



*Translated from the original in Spanish*

## **Social skills in the degree in Pedagogy-Psychology for work in Special Education**

### **Habilidades sociales en el licenciado en Pedagogía- Psicología para el trabajo en la Educación Especial**

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*The* performance of the professional education is conditioned by the particularities acquired by the communicative process in which it interacts. The importance of this process in the pedagogical context is manifested in criteria that attribute to pedagogical communication the possibility of favoring the interpersonal relationships of the

subjects that participate in that field (Reinoso, Rodríguez and Linares, 2008). Therefore, the proper use of communication facilitates the achievement of the social function assigned to the educator.

The main element of the complexity of the educational context is manifested, among other aspects, in that the subjects that integrate it face different problems related to their profession. Among them is the Bachelor of Pedagogy-Psychology. This professional, in compliance with his object of work, requires in a significant way to establish social interactions with the different human groups that integrate the spheres in which he acts.

The Bachelor of Pedagogy-Psychology must handle, in a balanced way, the situations in which he interacts with the biopsychosocial environment in which he works (Patrício, Maia and Bezerra, 2015). So to successfully develop their functions, it requires mastery of different professional skills, including social skills.

The mastery of these skills becomes a necessity in view of the fact that the communicative process constitutes an essential tool for the development of the professional functions of the psychopedagogue. Consequently, during his performance this professional must be able to exert influence on the subjects with whom he interacts, which translates into the fulfillment of his functions. In this process he expresses feelings, opinions, needs, but, at the same time, he must be able to accept that position in the interlocutors.

The psychopedagogue, must contribute to solve problems related to the psychological and pedagogical diagnosis integral in the different contexts of professional performance, in function of

the attention to the diversity, as well as the educational orientation and the preventive work to favor the individual, group and cooperative in the subjects that integrate their spheres of action.

For the MES (2016), as spheres of action of the Bachelor of Pedagogy-Psychology, "[...] are all the subsystems of the National Education System, including Special Education and Diagnostic and Orientation Centers" (p. 4).

In the same way they constitute professional problems:

- The psychopedagogical diagnosis based on the attention to diversity in the different contexts of professional performance, with emphasis on the prevention of the different situations that derive from individual and group differences that allow an increasingly inclusive educational practice.
- The educational orientation and preventive work in the different contexts of action to favor the stimulation of individual, group and cooperative work in professional performance and personal resources to achieve it. (MONTH, 2016, p. 4)

The resolution of such professional problems in the aforementioned areas requires the development of serious interdisciplinary and multifactorial work in which you will have to assert your social skills.

Defining what is meant by social skills remains controversial, while there is no unanimity among all specialists in the scientific community. Literature, when referring to the subject, does so in terms of: social skills, socially skilled behavior,

social interaction skills, assertiveness, adaptive behavior, among others.

Whatever the definition, everyone agrees on the importance of the context in which it should occur, indicating that social skills should be studied in a given cultural framework. This has a decisive influence on the characteristics of communication patterns. As a result, the use of social skills, during the communication process, invariably depends on the context in which that communication takes place, which gives this ability a contextual character.

Part of the actions developed by the psychopedagogue is related to working with children and adolescents with Special Educational Needs (NEE), in which they participate jointly with different professionals and areas (Lorente and Sales, 2017). In addition, his work extends to family orientation and advice and advice to diagnostic centers and other educators who carry out and direct the educational process in these cases, in which it will be necessary to show the mastery of various social skills in function of achieving quality performance during their professional performance (González, Hernández and Martin, 2018).

There are various classifications of social skills that the Bachelor of Pedagogy-Psychology needs to offer a quality service. However, it is interesting the systematization carried out by Tortosa (2018), on the proposals of a group of specialists in the subject, among them are:

- Teamwork,
- active listening,
- empathy
- assertiveness,
- the negotiation,
- Emotional self-control

In view of the contextual nature of social skills when working with children and adolescents with SEN, the multifactorial and interdisciplinary nature that presupposes *teamwork* with other professionals must be taken into account in the first instance. This ability becomes necessary from the moment of the planning of the action with the subject, the diagnostic work and the therapeutic projection. In this way, the integration of the knowledge and skills of each professional according to the common objective contributes to the effectiveness of learning.

On the other hand, the diagnostic work of the different subjects that integrate these spheres of action requires the implementation of skills such as *active listening and empathy*. During application of the methods and techniques of psychological exploration professional Pedagogy-Psychology should be able to decode the information provided by the subject and at the same time must capture the information expressed by the subject and at the same time to catch the information expressed by means of the corporal language, physiological indicators, tone and the inflections of the voice. The psychopedagogue must also be able to understand the points of view, emotional experiences and positions assumed by the explored subject.

The *assertiveness* and social skills is necessary for the performance of this professional in the context of special education for the development of work with families and educators of children and adolescents with special educational needs. This professional must be trained to demand respect for their positions and professional criteria in correspondence with the domain of their fields of action. However, you should also be able to understand that the subjects with whom you interact can assume positions

divergent from yours, especially when there may be resistance in the family to accept that their children have some kind of special educational need, when it refers to a deficit.

For its part, *negotiation* constitutes another necessary social skill in the context of Special Education. The psychopedagogue must know how to negotiate with the families so that they fulfill the activities planned for the development of their children. You must negotiate with the professionals with whom you interact regarding the activities to be carried out based on the education of the subjects with special educational needs, and even, you must learn to negotiate with children and adolescents with SEN.

Another unavoidable social ability for the work of the psychopedagogue or in the context of Special Education is *emotional self-control*. In the performance of their functions, these professionals face situations in which experiences and emotional reactions are manifested, both in the subjects with which they interact, as in themselves. In this sense, he must be able to regulate his emotional reactions during the communicative act in order to achieve the objective pursued by social interaction.

Social skills are a necessity in the Bachelor of Pedagogy-Psychology. These psychological formations guarantee, to a large extent, adequate professional performance in their different spheres of action. Despite this, its execution depends, in a significant way, on the contextual characteristics of each sphere. This conditions the differentiated treatment that social skills require when working with children and adolescents with SEN, with their family and the rest of the educators who carry out and direct this educational process.

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