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**SELF-PERCEPTION OF FAMILY FUNCTIONALITY IN**  
**STUDENTS OF NORTH TECHNICAL UNIVERSITY**

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*Abstract*

Several studies indicate that the population of University students, has some degree of vulnerability and can arise from certain factors such as: academic stress, family conflicts, and risk behaviors. Therefore, the family is the most important means for influencing the physical and emotional well-being. Objective: To describe the self-perception that the students of the Faculty of Health Sciences of North Technical University have in the functionality of their homes. Methodology: Quantitative, descriptive, non-experimental study of cross-section, carried out during the year 2017, in which participated 545 students of nursing, physical therapy, and nutrition; who informed consent responded self-applied APGAR family questionnaire. Results: 81% of students who answered the family Apgar test, corresponded to females and 19% to the male. Predominant age was 20 to 23 old. 40% of students perceived to their family as a functional family; different degrees of dysfunction (mild, moderate and severe), corresponded to 60%. Conclusions: The majority of students felt some degree of family dysfunction (59%), being the most frequent mild degree. This information should be taken into account to generate plans for individual and collective intervention as a strategy to achieve a healthy University environment.

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**Keywords:** APGAR family, family dysfunction, family functionality.



## 1. Introduction

University students like the rest of individuals depend on stability and family support; the negative environment that may result from variables such as the poor economy, poor organization and the quality of interaction that exist, directly influence psychosocial well-being. They joined the pressures and demands of a new adult life, in some cases with demands and needs that can increase stress levels and lead to behaviors of risk, bad relations and other issues of both the somatic field, mental health and social.

The study of the family and its functionality are two very important aspects when making a diagnostic approach in outpatient patients, whether in primary care or specialty. There have been several definitions of family functioning; being a simple definition that considers it as 'the set of processes in the breeding or interaction of a group of people who form a family, which are oriented physical and emotional growth of the members (Gomez-Bustamante, Castillo-Avila, & Cogollo, 2013).

The family is considered to be a natural, universal and fundamental element of society; It is the most important organization of the human type and reflects the development society. It is conceptualized as a group of people joint from a kinship that can be affinity or consanguinity and is conditioned by economic, social, biological and psychological laws defined in particular in the relations system in the context of the home (Lopez Mero, Barreto Pico, & del Salto Bello, 2015; Suárez et al., 2015).

The family performs several functions, among them: the biological, psychological and social development of its members; next to the socialization and education of the individual, it assures their insertion into social life and the transmission of cultural values through the generations. The satisfaction of these needs in the home environment, allows the confidence-building, security and self-esteem into source of health and well-being; not so when there are conflicts and tensions, which have a negative impact on the physical and mental health of its members (Suarez et al., 2015; Higuera-Gutiérrez & Cardona-Arias, 2016).

Several studies have been conducted in university population, which refers to the vulnerability of students as a result of various factors such as academic stress, risk, sexually transmitted infections, substance use, behavior pregnancy, disorders of eating behavior, depression, among others. These factors of order sociodemographic, family, and academic in the University students, demonstrate that role of the family has a high impact on behavior and health. Between the demographic also describes the early age and socio-economic level low, while, from an academic point of view, the assessments are tests and overload of hours of study and finally at the family level stand living outside your home and poor family relationships in some cases (Mora and Moreno, 2016; Torales, Barrios, Samudio, & Samudio, 2017).

Based on these statements, the main objective this research was to determine the self-perception that have students in the Faculty of Health Sciences, North Technical University about the functionality of your household, through the use of test Apgar family (graph N ° 1), validated instrument which shows how the family members perceive the performance level of the family unit on a global basis (Suarez Cuba & Alcala Espinoza, 2014).

## 2. Problem Statement

In institutions of higher education, left side, or has been minimized, analysis of a problematic psychosocial and family happening in one of the major college players as it is the student. The family is the

primary factor of support, but at the same time might generator of conflicts, which are perceived by each of its members in a different way. This factor can have a negative impact on academic performance and the future of professional in training. Universities may change the effects, the phenomenon of family dysfunction on the students, carrying out programs to improve psychological well-being, but as a starting point we need comprehensive information, not only of internal conditions affecting students, but the conditions of its micro society.

### **3. Research Questions**

What is the self-perception that the students of the Faculty of Sciences of health North Technical University (NTU), have on the operation its family to which they belong?

### **4. Purpose of the Study**

Determine the self-perception that the students of Faculty of Health Sciences, North Technical University about the functionality of your household.

### **5. Research Methods**

It was conducted present quantitative, descriptive, non-experimental study of cross section during the year 2017, in which participated 545 students of nursing, physical therapy, and nutrition; who previously informed consent, answered the self-applied questionnaire of APGAR family and socio-demographic survey. The Apgar score components are divided into 5 elements: adaptation, participation, gradient resources, affection and resources or problem-solving capacity. Each of the replies has a score of 0 to 4 points, according to the following rating: 0: never; 1: Almost never; 2: Sometimes; 3. almost always and 4: always. According to the sum of the score obtained in the test, this can be interpreted in the following way: Normal: 17-20 points; Mild dysfunction: 16-13 points; Moderate dysfunction: 12-10 points and severe dysfunction: less than or equal to 9. Obtained data were recorded in a matrix of Excel and processed at the statistical package SPS version 19.

### **6. Findings**

Most students of the Faculty of health science of North Technical University North that were part of this study, were female and age group comprised between 20 to 23 years old, the most predominant. In relation the familiar functionality, found that more than half of students (59%), auto sensed some degree of dysfunction in their families, with one higher proportion of mild dysfunction. This proportion was higher, when compared with the results of study conducted by Mora and Moreno (2016) on the self-perception of health and network of support and family function of students who begin graduate programs of medicine in Colombia, where the 33.7% perceived some degree of dysfunction in their respective families. In another work about family functionality and alcohol use in young people, the perception of adolescents was 86, 86% of functional families; mild dysfunction 12.71% and 0.42% severe dysfunction (Trujillo-Guerrero, Vázquez-Cruz, & Córdova-Soriano, 2016). This indicates that individuals can perceive differently the

family functioning depending on each context in which and circumstances or experiences everyday of their group of origin.

Since start of university academic activity in any of the careers, entails the transfer of place residence, in the case of students from other provinces, also involves many times away from his circle of friends and others nearby networks, a situation that could affect academic performance and their emotional and family stability as reported Torales in his study of social support self-perceived in medical students, where family dysfunction reached 22.4% (Torales et al., 2017).

Since the students who participated in the study have an average age of 20 years, and for the role at this stage of transition have yet to assume, are considered to be still adolescents regarding their economic dependence and the concerns in the stage. Product of student overcrowding that has been seen for some years should consider the population which they represent, comes from various social strata with experiences and conditions varied with different life styles. Dubet (2005) in his article "students", considers some particular phenomena that occur in this period in which conditions of youth and particularities of student life are included such as: students deviate more or less from your family due to the distance and by the change of sociability that adopts; They also change their ideological and political options for the level of integration that imposes both the schedule as own professional obligations, their eating habits, their cultural customs and personal interests.

Contreras, on the other hand, concludes that "there is a close relationship between social and educational inequalities" becoming a factor of risk for school failure (Contreras, Corbalán, & Pacheco, 2007). All of this is part of predisposing factors of family dysfunction, which can also affect academic performance.

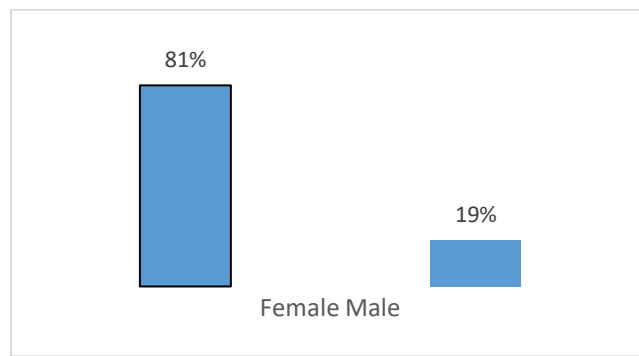
In the study of Gaviria, about quality of the family relationship and depression in medical students, they found a statistically significant association between a poor family relationship and depression (Gaviria, Rodríguez, & Álvarez, 2002). Family functioning could act as a support or as aggravating circumstance of different stressful circumstances that surround the student of medicine, according to its dynamics and quality.

The work carried out in Urcuquí, in the province of Imbabura, done at 297 people, found that 52% belonged to families with some degree of family dysfunction auto perceived; being dysfunction light also the most frequent (Acosta Vinueza, Alvear Reascos, González Pardo, Reascos Paredes, & Monroy, 2017). This study in student population, reflected what usually happens in the community. A proper family functionality depends on multiple factors within each social group, among them: the satisfaction of basic needs such as food, housing, dress, work, health, education, recreation, affection, among others.

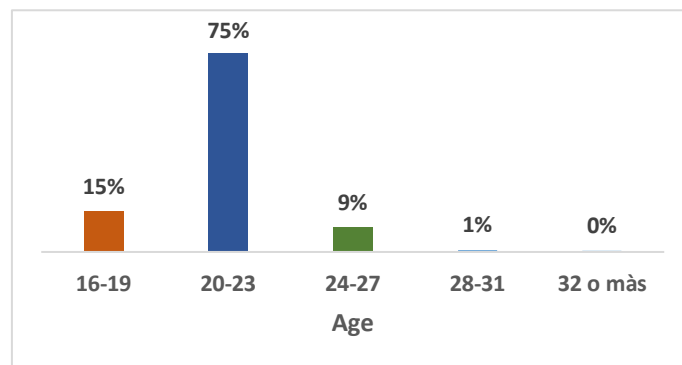
Once you start the academic cycle, students of different careers of North Technical University North, are undergoing a medical evaluation; Hence, this should become a means of early detection of risk factors and diseases established, through a comprehensive approach and this way to promote self-care, prevention and timely management of health problems.

**Table 01.** Perception of family functionality according careers. Family Apgar Scale

Career		Functional Family		Family with mild dysfunction		Family with moderate dysfunction		Family with severe dysfunctional		Total
Career	Nursing	95	38%	95	38%	46	18%	17	7%	253
	Nutrition	54	38%	60	43%	19	13%	8	6%	141
	Physical therapy	71	47%	42	28%	35	23%	3	2%	151
		220	40%	197	36%	100	18%	28	5%	545



**Figure 01.** Distribution of students according sex



**Figure 02.** Distribution of students according age

## 7. Conclusion

The percentage of different degrees of family dysfunction, is located above the perception of belonging a functional family. The highest degree of family dysfunction auto perceived by students of the Faculty of Sciences of health of North Technical University was the mild and moderate.

Is of great importance to know different risk factors that are exposed the students of different careers, since from this they derive possible intervention plans for the maintenance of an adequate individual and collective health University. This work constitutes a starting point for future studies, in relation to factors psychosocial and risk conditions in university students as determinants of mental health.

The use of tools such as family APGAR, although it has no absolute precision, allows a screening or a diagnostic approach important in large populations for its easy application, also mentioning that it

would serve as an input for the identification of students with academic performance issues associated with problems social and family and thus propose a program supporting student in Faculty of Sciences of the health of North Technical University.

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