Tensions and support in the academic training process for Social Work students at a public university in south-western Colombia

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Abstract. This article presents the findings of a qualitative study carried out in order to understand the times in the academic training process that caused most tension among the students in an academic Social Work programme at a public university in the city of Cali, located in south-western Colombia. The main forms of support used by students to remain in the academic programme are also identified. As a result, it is reported that the most tense moments during the academic training process – interpreted as structural testing (Martuccelli, 2006) – were joining and adjusting to university, the study of certain subjects and academic practice. When faced with these tensions, university students resorted to the use of internal or individual support and also external sources, mainly institutional, such as peer support (from other students) and relationships with teachers at their institution. The study findings suggest the importance of including strategies to reinforce links among peers and teachers in university retention programmes.
Keywords: university student retention; academic training; Social Work; tensions and support.

Summary: Introduction. 1. Theoretical and methodological aspects. 1.1 Departure point: review of related studies. 1.2 Trial and supports; key concepts to access individual's experience. 1.3 The university formation process as a trial and supports used for student permanence. 1.4 Moments of tension in the academic formation in Social Work. 1.5 Supports utilized by students in the academic formation process. 1.6 Institutional supports. 2. Conclusions. 3. References.

Introduction

Student permanence is of special interest to educational institutions which, using institutional strategies, seek to reduce desertion and promote individual persistence among the students to obtain a professional degree. While both aspects contribute to permanence, most studies preceding this research point out as key findings individual aspects associated to personality or centered in students' abilities. On the contrary, this study emphasizes the role of external support sources, some of them related to the support derived from bonds with peers, teachers, family, and partners, most situated beyond intentional strategies to generate social integration and cohesion.

Unlike other studies that address university student permanence quantitatively, this research approached the phenomenon from the experiences of students, recovering from their trajectories situations or moments in the formative process they lived as straining or threatening to their continuity in the program. Hence the importance of institutionally accompanying university students especially in two of these moments that mark important transitions in their lives and demand changes

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and adaptation to remain in the educational system.

1. Theoretical and methodological aspects

This is a qualitative exploratory and descriptive study that provides insight on the moments of the university formation process that generated the most tensions in students of Universidad del Valle's Social Work academic program, as well as identify the supports aiding them throughout these moments so as to keep pursuing their formative process. For this purpose, a random sample of 14 active students was taken, corresponding roughly to 32% of the students enrolled in tenth semester, aged 21 to 23 years. Semi-structured interviews were applied to six of them individually and a focus group session was carried out with the eight remaining participants.

1.1. Departure point: review of related studies

The decision to desert or remain in superior education has been object of study from different places. According to Fernández (2009, 2012), in research based in Latin America the most widely used concept has been desertion, though starting in the nineties the terms persistence and retention were popularized. However, research on the subject, besides scarce, is interested in analyzing the causes of abandonment in university students and the reasons why they remain are often given little thought (Velásquez, 2010).

In terms of desertion, Fernández (2012) and Arias (2013) coincide in naming Vincent Tinto's explicative model as the one most used; it highlights the internal factors in the subject and considers that, the better the student's adaptation to university life, the higher their commitment and the less likely to desert (Fishbein & Aizen, 1975, as cited in Rodríguez, 2019). However, for Arias (2013) its applicability is limited due to the model being foreign and diverse studies conducted in Latin America[4] (Fernández, 2009) indicating socioeconomic factors to be the main causes.

According to Rodríguez (2019) between the years 2006 and 2016 two tendencies have

occurred in approaches to the phenomenon in Colombia. The first is connected to the development of quantitative researches that would later be displaced by qualitative studies whose interest, besides grasping desertion, is to reveal actions to mitigate and prevent it (tendency in which the Colombian National Ministry of Education is included).

Pineda (2010) poses that academic success is the result of individual actions of students, coupled with the strategies executed by institutions in order to support them. Taking the institutional into account, Fonseca-Grandón's study (2018) makes manifest that university curriculums are a double-edged weapon, as it can favor students' permanence as well as trigger their desertion.

On their part, Fernández, Martínez-Conde and Melipillán (2009) found that the use of complex learning strategies and a high academic self-esteem predict good academic performance, a key factor in university permanence. Gore (2010) however points out that it is a multi-factor phenomenon in which, besides the academic aspect, institutional commitment and support networks also have an impact.

Espinosa-Castro and Mariño-Castro (2018) propose socioeconomic and individual factors as being the most influential, highlighting economic hardship and work affairs, respectively. Canales and De Los Ríos (2009) emphasize on personal traits such as perseverance, effort, confidence and capacity to recognize limits and possibilities to act consequently, and the perception of a professional degree entailing an improvement on socioeconomic conditions.

Parada, Correa and Cárdenas (2017) also identify the personal factor, integrated by personal motivation, vocation and taste for the career chosen; these authors also include institutional and academic factors such as curriculum, pedagogy, interaction with teachers and peers, and academic resources. On the personal and family levels, other variables were emphasized, such as marital status, extracurricular activities, educational level of the parents, gender, and cohabitation –or lack thereof– with the family of origin (Giovagnoli, 2002).

At the local level, Flórez (2015) found that despite there being considerable structural aspects that negatively impact the subject and

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[4] The studies are: Centro Interamericano para el Desarrollo del Conocimiento en la Formación Profesional (1994), Instituto Internacional de la Unesco para la Educación Superior en América Latina y el Caribe (2005), Muñoz (2004), Zúñiga (2006); Donoso y Schiefelbein (2007), Schwartzman (2004) y Geldstein (2004), y están citados en Fernández (2009).

which escape their control, there are also individual/subjective factors that influence the decision to persist in the educational process, such as conviction on getting a degree. Family also appears as an important support, along with some institutional aspects such as the relationship of the students with their peers and teachers, economic stimuli, among others.

Finally, it is important to mention that Universidad del Valle's research group Culture and Human Development, from a cultural learning perspective, has developed intervention and research projects related to desertion. In a study on the academic capital of students they found that "low scores [in the Saber 11 test][5] are correlated with insufficient academic performance from first semester" (Tenorio & Sambrano, 2009, p. 113). This study places at the center of discussion the low level of academic capital of the youth to face university's academic demands.

Currently this university progresses on the strategy of Student Accompaniment and Monitoring (ASES) for recently enrolled students belonging to the national programs Ser Pilo Paga, Generación E[6] or admitted on exceptional conditions[7], which surged in 2016 with the aim of promoting academic success (Barbosa, Castillo & Vásquez, 2018). On the strategy's impact, Escobar (2020) found that academic performance of students that participated in it was superior to those who didn't.

Another relevant institutional strategy are the Groups for Academic Culture Support (GRACA), which since 2014 accompany students in aspects involving reading and writing with the purpose of reducing early desertion (Mora & Rodríguez, 2016).

1.2. Trial and supports, key concepts to access individual's experience

For the object of study's analysis the concepts of trial and supports derived from Danilo Martuccelli's sociology of the individual (2006); he proposes a way of analysis that goes from the individual, through experiential narrative, to an understanding of the works of social structures.

For Martuccelli (2010) there exist three perspectives to understand changes in contemporaneity: socialization, subjectivation and individuation. The first approaches processes of psycho-sociological construction of actors, the interiorization of the norm and how from incorporated dispositions people become subjects. Subjectivation explains the unfolding of the relationship between mobilizations, social struggles, and mechanisms of domination of a historical moment, and personal experiences: "approaching, in the field of sociology, the problem of constitution of the subject as the result of a socio-political dynamic of emancipation" (p. 79).

Lastly, individuation "is interested, from a historical perspective, in the type of individual that is structurally fabricated by a society" (Martuccelli, 2010, p. 79). In other words, this alludes to the process by which the individual constructs themselves as a subject, having as a start the facing of a series of trials by making use of the different supports that correspond to their particular trajectory. Martuccelli (2006) subscribes to the latter perspective, which allows to understand the constitution of individuals as social actors through a series of trials to be faced, from a reading of their subjectivity and identity and not from individuals' social positions or habitus.

For this author subjectivity is understood as "the experience of possessing a personal dominion subtracted from the social. It is a particular experience of oneself: the sensation – socially and culturally validated – that there's a 'something' within ourselves which escapes the social" (p. 53). This way, subjectivity is located between the public and the private spheres, as it exists insofar as it relates and opposes others.

Identity, on its part, ensures the permanence of a person in time and allows them to make part of a set of sociocultural profiles associated to colectives within a historical period:

> At the core of the notion of identity [there is] a particular link between the personal and the collective – and it is this link that is the heart of the issue. There is no personal identity without

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[5]   State test for entry to higher education in Colombia.
[6]   Ser Pilo Paga was a program of the Ministry of National Education of Colombia that sought to benefit outstanding students in the Saber 11 Tests and with limited economic resources; through access to accredited universities. Currently; there is a similar program called Generación E.
[7]   The exceptional conditions for access to Universidad del Valle are affirmative actions for ethnic populations and people in situations of social vulnerability.

the presence of collective identities; and at the same time, all collective identity profile serves the structuration of personal identities (Martuccelli, 2006, p. 47).

Thus individuals' experiences crossed by identity and subjectivity allow them to assume trials that represent an articulation between individual problems and social structure; "trials are a testament to how structures act and are lived by individuals" (Román, 2016, p. 31).

In the words of Martuccelli (2006) a trial is "a difficult or painful situation by which we are confronted, which entails there is in any case a particular perception of it. There is no trial without perception" (p. 102). In turn, individuals perceive they are going through difficult times that may be understood as tensions, that is, as manifestations of the trial.

The trial, as an expression of the social selection process, shows that not everyone has the same resources to face it; thus, there will always be someone who, independent of their social position, will not come out of it unharmed. Now, when facing a trial individuals make use of supports – that is, of a "heterogeneous set of elements, real or imaginary, woven through relations with other or themselves" (Martuccelli, 2007, p. 63) – which help them hold up internally and externally. In this sense this model of analysis proposes to understand how the individual positions themselves before society and self-constructs.

1.3. The university formation process as a trial and supports used for student permanence

For Martuccelli (2006, as cited in Román, 2016), one of the most important trials in the subject's life is the school test, insofar as it "1) acts as a process of social selection to discern the successful and reward those who manage to plow through this process; 2) gives a sort of institutional trust that legitimizes certain individuals over others" (p. 31).

Those who do plow through the social selection process experience what Velásquez defines as student permanence:

> Process lived by the student which allows them to enroll in, take and culminate their studies plan, […] characterized by the establishment of social relations and affected by the pre-uni-

versity formative processes, those of enrollment to it, their socioeconomic position, adaptative capacity, resilience and tolerance to frustration (2010, p. 6).

According to Martuccelli (2006) supports, as tools of a social, political, economical or any other nature, are the first social dimension of the individual, and their use allows them to carry on with their life. "Supports can be described as incorporated and objectivated habits which facilitate or prevent individuals from connecting with others. These supports depend on the individual's trajectory (their story) and not on their position within a specific group" (Roman, 2016, p. 30).

Martuccelli (2007) defines individual supports as those internal abilities possessed by subjects to hold themselves up, some of these are: autonomy, related to the "capacity to affix the orientations of their actions themselves" (p. 38); independence or capacity to understand themselves as part of a society and not just of a community; rationalization, understood as capacity for self-control; and expression, occurring when the individual is capable of "manifesting outside themselves, on their acts, what they are within" (p. 38).

Individual supports, then, "come from inner abilities individuals possess to hold themselves up in their relationship to others" (Román, 2016, p. 30). In contrast, external supports are relational and depend on other people or institutions; sometimes they may be there, while other times they may vanish.

Thus individual supports used by students in their university formation process are those associated with their individual traits: abilities, perseverance in the pursuit of goals, capacity to recognize limits or possibilities and act consequently, personal motivations, vocation, study methods, academic capital, personal stories, and expectations, among others. On the other hand, external supports denominate socioeconomic, familiar and institutional aspects pertaining the contribution, not only of families but also of the university, to the achievement of individual and group goals such as the faculty, academic load and integration, scholarships, student services, etcetera (Canales & De los Ríos, 2009; Fernández, 2012; Coulon, 1997, as cited in Arias, 2013; Cely & Durán, 2014; Franzante, Hernández & Hernández, 2014; Vásquez & Rodríguez, 2007, as cited in Cely & Durán, 2014).

Within the latter category of external supports can be found what in this study we have denominated social and collective strategies, produced intentionally or not in the university setting – related to students' interaction with peers and teachers (Parada, Correa & Cárdenas, 2017), as well as to the establishment of connections and ways of coexistence that promote a sense of belonging and integration of the youth with their career and institution (Martinic, 2019). This also contributes to student permanence, although it is frequently overlooked in studies that address this issue.

According to Martuccelli (2006), the supports allow for the individual to be and sustain themselves: "it is only when an individual is actively held from outside that the actor has the illusion of maintaining themselves from the inside. This point is fundamental. No individual holds up on their own" (p. 34). Now the basic aspects constituting this study's model of analysis have been outlined, we proceed to present the main results and an analytical approximation of the same.

1.4. Moments of tension in the academic formation in Social Work

The students mainly recognized three moments of great tension throughout the academic formation process: the arrival to the university and the subsequent adaptation, some courses, and the academic practice. The moment of arrival and adaptation was considered a tensioning situation in the process of academic formation due to the changes entailed by the transit from secondary to higher education, as well as due to the moment in their individual life cycle.

While some studies on student desertion and permanence mention previous education and the academic performance in the first year of university have a considerable incidence (Valdés & Peláez, 2016; Fonseca-Grandón, 2018; Espinosa-Castro y Mariño-Castro, 2018), this was not reflected in the case of the students interviewed; for, though their academic performance decreased at the university compared to their performance in high school –situation attributed to their high school having a "low academic level" – this didn't represent a threat for their permanence in the formation process.

The tensions lived through this first moment are joined by the crises that for some come along with the passage from adolescence to young adulthood, right when the individual, formerly an adolescent, must begin to approach themselves to "concrete affiliations that might require significant sacrifices and commitments" (Erikson, 1982, p. 90) such as pursuing a university degree. In that sense, the research participants acknowledge their "ways of being and thinking" as different back then, a product of idiosyncrasies derived of contexts less heterogeneous than university, such as family, school, and church.

When I got to the uni everything opened… age, thoughts, sexuality, having come from a private all-girl high school, because the logics are different (Lina, focus group, October 03, 2017).

Furthermore, tensions experienced through some courses were identified as related to: their perception of their own academic quality in regards to the course demands, the existence of conflicts, mainly of a political nature, derived from their theoretical orientations, and the degree of personal reflection instilled in the students.

Regarding this it was found that the level of demand of courses, especially pertaining to social research, derived in tensions due to the addressing of issues related to the epistemological dimension of knowledge, which implied for the interviewees a certain capacity for abstract thought, as well as a permanent formal writing exercise they claimed not being used to before:

Research Strategies marked me greatly, it was when I began writing seriously, and I recognized plenty of errors in my writing (Tamara, interview, September 12, 2017).

However, regarding academic demand the opposite was also found: some pointed to the absence of academic demand in some courses as unsatisfactory of their significant learning expectations, which demotivated them from continuing in the program:

I wanted to drop out because some courses were too basic and I felt like I was wasting my time, […] I didn't feel that I was learning (Daniela, focus group, October 03, 2017).

On this matter some studies show that, among the personal factors influencing university student permanence, academic motivation is fundamental (Palmero, 2005, as cited in Arias, 2013; Arias & Lopera, 2013; Parada, Correa & Cárdenas, 2017).

Student satisfaction regarding the quality of their education relates to the wellbeing experienced by students when they perceive their academic expectations being taken care of by the institution (Surdez, Sandoval & Lamoyi, 2018), among which a curriculum adjusted to social and individual needs was counted. In this sense, it is possible that the satisfaction derived from the fulfillment of expectations to become a support for students.

Besides, the presence of conflicts on the part of the students before the theoretical orientation of some courses was identified; they labeled them as conservative of the social order and as fragmenting reality for its apprehension and addressing. These tensions reveal that throughout the formation process students adopt theoretical postures of greater political reach and implication.

> *With this subject of Social Management* (…) *I sort of didn't see I could pursue a transformation, that I wouldn't stop reproducing the social order as I already knew it* (Natalia, interview, September 14, 2017).

Plus, the results of this study found that the nature of some contents included in the courses[8] of the professional formation curriculum interpellated the students on an emotional level. That is, as the topics of reflection in the classroom suppose familiar realities, they instill questionings on their life trajectories and on the reference frames from which they act; such tensions, which emotionally compromise them, demand from them a higher degree of self-reflection:

> *I was going to drop out because of Psychopathology mostly, it hit me really hard, because I began to face issues of my own and it was, I think, a decisive moment* (Daniela, focus group, October 03, 2017).

It was also found that the academic internship represented the most tensioning moment of the process for the interviewees. Diverse elements contributed to it: the changes occuring as they went from being students to facing professional practice, the process of selection and induction, the application of obtained knowledges, the questions regarding profession, personal life situations lived simultaneously, the time dedication required by related academic duties, and particular institutional aspects of the place of internship, among others.

> *Internship was a difficult time* (…), *I had a crisis, I had a lot of questions, such as whether this was really what I wanted for myself and if it was really what I wanted to keep doing* (Ángela, focus group, October 03, 2020).

The academic internship means exiting the academic space, from which transformation of social realities is idealized, and meeting the complex field of professional intervention; it is a formal and structured social intervention exercise that the students must take on with absolute dedication and responsibility. At this time, questionings regarding the choice of profession and professional intervention increased; some students thought of dropping out, however, living through this moment allowed them to reaffirm their professional identity. Such interpellations on the nature and practice of Social Work are part of the process of construction of a professional identity linking objective and subjective constructions on the matter, which goes on to the professional exercise, as Blanco (2019) affirms.

On the other hand, time demanded by the academic internship activities, both in and out of the internship institution, plus the time allotted to other courses' duties, constituted a stressor factor that affected the mental and physical wellbeing of some students, as well as their economic situation, as not all institutions offered a paid internship, forcing those who supported themselves economically to look for other ways to make a living.

> *You have no time to dedicate to your very own health, mental and physical, a long time passed without me jogging because I got home so tired* (…), *I got home at 8 pm and would say "I'll do some reading", but then I'd just fall asleep, it was such a mental and emotion-*

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[8]   These courses belong to the component of training in intervention with families; such as Individual and Family I and II; Psychopathology; Death and Bereavement in Contexts of Violence.

al exhaustion, all I wanted was to rest when I got home. (Natasha, interview, September 07, 2017).

1.5. Supports utilized by students in the academic formation process

The findings on the main supports utilized by the interviewees show the importance acquired by subjective and relational aspects when they are faced with a moment of tension in the process of academic formation as a structural trial. It is thus that diverse supports were identified: self-perceived qualities, family, a partner, classmates, actions taken by the program's professors, some initiatives by the School of Social Work and Human Development favoring the students, and the university's Psychological Service. These elements belong to what Martuccelli would name as internal and external supports (Román, 2016).

The internal supports manifested by students include characteristics and personality traits which allowed them to face the diverse tensions presented during their academic formation. Among the attitudes, qualities and characteristics identified are self-reliance, commitment, interest in the profession and willingness to do things for their personal well-being. While these supports may or may not have existed prior to enrolling in the program, they become compatible with the tensions that take place in the formation process and thus help hold the individual up throughout it.

Some students manage to strengthen their capacities and modify individual aspects that allow them to tolerate and overcome difficulties in the formative process, which is often acknowledged by them by its end:

> *Plenty of things changed in my life since I enrolled in Social Work, I've learned a lot, and I feel I am in the capacity to sit and talk to someone about this, I've had my crisis and moments in which I say Social Work has many shortcomings* (...), *but I want to be a social worker* (Tamara, interview, September 12, 2017).

However, the most relevant supports for students are the external ones, those of a relational nature, in which family, partner, friends and peers appear as fundamental backing. "the existence or availability of people in whom to trust, who show their preoccupation for the

individual, who value them and show them appreciation" (Sarason, Levine, Basham & Sarason, 1983, as cited in Baptista, Rigotto, Cardoso & Marín, 2012, p. 3).

For students their immediate family represented a fundamental resource not just in facing moments of tension but through their entire formation as, besides company, they offer emotional and economic support, which are essential:

> *Family support, certainly* (...). *I think they're also a good refuge, an emotional, economic and social support, despite everything they are there* (Verónica, interview, September 11, 2017).

Their assumption of family as a support allows to see that, although the formation process allows for greater independence and autonomy, this doesn't mean family doesn't have an influence in it. Besides, the theoretical contents pertaining family may influence how they perceive their families and the place they hold in their lives.

The partners of some interviewees were also given recognition as a support in difficult times; their backing and company allowed them to better face some tensions:

> *My partner's support was crucial as he had already gone through making a final thesis project, facing the struggles of academic life,* (...) *in a way he became a support* (Verónica, interview, September 11, 2017).

Besides the aforementioned, classmates constitute the main relational support for students, since although the meanings ascribed to difficult moments vary, the experiences shared as peers were similar and facilitated confronting such hardships jointly:

> *One would speak to classmates and find in the other's discourse one's own situation, which helped to feel like one wasn't the only one going through it, so the support was implicit* (Daniela, focus group, October 03, 2017).

This support between classmates may be linked to a process of identification with one another that places them as peers not just on the basis of being students but due to their social origins. On this matter, Bordieu & Passeron (2003) pose that university students possess two identities, one proclaimed by themselves

and a hidden one: the former surges from their practices and common experiences to place them in the condition of students, and the latter from the existential conditions of their social origin, and their social, economic and cultural capitals.

In this sense, Román found that for grant holders in a private university in Peru, one of their supports is constituted by the other participants in the same state program they were a part of, mostly because they shared the same social position of origin and similar capitals, differentiating them from the rest of students, who would often be discriminative toward them.

The sentiments expressed by students before these supports show not just the importance interpersonal relationships hold for them, but also their capacity to reflect on these, which might be related to the fact that there were objects of reflection in the formative process. Furthermore, it was found that difficult situations affected their interpersonal relationships; that is, the feelings derived from tensioning moments might have had a transitory impact on the relationships assumed as supports, through arguments, conflicts, etc. This allows to conclude that the relationship between tensions and supports is not linear: despite supports being necessary to face and overcome trials, these also affect them and thus individuals, since they alter the sensation of social suspension (Martuccelli, 2006).

1.6. Institutional supports

Currently, the efforts of higher education institutions (IES) in Colombia have increased in the promotion of student permanence through strategies to prevent desertion, this is due to the National Ministry of Education (MEN) calling the IES to strengthen their capacity for developing and executing policies and programs to encourage permanence and student graduation (MEN, 2015a). In the case of our university of interest, diverse formal strategies of retention and student advisory have been implemented to prevent desertion and increase permanence and graduation.

In this sense, within institutional supports not only planified strategies of the academic pro-

gram or the university were identified, but also some individual actions by members of the institution which were recognized by the students as institutional support. The main institutional element identified as a support comes from professor's actions, their disposition and diligence before the students' academic and personal situations, who highlighted this as a particularity in the Social Work program that's much harder to find in other faculties at the university.

> *Some teachers approach you from a very personal place, from the empathy being built, (...) they ask how you're doing, but I think it's more their initiative than something intended by the academic program* (Jersson, interview, September 13, 2017).

According to Artavia (2005), professionals in education have the chance to reflect and choose to be flexible in the exercise of their labor, which allows them greater interaction with students and the possibility to build relationships imbued with more affection, confidence and understanding toward them. This is connected to each teacher's interpretation of the educational act, as it is observed that, "beyond a theoretical transmission of a specific knowledge, there is an affective and human encounter wherein the protagonists converge, with their expectations and limitations" (Vásquez, 2005, p. 4).

In relation to the support given by the Social Work academic program, the students expressed the need for more accompaniment when facing tensioning situations in formation; they nonetheless acknowledged initiatives such as the emotional transition workshops aimed at students during their internship to constitute a support in this time[9].

As for the support given by the university, the Psychological Service provided for students was highlighted. Nevertheless, this attention did not completely fulfill their expectations. Extracurricular spaces and resources of a cultural and sports nature programmed by University Wellbeing were also identified. This shows that all subjects count on and need supports to face trials, however, not all of them are equally legitimate, and what might be considered for some a support might not be for others (Martuccelli, 2006).

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[9]   The academic program of Social Work currently develops the Student Counseling Program (Universidad del Valle; 2005) as part of the academic activity of the career teachers to support the training process of the students.

2. Conclusions

Finally, this study identified the main moments of tension lived by Social Work students throughout their academic formation process to be the arrival and adaptation to university, some courses, and the academic internship. These moments are not limited to curricular or academic aspects, they are traversed by the students' individual trajectories and are manifestations of what Martuccelli has defined as a trial: a difficult or painful situation that individuals must face, a process in which their subjectivities intervene.

These moments represent, in this author's terms, a structural trial, insofar as it is common to all members of a collective – in this case, students – though lived from dissimilar positions and experiences. While these tensions instilled some questionings on the part of students regarding their professional choice, they didn't always arouse the intent to abandon the program; on the contrary, they meant a reinforcement of the pursuit of the degree.

On the other hand, the supports that allowed students to face the moments of greatest tension in the academic formation process were mainly external aspects of an institutional nature –such as relationships with peers and professors– and those pertaining to their families and partners. It is important to point out that despite the supports identified being so diverse, they were associated to subjective and relational aspects, mainly to the accompaniment of peers and the bonds created with teachers, taking precedence over economic or academic aspects, which have been signaled by other researches as determinant in the decision to remain in or desert from higher education.

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