



THE BODY LANGUAGE OF THE SOCIAL WORKER AND ITS INFLUENCE ON THE QUALITY OF CARE

EL LENGUAJE CORPORAL DEL TRABAJADOR SOCIAL Y SU INFLUENCIA EN LA CALIDAD DE ATENCIÓN

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ABSTRACT:

The objective of this study was to identify the body language of the social worker in the quality of care provided to users of the Hospitals of Manta and Portoviejo. For this, a survey was applied to 260 users of Manta and 285 users of Portoviejo attended in these health houses, which allowed to measure the degree of satisfaction that the user perceives with respect to the quality of service provided by the social worker, considering the result made using the servqual instrument, which determined that there is a high level of satisfaction. Conclusion obtained when analyzing the results of applying the questionnaire, where each indicator was analyzed in a consolidated manner. However, in the observation made to social work professionals, the need to implement a care manual that provides quality and warmth to the user was evident. In addition, it is necessary to analyze the conditions that the institution provides for the development of work activities, and especially aspects related to communication and language, body posture, gestures and expressions of the social worker. We consider that this study contributes to the analysis of the adequate handling of verbal and non-verbal communication that the social worker uses in the care she provides to users in the health sector, to improve the quality of service in the social work area.

Keywords: Body language, social work, quality of service, communication.

RESUMEN:

El objetivo de este estudio fue identificar el lenguaje corporal del trabajador social en la calidad de atención que brinda a usuarios de los Hospitales de Manta y Portoviejo. Para ello, se aplicó una encuesta a 260 usuarios de Manta y 285 usuarios de Portoviejo atendidos en estas casas de salud, mismos que permitieron medir el grado de satisfacción que percibe el usuario con respecto a la calidad de servicio que brinda la trabajadora social, considerando el resultado realizado por medio del instrumento servqual, lo cual determinó que existe un nivel alto de satisfacción. Conclusión obtenida al analizar los resultados de aplicar el cuestionario, donde se analizó cada indicador de manera consolidada. Sin embargo, en la observación realizada a los profesionales de trabajo social, se evidenció la necesidad de implementar un manual de atención que brinde calidad y calidez al usuario. Además, es necesario analizar las condiciones que presta la institución para el desarrollo de las actividades laborables, y sobre todo los aspectos relacionados con la comunicación y lenguaje, postura corporal, gestos y expresiones de la trabajadora social. Consideramos que este estudio contribuye al análisis del manejo adecuado de la comunicación verbal y no verbal que utiliza la trabajadora social en la atención que brinda a usuarios en el sector salud, para mejorar la calidad del servicio en el área de trabajo social.

Palabras clave: Lenguaje corporal, trabajo social, calidad de servicio, comunicación.





1. INTRODUCTION

Communication is a vital and indispensable element in the behavior of human body language, is defined as the influence it has for the internal development of a person, as well as for the expression of feelings, ideas and moods.

To transmit a message in a verbal way, sometimes it can be interpreted in different ways and with it not to reach the objective to offer an effective information, checking at the same time that the communication is not only to emit a message, but also, it is to know how to listen, to react and to give the message (Leiva, 2017). That is why talking about body language becomes relevant, therefore, it is important that Social Workers have a clear concept about the forms of communication, allowing in effect an effective link with users.

Research has shown that over 65% of our communication is non-verbal. This indicates that the words, even when preparing the best speech, may not be as important as what the body, gestures and movements denote (Herweijer, 2019).

This study aims to identify the body language used by the Social Worker and its influence

on the quality of care provided to users in the Hospitals of Manta and Portoviejo. As elements in its structure this research presents a support of literary review, with mixed approach and descriptive transversal method, with results, discussion, conclusion and final recommendations, raising the following question: How does the body language of the Social Worker influence the attention that he/she gives to users in the Hospitals of Manta and Portoviejo?

2. MATERIALS AND METHODS

a) Methodology Design.

This research was based on a mixed approach, of non-experimental type, whose characteristic is transversal - descriptive, therefore, the unit of analysis was centered in the first place in the quantitative thing referring to the measurement of satisfaction of the users and in the qualitative thing on the corporal language of the Social Worker.

b) Research Participants.

The need to take a sample through the formula for finite populations was estimated, having as sample 260 users from



Manta and 285 users from Portoviejo and 6 Social Workers.

For the effect, the type of sample is probabilistic based on a simple random process, which allowed the collection of data that determine the level of user satisfaction.

The Observation technique was used in 6 Social Workers, 2 of them belonging to the Hospital of Manta and 4 social workers from the Hospitals of Portoviejo, which contributed significantly to determine which is the body language adopted by the Social Worker in the health sector.

c) Area of Study.

The area of study, as already mentioned, is the Hospitals of the Ministry of Public Health of the province of Manabí in the cantons of Manta and Portoviejo.

General Hospital Dr. Rodríguez Zambrano, address; Manta barrio Santa Martha, 12th street and 38th avenue to San Mateo. Verdi Cevallos Balda Regional Hospital, address; Portoviejo Rocafuerte and 12 de marzo.

Hospital de Especialidades Portoviejo, address; 15 de abril street and Uruguay Avenue, Las Tres Marías Sector.

d) Techniques Employed.

In accordance with the quantitative scope of the methodological design of this research, a 10-question questionnaire was used as an instrument, which includes 5 dimensions and attributes of quality, according to the model used SERVQUAL (Ramírez, 2017).

In the qualitative scope, the Observation technique was used as an instrument that facilitated the collection of data on the communication, language, body posture and facial expressions adopted by the social worker at his or her workplace.

e) Statistical Analysis.

For the analysis of the data collected through the SERVQUAL instrument, the following elements were considered:

Reliability; facilitated the evaluation of the quality of care provided by the Social Worker, and the efficiency in which she delivers the procedures.

Security; allowed to measure the veracity of information provided by the social worker to the user.

Tangible elements; helped to verify the image of the social worker and the



conditions of the place where the user is received.

Sensitivity; used to determine if the Social Worker listens carefully to the user when they present their concerns.

Empathy; with this last element it was possible to measure the interest and courtesy that the social worker offers the user in the health area.

Therefore, the following criteria were considered to measure user satisfaction:

<70 Unsatisfied

>70 <80 Medium satisfied

>80 <90 Satisfied

>90 Very Satisfied

In the analysis of the Observation technique, three criteria were used to evaluate:

Communication and language, body posture, facial expressions and gestures. With this, it was possible to determine the importance of the adequate use of body language that the social worker should adopt in the care provided to users in the health area.

3. RESULTS

From the quantitative approach we present the data obtained in the surveys carried out, from a total of 260 surveys in the city of Manta, considering each of the questions that allowed to measure the impact in each variable and to evaluate the satisfaction of the user, it was determined that the users have a level of satisfaction of 89% of reliability in relation to the quality and effectiveness of the attention; 90% of security in relation to the veracity of the information that the social worker provides to the user; 76% in relation to the projected image of the social worker and the site of care. Although the level of satisfaction in this variable is between 70% and 80% equivalent to a medium level of satisfaction, it is suggested to implement adaptations in the place of attention to improve the well-being of the user; an 86% satisfaction level regarding the sensitivity of the Social Worker in the attention given to the user; 90% empathy regarding the respect and courtesy given by the Social Worker to the user.

Table 1. Tabulation of surveys of satisfaction of the users in Manta

| Variables | Impact |
|-------------|--------|
| Reliability | 89 % |
| Security | 90 % |



| | |
|-------------------|------|
| Tangible elements | 76 % |
| Sensitivity | 86 % |
| Empathy | 90 % |

From a total of 285 surveys carried out in the city of Portoviejo, considering each of the questions that allowed to measure the impact on each variable and to evaluate the satisfaction of the user, it was determined that the users have a level of satisfaction of 92% of reliability in relation to the quality and effectiveness of the attention; 92% confidence in the veracity of the information provided by the Social Worker to the user; 92% in relation to the projected image of the Social Worker and the place of service; 91% satisfaction level in relation to the sensitivity of the Social Worker in the service provided to the user; 95% empathy in relation to the respect and courtesy that this professional provides to the user.

Table 2. Tabulation of satisfaction surveys of users in Portoviejo.

| Variable | Impact |
|-------------------|--------|
| Reliability | 92 % |
| Security | 92 % |
| Tangible elements | 92 % |
| Sensitivity | 91 % |
| Empathy | 95 % |

From a qualitative approach made by means of the observation technique carried out to the social workers of Manta, the fulfillment of functions was determined according to three criteria such as: language and communication with a 0% fulfillment, body posture with an average of 50% fulfillment, expressions and gestures with an average of 88%, which in its effect shows a total percentage of 55% fulfillment, in such a way that the social workers have a low percentage of fulfillment in their user service functions.

Table 3. Observation at the work place of the Social Workers of Manta

| OBSERVATION QUESTIONS | YES | NO | O/C | % COMPLIANCE |
|-----------------------------------|-----|----|-----|--------------|
| LANGUAGE AND COMMUNICATION | | | | |
| QUESTION 1 | 0 | 2 | 0 | 0% |
| QUESTION 2 | 0 | 1 | 1 | 0% |
| BODY POSTURE | | | | |
| QUESTION 3 | 0 | 0 | 2 | 0% |
| QUESTION 4 | 1 | 0 | 1 | 50% |
| QUESTION 5 | 1 | 0 | 1 | 50% |
| QUESTION 6 | 2 | 0 | 0 | 100% |
| EXPRESSIONS AND GESTURES | | | | |
| QUESTION 7 | 2 | 0 | 0 | 100% |
| QUESTION 8 | 2 | 0 | 0 | 100% |
| QUESTION 9 | 1 | 0 | 1 | 50% |
| QUESTION 10 | 2 | 0 | 0 | 100% |
| | | | | 55% |



In the observation made to the social workers of Portoviejo, the fulfillment of functions was determined according to three criteria such as: language and communication with an average of 75% fulfillment, body posture with an average of 94% fulfillment, expressions and gestures with an average of 75%, which in its effect shows a total percentage of 83% fulfillment, in such a way, that the social workers have a high percentage of fulfillment in their functions of attention to the user.

Table 4. Observation of Social Workers in the workplace in Portoviejo

| OBSERVATION QUESTIONS | YES | NO | O/C | % COMPLIANCE |
|-----------------------------------|-----|----|-----|--------------|
| LANGUAGE AND COMMUNICATION | | | | |
| QUESTION 1 | 3 | 0 | 1 | 75% |
| QUESTION 2 | 3 | 0 | 1 | 75% |
| BODY POSTURE | | | | |
| QUESTION 3 | 3 | 0 | 1 | 75% |
| QUESTION 4 | 4 | 0 | 0 | 100% |
| QUESTION 5 | 4 | 0 | 0 | 100% |
| QUESTION 6 | 4 | 0 | 0 | 100% |
| EXPRESSIONS AND GESTURES | | | | |
| QUESTION 7 | 4 | 0 | 0 | 100% |
| QUESTION 8 | 2 | 0 | 2 | 50% |
| QUESTION 9 | 3 | 0 | 1 | 75% |
| QUESTION 10 | 3 | 0 | 1 | 75% |
| | | | | 83% |

4. DISCUSSION

Once the research instruments have been applied and the results have been tabulated, analyzed and interpreted, they can be discussed.

The Ávila study (2016) was taken as a reference, with the theme: "Quality in health care services from the point of view of the user in the San Vicente de Paúl center in the city of Esmeraldas", in this work criteria were taken into account to measure user satisfaction with respect to care, which were; very good, good, regular, and bad, therefore, the most important findings indicated that 94% of the users interviewed perceived that the care received was very good.

Furthermore, according to the study presented in this research, the analysis of the surveys made to the users of the Rodríguez Zambrano Hospital in the city of Manta was carried out, and criteria were used to evaluate the satisfaction felt by the user with regard to the care received from the social worker, the most relevant being that 86% of the users are satisfied with the care received at the hospital. These data show a high level of satisfaction of the users



of this health house regarding the care provided to them.

In the case of the Verdi Cevallos Hospital and Specialties Hospital in the city of Portoviejo, the most relevant findings indicated that 93% of the users are very satisfied with the attention received in these hospitals. These data show the high level of satisfaction that users perceive with the attention they receive in the area of social work.

In addition, we also analyzed the data obtained through the observation technique performed on the social workers of the Manta and Portoviejo hospitals, in which we evaluated the communication, language, and posture adopted by the social worker. It was evident that they do not provide quality and warm attention, therefore, the communication and language used by the social worker does not give clear information, she does not introduce herself with her name, and she does not give a cordial welcome.

With regard to body posture, the social worker does not maintain a 90° upright posture while sitting at her workplace.

Lastly, there was also evidence of non-verbal communication such as gestures and

expressions, the social worker does not show visual attention to the user, and has no interest in actively listening to the concerns of users.

Consequently, it is important to maintain verbal and non-verbal communication that demonstrates the quality of care that the user should receive. However, the theory is ratified according to research carried out by the Instituto Ecuatoriano de créditos educativos y becas (Ecuadorian Institute of Educational Credits and Scholarships) (IECE, 2011), User's guide, where it refers to how the user should be attended.

1. Introduce yourself with a warm welcome when the user is received.
2. Welcome the user with nice gestures like a smile.
3. Maintain the correct posture by sitting in the work chair and forming a right angle of 90°, the arms and forearms when supported at the desk should form a 90° angle.
4. Maintain interest in conversation with eye contact to the user.
5. Listen carefully to the user when they present their concerns.



6. Saying goodbye to the user in a friendly way.

All the expressed allows to respond to the objective of the investigation in analyzing the influence that the body language of the Social Worker has in the quality of attention that she offers to the user, indeed the professional of social work must conserve a suitable body language and adopt a correct posture, that guarantees an attention with quality and warmth to the user.

5. CONCLUSIONS

The purpose of this research was to measure the level of satisfaction felt by users served in the Hospitals of the Ministry of Public Health in the city of Manta and Portoviejo, according to the surveys conducted in Manta, the result was a high percentage of satisfaction, which means that users are satisfied with the care they receive from the social worker, even if the area where the professional is located does not have adequate parameters to receive the user.

Regarding the surveys carried out in the Hospitals of Portoviejo Verdi Cevallos and Especialidades, a higher percentage of satisfaction was obtained as a result, which

means that the users are very satisfied with the attention given by the social worker in these health houses.

In the body language that the social worker adopts in the attention that she gives to users, it was determined that she should dominate in the area of language and communication the following; the greeting should be immediate when receiving the user, it should be accompanied by some verbal sample of courtesy, she should use an appropriate language before the user, and call him/her by his/her name.

Regarding the body posture that the social worker should adopt in attention to the user is the following; maintain the correct posture to work in front of the computer forming a right angle of 90°, with the back completely supported by the back of the chair, the seat should be in such a way that the elbows are approximately at the height of the surface on which you are going to work, so that when you rest your hands on the keyboard, your arm and forearm form a 90° angle, that is, a right angle; you should have support material such as notebooks, removable notes and pencil on hand. Not just anything should be used for writing, it is not aesthetic and professional.



Finally, the social worker should use gestures and expressions in non-verbal communication in the following manner: the face should express cordiality through a smile; maintain eye contact with the user, while attending to their concerns, showing interest in the conversation; listening carefully to the user requires an effort of cognitive and empathic abilities, active listening is essential in attending to the user; correctly dismiss the user with a "See you later, thank you very much" accompanied by a cordial attitude. The impact that generates to the health sector the quality of service and satisfaction of the user, is fundamental in every institution, mainly when we speak about health, therefore, it is possible to conclude saying that the users feel satisfied with the attention that they receive on the part of the social worker in the Hospitals of Manta and Portoviejo, being fundamental the fulfillment of the guidelines raised in this investigation on the language corporal that the social worker must adopt in her work position, so that it is perceived in the satisfaction of the user.

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