

LATIN AMERICAN PRODUCTIVITY FROM 1990 TO 1998 IN THE *MEXICAN JOURNAL OF PSYCHOLOGY*

**LAURA HERNÁNDEZ-GUZMÁN
MARÍA MONTERO Y LÓPEZ LENA**

Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México

OLIVIA CARRILLO MACÍAS

Universidad de Sinaloa, México

ABSTRACT: Published uninterruptedly since 1984, the *Mexican Journal of Psychology (MJP)* has been recognized as one of the most important periodicals in Spanish-language psychology. After coping with financial impediments and a lack of scientific contributions, the significance of the *MJP* emerged. The journal remains vital in the development of Latin American psychology. It is today recognized as having the highest impact of all Latin American psychology journals as well as having the second highest impact of all psychology journals in the Spanish language. The goal of the present study was to review the profiles of the *MJP* from 1990 to 1998 by using a bibliometric classification procedure. Four indicators were employed in the present analysis of the articles including measurement techniques, methodology, field of psychology, and main results.

KEY WORDS: periodical; double-blind; peer review; basic research; applied.

Mexican Journal of Psychology (MJP) is one of the few Latin American periodicals that has appeared regularly and steadily since Juan Lafarga founded it in 1984. Published every six months by the Mexican Psychological Society, it has survived numerous other scholarly publications in various developing countries. The *MJP* can also be

Correspondence regarding this article should be addressed to Laura Hernández-Guzmán, Av. de la Alborada 165, Parques de Pedregal, 14010 Tlalpan, Mexico City, Mexico; e-mail: LHER@servidor.unam.mx.

distinguished from periodicals that mainly feature proceedings of annual conferences, lacking in serious, systematic peer review.

There are similar reasons behind the short life span and/or delays in the publication of a vast majority of scientific journals edited in developing countries. One of the major problems concerns the lack of financial support, which means that many of the administrative and clerical tasks must be completed by one person—usually the general editor. Consequently, the promotion of the journal, receiving manuscripts, assigning them to reviewers, receiving and sending feedback to authors, correcting style, preparing the final version to be sent to the printers and editorial records, even distributing the issues, processing subscriptions, and applying for official documents are tasks frequently carried out by the general editor. Likewise, the activities of the first few editors of the *MJP* followed this pattern.

There is also the scarcity of manuscripts submitted for publication. Even though the most important purpose of the *MJP* is the dissemination of scientific knowledge in psychology, it has also filled a gap in terms of educating authors and reviewers. The initial volumes were usually the products of hard work, convincing prospective authors of the importance of publishing in the journal. In addition, workshops on how to prepare manuscripts were conducted by the Mexican Psychological Society in order to encourage submissions of manuscripts, and after several years the journal began receiving an increasing flow of papers for consideration.

The submission of manuscripts has steadily grown, and with it, an increase in the quality of accepted manuscripts. The rigorous double-blind editorial peer review by three renowned researchers has not only allowed the selection of manuscripts meeting the quality standards of the journal, but has also provided feedback to authors.

The education of reviewers is necessary to prevent the arbitrary rejection of manuscripts submitted for publication. This lack of knowledge was a problem for the *MJP*, because to our knowledge, there is no Mexican training program of psychologists capable of teaching students how to review scientific manuscripts, provide positive feedback, and encourage authors to either correct a manuscript and resubmit it to the editors, or to conduct more rigorous and systematic research after the rejection of a manuscript. Special guidelines were developed to help reviewers make reasonable editorial decisions, and to communicate them in a concise and positive way. Authors had to learn and accept that feedback explaining the inadequacies of their studies and suggestions about rectifying them was to their advantage, and not intended to offend, as was frequently felt.

Currently, the *MJP* is one of the most important periodicals in Latin American psychology. The journal is published twice a year, in June and December. It contains scientific and professional articles representing diverse methodological and theoretical approaches and different fields of study including original basic, methodological, and applied psychological studies, epidemiological research studies, critical review essays, theoretical and methodological proposals in Spanish or English, with abstracts, titles, and key words written in both languages. Because the *MJP* maintained high quality standards and publications were timely, the journal was indexed in international databases, such as PsycINFO, CD Rom, PsycLIT, Current Contents, and DIRLAT. Today, it has been shown to have the highest impact factor among all Latin American Psychology journals, and the second highest of those published in Ibero-America (Buela-Casal, Carretero-Dios & de los Santos-Roig, 2002; Institute for Scientific Information, 2001).

The *MJP* has evolved throughout the years achieving new goals and overcoming many obstacles. Due to its growing acceptance by the psychological scientific community as a solid publication based on strong peer review, articles published in the *MJP* reflect the work of the most productive Mexican researchers. The evolution of Mexican psychology through its publications has been documented from the point of view of the productivity of psychologists at different periods throughout its history such as studies reflecting a wider or Ibero-American perspective (Díaz-Loving & Valderrama, 1992; Marín, 1985), or analyzing specific areas of interest, such as environmental psychology (Montero & López Lena, 1997). Galindo (1988) conducted one of the most comprehensive reviews of Mexican publications from 1958 to 1987, including journals and books. Information provided by such reviews can be used to identify both achievements and deficiencies, and thus redirect training practices, financing of projects, and publishing policies, and other actions relevant to the development of the discipline. The present article analyzes articles published from 1990 (Volume 7) to 1998 (Volume 15) in the *Mexican Journal of Psychology*.

METHOD

Sampling

From a total of 168 articles published in the *MJP* between 1990 and 1998, the present study examined 155 articles authored by Latin

American psychologists (151 Mexican and 4 from other Latin American countries).

Sources/Materials

The main sources consulted included the Reference Index of the *Mexican Journal of Psychology* (1984–1996), the SIPAL (Psychological Information System for Latin America) database, both available at the Documentation Center of the School of Psychology of Mexico's National University. Volumes 7 to 15 of the *Mexican Journal of Psychology* and editorial records belonging to the same period were examined. Standard software (Fox Plus and Excel '97) served as search tools.

Procedure

In order to outline the scientific productivity profile of the *Mexican Journal of Psychology* from 1990 to 1998, a bibliometric classification procedure was first developed according to specific indicators. Information was retrieved from both the SIPAL database and the original issues of the journal. Among articles published from 1990 to 1998, those authored by Latin American psychologists were identified and selected for analysis. After verifying each author's institutional affiliation, a list was developed containing the main indicators: institutional affiliation, which served to categorize articles by country and specific institutions, and number of different key words as either defined by the *APA Thesaurus*, or freely assigned by authors. When specific key words were not assigned by the authors (in early volumes and issues) the main concepts contained in the title and abstract served as key words. Key words allowed classification of articles according to participants in each study and, in case of human respondents, age or life stage.

A detailed analysis of each published article within the period based on an initial classification that differentiated basic and applied areas of psychology was conducted. Articles were reviewed according to the indicators of measurement techniques, methodology, field of psychology, and the main results.

RESULTS

The journal published a total of 168 articles during the time period under study. From these, 95 were authored by researchers affiliated

with Mexico's National University (UNAM), 34 by psychologists from universities or higher education institutions located in Mexico City's Federal District, 22 by authors in other Mexican states, and 17 by psychologists affiliated with foreign institutions, 4 of them from Latin America.

Results are derived from articles authored and co-authored by psychologists from Latin American institutions. A total of 155 articles were analyzed. Table 1 shows the institutional composition of the authors' pool.

As these results suggest, the *MJP* seems to be an attractive publication source for authors from a wide variety of institutions and geographical areas within Mexico. Collaboration of Mexican psychologists with colleagues from abroad is a common practice. Several articles reflect the collaboration of Mexican authors with colleagues from five United States of America universities, namely Nova University, Southeastern University, the Universities of Kansas, Nevada, and New Orleans, and one article included colleagues from the Alcoholism and Drug Abuse Institute of Costa Rica, Central America. Only four articles, three published between 1995 and 1997, were exclusively authored by colleagues from other Latin American countries. Since the number of subscriptions from Latin American countries has recently increased, it is anticipated that there will be an increasing number of submissions from Latin American colleagues. In terms of yearly distribution, Table 2 shows the distribution of articles published from 1990 to 1998.

The yearly publication of papers fluctuated between 12 and 25 articles. The number of articles appearing per year dropped in 1995, and has since been stabilized to an average of 13.5, contrasting with an average of 20 per year from 1990 to 1994. Even though the actual number of manuscripts submitted for publication has substantially increased over time (an average of 32 per year since 1996), the criteria for publication have become more stringent, especially during the last four years. In addition, publishing costs have tripled during the same period, forcing the publication of fewer pages and articles per volume. It is expected that approximately 13 to 14 articles per volume will be published over the coming years.

The number of key words (listed following the abstract) totaled 674. Regarding age or life stage, the number of associated key words were: Children 87 (12.9%), adolescents 219 (32.5%), adults 300 (44.5%), elderly 59 (8.8%), and animals 9 (1.3%). Thus adult participants, mainly university students, were the most frequent, probably due to

TABLE 1**Institutions represented in the *MJP* (1990–1998)**

<i>Higher education institutions located in other states</i>	
Technological Institute of Tuxtla Gutierrez	14.19%
Autonomous University of Baja California	
Autonomous University of Guadalajara	
Autonomous University of Tlaxcala	
Autonomous University of Estado de Mexico (Toluca)	
Autonomous University of Estado de Morelos	
University of Guadalajara	
De las Americas University (Puebla)	
University of Sonora	
<i>Higher education and other institutions located in Mexico</i>	
<i>City's Federal District</i>	
Psychoanalytic Psychotherapy Association	21.94%
Center of Studies on Rural Development- Postgraduate College	
Mexican Institute of Psychiatry	
Mexican Institute of Social Security	
National Institute of Neurology and Neurosurgery	
National Institute of Perinatology	
Technological Institute of Graduate Studies of Monterrey, Campus, D.F.	
Ministry of Health	
Iberoamericana University	
<i>Mexico's National University (UNAM)</i>	
Center for Research and Educational Services	61.29%
Office for Special Undergraduate Academic Programs	
National School of Professional Studies-Iztacala	
National Preparatory School	
School of Medicine	
School of Psychology	
Cellular Physiology Institute	
Biomedical Research Institute	
<i>Higher education institutions from Latin America</i>	
National University of Cuyo, Mendoza, Argentina	2.58%
National University of Colombia	
University of Havana, Cuba	
University of Costa Rica	

TABLE 2
Distribution of Articles per *MJP* Volume (1990–1998)

Year (Volume)	1990 (7)	1991 (8)	1992 (9)	1993 (10)	1994 (11)	1995 (12)	1996 (13)	1997 (14)	1998 (15)
Number of Articles	25	12	20	22	22	13	14	14	13
Percentage	16.13	7.74	12.91	14.19	14.19	8.39	9.03	9.03	8.39

N = 155.

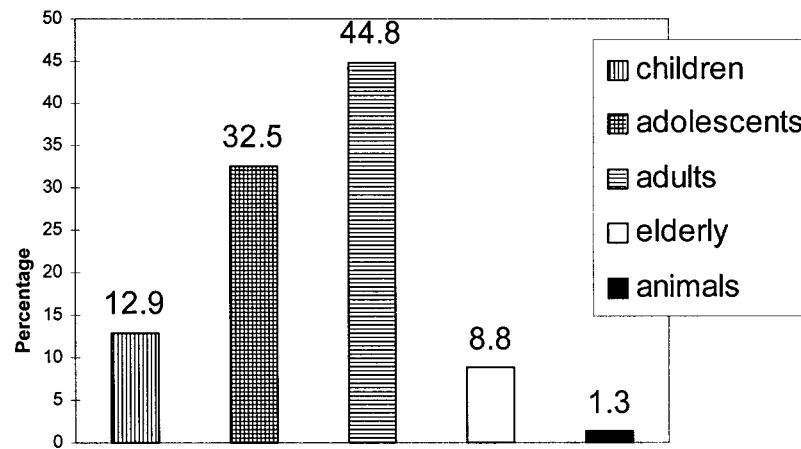


FIGURE 1

Key words identifying research participants including their life stage (in percent)

easier access to such populations at universities. Of these studies, 3.1% focused specifically on adult males, and 2.4% on adult females (see Figure 1).

A thorough analysis of the specific focus of the studies revealed that 17 of them dealt with basic research, 21 with measurement issues, 21 with educational/developmental psychology, 6 with professional training, 26 with social/environmental, 53 with health and clinical issues, 2 with industrial/organizational problems, and 9 with theoretical/historical perspectives (see Figure 2).

BASIC EXPERIMENTAL RESEARCH

During the time period emphasized in this article, 17 articles were published on basic experimental research; rats served as subjects in eight studies, and monkeys in one. Eight additional studies were conducted with human respondents. A gradual decrease of basic experimental studies was observed over the 9-year period. From 1990 to 1992 (volumes 7 to 9), eight basic research articles were published (5 including animals and 3 including humans). During 1993–1995, there was a decrease to six articles (2 focusing on animals and 4 on humans), and from 1996 to 1998 a decrease to three articles (2 including

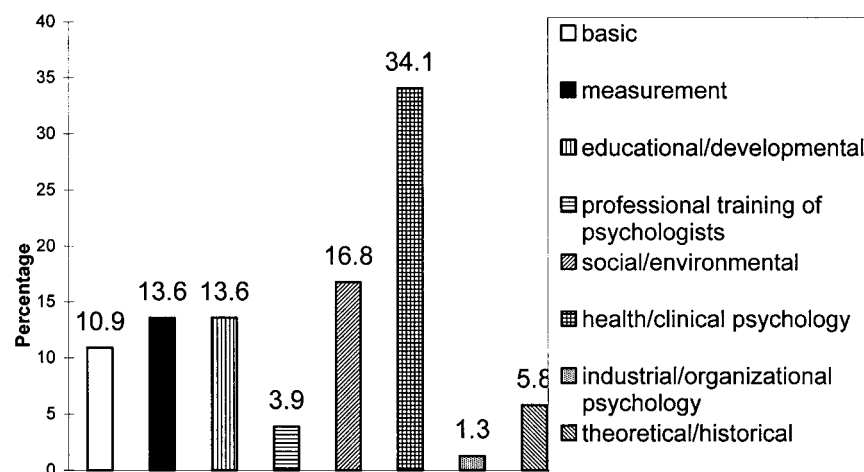


FIGURE 2

Distribution of specialty areas of articles (in percent)

animals and 1 including humans). This decrease could be attributed to the need of Mexican researchers to publish in foreign journals, which is associated with requirements regarding application for tenure and for academic promotions.

The publication of other Mexican periodicals specialized in basic research has stabilized over the years. One such example in psychology is the *Mexican Journal of Behavior Analysis*, which is published in English or Spanish and distributed in many countries. Another possible explanation could be the overall decrease in the number of articles published from one volume to the next over the years reviewed (see Table 2). However, as will be discussed later, this decrease was not demonstrated in all fields of study.

Concerning specific topics, memory, basic learning principles, perception, psychological accounts of behavior, and brain functioning have been the main areas of interest among Mexican experimental psychological researchers publishing in the *MJP*. Among the various topics addressed, three clear lines of research were identified. They fell within the tradition of experimental psychology, which tends to employ automatic recording systems, electroencephalographic signals, or direct observation and recording of behavior. The research traditions included the following:

- (1) Results from a study, based on the observation of the sexual

behavior of green monkeys of both sexes, concluded that the hierarchical rank of individuals depends on the behavioral characteristics of their sexual interactions, rather than on the frequency of their sexual activity.

(2) The role of serotonergic mechanisms on regulation of food intake was the topic reviewed by some articles mainly concluding that stimulation of postsynaptic serotonergic receptors provoked a decrease of food intake. Another stressed the need for new methods to quantify 5-HT in order to explore relationships between serotonin and feeding. According to another report, the experimental manipulation of 5-HTP by its injection in overeating rats significantly reduced self-selection of carbohydrates. A further analysis made an effort to understand these findings within the framework of biochemical psychology, specifically with respect to the hypothalamic monoaminergic systems involved in feeding behavior, in order to account for obesity and other eating disorders. Finally, a related experimental study suggested that the administration of amphetamine-saline facilitates discriminative control over saccharin intake in a conditioned state aversion procedure. These results open new possibilities for the explanation of eating disorders in humans.

(3) Experimental studies on brain waves in human subjects suggested the possibility of increasing interhemispheric correlations between pairs of subjects after biofeedback training, as compared to control subjects and basal conditions of the same experimental subjects. When one week had elapsed between biofeedback training sessions, no effect was observed in terms of the interhemispheric correlations found in previous studies. Further experimentation on pairs of subjects, when only one of them received visual stimulation, showed electrophysiological activity synchronized with the stimuli in both subjects only in those cases in which the pair of subjects had previously interacted. Such potentials were called *transferred* potentials, which were topographically described in another study which attempted to explain them in terms of synthesis theory.

(4) Research in the tradition of the experimental analysis of behavior has explored the effects of delayed reinforcement on response acquisition. In addition, the effects of session duration and intersession interval on the activity of rats in a swimming situation were investigated and interpreted within the context of sudden death research. Conditional discrimination was used to teach children how to read musical notes, in order to evaluate the effectiveness of a procedure that established stimulus equivalence (symmetry, transitivity, and

reflexivity) between the pictorial representation of musical notes and their names. Two more recent experiments suggested that children's descriptive behavior has different effects on performance in conditional discrimination depending on the use of second-order stimuli and visual demonstration, plus verbal description. Other studies exploring various facets of the experimental analysis of behavior, also with human respondents, have assessed causal relations between stimuli, by tracing various effects of probability and temporal contiguity.

MEASUREMENT

Although measurement instruments presented in the *MJP* cover basic, educational, and health/clinical constructs, it is worth considering measurement as a specific area of study. The need for valid and reliable instruments in Spanish that have been standardized for the Mexican population has prompted many psychologists to focus on psychometry, which could account for the increase in the number of articles on measurement over the years. Twenty-one articles were devoted to measurement in the nine volumes considered; four during 1990 to 1992, nine during 1993 to 1995, and eight during 1996 to 1998.

Several articles focused, respectively, on automated recording and the analysis of late evoked potentials among both patients afflicted with Parkinson's disease and normal respondents, on electroencephalographic signals used to study the functional organization of the brain, and on the Spanish adaptation and standardization of a non-verbal neuropsychological evaluation procedure.

Of the remaining articles on measurement, six were devoted to the Mexican adaptation of psychological tests or scales, originally developed in other countries, including Thurstone's mental abilities test, Raven's intelligence test, the MMPI, Eysenck's personality scales, and an anxiety scale for pregnant women. Twelve more articles presented data concerning the psychometrical viability of self-report questionnaires that posed questions regarding assertiveness, self-concept, family structure, affective states evoked by music, perfectionism, alcohol use, and depression.

EDUCATIONAL/DEVELOPMENTAL PSYCHOLOGY

Twenty-one articles were published by educational and developmental psychologists, ten between 1990 and 1992, five between 1993

and 1995 interval, and six from 1996 to 1998. Within the volumes analyzed, there was a heavy emphasis on school performance. In most cases, the enhancement of school performance was the goal, either through instructional interventions, or by identifying the factors affecting school performance.

Articles addressed instructional procedures based on psychological principles, reporting the results of experimental studies on instructional interventions, such as using illustrations, making use of chronological guides to visit history museums, which reduced the number of study questions posed by students when presented as advanced organizers, and emphasizing children's comprehension and learning of historical knowledge. Another study compared the different scoring procedures by assigning gradients of error to incorrect responses in a multiple choice achievement test applied to high school students, suggesting the importance of instruction based on the analysis of errors made by the students. In addition, the superiority of images over written words was revealed by an additional experiment on children's ability to learn about the history of the universe. A further group of experiments explored the effects of response feedback and criteria of task progression on human relational learning, which led to inconclusive results. Six additional articles described instructional proposals, without including data concerning their effectiveness. Five of these papers proposed conceptual criteria for the construction of computerized instructional programs, and one referred to an educational program that purported to develop intellectual abilities in the classroom.

By identifying the variables related to school performance, it is assumed that interventions can be designed to solve problems, such as low academic achievement, school dropout, absenteeism, and so on. This was the purpose of several correlational studies and one literature review, which explored various factors associated with academic achievement measures or other indicators of school performance. Learning strategies, based on psychological principles such as programming study activities, systematic re-reading aimed at mastering a specific criterion, conceptually articulating themes to be studied, or explaining in one's own words the information studied, yielded higher achievement scores in university students. As described in another article, a tutorial program designed to maintain the high academic standards of achieving university students proved to be more effective than a regular program with no support from tutors. Another factor, identified as affecting the dropout rates among university students, was pathological personality traits. Finally, a study found significant

differences between public and private elementary school children in terms of the reasons they attributed to school failure; public school children tended to attribute failure on achievement tests more to internal factors than their private school counterparts.

Additional articles within this area included a correlational study on the effects of students' feedback on teacher performance and two descriptive studies, one on teacher satisfaction and the other on students' self-perceived academic achievement. A further article defined the concept of development in terms of progressive changes in the acquisition of social competence, which would allow for the identification of socially defined programs specifying normative constraints that are usually embedded in social expectancies related to age. The authors interpreted the similarities and diversities observed within those socially defined stages to be the result of the interaction between behavioral repertoires and social constraints.

PROFESSIONAL TRAINING OF PSYCHOLOGISTS

Four articles published in 1990, one in 1993, and one in 1998 dealt with the professional training of psychologists. One of these articles described an experimental study which tested two teaching strategies, appraising psychology students' learning of psychophysiological contents. Five papers discussed various issues concerning training practices, such as the need to increase the emphasis on methodology in the training of school psychologists, the development of a model linking theory and practice to train experts on mental retardation, the reasons advanced at the beginning of this century for the teaching of psychology, contingent analysis as a proposed strategy to relate basic and applied knowledge in psychology, and a description of current conceptual, training, and professional deficits and ways to overcome them, such as by reorganizing the psychology curricula, formalizing accreditation of programs and professional certification, supporting research groups, and reinforcing scientific and professional associations.

SOCIAL AND ENVIRONMENTAL PSYCHOLOGY

Of the 26 articles written on social psychology, four reported experimental data, 18 were of a descriptive or correlational nature, and four

were reviews of the literature. A small decrease has been observed in this area, from ten articles in the 1990 to 1992 volumes to nine papers that appeared from 1993 to 1995, to a mere seven articles in the 1996 to 1998 volumes.

One group of research articles addressed social interaction in children. A behavioral observation system proposed for the study of children's social behavior was developed and tested in two experimental studies. The same observation system, further developed and modified was assessed in another article, allowing for the collection of data related to the quality, content, direction and context of social interactions. In another article, using the same behavioral observation system, the ongoing study of social interaction in children was investigated, with a focus on the differential identification of coercive patterns of behavior in aggressive children, as contrasted with non-aggressive respondents. An experimental study conducted in Argentina evaluated the effectiveness of social skills training of disadvantaged children on the reduction of aggressive behaviors. The findings of the study pointed to the need to implement similar programs in socially disadvantaged communities.

Experimental studies proved to be an exception within this group, since descriptive and correlational studies using self-report questionnaires predominated. Besides experiments on children's social interaction, only one additional experimental study was found which explored abnegation in Mexican men and women. This experiment revealed abnegation behaviors in men and, not so clearly, in women. The same construct was addressed in a study using self-report questionnaires. Results suggested that there have been changes over the last 30 years in the conceptualization of abnegation in both genders, but especially in women. Along the same line, another article presented data on changes in the concepts of obedience and respect, pointing to less rigid attitudes among today's young generation.

A more comprehensive article offering a theoretical approach to cultural differences from the perspective of Mexican Ethnopsychology, reviewed research literature on personality dimensions among Mexicans. This line of research was evidenced in other articles published in the period under consideration including, for example, comparisons between Mexican and U.S. university students with respect to time perspective. Answers to a self-report questionnaire revealed more present-oriented attitudes in the Mexican students, but, contrary to the traditional stereotype, Mexican students reported more concern about arriving at appointments on time, and they became upset when

made to wait. An additional study investigated ethnic prejudice in Mexican university students, which depicted liberal arts students as less discriminating against minorities; however, this finding was not statistically significant, suggesting no difference in discriminatory attitudes in the studied sample. Morosity and the propensity to accept authoritarian solutions for national problems by Mexican university students were tested according to previously generated models. Conservatism was associated with acceptance of authoritarian solutions. A further study investigated prejudice among mental health professionals concerning femininity and masculinity. The professionals exhibited a disposition to perceive women's psychological complaints as more severe than those of men's, leading to biased diagnoses.

Several articles addressed environmental issues, but did not propose or test solutions for such problems. Their main purpose was to describe the opinions and beliefs collected with the help of self-report questionnaires.

HEALTH AND CLINICAL PSYCHOLOGY

The area containing the most articles (53) was health/clinical psychology, having 13 articles between 1990 and 1992, 16 between 1993 to 1995 (in 1994, a monograph on dementia added 7 articles), and 17 between 1996 to 1998. This area has grown in Mexico during the last decade, especially health psychology. Taking into account that most of the measurement instruments published are also related to clinical/health problems, it is the area that has received the most attention from researchers. The need for more reliable and valid diagnostic tools, for more effective treatments, in addition to the identification of psychological variables associated with psychological or physical dysfunctions, is reflected in articles published during this decade.

Several experimental studies tested intervention strategies. Biofeedback techniques were successfully used to treat synkinesis, the involuntary movement of part of the face. Replication of the latter results using an improved biofeedback procedure was achieved, successfully implementing a more sharply focused and specific training program. Patients learned to exert control over the automatic activation of the labial commissure during blinking and to decrease reflex movements typical of synkinesis. Biofeedback techniques have also been implemented to control the conscious use of the tongue in patients with hypoglossal-facial nerve anastomosis, i.e., activity of the

hemi-face provoked by the conscious use of the tongue. Other treatments such as cognitive-behavior therapy were also evaluated; an experimental study using this approach found improvement among patients experiencing vertigo after treatment. In addition, a behavioral intervention program was used to teach parents instructional skills, which diminished their children's misbehavior. Cognitive group interventions were also evaluated in other articles, with apparently satisfactory results. For instance, the most comprehensive experimental study, which included single mothers, tested the effects of a one-year-long cognitive intervention on coping skills, measured in terms of assertiveness, self-esteem, future-time perspective, conformism, locus of control, organizational capability, and four consciousness levels. A report about the psychosocial treatment of hospitalized mentally ill patients showed an encouraging reduction in symptoms and better psychosocial functioning among the group as compared to patients who were treated with traditional methods.

Alcohol abuse is another health problem frequently addressed by researchers. For instance, one article reported on alcohol consumption in a group of Costa Rican workers. Another study showed that when compared to children of alcoholic fathers, children of alcoholic mothers tend to present psychomotor impairment. A cognitive-behavioral treatment based on self-control procedures, a functional analysis of drinking behavior, and the identification of risk situations influencing excessive drinking was also reported. The goal of changing the drinking patterns of patients from excessive to moderate alcohol consumption was achieved in this study.

Psychological problems related to teen pregnancy and motherhood is a topic researched by various authors. Comparisons based on videotaped observations of infant-teenage mother interactions in two articles failed to identify differences between high-risk groups of teenage mothers and of adult mothers. Content analysis of the Latin American literature about teenage pregnancy revealed a predominance of descriptive methodologies and a gradual increase in collaboration among Latin American researchers. High-risk pregnancies and parental loss were described in another study, as well as the psychodynamic oriented treatment and interpretations conducted in a Mexican institution for high-risk pregnant women. Taking into account the influence of caregiver rearing practices on children's development, an article reviewed the literature on secure attachment between caregivers and children and its role in the amelioration of the risk of insecure attachment with biological mothers.

Research on prevention mainly involved the identification of risk factors. For instance, dysfunctional relationships with fathers were described by a group of adolescents and related to their psychological functioning. In addition, dysfunctional family interaction and parenting patterns were related to severe anxiety among adolescents. Some concrete aspects of the marital relationship between the subjects' parents, as well as the interaction between parents and the adolescent respondents were identified as risk factors. Another article proposed redirecting parent training based on the results of previous research that identified risk factors.

It was suggested that contingency analysis can be a useful tool for redefining psychological disorders. Based on the assumption that behavior considered deviant or abnormal is evaluated as a problem by the social reference group, contingency analysis offers an alternative conceptual framework to traditional clinical procedures. Other studies proposed that contingency analysis be used in gerontological studies to present experimental data. Contingency analysis was also used as a technique to functionally choose behavioral change procedures, and assess their outcome. Data suggested that most often, therapeutic interventions solve only some aspects of a specific psychological problem.

A study with students found that depression was associated with attempted suicide and premenstrual problems among adult women.

The detection of eating disorders, such as obesity, bulimia and anorexia nervosa on the basis of descriptive statistics has led to more recent correlational studies. One study suggested that individuals' distortion of body image preceded high-risk practices associated with eating disorders. A distorted body image found among older adolescents and preadolescents was accompanied by a strong motivation to achieve thinness. In addition, videotaped interactions recorded in obese families revealed dysfunctional communication patterns when compared to interactions occurring in normal-weight families.

AIDS was also addressed during the period considered. Seventy percent of university students who answered a self-report questionnaire reported having knowledge about AIDS. The belief that the use of a condom reduces pleasure during sexual intercourse was seen as a possible risk factor.

Parkinson's disease (PD) has been one of the problems receiving special attention from Mexican health and clinical researchers. A literature review on the symptoms, pathogenesis, and treatment of PD provided evidence from experimental studies demonstrating that the

loss of dopaminergic cells in the mesencephalon, which has been associated with the disease, can be reversed by transplanting dopamine-containing cells to specific dopamine-depleted areas of the brain. Other reviews remarked on the occurrence of cognitive disorders in PD patients, including memory, language, visual perception, visuospatial processing, and behavioral planning deficits. Some patients even present global dementia. An experimental study evaluating the neuropsychological effects on PD patients after they received an autograft of adrenal medullary tissue to the caudate nucleus, reported improvements in motor and cognitive symptomatology in some patients. More recently, depression was found to be common among PD patients, but apparently unrelated to the clinical stage and progression of the disease. Furthermore, women and aging PD patients tended to display more severe depressive states.

Alzheimer's disease (AD) was the subject of various articles, which described cognitive changes associated with the disease, and tried to propose experimental models to evaluate potential therapies. In 1994, a special issue was published on dementia, and it specifically included AD, one of the dementias most frequently studied. It was proposed that there should be quantification of pathological findings in order to facilitate diagnosis of AD. Furthermore, findings on neuroimaging contributed additional tools for diagnosing AD. The use of event-related-potentials, mainly P300, offered also the possibility of refining the differentiation between demential disorders and other cognitive deficits. Some findings concerning its etiology suggested a genetic linkage. However, findings suggesting linkage with markers on the long arm of chromosome 21 in some families, on chromosome 19 in others and, more recently, on chromosome 14, lend support to the hypothesis of genetic heterogeneity in AD. Four types of psychiatric disorders were identified in patients suffering from dementia: delusions of being physically damaged, delusions about, or hallucinations of, imaginary companions, presbyophrenia, and confabulation of denial. All of these appear to be related to anxiety generated by loss of intellectual abilities. Huntington's disease, an inherited neurodegenerative condition, involving involuntary movements and loss of intellectual skills, was reviewed, and it was proposed that multidisciplinary programs be designed to counsel families diagnosed with the disease.

Split brain deficits affecting patients' linguistic, sensory, emotion, attention, memory, and reaction time tasks were described in a research review article.

Further studies focused on the relationship between psychology and health within the area of health psychology, mental health in mental health professionals, mental health professionals as depicted in movies, chronic pain, and trauma linked to disadvantaged conditions of poor communities.

INDUSTRIAL–ORGANIZATIONAL PSYCHOLOGY (I/O)

Traditionally, Mexican industrial-organizational psychologists relied only rarely on research findings for use in their professional practice, and they usually did not conduct research. This situation was reflected in the limited number of articles published with possible applied implications in this specialty area. One article explored the self-esteem of women workers with respect to employee seniority. Discriminant analyses showed that women with more job seniority valued themselves positively as workers, but negatively as housewives. Another article presented a structural work-avoidance model, based on personality variables. Apparently, a lack of control, mediated by the fear of failure and risk-taking, plays a significant role in work avoidance. Both studies made use of self-report questionnaires.

It is interesting to note that the area of I/O is more professionally oriented and has not been subjected to research scrutiny. There is no record of recognized research periodicals on I/O Psychology in Mexico, and the aim of those articles published in the *MJP* is not to promote professional interventions based on psychological data. In the coming years, this area should be developed by creating university programs to train researchers.

THEORETICAL AND HISTORICAL PSYCHOLOGY

Nine articles addressing general theoretical problems in psychology were published during the period; six from 1990 to 1992, two between 1993 and 1995, and one in 1997. One can observe a decrease in published theoretical papers during the last decade probably due to an interest in more research articles in contrast to theoretical/historical articles, and the more stringent criteria used to evaluate theoretical and historical manuscripts.

Articles on the history of psychology stressed common problems in the study of historical events, and criticized historical papers present-

ing merely a recollection of facts. It was alleged that the methodology of historical accounts in any discipline should systematically consider the continuous interaction between present and past, in order to explain the present as being guided by the past. Additionally, the need to train specialists in the history of psychology was repeatedly emphasized. Criticism of eclecticism in psychology was based on three basic arguments: it is impossible to be eclectic when theoretical principles are truly respected; lack of in-depth knowledge of different theoretical approaches leads to a pragmatic attitude; and eclecticism does not permit assessment and theoretical perfection.

One article proposed that, as an alternative to Freud's theory of instincts, which is based on a sort of thermodynamics, the concepts of man and his basic needs should be placed within Fromm's socioculturally oriented form of psychoanalysis. Also, from the psychoanalytic perspective, another article proposed a relationship between libidinal and aggressive drives to account for resentment and forgiveness.

Knowledge representation was addressed according to a Natural Semantics Network model. Advantages and disadvantages of the model were discussed, concluding that the model must be adapted to new developments in cognitive psychology and to research needs.

Instead of psychological schools, it was proposed that systems were more specific and less dogmatic. The experimental Synthesis of Behavior was presented as a unifying paradigm for all psychology.

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