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Satisfaction, Assessment and Adaptation to a Virtual Environment of the University Mentoring Programme GuíaMe-AC-UMA for Gifted High School Students

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Abstract: The purpose of this study is to analyse the satisfaction levels of participants (mentees, mentors, and technical-research team) of a university mentoring programme. The GuíaMe-AC-UMA is aimed at gifted high school students. Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the IX edition was carried out in an online format. The results were compared to those of the in-person edition (VII edition) to assess whether there were differences between the editions. For this purpose, three versions (one for each participant type) of a Likert-type questionnaire were distributed among the participants of the 22 workshops offered by the GuíaMe-AC-UMA Programme. A total of 224 responses were received: 21 from the mentors, 181 from the mentees and 22 from the technical-research team. The results indicate a high level of satisfaction with the development of the workshops by all participants. While the mentees preferred the in-person edition, the rest of the participants showed no difference in satisfaction levels between editions. A similar result was observed when correcting for the subject area of the workshop. The in-person edition was valued higher than the online version by all. The overall level of satisfaction shown by all participants and the support for continuation of the programme suggest that this type of educational offer is beneficial and satisfactory for all involved, in accordance with previous research on mentoring programmes. These results indicate that programmes focused on young pre-university students with high abilities are valued; these results encourage us to continue the programme.

Keywords: gifted students; mentoring; virtual environment; university context; satisfaction

1. Introduction

A knowledge society characterised by globalisation, continuous changes and advances in all areas, such as technology, together with a high and continuous flow of information, drive individuals to respond to society's demands in the academic, professional, and personal spheres [1]. Social participation develops from a young age and begins consolidating around adolescence [2]. Active participation is key and necessary to achieve a society with greater social cohesion, equality, inclusion, health, education and economic development "to reach a better and more sustainable future for all" [3].

Children are introduced to mentorship processes in the educational context, where they acquire the academic, professional, and life skills that will help them to integrate into society as active members. From a classical perspective, learning is posited as unidirectional, where there is a learner (the student) and a teacher (the tutor) [4,5]. Over time, however, there has been an evolution towards a more systemic learning model. Mentoring is currently seen as network development, as there is a reciprocity between mentors and mentees who participate in a mutually beneficial learning process [6]. It is now understood as a relationship in which there is mutual learning, and where the professional and personal development between mentor and mentee are based on trust, respect and commitment [7,8]. Mentoring is seen as an all-encompassing process, with various ways of conceiving, applying, and evaluating it, and with a great diversity in terms of methods, formats, and the relationships that are formed [9]. This can have positive influences on individual development beyond the professional realm, as it is related to life outcomes [10].

The mentoring process encompasses different phases and transitions in the development of the relationship between mentors and mentees. The first phase is the initiation, in which enough interactions take place to assess and determine the productivity of the mentor–mentee relationship. The second is cultivation, the most intense and sustained phase, where the commitment between mentor and mentee reaches its maximum expression in terms of mentoring roles. In the third phase, separation, the intensity of the relationship decreases, with a shift in roles as the mentee's autonomy increases. The last phase, redefinition, is characterised by the evolution of the relationship towards peer bonding, informal contact and mutual support [11,12].

Regarding the role of mentoring, it has both psychosocial and professional impacts [7,13–15]. Those roles are developed in the educational, professional and psychosocial development dimensions [16,17]. Educational development embraces the planning of academic programmes and the development of teaching/learning processes in both formal and informal educational contexts, with the goal of acquiring skills necessary for subsequent professional development. The professional domain includes professional skills as well as cooperation, leadership and other social values [9,18]. Psychosocial roles are associated with motivation, self-development, role modelling, acceptance and confirmation, counselling and friendship [19,20].

In addition to the roles described above, research on mentoring distinguishes nine types of mentoring [5]. (1) Formal mentoring comprises fully planned, structured, intentional and articulated mentoring that takes place in formal educational contexts. Formal mentoring programmes corroborate the transformative capacity of mentoring, which aims to drive positive change in the mentee, in terms of autonomy and self-regulated learning. Mentors play a key role as facilitators of this change process [21–23]. (2) Informal mentoring occurs when mentors and mentees interact in natural contexts, regardless of whether they occur in formal settings. It can outperform formal mentoring in terms of retention, satisfaction and benefits [20,24]. (3) Diverse mentoring has a focus on equity, social justice and diversity. It is the quality of the interaction between mentors and mentees that determines growth and success, even in situations of personal and contextual diversity [20,25]. (4) Collaborative mentoring is that in which both mentor and mentee, regardless of knowledge differences, become co-mentors, resulting in a reciprocity with shared goals and values [20,26]. (5) Group mentoring is aimed at mentees who do not reach, or do not have access to, traditional mentoring programmes. Groups are made up of three or more mentees who support each other's development, complementing each other through their differences. The mentor is the modulating element of group functioning, facilitating the overcoming of obstacles to succeed [27,28]. (6) Peer mentoring entails a high level of learning as a developmental activity, involving both formal and informal learning settings, bringing together both experts and non-experts. This type of mentoring is activity-based and encourages persistence, commitment, collaboration and self-efficacy, without the hierarchical element present in other mentoring types [23,29]. (7) Multi-level mentoring has the goal of fostering synergies between different levels within a system, and this type of mentoring can include groups.

These levels, involving specific groups, units or entire cultural and social systems, can be either horizontal or vertical in nature [30,31]. (8) Cultural mentoring involves intercultural relationships that are promoted via transactional relationships. This type of mentoring promotes democratic values such as equality, social justice and tolerance. Thus, the mentee develops into a citizen who promotes social change [20,32]. (9) Virtual mentoring or e-mentoring involves the use of online platforms (e.g., conference calls, chats and emails) for mentoring purposes. This model has flourished rapidly due to recent technological advances, allowing the interaction of people from different backgrounds and in different locations. This type of mentoring can help break down barriers and facilitate equality, inclusion and overall success [13,33].

The school context, and more specifically the classroom, is characterised by a great diversity of students. In this context, students with for example externalising behaviours or neurodevelopmental alterations are more visibly in need of support. In fact, most actions are focused on these groups to help them achieve their full development and inclusion. However, there are other students who may go unnoticed and who also require support. This is the case for highly able pupils, who, until recently, were believed to not need support to reach their full potential. However, research shows they have specific needs [34–36], and mentoring can serve an important role for this purpose as it can be focused on these needs, while improving the mentor's knowledge of them and how to provide support.

Highly able students are characterised by their ability to handle and relate multiple cognitive tasks of logical, numerical, spatial, memorability, verbal and creative nature, and these students may stand out especially and exceptionally in one or more of these abilities [37]. These students are not a homogeneous group and are characterised by continuously evolving and dynamic development. However, they present exceptional characteristics, for example, outstanding creativity in problem solving, unique reasoning skills and the ability to undertake innovative research, as well as high levels of persistence and motivation in pursuing their interests [34]. But achieving success in the school context is not synonymous with future academic success or facility with developing relationships with peers. In many cases exceptional abilities can, in fact, hinder highly able students' achievements, as there is a mismatch between educational resources and these students' interests and demands. This can lead to poor academic performance and misbehaviour that can also impact peer socialisation [38,39].

Addressing the demands of these students requires specific educational programmes and services that can contribute to their development as well as to society [35,40]. Thus, the Curriculum Enrichment Programme of Mentor Workshops (GuíaMe-AC-UMA) was born. It was developed by the University of Malaga (UMA) and the Educational Guidance Network of the Education and Sport Delegation of Malaga (the Network). It is a training and mentoring programme for pre-university students with high abilities (ages 11–18). The programme began in 2009, and it runs every year in an in-person setting. The IX Edition planned for 2020 was adapted to a virtual learning environment forced by the COVID-19 pandemic.

The technical and research team comprises a guidance counsellor from the Network, three professors from the UMA (one each from the faculties of Sciences, Psychology and Educational Sciences), and a high-ability university student. The team is responsible for the organisational, curricular, structural and evaluative elements of the programme. The curriculum of the workshops is organised and developed over the year by the teaching staff of the UMA and includes a wide range of disciplines, topics and contents. These include Art, Biology, Communication Sciences, Computer Science, Drama, Economics and Business Studies, Education, Engineering, Genetics, Geology, Health Sciences Journalism, Law, Medicine, Music, Nutrition, Physiology, Psychology, Science and Technology. The workshops are focused from a creative and innovative perspective and have a strong participatory component.

These workshops also serve to mentor students, whereby the mentor advises, accompanies and monitors the mentee's progress, especially regarding their expressed interests.

This action will help the student acquire the skills that each workshop offers. In a following phase, students introduce projects in a presentation competition. All this contributes to fostering a research and entrepreneurial spirit in these highly able students and provides professional guidance for their future academic career. Many former students in the GuíaMe-AC-UMA Programme have set up Cicerones, a group of university students who, as part of the academic environment, can continue their own training as well as develop specialisation training initiatives for pre-university students.

Given the scarce literature on the convergence of virtual learning environments, students with high abilities, competence development and mentoring, this study focuses on comparing the level of satisfaction of the GuíaMe-AC-UMA programme between the in-person and online editions.

The overall goal of this study was to compare the level of satisfaction of all participants (mentors, mentees and technical team/coordinators) between the online and in-person GuíaMe-AC-UMA Programme. The specific research questions were these:

1. Does the level of satisfaction differ between participants according to their profiles—mentors, mentees and technical-research team (TRT)—in the online edition?
2. What are the best and worst rated elements of the course? Do these vary depending on the profile of the participant (mentors, mentees, and the TRT)? Are the online and in-person ratings similar?
3. Are there significant differences between the virtual and face-to-face modality on the part of mentees, mentors and the TRT?
4. Are there significant differences between the online and in-person workshops according to area of knowledge?

2. Materials and Methods

The GuíaMe-AC-UMA mentoring programme is carried out in two phases. First, students (potential mentees) are offered the opportunity to meet university professors and researchers (potential mentors) through group mentoring in a workshop format. Subsequently, and once the mentor–mentee pairs have been identified, students are engaged in an individualised mentoring process, within which they develop a personal and/or academic project chosen by each mentee in agreement with their mentor. Although it is optional, all students are encouraged to participate in a competition that takes place at the closing ceremony, by presenting a research project based on their interests.

Students with high abilities enrolled in the programme can delve deeper into the content and educational challenges they are interested in. They are also exposed to the different lines of research within the UMA and could get to know the university environment more directly. Additionally, the GuíaMe-AC-UMA programme can help students discover their vocation and professional orientation as well as to improve socioemotionally. This is made possible through participation in group mentoring or workshops of their interest, where they acquire knowledge from different disciplines, learn about professional opportunities within those fields, discover new career options, or reaffirm their initial preferences. These workshops represent an educational challenge for the students, which not only helps with motivation but also strengthens their will, taking them out of their comfort zone. In other words, the mentorship workshops offer learners the possibility to awaken their motivation, wonder, interest, entrepreneurship, pursuit of their goals and much more [35].

Mentorship workshops not only play an educational role but also facilitate bonding between mentor and mentee through shared interests and values. Research on the effectiveness of mentoring identifies as key the elements of trust, mutual liking, supportive relationships and complicity between the mentor and mentee [41]. In the GuíaMe-AC-UMA programme, mentors use effective educational strategies, including learning by discovery and problem-solving, cooperative and unstructured or even open-ended group activities, in combination with a variety of didactic resources that foster motivation and creativity. Thus, the mentor aims to guide the mentee towards enquiry, dialogue, experimentation and exploration [35].

The TRT is responsible for coordinating, designing and implementing the programme, as well as for adapting the instruments for evaluation, collecting and analysing data, and disseminating the results. The TRT also addresses needs and difficulties faced by mentees, families, mentors, school counsellors and other bodies involved in the development of the programme. It also works towards expanding the number of workshops to cover as many areas of knowledge as possible, and it provides training in high abilities for the mentors. Thus, the TRT is responsible for the management, training, attending, supervising, monitoring and evaluating the development of the programme for its proper functioning and implementation [35].

For the virtual edition, the workshops did not entail any change with respect to in person edition, as they were chosen for their subject matter, form and content, which were perfectly adapted to the virtual environment, using the online platform Google Meet for their development [42].

This research was conducted under the commitment to comply with ethical standards of research and essential legal requirements to be able to carry out this study. All participants gave their informed consent to inclusion before participating in accordance with the Declaration of Helsinki. The protocol was approved by the Ethics Committee of the University of Malaga (CEUMA: 61-2018-H), thus guaranteeing all issues related to confidentiality and anonymity of the data, among other fundamental ethical aspects.

2.1. Questionnaires

Participants were divided into three distinct groups: mentees, mentors and the TRT. Their participation was voluntary.

2.1.1. Mentees

A total of 181 questionnaires were distributed to students who attended the GuíaMe-AC-UMA programme. At the start of the programme, all mentees were between 11 and 18 years old, 60.22% (n = 109) were male and 39.78% (n = 72) were female.

Mentees took part in the workshops that they were interested in, taking into account the year they belonged to, so that level I corresponds to 1st and 2nd ESO and level II from 3rd ESO to 2nd year of high school. The percentage of all participants in level I was 60.77% and 39.22% in level II. At both levels, mentees participation was voluntary.

The percentage of mentees at each level was as follows: 25.41% were in 1st ESO, 35.36% in 2nd ESO, 16.57% in 3rd ESO, 13.81% in 4th ESO, 6.08% in 1st grade of high school, and 2.76% in 2nd grade of high school.

2.1.2. Mentors

The mentors were all university professors and/or researchers. The total number of mentors who participated in the IX edition of the programme was 18, of whom 55.55% were female and 44.44% male. Mentors carried out 22 different workshops, as some mentors were involved in more than one workshop or adapted one to both levels. Each mentor was asked to complete one questionnaire per workshop. A total of 21 questionnaires were collected.

2.1.3. Technical-Research Team

The number of participants in the TRT was 4, including three professors and a graduate student in psychology. Of the team, 80% were women.

A total of 22 questionnaires were collected.

2.2. Instruments

The satisfaction levels were evaluated using the three versions of the semi-structured questionnaires developed by García-Román et al. (2018) [43]: for mentees, mentors, and the TRT. Questionnaires were distributed at the end of each workshop (n = 22) via Google Forms [44].

Each questionnaire includes 30 questions, which are quantitatively evaluated on a Likert scale from 1 to 4 (1 = No, never; 2 = Almost nothing; 3 = Yes, quite a lot; 4 = Yes, a lot; NA = Not applicable). The questions are focused on different aspects of the workshops: usefulness, methodology, organisation and resources, teaching characteristics and interests and expectations. The form also includes questions related to the subject of the workshop, such as raised interest, relevance to the individual, how deeply the topic was discussed and how rigorous it was. The maximum level of overall satisfaction on the scale is 120 points, whilst the minimum is 30 points.

The collection of information was carried out at the end of each workshop in which the three agents involved (mentees, mentors, TRT) had to complete the online questionnaire, with the member of the TRT or collaborator in charge of supervising the workshop being responsible for posting the link on the platform (Google Meet) [42] and motivating the students and mentor to complete it. In total, information was collected from 22 workshops.

2.3. Statistical Analysis

The data obtained from the participants were analysed using the programming environment R (version 4.0.2) [45]. The confidence level was set at 99%.

First, a descriptive analysis was performed. Data exploration showed that the results of questionnaires had a positive asymmetric distribution (i.e., high scores predominate) and showed that the normality assumption was violated ($p < 0.001$). Therefore, the Mann–Whitney–Wilcoxon test was performed to test whether the satisfaction level was significantly different between the in-person and online workshops for each of the participant groups (i.e., mentees, mentors, and TRT). Subsequently, the same analysis was performed in a subsample to test if the satisfaction levels were significantly different depending on the workshop topic. Only topics that were in both online and in-person workshops were included in this analysis. Finally, the Kruskal–Wallis test was performed to compare more than one independent sample (mentees, mentors and TRT) in both the full and reduced versions.

3. Results

Satisfaction Levels

The overall level of satisfaction for all participants was high for the online workshops but was significantly lower for the in-person editions ($p < 0.001$). On the other hand, no significant differences were found within participants, except for mentees ($p < 0.001$). Furthermore, no significant differences were found between any of the agents involved in the virtual version. A summary of the results is shown in Table 1.

Table 1. Overall satisfaction results by group for the online and in-person editions of the GuíaMe-AC-UMA program.

Programme	Mentees M (SD)	Mentors M (SD)	TRT M (SD)	Total Score M (SD)
GuíaMe online	103.71 (9.39)	101.36 (12.8)	108.00 (10.19)	103.99 (9.78)
GuíaMe in-person	107.43 (10.97)	105.37 (10.56)	106.82 (9.86)	107.44 (10.97)

We have analysed the workshop according to the profile of the participants taking into account the overall satisfaction (total score of the questionnaire) and satisfaction per item, to check if there are any differences in the assessment according to the edition and type of agent. A Likert-type scale was used (1 = No, never to 4 = Yes, very much), from low satisfaction to high satisfaction. The maximum level of overall satisfaction on the scale is 120 points, whilst the minimum level on the scale is 30 points.

The agents rated the workshops with very high scores in the virtual edition (M = 103.99; dt = 9.78), with significant differences between the two editions (W = 50,536; $p < 0.001$). On the other hand, no significant differences by agent were found between the two editions,

except in the case of mentees (W = 34,814; $p < 0.001$). Furthermore, no significant differences were found between any of the agents involved in the virtual version.

In the reduced version, only the areas that were taught in both editions (virtual and face-to-face) are included, with the total of the 13 mentioned areas of knowledge.

The agents, in the reduced version, rated the workshops with high scores (M = 104.17; dt = 10.33), with significant differences between both editions (W = 27,728; $p < 0.01$). On the other hand, significant differences were only found between both editions in the case of mentees (W = 16,497; $p < 0.001$). No significant differences were found between the agents in the reduced virtual edition.

Looking at the specific profiles of the participants (mentors, mentees, TRT), the overall satisfaction scores of the three groups were quite high in all cases (above 100 out of 120). In the virtual edition, the highest score was for the TRT, followed by mentees and mentors. In the in-person edition, the best rating was given by the mentees, followed by the TRT and mentors. In both editions, it is the mentors who obtained the lowest score, although these scores are above 100, showing high satisfaction on the part of the mentors. However, it should be noted that no significant differences in overall satisfaction were found between mentors, mentees and the TRT in either edition ($p > 0.01$ in both cases). These results are shown in Table 1.

When looking at the differences per area of knowledge above described, the agents rated the workshops with high scores (M = 104.17; dt = 10.33), with significant differences between both editions (W = 27728; $p < 0.01$). On the other hand, significant differences were only found between both editions in the case of mentees ($p < 0.001$). No significant differences were found between participants.

The results of the averages of the online and in person editions are presented in Figure 1 below.
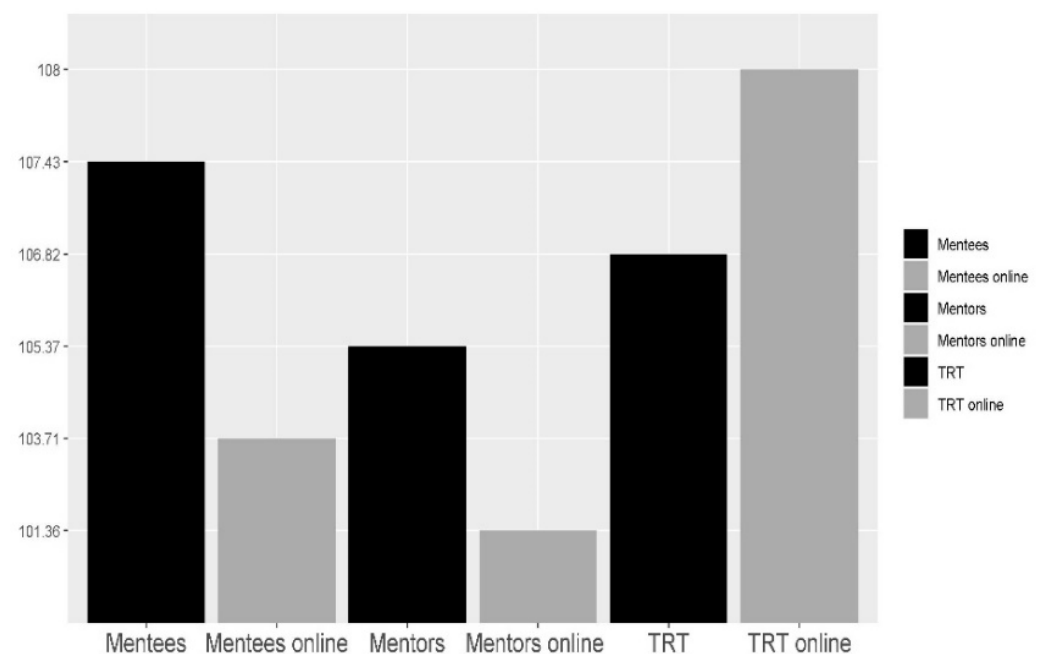
Figure 1. Comparison of average scores between virtual and in person.

Table 2 identifies and presents the items that generated greater and lesser satisfaction in the virtual and face-to-face versions, showing that the items that caused less satisfaction were still fairly well rated, with an average score above 3, except for items 12, 1, and 4 (mentors) in the virtual version and items 4 (mentees) and 12 (mentors and the TRT) in the face-to-face version.

Table 2. Items rated by participants in the workshop (group mentoring).

		Most Highly Rated Items	Lowest Rated Items
Online	Mentees	21-The mentor has tried to maintain order/discipline within a pleasant and respectful environment. (M = 3.82) 25-I would propose this workshop for the next edition of workshop. (M = 3.73) 18-The mentor was able to answer our questions and was approachable. (M = 3.72)	4-I think that the workshop has helped me to clarify my future university studies. (M = 3.09) 1-I will be able to apply the knowledge acquired in the IES, in my life. (M = 3.12) 8-The methodology used in this workshop has been mainly practical. (M = 3.13)
	Mentors	24-I think that the TRT members gave adequate support for the optimal development of the programme. (M = 3.93) 18-I was able to answer the students' questions and I made myself to be approachable. (M = 3.78) 19-I have encouraged student participation during the workshop. (M = 3.78)	12-We gave the students the appropriate documentation and/or materials for the development of the workshop. (M = 2.64) 1-The mentee will be able to apply the knowledge acquired at the IES in their life. (M = 2.86) 4-I believe that the workshop has helped them to clarify their future university studies. (M = 2.86)
	TRT	18-The mentor was able to answer our questions and was approachable. (M = 4.00) 21-The mentor has tried to maintain order/discipline within a pleasant and respectful environment. (M = 3.95) 16-The mentor taught the content in an attractive manner. (M = 3.86)	9-The mentor used the scientific method throughout the workshop. (M = 3.14) 4-I think that the workshop has served to clarify the mentee's future university studies. (M = 3.23) 8-The methodology used in this workshop was mainly practical. (M = 3.23)
In-person	Mentees	21-The mentor tried to maintain order/discipline within a pleasant and respectful environment. (M = 3.92) 25-I would propose this workshop for the next edition. (M = 3.78) 18-I was able to answer the students' questions and I made myself to be approachable. (M = 3.75)	4-I think that the workshop has helped me to clarify my future studies at university. (M = 2.98) 1-I will be able to apply the acquired knowledge in the IES, in my life. (M = 3.27) 9-The mentor has used the scientific method throughout the workshop. (M = 3.35)
	Mentors	25-I would propose this workshop for the next edition. (M = 3.80) 24-I think that the TRT members gave adequate support for the optimal development of the programme. (M = 3.76) 19-I encouraged student participation during the workshop. (M = 3.69)	12-We gave the students the appropriate documentation and/or materials for the development of the workshop. (M = 2.73) 9-I have used the scientific method throughout the workshop. (M = 3.24) 1-The mentee will be able to apply the knowledge acquired in their life. (M = 3.24)
	TRT	18-The mentor was able to answer our questions and was approachable. (M = 3.93) 20-The mentor did their best to use simple language to make the ideas and concepts he wanted to convey understandable. (M = 3.93) 21-The mentor tried to maintain order/discipline within a pleasant and respectful environment. (M = 3.91)	12-Students received the appropriate documentation and/or materials for the development of the workshop. (M = 2.49) 1-The mentee will be able to apply the knowledge acquired in their life. (M = 3.12) 4-I think that the workshop has helped the mentee clarify their future university studies. (M = 3.16)

It is worth mentioning that, in general, the majority of the most highly rated items refer to the interests and expectations of mentees as well as to the teaching characteristics of mentors. Regarding the lowest rated items, they refer more to the usefulness of the workshop outside the programme and the methodology used. As can be seen in Table 2, it deserves special recognition that the majority of the extracted items coincide in their high and low ratings both between programmes (virtual and face-to-face) and between informants (mentees, mentors, TRT), with even greater concordance in the items that are worst rated.

4. Discussion

At the beginning of this article, it was pointed out that an important limitation in this type of educational experience intended for students with high abilities is the limited existence of research focused on the development of training and mentoring initiatives in a virtual format, coupled with the lack of a formal evaluation that would allow us to assess the effects they produce [46,47]. Therefore, the purpose of this study has been to go a step further and assess the degree of satisfaction generated by the mentorship workshops carried out in a novel way, by being offered in a virtual format, as well as comparing the results with the last face-to-face edition of the university mentoring programme aimed at pre-university students with high intellectual abilities [35] to check whether this programme in its online version is as satisfactory as it is in its face-to-face version.

The first interesting result is that the average satisfaction score for group mentoring showed mostly high values for the online version, and it was quite similar to those found in the last in-person edition [35]. These results encourage us to continue offering the programme online, especially if the current COVID-19 pandemic requires this format, given that the results obtained are pretty similar when compared with the face-to-face edition, so that this comprehensive training proposal for students with high abilities can be considered satisfactory by all the agents involved in the programme.

The necessity of resorting to a virtual modality in the current edition has confirmed the advantages and benefits that online learning provides for the development of cognitive skills and the construction of knowledge. In this respect, it is necessary to distinguish between two dimensions that determine learning: on the one hand, the management of virtual learning environments and, on the other hand, the articulation of all the factors that contribute to the development of complex thinking skills and that result in the development of talents and abilities. Virtual learning environments constitute spaces for the construction of knowledge in which, as in the case of mentorship workshops, a constructivist space is generated in which the mentee can interact with other mentees and with the mentor, having access to resources that favour the acquisition and development of competences. The implementation of online training actions involves developing methodological strategies that facilitate access to information and content, and that enhance interactions. Therefore, adapting agile and active methodologies for online learning involves adding innovative processes that go beyond the use of digitalisation platforms as a learning resource. Encouraging motivation, cooperative learning and learning by solving challenges contribute to the development of competences that bring out talent and the enrichment of skills for all students.

It should be noted that in our study, although we did not directly evaluate the effectiveness of the programme, we can conclude that the high degree of satisfaction reported by mentors, mentees and the TRT can be considered an indicator of the effectiveness of the programme in both its in-person and virtual versions.

Once the high satisfaction with the virtual edition has been made clear, it is necessary to carry out a detailed analysis to assess the elements on which this satisfaction is based.

One of the most highly valued aspects in both modalities (virtual and in-person), by the TRT and mentees, has to do with the mentor's skills and with his or her ability to manage the classroom and establish a good atmosphere. As an example, "The mentor has tried to maintain order/discipline within a pleasant and respectful environment" (21). In this sense, several studies indicate that one of the most important variables in the effectiveness and satisfaction with mentoring programmes is the mentor's skills and ability to foster a good atmosphere in the classroom [41]. There is no doubt that the mentor's value comes from that person's role as a teacher in the development of training activities in the classroom, a role to which they incorporate their mentoring functions by assuming the character of advising and monitoring the pedagogical action and generating a good relational climate with the mentee. In addition, there are other organisational aspects related to punctuality in attending meetings, generating supportive, trusting and stimulating relationships between participants, and having clear objectives [48]. These

characteristics have an impact on the professionalism that the mentor manifests during mentoring and teaching in the context of the workshops. The fact of building spaces characterised by cordiality and good communication enhances the mentee's motivation and favours the flow of learning in all its dimensions, whether self-regulated, mediated or autonomous.

Similarly, the importance of the relationship with the mentor and their closeness has been shown to be key in studies on mentoring [49], and in our results in both modalities and by different participants, we confirm the value of the mentor's closeness and accessibility: "The mentor was able to answer our questions and was approachable" (18); "I have encouraged student participation during the workshop" (19). Moreover, both in the virtual modality with item 16 and in the face-to-face modality with item 20, the TRT highlighted the role of the mentor at the communicative level: "The mentor taught the content in an attractive manner" (16); "The mentor did their best to use simple language to make the ideas and concepts he wanted to convey understandable" (20). In this sense, scholars [48] suggest that the main contributions of the mentor are to inspire, encourage, and empower mentees; to guide them to explore the world; and to find answers, solutions, etc., and in this way to foster mentee development [50]. The evaluations made by the TRT on the role played by the mentor reveal they care about the competences that form part of the mentor's motivating, encouraging and intermediary work between the content developed in the workshop, the topics from the expert approach, and the versatility for the mentee to be the protagonist of their own learning.

Another aspect highly valued by the different members or informants of the two programmes (mentees in virtual and mentees and mentors in face-to-face format) has to do with their satisfaction with the programme in general and their wish for it to be carried out again in the future. For example, "I would propose this workshop for the next edition" (25). Given the satisfaction levels shown by participants, it is not surprising that they recommend the programme to continue, as other studies showed the learning benefits of mentoring, facilitation of the development of a personal relationship, personal gratification of participating and an improvement of management skills [51]. Authors such as [52] note personal benefits for mentors as they perceive themselves as role models, which forces them to re-evaluate their own teaching approaches, techniques and attitudes more deeply and critically than they normally would. Equally, they also learn from their mentees innovative ideas and strategies that enable them to renew themselves in their teaching [53]. Perhaps this mutual benefit of mentoring [54] is reflected in some aspect assessed in this study, such as the high satisfaction with the programme by all the agents involved (mentees, mentors, TRT) as well as their support and involvement in the programme's continuation. As has been indicated, when a mentoring programme is carried out, the accompaniment, follow-up and advice given to the mentee is particularly valued, as well as the space for dialogic learning that is generated between mentor and mentee. The interest in the continuation of the programme refers not only to an interest in the content but also to the environment generated between expert teachers and students eager to broaden their theoretical and practical knowledge in specialised workshops with a wide range of disciplines. The fact that many of the mentors have a consolidated track record in the programme encourages proposals for improvement and progressive evaluation of both the development of the workshop and of the impact it can have on the mentee. Another factor that we believe leads to high satisfaction rates is the mentors' encouragement, so that mentees also see continuity in the application of the competences acquired and the knowledge built up, promoting enquiry and research.

One of the most valued aspects by the mentors in both modalities was the support provided by the TRT during the activities: "I think that the TRT members gave adequate support for the optimal development of the programme" (24). In this sense [55] emphasises the importance of training and support to the mentor, as both aspects are important for the development of mentoring. Similarly, we note the results found by [56], who indicate the importance of providing some form of guidance to the mentor and the fact that mentors

have ongoing support available to them as key aspects in the effectiveness of mentoring. Structural, organisational and planning issues are part of the role of the TRT in providing the content attributed to them, the mentor teaching staff. In the current online edition, this has also meant support in technical issues with the facilitation of access to the platform as well as all the management carried out with mentees to ensure access and confirm the correct functioning of the platform, provide regular and gradual information on the planning of the workshops and facilitate communication between mentors and mentees. Furthermore, mentors are accompanied during the development of the workshops, participating in the assessment of the workshops and in dealing with any incidents that may arise. The facts that the introduction and presentation are made at the beginning of the workshops and the assessment and comments are done at the end provide elements that endorse the training and competence nature of the workshops.

On the other hand, there are similarities in the modalities in many of the items with the lowest evaluation by almost all the evaluating agents. These items have to do with aspects related to the applicability of the knowledge for the future. This is evidence by the following comments: "I think that the workshop has helped me to clarify my future university studies" (4) and "The mentee will be able to apply the knowledge acquired at the IES in my life" (1). This may be due to the age of the mentees, as it ranges from 11 years onwards, and perhaps the knowledge they may acquire during the workshops does not correspond to the reality they live in their schools, but it provides mentees with knowledge that may contribute to awaken interest and vocations in educational centres or their future idea in their choice of studies. However, some studies point to the positive effects of mentoring on mentees' academic and vocational outcomes [57], indicating that being able to participate in real work contexts can influence vocation, interests and educational engagement by providing opportunities to pursue interests and feel competent in real environment [58]. Younger participants may not perceive the benefit of the activities in their vocational development, as it is still in their distant future. Because the programme has different phases in the development of mentoring, it is possible to contextualise the topics and explore with the students how the acquired knowledge can be transferred to real contexts related to their professional future. Alluding to the applicability that the content of the workshops may have in the future is one of the aspects that both the mentor and the TRT address in the introduction to the workshop in order to contextualise its content, linking it to this guiding nature adapted to the two corresponding levels based on the educational level of the mentee. These items are conditioned and determined by the vocational and professional orientation that the students receive in their educational centres and, given the timing of the same, they open up professional or further training opportunities that may not be known to the mentee yet. In fact, the evaluation carried out by the TRT after assessing the development of the programme encourages the incorporation of improvement actions so that this guiding character for the decision-making process in the transition processes between educational levels or even in the choice of higher studies is a dimension that the programme contemplates. Sometimes a mentee's participation in a workshop can be a critical incident in that person's training itinerary that delimits their decision on the future continuation of studies and professional specialisation. Therefore, the comments made by mentees show the applicability and impact they have had.

Additionally, the need to continue improving the methodology used in the workshops was also identified. Surprisingly, the least valued aspect of the workshop was the use of the scientific method: "The mentor used the scientific method throughout the workshop" (9). This was found to be the case by the TRT in the programme's virtual modality and among the mentors and mentees in the face-to-face version, which may be related to the fact that several of the workshops were intended to provide dynamic, playful or magisterial activities that seems not to be evident, although the scientific method is the base of the GuíaMe-AC-UMA program. One methodology aspect that was poorly rated for the online version (mentees and ET) but not the in-person one was the practical nature of the workshop: "The methodology used in this workshop was mainly practical" (8). We understand that in the

virtual edition this item is among the worst rated because in the virtual workshops it has not been possible to offer any laboratory workshops, which are usually among the best rated by the mentees.

The opinions provided by mentees and evidenced here show the need to adapt the wording of the item in the face of what is interpreted as a lack of knowledge on the part of mentees of the term "scientific method" itself. The incorporation of specific terminology in some items may mean that the answers do not adequately respond to an objective assessment, but rather to an assessment of opinion. The methodologies implemented by the mentors are specially designed to match the workshops' objectives and content, which are as diverse as the areas and disciplines covered. This heterogeneity in subject matter is also evident in the methodology. Maybe the use of the "scientific method" has not been highlighted by the mentor when introducing the workshop. The perception of the method as such by the mentee is complex, as indicated above, even if mentees are unaware of the nature of this method. Logically, workshops that are more related to experimental sciences, natural sciences, or health sciences can allude to this scientific nature due to their own identity, although the hypothetico-deductive reasoning, inference, deduction, or induction is the methodology for cognitive process used in the program.

There have been workshops that are not "laboratory-based" and have incorporated activities and dynamics that are perfectly approachable in the virtual modality. Scientism or rigorousness as such is usually associated with workshops linked to "scientific" areas, and this is an argument that conditions the assessment. The TRT specifically asks the mentors to consider in their didactic programming the application of an educational methodology that promotes research in all the areas proposed in the program, as well as pedagogical rigor as an integral part of the scientific methodology as such.

The online edition has offered workshops with practical methodological applicability, and the students' expectations are not exclusively aimed at carrying out laboratory practices, as even the workshops which, in the case of face-to-face attendance, would have had this experience, have made the most rigorous possible approximation of the content to a possible direct and real experience in the laboratory. Items with wording similar to those distributed for the in-person format may have received a lower score due to the change in format. However, at this point it is worth mentioning the good assessment given to workshops in disciplines related to fields such as Art, Advertising, Communication, Education, Journalism, Music, Public speaking and Technology.

Another aspect related to organisation and resources was the delivery of materials, which showed similar results for the mentors in both modalities and the TRT in the face-to-face modality: "Students received the appropriate documentation and/or materials for the development of the workshop" (12). This was not so for mentees, which may lead us to think that perhaps the mentees were more satisfied with the workshop without the need for prior materials or documentation, an aspect that perhaps worries the mentors more.

In any case, we should not forget that the virtual modality has been rated very satisfactorily without any relevant differences with respect to the face-to-face modality. In spite of some issues that need further improvement, it seems that the form and the way it is carried out is interesting, being beneficial for different reasons for all participants.

5. Limitations and Future Research

The research, since it stems from an enquiry carried out in practice, has been conditioned by the nature of the virtual modality in which the workshops were conducted. Although this cannot be considered a limitation, it meant a readjustment whose factors have also conditioned the answers on the degree of satisfaction analysed. As indicated above, the virtual learning environment in which the activity was carried out, generated a methodological adaptation whose limitations were minimal, taking into account that both the data collection and the implementation of the workshops were also carried out in the same environment.

A prospective research is proposed which may have several sources of research: methodology, the design of the mentoring program, the impact on student learning, the training trajectories of mentor teachers, the impact on students of the complementary factors in their training and their contribution to the choice of their future school or university training itineraries, longitudinal studies of the students participating in different editions and narratives of mentor teachers.

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