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FACULDADE DE
EDUCAÇÃO E PSICOLOGIA
PORTO

PERCEPTIONS OF THE UNIVERSITY EXPERIENCE AMONG HIGHER EDUCATION STUDENTS: A QUALITATIVE STUDY USING THE DRAW, WRITE AND TELL METHOD

Dissertação apresentada à Universidade Católica

Portuguesa para obtenção do grau de mestre em Psicologia

- Especialização em Psicologia Clínica e da Saúde

Luís Pedro Resende Santos e Sá

Porto, July, 2026



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Trabalho efetuado sob a orientação de

Luísa Mota Ribeiro

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Use of Artificial Intelligence

The Claude AI assistant (Anthropic, Claude Sonnet 4.6) was used in the Results and Discussion sections to support text revision and restructuring, namely in the reduction and synthesis of participant excerpts in order to meet the established word limit requirements, and in the organisation and thematic structuring of the data presentation.

Agradecimentos

A concretização deste trabalho não teria sido possível sem o apoio de várias pessoas, a quem gostaria de expressar o meu mais profundo agradecimento.

Em primeiro lugar, à Professora Luísa Mota Ribeiro, minha orientadora, pela disponibilidade constante, pelo rigor que me ajudou a crescer academicamente, e pela confiança que depositou neste trabalho desde o primeiro momento. A sua orientação, sugestões e olhar crítico foram determinantes para que esta dissertação chegasse a bom porto.

Aos professores da Faculdade de Educação e Psicologia da Universidade Católica Portuguesa, que ao longo destes anos contribuíram para o meu desenvolvimento académico e pessoal, e que me deram as ferramentas necessárias para realizar este trabalho com rigor científico.

Aos 18 estudantes que aceitaram participar neste estudo, partilhando de forma tão genuína as suas experiências, os seus desenhos e as suas palavras. Sem a sua disponibilidade e abertura, esta investigação simplesmente não existiria.

À minha família, pelo apoio incondicional ao longo deste percurso, pela paciência nos momentos de maior cansaço, e por acreditarem sempre em mim, mesmo quando eu próprio duvidava.

À Carolina, pelo seu carinho, paciência e apoio constante ao longo deste percurso, e por estar sempre a meu lado nos momentos mais difíceis.

Aos meus amigos, que estiveram sempre presentes, seja através de palavras de incentivo, seja simplesmente pela companhia nas pausas tão necessárias. O vosso apoio tornou este percurso mais leve.

A todos, o meu sincero obrigado.

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Resumo

A experiência universitária constitui um fenómeno complexo e multidimensional, que engloba dimensões académicas, relacionais, afetivas e simbólicas. O presente estudo explorou as representações sociais da experiência universitária em estudantes do ensino superior, com particular atenção aos laços emocionais, sentimentos de pertença, redes de suporte e recursos percebidos. Participaram 18 estudantes de licenciatura de uma universidade na região Norte do país, distribuídos entre o primeiro e o último ano de sete cursos distintos. Foi utilizado o método Desenhar, Escrever e Dizer, integrando expressão visual, reflexão escrita e narração oral, analisado através de análise temática qualitativa com suporte do NVivo 15. Emergiram dez categorias temáticas, sendo as mais representadas as Amizades e Vida Social, o Crescimento e Desenvolvimento Pessoal, e o Stress e Sobrecarga. Os resultados revelam que as representações dos estudantes se organizam predominantemente em torno de dimensões relacionais e afetivas, e que existem diferenças sistemáticas entre estudantes do primeiro e do último ano na forma como narram a transição e o desenvolvimento identitário.

O estudo contribui para a literatura ao demonstrar a adequação do método DED com populações universitárias e o seu valor na captação de nuances da experiência estudantil.

Palavras chave: experiência universitária, representações sociais, Desenhar Escrever e Dizer, sentimento de pertença, pesquisa qualitativa

Abstract

The university experience constitutes a complex and multidimensional phenomenon, encompassing academic, relational, affective, and symbolic dimensions. The present study explored the social representations of the university experience among higher education students, with particular attention to emotional ties, senses of belonging, support networks, and perceived resources. Eighteen undergraduate students from a university in the north of the country participated, drawn from the first and final years of seven different degree programmes. The Draw, Write and Tell method was used, integrating visual expression, written reflection, and oral narration, with data analysed through qualitative thematic analysis supported by NVivo 15. Ten thematic categories emerged, the most extensively represented being Friendships and Social Life, Personal Growth and Development, and Stress and Overload. The findings reveal that students' representations are organised predominantly around relational and affective dimensions, and that systematic differences exist between first-year and final-year students in how they narrate transition and identity development. The study contributes to the literature by demonstrating the suitability of the DWT method with university populations and its value in capturing nuances of the student experience.

Keywords: university experience, social representations, Draw Write and Tell, sense of belonging, qualitative research

Introduction

The way individuals perceive and relate to their social and institutional environments plays a central role in identity construction, psychological well-being, and experiences of belonging and social connectedness (Harrison et al., 2019). For university students, these processes gain particular relevance, as they occur during a period marked by transition, self-exploration, and identity development. Arnett (2000) conceptualises this phase as emerging adulthood, a distinct developmental period roughly spanning ages 18 to 25, characterised by identity exploration, instability, and the gradual assumption of adult roles and responsibilities. Within this period, the university context constitutes one of the primary areas in which emerging adults negotiate questions of identity, belonging, and personal direction. This developmental perspective is consistent with approaches that situate students' learning and well-being within the broader frame of lifelong development, understanding the university experience as a privileged context for personal growth, inclusion, and identity construction (Candeias, 2019). Research on students' experiences in higher education has increasingly highlighted that the university experience extends beyond formal academic activities, encompassing emotional, relational, and symbolic dimensions that shape students' everyday lives and their sense of belonging within the university context (Elsharnouby, 2015).

Understanding students' lived experiences in the university context therefore requires attention to how meaning is constructed through relationships, emotions, and interactions with both people and places. The university experience involves not only academic demands and institutional structures, but also emotional ties, interpersonal relationships, perceived support networks, and resources that contribute to students' well-being and engagement (Elsharnouby, 2015; Harrison et al., 2019). Despite the relevance of these dimensions, research exploring how university students experience, represent, and communicate these aspects of their lived experience remains limited, particularly when using participatory and visual methodologies capable of capturing affective and symbolic meanings (Angell et al., 2015; Guillemin, 2004).

In this context, the present study aims to explore how university students construct and express their lived experience within the university context, with particular attention to emotional ties, senses of belonging, support networks, and perceived resources.

Theoretical Framework

The Concept of University Experience

The concept of university experience has been consistently described in the literature as complex and multifaceted, with no clear consensus regarding the most appropriate way to conceptualise or measure it (Elsharnouby, 2015). Although it occupies a central place in higher education research, comparatively limited effort has been made to integrate the multiple dimensions of students' experiences into a coherent framework capable of capturing the academic, social, relational, and contextual aspects of university life (Elsharnouby, 2015). This complexity suggests that university experience cannot be reduced to academic performance or instructional outcomes alone but should instead be understood as a lived and meaning-making process shaped by multiple, interconnected factors.

Elsharnouby (2015) proposes that students' university experience operates across at least two interrelated levels. The core level refers to the learning experience itself, shaped by factors that enable students to meet academic demands, including teaching practices, classroom dynamics, and learning conditions. The supplementary level encompasses the broader physical and institutional environment, such as campus facilities, technological resources, spatial organisation, and overall campus climate. Together, these levels highlight how academic, environmental, and relational elements jointly contribute to students' overall experience of university life.

Beyond structural and organisational dimensions, the university experience is also closely linked to students' perceptions, interpretations, and representations of the institution. Elsharnouby (2015) argues that the image of the university is constructed through a combination of external influences and students' personal experiences within the institution, with these representations evolving over time. This image is shaped by perceptions of the study environment, the perceived practicality and relevance of academic programmes, and the institution's symbolic status or prestige. These dimensions emphasise the subjective and symbolic nature of university experience, underscoring how meaning is actively constructed through students' interactions with academic, social, and institutional contexts.

Research has further shown that the college experience produces wide-ranging and lasting effects on students' development, encompassing not only intellectual and academic

growth but also psychosocial change, shifts in values and attitudes, and the consolidation of identity (Pascarella & Terenzini, 2005).

Social Representations of University Experience

To understand how university students construct and communicate meanings related to their university experience, it is pertinent to draw on Social Representation Theory (SRT), originally proposed by Moscovici (1961) and further developed in subsequent theoretical and empirical work (Moscovici, 2001; Nogueira & Grillo, 2020). This theoretical framework conceptualises social knowledge as a collective, dynamic, and contextually situated construction, emerging through social interaction and everyday communication. Social representations thus constitute shared systems of meaning that enable individuals and groups to interpret social reality, orient their behaviour, and position themselves within a given social context.

According to Moscovici (1961), social representations are composed of common-sense knowledge, beliefs, and ideas about social objects, which are continuously produced and transformed through interaction. These representations fulfil a fundamental function: making unfamiliar or abstract phenomena familiar and intelligible. Moscovici (2001) highlights that this process operates through two key cognitive mechanisms: anchoring and objectification. Anchoring refers to the integration of new information or experiences into pre-existing categories, values, and worldviews, allowing individuals to classify and name what is new. Objectification, in turn, involves transforming abstract concepts into concrete images or symbols, giving material and perceptual form to ideas that might otherwise remain intangible.

A central contribution of Social Representation Theory lies in its recognition that representations possess both conceptual and iconic dimensions. That is, social representations are communicated not only through verbal language, but also through images, symbols, and visual forms (Moscovici, 2001). This dual nature is particularly relevant for research that seeks to access meanings that may be difficult to articulate solely through words, especially when exploring affective, relational, and symbolic dimensions of lived experience.

Within higher education contexts, social representations play an important role in shaping how students interpret and make sense of their university experience. The representations students construct influence their feelings of belonging, their forms of participation, and their engagement with academic and social life (Santos & Dias, 2015). As

Goodwin et al. (2023) argue, social representations do not merely reflect social reality; they actively contribute to its construction by shaping identities, practices, and relational dynamics within groups.

Nogueira and Grillo (2020) further emphasise that social representations should be understood simultaneously as product and process. They emerge from communicational practices, including verbal, written, and visual language, and are continuously reconstructed through social interaction. This perspective allows for a nuanced understanding of how individual and collective meanings intersect, particularly in contexts such as higher education, where students negotiate multiple roles, expectations, and social positions.

Drawing on this framework, Silva et al. (2020) highlight the relevance of Social Representation Theory for studies that employ visual and participatory methodologies. By combining verbal and visual forms of expression, such approaches enable access to symbolic, affective, and experiential dimensions of social representations that might remain partially invisible in exclusively verbal accounts. This is especially pertinent when exploring abstract and relational phenomena such as belonging, relational ties, and lived experience, which are often communicated through images, metaphors, and embodied meanings.

Within the present study, Social Representation Theory provides a central theoretical lens for analysing how university students construct, express, and share meanings related to their lived university experience. By accessing these shared representations through visual and narrative data, the study seeks to deepen understanding of the symbolic, affective, and relational dimensions that shape students' experiences, including their senses of belonging, emotional ties, and engagement within the university context.

Social Engagement and Places of Belonging in the University Experience

Social engagement constitutes a central dimension of students' university experience, reflecting the ways in which individuals interact with, participate in, and emotionally invest in their academic and social environments. Rather than being limited to observable participation in academic activities, social engagement encompasses emotional, relational, and symbolic processes through which students develop a sense of involvement and connection with their surroundings. Research on engagement highlights

its multidimensional nature, integrating behavioural, emotional, and cognitive components that emerge through the interaction between students and their institutional context (Fredricks et al., 2004). Emotional engagement, in particular, has been consistently associated with feelings of belonging, identification, and attachment to the educational environment, reinforcing its relevance for understanding students' lived experiences.

Within higher education, social engagement is closely linked to students' perceptions of support, inclusion, and recognition within their daily academic lives. Engagement develops through interpersonal relationships with peers and faculty, participation in formal and informal activities, and the quality of social interactions that extend beyond the classroom. These relational dynamics play a significant role in shaping students' satisfaction, motivation, and psychological well-being, as well as their sense of connection to the university environment (Elsharnouby, 2015). Consequently, social engagement should be understood as a situated and relational process, embedded in students' ongoing experiences and interactions rather than as an individual trait. In this regard, Pascarella and Terenzini (2005) emphasise that the degree to which students are actively engaged with their institution, both inside and outside the classroom, is among the most consistent predictors of positive developmental outcomes throughout the undergraduate years.

Closely related to social engagement is the notion of places of belonging, which refers to the emotional and symbolic attachment individuals develop toward specific physical and social spaces. Studies on local attachment demonstrate that places acquire meaning not merely through their physical characteristics, but through the social relationships, experiences, and emotional investments associated with them (Mesch & Manor, 1998). In this sense, attachment to place emerges from repeated interactions, shared experiences, and the perceived quality of social ties established within those spaces. Applied to the university context, campuses, classrooms, libraries, and informal gathering areas may function as places of belonging as they support meaningful social engagement and foster feelings of familiarity, safety, and identification.

Environmental perception plays a mediating role in the relationship between social ties and place attachment, as individuals interpret and attribute meaning to spaces based on their lived experiences and relational contexts (Mesch & Manor, 1998). For university

students, perceptions of the campus climate, accessibility of resources, and opportunities for interaction contribute to how academic spaces are experienced and symbolically constructed. These perceptions are not static, but evolve throughout students' trajectories, shaped by emotional experiences, social participation, and changing expectations (Elsharnouby, 2015).

Taken together, social engagement and places of belonging represent interconnected dimensions of the university experience, grounded in affective, relational, and symbolic processes. Engagement facilitates the formation of social ties, which in turn contributes to the development of attachment to specific places within the university context. These processes are fundamental for understanding how students experience their time in higher education, as they influence well-being, involvement, and the meanings attributed to academic life. Exploring these dimensions through qualitative and participatory methodologies allows access to aspects of experience that are often difficult to capture through exclusively verbal or quantitative approaches, particularly those related to emotion, symbolism, and lived meaning.

Visual and Participatory Approaches in Higher Education: Draw, Write and Tell

In recent years, visual and participatory methodologies have gained increasing relevance in qualitative research due to their potential to access subjective, emotional, and symbolic dimensions of lived experience that are not always fully articulated through verbal language alone (Guillemin, 2004). Within this methodological landscape, the Draw, Write and Tell (DWT) approach has been highlighted for its capacity to integrate graphic expression, written reflection, and oral narration, offering participants multiple modes through which to construct and communicate meaning (Angell et al., 2015).

Guillemin (2004) emphasises that drawings should not be understood merely as visual products, but rather as processes of meaning-making, through which participants mobilise emotions, memories, and interpretations. From this perspective, drawing functions as an active method of knowledge production rather than as a representational outcome. The narrative component of the method, the Tell, is particularly relevant, as it allows participants to contextualise and explain the meanings attributed to their drawings,

thereby reducing the risk of decontextualised or projective interpretations imposed by the researcher.

Although the Draw, Write and Tell method has been widely employed in research with children and adolescents, particularly within health and educational settings, its application with adult populations remains relatively limited (Angell et al., 2015; Guillemin, 2004). More recently, Allen et al. (2025) demonstrated the continued relevance and adaptability of the DWT method, showing how it enables participants to articulate complex experiences of belonging through the integration of drawing, writing, and verbal narration, reinforcing its suitability for research that seeks to access affective and relational dimensions of lived experience. Studies conducted in higher education contexts have seldom used visual participatory methods to explore complex and abstract phenomena such as lived university experience, identity, belonging, and emotional engagement. When visual methods are employed with university students, research has often privileged either visual or written outputs, underestimating the central role of narrative explanation in ensuring interpretative depth and validity.

Recent work by Silva et al. (2020) represents an important contribution to this emerging field by demonstrating the relevance of integrating drawings with verbal narratives in the study of students' representations of identity and university experience. Grounded in Social Representation Theory, this approach highlights how visual expression can function as a process of objectification, enabling participants to give concrete form to abstract, symbolic, and affectively charged representations. Such findings reinforce the suitability of visual and narrative methods for accessing dimensions of experience that may remain partially implicit or difficult to verbalise. In a related methodological contribution, Martikainen and Hakokongäs (2023) further demonstrate that drawing constitutes a particularly productive method for researching social representations, as it externalises mental imagery and enables participants to express meanings that resist verbal formulation, thereby expanding the scope of what qualitative inquiry can access.

Despite this growing recognition, empirical research employing the Draw, Write and Tell method with university students remains scarce (Silva et al., 2020). As a result, there is a limited body of research exploring how students use visual and narrative expression to construct and communicate meanings related to their lived university

experience, particularly in relation to emotional ties, senses of belonging, and relational dynamics. Addressing this gap, the present study adopts the Draw, Write and Tell method as a means of accessing the symbolic, affective, and experiential dimensions of university experience, grounded within a robust theoretical framework informed by Social Representation Theory.

Method

Methodological Rationale

This study adopts a qualitative exploratory approach aimed at gaining an in-depth understanding of university students' perceptions and representations of their academic community and lived university experience. This approach is particularly suited to the subjective and symbolic nature of the phenomenon under study, as it values individual experiences, shared meanings, and the social construction of reality. Rather than seeking to quantify or generalise, the qualitative orientation of this study prioritises interpretive depth, allowing for the exploration of meanings, feelings, and representations as they are experienced and expressed by participants themselves.

Existing studies with adult participants have often relied primarily on verbal or written data, potentially overlooking symbolic and affective dimensions that visual methods are particularly suited to capture (Angell et al., 2015; Guillemin, 2004). Addressing this gap, the present study applied the Draw, Write and Tell method with higher education students, integrating visual and narrative data to explore social representations of the university experience. This methodological choice is further supported by the recognition that social representations possess both conceptual and iconic dimensions, and that visual forms of expression can grant access to meanings that resist full articulation through language alone (Moscovici, 2001; Silva et al., 2020). By combining drawing, written reflection, and oral narration, the DWT method enables a richer and more complete apprehension of the symbolic, affective, and relational dimensions of students' university experience than would be possible through exclusively verbal approaches.

Theoretical sensitivity throughout the analytical process was informed by Social Representation Theory, which provided the primary conceptual framework guiding the

interpretation of participants' visual and narrative accounts without imposing predefined categories upon the data.

Objectives and Research Questions

The general aim of this study was to explore how university students construct, express, and communicate their lived experience within the university context, with particular attention to emotional ties, senses of belonging, support networks, and perceived resources. From this general aim, four specific objectives were derived, each associated with a corresponding research question.

The first objective was to analyse the emotional ties, feelings, places of belonging, support networks, and perceived local resources that students associate with their university experience, addressing the question of how students experience and represent these dimensions within the university context.

The second objective was to explore how students identify and interpret the positive and negative aspects of their lived experience, addressing the question of how they describe and differentiate these aspects across the various domains of university life.

The third objective was to examine similarities and differences in perceptions between first-year and final-year undergraduate students from different degree programmes, addressing the question of how these two groups converge and diverge in the ways they perceive and narrate their university experience.

The fourth objective was to understand how visual and narrative forms of expression facilitate the communication of the emotional and symbolic dimensions of students' experience, addressing the question of how the integration of drawing, writing, and oral narration supports the articulation of meanings that may resist purely verbal expression.

Given the exploratory and qualitative nature of the study, no hypotheses were formulated. Rather than testing predefined assumptions, the research sought to explore the meanings, representations, and experiences constructed by students regarding their university experience, allowing for an in-depth understanding of subjective, symbolic, and relational dimensions as expressed through participants' visual and narrative accounts.

Participants

Participants in this study were higher education students enrolled in the first and last years of different undergraduate programmes at a private university located in an urban setting in northern Portugal. The institution comprises approximately 6,000 students, encompassing several distinct faculties and schools spanning areas such as law, management, psychology, the arts, biotechnology, and health sciences. This diversity of academic units, combined with the urban and multi-campus nature of the institution, provided a relevant context for exploring students' emotional ties, senses of belonging, and perceived resources across different faculties and physical spaces.

The inclusion criteria consisted of being enrolled in higher education at the mentioned university, being in the specific years of study indicated, and being willing to voluntarily participate in the study.

A non-probabilistic convenience sampling strategy was used, which is appropriate for exploratory qualitative research aiming to access in-depth subjective meanings rather than achieve statistical generalisation.

The sample comprised 18 undergraduate students (12 female, 6 male), aged between 18 and 27 years ($M = 20.11$, $SD = 2.08$), 8 enrolled in the first year and 10 in the final year of their degree programmes, across seven different undergraduate programmes: Law ($n = 4$), Psychology ($n = 6$), Management ($n = 3$), Sound and Image ($n = 2$), Cinema ($n = 1$), Nutrition ($n = 1$), and Microbiology ($n = 1$). Sixteen participants held Portuguese nationality, and two were international students (one Colombian, one Brazilian). Five participants were working students, while the remaining thirteen were not in paid employment during their studies (see Appendix G).

All participants were informed about the objectives and procedures of the study and provided informed consent prior to participation.

Instruments

The Draw, Write and Tell (DWT) method was used as the primary data collection instrument in this study. This method integrates three complementary components:

drawing, written reflection, and oral narration, allowing participants to express subjective meanings, emotions, and representations related to their university experience.

Participants were invited to produce a drawing in response to a prompt related to their perception of the university experience. Following the drawing task, participants were asked to write a brief title for their drawing. Finally, a narrative component, the Tell, was conducted, during which participants were encouraged to verbally explain their drawing and written text, clarifying meanings and contextualising their representations.

The DWT method is particularly suitable for exploring complex and abstract constructs such as sense of belonging, and relational experiences, as it enables access to symbolic and affective dimensions that may be difficult to articulate through verbal language alone. In this study, drawings were not interpreted independently but were analysed in conjunction with participants' written and oral explanations, ensuring that meanings are grounded in participants' own accounts.

The Three Components of the Draw, Write and Tell Method

Although the three components of the DWT method were applied as a single integrated procedure, each contributes a distinct layer of data with its own analytical value. The following sections consider titles, drawings, and interviews in turn, before addressing the way in which their integration constitutes the methodological strength of the approach.

Drawings

Drawings constitute the visual core of the DWT method and offer a distinct route to dimensions of experience that may not be readily accessible through verbal report alone. Guillemin (2004) argues that drawing should not be treated merely as an illustration of a pre-formed idea but as an active process of meaning-making in itself, through which participants mobilise memories, emotions, and associations as they create the image. The elements chosen for inclusion in a drawing, such as people, places, symbols, and the way these are arranged or emphasised, can reveal relational and affective patterns that participants may struggle to express directly in words (Angell et al., 2015; Guillemin, 2004). From the perspective of Social Representation Theory, drawings function as a process of objectification, transforming abstract

or complex experiences into concrete visual forms that carry shared and individual meaning simultaneously (Moscovici, 2001; Silva et al., 2020). Martikainen and Hakokongäs (2023) further emphasise that drawing externalises mental imagery in a way that resists the simplifications imposed by purely verbal accounts, making it a particularly productive method for accessing social representations (see Figures 2 and 3, Appendices D and E).

Titles

The titles participants assigned to their drawings constitute a distinct and analytically valuable layer of data. Although brief, titles often condense the central meaning or emotional tone of a drawing into a single phrase, functioning as an interpretive key that orients the reading of the visual content (Angell et al., 2015). Goodwin et al. (2023) note that the act of naming a drawing requires participants to engage in a process of synthesis, selecting which aspect of their experience they consider most salient or representative, which can reveal priorities and emphases that might not be immediately evident from the image alone. In this sense, titles can be understood as a form of self-anchoring, in Moscovici's (2001) terms, through which participants attach an abstract or diffuse set of feelings to a concrete verbal label, making the underlying representation more accessible to both the participant and the researcher (see Figure 1, Appendix C).

Interviews

The verbal narration component of the DWT method, the Tell, provides the interpretive context within which titles and drawings can be meaningfully understood. Guillemin (2004) emphasises that this narrative explanation is essential to reducing the risk of decontextualised or projective interpretation, as it allows participants themselves, rather than the researcher, to clarify the meanings attached to their visual and written productions. Through the interview, participants can elaborate on the symbols, figures, and spatial arrangements present in their drawings, situating these elements within their own biographical and emotional context. Silva et al. (2020) similarly highlight that verbal narration grants access to dimensions of experience that remain implicit in the drawing itself, allowing for a fuller articulation of the relational, affective, and symbolic content of participants' representations (see Appendices I and J)

Integrating the Three Components

Taken individually, titles, drawings, and interviews each offer a partial window into participants' representations of their university experience. Titles distil meaning into a concise verbal anchor, drawings externalise affective and relational content through visual and symbolic form, and interviews provide the narrative elaboration necessary to situate and contextualise both. It is precisely the integration of these three components that constitutes the analytical strength of the Draw, Write and Tell method (Angell et al., 2015; Guillemin, 2004). Rather than functioning as independent or redundant sources of data, each component compensates for the limitations of the others: drawings and titles capture dimensions of experience that may resist verbal articulation, while the interview ensures that visual and written content is not interpreted in isolation or projectively, but is grounded in participants' own explanations (Guillemin, 2004). This triangulated structure aligns closely with the dual conceptual and iconic nature of social representations described by Moscovici (2001), and is consistent with recent methodological work demonstrating that combining visual and verbal modes of expression provides a more complete and trustworthy access to participants' lived experience than any single mode could achieve alone (Allen et al., 2025; Martikainen & Hakokongäs, 2023; Silva et al., 2020;).

Data Collection Procedure

Data collection was conducted in an academic context, in person at the university. Prior to data collection, authorization was obtained from the relevant institutional bodies. Potential participants were informed about the objectives, procedures, and voluntary nature of the study and invited to participate.

Participants who agreed to take part received written information about the study and were asked to provide informed consent. Data collection took place individually in a quiet and appropriate setting, ensuring participants' comfort and confidentiality.

The Draw, Write, and Tell procedure was implemented in three sequential phases. First, participants were invited to produce a drawing in response to a prompt related to their perception of university experience as students. Participants were informed that

artistic ability is not relevant and that the focus should be on expressing ideas, experiences, and meanings.

In the second phase, participants were asked to give a brief title to their drawing and to describe its perceived significance. In the final phase, the Tell component, participants were invited to verbally explain their drawing and written text, allowing them to clarify meanings and contextualize their representations.

All verbal narratives were audio-recorded with participants' consent and subsequently transcribed verbatim. Drawings and written texts were collected and stored securely. To ensure anonymity, each participant was assigned a code, and all data were handled in accordance with ethical standards for psychological research.

Ethical Considerations

The study was conducted in accordance with the ethical standards for research in psychology. Participation was voluntary, and all participants were informed about the objectives, procedures, and nature of the study before agreeing to take part. Written informed consent was obtained from each participant (see Appendix F), including specific consent for the audio recording of the verbal narration. Participants were informed of their right to withdraw at any point without consequence.

To ensure confidentiality and anonymity, each participant was assigned an alphanumeric code, and any potentially identifying information was removed during transcription. Audio recordings, drawings, written texts, and transcripts were stored securely and were accessible only to the research team.

Data Analysis Procedure

Data analysis followed a qualitative thematic analysis approach, allowing for the identification of recurrent patterns and meanings across participants' visual and narrative data. The analysis was conducted on the combined corpus of drawings, written texts, and verbal narratives, with particular emphasis on participants' own explanations of their visual productions. The entire process was supported by NVivo 15 (Lumivero), a

qualitative data analysis software that was used to organize, code, and manage the dataset throughout the analytical process.

The analytical process involved several stages. First, all verbal data were transcribed verbatim, and the entire dataset was imported into NVivo 15 and read repeatedly to ensure familiarization with the material. Initial codes were then generated inductively within the software, focusing on meaningful units related to perceptions of community, belonging, relationships, resources, and participation.

In a subsequent stage, codes were examined and organised into broader thematic categories that captured shared meanings across participants, using NVivo 15's coding and classification functions to support the systematic organisation and retrieval of coded material. Visual elements present in the drawings were analysed in close connection with the corresponding written and oral explanations, avoiding decontextualised or projective interpretations. Throughout the analytical process, reflexivity was maintained, with attention to the researcher's role in interpreting the data. Theoretical sensitivity was informed by Social Representation Theory, which guided the interpretation of themes without imposing predefined categories upon the data.

Results

Ten thematic categories emerged from the analysis of participants' visual and narrative accounts (see Table 1, Appendix A). Figure 2 (Appendix D) displays the drawings produced by first-year participants, and Figure 3 (Appendix E) displays the drawings produced by final-year participants, each identified by participant code and accompanied by its corresponding title. As each illustrative excerpt throughout this section is identified by participant code, readers may consult the associated drawing to complement the verbal and visual dimensions of the analysis.

Adaptation and Transition

This theme emerged across 11 participants (18 references), capturing the ways in which students experienced and made sense of the transition to higher education, encompassing

adjustments to new academic and personal demands and the process of redefining their relationship with learning and independence.

For several first-year students, the transition was characterised by emotional intensity and a pronounced structural contrast with secondary school, with the physical and organisational differences of the university environment functioning as symbolic markers of change. P07, a first-year Psychology student, used the physical space of the lecture hall to illustrate this shift: "I started by drawing a lecture hall because it was one of the most different things from secondary school. That was where my sense of commitment, freedom and independence began, because it is not that thing of us all sitting at little desks". Among final-year students, the transition was more frequently recounted retrospectively, framed in terms of a gap between initial expectations and lived reality: "My reaction when I arrived at my building was 'Oh my God, I made it here.' Then, as the years went by, the university left something to be desired" (P08, 3rd year, Nutrition). A further recurrent dimension concerned the development of personal autonomy, which several participants, particularly those who had relocated to attend university, described as an unexpected but significant gain: "Coming to university allowed me to step out of that bubble and almost have to fend for myself, and I think that was a very positive aspect I was not expecting" (P11, 3rd year, Management).

Identity and Self-Knowledge

This theme was coded across 5 participants (8 references) and reflects the processes through which students came to develop a deeper understanding of themselves in the context of their university experience. The theme was more prominent among final-year students, whose longitudinal perspective allowed for a more consolidated reflection on identity change, and was notably rich in reflexive content.

Several participants described university as a context that had fundamentally reshaped their sense of self. A third-year student, connected the accumulation of experiences and relationships to a broader process of identity formation: "All these symbols, or people, or images, or whatever they may be, made me the person I am today" (P05, 3rd year, Psychology). For P09, a third-year Management student, self-knowledge emerged partly through difficulty and self-confrontation, leading her to question her own role in generating the competitive atmosphere she had experienced: "Perhaps I think it was also me who created this competitive

atmosphere when I arrived here and decided I had to be one of the best" . The single first-year account coded within this theme was notably forward-looking rather than retrospective: P07, a first-year Psychology student, framed identity development as something still unfolding ahead of her rather than already achieved: "Growth was always something that worried me a lot, because when I was younger, I really wanted to grow up, to have maturity, and I think I am on the right path for that now". This contrast suggests that the relationship between university experience and identity development is understood differently depending on students' position within their academic trajectory.

Personal Growth and Development

This theme was coded across 13 participants (33 references), making it the second most widely represented category in the dataset and the one with the highest density of references per participant. It captures students' perceived development throughout their university trajectory, encompassing emotional maturation, increased autonomy, resilience, and a broader sense of becoming.

A recurrent pattern was the representation of personal growth as inseparable from the accumulation of both positive and negative experiences. P01, a third-year Law student, whose drawing was titled *Crescimento* (Growth), articulated this directly: "Both good things and bad things happened that made me develop as a person". For several participants, growth was also closely linked to learning a more balanced relationship with academic demands. P11, a third-year Management student, described a gradual shift over three years: "At the beginning I had to always be super attentive and study constantly. And as the years went by I realised I can still come home and allow myself to rest. Everything works better if there is a balance". A forward-looking dimension was also present, particularly among first-year participants, for whom university was represented as a stepping stone toward a desired future self rather than a retrospective account of transformation already achieved. P16, a first-year Psychology student, framed this explicitly through the title of her drawing, *Um Passo para o Futuro* (A Step Towards the Future): "We are all here to have a better future, to pursue what we have always wanted, and I believe it is a very important stage, above all to live it in the most peaceful and gentle way possible".

Friendships and Social Life

This theme was the most extensively coded in the entire dataset, with 16 participants contributing 52 references. This quantitative prominence is itself analytically significant, suggesting that peer relationships occupy a central place in students' social representations of their university experience, irrespective of year group or degree programme.

Friendships were consistently represented as foundational rather than peripheral, functioning as a condition of persistence and psychological well-being. P09, a third-year Management student, described peer support as decisive during a period of significant difficulty: "Without these two people I could not have done anything here. It was emotional support for when I was stressed. Without them I could not have finished university, because in my second year I genuinely considered dropping out". Informal social spaces also emerged as important sites through which friendships were enacted and sustained, with specific locations such as faculty bars and common rooms functioning as places of conviviality and belonging. Some participants further situated friendships within a longer temporal horizon, representing them as relationships of enduring significance that extended beyond the university years themselves. P12, a third-year Management student, opened his account by foregrounding a specific friendship that had structured his entire trajectory: "First I drew my group of friends, me, Francisca, and Madalena, because ultimately I think my university experience was very much built around our friendship, which began in the first year and has continued to this day".

Romantic Relationships

This theme was the least represented in the dataset, with 2 participants contributing 3 references, both third-year students. Its presence is nonetheless analytically noteworthy, as it indicates that romantic relationships constitute a meaningful, if not widely shared, dimension of some students' representations of their university experience.

P01, a third-year Law student, incorporated a romantic relationship into her drawing through two contrasting symbols, a growing plant with hearts and a fallen petal, capturing the arc from beginning to ending: "There is a plant that is growing and has hearts because it was when I had my first boyfriend, but then there is a petal that fell because that relationship ended badly". The limited representation of this theme may partly reflect the fact that romantic

relationships for several participants may be situated outside the university context altogether, for instance with partners met prior to entering higher education, and would therefore not have been captured by a prompt oriented specifically toward the university experience. This possibility, together with the more general privacy typically associated with romantic experience, offers a plausible explanation for the theme's low frequency, rather than indicating that romantic relationships are unimportant to students' broader lives.

Homesickness and Family

This theme was coded across 3 participants (6 references) and captures the emotional experience of distance from family and home as a significant dimension of the university experience. Although modest in quantitative terms, the accounts within this category were notably affectively charged.

The most extensive account was provided by P18, a first-year Psychology student of Brazilian nationality, whose drawing captured the ambivalence of an experience simultaneously marked by gratitude and grief: *"I have a strong connection to home, I miss my family very much"*. For P06, a third-year Cinema student who relocated to Porto, homesickness manifested relationally rather than domestically, as her pre-existing social network became geographically dispersed over time. Taken together, these accounts point to the importance of belonging not only within the university context but also in relation to the affective ties students carry with them into higher education.

Academic Groups and Extracurricular Activities

This theme was coded across 6 participants (14 references) and captures the role of extracurricular involvement in shaping students' university experience, functioning as a significant source of personal development, social connection, and institutional belonging. For several participants, engagement in academic groups was described as one of the most defining aspects of their trajectory. P01, a third-year Law student, was unequivocal: *"My experience in an academic group was the most important thing at university for me, because it was there that I met everyone"*. At the same time, extensive extracurricular commitment also introduced new pressures. P13, a third-year Law student,

described the cumulative weight of her involvement: *"In my first year I only came to classes, so my university life amounted to almost nothing, and suddenly I got involved in various things and now I am in so many things that 24 hours in a day is not enough"*. This account connects the theme directly to the category of Stress and Overload, illustrating how extracurricular belonging and overload can emerge from the same source.

Teachers and Quality of Teaching

This theme was coded across 10 participants (18 references) and reflects the significant role that faculty members and pedagogical practices play in students' representations of their university experience. The accounts reveal a notably ambivalent picture, in which appreciation for relational proximity coexists with criticism of pedagogical quality.

The value attributed to the accessibility of faculty was a consistent and prominent dimension. P14, a first-year Microbiology student, described this quality with evident warmth: *"Contact with teachers is extremely close, to the point where a teacher once gave me a hug"*. Critical perspectives were more pronounced among final-year students. P08, a third-year Nutrition student, expressed direct dissatisfaction: *"The teaching environment is not the best, in my opinion. I think it could be more interactive and less dry or boring"*. These two dimensions, relational proximity consistently valued and pedagogical quality more variably assessed, structured students' representations of teaching across degree programmes and year groups.

Stress and Overload

This theme was coded across 10 participants (37 references), making it the third most extensively referenced category in the dataset. It captures students' experiences of academic pressure, cognitive overload, emotional strain, and the challenge of managing competing demands, and was present across both year groups and multiple degree programmes.

A recurrent pattern was the representation of stress as pervasive and multi-causal, manifesting simultaneously across academic, relational, and personal domains. P08, a third-year Nutrition student, whose drawing was titled *Montanha-Russa da Vida Universitária* (Roller Coaster of University Life), captured the non-linear emotional trajectory of academic life: *"It is a roller coaster, we always have ups and downs throughout these years, both because of grades and friendships. We think we enter a state of calm and there is none"*. For several participants, stress was closely intertwined with self-imposed standards. P09, a third-year Management student, disclosed the severity of the psychological impact, including having genuinely considered dropping out during her second year: *"I had a constant feeling that everyone was watching me, that I had to perform to a certain level so as not to disappoint my expectations and the expectations of others"*. Several first-year participants situated stress within a broader framework of growth, acknowledging overload whilst framing it as cyclical and ultimately survivable.

Transport and Fatigue

This theme was coded across 4 participants (11 references) and captures the experience of daily commuting as a significant and often draining dimension of university life. The accounts reveal a consistent experience in which time and energy spent in transit constitute a meaningful depletion of students' physical and cognitive resources.

P10, a first-year Law student, whose drawing was organised entirely around the commute, described the cumulative experience with precision: *"Getting on and off transport, thinking that I have less time to study than other people, when I am arriving at university I am already tired, and when I am arriving home I am also tired"*. For commuting students, the journey to and from university was consistently represented as a form of depletion rather than a neutral activity, reducing the time and energy available for study, rest, and social engagement. This theme therefore intersects directly with Stress and Overload, and points to the importance of considering students' logistical circumstances as a meaningful dimension of their lived university experience. (see Table 2, Appendix B)

Discussion

The present study explored how university students construct, express, and communicate their lived university experience through the integration of visual and narrative data, drawing on Social Representation Theory. The findings are discussed below in relation to the study's research questions and the existing literature on higher education, emerging adulthood, and social representations.

Emotional Ties, Places of Belonging, Support Networks, and Perceived Resources

The most striking finding of this study is the overwhelming centrality of friendships and peer relationships in students' representations of their university experience. Friendships and Social Life was by far the most extensively coded theme, with 16 of the 18 participants contributing references, a pattern that strongly corroborates Pascarella and Terenzini's (2005) conclusion that the quality of students' interpersonal relationships, particularly with peers, is among the most consistent predictors of positive developmental outcomes across the undergraduate years. The functional role attributed to friendships, ranging from academic support to protection against psychological distress, closely echoes earlier qualitative findings showing that peer networks moderate the impact of stress and can be decisive in students' decisions to persist in their studies (Robotham & Julian, 2006). P09's account, in which peer support was described as the determining factor in her decision not to drop out during a period of significant psychological difficulty, exemplifies this protective role.

The salience of friendship in this dataset can also be productively read through Arnett's (2000) theory of emerging adulthood. Arnett (2000) argues that emerging adults spend a disproportionate amount of their time outside the daily companionship of family, relying instead on peer relationships forged during this period to provide continuity and support. The present findings extend this observation to the specifically academic context, suggesting that for these participants, friendships formed at university partially substitute for the family-based support networks left behind, particularly among students who relocated to attend university, such as P06 and P18. This is consistent with the theme of Homesickness and Family, in which the disruption of pre-existing social networks emerged as a significant source of emotional difficulty, but one that was, for some participants, attenuated by the formation of new university-based ties.

In relation to places of belonging, the recurrent identification of informal social spaces, such as the bar described by P05 or the common room described by P14, as meaningful sites of conviviality supports Mesch and Manor's (1998) argument that attachment to place emerges not from the physical characteristics of a space but from the social relationships and emotional investments enacted within it. These findings reinforce the view that academic spaces function as places of belonging only insofar as they support meaningful social engagement, rather than through their institutional or architectural properties alone.

The relatively limited representation of Romantic Relationships, by contrast, diverges somewhat from what might be expected given Arnett's (2000) characterisation of emerging adulthood as a period in which explorations in love intensify and become more identity focused. One possible explanation follows Elsharnouby's (2015) distinction between the core and supplementary levels of university experience: since the drawing prompt was oriented toward the university experience specifically, it may have implicitly directed participants toward the relational and supplementary dimensions of institutional life rather than toward personal relationships situated outside it. Indeed, several participants may sustain romantic relationships beyond the university context altogether, for instance with partners met prior to entering higher education or living in a different city, meaning such relationships would not naturally surface in a representation of university experience even where they remain significant to students' lives. This points to a methodological rather than substantive explanation for the theme's low frequency, one linked to where students situate their romantic lives relative to the university context and to the specific framing of the drawing prompt, rather than to the absence or unimportance of romantic relationships among these participants.

Positive and Negative Aspects of the Lived University Experience

A recurring pattern across multiple themes was the coexistence of positive and negative valence within the same domain of experience, most clearly illustrated in the theme of Stress and Overload, which was both extensively represented and explicitly framed by several participants within a broader narrative of growth. This duality aligns closely with Robotham and Julian's (2006) argument that not all stress should be understood as inherently negative, and that the prevalence of distress among students coexists with the potential for what has been termed eustress, a form of stress that can support effective functioning and adaptation. P08's

depiction of university life as a roller coaster, and P07's framing of pressure as something that recurs but is ultimately survivable, both reflect this non-linear and ambivalent quality of academic stress identified in the literature.

At the same time, the present findings extend Robotham and Julian's (2006) critical observation that the existing literature on student stress has relied heavily on quantitative, decontextualised measures, and has rarely examined the specific stressors faced by students outside narrowly vocational fields such as medicine, law, or nursing. The qualitative and visual approach adopted here allowed for a more contextually grounded account of stress, revealing how academic overload intersects with extracurricular involvement, as in P13's account of chaotic time pressure, and with commuting, as captured in the theme of Transport and Fatigue, particularly evident in P10's account of cognitive overload during her daily commute.

The theme of Teachers and Quality of Teaching similarly displayed a pronounced ambivalence, with participants consistently valuing the relational proximity of faculty while simultaneously critiquing the pedagogical quality of teaching itself. This pattern is consistent with Pascarella and Terenzini's (2005) emphasis on the importance of student-faculty interaction as a predictor of positive outcomes, while also echoing long-standing concerns in the higher education literature regarding the gap between disciplinary expertise and pedagogical competence.

Convergences and Divergences Between First-Year and Final-Year Students

A clear developmental pattern emerged in the way adaptation and personal growth were narrated across the two-year groups. First-year participants tended to describe the transition to university in the present tense, emphasising novelty, emotional intensity, and the volume of simultaneous demands, whereas final-year participants more often reconstructed it retrospectively, in terms of a gap between initial expectations and lived reality. This offers strong qualitative support for Arnett's (2000) characterisation of emerging adulthood as a period defined by its heterogeneity, observable here at the level of subjective meaning-making, with first-year and final-year students occupying markedly different positions in relation to the same institutional context (see Figures 2 and 3, Appendices D and E).

This pattern was particularly pronounced in the theme of Identity and Self-Knowledge, which was almost exclusively populated by final-year accounts. This is consistent with Arnett's (2000) argument that identity exploration, while originating in adolescence, takes place predominantly during emerging adulthood, and that the consolidation of identity is a gradual process that intensifies over the course of this period rather than being resolved early. The single first-year account coded within this theme, provided by P07, was explicitly forward-looking rather than retrospective, further supporting the view that identity consolidation among these participants was experienced as an unfolding process rather than a completed one.

The theme of Personal Growth and Development, the second most extensively coded category, reinforces this developmental reading. Final-year participants frequently articulated growth in terms of emotional regulation, increased self-efficacy, and a more balanced relationship with academic demands, echoing Pascarella and Terenzini's (2005) conclusion that psychosocial change is among the most consistent effects of the college experience. The accounts of P09 and P11, both describing a shift from rigid self-imposed standards toward greater self-acceptance, exemplify this consolidation.

Visual and Narrative Forms of Expression

The findings of this study also speak directly to the methodological literature on visual and participatory research. Consistent with Guillemin's (2004) argument that drawing constitutes an active process of meaning-making rather than a mere illustration of pre-formed ideas, several participants appeared to arrive at insights about their own experience through the act of drawing and titling itself, rather than simply representing conclusions reached beforehand. This is most evident in P05's account, in which she explicitly described the process of reflecting on the symbols included in her drawing as a mechanism through which self-knowledge was constructed, a finding that closely mirrors Guillemin's (2004) conceptualisation of drawing as knowledge production.

The titles participants assigned to their drawings frequently functioned as condensed interpretive anchors, consistent with the analytical role attributed to titles in the DWT literature (Angell et al., 2015; Goodwin et al., 2023). P13's title, which encapsulated an entire narrative of chaotic overload in a single phrase, and P08's roller

coaster metaphor, both illustrate how the titling component allowed participants to synthesise complex and sometimes contradictory experiences into a single guiding image, supporting the interview that followed.

Importantly, the present findings reinforce the value of combining drawing, writing, and oral narration rather than relying on any single mode of expression. In several instances, most notably P18's incorporation of Korean script and P01's depiction of a growing plant alongside a fallen petal, the visual content alone would have remained ambiguous or open to projective misinterpretation without the accompanying verbal explanation. This is consistent with Guillemin's (2004) caution regarding the risks of interpreting drawings independently of participants' own accounts, and with Silva et al.'s (2020) demonstration that integrating visual and verbal modes grants access to dimensions of social representations that would otherwise remain partially inaccessible.

Unexpected Findings and Alternative Explanations

Two findings merit particular attention as departures from what existing literature might predict. First, the relatively low representation of academic content itself, as distinct from the social and relational dimensions of university life, is somewhat unexpected given that university is, formally, an academic institution. One explanation, consistent with Elsharnouby's (2015) distinction between the core and supplementary levels of university experience, is that the drawing prompt, which asked participants to represent their university experience broadly rather than their academic learning specifically, may have implicitly oriented them toward the relational and supplementary dimensions of university life rather than the core learning experience. The prominence of friendship and social engagement may therefore partly reflect the specific framing of the task.

Second, the explicit account by P09 of having personally contributed to constructing the competitive atmosphere she experienced as oppressive represents a noteworthy instance of reflexive insight that is rarely captured in quantitative stress research. This finding adds nuance to Robotham and Julian's (2006) discussion of self-imposed performance standards as a source of student stress, suggesting that some students are not only subject to internalised social representations of academic success but are, at times, explicitly aware of their own role in producing and sustaining them. This level of reflexive awareness may be a particular

affordance of the DWT method, in which the combination of visual representation and narrative explanation seemed to invite participants toward exactly this kind of retrospective self-examination.

Taken together, these findings suggest that university students' representations of their lived experience are organised primarily around relational and affective dimensions, namely friendship, belonging, and emotional growth, rather than around academic content per se, and that these representations evolve systematically over the course of the undergraduate trajectory in ways that closely parallel the heterogeneity and identity-focused exploration described by Arnett's (2000) theory of emerging adulthood.

Conclusion

The present study set out to explore how university students construct and express their social representations of the university experience, with particular attention to emotional ties, senses of belonging, support networks, and perceived resources. Through the application of the Draw, Write and Tell method with 18 undergraduate students in the first and final years of seven-degree programs, it examined the positive and negative dimensions of their experience, identified convergences and divergences between year groups, and assessed the capacity of visual and narrative methods to access symbolic and affective dimensions that may resist purely verbal articulation.

Synthesis of Main Findings

The findings reveal that students' social representations of the university experience are organised primarily around relational and affective dimensions rather than around academic content per se. Friendships and Social Life emerged as the most extensively represented theme, with peer relationships functioning not merely as a source of enjoyment but as a fundamental condition of persistence, psychological well-being, and sense of belonging. Personal Growth and Development was the second most widely coded category, reflecting a broadly shared perception of university as a transformative experience, while Stress and Overload, the third, illustrated that academic pressure and the challenge of managing competing demands are experienced as pervasive features of

university life. The remaining themes, though less universally represented, carried significant weight for the students who expressed them, and across the dataset a consistent pattern of duality emerged, in which positive and negative valences coexisted within the same domains of experience.

Practical Implications and Recommendations

The findings carry several implications for higher education institutions. The centrality of peer relationships suggests that institutions should actively invest in informal spaces and structured opportunities for social connection, particularly during the early stages of the academic trajectory, when students are most vulnerable to isolation. The identification of specific spaces such as common rooms and faculty bars as sites of belonging indicates that the physical organisation of campus environments plays an active role in shaping social engagement and institutional identification.

The widespread experience of stress and overload, particularly among students with high extracurricular involvement and those who commute considerable distances, points to the need for more targeted and contextually sensitive support structures. Universal stress-management programmes may be insufficient for students whose overload stems from the intersection of academic demands with logistical and personal circumstances, and institutions would benefit from attending more deliberately to the persistent time depletion and fatigue reported by commuting students.

The ambivalence expressed toward Teachers and Quality of Teaching, in which relational proximity was consistently valued but pedagogical quality frequently criticised, points to a specific area requiring attention. Faculty experienced as accessible and emotionally available tend to be represented positively regardless of subject area, whereas those perceived as pedagogically ineffective can undermine students' sense of academic belonging. Institutions might therefore supplement existing pedagogical evaluation with more qualitative, relational forms of feedback.

The experience of students who relocated to attend university, and of international students such as P18, underscores the importance of dedicated transition support addressing the emotional, social, and practical dimensions of geographical displacement.

The theme of Homesickness and Family, though modest in quantitative terms, revealed affective intensity unlikely to be captured by standard welfare assessments.

Contribution to the Field

This study makes several contributions to literature on higher education and student experience. Theoretically, it extends Social Representation Theory to the study of university experience, demonstrating that students' representations are organised around shared symbolic and affective structures rather than individual attitudes, and are accessed more fully through visual and verbal modes combined than through either alone. Methodologically, it contributes to the emerging body of work applying the Draw, Write and Tell method with adult and university-level populations, a context in which its use remains comparatively scarce (Angell et al., 2015; Silva et al., 2020), showing it to be both feasible and analytically productive. Empirically, it offers a qualitative portrait of the lived experience of a group of Portuguese university students, grounded in their own visual and narrative accounts, and generating hypotheses and questions that may inform future research rather than generalisable conclusions about Portuguese university students as a whole.

Strengths and Limitations

Among the strengths of this study, the use of the Draw, Write and Tell method stands out as a particular asset, enabling the collection of layered and contextually grounded data that would not have been accessible through questionnaires or structured interviews alone. The diversity of the sample in terms of degree programmes, year of study, and personal circumstances, including international students and students who relocated to attend university, enriched the dataset and allowed for a broader range of experiences to be represented. The inductive thematic analysis conducted through NVivo 15, guided by Social Representation Theory without imposing predetermined categories, ensured that the findings remained closely anchored in participants' own accounts.

The study is not without limitations, however. The use of a convenience sample drawn exclusively from a single private university in Porto limits the transferability of the findings to other institutional contexts, including public universities, institutions in other

regions of Portugal, or universities in other countries. The sample size of 18 participants, while appropriate for a qualitative exploratory study, does not permit the kind of systematic comparison across degree programmes, year groups, or sociodemographic characteristics that a larger dataset would allow. Furthermore, the cross-sectional design of the study, in which participants were interviewed at a single point in time, precludes any examination of how individual representations change over the course of the university trajectory. The retrospective nature of final-year students' accounts, while analytically valuable, introduces the possibility of retrospective bias in the reconstruction of earlier experiences.

It should also be acknowledged that the drawing prompt used in this study, which invited participants to represent their university experience, may have implicitly oriented responses toward the relational and social dimensions of university life, potentially underrepresenting the academic and intellectual dimensions of students' experience. Future studies might consider using prompts that more explicitly address the learning experience itself, or that invite participants to represent different aspects of their university experience across multiple drawings.

Directions for Future Research

Several avenues for future research follow these findings. A longitudinal design, following students from their first year through graduation, would allow a more rigorous examination of how representations of university experience evolve over time. Comparative studies across different institutional contexts, including public universities and institutions with distinct pedagogical cultures, would clarify the extent to which these findings reflect the specific character of this institution. Future work might also attend more deliberately to underrepresented subgroups, particularly commuting and international students, and explore further adaptations of the Draw, Write and Tell method for adult populations, including multiple sequential drawings or digital tools for remote data collection.

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Appendix

A - Table 1

Themes Identified in Students' Experiences, by Number of Participants and References

Theme	Participants	References
Friendships and Social Life	16	52
Stress and Overload	10	37
Personal Growth and Development	13	33
Adaptation and Transition	11	18
Teachers and Quality of Teaching	10	18
Academic Groups and Extracurricular Activities	6	14
Transport and Fatigue	4	11
Identity and Self-Knowledge	5	8
Homesickness and Family	3	6
Romantic Relationships	2	3

Note. n = number of participants who mentioned the theme and the total number of references coded for each theme.

B - Table 2

Thematic Categories of the University Experience, With Description and Examples by Year of Study

Category	Description	Example (1st year)	Example (3rd year)
Adaptation and Transition <i>n_part = 11;</i> <i>n_ref = 18</i>	Captures how students experienced and made sense of the transition to higher education, including adjustments to new academic and personal demands, the contrast with secondary school, and the development of autonomy.	<i>"I started by drawing a lecture hall because it was one of the most different things from secondary school. That was where my sense of commitment, freedom and independence began."</i> P07, Psychology	<i>"My reaction when I arrived at my building was 'Oh my God, I actually made it here'. Then, as the years went by, university left something to be desired."</i> P08, Nutrition
Identity and Self-Knowledge <i>n_part = 5;</i> <i>n_ref = 8</i>	Reflects the processes through which students developed a deeper understanding of themselves within the university context, including moments of self-discovery, questioning and personal redefinition.	<i>"Growth was always something that worried me a lot, because when I was younger I really wanted to grow up, to have maturity, and I think I'm on the right path for that now."</i> P07, Psychology	<i>"All these symbols, or people, or images, or whatever they are, made me the person I am today."</i> P05, Psychology

Personal Growth and Development <i>n_part = 13;</i> <i>n_ref = 33</i>	Captures the changes students perceived throughout their university trajectory, including emotional maturity, increased autonomy, resilience, and learning to balance academic demands with personal life.	<i>“Things happened for a reason and there is always a lesson to take from them, always something to learn from what happened.”</i> P15, Psychology	<i>“At first I felt I always had to be super attentive and studying constantly. Over time I realised I can come home and allow myself to rest. Everything works better if there is a balance.”</i> P11, Management
Friendships and Social Life <i>n_part = 16;</i> <i>n_ref = 52</i>	The most represented category. Captures the central role of friendships and social life in the university experience, including emotional support among peers, informal spaces for socialising, and the durability of the friendships formed.	<i>“What I value most at university is being with my friends. Without them I honestly don’t think I could stay here much longer.”</i> P16, Psychology	<i>“Without these two people I couldn’t do anything here. They were emotional support for when I was stressed. Without them I wouldn’t have finished my degree; in the second year I actually thought about dropping out.”</i> P09, Management
Romantic Relationships <i>n_part = 2;</i> <i>n_ref = 3</i>	The least represented category. Captures the presence of romantic relationships in the narrative of the university experience, namely their beginning, end, and emotional weight within the academic journey.	Not represented.	<i>“There is a plant that is growing and has hearts because that was when I had my first boyfriend, but then there is a petal that fell because that relationship ended badly.”</i> P01, Law

Homesickness and Family <i>n_part = 3;</i> <i>n_ref = 6</i>	Captures the emotional experience of distance from family and home as a significant dimension of university life, especially among displaced or international students.	<i>"I have a strong connection to home. I miss my family a lot."</i> P18, Psychology	<i>"Long distance. In terms of family and my group of friends from before, I now have one friend in Australia and another in Paris."</i> P06, Cinema
Academic Groups and Extracurricular Activities <i>n_part = 6;</i> <i>n_ref = 14</i>	Captures the role of extracurricular involvement in the university experience, including academic groups, student associations, and the impact of that involvement on personal and social development and on time management.	<i>"I drew two academic groups, students waiting for something else, and the Law Debating Society, which is what people do here."</i> P15, Psychology	<i>"My experience in an academic group was the most important thing at university for me, because it was there that I met everyone."</i> P01, Law
Teachers and Quality of Teaching <i>n_part = 10;</i> <i>n_ref = 18</i>	Reflects the role of teaching staff and pedagogical practices in students' representations, revealing an ambivalent picture: relational closeness is consistently valued, while pedagogical quality elicits more critical responses.	<i>"I represented the teachers' offices because of the closeness we have with them. The contact is extremely close, to the point that a teacher once gave me a hug."</i> P14, Microbiology	<i>"The teaching environment is not the best, in my opinion. I think it could be more interactive and less dry or boring."</i> P08, Nutrition
Stress and Overload <i>n_part = 10;</i> <i>n_ref = 37</i>	Captures experiences of academic pressure, cognitive overload, emotional strain, and difficulty managing simultaneous demands. Present across both years and several	<i>"The academic context ends up causing a lot of pressure. Being in nature, getting some sun, being with friends, ends up</i>	<i>"I had the constant feeling that everyone was watching me and that I had to perform to a certain standard so as not to</i>

	degree programmes, described as pervasive and multi-causal.	<i>helping us unwind from that pressure.”</i> P16, Psychology	<i>disappoint my own expectations and other people’s expectations.”</i> P09, Management
Transport and Fatigue <i>n_part = 4;</i> <i>n_ref = 11</i>	Captures the experience of daily commuting as a significant and draining dimension of university life, in which the time and energy spent in transit constitute an additional burden on students’ physical and cognitive resources.	<i>“Getting on and off transport and thinking that I have less time to study than other people. When I get to university I’m already tired, and when I get home I’m tired too.”</i> P10, Law	<i>“The journey to university is an important part and part of everyday life.”</i> P04, Sound and Image

Note. n_part = number of participants who mentioned the category; n_ref = total number of coded references. Quotes are verbatim transcriptions, identified by code and degree programme. Where a category was not represented in one of the years, this is indicated as “Not represented”.

C - Figure 1

Titles Given by Students to Their Drawings

FIRST YEAR			
P02	<i>“A Place to Learn”</i>	P07	<i>“Growth and New Beginnings”</i>
P10	<i>“The Feeling of Always Being Tired”</i>	P14	<i>“The Imaginable and Hopeful First-Year Experience”</i>
P15	<i>“Roller Coaster”</i>	P16	<i>“A Step Towards the Future”</i>
P17	<i>“Adaptation”</i>	P18	<i>“Grateful/Stress”</i>
THIRD YEAR			
P01	<i>“Growth”</i>	P03	<i>“Unprocessed Undergraduate Journey”</i>
P04	<i>“Cacophony”</i>	P05	<i>“The Path”</i>
P06	<i>“UCP Cinema Bachelor Experience”</i>	P08	<i>“Roller Coaster of University Life”</i>
P09	<i>“Duality”</i>	P11	<i>“It’s All Fine”</i>
P12	<i>“The 3 University Moments”</i>	P13	<i>“The Chaos of a Day with 24h When 48h Are Needed”</i>

Note. Each entry corresponds to the title freely given by a participant to the drawing they produced about their academic experience, grouped by year of study (N = 18).

D - Figure 2

Drawings Produced by First-Year Students About Their University Experience



P02 — *A Place to Learn*



P07 — *Growth and New Beginnings*



P10 — *The Feeling of Always Being Tired*



P14 — *The Imaginable and Hopeful First-Year Experience*



P15 — *Roller Coaster*



P16 — *A Step Towards the Future*



P17 — *Adaptation*



P18 — *Grateful/Stress*

Note. Each panel shows the drawing produced by a first-year participant about their academic experience, identified by participant code and followed by the title they gave it.

E - Figure 3

Drawings Produced by Third-Year Students About Their Academic Experience



P01 — *Growth*



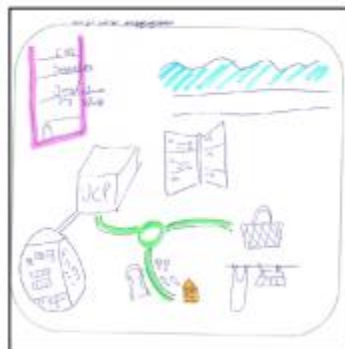
P03 — *Unprocessed Undergraduate Journey*



P04 — *Cacophony*



P05 — *The Path*



P06 — *UCP Cinema Bachelor Experience*



P08 — *Roller Coaster of University Life*



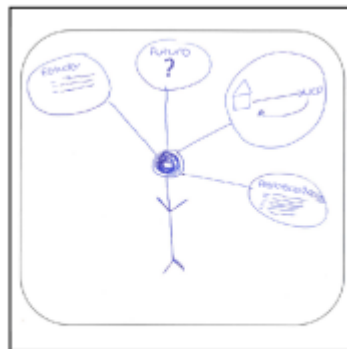
P09 — *Duality*



P11 — *It's All Fine*



P12 — *The 3 University Moments*



P13 — *The Chaos of a Day with 24h When 48h Are Needed*

Note. Each panel shows the drawing produced by a third-year participant about their academic experience, identified by participant code and followed by the title they gave it.

F - Consent Form

CONSENTIMENTO INFORMADO, ESCLARECIDO E LIVRE

Investigador responsável: Luís Pedro Resende Santos e Sá

Orientadora: Professora Doutora Luísa Mota Ribeiro

Este estudo tem como objetivo compreender as perceções dos estudantes universitários acerca da sua experiência universitária. Para tal, será utilizado o método *Draw, Write and Tell*, que envolve a realização de um desenho e uma explicação oral.

Voluntariedade e Confidencialidade A participação no estudo é voluntária, sendo garantido aos participantes o direito de recusar responder a qualquer questão ou de desistir a qualquer momento, sem qualquer prejuízo académico ou pessoal. Todos os dados recolhidos serão tratados de forma confidencial e codificados, assegurando o anonimato dos participantes. Os desenhos, descrições e entrevistas serão utilizados exclusivamente para fins académicos e de investigação, podendo ser citados em relatórios ou publicações de forma anónima.

Dados pessoais e Direitos: Os dados pessoais recolhidos (idade, género, curso e ano curricular) serão utilizados exclusivamente para a caracterização da amostra, armazenados de forma segura e eliminados após a conclusão da investigação.

Declaração de Consentimento: Declaro que fui devidamente informado/a acerca dos objetivos, procedimentos, riscos e benefícios deste estudo. Compreendi que a minha participação é voluntária e que posso desistir a qualquer momento, sem consequências. Concordo em participar na investigação acima descrita.

Nome do/a participante: _____

Data de nascimento: _____

Assinatura: _____

Data: ____ / ____ / ____

G - Sociodemographic Form

**Perceptions of the University Experience among Higher Education Students:
A Qualitative Study Using the Draw, Write and Tell Method**



Idade: ____ anos

É trabalhador-estudante?

☐ Sim

☐ Não

Já frequentou outro curso?

☐ Sim, qual? _____

☐ Não

Curso que frequenta atualmente na []: _____

Ano académico que frequenta atualmente na []:

☐ 1.º ano da licenciatura

☐ 3.º ano da licenciatura

☐ Outro: _____

Sexo:

☐ Feminino

☐ Masculino

☐ Outro

Nacionalidade:

☐ Portuguesa

☐ Outra (pf indique qual): _____

Em que concelho reside atualmente durante a semana: _____

Em média quanto tempo demora a deslocar-se à universidade: _____

Habilitações do pai:

☐ Sem escolaridade ou 1.º ciclo do ensino básico

☐ 2.º/3.º ciclo do ensino básico

☐ Ensino secundário

☐ Ensino superior (licenciatura ou superior)

Habilitações da mãe:

☐ Sem escolaridade ou 1.º ciclo do ensino básico

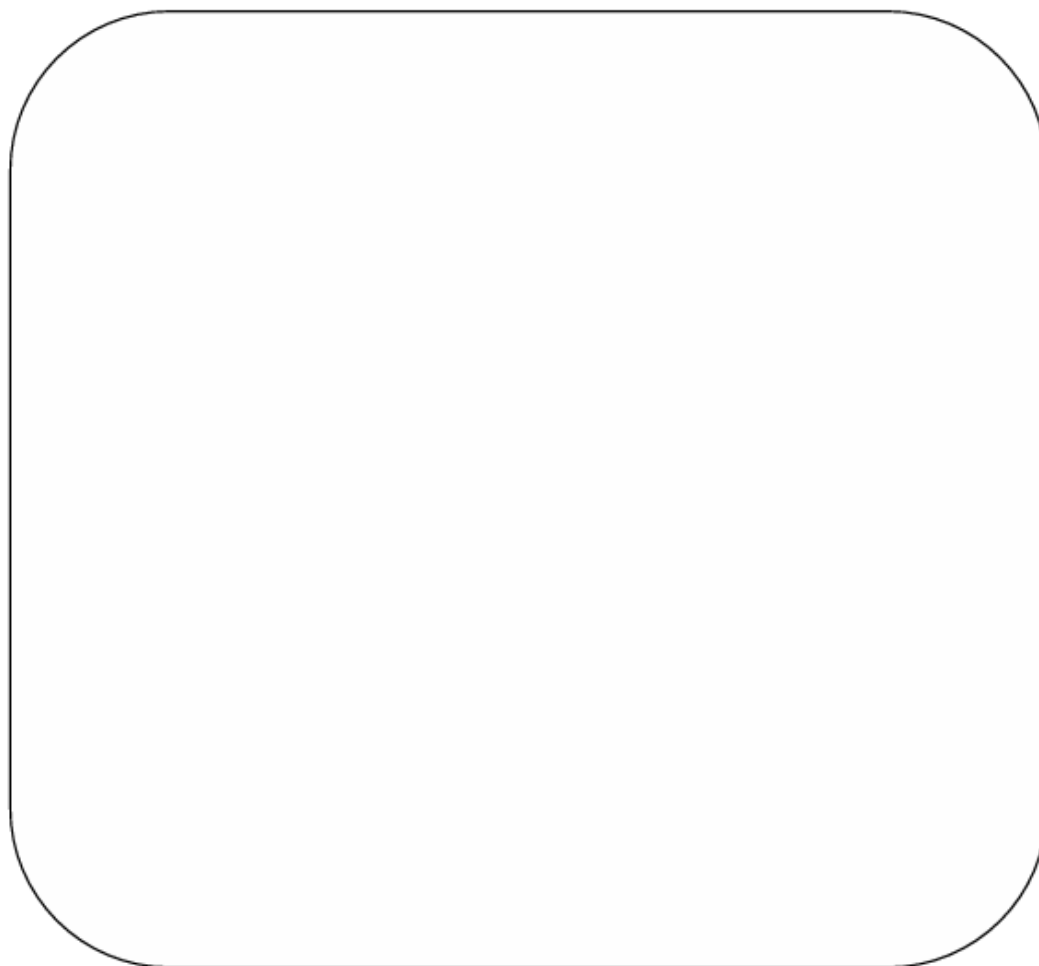
☐ 2.º/3.º ciclo do ensino básico

☐ Ensino secundário

☐ Ensino superior (licenciatura ou superior)

Desenho:

De seguida, pedimos-lhe que realize um desenho que represente a forma como percebe a sua experiência universitária. O desenho pode incluir pessoas, lugares, símbolos, emoções ou situações que considere importantes para expressar essa percepção.

A large, empty rounded rectangle box with a thin black border, intended for a drawing. The corners are smoothly rounded, and the interior is completely blank.**Título:**

H - Interview Script

Introdução: Obrigado/a por aceitares participar neste estudo. Este tem como objetivo compreender como estudantes do ensino superior percecionam e experienciam a sua vivência universitária. Em particular, interessa-nos explorar os significados, emoções e experiências que associas ao teu percurso e ao teu quotidiano na universidade. É importante salientar que não procuramos necessariamente aspetos positivos ou negativos; o mais importante é que possas expressar o que é, para ti, a experiência universitária. A tua participação é totalmente voluntária. Não existem respostas certas ou erradas; o que nos interessa é aquilo que estas experiências e representações significam para ti, a partir da tua própria perspetiva. A sessão irá decorrer em três momentos. Em primeiro lugar, ser-te-á pedido que respondas a uma breve ficha sociodemográfica, cujas questões têm apenas como finalidade a caracterização da amostra. De seguida, ser-te-á pedido que realizes um desenho que represente a tua vivência universitária, de acordo com a forma como a percecionas e os significados que atribuis. Por fim, conversaremos brevemente sobre o desenho que realizaste, incluindo o título que escolheste e o significado dos elementos que representaste. É importante salientar que não são necessárias competências artísticas e que o desenho não será avaliado do ponto de vista estético. O objetivo é expressar ideias, experiências e perceções pessoais, da forma que fizer mais sentido para ti. Toda a informação recolhida será tratada de forma confidencial e anónima. Podes recusar responder a qualquer questão ou interromper a tua participação, sem qualquer prejuízo. Se em qualquer momento tiveres alguma dúvida, podes colocá-la para que seja esclarecida. Se estiveres de acordo, podemos então começar com a ficha sociodemográfica.

Guião de entrevista:

Exploração do Desenho

Pergunta central obrigatória

1. Podes explicar-me o que desenhaste? O que está a acontecer na tua imagem? (Pergunta inspirada diretamente nos estudos DWT, é sempre o ponto de partida.)

Elementos visuais

1. Quem ou o que aparece no desenho?
2. Por que escolheste representar estas pessoas, espaços ou símbolos?

3. Há elementos no desenho que consideras mais importantes? Quais? Porquê?
4. Há algo que não representaste, mas que também faz parte da tua experiência universitária?

Significados

1. O que é que este desenho simboliza para ti?
2. O que sentes quando olhas para o teu desenho?
3. Se tivesses de escolher uma parte do desenho para representar melhor a tua experiência universitária, qual seria?

Exploração do Título

1. Podes falar-me um pouco sobre o título que escolheste?
2. O que é que este título significa para ti?
3. Este título está associado a alguma situação em particular que viveste na tua experiência universitária?

Pergunta de síntese

1. O título representa mais os aspetos positivos, negativos ou neutros da tua experiência universitária?

Relação entre o Título e o Desenho

1. De que forma é que o título se manifesta no desenho?
2. O teu título e o teu desenho contam a mesma história?
3. Há algo que o desenho te permitiu expressar que título não realça?

Perceção da Experiência universitária

- 1) O que é que o teu desenho revela sobre a tua experiência universitária?
- 2) Quais consideras ser os aspetos mais positivos da tua experiência universitária?
- 3) Quais consideras ser os aspetos mais negativos da tua experiência universitária?
- 4) Se pudesses mudar algo na tua experiência universitária, o que seria?
- 5) Que capacidades, forças e recursos estão representados no teu desenho?

6) Que dificuldades, necessidades e problemas estão representados no teu desenho?

Encerramento

1. Se pudesses mudar o título, mudarias? Qual seria a nova versão desse título?
2. Há algo que gostarias de acrescentar antes de terminarmos? Obrigado/a pela tua participação e pelas partilhas que fizeste. O teu contributo é muito importante.

I - Transcribed Interview with 1st Year Student

1. Podes explicar-me o que desenhaste? O que está a acontecer na tua imagem? Eu basicamente desenhei, digamos assim, a universidade. Desenhei um bocado a universidade, o estacionamento e os jardins. Aqui nos jardins sou eu e os meus amigos, estamos a estudar, por isso eu vou entrar na universidade, no parque de estacionamento está a minha motinha. Basicamente eu quis desenhar o meu dia-a-dia, digamos assim, porque eu acho que no fundo é isso que eu mais valorizo na universidade, é estar com os meus amigos, eu conseguir estudar com eles. No fundo, acho que é isso, um ambiente bom, convívio acima de tudo.
2. Quem ou o que aparece no desenho? Tenho eu, o meu grupo de amigos mais próximos, a minha mota, porque eu venho para cá de mota todos os dias, os jardins, que eu adoro estar aqui agora este tempo de estar, principalmente com eles a apanhar solzinho, e a universidade no geral.
3. Por que escolheste representar estas pessoas, espaços ou símbolos? Escolhi a universidade por causa disso mesmo, por causa da questão académica. E escolhi desenhar os meus amigos e o jardim, porque, lá está, por causa da questão do convívio e porque sem eles eu acho que não conseguia estar aqui muito mais tempo, honestamente. Sou uma pessoa bastante social, preciso do convívio deles e eles também me ajudam na questão académica, por isso eu também os desenhei a estudar.
4. Há elementos no desenho que consideras mais importantes? Quais? Porquê? Diria que o jardim e os meus amigos, porque, lá está, querendo ou não, o contexto académico acaba por causar muita pressão e eu acho que estar no meio da natureza, a apanhar sol, estar com os amigos, acaba por nos fazer desanuviar dessa pressão e eles são imprescindíveis nesse aspeto.
5. Há algo que não representaste, mas que também faz parte da tua experiência universitária? A pressão.
6. O que é que este desenho simboliza para ti? Significa um pequeno passo, também acabei por mencionar isso no título, um passo para o futuro, ou seja, uma etapa que vai influenciar muito positivamente o meu futuro.
7. O que sentes quando olhas para o teu desenho? Felicidade.
8. Se tivesses de escolher uma parte do desenho para representar melhor a tua experiência universitária, qual seria? Os livros.
9. Podes falar-me um pouco sobre o título que escolheste? Então, eu escolhi o título "Um Passo para o Futuro", porque querendo ou não, nós estamos todos aqui para ter um

futuro melhor, seguir aquilo que nós sempre desejámos, e creio que seja uma etapa muito importante, principalmente vivê-la da maneira mais tranquila e amena possível.

10. O que é que este título significa para ti? Levar as coisas com calma, por isso um passo, uma coisa de cada vez e logo se vê.
11. Este título está associado a alguma situação em particular que viveste na tua experiência universitária? Não.
12. O título representa mais aspetos positivos, negativos ou neutros da tua experiência universitária? Depende um bocado, porque eu já quis viver as coisas demasiado depressa, então esta questão de um passo, viver as coisas mais lentamente e com calma, aproveitar toda a jornada, acaba por ser um bocadinho os dois, sim.
13. De que forma é que o título se manifesta no desenho? É como eu disse, isto é toda uma jornada, a vida académica, então acabei por desenhar um pequeno pedaço do que estou a viver ao longo desta experiência, ou seja, eu estar com os amigos, estudar também, estar com eles.
14. O teu título e o teu desenho contam a mesma história? Sim.
15. Há algo que o desenho te permitiu expressar que o título não realça? Depende. Acho que vai acabar por partir muito da interpretação de cada um ao ver e ao analisar também o título, mas do que eu vejo, acabam por se associar, sim.
16. O que é que o teu desenho revela sobre a tua experiência universitária? Os estudos, acima de tudo, os estudos, mas também o convívio, não esquecer o convívio.
17. Quais consideras ser os aspetos mais positivos da tua experiência universitária? Os amigos que fiz.
18. Quais consideras ser os aspetos mais negativos da tua experiência universitária? Muita coisa ao mesmo tempo. Sejam estudos, trabalhos. É um salto muito grande passar do secundário e depois ir diretamente para o ensino superior.
19. Se pudesses udar algo na tua experiência universitária, o que seria? Mais dedicação.
20. Que capacidades, forças e recursos estão representados no teu desenho? Lá está, amizade, porque acho que sem apoio uns dos outros não conseguimos chegar a lado nenhum. E também, lá está, os livros, porque também sem estudos, sem o nosso esforço próprio, também os nossos objetivos não são inalcançáveis.

21. Que dificuldades, necessidades e problemas estão representados no teu desenho?
Necessidade do social, mas também do estudo. E dificuldades estaria mais na questão de transporte, porque eu sou de longe e venho para cá de mota todos os dias, custa imenso. Mas também ajuda a desanuviar um bocadinho.
22. Se pudesses mudar o título, mudarias? Qual seria a nova versão desse título? Não.
23. Há algo que gostarias de acrescentar antes de terminarmos? Não. Pronto. Perfeito

J - Transcribed Interview with 3rd Year Student

1. Podes explicar-me o que desenhaste? O que está a acontecer na tua imagem? Está a acontecer sou eu e a minha cabeça a ter muita informação que está misturada porque é difícil processar. É a vida ser casa universidade, mas o ir a casa é ir dormir. Questionamentos quanto ao futuro, cada vez mais porque cada vez mais gosto de várias áreas. O estudar está ali só com três linhas, ao contrário das responsabilidades, porque acaba por ficar um bocado mais por trás. E as responsabilidades, se serem muitas, provavelmente é o fator caótico. Daí o caos de um dia ser 24 horas quando eu precisava de 48
2. Quem ou o que aparece no desenho? Eu.
3. Por que escolheste representar estas pessoas, espaços ou símbolos? Porque todas as consequências de tudo o que eu estou a fazer são absolutamente minhas e decisões minhas.
4. Há elementos no desenho que consideras mais importantes? Quais? Porquê? A casa, que é onde eu passo menos tempo.
5. Há algo que não representaste, mas que também faz parte da tua experiência universitária? Eu não enlinquei as responsabilidades, mas acho que está um bocado representado pelas responsabilidades.
6. O que é que este desenho simboliza para ti? Simboliza que está o caos na minha vida universitária
7. O que sentes quando olhas para o teu desenho? Sinto que os valores deviam estar mais equilibrados. Em vez de estudar ser menos, responsabilidade devia ser menos. O futuro não devia ter um ponto de interrogação.
8. Se tivesses de escolher uma parte do desenho para representar melhor a tua experiência universitária, qual seria? Tem a ver com as responsabilidades que tenho assumido durante a vida universitária, principalmente da associação de estudantes.
9. Podes falar-me um pouco sobre o título que escolheste? Creio que, por exemplo, no primeiro ano da faculdade eu só vinha às aulas, então a minha vida universitária era resumida a nulo, e de repente meti-me em várias coisas e agora estou em tantas coisas que um 24 horas no dia não me chega para fazer tudo.
10. O que é que este título significa para ti? A faculdade é muito mais que as aulas, mas que também é preciso haver equilíbrio.

11. Este título está associado a alguma situação em particular que viveste na tua experiência universitária? O último ano, provavelmente.
12. O título representa mais aspetos positivos, negativos ou neutros da tua experiência universitária? Neutros.
13. De que forma é que o título se manifesta no desenho? Manifesta-se por eu ter várias coisas a acontecer.
14. O teu título e o teu desenho contam a mesma história? Eu acho que sim.
15. Há algo que o desenho te permitiu expressar que o título não realça? Talvez a questão do futuro.
16. O que é que o teu desenho revela sobre a tua experiência universitária? De que para além de estar a fazer o curso estou a fazer muito mais ao mesmo tempo. Acho que estou a crescer bastante em todos os aspetos. O curso está a dar-me muita maturidade, por exemplo, linguística. E tudo o que a universidade me dá de associação de estudantes, de programas extras e etc., contribui muito para a parte pessoal.
17. Quais consideras ser os aspetos mais positivos da tua experiência universitária? X
18. Quais consideras ser os aspetos mais negativos da tua experiência universitária? O stress.
19. Se pudesses mudar algo na tua experiência universitária, o que seria? Não mudava o passado, mas quero abrandar no futuro, porque senão...
20. Que capacidades, forças e recursos estão representados no teu desenho? A minha capacidade de organização. A minha capacidade de estar em várias coisas ao mesmo tempo e me conseguir dedicar a tudo. A minha força de vontade. E pronto, acho que é isso.
21. Que dificuldades, necessidades e problemas estão representados no teu desenho? O stress. Acho que é maioritariamente o stress.
22. Se pudesses mudar o título, mudarias? Qual seria a nova versão desse título? Não, porque acho que é comum a todos.
23. Há algo que gostarias de acrescentar antes de terminarmos? Porque a faculdade não é apenas as aulas, é muito mais, e que a vida universitária efetivamente é para ser vivida,

são os melhores e os piores anos da nossa vida, bastante stressantes, mas só se vive uma vez e é para aproveitar todas as oportunidades que nos dão.