

## The social skills developed in professional practices with psychology students at the FPyTCH community service center at UJED

### Las habilidades sociales desarrolladas en las prácticas profesionales con estudiantes de psicología en el centro de servicios a la comunidad la FPyTCH de la UJED

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#### Abstract

Objective: To know the evolution of the social skills developed in the professional practices in students of the Degree in Psychology of the Faculty of Psychology and Human Communication Therapy of the Juárez University of the State of Durango.

Methodology: A flexible procedure was followed to read the data obtained with the application of the Gismero social skills scale, which allowed us to examine the data and categorize them with the idea of describing the evolution in the skills analyzed in the population described.

Contribution: The evolution of the social skills of psychology students as residents is described, within the Community Services Center at the Faculty of Psychology and Human Communication Therapy belonging to the Universidad Juárez del Estado de Durango.

**Social skills, Students, Psychology, Professional practices, Evaluation**

#### Resumen

Objetivo: Conocer la evolución de las habilidades sociales desarrolladas en las prácticas profesionales en alumnos de la Licenciatura en Psicología de la FPyTCH.

Metodología: Se siguió un procedimiento flexible para la lectura de los datos obtenidos con la aplicación de la escala de habilidades sociales de Gismero, que permitió examinar los datos y categorizarlos con la idea de describir la evolución en las habilidades analizadas, en la población descrita.

Contribución: Se describe la evolución de las habilidades sociales de los estudiantes de psicología en calidad de residentes, dentro del Centro de Servicios a la Comunidad en la Facultad de Psicología y Terapia de la Comunicación Humana perteneciente a la Universidad Juárez del Estado de Durango.

**Habilidades sociales, Estudiantes, Psicología, Prácticas profesionales, Evaluación**

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## Introduction

The School of Psychology and Human Communication Therapy (FPyTCH) has a Community Service Center (CSC), where students can perform their social service contributing to their professional and academic training.

Social skills are an important topic in the professional training of psychologists, since it is expected that upon graduation they will be able to handle skills such as problem-solving, speaking, and establishing rapport, among others.

The need to improve interpersonal skills, manage stressful situations and increase the well-being of health personnel has been identified as essential for the proper functioning of psychology students. For such reason, it is necessary to highlight the importance of social competence, due to the fact that they constitute an emerging professional class that has in social interaction the basis of their actions; in social sciences, "in psychology in particular, the interpersonal difficulties of students are even more critical, given the interpersonal nature of the performance and the object of study of these disciplines" (Herrera, Freyres, López & Olaz, 2012 p. 279).

## Justification

Interpersonal and communication skills in a clinician encompass the ability to gather information in order to facilitate accurate diagnosis, appropriate advice, give therapeutic instructions, establish care and relationship with their patients (Ortiz & Beltran, 2016, p. 3).

The competencies of a clinically focused professional are complemented through professional practices, social service or residencies, or in simulation or role-playing situations in the academic load and in the day-to-day practice involved in the development of the profession.

## Problem

The Psychology career belongs to the health sciences, seeking to promote the emotional well-being of people, as well as the mental health of the population and the improvement of the quality of life.

Therefore, it is essential that within the professional practice students have solid and strengthened emotional bases so that the professional activities to be performed are not hindered by emotional problems or lack of ability to be carried out (Ordaz, 2013, p. 6).

## Objectives

General:

- To know the evolution of social skills developed in professional practices in students of the Bachelor's Degree in Psychology of the FPyTCH.

Specific:

- To evaluate the social skills at the beginning and end of the professional practices in students of the Bachelor's Degree in Psychology of the FPyTCH.
- To analyze the changes presented in the results of both applications.
- To favor personal and professional training in students of the Bachelor's Degree in Psychology of the FPyTCH.

## Methodology

This research followed a flexible process of analysis of the data collected with the resident students of the Bachelor's Degree in Psychology, the data were collected during the period of professional practices at the Community Services Center in the School of Psychology and Human Communication Therapy belonging to the Universidad Juárez del Estado de Durango, through the application of Gismero's social skills scale.

For the elaboration of the results, a series of stages were followed as recommended by Mejía (2011), which were finally organized in three moments that facilitated the description of the results:

- In the first, the scores obtained in each of the social skills evaluated were read.

- In the second, comparisons were made between them, finding similarities and differences that made it possible to elaborate categories of weighted traits on the social skills of the evaluated population.
- Finally, a selection and ordering of the qualitative data obtained on the social skills developed by the students and the period already mentioned was carried out, with the idea of describing the evolution of the skills analyzed in the population described.

### Population and Sample

The present research was conducted with students of the Bachelor's Degree in Psychology of the FPYTCH who were doing their professional practices and wanted to participate voluntarily in the research and were willing to sign an informed consent, in order to obtain better results in the application of the tests.

A convenience sample was used (Hernández, Fernández & Baptista, 2014, p.401), in which a non-probabilistic and non-random technique is used, with the purpose of creating a sample based on the ease of access to the population and the establishment of the availability of the students through informed consent prior to the intervention.

Degree	Sex	Academic level
18 Psychology students.	3 Men. 15 Women.	5 6 <sup>th</sup> semester students. 4 7 <sup>th</sup> semester students. 9 8 <sup>th</sup> semester students.

Table 1

### Theoretical Framework

The term social-emotional skills or social-emotional learning is currently used. When they are referred to as skills it has the connotation of the possibility of their educability or training, while socioemotional learning can be described as the acquisition of various socioemotional skills, among which are self-knowledge, self-regulation, social awareness, skills to relate to others and responsible decision making (García, 2018, p.5).

Social skills are defined as behaviors that help to have interpersonal relationships in various social factors to obtain success in the professional and occupational. "The establishment of satisfactory social relationships help the person to perform successfully and healthily in different areas, both in affective relationships, as well as in professional, work and academic life is a salogenic factor of great importance" (Morán and Olaz, 2014, p. 94).

Social ability is the ability of the subject to perform successfully in the environment and achieve the satisfaction of their needs; it is a quality related to the health, emotional adjustment and well-being of individuals. Therefore, the practice of social skills "helps to raise the levels of self-efficacy, personal resources and social competence of individuals, thus improving their possibilities for a creative life and social well-being" (Arancibia & Péres, 2007, p. 135).

"Socioemotional competencies serve as part of prevention to reduce different risk situations such as violence, depression, stress, among other situations, thus minimizing the vulnerability of the person to dysfunctional situations" (Bisquerra, 2005 cited in Aguilar, Moreno & Torquemada, 2019, p. 216).

### Relevance of social skills.

"The deficit in the development of HHSS lies in the maladjustment or difficulty to engage in interpersonal relationships, since one possesses a series of negative consequences such as low social acceptance or social rejection, psychological maladjustments, emotional, academic problems and antisocial behavior" (Bueno, Durán and Garrido, 2013 in Pulido and Herrera, 2014, p. 262).

In addition to the first stages of primary education during the higher education stage, the acquisition and strengthening of HHSS for professional life is crucial, fundamentally in careers where interpersonal relationships are part of the field of work (Padilla, Colunga, & Aguilar, 2019, p. 71).

**Social skills in university life**

The HHSS is a set of behaviors that allows the person to function functionally develop both in the social and professional spheres, which is why importance is given to the topic of social skills in university students, since they are defined as the basis of social competence, which students must face.

The acquisition of HHSS is a lifelong learning process, where the transition to new experiences and contexts makes modifications in social goals and demands broader repertoires of interpersonal behaviors.

“There are studies carried out by Argyle, Bryant and Trower in 1974 on social performance in university students, where it was observed that they present deficits in their social competence; these authors found that 10% to 30% of a sample of Oxford students presented great difficulties in common social situations such as approaching other people, going to discotheques, taking the initiative in a conversation, talking to people of the other sex, among other things” (Herrera et al., 2012, p. 278).

The importance of social competence in university students is emphasized, given that they constitute an emerging professional class whose actions are based on social interaction. In the social sciences, "in psychology in particular, the interpersonal difficulties of students are even more critical, given the interpersonal nature of action and the object of study of these disciplines".” (Herrera, et al., 2012, p. 279).

One of the main disagreements of young university students is that, within the study plan, the difficulties of development in social skills are not included, nor are theoretical and methodological tools provided to face them, nor do they have prior information about the work they will have to perform, nor the customs and beliefs of the social context, "sometimes finding themselves in situations of isolation and vulnerability reflected in a sense of lack of control and loneliness that can lead to a phenomenon such as depression and insecurity related to their personal integrity” (Ortiz & Beltrán, 2016 ,p. 2).

**Social skills in professional practices in psychology students.**

Interpersonal and communication skills in a clinical professional encompass the ability to gather information in order to facilitate accurate diagnosis, appropriate counseling, give therapeutic instructions, establish care and relationship with their patients (Ortiz & Beltrán, 2016, p. 3).

In the training of social skills, it is essential to create mutually beneficial relationships, stimulate participation and enthusiasm, consolidate group identity and commitment, share merits, among other skills of a balanced and creative personality. (Ordaz, 2013).

A fundamental factor for students to become cultural and learning promoters is related to social practice; therefore, it is necessary to develop in students with a clinical approach knowledge and skills that allow them to promote culture and scientific-technical advances of their profession in their social bond (Ordaz, 2013).

In order to achieve a future socially skilled professional, it is essential to develop a group of skills through which pleasant emotions are generated, unpleasant ones are controlled, unfavorable criteria are adequately expressed in the context, respecting the judgments of others, teamwork, as well as the effective resolution of professional and personal problems.

Higher education should not only provide solid competencies for the world of today and tomorrow, but also contribute to the formation of a citizenry endowed with ethical principles, committed to the construction of peace, the defense of human rights and the values of democracy (Ordaz, 2013).

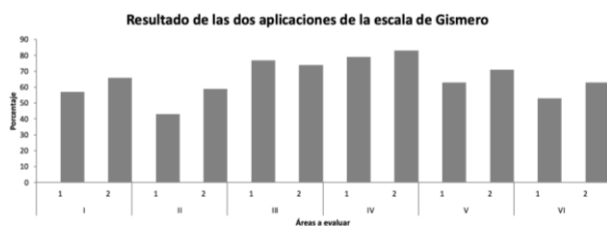
**Results**

The application of a Gismero social skills scale was carried out, the population was kept constant and it was performed at two moments, at the beginning and end of the semester.

The following is a description of the areas evaluated:

– I Self-expression.

- II Defense of one's own rights as a consumer.
- III Expression of anger or disagreement.
- IV Saying no and cutting off interactions.
- V Making requests.
- VI Initiating positive interactions with the opposite sex.



**Graphic 1**

This table shows a comparison of the two evaluations applied to the students during their professional practices, showing the first and second application within each area to be evaluated. The higher the score, the higher the skill acquired in the corresponding area.

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### Conclusions and recommendations

From the work carried out in the present investigation, the following conclusions can be drawn from the objectives:

- The social skills of the psychology students who carried out their professional practices in CSC of the FPYTCH, at the beginning scored with a percentage somewhat close to the average (68%), however, at the end an advance in the development of these skills was noted, with a percentage close to 80%.
- It is important to note that, although these skills were strengthened during this period, the expression of anger or disagreement was diminished as a skill.

- The most latently developed skills in both applications are saying no and cutting interactions, as well as defending one's own rights as a consumer, perhaps this may be due to social behavioral norms or fear of not being accepted in a social circle.
- With percentages close to 80% in the second application, the residents were able to show expressions of anger and make requests, which considerably favors their emotional intelligence with the good management of emotions or feelings.
- The most significant increase, between one application and the other, was found in self-expression skills in social situations and initiating positive interactions with the opposite sex, perhaps this may be due to the age of the sample population, in which sentimental and social relationships become more important.
- During the present investigation, the personal and professional training of psychology residents and social service providers is favored through the implementation of social skills, as well as the acquisition of new knowledge generated from clinical supervision and the implementation of assertive signing of their HS.

Finally, it can be concluded the importance of continuing to generate research on the present research topic, as a topic of relevance for mental health professionals, as well as to promote the generation of academic material that will enrich future research.

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