

PEDAGOGICAL PROPOSAL FOR DEVELOPING SOFT SKILLS IN PSYCHOLOGY STUDENTS AT A PRIVATE UNIVERSITY IN LIMA

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ABSTRACT

The main objective of this study is to contribute to the development of soft skills in psychology students at a private university in Lima through a pedagogical proposal based on active learning methodologies. The approach of the study is qualitative based on hermeneutic theory and action research of basic, applied and longitudinal design. The population consisted of 20 students of the eighth cycle of a private university of Lima in Ate. Observation, interview and documentary analysis were used as techniques. The interpretation of the findings showed that students develop some soft skills that are encouraged by teachers through active methodological strategies; however, there is no evidence that there is an association of the skills developed with the necessary skills required to perform effectively in the workplace.

Keywords: Soft Skills, Active Teaching Strategies, Critical Thinking

INTRODUCTION

Throughout history, university institutions have been considered centers for building and disseminating knowledge in all disciplines. In the medieval context in which the first universities emerged, the vision of universality (*Universitas litterarum*) was not seen as a simple accumulation of knowledge, but as the coherent organization of all that knowledge. Later, when the term *literate* became associated with the humanistic field, *scientiarum* was included in order to add the scientific part. In this transition marked by philosophical and theological thought, different models of universities followed one another in which the roles of the student and the teacher changed to adjust to new socio-educational demands (Chuaqui, 2016).

In such a way, it is observed that the role of university institutions is not static, since it responds to the conditions of the historical moment, what cannot be ignored is that since their appearance they have played an invaluable role for society by training those who will play different roles in the structure that sustains a country in the social, economic, cultural, and other areas. Therefore, in contemporary times what is expected is that they contribute to the sustainable human development of nations through the proper articulation of the functions of teaching, research, and linkage with the environment (Arocena & Sutz, 2016).

The demands placed on universities today are therefore different. In the past, the solidity of theoretical knowledge was the indispensable requirement to obtain a job, but the competencies required today are not limited to the presentation of a diploma that accredits a professional degree; at the same time, other competencies associated with the mastery of technological skills are required, as well as the socio-affective dimension that guarantee people to be effective in their work environment. The latter, called soft skills as opposed to hard skills that can be demonstrated more

easily (specialized knowledge, language skills), are combined to promote employability, to the extent that graduates have the professional profile to respond to the needs of the environment in which they operate (Gómez, 2019).

In this regard, the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO, 2017) stresses that in order to align what is demanded in the labor field and university education, what is taught must be relevant and pertinent, as these are key characteristics for advancing towards growth. In addition, Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) 8 of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), looking forward to the year 2030, recognizes that the financial crisis has affected workers, increasing the level of poverty. Therefore, member countries are urged to promote economic development within a framework of inclusion and sustainability that is conducive to the generation of productive employment and the possibility for each person to achieve decent work that allows them to live in dignity (UNESCO, 2015).

Reaching that goal in the next decade demands from a university graduate the mastery of soft skills such as: knowing how to build positive interpersonal relationships in the workplace, evidencing communication skills, coordination, working under pressure and problem-solving skills (Umatqul, 2020).

These are the guidelines that guide employability not only in the global business environment, but also in other fields such as care and education, given that for a student to acquire such competencies; their teachers must also demonstrate them in everyday practice (Tang, 2018). However, theoretical and field studies (Tito & Serrano, 2016) reveal the gap between the professional profile of university graduates and the competencies for the 21st century that employers aspire to, this is a consequence of the lack of training spaces in which students appropriate these skills through the use of relevant methodological strategies and the implementation of these in real contexts. As Guerra-Báez (2019) exposes, the predominant type of evaluation in universities marked by the classic positivist paradigm focuses on the measurement of knowledge, neglecting the soft skills that are essential not only for employment, but also for the exercise of citizenship.

Other research conducted in Latin American countries reveals the weaknesses found in teacher training and the application of soft skills. From a study carried out in Chilean schools, Oyarzo, Piffaut, Ulloa & Vejar (2019) express that teachers are aware of the relevance of training soft skills from the first educational levels. However, incongruities between the theoretical domain and practice are evident; because these competencies are not included in the planning and are diluted among cognitive contents, because they have a greater value within the daily teaching practice.

It is observed that didactic and methodological strategies of traditional type little oriented to innovation and the formation of the so-called skills to perform in life established by a supranational body such as the World Health Organization (WHO) prevail (Guerra-Báez, 2019), among which soft skills are included, hence being at the forefront requires training and permanent updating of the teacher in terms of didactic strategies and the vision of what happens in their environment to thus know the characteristics of their students and where they should be projected at the end of their professional training.

An important element to highlight is that, according to the findings of the company Udemy (2020) in different countries in Asia, America and Europe between 77% and 94% of workers surveyed in India, Brazil, Mexico, United States, Spain, France and Mexico consider that there are gaps in terms of training. This skills gap affects the performance of their work. In the case of Peru, the situation is worrying, the results of the Survey of Skills to Work (ENHAT) 2017-2018: Causes and consequences of the skills gap in Peru conducted by Novella, Alvarado, Rosas & González-Velosa (2019) specialists working at the Inter-American Development Bank (IDB) shows how a large percentage of companies (95%) indicate that part of their staff does not demonstrate the expected competencies for their position in view of the fact that they do not possess certain

socioemotional skill, among which are: (a) teamwork, (b) responsibility, (c) leadership, (d) communication skills, (e) kindness, (f) problem solving skills, (g) creative thinking (h) emotional balance, (i) critical thinking, among others. At the time of selecting a person to fill a vacancy these skills also become an obstacle because the applicants do not possess them. All this affects the performance of the company within its sector and restricts its growth possibilities.

In this new era, the Ministry of Education of Peru (MINEDU, 2016) has implemented a transversal strategy for the development of soft skills in training centers. However, in this new transition it has not provided adequate guidance and direction for students to acquire the soft skills they need to advance in their careers and as future professionals in the service of society. It is now urgent for citizens to achieve the development of soft skills, especially since facing the challenges that arise daily requires integration, dialogue and empathy to achieve social harmony.

Chakrabort's study (2019) conducted on business students belonging to generation Z, points out the importance of the development of soft skills before technical skills. The new generation must respond to the needs that education could not meet in the last century. Therefore, they need to develop skills that allow them to enhance critical thinking, professional independence, work style, work ethic and flexibility.

However, in the new post-Covid-19 pandemic scenario, possessing soft skills acquires a greater connotation. According to Aguerrevere, et al., (2020); the appearance of the coronavirus has made evident the preeminence of socioemotional skills (empathy, self-regulation & resilience) to manage social distancing, as well as to face the economic recession and the subsequent process of recovery of economic activity that is expected in the medium and long term. To do this, employees and entrepreneurs will need to make adaptations and upgrades for the return to the world of face-to-face work.

Another aspect to consider is that, according to the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC) in a joint work carried out with the International Labour Organization (ILO) (2020), a contraction of the economy of -5.3% is projected for this year, which will affect the labor field, with an estimate of more than 11 million unemployed. This implies greater limitations for new graduates to access the labor field, because as the need for employment increases and the labor supply decreases, employers will be more rigorous in choosing a person to fill a vacancy and those who meet the largest number of skills will be in an advantageous situation with respect to those who do not have them.

Aguilar (2020) points out that, in Peru, this is a palpable reality that cannot be ignored because in the midst of this socioeconomic situation, the main purpose of companies is to maintain their operations and profitability. In addition to the skills for virtual work, he considers that priority will be given to the creative part, as well as flexibility, intrinsic motivation, communication skills, self-leadership, and the ability to deal with unfamiliar situations without frustration.

Therefore, the demand for soft skills constitutes a permanent challenge that Peruvian university institutions must face, given that it implies modifications at the curricular level, adapting to new times and promoting transformations in the conceptions of teaching restricted, in many cases, only to pondering the cognitive domain. Rodríguez (2020), as a result of the study carried out in a private university in Peru, concludes that soft skills represent the basis of professional success due to the high correlation between them, which is why they should be incorporated as a decisive element when hiring teaching staff to ensure that students acquire these competencies during their academic training, especially in the exercise of critical thinking through the formulation of questions, whose response leads them to strengthen their argumentative capacity.

In addition, higher education is one of the pillars for change and transformation of societies, to promote knowledge, intellectual, ethical, moral and coexistence with others; as a basis for the transition between academia and work. These activities pertain to both students and teachers. Therefore, teachers should receive professional and emotional training. This last aspect has been acquired over the years with the development of social, emotional or transversal skills as social

competence of communication and effective interaction with others (Vidal, 2008). It should be noted that these educational skills are based on the theory of emotional intelligence of Goleman (1998) and the idea of inclusive education proposed by Mayer & Salovey (1997); which are based on the combination of intellectual and emotional to achieve the integral development of students.

With regard to the training of students, teachers and public policy planners have a preponderant role to play in preventing skills from becoming obsolete, as well as in the permanent updating and development of these skills, according to what is requested in the current and future work environment. In particular, hard and soft skills must be evaluated at the end of each university course to determine whether the profiles being trained meet the expectations of companies and whether what has been learned will be useful in the workplace. The aim is to create synergistic relationships between the education system and employers to improve the training of graduates (Ghislieri et al., 2018).

The relationship between universities and productive organizations is undeniable because it is in these where graduates will seek opportunities for labor insertion and obtaining their first job, hence they are raised as a social requirement that universities fulfill the mission of being guarantors of scientific and technological progress of the country, by providing the tools for young Peruvians to be innovative in their field of work and can overcome the uncertainties of the contemporary world (Loayza, 2018).

Therefore, interpersonal soft skills are necessary to access the formal labor market, as well as to favor the development of successful enterprises in a society where the informal economy is very high. In this regard, the National Education Project (National Education Council, 2020), in accordance with the learning actions to achieve the SDGs (UNESCO, 2017), aims to overcome visions of education out of step with reality that generate certifications with zero social value because they are far from the needs that people currently demand, among which are those related to employability.

The competences relating to employability are common to all graduates. However, the study is focused in delving into those required by a specialist in psychology, a scientific discipline whose purpose is to improve people's mental health, thus contributing to an increase in their quality of life and socio-affective well-being (Cepeda, 2014). Therefore, they must demonstrate both personal and professional competencies that make them suitable to occupy a job in any of the areas of their competence.

In attention to these areas of performance, from his initial training, the psychologist should be trained in soft skills for being a profession, eminently, of help in which he acts as a guide for the resolution of the different problems presented by the patient, either in work, educational or clinical care contexts. According to González, et al., (2014) the competences of the career are perceived in the cognitive, procedural and attitudinal dimension which serve as a basis in the process aimed at evaluating, diagnosing and finally reaching the intervention, according to the context in which they act. Their self-perception as professionals is focused on the achievement of the well-being of others, as revealed by the study that the authors conducted with two hundred (200) Chilean psychologists.

However, their profession does not make them immune to situations of work stress, the results of Simionato & Simpson (2018) point out a high-risk factor among psychologists that increases the possibility of suffering stressful situations and emotional exhaustion, especially in those young people who are novices in professional performance and still do not possess sufficient confidence in their competencies, frustration management for not being able to meet their expectations. In addition, the data express the existing links between personal traits and burnout among them: being perfectionist, introversion (shyness), communication problems with colleagues, difficulties to establish separation between the situations experienced by the patients and one's own life. Socially, the absence of affective ties of support is also a risk factor.

In addition to designing standardized instruments to measure burnout and its possible link to depression, Simionato & Simpson (2018) recommend the development of training activities that

facilitate self-awareness and the ability of psychotherapists to reflect on their strengths, limitations and maximum workload capacity, in order to achieve an adjustment between their personality, circumstances and professional demands. It is important to include in training program strategies for developing adaptive skills, including positive reinterpretation and reflection on satisfactory work experiences, a sense of humor, and strategies for seeking support when required.

As can be seen in what is stated by the authors, possessing soft skills (adaptability, effective communication, emotional intelligence) constitute a protection mechanism so that the psychologist can successfully and with greater determination face the situations involved in his or her professional practice. In this sense, Rodríguez & Suárez (2012), when analyzing Colombian psychology students, found that 17% of the sample manifested difficulties in expressing their emotions, inadequate management and little control, which demonstrates the importance of achieving a balance between soft and hard competencies. The soft competencies facilitate the insertion of graduates as pedagogues, psychologists and psychopedagogues in the field of work, highlighting teamwork as an essential skill for the ideal performance in the psycho-educational field. Likewise, problem solving is a competence that requires further development during higher studies because it is highly valued when applying for employment (Pineda-Herrero et al., 2018).

In Peru, the scopes of attention of the psychologist are nine according to the Regulation that regulates this profession (Law N° 28369) in its article 8 and include the labor, political, social, educational, sociocommunitarian, economy, health, sport and juridical. The professional performance of the psychologist in each of them demands a great sense of commitment, responsibility and academic training to comply with the guidelines established in the various regulations governing the subject in the country.

In relation to the mastery of soft skills, Huaman & Quispe (2019) found that the level of soft skills in two hundred and fifty-six (256) psychology graduates belonging to different institutions in Arequipa is at a medium level, which indicates that it is relevant to take action to transform what happens, currently, with the mastery of soft skills in graduates of that specialty.

In attention to the above, it is pertinent to delve into how soft skills can be developed in aspiring psychologists enrolled in a private university located in the city of Lima in view of the fact that students in the last cycles show little evidence of them, which is evident when intervening in classes and defending their points of view, little exercise of leadership to undertake projects related to their specialty, inability to show empathy for others, bringing as a consequence obstacles to the development of collaborative work that the subjects demand. This is a problem that worsens in the stage prior to the start of pre-professional practices, in which they must demonstrate theoretical knowledge and soft skills to successfully face the activities of their career in real contexts. Undoubtedly, in the professional practice of the psychologist converges what they have learned in the university institution and the needs of the field of work. It is the beginning of the journey to consolidate what will be their performance in the future, when they receive the diploma that accredits them to practice this career (Echeverri-Gallo, 2018).

It is appropriate to mention that although the curriculum of the private university where the research was conducted is organized with a view to consolidate the knowledge and skills to obtain employment, throughout the cycles, within the core courses, generally of theoretical and practical type, the methodological strategies of teachers are inadequate because they focus on weighting the knowledge of memoristic and theoretical type. This undoubtedly does not favor the profile of the graduate for today's world, especially for those who are going to work as psychologists in different types of organizations, such as companies of various commercial branches, Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs), child or elderly care centers, hospitals, educational institutions, centers for personal growth, among others.

This study corresponds to the purposes of the research line Retention, Learning and Quality of Education because it aims to achieve a positive change during the academic training of future

psychologists and thus improve the quality indicators of Peruvian education from the graduation of professionals with the soft skills required by the labor field.

OBJECTIVES

General Objective

Contribute to the development of soft skills in psychology students in a private university in Lima through a pedagogical proposal based on active learning methodologies.

Specific Objectives

- To sustain the theoretical and epistemological aspects that explains the soft skills for their development in psychology students in a private university in Lima.
- To know the current state of soft skills in psychology students in a private university in Lima.
- To establish the methodological, epistemological, didactic and practical criteria that supports the pedagogical proposal to develop soft skills in psychology students in a private university in Lima.
- To validate the scientific suitability of the pedagogical proposal for the development of soft skills in psychology students in a private university in Lima.
- To apply the pedagogical proposal for the development of soft skills in psychology students in a private university in Lima.
- To verify the impact or improvement of soft skills after having applied the pedagogical proposal in psychology students in a private university in Lima.

METHODOLOGY

Theoretical Methods

Theoretical methods present principles and generalizations that will later be contrasted with the reality under study (Sánchez et al., 2018). There are different classifications based on the so-called historical-logical approach.

Historical-logical Method

It is based on previous knowledge that has been built over time and that constitutes background. The historical method uses secondary or tertiary sources in the processes of reconstruction and explanation of the past (Sánchez et al., 2018). Likewise, the logical sense is appreciated to the extent that these historical events impacted a certain phenomenon. Therefore, for the purposes of this study, different documents were considered (articles, reports, books) that account for how the demands of organizations have been modified in the historical course as a result of globalization, the progress caused by Information And Communication Technologies (ICT). This has caused soft skills to occupy a predominant place to gain access to employment.

Inductive-Deductive Method

It is a method that starts from specific reasoning or propositions (inductive process) from which the researcher can establish general conclusions (deductive process) through the observation of the phenomenon under study, which implies that it requires an empirical basis. According to

Rodríguez, et al., (2017) it was used for the establishment of the final conclusions, as well as recommendations, in view of the fact that the research focused on a particular case (sample of a section of students enrolled in the psychology career in an institution of higher education in Lima) and from there some conclusions were extrapolated with respect to what happens with the formation of soft skills of all psychology students in that institution.

Empirical Methods

They are based on experience and on the observational processes of phenomena in reality through the use of the senses. They are used, initially, in the identification of the problem and allow the collection of different data and information through the verification carried out in practice (Rodríguez & Pérez, 2017). In this project, the inductive-deductive survey method was used, as well as the modeling method.

The Survey

The use of the survey as a method involves a process that starts with the selection of the sample elements, the design of the questionnaire according to the typology established for the questions, the application and the data coding process, using different tools to proceed to its analysis and presentation of results (López-Roldán & Fachelli, 2015).

In correspondence with these approaches, the instrument designed for this study was a questionnaire, understood as a series of questions that the researcher defines in advance to be applied to the participants of the study. The aim is to obtain information on specific variables that may include knowledge, beliefs, points of view and ideas, among others. Before consolidating a definitive instrument, it is necessary to take into account the theoretical foundation related to the research topic, the characteristics of the participants, forms of expression, cultural level, choice of questions according to the research objectives, indicators, as well as the previous review through expert judgment to determine the validity and correspondence with the variable subject to measurement (Canales, 2006).

For the purposes of this research, the characteristics of the sample of twenty (20) students, level of education, culture and adequacy of the questions were considered in order to respond to objective 1 of this study, which is to know the current state of soft skills in the participants of the study. Prior to its application, this instrument was subjected to a validation process through which specialists gave their opinion (expert judgment) to establish the relevance of the items with the purposes of the study. The survey method was also used to validate the proposal and to test its effectiveness.

Modelling Method

Rodríguez & Pérez (2017) following Valle, argue that this method allows access to new knowledge from the construction of a guiding model to investigate reality. It starts with the definition of an objective that covers, in an abstract way, the essential aspects of the object of study and from there it is concretized through its application in a real context. This makes it possible to appreciate the cyclical interaction between theory and practice. It also serves to assess the level of objectivity of the knowledge built up during the process. This method served as the basis for the development, application and evaluation of the proposal aimed at generating a pedagogical proposal for the development of soft skills in the participants of the study.

Techniques and Instruments

Arias (2006) define the data collection techniques as the technique used in the course of research to obtain information about the research objectives. Data collection techniques are measurement procedures through which it is possible to collect data, *i.e.*, valid and reliable information; therefore, it is scientifically useful on the objects of study in order to solve the research question posed.

For the data collection, the instruments used were the interview and observation. In this regard, Hernández, et al., (2014) point out that the interview can be defined as a meeting to discuss and exchange information between an individual (the interviewer) and another (the interviewee) or others (interviewees). In the interview, through questions and answers, communication and the joint elaboration of meanings in relation to an issue or problem is established. Hence, it is based on the ability of the person who conducts the interview to guide the dialogue towards the aspects that are of interest to him/her and to encourage deep answers for this purpose; open questions should be formulated to deepen the answers, thus achieving valid information. Regarding observation, Campos & Lule (2012) state that it is the most simplified and logical way to visually and verifiably record what happened in the real world, either to detail it, study it or explain it from a scientific approach.

Population and Sample

A convenience sample was used for this research because this type of sampling is characterized by a voluntary and deliberate effort to find "representative" samples by including apparently typical groups in the sample. It is used so that the researcher directly and intentionally chooses subjects from the population. The most usual case of this procedure is to use as a sample the people to whom one has easy access. In this regard, Otzen & Manterola (2017) state that non-probabilistic convenience sampling is appropriate because it allows choosing certain accessible cases that can be included in the study. This is based on the convenient accessibility and proximity of the people for the researcher. These are samples made up of captive informants or volunteers. The selection is here the least rigorous; it is not based on any strategic consideration nor is it governed by any theoretical purpose coming from the previous knowledge about the phenomenon, but it is fundamentally due to the accessibility of the units, the ease, speed and low cost to reach them (Martínez, 2012).

The participants of this study were the students of a section of the eighth cycle of psychology of a private university of Lima in Ate, to whom the semi-structured interview was applied in the academic environment.

RESULTS

The following are the findings found as a result of the application of the data collection techniques and instruments and according to the proposed objectives.

NO.	Questions	Analysis of responses
1	In what ways are social-emotional skills developed during class sections in psychology majors?	The vast majority of students agree that academic activities allow their active participation and can interact directly by showing their emotions, which facilitates their integration with the environment. In addition, they agree that the soft skills allow them to develop socioemotional and affective skills to maintain good

		interpersonal relationships and serve to achieve success in life
2	What social skills are developed during psychology classes?	Almost everyone agrees that communication; problem solving, empathy and decision-making skills are developed.
3	What soft skills are commonly taken in class and reinforced daily?	Most of the students interviewed agreed that in class they have the opportunity to reinforce the following soft skills: adaptation, critical thinking, teamwork, problem solving, and communication. However, some mentioned that they also have opportunities to develop leadership and none expressed that classes take into account the ability of creative thinking.
4	Do the soft skills contribute to the development of your social-emotional skills?	All the students surveyed agree that soft skills are necessary for the development of socioemotional skills and that they agree that they are absolutely necessary to be able to face the world and achieve professional success.
5	Does the way they resolve a conflict affect the development of their social-emotional skills, and why?	Most of the students surveyed stated that the way in which conflict is managed and resolved has an impact on the acquisition and development of emotional skills, because it helps them in their autonomy as a person, in their self-regulation of emotions, allowing them to face and resolve conflicts in their lives and in the professional sphere.
6	How does teamwork allow you to resolve conflict?	They all agree that teamwork is the most appropriate strategy for decision making and problem solving; because the different ways in which team members see and understand the problem provides them with several alternative solutions that when analyzed together gives them a broader and more effective perspective of what is happening.
7	Do you think that communication is necessary to be able to resolve a conflict? Why?	Almost all the respondents answered that communication is a necessary tool to be able to understand others and to be able to effectively solve conflicts and problems. In addition, it is essential to reach agreements in teamwork.
8	What strategies do teachers develop in their class sessions for the development of soft skills?	Most of the respondents answered that the strategies used by teachers are active methods and among them they apply debate, teamwork, problem solving, case studies for conflict resolution, expositions and the dialogue method for the analysis of situations in class.

9	When working in a team, what kind of participation do you assume within the group? Explain your performance in the team?	Most of the students say that they participate in group activities in an active and cooperative way in order to promote effective work. However, in a minority, it is observed that their integration is done in an authoritarian way, as they want to direct the group in a unidirectional way instead of maintaining a horizontal position in the team.
10	When a problem has several possible solutions, are you able to choose the most successful one, and give reasons for your answer?	The majority of the students surveyed say that decisions are made in an adequate way when they are made as a group. But there is a small minority that has difficulty in making decisions, noting that the decisions are made individually.
11	Do you feel you have the ability to debate your ideas and make your point clearly, and why?	Almost all the students do not present problems to debate their ideas, this shows that they have developed skills related to critical thinking; in addition to observing that they have the ability to argue, contrast ideas and infer.
Source: Own elaboration		

Discussion of Results

In this section, based on the categories established for the study, the following findings are presented:

With respect to the objective of developing soft skills in psychology students at a private university in Lima. The study corresponds to the study of Tem, et al., (2020) where they show that critical thinking, communication and problem-solving skills are essential for the development of soft skills. At the same time, they are essential in higher education students as these will enable them to compete in the job market in which they will perform. Likewise, Crawford, Weber & Lee's research (2020) points out that soft skills are important in higher education students and teachers should provide them with the necessary guidance to apply them in the work context, since they generate individual and collective growth.

Therefore, when compared with the study by Maturana & Guzmán (2019), the authors' contribution is valued by demonstrating that soft skills (CB) or social and emotional skills that are traditionally excluded by the academy tend to benefit students by providing them with greater possibilities of insertion in the labor field.

Regarding the specific objective 1, related to the theoretical and epistemological aspects that explain the soft skills for their development in psychology students in a private university in Lima. According to Paredes & Ortiz (2019) state that the preparation of students is adequate; however, at the time of entering the labor field it is observed that the competencies acquired by students do not correspond to those they need to face the labor world. In the same order, the research conducted by Abelha, et al., (2020) points out that one of the main problems found is that the competencies obtained by university students are not congruent with the expectations and demands of employers.

Next, in relation to the specific objective 2 related to know the current state of soft skills in psychology students at a university in Lima. It is contrasted with the results derived from the study of Hidalgo (2020) psychology students develop skills related to social representations and are based on three pillars: ideas to compete, practical training and personal success, but they are unaware of the curricular orientation of their training and the work environment. In the same way, Huamán & Quispe (2019) determined that students who obtained degrees as psychologists the level of soft

skills acquired corresponds to the medium level constituting a major limitation when they try to access the labor field.

According to objective 3, to establish the methodological, didactic and practical criteria that support the pedagogical proposal to develop soft skills in psychology students in a private university in Lima. According to Guerra-Báez (2019), in order to effectively develop soft skills in students, universities must promote significant changes in the teaching performance where the being and doing that the labor field of the specialty demands are combined. Expanding on the previous approach, researchers; Zepeda, et al., (2019) demonstrated that, to favor the development of soft skills such as creative thinking, decision making and self-control are effective strategies such as information search, group discussions, field work and consolidation of the final product. Similarly, Mussico (2017) proposes for university academic spaces the use of coaching for the development of soft skills.

In the same order, Ortega, Febles & Estrada (2016) in their study develop a proposal for the development of soft skills to function in today's world, activities based on team learning, construction of mind maps and smart organizations. Menacho's study (2020) points out that the implementation of the travel study and graphic organizers turn out to be a methodological strategy that benefits the development of critical thinking, professional skills and student learning; therefore, it recommends that they should be contemplated in the educational plans of teachers.

For the specific objective 4, validate the scientific suitability of the pedagogical proposal for the development of soft skills in psychology students in a private university in Lima. Tsey, et al., (2018) presented a study on a program applied to facilitate the improvement of soft skills applied to the workplace, in the development of the program the suitability in the improvement of more successful leaders was evidenced. In the same line, Romero (2019) applied a workshop where the improvement of creative thinking and other soft skills was evidenced. In the research, it was possible to determine the effectiveness of the proposal.

In relation to specific objective 5, to apply the pedagogical proposal for the development of soft skills in psychology students at a university in Lima, the study of Tang (2018) is related to demonstrate the pedagogical practice oriented towards the acquisition of soft skills allowed the growth and professional development of students' skills. Similarly, Arias (2017) presents the results of pedagogical experiences where the practices of varied strategies allow the development of soft skills.

Finally, for the specific objective 6, to check the impact or improvement of soft skills after having applied the pedagogical proposal in psychology students at a private university in Lima. The study by Oseda, et al., (2020) applied a test and a post-test to measure the effectiveness of the implemented proposal and their findings indicate the existence of significant changes in the students' mastery of soft skills.

CONCLUSION

Considering the objectives outlined for this research, as well as the categories and subcategories studied, the following conclusions were obtained. Regarding the identification of soft skills in psychology students in the eighth cycle of a private university of Lima in Ate; taking into account communication, adaptability and teamwork; it was obtained as a result; that they communicate adequately and teamwork is developed in a cooperative manner where group members adapt to the situations raised.

In terms of conflict management, decision-making and leadership, the valuation of emotions and self-regulation is evident; the result was that most students can make decisions adequately when they do so in a group. This indicates that some students are not able to resolve conflicts and self-regulate their emotions. When identifying conflict resolution, it was obtained as a result taking

into account the soft skills, an adequate management of situations to solve problems through critical thinking.

With respect to the management of empathy, the presence of empathy is manifested when students show support to their teammates when they have difficulties.

Regarding the methodological strategies, it could be concluded that the teachers know and develop methodologies that encourage soft skills; but even so, it is not evident if there is an association with the labor field of psychology, since the students say they do not know them. And the teaching work is more oriented towards the development of soft skills as such, without specifying exactly the labor needs.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The elaboration of a pedagogical proposal is suggested based on active learning methodologies that allow the development of the necessary soft competences, so that the students that graduate from the psychology career can be inserted in the labor field in an effective way.

It is suggested that the teachers who teach in the psychology career carry out an exhaustive revision of the curricular plan of the career in order to adapt the contents and strategies to the achievement of soft competences that are in correspondence with the demands of the labor field in these times.

It is suggested to promote activities where students can visualize specific cases and situations that allow the development of creative thinking.

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