

PERSONAL AND SOCIAL FACTORS, RECOGNIZED BY ENTRANTS IN THE CAREER CHOICE OF PSYCHOLOGY

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Abstract

Introduction

The career choice is crossed by different factors related to the vocational problem: reasons of choice, preferences and interests, identifications, expectations and individual, social and contextual needs. The recognition of these aspects contributes to the achievement of satisfaction, permanence and commitment to the career.

Objective

To describe personal and social factors in the choice of career, in a sample of entrants to the Faculty of Psychology. National University of Cordoba. Cohort 2016.

Methodology

A quantitative, descriptive and cross-sectional study was carried out (Hernández Sampieri, Fernández Collado & Baptista Lucio, 2006). Sample: Non-probabilistic sampling, of accidental type. Data analysis: SPSS. 20

Instrument

The instrument used was a semi-structured-self-administered survey.

Results

The sample is 136 students, from the Extended Leveling Course 2016, between 17 and 58 years, with a mean age of 22 years. 75.7% of the sample corresponds to the female gender. 58.8% are from the province of Córdoba, while 41.2% come from other Argentine provinces. With regard to work, 21.3% currently work and 40.4% said they need work to be able to study. The most frequent reasons considered to choose the race were: 12.1% to help people, 11.6% interest in the theme, 11.3% motivation to listen to people.

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Conclusion

The aspects considered correspond to motivations, interests and expectations coming from the social context of belonging: family, school, group, among others. The feeling of personal accomplishment, the vocation and interest for the race and the work with the people; Are the most valued aspects among the respondents. The need to know these particularities will allow the construction and implementation of interventions more in line with the educational needs of students and articulate with institutional spaces of the Faculty.

Key words: New students, factors involved, motivations, choice.

1. Introduction

The current context is characterized by deep transformations in the economic and social structure, including an accelerated transformation brought about by technological advances. The characteristics of this context became a relevant theme for vocational guidance, which must be known and addressed if it is intended to accompany the people in the task of choosing an educational work project. This requires a positioning from a complex perspective against the context and an analysis of the possibilities, the opportunities and the difficulties that characterize it. In this context, access to Higher Education (ES) is a pressing problem in Argentina and in several Latin American countries, as it is the permanence and the possibility of graduation. . The entrance to higher level careers, especially in the Public Universities of the country, are strongly crossed by problems of degrading, delay and abandonment that impact on subjects and institutions (Gessaghi & Llinás, 2005). The “entrance” to a higher study represents a break with respect to previous school courses, implies for the student a subjective movement in order to position themselves in a new institution with different logics of operation and to incorporate the self-management as a way of transiting it. In this regard, research in the field of the National University of Cordoba shows that:

In the entrance to the University they show the different trajectories, the advantages and disadvantages related to students, the definitions and the indefiniteness constructed socially, experienced and perceived only as personal. The future is re-dimensioned: the repeated postponement in the choice of careers-or other possible practices-, which worsens in the last year of secondary school, leads to a weak election, where there is still no need for anticipation (Ortega, 2008: 17).

These different trajectories are sharpened in the entrance to the career, in the first contact of the students with the educational institution, which expects them to put into

practice, social and educational resources to achieve adaptation and permanence in the new education system.

In this regard, Flavia Terigi (2009) states that real or formal school trajectories that comprise the course designed by the institution for a “single” student, are different from the actual school trajectories, where the hauls are considered as dynamic processes that the students in a particular way construct and that distances of the formal trajectory prescribed by the institution.

In the same line of research, Sandra Carli (2012), among other authors, has deepened the experiences of university students, focusing on the itineraries they carry out, their reflections and their life stories about the transit in the Public University. In her investigations, she emphasizes that the real trajectories imply different ways in which the students transit their university life, strongly linked to the historical contexts and the institutional environment that makes these hauls possible or not.

The present research presents an advance of results of a study carried out with a sample of psychology graduates who attended the extended leveling course in 2016. In the framework of the research project endorsed by the Secretary of Science and Technology (Secyt) “ANALYSIS OF THE FACTORS INTERVINED IN THE EDUCATIONAL PROJECT OF THE ENTRANTS TO THE CAREER OF PSYCHOLOGY”, the study sought to provide information to know and to analyze the personal and social factors that go through the choice of the educational project. . Given that in recent years has been increasing the enrollment of the Degree in Psychology - according to UNC statistics - placing it among one of the most demanded careers, several authors have analyzed themes related to factors that join in university admission, such as the analysis of the explanatory models of retention of students in the university: a view from social inequality, carried out in Chile (Donoso & Schiefelbein, 2007), factors that intervene in the academic performance of students of psychology and psychopedagogy (Renault et al., 2008) and analysis of the interacting factors in the vocational problem addressed from the promotion of Health (Stabile, 2012), account for the various factors that affected the educational trajectory of university students.

Identify the different factors related to the vocational problem, such as the reasons for choosing, preferences and interests, identifications, expectations and the articulation of this with the individual needs, social and contextual, allows to intervene from a preventive approach and to propose intervention devices according to the real trajectories of the students.

From this point of view, Diana Aisenso (2002) considers central to encourage the creation of alternatives that make possible, both personal growth and openness to a reality that promotes the insertion of the subjects in the community and in the current socio-economic context. From a preventive perspective, the vocational orientation aims to work in the learning of the elections and personal development intimately linked to the institutional, educational and social, supported by the political and economic needs of the context.

2. General objectives

Describe personal and social factors in the career choice, in a sample of entrants to the Faculty of Psychology of the UNC (Cohort 2016).

Specific objectives

Describe socio-demographic characteristics in a sample of entrants who perform the extended leveling course.

Explore the career choice reasons expressed by students attending the extended leveling course.

Recognize the sources of information consulted and investigate the assistance received for the career choice recognized by the students who perform the extended leveling course.

3. Methodology

a. Design

A quantitative, descriptive and cross-sectional study was carried out (Hernández Sampieri et al., 2006).

Non-probabilistic sampling, of accidental type.

b. Instrument

The instrument used was a semi-structured, self-administered survey, previously validated, in a study carried out for medical students (UNC) (Stabile, 2012). It is made up of 45 items, with multiple options in its answers, in which four dimensions are addressed: sociodemographic data; factors that the subject recognizes as intervening in the election; performance of Vocational Guidance process and elections and the life project dimension (personal, professional, labor).

The pilot study aims to review the survey and adapt it to be applied to a sample of psychology graduates (Cohort 2017).

c. Process

For the conformation of the sample we used students who attended the extended leveling course of the Faculty of Psychology. Being a preliminary study, the possibilities of access to the sample were prioritized, since it was in line with the research objective.

Inclusion of cases: it was decided to include those students who were performing in the leveling course at the time of data collection, excluding from the study those who, for various reasons, have not completed the majority of the questionnaire administered or were not present on the days of administration of the protocols.

The survey was applied to students of two committees of practical works of the extended leveling course, in 2016. During the administration, the objective of the

investigation was explained to them and they were clarified that it is a self-administered, anonymous and voluntary instrument, after acceptance and signing of informed consent.

The data surveyed in this research were systematized and analyzed quantitatively by means of the computer statistical system SPSS 20.

To analyze such data, only the variables linked to were taken into account:

Sociodemographic data (age, gender, place of birth, marital status, employment status)

-Process of vocational guidance (performance of activity linked to the orientation, scope in which it was developed, characteristics of the process).

Factors involved in the election (sources of information, reasons for election)

It should be noted that the data provided by the participants have the ethical safeguards of the study in question.

4. Results

The sample consisted of N = 136 students of the extended leveling course 2016, for the entrance to the career of Psychology (UNC). The age of the participants ranged from 17 to 58 years, with a mean age of 22 years (see Annex Table N ° 1). 75.7% of the sample corresponded to the female gender (See Graphic Annex No. 1).

In relation to the place of origin, 53.7 percent was from Córdoba, 41.2 percent came from other Argentine provinces and 5.1 percent from Latin American countries.

Regarding marital status, 77.9 percent claimed to be single, 13.2 percent as a couple, 4.4 percent married and the remaining percentage are separated, divorced and widowed.

When inquiring about the specialty of the secondary school they attended, 22.8 percent came from a specialty in Social Sciences, 22.1 percent from Economics and Management, 16.9 percent from the Humanities, 9.6 percent of Natural Sciences and the remaining percentage of other specialties such as Technicians, Art and Design, among others (See Annex Table No. 2).

As for the labor situation of the participants in the sample, 75 per cent is not currently working: it was observed that 40.4 per cent stated the need to work in order to continue their studies at the higher level (see Annex Table N ° 3 and 4).

When asked about the activities they do in their free time, 43 percent play sports, 18 percent perform artistic activities, 9.4 percent do activities related to information technology, 3.6 percent study a language and the remaining 25.2 percent perform other unspecified activities.

As for information provided regarding the family group, the age of the Parents (N = 96), is between a minimum of 38 and a maximum of 76 years, with a mean age of 51 years. Meanwhile, the age of the Mothers (N = 111) ranges from a minimum of 36 years to a maximum of 75 years, with the average being 48 years. It should be noted that the difference in the number of cases is due to the fact that some of the parents have died or there is no close link (See Annex Table No. 1).

In relation to the educational level reached by the father (N = 102), it is observed that 17.6 percent have primary studies, 32.4 percent secondary studies, 8.8 percent tertiary studies and 14 percent has achieved university studies (See Annex Table N ° 5).

As for the mother (N = 114), 15.4 percent have primary education, 32.4 percent have secondary education, 17.6 percent have completed tertiary studies, and 17.6 percent have completed his university studies (See Annex Table N ° 5).

Another of the aspects analyzed, referred to the specialized accompaniment at the time of making the choice to continue the studies at the higher level, that is, the realization of vocational guidance processes for career choice. About the students who did carry out vocational counseling, 24.3 percent did so at school, while 9.6 percent used private counseling.

As for the aspects that were taken into account when choosing the Psychology career, among the most relevant factors was mentioned that 11 percent sought information on the Internet, 9.6 percent written information, 9.3 % thought about the possibilities of work in the future and 9.2 per cent took into account their personal skills. In addition, 8.4 percent took into account the secondary subjects, 8.1 percent talked with career professionals and 7.6 percent had the opportunity to visit the Faculty. It was also identified that 6.3 percent talked with relatives about the option considered, the same percentage did consulting with secondary school teachers. 10.2 percent were able to make the decision regarding entry to the career by carrying out vocational guidance processes (see Annex Table No. 6).

In relation to the motivations recognized by young people when choosing the career of Psychology, among the most relevant aspects, stand out: 12.1 percent chose the career because it aspires to help people; 11.6 percent because it is what they want to do in a professional future; 11.6 percent because it represents their most predominant interests; 11.3% referred to aspects related to listening; 8.9 percent reported possessing skills to play the professional role; 7.3 percent believe that this choice is their biggest challenge, 11.5 percent expressed interest in being a health professional, while 3.5 percent is not visualized in another option of profession or expressed no having interest in another options (See Annex Table No. 7).

5. Conclusion

Accounting and analyzing the different factors that intervene when choosing a university career, allows us to think of them as isolated aspects and to appreciate the interplay of the various dimensions and how they intersect in the decision making of a student.

For the next research, whose objective is to describe the personal and social factors in the choice of a career, in a sample of entrants to the Faculty of Psychology of the UNC, Cohorte 2016, based on the results obtained, it was possible to identify some aspects that allow to characterize the sample of students analyzed.

We can describe the student of the entrance of Psychology broadly, as a young person of about 21 or 22 years, mostly of the feminine gender, with a main civil status single, coming from diverse specialties of the average level. The great majority does not work, denoting the support of the parents to face this stage, allowing them dedication to face the study, but manifesting the need to have an extra economic contribution.

It is not surprising that the high percentage of students belongs to the female gender, as it could be due to gender stereotypes and career choice, would place women in activities such as care and attention, among other activities attributed to women's roles, in agreement with studies on gender and careers choice.

Valuing the importance of the family, school and society, as constitutive instances of the identity of the subject and that play an important role in the educational trajectory of a student, can become favorable or impeding the permanence in the university. In this new stage, recognizing that the family can contribute, in addition to an economic capital to meet the expenses that need to study in the university, it is also important to recognize a cultural capital. Taking into account the level of studies achieved by parents, we may think that many of the career entrants are the first in their family to undertake university studies, "Young first-generation college students"; also showing that, in recent years, since the compulsory secondary school in the Argentine educational system, have been implementing different strategies of inclusion and educational quality, an aspect that we can appreciate since the enrollment of the Degree in Psychology has been increasing progressively, thus expanding the possibilities of entering the university of socio-cultural sectors previously excluded.

As referring to students aspiring to enter the Faculty of Psychology (UNC), a recognized institution for its prestige at local, provincial, national and international level, we can recognize the heterogeneity of its student population, observing the diversity of places of origin of the aspirants. Although most of them come from the capital of Cordoba, other students choose this school because of the lack of educational options in their native cities and, on the other hand, the recognition of the university degree, obtaining a distribution that is similar to the analysis of the UNC entry-level survey conducted by the University Statistics Program year by year (Maccagno et al., 2016).

Based on answering the second objective, exploring the reasons for choosing the career, we were able to identify that motivations are related to personal values (helping others), their interests, future professional role, their own capacities, expectations of achievement with the career; different aspects identified as influential when it comes to thinking about an election of the Faculty. These aspects recognized by the students correspond to the expression and clarification of motivations, interests and expectations regarding the choice of the Psychology career, which appears in many cases motivated by the social context of belonging, family, school, group of pairs and, to a lesser extent, by the access to means of communication and approach to the institutions.

The feeling of personal accomplishment and the general interest for the career, together with the interest in the work with the people appear as the aspects most valued by the respondents when choosing the career, on the contrary to a choice based

on the access to the actual and concrete information regarding the career, the specific characteristics of the academic formation and the professional profile that, although they appear in the answers obtained, would not be the primordial ones. . Recognizing the sources of information consulted and analyzing the importance that students attribute to them in the construction of their choice, provides us with guidelines in which to focus on the planning of preventive measures that aim to sustain the trajectory of students. Even though we know that choosing a career can be a spontaneous process, access and sources of information are important in building a realistic image of the profession.

Perhaps this can be related to two aspects, on the one hand, the fact that, in most cases analyzed, the participants are part of the first generation in the family that has access to higher education and the fact that most of the students have not carried out vocational guidance processes and have only searched for information on the internet or in writing. Although they are the most outstanding percentages, none of them has a very marked preponderance. In this way, it can be observed that among the aspects considered by the young people who choose to study this university career does not always take into account aspects related to the training provided by the higher education studies.

It is considered that the obtained information puts us in front of the challenge of investigating in a preventive way the incidence of these motivations in the later performance in the academic trajectories of the students, as well as in the elaboration of the vocational and occupational projects that they realize through their choice.

There are some methodological weaknesses of the study that are important to consider. On the one hand, the use of non-probabilistic sampling, since it does not allow to generalize the results to the entire population of Psychology (UNC) entrants, but it is in agreement with the preliminary study in question. The administration of the questionnaire as a pilot test, allows correcting the instrument incorporating or removing items in the event that it is necessary. This research opens new perspectives of work as members of a broader team, the continuity of research is in improving the instrument, from incorporating another variables that were not considered for the present research.

Thus, the data collected in the sample of entrants, allows us to approach to describe some of the characteristics of the students who aspire to enter the career of Psychology; to visualize needs and demands that arise in the approach of this stage from the beginning to the career. It is necessary to continue in this line in later studies, in order to be able to establish generalities of the population.

The importance of knowing, understanding and valuing both the context of the young people who aspire to enter higher studies, specifically those who choose a university career, allow to orient decisions and construct interventions more according to the educational needs of students and articulate with institutional spaces of Faculty and the University that promote an accompaniment and orientation both at the beginning of the career and in the possible prevention of difficulties that they may arise in the academic course, development and performance throughout the subjects of the career.