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PREPRINT: El Desarrollo de Habilidades Sociales en la Educación Superior ante el reto de formar educadores

PREPRINT: The Development of Social Skills in Higher Education facing the challenge of train educators

PREPRINT: O Desenvolvimento das Competências Sociais no Ensino Superior face ao desafio da formação de educadores

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Resumen: Introducción. El desarrollo de las habilidades sociales es un proceso importante en el ámbito educativo dado que contribuye en la consolidación de relaciones positivas y estables. El presente estudio aborda experiencias en el aula con estudiantes que se forman como educadores en las carreras de Psicopedagogía y Educación Inicial. Objetivo: Tiene como objetivo presentar los

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resultados obtenidos profundizando en el desarrollo de las habilidades sociales como eje transversal en la formación de docentes en los escenarios que propician tres asignaturas de la formación investigativa. Se destaca la importancia de comprender que toda práctica educativa modela al ser humano y lo prepara para crecer en lo personal y social. **Metodología.** Como parte de la metodología se recoge información de estudiantes con edades entre 18 a 25 años durante el semestre 2019-A, con empleo del enfoque cualitativo, alcance descriptivo y de campo. Se realizaron observaciones participantes, que ofrecieron información sobre los resultados obtenidos en el desarrollo de las habilidades sociales de los estudiantes a partir de las estrategias áulicas aplicadas, se incluyen aportes de los autores consultados y reflexiones generadas en el proceso investigativo. **Resultados.** Los resultados reflejan cuáles habilidades sociales lograron un mayor desarrollo y de qué manera el docente, puede fortalecer acciones con proyección social que orienten a consolidar las habilidades que inciden en la formación del profesional en la sociedad. **Conclusiones.** Las conclusiones expresan que las habilidades sociales forman parte de la conciencia social para afrontar los desafíos del contexto en el ámbito de actuación profesional.

Palabras clave: Proceso de interacción educativa, formación del personal docente, comportamiento social.

Abstract: Introduction. The development of social skills is an important process in the educational field since it contributes to the consolidation of positive and stable relationships. This study addresses experiences in the classroom with students who are trained as educators in the careers of Psychopedagogy and Initial Educatio. **Objective.** Its objective is to present the results obtained by deepening the development of social skills as a transversal axis in the training of teachers in the scenarios that promote three subjects of investigative training. The importance of

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understanding that all educational practice models the human being and prepares him to grow personally and socially is highlighted. **Methodology.** As part of methodology, information is collected from students aged 18 to 25 years during the 2019-A semester, using the qualitative approach, descriptive scope and field research methods. Participant observations were made, which offered information on the results obtained in the development of the students' social skills from the applied classroom strategies, contributions from the consulted authors and reflections generated in the research process are included. **Results.** The results reflect which social skills achieved greater development and in what way the teacher can strengthen actions with social projection that guide the consolidation of the skills that influence the training of the professional in society. **Conclusions.** The conclusions express that social skills are part of social awareness to face the challenges of the context in the field of professional performance.

Keywords: Educational interaction process, educational personnel training, social behavior.

Resumo: Introdução. O desenvolvimento de habilidades sociais é um processo importante no campo educacional, pois contribui para a consolidação de relações positivas e estáveis. O presente estudo aborda experiências em sala de aula com alunos que se formam como educadores nas carreiras da Psicopedagogia e da Educação Inicial. **Objetivo.** Tem como objetivo apresentar os resultados obtidos pelo aprofundamento do desenvolvimento de habilidades sociais como eixo transversal na formação de professores nos cenários que promovem três disciplinas de treinamento investigativo. Destacase a importância de compreender que toda prática educativa modela o ser humano e o prepara para crescer pessoal e socialmente. **Metodologia.** Como parte da metodologia, são coletadas informações de alunos de 18 a 25 anos durante o semestre 2019-A, por meio da abordagem qualitativa, de abrangência descritiva e de campo. Foram realizadas observações

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participantes, as quais ofereceram informações sobre os resultados obtidos no desenvolvimento das habilidades sociais dos alunos a partir das estratégias aplicadas em sala de aula, contribuições dos autores consultados e reflexões geradas no processo de pesquisa estão incluídas. **Resultados.** Os resultados refletem quais habilidades sociais alcançaram maior desenvolvimento e de que forma o professor pode fortalecer ações com projeção social que norteiam a consolidação das competências que influenciam a formação do profissional na sociedade. **Conclusões.** As conclusões expressam que as habilidades sociais fazem parte da consciência social para enfrentar os desafios do contexto no campo da atuação profissional.

Palavras-chave: Processo de interação educacional, treinamento de profesores, comportamento social.

Introduction

The report of the International Commission on Education for the 21st Century to UNESCO entitled “Education contains a treasure” (Delors, 1996) expresses the need to: “Learn to live together by developing the understanding of the other one and the perception of interdependence forms-perform common projects and prepare to deal with conflicts-respecting the values of pluralism, mutual understanding and peace"(p.9).

This idea supports the emphasis with which it is assumed that teachers should reflect on the challenges demanded by education in general and higher education in particular. It is required to work on levels of social competences and innovation from the cognitive, linked to values such as solidarity, humanism and respect, among others.

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Social skills are a set of learned and acquired behaviors that people demonstrate in their interrelation with others. At present, it is demanded that they are increasingly developed, especially in the training of educators, to realize a pedagogical process that meets the goals of education. In its efforts to achieve these objectives, the United Nations Educational and Scientific Organization UNESCO (2016), poses one of the challenges for 2030, the need to consider increasing the number of young people and adults with relevant skills, including social ones. In addition, it includes in their global perspectives, relating well, working in teams and resolving conflicts.

The United Nations Children's Fund UNICEF (2017) points out that social skills are abilities that lead human beings to communicate effectively, solve problems and express their feelings, thoughts and actions correctly, in order to guarantee relationships stable and durable. In accordance with the above, the Ministry of Education of Ecuador MINEDUC (2018), committed to the need to ensure quality and warmth education, states that students must have tools for the development of skills, and that the actions of Teachers in the classroom and other learning environments should aim to achieve the integral development that human beings deserve.

Higher education has the mission of training professionals who are highly qualified for their job performance. Given this enormous responsibility, the development of social skills in students, future graduates, is an urgent need and requires a pedagogical dialogic action, which promotes that teachers, in their educational work, consider the need to work in relation to behavior and that lead the human being to relearn activities that contribute to the common good. In light of the above, Bravo & Herrera (2011) point out that the goal of education is to promote that students have in their school environment all spaces that foster interpersonal competence and the development of social skills through the curriculum. All this

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shows the value of the teacher and with it the work of the entire educational community for the achievement of a coexistence in harmony where a positive communication takes place, which contributes to the development of successful social skills.

This topic has been studied by several authors in recent years, which demonstrates its topicality and relevance as an object of research. In the field of higher education, there are the works of Flores, García, Calsina & Yapuchura (2016) who have studied the relationship of social skills and interpersonal communication among university students; Holst, Galicia, Gómez & Degante (2017) who studied social skills and their differences in this context. For their part, Huambachano & Huaire (2018), have focused on how to develop social skills in university contexts, among other authors.

Morales and Benites (2013) refer to social skills as those skills that allow promoting the adoption of positive behaviors necessary for people to control and direct their lives. In this regard, Tapia & Cubo (2017) report that, social skills are those verbal and nonverbal behaviors, observable at different times that interact with another person and privilege the context of the teacher in relation to knowing how to live with students.

For this reason, it should be borne in mind that social skills are learned and promote openness to interact with others and achieve new goals (Reyes, 2016). In this way, each person expresses their feelings in an interpersonal context that can become complex (Javier, Santa, Norabuena & Jara, 2019). Social skills should be conceived for daily work, as Jordán and Codana (2019) point out, who suggest a more humanistic conception of education and they consider the awareness of the educational community convenient to optimize social relationships.

In line with the above, Holst, Galicia, Gómez & Degante (2017) point out that:

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"The importance of the promotion of social skills in university students is due to the fact that social interaction is the basis of their professional performance" (p.22). This allows solid foundations to be established for competencies of life and as active agents committed to harmonious coexistence. Huambachano & Huaire (2018) consider that the university must: "guarantee the training of full professionals and therefore, research, at the level of personal development of students, is a starting point to strengthen its training program" (p.125).

In accordance with the above, Sirvent & Rigal (2012) consider that social skills represent a vertebral path that enables the growth of the capacities of critical and reflective thinking to strengthen social participation. Flores, García, Calsina and Yapuchura (2016), in this line, refer that: "Throughout his life, man lives a continuous process of development and learning in which there is a constant interaction between the genetic and his social environment" (p.7).

In correspondence with this principle, the authors consider that the teacher, awaring of his aulic work, tries to make his pedagogical exercise with future professionals a source of inspiration and motivation in human principles and values. It favors in this sense to analyze what Báez, Zurita, Martínez & Zagalaz (2016) point out, they express that teachers: "become aware of the habits that students have, explaining in planning the attitudes that are intended that acquire and selecting those appropriate teaching activities and strategies to favor attitudinal development" (p. 203).

Tapia & Cubo (2017) consider that the socio-emotional dimension and the development of social skills, must be worked from the initial formation as the backbone of the integral formation and in this way positively influence the social and emotional development of his students. (García & Méndez, 2017) emphasize that the educational community must promote school coexistence at all times.

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A student who relates assertively to his teacher, is able to communicate empathically what he learned to harmonize his being with the knowledge acquired and what he discovered of his humanity, influencing this in the development of his social skills.

Social skills in teacher training

Teaching is a fundamental pillar to link the learning of each student with their life history, so today it demands a profound transformation to respond to the complexity of the role that social relationships play in the teaching task. In line with the afore mentioned, Rodríguez & Ruiz (2019) point out that "positive relationships, good communication and closeness between teachers and students encourage increased motivation and trust between both parties" (p.234).

It is also worth mentioning that, in humanity and throughout history, there have been conflicts among men to relate adequately; therefore, the teacher must be prepared for a greater understanding and sensitivity towards the educational being who he is forming, so that it develops as a bio-psycho-social and spiritual being (Sánchez and Pérez, 2017), this also implies the emotional.

For Goleman (2008) in the first years of primary education, the teacher must take care to teach his students the management of empathy, respect and value the opinions of others in such a way that the framework of school education allows them to achieve a valuable learning for conflict resolution.

For his part, the teacher of university careers in the field of education, has the enormous responsibility of training trainers so that, with a creative, entrepreneurial attitude, he must always be willing to overcome all obstacles through an unconditional service, this It includes knowing and applying the most appropriate

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strategies to work on social skills in students. Therefore, in the course of the investigation it is considered that the teacher's interaction with the students is a key element so that he can communicate in an affective and effective way during the university teaching-learning process where important conditions for development of social skills are manifested.

In the following table, a series of actions are proposed that can influence both the teacher's social skills and those of the students that he forms for this work. (Table 1)

Table 1. Teacher actions and expected changes in students

Teacher	Expected changes in the student
Communicate rules of coexistence from the first pedagogical meeting for its continuous evaluation process.	Individual and group understanding about elements of their training.
Present arguments about the social competences necessary to carry out the professional activity.	Self-awareness and self-management in the practice of social skills.
Offer support to know the interests of his students.	Congruent rules are assumed, feelings of security are strengthened.
Generate a learning environment full of confidence and security.	Probability for the student to be motivated and reflect on their learning.
Look at the body language of the students.	Indiscipline prevention.

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Promote social responsibility in the pedagogical process in situations of disorder, lowering the tone of the voice, looking directly at the person who causes it.	It attracts the eyes of context, calls for reflection and shows the value of emotional control.
Control his reactions to demand discipline.	He feels respected.
Handling of silence and nuances of voice timbre.	Invite to reflection and search for values.
Educate from the example.	Remember that he is a human being and helps others to overcome.
Favor personal and collective learning.	It promotes social responsibility.

Note: Produced by the authors.

In this order of ideas, the teacher has the privilege of being part of the student's training process, so, being his function to accompany the academic growth of his students, he also assumes the constant challenge of taking on the dare with integrity. Therefore, the social commitment that the teacher has acquired with society, requires observing from the discourse that sustains the pedagogical action as the social prestige that he communicates to his students. Therefore, “the teacher projects his thoughts, his experience and his knowledge radiating from his body his emotions in actions, attitudes and tones. Through it, the teacher excites or bores, approaches or distances, creates trust or distrust” (Casassus, 2017, 92). Thus, the teacher has the possibility of being a trainer of trainers by being a participant in the development of the social skills of his students for an optimal coexistence in the

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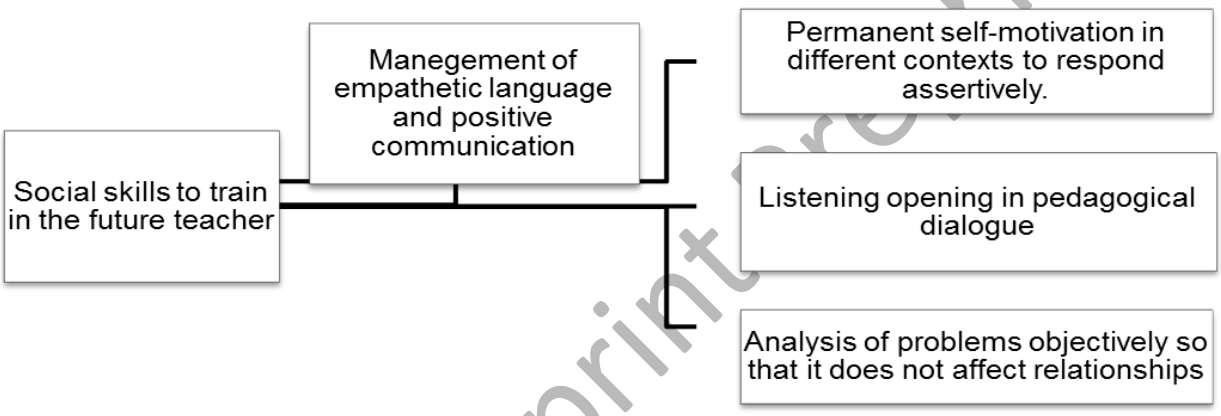
classroom, which will be fed back into his mode of professional performance, motivating and always showing openness to the dialogue. The authors synthesize these ideas:

Figure 1. Social skills to be trained in the future teacher



Note: Produced by the authors

All this analysis shows that the detailed information in the research fails to reflect the wealth collected in the daily practice of the educational task; However, it fosters spaces for reflection against the role that each one plays in each pedagogical scenario. In addition, it is emphasized that to favor the development of social skills, the environment must generate a climate that favors solidarity, cooperation with peers and mutual respect, aspects that are considered relevant for social interactions to flow properly. The teacher must be a keen observer and teach his students to observe.

Guzmán (2018) highlights that: “by observing, the learning process is optimized, working within the framework of a collaborative, reflective and

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strengthened attitude in an action protocol that is consolidated with the quality of teaching performance" (p.7). The subjects of the research area have a fundamental role in the development of social skills in students of education careers. The study of educational reality in real contexts in which this occurs, and the application in their pre-professional practice of systematic observations for subsequent reflection on the context and the observed subjects, also allow a permanent self-assessment of the development of their social skills. Pareja & Pedrosa (2012) report that: "the jump to Science in education is fundamental, and base the actions on theories and rigorous data, on good practices that have been corroborated, on experiences that have ceased to be promising to be a reality" (p.469).

Therefore, educational practice related to research is an important source for the development of social skills. From this perspective, the research carried out, aimed to open spaces for mutual reflection and with it to provide experiences collected by the authors, in optimization of social relations in training of educators in the careers of Initial Education and Psychopedagogy, to characterize social skills that favor the training of educators and at the same time reveal the need to take care that educational practices ensure human and scientific training to respond to a quality dimension in university education.

Therefore, the critical reflection of the teacher's role is a source of inspiration and motivation when the emphasis is placed on the development of social skills in students, future educators, based on the practice itself; where the educator identifies paths of epistemological curiosity and their identification with social needs, which positions the professional in training for personal transformations. By sharing the needs and desires, the world in which one lives is configured (Maturana, 1996).

Methods

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The research that serves as the basis for this article is of a qualitative nature, using data collection techniques, to gather valuable information resulting from the aulic experiences.

It is a descriptive and field investigation. The idea of which it starts, is that the development of social skills in higher education, favors the process of training educators. After reviewing the literature to broaden the knowledge about the constructs studied, we proceeded to specify the work scenario that were the teaching spaces (aulic processes and pre-professional practice) in the subjects Theoretical and normative foundations of the Research that is taught in the first semester, Participatory action research: Life stories, in the second semester and Writing Workshop for Research that is taught in the fifth semester in the Psychopedagogy and Initial Education careers of the Faculty of Education.

The students of both careers, in these semesters, with an age that fluctuates between 18 to 25 years were considered subjects in the investigation. Data collection was carried out through participant observation, which was completed with spaces for dialogue and active listening. Data were collected on the life stories that the students elaborated, this procedure is based on the contributions of Hernández, Fernández and Baptista (2014) who report that in the qualitative research: “the researcher enters into the experiences of the participants and builds knowledge, always aware that he is part of the phenomenon studied” (p. 42).

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Analysis and interpretation of results. Aulic observations.

Derived from the aulic observations to the students, the social skills present in them are specified in the following Table 2.

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Table 2. Synthesis of results that support the analysis of social skills present in students.

Criterion 1	Empathic language results
	Frequently seek greetings with manifestations of joy
	His expressions show motivation to fulfill the instructions.
	He usually recognizes his emotions in front of his classmates.
	Show emotional closeness with others.
Criterion 2	**Opening to dialogue**
	Conscious effort to maintain levels of attention with pedagogical indications.
	Respect and values are presented in a double way teacher-student and student-teacher.
	In peer relationships, cases that are not properly integrated into teamwork are rare.
Criterion 3	**Assertive Answers**
	He is relaxed. Despite personal situations, he worries about being aware of others.
	He shows patience in the development of activities.
	He speaks little and refuses dialogue.
	He stays tuned for the needs of his classmates.
Criterion 4	**Responsibility in action**
	Use silence before acting.
	He commits to work by drawing goals to meet.
	He overcomes the difficulties that arise at a personal and group level.

Note: Produced by the authors with data obtained in semester 2019.

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Results of group work

The classes were achieved as permanent openings to reflect on the results

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of their work and in the process to foster empathic understanding. From the group work we obtained:

- Need to reflect on being in order to contribute to know-how and know how to live together.
- The need to practice knowing how to listen as a basis for dialogue.
- Permanent search for information to be updated.
- Dialogue about sentipensante being of Fals Borda to investigate committed to the reality of the environment.
- Motivation in practices in educational institutions to seek knowledge in action to lead them to empathic action.
- Writing life stories with cases registered in practices they carry out in educational institutions.
- Preparation of a first approach to a life project.
- Recognition that everyone needs to live together and transform themselves to educate in social research

In the example shown in Figure 2, results of a student's life history are presented.

Figure 2. Synthesis of life history. X student

Who I am?

"I am a 19 year old girl, I was born on Oct. 13, 1999, my face is round, I have dark brown eyes, torn; abundant and black eyelashes and long eyebrows, I have a mole under my mouth, symmetrical ears, my hair is almost clubbed, brown. I always have a big smile, an intelligent and competitive mind, I am not conformist, I always long for the best, I am sentimental, but strong at the moment of making decisions, I

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love to study. The dialogue for me is the main thing, I love the color green, I like reading books, rather, I love them, I spend most of my time reading and singing my guitar, the instrument that God gave me apart from my voice. I want to be a spiritual advisor, excellent psychopedagogue and a great professional."

Achieved goals	**Goals to reach**
1. **Graduate from school**	1. Culminate my careers: Psychopedagogy and Languages
2. **To have been first escort**	2. Write a book
3. **Win Gold Medal**	3. Be black belt in taekwondo
4. **Be taekwondo red belt**	4. Sing in an event
5. **Be an assistant in nursing**	5. Learn to play drums
6. **Work as an assistant**	6. Travel to Baños
7. **Preach in the church**	7. Compose a song
8. **Play piano**	8. Get married
9. **Sing in college**	9. Create a foundation for stray animals
10. **Get to know Quito**	

Note: Produced by the authors with data obtained in semester 2019 A

In order to fulfill the proposed objectives, the learning results were reviewed on a weekly basis in order to progressively evaluate the goals and in each week five minutes were allocated to listen to the needs of the group as well as their motivations.

Discussion and Conclusions

Aware that social skills develop from an early age, the results of this research reflect a panorama of continuous reflection, since human beings need to relate to others; and their behavior must be adequate for the situations that are presented to them; however, it should be kept in mind that each response is circumstantial to the realities of the moment, maturity levels, centers of interest, among others.

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Criterion 1, referring to empathic language is one of the most discussed topics by teachers, since there are even days where there is little understanding with their peers, therefore you must be aware of the impact that the environment has on each pedagogical meeting (Luque, 2017) and systematically propitiate a meeting of knowledge with students in the classroom so that they develop learning in being and knowledge.

In criterion 2 that shows openness to dialogue, it is necessary to emphasize that teachers must be good communicators. On this ability, the authors agree with Freire (2005) when he points out that:

> The living word is existential dialogue. Express and elaborate the world in communication and collaboration. Authentic dialogue - recognition of the other and recognition of oneself in the other - includes a decision and commitment to collaborate in the construction of the common world. (p. 26)

That is why, being aware of our social nature, it is crucial to take care of and foster spaces so that the conditions of dialogue are renewed and propitiated.

In criterion 3 regarding assertive responses, students usually respond accordingly to their referents at that time. Therefore, it is necessary to analyze each particular case and increase the dose of understanding in situations in which it is necessary to act at the moment (Flores, García, Calsina and Yapuchura, 2016). These authors argue that the position of recognizing mistakes and facing new situations favor the repertoire of their social skills in general.

In criterion 4 that analyzes the promotion of responsibility, behaviors that demand greater attention were observed, and although there are motivations in the fulfillment of the activities and care in their actions, it is required to continue working for social improvement. In this regard Beltrán, Iñigo & Mata (2014) point out that

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given the enormous responsibility that universities have, beyond building knowledge for humanity, the goal is that students become good professionals.

Based on the established criteria, the authors reflect that:

A teacher must always keep in mind his vocation to serve and for this purpose he is a guide for all the processes that the student must live for his personal and academic growth. Each class is the unique moment he has to make each student reflect on their daily responsibilities and beyond the contents link their present praxis with their environment reality.

A teacher should have the habit of communicating problems and analyzing the possible solutions in a group. To do this, they must learn to listen, observe and be critical-reflective.

Motivation leads to confront fear and despite the lack of maturity in some students, there is the responsibility to build knowledge, but also roads that forge life projects and foster environments of warm coexistence and openness to constructive criticism.

To greater knowledge management, students should be led so that their relationship with peers can be with humility and openness to information exchange.

The cultural attribute must be worked as part of the social gear in which each person must keep in mind that what they do individually, is part of a story.

As a final reflection, the authors consider that every educational practice implies a human formation that is concretized when the teacher works in personal growth and is aware of his responsibility with needs of the environment so that, given

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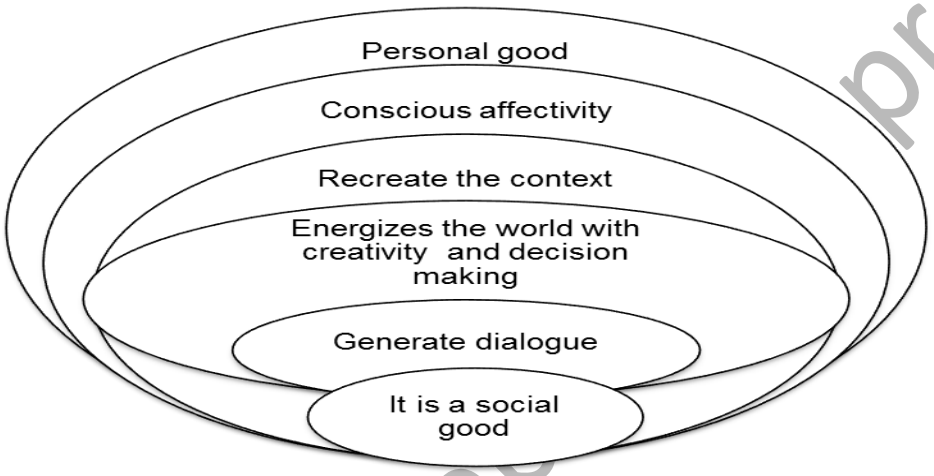
this proven reality, his commitment to dialogue with their own humanity is renewed.

Figure 3. Shared relationship between social skills and group experiences



Nota: Produced by the authors.

By virtue of the aforementioned it is concluded that social skills are a reference in every educational field; and although the theme is challenging in university contexts, it is committed to its development, since the pedagogical mediation carried out by the teacher goes far beyond the contents, since he one models human beings so that they in turn form generations.

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