50	87
		% Inside Sex	36.5%	63.5%
		% Inside Permanence	35.2%	23.0%

**Table 3.** Correlation of academic variables and permanence.

			Permanence
Spearman's Rho	Average	Correlation coefficient	.224**
		Sig.	.000
	Semestre	Correlation coefficient	.145**
		Sig.	.000

\*\*The correlation is significant at the 0.01 level

**Table 4.** Contingency of working hours and permanence variables.

			Permanence	
			No	Yes
Shift	<i>Day</i>	Count	63	244
		% Inside Shift	20.5%	79.5%
		% Inside Permanence	44.4%	64.6%
	<i>Nigth</i>	Count	79	134
		% Inside Shift	37.1%	62.9%
		% Inside Permanence	55.6%	35.4%

**Table 5.** Contingency Academic program and permanence.

			Permanence	
			No	Yes
Academic Program	<i>Psychology</i>	Count	61	251
		% Program	19.6%	80.4%
	<i>Law</i>	Count	39	56
		% Program	41.1%	58.9%
	<i>Social Work</i>	Count	34	51
		% Program	40.0%	60.0%
	<i>Systems Engineer</i>	Count	1	9
		% Programa	10.0%	90.0%
	<i>Business Administration</i>	Count	3	5
		% Program	37.5%	62.5%
	<i>Trade and International Business</i>	Count	4	5
		% Program	44.4%	55.6%

**Table 6.** Correlation number of sessions with permanence.

		Permanence
Tau_b de Kendall	Correlation coefficient	-.012
	Sig.	.391
	N	520

**Table 7.** Contingency reason for consultation with desertion.

		Desertion (%)
Reason of the consultation	Affective-emotional difficulties	35.3
	Admission profile	28.8
	Family problems	20.9
	Academic difficulties	12.2
	Grief / Losses	1.4
	Economic problems	1.4

**Table 8.** Contingency Therapeutic approach and permanence.

Therapeutic Approach	Permanence	
	No	Yes
<i>Behavioral Cognitive</i>	27.3%	72.7%
<i>Systemic</i>	33.3%	66.7%
<i>Humanistic</i>	26.1%	73.9%

## DISCUSSION

This research was carried out taking as a population student from a private university, and from its policy it encourages access and permanence in the educational system to students with different stimuli such as the affective partner, which an institutional program is implemented and responsible for providing psychological support to students who require it (Universidad Simón Bolívar, 2015), providing students with psychological support that can be accessed from any semester, at no cost. Likewise, it is relevant to mention that the university is located in a highly dynamic border area, where it has students who reside in the city and metropolitan area, as well as its surroundings such as Venezuela.

Now, when analyzing the individual variables related to student retention, it was found that the dropouts are a heterogeneous population with a considerable number of female sex, which is related to the fact that the students who received psychological counseling are mostly of this genre; however, when comparing the partial data of the variable, the result varies. In this sense, there is a trend of greater permanence in women compared to men who are more likely to abandon academic training, this result is consistent with studies carried out by Giovagnoli (2002) and Lopera (2007),

where it is stated that there is a considerably higher risk of dropping out in men.

It is inferred that this trend is related to behavioral, social and psychological aspects of each gender, such as adaptation to the university environment, plasticity, establishing close academic relationships with professors and peers, in the same way, family and social support, among others. (Rayman & Brett, 1995; Beutel & Axinn, 2002; Pinto, Durán, Pérez, Reverón, & Rodríguez, 2007). Pinto et al. (2007) state that in women the habits related to academic responsibility are more evident and even more, permanence will be much more likely if these behaviors are accompanied by favorable economic, family and social conditions.

Likewise, age is found as a variable linked to desertion, showing that the older adults complete their higher education the least. According to this, Montes, Almonacid, Gómez, Zuluaga and Tamayo (2010), affirm that students whose ages range between 15 and 20 years have higher retention rates than those between 21 and 37 years of age. In agreement, the findings found by Lopera (2007) show that the average age of admission corresponds to 17 years of age.

Thus, older students belong to a minority within the student community, where probably these students, when sharing classrooms with peers who are mostly

young, they may experience barriers when executing academic and social interactions. In this regard, Boshier (1973 cited by Tinto, 1989) concludes that when these minority groups feel marginalized, that is, they feel that they are not integrated into their academic environment where they can have a favorable approach with teachers and other members of the community educational efforts to persist diminish.

In any case, it should be noted that individuals outside the range of the average age of university students may have a time restriction that prevents them from attending classes more and it is difficult for them to commit to the academic load; Mendoza, Mendoza and Romero (2014), establish that at the national level this behavior is linked to work and family commitments that older students must attend to, thus increasing their risk of dropping out.

On the other hand, in terms of socioeconomic status and marital status, no significant effects related to permanence were evidenced. Contrary to the results, previous studies carried out by Vásquez et al. (2003) and Montes et al. (2010), through an analysis of the determinants of desertion, found that married individuals have higher retention rates compared to single individuals. Regarding the socio-economic stratum, Castaño, Gallón, Gómez, and Vásquez (2006), found that students belonging to the low and middle strata do not have the same possibilities of completing their educational project compared to the opportunities of the upper strata. Similarly, it is pertinent to recognize that in the university context in which the study was carried out, 49.6% belonged to socio-economic stratum 2, followed by stratum 1 and 3 with 21.5% of the population, with a predominance low socio-economic levels.

Second, the academic variables related to permanence were identified, where it is observed that the most visible type of dropout corresponds to early dropout, that is, that the phenomenon occurs notably in the first semesters. The elements associated with early dropout are made up of the dynamic interaction between those attributes that the student has prior to admission, personal goals and academic experiences. The foregoing agrees with what was stated by Reyes (2004) who invites us to review the process of adaptation to university life of students in the first semesters, since in his study it was recorded that the lowest averages of the subjects correspond to students first semester.

According to the theory, the model of Tinto, (1987 cited by Donoso & Schiefelbein, 2007) suggests that there are some characteristics that the student has that can influence the abandonment of higher education, which have to do with family precedents, social stratum, cultural aspects of the family, personal characteristics

and pre-university academic skills where these characteristics act together influencing the decision to remain in university education. Even the literature refers that the majority of students who are just beginning their university training are experiencing a transition process, from the already known environment such as school to a more adult environment, where the development of suitable skills that allow face the problems that derive from social relations in the university community (Tinto, 1989).

Similarly, Kirton, (2000 cited by Bayron, 2012) emphasizes that in addition to the perception of the university environment, academic self-efficacy influences student permanence, assuming an important role in students who attend first semesters. In addition, taking into account that dropping out is a voluntary act, the same author identifies five factors that according to him are the most influential in students to continue and set goals, these factors are: educational values, perceptions of the university environment, university support and attachment to peers, generating a context in which educational processes are centered on the student and throughout life (Maury, Marín, Ortiz, & Gravini-Donado, 2018). Additionally, Reyes (2010), in his study to evaluate the quality of the teaching-learning process based on the students' appreciations, determines that the motivation of the students, as well as, the awareness of their own training process are some of important aspects that generate interference during vocational training. From the above evidence, it is possible to formulate that the permanence in the first semesters is defined by the interaction between endogenous aspects (values, motivations, academic skills, perception of the university environment, expectations, goals, among others) and exogenous (social support, family and teachers, among others.).

For his part, Lopera (2007) concludes that dropout rates in the first semesters are also attributable to low academic performance, which agrees with the results found regarding the average, where it was evidenced that the average value is directly proportional to the levels of permanence, that is, the lower the academic average, the lower the permanence in the students. Therefore, it is valid to affirm that the people with the highest averages have acquired an active commitment with their academic process, consequently they have lower risks of abandoning it.

In reference to the shift, it is observed that it is the students enrolled in the night shift who are more inclined to abandon the higher education process. It must be taken into account that people who choose to study at night do so because they need to carry out other activities during the day, these activities generally correspond to work activities. Consequently, the work obligations in addition to the academic ones to which

these students must respond can generate exhaustion and later abandonment. In contrast, exchange theory states that students' performances are determined by goals and commitments, where the benefits of staying in the university should be perceived as greater than personal efforts and sacrifices, considering that if other activities will offer better rewards the chances of continuing their education are low (Tinto, 1975 cited by Himmel, 2002).

Something else to add to the results obtained is the assistance to the psychological monitoring of the students according to the academic program, from which it is observed that psychology students are the ones who most come to use the service, this point is interesting because other programs as a right that exceed the number of enrolled students do not make active use of the service. In this regard, it should be said that this behavior suggests a certain level of awareness on the part of psychology students of the importance of psychological support compared to students in other programs. Torres, Maheda and Aranda (2004) cite Romo (2000, p. 32) who states that "the symbolic representation of psychologists is oriented towards the preservation of principles such as justice, honesty, the commitment to "psychological health " of others and his/her own".

Similarly, when analyzing the variables of psychological support associated with permanence, the results indicate that there is no significant relationship between the number of sessions and permanence. Faced with this finding, it should be noted that a considerable number of students attended psychological consultation only once. If carefully considered, a session is not enough to achieve noticeable changes in a patient, this is because it is very little time to inquire about the problem, generate a possible diagnosis and develop a treatment. Paineipan and Kühne (2012), in a psychological care center for university students, determined that psychotherapy effectively mitigates the clinical indicators of the consultants, the results improve over the course of the sessions, showing that on average from the 8 sessions they do not present clinical indicators and it shows its greatest effectiveness upon reaching 12 sessions.

Another important point to consider is the reason why the students attended the consultation, this note could generate information that allows to identify the main causes why students interrupt the academic formation. In the data found, it is observed that the assistance to the psychological accompaniment has to do mainly with affective-emotional problems and secondly by the admission profile. In accordance with this, there are discrepancies with the antecedents, noting that according to Vélez and López (2004), in Colombia the main determining factor of desertion

corresponds to economic difficulties.

The finding agrees with that described by Tinto, (1987 cited by Huesca & Castaño, 2007) who states that some students concern economic difficulties with dropping out but this is only a way of hiding the real reasons. For Tinto, if the university experiences are satisfactory the students in order to obtain their graduation can bear considerable financial burdens. Regarding the entry profile, Marín, Infante and Troyano (2000) state that the vocational profile is a maturation process where motivations, interests and personality factors converge based on the requirements and rewards of their work environment. In other words, pursuing a degree that is not in accordance with professional expectations and preferences on a personal level can be a reason for academic failure. Reyes (2006), considers that during the vocational guidance process the parents or those who pay for the studies could exert pressures that force the young person to decide between studying what is not desired or simply not studying, also considers that there must be a potential intrinsic to stay in the chosen academic program.

Regarding the therapeutic approach, it is evident that although there are differences between the effectiveness of one or the other, these are not statistically significant since the three approaches achieved a permanence of over 60%. Within this framework, it must be considered that "there is little evidence that any technique has superiority; the increasingly widespread use of manuals for each type of therapy promotes greater uniformity in the techniques and results of a therapist " (Campagne, 2014, p. 81). In contrast, the effectiveness of a therapeutic approach, regardless of the problem to be treated, is determined by certain variables that according to Rondón, Otálora and Salamanca (2009) have to do with the factors associated with the client (personality, expectations, etc.), as well as, factors associated with the institution (information management, appointment scheduling, frequent therapist changes, etc.), factors associated with therapy, and factors associated with the therapist.

This description allows us to better understand what is observed in terms of the work carried out by therapists related to attrition, that despite the fact that the cognitive-behavioral approach was mostly used, differences are shown from one therapist to another. This event suggests that the effectiveness of psychological support is also related to certain professional skills developed by the therapist, such as empathy, detecting the real motive, and generating goals, among others. In agreement, Campagne (2014), affirms that for the final result of the therapy to be the expected one, the therapist must carry out their exercise directed towards factors such as correct empathy, positive esteem, non-possessive affect, congruence of

sincerity, and a minimum of attack or guilt.

Taking into account the previous considerations, and observing that the dropout rate of students who attend psychology to receive support is lower compared to those who do not attend, it is inferred that psychological support does represent a protective factor for those students in condition of dropping out. It is well known that within higher education institutions the main support offered to the student is financial, which is why it is no longer among the aspects that indicate the influence on dropout. Other types of support, such as psychological, can reduce educational failure rates, understanding that it is a strategy to increase student retention and is recognized by the Ministerio de Educación Nacional who affirm that "psychological and social support programs are based on various studies carried out on the mental health of young people, which show rates of depression and suicide risk" (Guzman et al., 2009, p. 127). It's important to understand the adaptation process and delve into the academic and personal characteristics of the student (Dominguez-Lara, Prada-Chapoñan, & Gravini-Donado, in press).

### CONCLUSIONS

A positive relationship between student permanence and brief psychological support is evidenced, finding a higher proportion of permanence in the group that received psychological support in a timely manner in critical situations, taking an average attention time between one and three sessions. It should be noted that no psychological approach showed superior effects on permanence, and that the main reason for consultation associated with dropping out was the presence of affective-emotional problems.

It is noted that a high percentage of dropouts do not use the psychology service provided by the university welfare department, and that unlike some previous reports, the economic dimension was not significantly related to permanence in the sample studied. On the contrary, this study supports the argument that permanence depends in an important way on the well-being of the student where physical and mental health is considered, followed by other personal and situational characteristics that surround the student.

As final considerations, it should be noted that this study contributes, like many others, in arguments to promote the permanence of university students, taking into account variables that impact the psychological state of people. Consequently, an increase in psychological support and accompaniment programs is to be expected as a policy of all universities, as well as implementing a protocol for the psychological care of the student. In the same way, motivate and generate awareness of the emotional processes which influence decision-making and problem solving. Finally, it is to be expected to

continue in the line of research that addresses in greater detail and under more rigorous methods, the analysis of psychological changes and the psychotherapeutic management that occurs within universities with a view not only to permanence in the academic programs, but also that it could show a relationship with the personal formation of students.

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