



INTERPERSONAL SKILLS PROGRAM BASED ON ARTISTIC EXPRESSIONS TO REDUCE INTIMATE PARTNER VIOLENCE IN UNIVERSITY STUDENTS

LILIA LUCY CAMPOS CORNEJO¹, ROSALINDA RAMÍREZ MONTALDO¹, LUPE GARCÍA AMPUDIA², MIGUEL ANGEL JAIMES CAMPOS², MANUEL SÁNCHEZ-CHERO³, MARÍA DEL CARMEN VILLAVICENCIO GUARDIA¹

¹Universidad Nacional Hermilio Valdizán, Huánuco-Perú

²Universidad Nacional Mayor de San Marcos, Lima-Peru.

³Universidad Nacional de Frontera, Sullana - Peru

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ABSTRACT

This article evaluated the effects of an interpersonal skills program based on artistic expressions to reduce intimate partner violence in college students. The research was of explanatory type, quasi-experimental design and used the Dating Abuse questionnaire (adapted by Osorio, 2014), the Interpersonal Skills questionnaire with reliability of 0.81 having as results in the entry test in terms of violence a mean of 88.16 and after the program was applied it decreased to 81.2, in interpersonal skills the mean of 46.6 increased to 53.3 with large effect size according to Cohen's d 7.889 CI95% (6.246-9.532), statistically significant differences were found in terms of violence

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1. Introduction

In recent times, interpersonal bonds have been undergoing a series of transformations, expressing themselves in a plurality of experiences that affect the psychological health of people such as violence, specifically in couples of all stages, social levels and contexts; being a public health problem Yago and Tomás (2015). This problem is seen as if it only affects adults and couples who already have a family life together and do not pay much attention to it; however, in the stage of falling in love, certain etiological factors of violence can be generated, which often occur and even have tragic endings in adult couples.

Chapa (2022), points out that in university contexts, gender inequalities are produced that manifest themselves in discrimination and violence. Many times during the professional training of students, the personal problems that young people are facing are not considered, prioritizing only the aspects of the curricular contents; when it should contribute to the protection of students, as it points out, Amemiya, et al. (2019), observing more frequently: attitudes of threats, physical aggression, sexual harassment, insinuating pressures, among others.

On the other hand, the highest frequency of cases of violence is observed in women (Zeña, et al., 2022); affecting their psychological health; but it is also important to consider social factors such as degree of education, marital status and occupation (Méndez, 2022). However, there is no consensus, it can occur in different forms such as insults, threats, aggressions, thus Sarduy & Miraval (2020) point out that it is a "serious health problem that affects their well-being and quality of life and that requires knowledge about violence through information and data management, about the perception of risks and the consequences for the community" (p.274).

Shorey, Stuart & Cornelius (2011), note that dating violence is "those behaviors that involve physical, psychological, or sexual aggression between partners in a dating relationship" (p. 549). This relationship identifies the intentional threat, control or domination of a partner that occurs in a dating relationship (Rubio et al., 2015).

Similarly, it is reported that, 7 out of 10 Peruvian women between 15 to 49 years of age, have been victims of violence at some time (Allen, Salari & Buckner, 2020) and that the murders of women aged 15 to 30 years, are carried out by intimate partners (INEI, 2018). Some cases have been reported that during university activities do not manifest to be victims of violence, but cases of homicide have been presented later outside the university context. These violent actions occur in a system of interpersonal relationships and are manifested in particular social and cultural contexts that give them meaning and particular meanings (Castellón, 2017).

This study is approached from the ecological approach that considers the environments where the individual develops and the relationships established in these contexts will influence his development. Thus, the immediate environment and specifically higher education constitutes the macrosystem and through the curricular training will outline their behavior to face various situations, likewise through extracurricular activities such as art, sports among others, the comprehensive training of students is complemented. Carranza & Galicia (2019), points out that university education can be a macrosystem but that there is a relationship with the microsystem, for the development of interpersonal relationships.

While it is true that the professional profiles include general and specific competencies according to the different professional careers, however, they do not always have opportunities to develop skills that favor their personal development, Huerta (2021) points out that in the university context, when witnessing situations of intimate partner violence, indifference was generally reported, and they justify their behavior with the idea of: "better not even get involved". Thus, young women who are victims of violence do not express the situation they are living with their partner and it is expressed in behaviors of anxiety, depression, often non-attendance to their classes, neglect in their academic performance.

It is therefore important to study partner violence from the social dynamics and in a preventive way, through strategies that strengthen self-esteem and in general interpersonal skills to promote healthy relationships in couples, making use of strategies such as art and prevent violence that affects not only in the emotional and relational aspect, but this also influences their studies, since art in the various forms allow personal and social transformation (Llanos, 2020).

Fernández (2017) points out that for decades art has been a means to stimulate intellectual development and strengthen the emotional state to express oneself with greater ease and spontaneity, as well as to mobilize cognitive processes and decision making in the management of spaces to the

rhythm of music, for example in dance, theater or musical interpretation. Serón (2019), states that the inclusion of art in the curriculum facilitates the strengthening of values and social relations of students.

Art restores confidence in personal abilities and improves self-esteem, so that through the different artistic expressions, is aimed at creating spaces that allow them to develop confidence, security, facilitating new ways of expression through the analysis of cases of violence, theater performances and development of bodily expressions that allow them to deploy energy through dance, This will be expressed not only on a personal level, but also through awareness-raising workshops for others, displaying and using their own potential, improving their physical and mental health, strengthening their self-esteem, making more assertive decisions that can help them to have a better disposition to study.

Baque, Viteri & Izquierdo (2022) refer that working on interpersonal skills allows for adequate communication and a more adequate channeling of conflicts in a couple's relationship, strengthening their self-esteem, making decisions when the relationship becomes violent and also how the management of these artistic skills will allow them not only to engage in an activity that keeps them busy, but also to broaden their social relationships and strengthen their emotional life.

Taking into account these considerations, the study is oriented to what extent a program of interpersonal skills based on artistic expressions (dance, music, theater) contributes to reduce intimate partner violence specifically in students who begin their university studies, for which the following objectives are considered:

To evaluate the effects of an art-based interpersonal skills program on decreasing intimate partner violence in college students.

To establish the differences between the pre- and post-test in terms of strengthening interpersonal skills and levels of violence in young university students.

2. Methodology

The study was of quantitative approach and quasi-experimental design with before and after group measurement, because it sought to demonstrate the effects of the art-based interpersonal skills program to reduce intimate partner violence in college students.

The sample consisted of 50 incoming university students from different professional careers between 18 and 25 years of age, 60% female and 40% male, who participated in art workshops at the University Welfare service of a public university. Each participant was evaluated with the instrument on dating abuse; the study was conducted in accordance with the current ethical norms (Psychologist's Code of Ethics). The participants were asked to sign the informed consent form and with their acceptance, the program was applied during twenty sessions.

The Cuestionario Maltrato en el Noviazgo (CMN), Mexico version, was used, derived from the Cuestionario Maltrato en el Noviazgo, a binational Italy-Mexico instrument (Osorio, 2014). The instrument was validated through Crombach's Alpha, being 0.89 high level.

The interpersonal skills questionnaire was developed by the research team, taking into account the following areas: self-awareness, assertive communication, self-concept, emotional independence, social skills, conflict resolution, impulse control and optimism, which was validated by experts with a concordance of 87% among the judges and a reliability of 0.86 according to Crombach's Alpha.

An interpersonal skills program was also developed and applied to the sample of participants in the art groups (theater, music and dance), which were the means to raise awareness and strengthen interpersonal skills in couples in order to reduce the indicators of violence in the following artistic expressions:

- Theater: Prepares students in skills that allow them to develop expression, flexibility not only physically but mentally in the representation of a play that is oriented to raise awareness of violence prevention, develop creativity and promote healthy lifestyles.
- Music: It allows the development of musical skills as a means that favors affective well-being, teamwork, sensitivity, as a means to strengthen their self-esteem and avoid emotional dependence.
- Dance: Allows the development of psychomotor skills, flexibility, emotion management, creativity, impulse control and a means to keep them busy and expressive.

Conde (2020) argues that art generates empathy, critical thinking, and assertiveness in the individual who allows himself to be carried away by it; it becomes the refuge of those who come with problems and is the most positive way out of all problems.

The measurement instruments were developed and validated. We coordinated with the responsible authorities for the selection of the sample and then socialized the research project, pointing out the evaluation process, the application of the program and the safety guidelines.

Informed consent forms were given to the participants who signed them, guaranteeing the anonymity and confidentiality of the data collected in the study.

The participants then answered the questionnaire, with the support of the art teachers and the research team. The groups were organized according to the preference of the participants in theater, dance, music and film to whom the instrument was applied.

Application of the interpersonal skills program in twenty sessions, during 60 minutes before the artistic activities, according to an established schedule, sensitizing them, training them with topics related to the development of interpersonal skills.

Descriptive statistics were used to determine the tables describing the variables. For the inferential analysis, the "T" statistic was used to establish the differences in the values before and after the program was applied and Cohen's d statistic was used to determine the effect size of the differences in the results.

3. Results

Table 1. Mean differences between pre- and post-test scores on intimate partner violence in college students.

Type of Violence	Pre test	Post Test	Average Differences
Psychological	54.07	36.10	17.97
Physics	16.17	9.32	6.85
Sexual	17.31	10.82	6.41
Economic	13.40	8.12	5.28
Socio-cultural influence	10.30	9.23	1.07
Total	88.16	81.20	6.96

Source: Own elaboration based on the results of the Interpersonal Skills Questionnaire.

Table 1, shows the results at the general level in the pre-test, the mean was 88.16 and in the post-test it decreased to 81.2, likewise in each of the dimensions (psychological, physical, sexual, economic and socio-cultural) in the pre-test the mean is higher than in the post-test, being better in the psychological dimension and lower in the socio-cultural dimension.

Table 2. Descriptive results of interpersonal skills

Skills Interpersonal	Pre test		Post test		Differences of Stockings	Cohen's d Effect size
	Media	D.S	Media	D.S		
Self-awareness	54.8	0.96	62.3	0.56	7.5	0.999 IC95% (3.42-5.48)
Assertive communication	59.6	1.09	66.4	1.03	6.8	6,413 IC95% (5.03-7.08)
Self-concept	44.1	0.55	47.2	0.91	3.1	4.123 IC95% (3.14-5.10)
Emotional independence	42.5	0.43	48.9	0.75	6.4	10,469 IC95% (8.34-12.59)
Interpersonal Relationships	45.1	1.77	53.4	1.23	8.3	5.446 IC95% (4.24-6.64)
Conflict resolution	42.8	0.43	49.2	0.94	6.4	8.349 IC95% (6.62-10.07)
Impulse control	42.8	0.54	45.3	1.45	2.5	2.285 IC95% (1.57-2.99)
Optimism	41.1	0.31	53.6	1.22	12.5	14.04 IC95% (11.23-16.85)
Total	46.6	0.65	53.3	1.01	6.7	7.889 IC95% (6.24-9.53)

Source: Own elaboration based on the results of the Interpersonal Skills Questionnaire.

Table 2 shows that the mean is higher in all dimensions in the post-test, higher in optimism and lower in impulse control. Likewise, the effect size of the differences between the pre- and post-test results is large with 95% CI, and these differences are significant.

Table 3. Differences in interpersonal skills scores.

	Variable 1	Variable 2
Media	82.82	79.52
Variance	109.538367	133.111836
Remarks	50	50
Hypothetical difference of means	0	
Degrees of freedom	97	
Statistic t	1.497988956	
P(T<=t) one tail	0.068691691	
Critical value of t (one-tailed)	1.66071461	
P(T<=t) two-tailed	0.137383382	
Critical value of t (two-tailed)	1.984723186	

Source: Own elaboration based on data from the pre and post test on Interpersonal Skills.

Since the t-statistic is 1.49 less than the critical value of 1.98 and the probability of the statistic of 0.13 is greater than 0.05, they do not present statistically significant differences in interpersonal skills in the study sample.

Table 4.Differences in the results on the levels of violence in university students in the sample.

	Variable 1	Variable 2
Media	82.24	81.2
Variance	596.145306	254.69387
Remarks	50	50
Hypothetical difference of means	0	
Degrees of freedom	84	
Statistic t	1.84902455	
P(T<=t) one tail	0.02731504	
Critical value of t (one-tailed)	1.56319667	
P(T<=t) two-tailed	0.0446300	
Critical value of t (two-tailed)	1.97860966	

Source: Own elaboration, based on data from the pre- and post-test on intimate partner violence.

The t-statistic is 1.84, lower than the critical value of 1.97 and the probability of the statistic of 0.04 lower than 0.05, demonstrating that there are statistically significant differences in terms of violence. The research highlights that differences have been found in the results in terms of violence, where the average decreases after applying the program, in the following dimensions: psychological, physical, sexual, economic and socio-cultural, being higher in the psychological dimension and lower in the socio-cultural dimension. Gaspara, (2020) in a study conducted in Spain with adolescents, found similar results, with psychological violence being more frequent.

This reflects that art workshops are a good strategy for preventive work with young people, not only as an activity for enjoyment but also for reflection, psychological awareness and training with the practice of different artistic expressions; as also Gonzales (2016), points out that art as an intervention strategy generates a self-perception of value and sufficiency to avoid violent behavior.

Therefore its importance to apply preventive programs from a comprehensive approach, not only to reduce violence but also as an emotional support, through the practice of an artistic activity and at the same time as a therapeutic means, Fernandez, (2017) proved that therapeutic art, is a means to prevent and combat violence, because it allows strengthening self-knowledge.

We can point out that although it is true that there are no statistically significant differences in the strengthening of interpersonal skills, there are nevertheless percentage differences in the increase in the results of the post-test, with a large effect size, which could suggest that artistic activities have greater effectiveness in learning and awareness in these skills that precisely have close relationship with the direct dealings with others, self-reflection, strengthening of self-esteem and the attitude with which it relates to its environment as pointed out, Bonilla and Posada (2019), artistic activities influence the lifestyles of the participants.

Although these achievements can be expressed in practice progressively, since the change of attitudes is not very easy, but in a reflexive way it will allow to control in better conditions a situation of violence. It is important to consider as methodological strategies focused on artistic work for the socioemotional development of university students, there are experiences such as those pointed out by Muñoz and Ibañez (2022) who implemented a pilot project in Chile, to strengthen socioemotional skills in students through artistic strategies which allowed an improvement in communication in students.

According to the results found, participation in artistic activities raises the level of personal capabilities, and can also decrease the level of aggressive behaviors. In this regard, it could be argued that people, having developed personal capabilities, have more horizons and openness in their thinking, so they find more adaptive ways to deal with complicated situations in their interpersonal and couple relationships, thus decreasing the use of aggressive and violent behaviors.

Therefore, it is very important to improve soft skills and education, in recognizing the warning signs in college and high schools among teachers, students, as Carreño (2020) states that the development of workshops in psycho-socio-emotional skills teach students different strategies to reject aggression.

Better results have been obtained in relation to assertive communication, being a very important aspect in communication relationships, specifically with the partner in a conflict situation and in general in social relationships, artistic workshops favor better communication and the absence of behaviors of

violence where they develop skills such as knowing how to listen, respecting turns in conversation, respecting opinions of others; Alonso (2017), expresses that performing an artistic work in a group favors the development, of their social skills, and coping with situations of violence. While it is true that the study has been conducted only with those incoming students who participated in the artistic workshops, it is important to consider the prevention of intimate partner violence in the entire student population, since the effects of violence create tension, as the participants themselves have referred, it makes it difficult for them to cope with their academic responsibilities when they face situations of aggressiveness and as they do not express, they also do not have timely help, Flores and Barreto (2018) refer that young women feel guilty for this reason they do not report. On the other hand, emotional dependence is another factor for which they continue to maintain a relationship of conflict, who do not seek professional help, but neither do they seek strategies, such as the practice of art for their emotional support; refer, Fábregas and Martínez (2018).

5. Conclusions

It has been shown that the art-based interpersonal skills program has been favorable in decreasing intimate partner violence behaviors in college students. In terms of interpersonal skills, the mean difference of 46.6 increased to 0.65 after the program was applied, and in the levels of violence, statistically significant differences have been demonstrated. Finally, it is important to consider training strategies in higher education, since young victims of violence face situations that affect their personal and academic development and find themselves in a situation of vulnerability.

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