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## EMPLOYABILITY AND ITS CHALLENGES: A SURVEY CARRIED OUT WITH NEWLY GRADUATED PSYCHOLOGISTS

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**Abstract:** The aim of this study was to collect data on the employability of newly graduated psychologists from a private college located in the Midwest region of Minas Gerais. A survey was carried out with 31 newly formed psychologists. For its realization, an electronic questionnaire was used with mostly objective questions, and there were specific questions for participants who were already working in the area (n=22; 71%) and others for those who were not (n=9; 29%). The results show that graduates have used various resources to enter the job market, such as referring friends, family and/or teachers, social networks and setting goals. Among those who are working in the area, there is a predominance of work in Clinical Psychology and Organizational and Work Psychology. These are also the fields of greatest interest among those who are not working. Considering the level of satisfaction and salary expectations, it appears that the majority of graduates are satisfied with the work they perform and those who do not work in the area expect higher salaries in relation to the salary received by professionals who already work in the labor market.. It is concluded that the participants of this research, in general, know the strategies for employability according to the literature addressed in this study. Limitations of the study and suggestions for future research are pointed out. it is assumed that the majority of graduates are satisfied with the work they perform and those who do not work in the area are expecting higher salaries in relation to the salary received by professionals who already work in the labor market. It is concluded that the participants of this research, in general, know the strategies for employability according to the literature addressed in this study. Limitations of the study and suggestions for future research are pointed out. it is assumed that the majority of graduates are satisfied with the work they perform and those who

do not work in the area are expecting higher salaries in relation to the salary received by professionals who already work in the labor market. It is concluded that the participants of this research, in general, know the strategies for employability according to the literature addressed in this study. Limitations of the study and suggestions for future research are pointed out.

**Keywords:** Employability. Training. Psychologists.

## INTRODUCTION

Employability is a very complex phenomenon, determined by multiple factors. and, for this reason, it has several definitions (NOGUEIRA, ANDRADE, SOUZA, SOARES, 2015). According to Dourado and Carvalho (2007, cited by NOGUEIRA, ANDRADE, SOUZA, SOARES, 2015), employability indicates the individual's ability to adapt to the new demands of the world in relation to the labor market and can be considered as the responsibility of the worker to get his own job. It considers that the work context changes according to the new trends that appear in the world: it follows the technological advance, it requires different personal skills from the professional as well as the flexibility of them in the professional context.

With regard to the job market in Psychology, there are wide fields of action (LEITE, WESLEI, ANDREATTA, KELLI, DURÃES, RENATA, COZZA, HEITOR, CRUCES, ALACIR, 2011, P.105). "It is observed that many undergraduates already have some area of activity in mind when they start their graduation and that other desires about a professional career emerge throughout the course." "However, when the recent graduate enters the labor market, he may face some challenges, among others, due to the specificities of employability in the different regions, which may make it difficult for him

to enter the field of his choice” (ROCHA-PINTO et al. al., 2007 apud LEITE, WESLEI, ANDREATTA, KELLI, DURÃES, RENATA, COZZA, HEITOR, CRUCES, ALACIR, 2011, P.106).

Given these aspects that involve the process of entering the labor market, this article aimed to analyze the employability of newly graduated psychologists in a private college located in the Midwest region of Minas Gerais. Specifically, we sought to know the actions that graduates use to get a job; identify how many graduates and in which areas of psychology they are employed; check the level of satisfaction with the remuneration for the type of service provided and check the professional’s initiatives as well as his entrepreneurial capacity. To this end, a survey was carried out using an online questionnaire. It is believed that the findings may be useful for thinking about training in Psychology,

## **EMPLOYABILITY IN THE FIELD OF PSYCHOLOGY**

According to Campos et al. (2003 apud RUEDA, MARTINS E CAMPOS, 2004, p. 64) “employability can be understood as the actions undertaken by people, with the aim of developing skills and seeking knowledge favorable to achieving a position, be it formal or informal, in the labor market”. In addition, Morosini (2001 apud RUEDA, MARTINS E CAMPOS, 2004, p. 64) states that “considering the field of higher education, employability is the probability that the graduate presents attributes that employers anticipate as necessary for the future effective functioning of your organization.”

Nogueira, Andrade, Souza and Soares (2015) allude that the employability of recent graduates is associated with “[...] social, cultural and human capital” (HELAL, 2005 apud NOGUEIRA, ANDRADE, SOUZA and SOARES, 2015, p.40), assigning responsibility

to the subject for the opportunity to get the job or not. In addition, these authors also point out that the university is involved with the possibilities of adding the skills and competencies necessary for the insertion of its students in the labor market.

Campos et al. (2008, apud NOGUEIRA, ANDRADE, SOUZA and SOARES, 2015) emphasize that higher education institutions must be aware of the labor market so that they can contribute to training that encompasses the skills demanded today; for this, it is essential that the teaching staff is trained. In addition to these, the course curriculum has an impact on the insertion of graduates in the labor market.

Professionals who seek to enter the job market in today’s world need to have skills, competencies and attitudes that contribute to their area. In addition, it is essential to promote self-development and be up to date with the skills required by institutions, organizations or other possibilities for professional insertion in the current job market. (STACHIU, TAGLIAMENTO and POLLI, 2018, p.17; CAMPOS, 2008, apud ALVES, BORGES, BEURON and NOTARI, 2019)

In addition to the knowledge and skills favorable to achieving a job market placement, it is important to consider the self-perception of employability, the subject’s self-efficacy, the way he deals with the situation he is in, as well as his knowledge about employability. Insertion in the labor market depends on professional skills (internal factors) and also on the demands of the service in a given region (external factors).

Regarding internal factors, Alves, Borges, Beuron and Notari (2019) present several studies that elucidate important characteristics: motivation, self-confidence, language ability. In turn, factors external to the professional, that is, factors that are independent of him, can influence him to define the field of action,

to seek other specializations and qualifications or even to seek employment in another region.

Difficulties for professional insertion may be associated with little theoretical knowledge about the chosen area, with the level of practical experience in the field, with the individual characteristics themselves and their interaction with the collective sphere, or even a lack of skills in sectors other than Psychology. In addition, the salary expectation with the chosen field may not be equivalent to that established in that region and for that type of service performed.

Furthermore, it can be a little difficult and/or time-consuming to get a job since the number of vacancies may be less than the number of people applying for them (CAMPOS, 2008). This is one of the assumptions that new graduates face after graduation. It must be noted that more and more organizations demand a higher degree of specialization for different positions. "The labor market is becoming more and more competitive every year and professional training no longer comprises only teaching the profession, but also teaching that there is a need to develop skills" (ROCHA-PINTO et al., 2007 apud LEITE; ANDREATTA; DURÃES; COZZA; CRUCES, 2012, p.106).

According to Rocha-Pinto et al., (2007 apud Leite; Andreatta; Durães; Cozza; Cruces, 2012, p.106) psychologists face other challenges that go beyond the quality of the Psychology degree. They are faced with frustrations, lack of experience and demands from the job market. According to Santos (2004) societies are being transformed by the social context, technologies and social relations. These changes result in new social needs, as well as generating new demands and professional requirements. Thus, with the changes there will be new possibilities for action. It is worth mentioning that in the context of a pandemic, there were significant

changes related to the professional field and, therefore, recent graduates need to review their ways of working, reinvent and adapt to the current context. Then, they need to use their professional and personal skills to seek work demands or offer their service skills and thus get some space to exercise their profession. It is also understood that the area of work that the professional chooses to exercise is related to the society of which he is a part, and can also be linked to the personal preferences of this subject.

Bardagi, Lassance and Paradiso (2003 apud LEITE; ANDREATTA; DURÃES; COZZA; CRUCES, 2012, p.107) "supposes that the choice involves changes, losses, fear of failure and devaluation, elaboration of mourning and conflicts with oneself and with others. significant others." Therefore, many recent graduates end up having to re-elaborate life projects that fit their reality.

The study by Rueda, Martins and Campos (2004, p. 63) demonstrated that "254 university students in the last year of Psychology, Business Administration and Civil Engineering courses at a private university in the countryside of the State of São Paulo" were investing in their employability based on the following categories: "constant updating and pursuit of development, technical skills and theoretical foundation, moral aspect, practical spirit, academic training, active role and others" (RUEDA, MARTINS, CAMPOS, 2004, p.68). In the case of the Psychology course, students aimed to increase employability by investing more in constant updating and development, and seeking technical skills and theoretical foundations (RUEDA, MARTINS, CAMPOS, 2004).

In terms of academic training, it can be seen, according to the edition of the Census of Higher Education (2018, p.30) that "In 2018, more than one million and two hundred thousand students completed undergraduate

higher education in Brazil” and that in this same year “3.4 million students enrolled in undergraduate higher education courses” (CENSO DA EDUCAÇÃO SUPERIOR, 2018, p.14). This statistic shows that people are looking for higher education, perhaps with the perspective that this can bring them better opportunities to stand out in the job market. “The number of enrollments in higher education (undergraduate and sequential) continues to grow, reaching the mark of 8.45 million students in 2018” (CENSO DA EDUCAÇÃO SUPERIOR, 2018, p.18).

Despite the growing demand for training in higher education, it is possible to see that this is not enough for recent graduates to enter the job market. According to data from the Brazilian Institute of Geography and Statistics, the 2nd quarter of 2020, the unemployment rate in Brazil is at 13.3%.

According to Campos (2008) candidates for job vacancies are having difficulties at the time of the interview since this requires communication, expression and relationship skills. According to the result of research with 156 companies in the State of São Paulo (Campos, 2008, p. 159), professional qualification and lack of technical preparation are limiting factors for candidates at the time of the interview during the selection process. It is inferred that companies look for commitment and responsibility in their candidates. However, in that research it could be seen that the candidates lacked interest and motivation and were not up to date.

Stachiu, Tagliamento and Polli (2018) investigated 12 students from different periods and ages, from Business Administration, Accounting, Psychology and Physiotherapy courses. They identified the participants’ fear in relation to the labor market, considered by them as unstable, closed, lacking, competitive, difficult and with low wages. In addition, it was noticed that they had pessimistic perceptions,

accompanied by anguish and restlessness due to changes in the labor market. Finally, blame for failure was noted, in which students considered themselves responsible for their professional success, that is, they disregarded the support of colleagues, teachers and family members.

According to Ribeiro (2011, apud STACHIU, TAGLIAMENTO and POLLI, 2018) having a network of contacts (networking) is important for establishing a good professional placement, because the more contacts you have, the greater your possibilities for social interaction and this favors the social placement. In addition, Stachiu, Tagliamento and Polli (2018) mention that it is important for future professionals to have or elaborate a life project so that they can have future planning to achieve goals and objectives, both personally and professionally.

In addition, both practices and experiences acquired during graduation help the subject to have advantages in the job market (STACHIU, TAGLIAMENTO and POLLI, 2018)

The period between graduation and the waiting time to enter the job market could be shorter if higher education institutions counted, in addition to research and extension programs, internships to approach the market, and also the provision of information on job opportunities. post-graduation employment most actively of university officials and educational policy makers. (MENON, 2012 apud ALVES, BORGES, BEURON and NOTARI, 2019, p. 4)

According to Teixeira (2002 apud ALVES, BORGES, BEURON, and NOTARI, 2019) it is perceived that withdrawn and shy people have less professional experience and this makes it difficult for them to enter the labor market. Another characteristic can be inferred: after training, the person does not feel prepared to exercise this profession. One of the reasons would be the lack of practical experience in

the profession and the restriction of the labor market. (TEIXEIRA, 2002; apud ALVES, BORGES, BEURON and NOTARI, 2019)

In view of the above, for the present study, it was considered that employability is the probability that graduates have attributes considered important for professional insertion, as well as the ability to develop skills and seek knowledge relevant to the field of work in Psychology. Thus, recent graduates must seek strategies for their own professional placement, considering external aspects. It is noteworthy that graduates are not solely responsible for their professional insertion, but they are the ones who need to use their professional and personal resources to seek job opportunities. Thus, it is up to them to keep up-to-date and offer their services in an innovative way, understanding that just having completed graduation will not be enough for professional placement. It is necessary to go further.

## **METHODOLOGY**

A descriptive survey research was carried out. Data were analyzed quantitatively.

## **PARTICIPANTS**

The study included 31 Psychology graduates from a private educational institution, located in the Midwest region of Minas Gerais, who completed their graduation in the 1st or 2nd semester of 2019, or in the 2nd semester of 2020. Of the participants, 22 (71 %) were working as psychologists and nine (29%) were not working in the area. Most were female (n=25; 80.6%). Regarding the age group, 12 (38.7%) were up to 25 years old, nine (29%) between 26 and 30 years old, two (6.5%) between 31 and 35 years old, six (19.4%) between 36 and 40 years old, and two (6.5%) were over 41 years old.

Regarding the year of completion of the course, 12 (38.7%) of them completed it in

the 1st semester of 2019 (Graduates of the 1st Psychology class), seven (22.6%) of them in the 2nd semester of 2019 (Graduates of the 2nd Psychology class) and 12 (38.7%) in the 2nd semester of 2020 (Graduates of the 3rd Psychology class).

## **INSTRUMENTS**

An online questionnaire (Google Forms) was used, containing mostly objective questions that are specified below:

- Eight general questions (both for those who are working and for those who are not working as psychologists) that included: name, sex, age, year of completion of the Psychology course, aspects considered crucial for placement in the job market, perception about professional preparation by the private educational institution, own perception of preparation to act as a psychologist and finally, if this recent graduate was working in the training area. This last question served as the basis for the other questions, that is: those who were acting as psychologists answered some different questions from those who were not acting as psychologists.
- Ten questions for participants who were working as psychologists: area of expertise in Psychology, time working in the area, region where they work, resources used for professional insertion in the labor market, whether carrying out internships during graduation helped insertion professional, which behavior/ characteristics of them contributed to professional insertion, type/mode/form of work, approximate monthly income from the work performed, satisfaction with remuneration for the work performed, and satisfaction with the work performed.

- Eight questions for participants who were not working as psychologists: why they were not working professionally in Psychology, which area of Psychology they would like to work in resources, they have used to enter the job market, in which region they have been looking for work, which the intention of type/method/form of work, salary expectations, if they consider themselves solely responsible for getting a job, and how they feel for not exercising their profession in the training area.

## PROCEDURES

Participants were contacted by message through WhatsApp and Instagram applications. Initially, the researchers contacted graduates closest to them, inviting them to participate in the research. At the time, these individuals were also asked to help contact other former students, forwarding the invitation message so that other graduates could also participate. The research sample, therefore, was non-probabilistic.

In the form, the participants initially gave free and informed consent to participate. Upon consenting, they proceeded with the next step – answering the session of questions common to recent graduates, as well as the specific part for those who are working with Psychology and for those who are not working in the area.

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The aspects considered crucial for the placement in the labor market highlighted by the participants (regardless of being employed or not) are listed in Table 1. It is highlighted that the participants could mark all the aspects they considered relevant. It is noticed that the graduates are aware of the factors that permeate employability, highlighting the importance of skills development.

| Aspects  | n  | %    |
|--|----|------|
| To have responsibilities towards work                      | 28 | 90.3 |
| To stay up to date   | 26 | 83.9 |
| To have had a good education during graduation             | 26 | 83.9 |
| To master the theories and techniques of Psychology        | 25 | 80.6 |
| To be communicative and know how to work in a team         | 25 | 80.6 |
| To have a good network of contacts – networking            | 25 | 80.6 |
| To be a creative person                                    | 23 | 74.2 |
| To recognize employment possibilities based on your skills | 19 | 61.3 |
| To Know how to offer a certain service                     | 16 | 51.6 |
| To Deeply understand the job market                        | 12 | 38.7 |
| To Perform well in selection processes                     | 12 | 38.7 |
| To Master computer resources                               | 9  | 29   |
| To have a good life plan                                   | 7  | 22.6 |
| To master another language                                 | 4  | 12.9 |

Table 1 -Aspects considered crucial for placement in the job market (regardless of being employed or not)

These findings are in line with the study that Rueda, Martins and Campos (2004, p. 63; 68) present since, in the case of the Psychology course, students aimed to increase employability by investing in constant updating and seeking development, technical skills and theoretical foundation.

Most participants (n° = 18 58.1%) said that they were adequately prepared by the institution where they graduated to work in the labor market, 11 (35.5%) of them claim that they were prepared more or less and 2 (6.5%) said they did not know if the institution prepared them properly. It is noteworthy that no participant marked the option that stated that the institution had not prepared them for the job market. Therefore, in this study, it appears that the institution was an external factor that contributed positively to the employability of psychologists.

It is worth highlighting that 23 participants

(74.2%) feel prepared to act as psychologists, six (19.4%) feel more or less and only two (6.5%) do not feel prepared to act professionally. It is noteworthy that the self-perception of being prepared for professional activity depends on external and internal factors, on the situation in which the graduate is and how these graduates perceive themselves in relation to these external and internal factors. Thus, self-perception is linked to employability.

Most respondents (n= 22; 71%) are working as psychologists. Of those who are not (n=9; 29%), five (55.5%) feel prepared to act as psychologists, two (22.2%) do not feel prepared and two (22.2%) feel more or less prepared. It is noteworthy that the majority (n=7; 77.7%) of the participants who are not working as psychologists completed their graduation in the 2nd half of 2020. It can be inferred that the fact that they are not working is due to prematurity with that were formed and the consequent need for organization and planning to start acting, as well as the unemployment rate having increased in the 2nd quarter of 2020 and, also, due to the moment of the pandemic (Covid 19) experienced in the years 2020 and 2021.

### EGRESSES WHO ARE WORKING IN THE AREA

Among the graduates who are working, most are in the Clinic (n=15; 68.2%), as shown in Table 2. On the other hand, in other common fields of Psychology, there were no recent graduates working. Thus, the prevalence of psychologists in some fields is perceived, which may be related to the professional opportunities available in the city in question. It must be noted that, considering the popularization of Psychology, areas not yet occupied by graduates may constitute promising fields for Psychology professionals in the future.

| Occupation area                    | no. | %    |
|------------------------------------|-----|------|
| Clinical Psychology                | 15  | 68.2 |
| Organizational and Work Psychology | 7   | 31.8 |
| Hospital and Health Psychology     | 3   | 13.6 |
| Social/Community Psychology        | 3   | 13.6 |
| Other                              | 1   | 4.5  |
| Neuropsychology                    | 0   | 0    |
| Vocational/Professional Guidance   | 0   | 0    |
| Sport Psychology                   | 0   | 0    |
| traffic Psychology                 | 0   | 0    |
| Educational/School Psychology      | 0   | 0    |
| Juridical Psychology               | 0   | 0    |

Table 2 - Area of expertise of graduates

So that they could get a job, 12 participants (54.4%) said they asked for referrals from friends, family and/or teachers, 11 (50%) used their contact networks – networking, seven (31.8%) created goals (life project), five (22.7%) used social networks to search for job vacancies (Linkedin, Vagas and others). Such results are in line with the scientific literature, as highlighted by Ribeiro (2011, apud STACHIUI, TAGLIAMENTO and POLLI, 2018), emphasizing that a network of contacts (networking) is important for establishing a good professional placement. The elaboration of the life project that fits the reality, according to Stachiu, Tagliamento and Polli (2018) was also considered relevant to get the job.

Regarding the internships undertaken by recent graduates during graduation, it was found that 18 (81.8%) said that these experiences helped them in their professional insertion, two (9.1%) that the internships did not help in their professional insertion and two (9.1%) were unable to answer. According to Stachiu, Tagliamento and Polli (2018) report that the practices and experiences acquired during graduation help the subject to have advantages in the job market. In the present research, this aspect was confirmed.

Regarding the behaviors/characteristics that the participants thought contributed to



their insertion in the job market, the following were cited: believing in their own potential, professional improvement, self-knowledge, good communication, seeking learning/knowledge, ability to welcome individuals, courage, curiosity, dedication, determination, mastery, ethics, studying often, ease of working in a team/group, focus, interest in Psychology, importance of the extracurricular internship and opportunity to practice what was learned in theory, optimism, persistence, proactivity, responsibility, have a professional posture and relationships established during internships carried out in graduation. Thus, it is possible to observe that the perception and behaviors of what it is to be employable go against the personal characteristics of the graduates and adaptability to the work context. Thus, according to Campos et al. (2003) apud Rueda, Martins and Campos (2004, p. 64), they are characteristics required by the labor market and represent the active search for knowledge favorable to achieving a professional placement, whether formal or informal.

Most participants said they work autonomously (n=13; 59.1%), seven (31.8%) work with a formal contract and two (9.1%) have another type of job. None of them do volunteer work. With regard to remuneration, eight (36.4%) earn up to one minimum wage, six (27.3%) earn one to two minimum wages, five (22.7%) earn two to three minimum wages and three (13.6%) earn from three to four minimum wages. Indeed, 10 (45.5%) psychologists said that they are satisfied with their remuneration, seven (31.8%) are more or less satisfied and five (22.7%) are not satisfied with their remuneration.

Regarding satisfaction with the work they perform, six (27.3%) stated that they are very satisfied, 12 (54.5%) are satisfied and 4 (18.2%) are neither satisfied nor dissatisfied with their work. Analyzing remuneration and

job satisfaction, it is clear that most graduates are satisfied with the work they perform.

### EGRESSES WHO ARE NOT WORKING IN THE AREA

Among the graduates who are not working in the area, six (66.7%) stated that they are not working because they could not find a job, three (33.3%) feel insecure to start working with Psychology and/or for other issues personal or professional, two (22.2%) are furthering their studies by doing postgraduate studies, one participant (11.1%) is furthering their studies to take a competitive exam, one (11.1%) is developing professional projects to start work and one (11.1%) prefers not to work at the moment due to the Covid-19 pandemic. It is noticed that most of those surveyed are looking for a job. The fact that they are not working may be related to the postgraduate time, since the participants in this research have, at most, one year and eight months since they obtained their diplomas. Furthermore,

Despite not working with Psychology, the participants expressed a desire to enter the area, and many indicated more than one possible field to work in, as shown in Table 3. It is noticed that this group of participants want to work in several areas that go beyond the fields of action of graduates who are already working in the area.

| Occupation area                    | n | %    |
|------------------------------------|---|------|
| Clinical Psychology                | 7 | 77.8 |
| Organizational and Work Psychology | 6 | 66.7 |
| Neuropsychology                    | 4 | 44.4 |
| Hospital and Health Psychology     | 4 | 44.4 |
| Vocational/Professional Guidance   | 3 | 33.3 |
| Juridical Psychology               | 3 | 33.3 |
| traffic Psychology                 | 2 | 22.2 |
| Social/Community Psychology        | 2 | 22.2 |
| Other                              | 2 | 22.2 |
| Sport Psychology                   | 1 | 11.1 |

Table 3 - Area of desire for professional activity of newly graduated psychologists who are not working in Psychology

Among the resources they have used to enter the job market, it appears that: five (55.6%) invest in job vacancy sites (Linkedin, Vagas or others), five (55.6%) in contact networks and five (55.6%) refer to friends, family and/or teachers, four (44.4%) elaborate goals for professional insertion (life project) or other strategies, two (22.2%) seek social networks and only one (11.1%) does not use any resources to enter the job market. It is observed, therefore, that graduates seek strategies to adapt to market demands and use various resources that contribute to professional insertion.

It is observed that five graduates (56.6%) intend to work with a formal contract, three (33.3%) autonomously and only one (11.1%) intends to have another form of work. It is worth mentioning that none of them intends to do voluntary work. The salary expectation of these participants has been mostly 2 to 3 minimum wages (n=5; 55.6%), 3 to 4 minimum wages (n=3; 33.3%) and finally, more than 4 minimum wages (n=1; 11.1%). It was observed that none of the newly formed psychologists intends to earn less than two minimum wages. Salary expectations may be one of the factors that lead recent graduates to change their choices regarding the field of work as well as the type of work to be performed. In addition, the salary expectation with the chosen field may not be equivalent to that established in that region and for that type of service performed.

Four graduates (44.4%) said they believe they are solely responsible for getting a job and four of them (44.4%) do not. These responses can be associated with what Nogueira, Andrade, Souza and Soares (2015)

allude to that the employability of recent graduates is associated with the attribution of responsibility of the subject for the very opportunity of getting the job or not. On the other hand, Stachiu, Tagliamento and Polli (2018) found in their research that graduates did not blame themselves for their failure to get a job in Psychology. The findings in the present study deserve to be better investigated, since they were inconclusive.

| Feelings   | n | %    |
|--|---|------|
| Sometimes I get worried but I keep trying                    | 6 | 66.7 |
| I feel disappointed not to be working with Psychology        | 6 | 66.7 |
| I feel frustrated that I didn't get a job                    | 4 | 44.4 |
| I feel sad not working                                       | 3 | 33.3 |
| I am fine and aware that professional placement is difficult | 2 | 22.2 |
| I don't feel prepared to work                                | 2 | 22.2 |
| I gave up looking for a job                                  | 1 | 11.1 |
| I'm calm because I know I'm going to get a job               | 1 | 11.1 |
| I don't need to work   | 1 | 11.1 |
| I want to change profession                                  | 1 | 11.1 |
| I think I have little to offer society                       | 0 | 0    |
| I do not feel anything                                       | 0 | 0    |

Table 4 - Feelings of graduates in relation to not working in Psychology

This variety of feelings is involved with the subject's self-perception in relation to his environment and his own beliefs. In addition, to some extent it corroborates with what Rocha-Pinto et al., (2007 apud LEITE; ANDREATTA; DURÃES; COZZA; CRUCES, 2012, p.106) alludes, that psychologists face other challenges that go beyond the quality of Psychology graduation. They are faced with frustrations, lack of experience and demands from the job market. It is not possible to infer that these feelings are associated with lack of experience, or other personal issues that complement each other.

## FINAL CONSIDERATIONS

Completion of a higher education is no guarantee of having a job. The academic trajectory, the context of insertion in the labor market that is becoming more and more competitive, show that this action does not depend solely on graduation. Skills, competencies, and attitudes are needed in order for the individual to get the job.

In the present study, it was found that both graduates who work in the area, and those who do not, used or still use the same methods to be able to enter the job market. Among these strategies are: indication of friends, family and/or teachers, contact networks – networking, creation of goals (life project) and social networks for job search. Such findings demonstrate that the researched graduates are investing in actions that the literature confirms to be beneficial.

With regard to the work area, there was a predominance among the participants in the clinical field, although newly graduated psychologists who do not work in Psychology stated the desire to work in different areas beyond the office. It is noticed that the clinical area continues to be one of the main fields of professional insertion of the psychologist. This fact may be related to opportunities, but also to the fact that the office generates greater independence for professional insertion.

Another result found highlights that newly formed psychologists who work in the area earn, for the most part, less than the salary expectations of newly formed psychologists who are not working in the area. It is questioned whether the economic factor may have been an obstacle for the surveyed graduates who were not included in the labor market. Future research may shed light on this issue.

It was also observed that the graduates have knowledge about the factors that permeate employability. According to Dourado and Carvalho (2007) companies expect certain

contributions and behaviors from workers. Thus, it gives the worker the condition of “main asset” of organizations. Therefore, it transfers the responsibility to the worker to remain in the job. Accordingly, it was found that graduates seek strategies to adapt to the demands of the labor market and use resources that contribute to their own professional insertion.

In short, it was noted that there was no lack of practical experience during graduation on the part of graduates working in the area, and that, in general, there was no lack of contact with people who could help with professional insertion. In addition, it can be inferred that the graduates participating in the research identified that the life project is important for professional insertion and this may indicate that, in a way, they are clear about their professional interests.

This study made it possible to know the actions that graduates used for professional insertion and found that most respondents are satisfied with what they do. In general, respondents use resources highlighted in the literature on employability.

As limitations of this study, it must be noted that only part of the recent graduates in the researched institution responded to the research instrument and, therefore, the results cannot be representative of the population in question. It is also not possible to measure the effects of covid-19 on the employability of these graduates. In addition, it was observed that the salary received by psychologists who work in the labor market is lower than the salary expectations of those who do not yet work professionally. Investigating whether psychologists are ceasing to work professionally because of salary expectations may be a suggestion for future work. Other research may complement the findings. Furthermore, it is suggested that future studies address more specifically self-perception and self-efficacy linked to employability.

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