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Interactive management of the CSR communication of Argentinian companies on Facebook

Gestión interactiva de la comunicación de la RSE de las empresas de Argentina en Facebook

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Abstract

Facebook has become an important tool for CSR communication. Interactive management of CSR communication on Facebook helps increase the levels of trust and transparency between companies and their stakeholders. Consequently, it could positively influence corporate reputation. The objective of this study is to analyze how Argentinian companies communicate CSR activities to their stakeholders on Facebook. The study includes a specific analysis of CSR activity, content, communication resources and interaction. The objectives were achieved by undertaking content analysis of 4 456 posts by Argentinian companies on the social network in 2015 and 2016. The results indicate that companies are using Facebook to communicate their CSR activities. However, communication is more focused on economic issues than on CSR issues. The communication model is not very interactive, which means that companies are missing out on the capabilities offered by the social network for promoting dialogue about CSR with their stakeholders. A review of CSR communication strategies on Facebook is suggested in order to establish effective relationships with stakeholders.

Resumen

Facebook se ha convertido en una herramienta importante para la comunicación de la RSE. Gestionar de forma interactiva la comunicación de la RSE a través de Facebook ayuda a las empresas a aumentar los niveles de confianza y transparencia con sus públicos, y como consecuencia esto puede contribuir positivamente a la reputación corporativa. El objetivo de este estudio es analizar cómo las empresas de Argentina comunican las actividades de RSE a sus públicos en Facebook. El estudio incluye un análisis específico de la actividad de RSE, los contenidos, los recursos de comunicación y la interacción. Los objetivos fueron alcanzados mediante el análisis de contenido de 4456 posts de empresas de Argentina en la red social en 2015 y 2016. Los resultados indican que las empresas están utilizando Facebook para comunicar sus actividades de RSE. Sin embargo, la comunicación está más centrada en los temas económicos que en los temas de RSE. El modelo de comunicación es poco interactivo, lo cual significa que las empresas están desaprovechando las capacidades de la red social para promover el diálogo sobre la RSE con sus públicos. Se sugiere revisar las estrategias de comunicación de la RSE en Facebook para lograr relaciones efectivas con los públicos.

Keywords | palabras clave

Corporate Social Responsibility, corporate communication, Facebook, companies, interaction.
Responsabilidad Social Empresarial, comunicación corporativa, Facebook, empresas, interacción.

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1. Introduction and State of the Art

In the last decades, Argentina has undergone processes for its insertion in the global economic market. The opening of international markets, together with corporate mergers and acquisitions in Latin America, prompted changes in the business management model in Argentina. The relationship of companies with different actors raised the need to increase confidence and transparency levels, not only in terms of economic benefits, but also in terms of social responsibility.

Any initiative that companies take to achieve trust and legitimacy through responsible behavior must include their capacity to respond to the needs of the public and establish contact with them. Bögel (2015) states that one of the challenges that companies face is to make the public believe in their CSR activities. In this sense, CSR communication becomes a key aspect in promoting and strengthening the relationship of companies with their public through dialogue and active participation.

CSR contributes to integration in the social environment, and its communication favors corporate reputation (Kim, 2017; Lee, 2016). But positive reputation only yields when the public actively participates in the communication of the activities (Eisenegger & Schranz, 2011). Therefore, interaction becomes an important element in the strategic management of CSR communication.

Social networks have changed the way in which CSR is communicated. They have become one-to-one key tools for communicating CSR (Capriotti, 2017; Cortado & Chalmeta, 2016), and modified the way companies have established relationships with the public (Kim, Park & Wertz, 2010; Park & Reber, 2008; Taylor & Kent, 2014). The impact of the Internet and the Web 2.0 on corporate communication has generated an evolution of traditional CSR communication towards interactive CSR communication between organizations and the public. The Web 2.0 increased the ability of users to influence and contribute to CSR content (Kilgour, Sasser & Larke, 2015).

Therefore, the aim of this study is to analyze how companies in Argentina communicate their CSR activities to their audiences on Facebook.

Facebook, the social network with the largest number of monthly active followers (Kemp, 2018), aids in the effective communication of CSR activities to the public. This social network allows close and direct dialogue and interaction between companies and users. However, as stated by Losada-Díaz & Capriotti (2015), the fact that companies have profiles on Facebook does not generate greater participation and visibility. For this to happen, it is necessary to understand social networks as communication tools that serve to establish and maintain relationships with the public, through active participation in the social network. Experts and professionals recommend that companies publish between 1 and 2 posts per day (Jordan, 2017; Patel, 2016). However, studies conclude that the activity level of companies in Facebook is generally low (Devaney, 2015; Quintly, 2016). Thus, the first specific objective is to determine the level of the CSR activity that companies have on Facebook.

The public can have two association levels linked to the companies' two basic roles: the economic role and the social role (Berens & Van Riel, 2004; Carroll, 1999; Haigh, Brubaker & Whiteside, 2013). The economic role is related to economic-legal responsibilities for the production of goods and services. The social role is linked to social responsibility related to environmental issues, human resource management, as well as economic and social contributions to the community.

Companies are using social networks to communicate information about their social and economic roles. But studies indicate that companies are focusing most of their social network communication on the economic role (Cho, Furey & Mohr, 2016; Haigh *et al.*, 2013; Park & Lee, 2016; Torres, 2017), especially commercial issues (Macnamara, 2016), rather than featuring social issues. Researches show that less than 20% of the content disseminated by companies relate to CSR issues (Cho *et al.*, 2016; Kim, Kim & Hoon Sung, 2014). Thus, as a second specific objective, this paper proposes to determine the type of CSR content that companies are handling on Facebook.

Companies have a number of resources: graphic resources (image, text and emoticons), interactive (links, tags to users and hashtags) and audiovisuals (audio-videos and animated images—GIF) to communicate CSR activities on Facebook. The use of these resources helps disseminate content in an attractive manner, generating interaction and dialogue with the public. Among the available resources, audiovisuals stand out, since they are more effective to increase engagement (Pletikosa Cvijikj & Michahelles, 2013). Despite the strong potential and growth in the use of videos on the Internet and social networks (Fosk, 2017; Smith, 2017; Valentine, 2017), graphic resources are more commonly used to disseminate content on social networks. Thus, as a third specific objective, this paper analyzes the communication resources used by companies to present CSR content on Facebook.

Facebook's ability to generate dialogue between companies and the public allows CSR communication to be interactive as opposed to simply informative. To generate dialogue and interaction on published content, Facebook offers 3 options that can be used simultaneously by users: *likes*, *shares* and *comments*. *Likes* are the passive way of voicing appreciation of the contents without verbal expression, *shares* allow users to become voluntary spokespersons of the messages of other users to their own social groups, and *comments* help to establish direct conversations between users (Abitbol & Lee, 2017).

Despite the interest and willingness of users to interact and discuss the contents of companies (Cho, Schweickart & Haase, 2014), companies mainly disseminate informative content on Facebook (Shin, Pang & Kim, 2015). Thus, as the fourth specific objective, this paper proposes to study the types of interactions generated on CSR contents for these companies on Facebook.

2. Material and methods

The objects of study are the main companies in Argentina. For the sample, those with the best reputation were selected, as they are considered leaders in communication management issues and promoters of innovation in digital communication.

For this purpose, the annual *mercoEmpresas* corporate reputation study prepared by MERCO was taken as a reference, and the companies present in the Argentina ranking were selected. Companies with stability in the market for four consecutive years (from 2013 to 2016) were chosen, to avoid selecting enterprises with recent success. Thus, the final sample included 26 companies: Arcor, Cervecería and Maltería Quilmes, Mercedes Benz, Rio de la Plata Mills, Volkswagen, Toyota, Nestlé, Banco Galicia, Kimberly Clark, American Express, Mastellone Hnos. (La Serenissima), Orange Card, Bayer, PSA Citroen, PSA Peugeot, Sony, Samsung, General Motors, SanCor, Santander Rio, Ford, Renault, BBVA French, Techint Group, Bagó, Apple.

To select the profiles of companies on Facebook, the official corporate *fanpages* of this social network were considered at the national level. The *fanpages* were located through direct links to Facebook in the companies' official websites, or through popular Internet search engines. The profiles that could not be verified were discarded. Finally, 23 *fanpages* from Argentina were detected. This indicates that the most of the companies have a Facebook presence (more than 88.5%).

The units of analysis were the posts published in the corporate *fanpages* of the companies in Argentina in 2015 and 2016. Publications were selected during 2 weeks per month for 12 months: from January to June 2015 (posts from odd weeks) and from July to December 2016 (posts from even weeks). The final sample consisted of 4 456 posts.

To achieve the objectives set for this study, four research questions (RQ) were established, based on «activity», «content», «communication resources» and «interaction».

RQ 1: What level of CSR activity do companies have on Facebook? (Activity)

RQ2: What types of CSR content are disseminated by companies on Facebook? (Contents)

RQ3: What kind of resources do companies use to communicate their CSR activities on Facebook? (Communication Resources)

RQ4: Are companies using Facebook to interact and discuss their CSR activities? (Interaction)

Thus, four categories of analysis were defined based on the established research questions (RQ); these were developed and tested in previous studies (*v.gr.* Capriotti, Carretón, & Castillo, 2016; Losada-Díaz & Capriotti, 2015).

For RQ1, the category of «activity» was developed, which enables the determination of CSR activity levels obtained by calculating the average of daily and weekly publications on Facebook.

For RQ2, the «content» category was established, which enables the identification of the main topics discussed by the companies. For this, 3 key dimensions were identified: (a) Business issues: issues related to the business, commercial and corporate activities of companies. For this dimension, four topics were identified: strategies (information related to business policies and strategies), results (information on business, financial, economic and stock market results), supply (information related to the characteristics of products, services and brands) and innovation (information on the key aspects of creative and productive innovation); (b) CSR issues: issues related to the company's daily CSR activities. For this dimension, three topics were identified: integrity (information linked to commitments, strategies, policies and responsible practices at the level of the company's management, commercial and marketing management), work (information on labor aspects and employment of the company, information on the commitments, strategies, policies and responsible practices at the management level of the organization's human resources department), and citizenship (information related to the commitments, strategies, policies, responsible practices for the company at a social and environmental level); and (c) Context issues: issues related to the general situation of the company. For this dimension, three topics were identified: general context (aspects that do not have to do with the business activity), sectorial context (aspects that have to do with the business activity) and relational context (aspects that have to do with the relationship of the company with the stakeholders).

For RQ3, the category of «communication resources» was developed, which allows determining the resources used for the dissemination of contents. Thus, the following graphical resources (text, image and/or emoticon), interactive resources (links, hashtags and/or tags to users), and audiovisual (animated image and/or audio-video) were defined. In this analysis, more than one possible resource can be included.

For RQ4, the category «interaction» was established, which allows evaluating the tools available on Facebook to promote interaction on the contents published by companies in their corporate *fanpages*. Thus, 3 analysis dimensions were defined: (1) Level of Support: determined by the volume of *likes* obtained in the posts; (2): Viralization level: determined by the volume of *shares* obtained in the posts; and (3) Conversation level: determined by the volume of *comments* from the companies and users in the posts.

The methodology used was the content analysis of *posts*. A monitoring tool available on the Internet called Fanpage Karma® was used to collect data. The approach of the categories of analysis allowed the design of a template on Excel, in which the sample data were overturned and codified.

3. Analysis and results

The results are presented below, based on the research questions (RQ) developed in the methodology. The findings indicate that companies have a very good presence on Facebook. Almost 90% of the companies analyzed are present in the social network studied (88.5%).

3.1. Activity of companies on Facebook

The results regarding activity (RQ1) indicate that the companies have an activity level that is quite high. At least 1 post daily per company from Argentina is published, between 7 and 8 posts per week (see table 1).

Tabla 1. Activity level of companies on Facebook

Activity	Total	Business	CSR	Context
General Total	4 456	3 300	480	669
Daily average	1.1	0.8	0.1	0.2
Weekly average	7.5	5.5	0.8	1.1

From the subjects covered by companies on Facebook (Table 1), it is detected that about 1 CSR post is published per week, compared to an average of 5 and 6 business posts per week. That is, CSR issues are addressed much less frequently than commercial issues, and somewhat less than context issues. While publications on CSR issues represent 1 in 7 or 8 posts, business topics represent 5 or 6 of every 7 or 8 posts, so the latter are much closer to the suggested average.

3.2. Content disseminated by companies on Facebook

In relation to the content (RQ2), the results show that most of the posts refer to business topics. That is, companies focus on communicating economic issues. Almost 75% of posts report on business, commercial and corporate activities. The presence of posts related to CSR issues corresponds to a seventh part of business topics. About 10% of posts talk about social and environmental responsibilities. Although the difference is not significant, it should also be noted that companies grant more priority to contextual issues than to the current communication of CSR activities (see table 2).

Tabla 2. Content disseminated by companies on Facebook (%)

Content	%
Business issues	74.1
CSR issues	10.9
Context issues	15.0

Table 3 shows that companies concentrate their communication mainly on citizenship issues, i.e, social and environmental commitments and responsibilities (71%). Sometimes they disseminate messages on labor and employment aspects of the company, as well as commitments, policies and responsible practices at the level of human resources management (18.5%), and virtually never talk about responsible policies and practices at the level of company management or commercial and marketing management of the organization (10.4%).

From the total number of publications related to business issues, around 70% respond to the commercial offer, i.e, to the characteristics of the products, services and brands (Table 3). Business policies and strategies are also dealt with quite frequently (22%). Productive innovation and financial results are rarely addressed.

Tabla 3. CSR and business contents (%)

<table>
<tr><th>Content</th><th>Dimensions</th><th>%</th></tr>
<tr><td rowspan="4">Business</td><td>Business strategy</td><td>22.0</td></tr>
<tr><td>Financial results</td><td>0.1</td></tr>
<tr><td>Commercial offer</td><td>69.8</td></tr>
<tr><td>Productive innovation</td><td>8.0</td></tr>
<tr><td rowspan="3">CSR</td><td>Government and ethics</td><td>10,4</td></tr>
<tr><td>HR and employment</td><td>18,5</td></tr>
<tr><td>Social and environmental commitment</td><td>71,0</td></tr>
</table>

3.3. Communication resources used by companies on Facebook

Based on the results of communication resources (RQ3), it can be seen that companies mainly use graphic resources to create and communicate their CSR content on Facebook (see table 4). Virtually all publications have text (96.8%), include images (82.3%), and use emoticons very rarely (14.3%). This is a relevant fact as they present information in a friendly and informal way, while helping to transmit emotions and feelings more effectively.

Audiovisual resources are the least used by companies to share information about their CSR activities. The presence of audio-videos and animated images is approximately 15%. The videos found represent around 6 times less the percentage of images, that is, that there is one video per every 6/7 images.

On the other hand, an outstanding percentage of posts contain *hashtags* (46%) and *links* (51%). This indicates that at least half of the posts include one or more interactive resources, promoting the interaction of users on the CSR activities of the companies.

Tabla 4.Communication resources of companies on Facebook (%)

Recursos	Aspectos	%
Gráficos	Texto	96,8
	Imagen fija	82,3
	Emoticones	14,3
Audiovisuales	Imagen animada	7,5
	Audio-video	12,3
Interactivos	Etiqueta a usuarios	22,1
	Hashtags	46,0
	Link	51,7

3.4. Interacción generada en los contenidos de las empresas en Facebook

Finally, the interactions results (RQ4) show that interactions generated in the publications of the companies mainly rely on the high level of support obtained. The volume of *likes* obtained exceeds in a very significant way the volume of *shares* and *comments* obtained on CSR activities (table 5). While the level of support reaches 90% of the interactions generated by users, the level of viralization and conversation as a whole barely reaches 10% of the interactions. In addition, in relation to the total of *comments* (4%), almost all respond to comments from users. This indicates that users have an interest in discussing CSR activities of companies, but companies have very little interest in intervening in the conversations. Practically no comments from the companies are found in their own publications (0.4%).

Tabla 5. Interaction of companies on Facebook (%)

Interaction Level	%
Level of support (likes)	90,3
Viralization level (shares)	5,3
Conversation level (comments)	4,4
Comments from companies	0,4
Comments from users	4,0

4. Discussion and conclusions

Social networks have changed the communication of CSR. Facebook has become a very important tool for companies by modifying relations with the public. This social network allows companies to communicate their CSR activities, generating dialogue and establishing relationships with their public. The communication of CSR activities on Facebook helps to promote relationships with users and, as a result, helps to consolidate a corporate reputation. However, this is possible if there is an active participation of the companies in the social network.

Companies have a significant presence on Facebook, and the results of their «activity» (RQ1) indicate that they are publishing content on a regular basis. This frequency is minimally adequate according to the average number of publications recommended by professionals and experts (1 and 2 *posts* daily per company), and corresponds to the results of other previous studies (Estudio de Comunicación, 2017).

As for the «contents» (RQ2), it is detected that the CSR issues are very rarely discussed by companies in Argentina. The companies are using Facebook mainly to disseminate information on commercial issues (specifically the communication of products, services and brands offered). These results reaffirm what was stated by Eisenegger and Schranz (2011) and Haigh *et al.* (2013), who pointed out that the contents presented by companies are focused on business. The communication of CSR activities is rarely discussed by the companies, and if it happens the focus is mainly on social and environmental commitments. Issues of integrity and work are limited.

Regarding «communication resources» (RQ3), it is observed that companies continue to have a firm tendency to use graphic resources when creating and disseminating CSR activities. Although Facebook has made available a series of resources that help interacting with users, such as audiovisual and interactive contents (Pletikosa Cvijikj & Michahelles, 2013), companies continue to use mainly images and text. This shows that the possibilities offered by Facebook to promote dialogue with users are being largely ignored.

In relation to «interaction» (RQ4), it is clear that there is a strong interest on the part of the stakeholders to interact on the publications of the companies, but very little interest of the companies to keep a dialogue with stakeholders. The level of user support is high; however the level of viralization and conversation is quite low. This may be the result of two possible reasons. On the one hand, companies may not be promoting enough interaction through the creation of CSR content, including interactive and audiovisual resources, which generate a higher level of commitment by the stakeholder; on the other hand, because they are using the social network as a channel for disseminating information and not for communicating. A study suggests that the conversations and interactions generated by companies in social networks affect the public's attitude towards and confidence in companies (Kim, 2017), and the fact that Argentinian companies practically do not intervene in conversations with users affects relations with the public.

Thus, companies are using Facebook to communicate their CSR activities, but their level of activity in the social network is low. In addition, they are communicating from a business perspective rather than from a CSR scope, with a unidirectional communication model.

When Facebook is included in the communication of CSR strategies, companies should understand it as a key instrument to interact and engage with their stakeholders; thus, maintaining active participation in CSR issues and dialoguing with the public are basic aspects of communication management on Facebook. However, companies are failing to take advantage of Facebook's dialogical capabilities to establish relationships with their public, and to discuss their CSR activities. Their presence in the social network is aimed at achieving greater visibility. Therefore, companies in Argentina should review their communication strategies on Facebook in order to generate dialogue with the public. This allows knowing the opinions, interests and expectations of the clients regarding CSR activities, getting them involved and participating in these issues in order to increase transparency and contribute to corporate reputation.

This study has contributed to the development of an integrative methodology that allows analyzing the dialogic communication of CSR on Facebook. The study was applied to the companies with the best corporate reputation in Argentina and their results show the situation. However, in future research this methodology could be applied to other social networks such as Twitter, Instagram, etc., and/or to other organizations in different countries of the world to see if the results can be replicated with other organizations and social networks.

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Corporate volunteering within social responsibility strategies of IBEX 35 companies

El voluntariado corporativo en la estrategia de responsabilidad social de las empresas del IBEX 35

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Abstract

Corporate volunteering is on the rise in companies as they strive to improve their reputation and the level of commitment of employees through policies of social responsibility. In turn, employees simultaneously contribute their time and skills to improving local communities. This research analyzes the implementation of corporate volunteering programs in IBEX 35 companies based on content analysis of their web pages and annual reports. The percentage of companies that do not have a corporate volunteering program is 25.71%, despite the fact that the Technology and Telecommunications sector have a 100% implementation rate of such programs. Out of all IBEX 35 companies, 45.71% perform volunteering activities related to their business activity, and such actions are mainly social, educational and environmental. Moreover, from the companies on the IBEX 35, 54.29% specifically include Sustainable Development Goals in their corporate volunteering actions. There are few incentives for employees, and 49.57% of companies expressly state that corporate volunteering activities cannot be carried out during working hours. Communication by companies of these volunteer programs has become more specific. As such, 28.57% of companies have a corporate network and their own website to promote the management and visibility of these programs, even if there is only one company, Telefónica, which offers social networks specifically committed to its corporate volunteering program, is the only company with a commission for selecting volunteers.

Resumen

El voluntariado corporativo se encuentra en auge en las empresas, que mejoran su reputación y el compromiso de los empleados con la política de responsabilidad social de la organización, a la vez que éstos contribuyen con su tiempo y habilidades a la mejora de las comunidades locales. Esta investigación analiza la implantación del voluntariado corporativo en las empresas del IBEX 35 a partir de un análisis de contenido de sus páginas web e informes anuales. El 25,71% de las empresas no tiene un programa de voluntariado corporativo declarado, a pesar de que en el sector Tecnología y Telecomunicaciones la implantación es del 100%. El 45,71% presenta un enfoque hacia su actividad empresarial y las acciones son principalmente sociales, educativas y medioambientales, incluyendo el 54,29% los Objetivos de Desarrollo Sostenible (ODS) específicamente en sus acciones de voluntariado corporativo. Según la información recabada, existen pocos incentivos para los empleados y el 49,57% de las empresas informa expresamente que no se podrá realizar voluntariado corporativo durante la jornada laboral. La comunicación comienza a ser específica, contando un 28,57% de las empresas con una marca de voluntariado corporativo ad hoc y un sitio web propio para fomentar la gestión y visibilidad de estos programas, a pesar de que sólo una empresa, Telefónica, dispone de redes sociales monotemáticas sobre su voluntariado corporativo, siendo también la única empresa que cuenta con una comisión de selección de voluntarios.

Keywords | palabras clave

Corporate Social Responsibility, corporate volunteering, IBEX 35, employee volunteering, organizational citizenship behavior, corporate brand.
Responsabilidad Social Corporativa, voluntariado corporativo, IBEX 35, voluntariado de empleados, conducta cívica organizacional, marca corporativa.

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1. Introduction

Corporate volunteering is a company's formal organization of programs for employees who o put their skills and time at the service of the community voluntarily and disinterestedly (Wild, 1993). To this end, specific programs are developed in which employees can participate as a team, or in which work hours are released in exchange for participating individually in volunteer programs of Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs) in areas such as education, health, environment, support to young people or elderly people, among others (Solomon *et al.*, 1991). Corporate volunteering is a growing global phenomenon (*v. gr.* Caligiuri, Mencin, & Jiang, 2013; Rodell *et al.*, 2016; Licandro, 2017) mainly located in companies, since corporate volunteering within non-profit organizations is fully integrated with the services they provide (Roza *et al.*, 2017); despite the fact that NGOs, as organizations, have the possibility of collaborating with companies to organize corporate volunteering programs (Samuel, Wolf, & Schiling, 2013).

Corporate volunteering must be contextualized within the «reputation economy» (Johndrow, 2010) and the creation of shared value (Porter & Kramer, 2011), in which the work is a purely economic factor and acquires value as a socio-cultural phenomenon (Jones, 2011), as employees wish to express significant values that reinforce their integrity and that are inherent to volunteering activities (Brockner, Senior & Welch, 2014).

The reasons employees perform corporate volunteering include loyalty to the organization, the opportunity to improve their network of contacts, the development of skills, and personal satisfaction by the help provided (Loosemore & Bridgeman, 2017); even when they recognize the influence that the company has on the decision beyond the personal benefits provided by good actions (Peloza & Hassay, 2006) and the altruistic reasons (Peloza, Hudson, & Hassay, 2009). Younger employees are the most likely to participate in corporate volunteering (Peterson, 2004; Waikayi *et al.*, 2012), despite for the continued motivation by hands of the company for participating (Pajo, & Lee, 2011). In addition, female employees show more job satisfaction related to volunteering, a fact that is not present in male employees (Peterson, 2004a). Likewise, gender inequality was evident in Canada, as it identified lower probabilities among female employees to receive the company's support in volunteer work as a free time (MacPhail, & Bowles, 2009).

The main benefits of corporate volunteering for the organization that promotes it are reputation (Cycyota, Ferrante & Schroeder, 2016), the attraction of talent, the development of greater skills (Jones, 2016) and the training that employees acquire (Loosemore & Bridgeman, 2017). In effect, the attraction of talent must be linked to the commitment shown by employees regarding the company's mission, insofar as these values are shared, expanding networks of contacts with individuals who share similar values in their working environment. (Bhattacharya, Sen & Korschun, 2008). Additionally, a company's initiatives in social responsibility improve the identification of the employee with the company, their attitude, relationship and behavior towards the company (Gilder *et al.*, 2005; Muthuri, Matten & Moon, 2009; Kim *et al.*, 2010). Despite this identification with the company, volunteering has not been associated with higher levels of compliance in US companies (Houghton, Gabel & Williams, 2009).

It is precisely in a working environment of mutual trust where employees offer their creativity and experience (Kim & Mauborgne, 1997). Positive volunteer experiences that are accompanied by the support of company management encourage employees to continue participating (Grant, 2012) and increase their loyalty to the organization (Carroll, 1990). Despite this, it cannot be ignored the business strategy component that is implicit in any social responsibility action (Porter & Kramer, 2006) and the positive perception it arouses in its strategic publics—*stakeholders*—(Plewa *et al.*, 2015), which makes it more likely for big companies to promote corporate volunteering in a more formal, strategic and generalized way than smaller ones (Basil *et al.*, 2011), although these should improve the training of volunteers, since it is the least satisfactory aspect for them (Do-Paco, & Nave, 2013).

Corporate volunteering programs have introduced Sustainable Development Goals (SDG), which the United Nations (2015) has promoted among companies as active agents to achieve the 17 goals set for the year 2030. Although traditionally it has been considered that the communication of social responsibility actions should be consistent with a company's activities, a form of coherence known as *fit* to achieve more persuasive conviction regarding the honesty of the organization that has been questioned (Villagra, Cárdaba, & Ruiz San Román, 2016).

Beyond the reputation, it is necessary to consider different types of implementation according to the time allowed by the organization. In this sense, a study carried out in Canada showed that passive support for volunteering took the form of unpaid free time (71%) and the adjustment of working hours (78%), while active support with free time remunerated to be allocated to participate in volunteering was reduced to 29% (Basil *et al.*, 2009). Corporate volunteers have the support of family and friends to occupy their time in these tasks, but their work performance may be subjected to distractions if their volunteering experience does not involve learning (Hu *et al.*, 2016). Although there are no regulatory initiatives in this regard, the Conservative Party of the United Kingdom included in its 2015 electoral program the requirement that all big companies and public bodies grant three paid annual days to their employees to participate in volunteer programs (Smith, 2017), but the crisis that unleashed *Brexit* with the subsequent resignation of the Prime Minister David Cameron, caused the reassignment of this measure.

In short, corporate volunteering has gained status within social responsibility programs in companies, especially big ones, so it is necessary to assess the degree of implementation in companies listed on the IBEX 35 as points of reference in Spain.

2. Material and methods

This research seeks to determine the implementation degree of corporate volunteering within the social responsibility strategy of IBEX 35 companies. To do so, the following specific objectives are stated: i) Establish the implementation of corporate volunteer programs by business sectors of the IBEX 35; ii) Determine the companies in which these programs are implemented and; iii) Recommend good practices regarding the involvement of employees and communication of these programs based on the variables analyzed.

The starting hypothesis (*H0*) is that the main Spanish companies have not yet developed their corporate volunteering programs in relation to the involvement of their employees, and especially in the communication and public information directed to their stakeholders.

The methodology is based on content analysis of corporate websites, sustainability reports and social responsibility reports of the IBEX 35 companies to identify the information related to corporate volunteering carried out by them. Content analysis was carried out during March 2018 from the census carried out in the companies listed on the IBEX 35 at the beginning of that month, grouped into six sectors established by the Madrid Stock Exchange (see table 1).

Table 1. IBEX 35 companies by sector

Sectors	Business
Oil and energy (Sector 1)	Enagas Endesa Gas Natural Iberdrola REE Repsol
Basic materials, industry and construction (Sector 2)	Acciona Acerinox ACS Arcelormittal Ferrovial Siemens Gamesa Técnicas Reunidas
Consumer goods (Sector 3)	Grifols Inditex Viscofan
Consumer services (Sector 4)	Abertis AENA DAY IAG Mediaset Meliá Hotels Intl.
Financial and real estate services (Sector 5)	Bankia Bankinter BBVA Caixa Bank Inmobiliaria Colonial Mapfre Merlin Properties Sabadell Santander
Technology and telecommunications (Sector 6)	Amadeus Cellnex Telecom Indra Telefónica

The content analysis is made from three categories, consisting of 18 variables in total, emerging from a pre-review of structured dimensions in the review of the scientific literature and the previous analysis of a pilot sample constituted by the 6 companies quoted with the highest growth in February 2018—immediately before the study date—in relation to the leader for each sector referenced in table 1. The list of categories and variables is structured according to the following breakdown (see table 2):

Table 2. Categories and analysis variables

Categories	Variables
Programa de voluntariado corporativo	Management responsibility through its Foundation. Collaboration with professional social organizations. Complies with SDG. Actions related to main business activity. Category of activities performed. Total active participants. Volunteer selection committee. Participants from outside the organization. No. of countries.
Incentives for employees	Rewards. Volunteer of the year award. Volunteering during the work day. Expenses covered in solidarity holidays. Online volunteering. International programs.
Program communication	Program brand. Dedicated web. Dedicated social networks.

3. Results

Despite the increase of corporate volunteering within the social responsibility plans of IBEX 35 companies, 25.71% of them still do not have a specific program for their employees and are limited to making only financial contributions to NGOs or other organizations through a strategy closer to sponsorship and patronage than to a social responsibility plan. The «Oil and Energy» and «Technology and Telecommunications» sectors present corporate volunteering in 100% of the companies of this Spanish stock market index. On the contrary, in the «Consumer Services» category, only 33.33% of companies have implemented a similar program.

A total of 28.57% claim they work with their corporate volunteering programs through their foundations, with an increase of 57.14% in the «Basic Materials» sector. Surprisingly, 54.29% of the total offer no information in this regard. 17.14% of the companies trust the management of their programs to specific departments, as it is the case of the financial institutions BBVA—Area of Talent and Culture—or Santander—Sustainability Committee. A tendency on the rise is to combine both models with the creation of committees formed by several departments. Such is the case of Gas Natural, which brings together Human Resources, Communications and Environment. Another trend is to integrate the management of the foundation with departmental support, as

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in the case of Endesa, Mapfre or Telefónica. Caixa Bank deserves a special mention, as it has been set up by La Caixa Association of Volunteers to fully manage its volunteer programs, including the corporate one.

Although 54.29% comply with Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) expressly in their corporate volunteering, 20% still do not include them, although they do so within their sustainability objectives in the environmental field. In this sense, all companies in the «Oil and Energy» sector incorporate them.

In relation to the *fit* of social responsibility actions that organizations must decide in relation to their activity, 45.71% of the companies mainly focus their corporate volunteering actions towards their own activity, although this is suited to some social purposes. Despite this, 25.71% establish these activities according to the public and local communities they interact with, with a greater presence of diverse activities.

«Consumer Services» is the sector that has the least dependence on its activity when orienting the theme of its declared corporate volunteering (16.67%). These activities are mainly social (65.71%), educational, training or awareness (57.14%), environmental (40.00%), inclusion (34.29%), health (25.71%) and others of various kinds (17.14%).

The total number of active participants declared by the IBEX 35 companies in the last year amounts to 128 629. Since not all of them have published the data referring to the year 2017, at the end of the current investigation, it cannot be determined exactly what percentage it represents with respect to the current workers of the IBEX 35 companies, but it is around 10%. The «Financial Services and Real Estate» sector provides the largest number of active volunteers, 75 692 (58.84% of the total).

Only one company, Telefónica, declares having a selection committee of volunteers with clear guidelines such as: i) participation in other program activities, ii) knowledge of the company's social action, iii) experience in other social projects, iv) profile adapted to the activity and, v) expressed motivation for participation. The rest of the companies do not offer any information in this regard, which allows inferring that the only selection criterion is the enrollment order in the program once the quota of available places is filled. This criterion is reflected in most of the programs, but they do not indicate if it is the only exclusion criterion, in addition to those established by the Volunteer Act itself (Law 45/2015, October 14), which includes, for instance, a requirement not to be included in the registry of sex offenders, and other similar requirements.

Only 14.28% of companies allow participants outside the organization, i.e. employees, early retirees and retirees, to enroll in corporate volunteering actions, although in a timely manner the family can participate in events that usually last a day and are focused on raising awareness and improving coexistence, rather than active participation. Despite this, some companies such as AENA allow suppliers to participate and others, such as Caixa Bank or Indra, do the same with customers.

Corporate volunteering programs are also in line with the multinational vocation of the IBEX 35 companies, extending such programs to a total of 214 aggregate countries, many of them related to the activity of each company, and others determined by the social urgency of the countries in which they are developed.

Table 3. Analysis of corporate volunteering programs

Management responsibility through its Foundation	Sector 1 (%)		Sector 2 (%)		Sector 3 (%)		Sector 4 (%)		Sector 5 (%)		Sector 6 (%)		Total (%)	
Collaboration with professional social organizations	Yes No N/A	33,33 16,67 50,00	Yes No N/A	57,14 0,00 42,86	Yes No N/A	0,00 66,67 33,33	Yes No N/A	16,67 0,00 83,33	Yes No N/A	22,22 33,33 44,44	Yes No N/A	25,00 0,00 75,00	Yes No N/A	28,57 17,14 54,29
Complies with SDGs	Yes No N/A	100,00 0,00 0,00	Yes No N/A	71,43 0,00 28,57	Yes No N/A	66,67 0,00 33,33	Yes No N/A	33,33 0,00 66,67	Yes No N/A	77,78 0,00 22,22	Yes No N/A	75,00 0,00 25,00	Yes No N/A	71,43 0,00 28,57
Activities mainly related to their business area	Yes No N/A	100,00 0,00 0,00	Yes No N/A	42,86 28,57 28,57	Yes No N/A	33,33 33,33 33,33	Yes No N/A	33,33 0,00 66,67	Yes No N/A	44,44 33,33 22,22	Yes No N/A	75,00 25,00 0,00	Yes No N/A	54,29 20,00 25,71
Category of activities carried out (Social=SL; Education=ED; Environment = MA; Health = SD; Inclusion = IN; Others = OT)	Yes No N/A	83,33 16,67 0,00	Yes No N/A	42,86 28,57 28,57	Yes No N/A	33,33 33,33 33,33	Yes No N/A	16,67 0,00 83,33	Yes No N/A	33,33 44,44 22,22	Yes No N/A	75,00 25,00 0,00	Yes No N/A	45,71 25,71 28,57
Total active participants	SL ED MA SD IN OT	100,00 100,00 83,33 33,33 66,67 33,33	SL ED MA SD IN OT	57,14 71,43 28,57 28,57 0,00 28,57	SL ED MA SD IN OT	66,67 33,33 0,00 33,33 33,33 0,00	SL ED MA SD IN OT	16,67 0,00 0,00 16,67 0,00 16,67	SL ED MA SD IN OT	66,67 66,67 44,44 22,22 55,56 0,00	SL ED MA SD IN OT	100,00 50,00 75,00 25,00 50,00 25,00	SL ED MA SD IN OT	65,71 57,14 40,00 25,71 34,29 17,14
Volunteer selection commission		6,462		15,135		1,300		N/A		75,692		30,040		128,629
Participants from outside the organization	Yes No N/A	0,00 0,00 100,00	Yes No N/A	0,00 0,00 100,00	Yes No N/A	0,00 0,00 100,00	Yes No N/A	0,00 0,00 100,00	Yes No N/A	0,00 0,00 100,00	Yes No N/A	25,00 0,00 75,00	Yes No N/A	2,86 0,00 97,14
No. of countries (inc. Spain)	Yes No N/A	16,67 50,00 33,33	Yes No N/A	0,00 14,29 85,71	Yes No N/A	0,00 0,00 100,00	Yes No N/A	16,67 0,00 83,33	Yes No N/A	22,22 55,56 22,22	Yes No N/A	25,00 50,00 25,00	Yes No N/A	14,28 31,43 54,29
Nº de países (inc.España)		21		58		10		1		34		90		214

No company declares in its public information to offer additional free days for participating in corporate volunteering days, even if an employee participates during a working day, something that happens only in 22.86% of the cases, as 48.57% expressly declare that this possibility is not considered. Only Telefónica recognizes the work of the corporate volunteer with a specific award for this work, covering all the expenses of the employees who are part in the solidarity vacation program together with Iberdrola, the only two companies that do so. It is also surprising that, despite the multinational nature of IBEX 35 companies, only 45.71% of their volunteer programs have an international character, in the sense that employees can participate in the activities

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organized in other countries by other centers. Nor are online volunteering programs developed, as they are done only by 14.29% of the companies, all of them from the energy sector together with Telefónica, which stands out in this regard.

Table 4 Analysis of incentives for employees of corporate volunteering

Incentives for employees	Sector 1 (%)		Sector 2 (%)		Sector 3 (%)		Sector 4 (%)		Sector 5 (%)		Sector 6 (%)		Total (%)	
Rewards (extra days off)	Yes	0,00	Yes	0,00	Yes	0,00	Yes	0,00	Yes	0,00	Yes	0,00	Yes	0,00
	No	100,00	No	71,43	No	66,67	No	0,00	No	0,00	No	100,00	No	48,57
	N/A	0,00	N/A	28,57	N/A	33,33	N/A	100,00	N/A	100,00	N/A	0,00	N/A	51,43
Volunteer of the year award	Yes	0,00	Yes	0,00	Yes	0,00	Yes	0,00	Yes	0,00	Yes	25,00	Yes	2,86
	No	100,00	No	71,43	No	66,67	No	16,67	No	77,78	No	75,00	No	68,57
	N/A	0,00	N/A	28,57	N/A	33,33	N/A	83,33	N/A	22,22	N/A	0,00	N/A	28,57
Volunteering during work days	Yes	33,33	Yes	28,57	Yes	33,33	Yes	0,00	Yes	11,11	Yes	50,00	Yes	22,86
	No	16,67	No	0,00	No	0,00	No	0,00	No	0,00	No	0,00	No	2,86
	N/A	50,00	N/A	71,43	N/A	66,67	N/A	100,00	N/A	88,89	N/A	50,00	N/A	74,29
Expenses covered for solidarity holidays	Yes	16,67	Yes	14,29	Yes	0,00	Yes	0,00	Yes	0,00	Yes	25,00	Yes	8,57
	No	0,00	No	0,00	No	0,00	No	0,00	No	0,00	No	0,00	No	0,00
	N/A	83,33	N/A	85,71	N/A	100,00	N/A	100,00	N/A	100,00	N/A	75,00	N/A	91,43
Online volunteering	Yes	50,00	Yes	0,00	Yes	0,00	Yes	0,00	Yes	0,00	Yes	50,00	Yes	14,29
	No	50,00	No	71,43	No	66,67	No	16,67	No	77,78	No	25,00	No	54,29
	N/A	0,00	N/A	28,57	N/A	33,33	N/A	83,33	N/A	22,22	N/A	25,00	N/A	31,43
International programs	Yes	66,67	Yes	71,43	Yes	66,67	Yes	0,00	Yes	22,22	Yes	75,00	Yes	45,71
	No	33,33	No	0,00	No	0,00	No	16,67	No	22,22	No	0,00	No	14,29
	N/A	0,00	N/A	28,57	N/A	33,33	N/A	83,33	N/A	55,56	N/A	25,00	N/A	40,00

A total of 28.57% of the companies have their own brand of corporate volunteering that goes beyond including the word «volunteers» to the corporate brand and use a specific logo in accordance with the corporate visual identity or a specific naming. Names as diverse as «EnREDando», «Solidarios», «Altruis», «Mueve.te» or «Sabadell Life», are accompanied by specific logos such as those that can be seen in the following figure:

Figura 1. Corporate visual identity of corporate volunteer programs.

Source: corporate websites of companies (2018).

Out of the companies that have their own brand for their corporate volunteer programs, 28.57% have also developed a specific website to manage and give visibility to their programs, many of which incorporate the volunteer programs of the NGOs with whom they collaborate as well as their corporate volunteering programs. There is an even lower presence on social networks with accounts and content specifically related to corporate volunteer programs, and only Telefónica does so on Facebook, Twitter, Instagram and YouTube. Monitoring by the public is scarce, reaching 839 likes on their Facebook fan page. Other companies choose to integrate the communication of their volunteering actions as another publication within the social networks of their foundations or the company; although some like Mapfre do so with the *hashtag* #VoluntariosMAPFRE. It is striking that Caixa Bank, which is one of the companies with the most developed corporate volunteering program, uses Facebook as a private group, that is, as a tool for internal and not external communication.

Table 5. Communication analysis of corporate volunteering

Program communication	Sector 1 (%)		Sector 2 (%)		Sector 3 (%)		Sector 4 (%)		Sector 5 (%)		Sector 6 (%)		Total (%)	
Program's own brand	Yes	50,00	Yes	0,00	Yes	33,33	Yes	16,67	Yes	55,56	Yes	0,00	Yes	28,57
	No	50,00	No	71,43	No	33,33	No	16,67	No	22,22	No	100,00	No	45,71
	N/A	0,00	N/A	28,57	N/A	33,33	N/A	66,67	N/A	22,22	N/A	0,00	N/A	25,71
Dedicated web	Yes	50,00	Yes	0,00	Yes	33,33	Yes	0,00	Yes	55,56	Yes	25,00	Yes	28,57
	No	50,00	No	71,43	No	33,33	No	33,33	No	22,22	No	75,00	No	45,71
	N/A	0,00	N/A	28,57	N/A	33,33	N/A	66,67	N/A	22,22	N/A	0,00	N/A	25,71
Dedicated social networks	Yes	0,00	Yes	0,00	Yes	0,00	Yes	0,00	Yes	0,00	Yes	25,00	Yes	2,86
	No	100,00	No	71,43	No	66,67	No	33,33	No	77,78	No	75,00	No	71,43
	N/A	0,00	N/A	28,57	N/A	33,33	N/A	66,67	N/A	22,22	N/A	0,00	N/A	25,71

4. Discusión y conclusiones

Most of the companies cited in the Spanish stock index, IBEX 35, have corporate volunteering programs. However, they are often undefined and rely on external organizations for their management, something that only makes sense in a primitive phase of development and that is closer to volunteering than corporate volunteering as a strategic management section.

More than half of the companies do not offer information on whether the foundation (all the IBEX 35 companies have a foundation generated from their activity) is the ultimate responsible for the management of the corporate volunteering program; probably they try to avoid the feeling that these programs are launched with a purely fiscal purpose, which is successful in terms of communication, but poorly coherent in terms of social responsibility, while clearing any doubt by managing it through a specific department or a committee within the company related to the management of people, social action, communication, and sustainability, which would contribute to professionalizing and personalizing corporate volunteering within the company.

The integration of the SDGs within the corporate volunteering programs implies a recognition of their contribution and of the participating employees to the challenges set by the United Nations by 2030, leading to the disappearance of the reductionism of limiting said SDGs to environmental management actions that had been taking place. This is done through sustainability plans, giving them a global and transversal scope within the organization.

Likewise, half of the IBEX 35 companies adopt a tactical approach when deciding the *fit* of corporate volunteering activities with their own activity as an organization,

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which reflects the fact that we are still in the first development phases of programs of social responsibility policies in Spain.

Despite the increase in the number of employees actively participating in corporate volunteering programs, 10% is still a figure that allows inferring the improvements that these programs should still implement. It can also be questioned whether these figures are real, since in certain information provided by some companies it is not clearly reflected that the declared employees are those who perform corporate volunteering, excluding a mere economic contribution that is made, for example, during the International Volunteer Day in which many companies participate. Therefore, corporate volunteer participation in a strict sense could be lower.

Despite the fact that only Telefónica has a selection committee for volunteers, which implies a genuine professionalization of these programs and maximum involvement in their proper development by the company, it must be considered that by analyzing the agenda of volunteering activities of the different companies, many of them do not reach the objective in terms of the maximum number of registered participants, which explains—but does not justify—, why it is not yet a priority for other companies.

The opening of corporate volunteering programs to clients and suppliers, despite their limited implementation, can be an interesting initiative from the point of view of integrating a greater number of *stakeholders* to which employees have a direct relationship in their roles as professionals. This could promote a better relationship for the participation in altruistic programs, far from the tension that the economic activity can lead to in the day to day of said supplier-client relationship.

Although the very essence of volunteering presupposes an altruistic choice without the expectation of reward other than personal satisfaction, the involvement of the company that sets up a corporate volunteer program must translate into maximum commitment, favoring participation and recognizing the work of its employees.

A minimum number of volunteer hours that can be carried out during the working day must be established, something that rarely happens, with no limitations other than the inexcusable service needs that may occur during the dates of the activity for the normal operation of the company. What it cannot do is limit it to the free time or to the vacations of the employees, since, in this case, the volunteering ceases to be corporate and becomes *ipso facto* employee altruism.

However, on the other hand, granting additional days off as a reward for having participated as a corporate volunteer would contravene the Volunteer Law (Law 45/2015, of October 14), which clearly states in article 3 that the activities will be «carried out without any economic or material consideration, without prejudice to the payment of the reimbursable expenses that the voluntary action implies for the volunteers».

Fully covering the expenses of employees in solidarity holiday programs, enhancing their international character, since the employees have an eminently international profile, and implementing in-house volunteer awards and *online* programs for employees who, due to their roles, cannot be absent from their job to participate in other types of programs are other decisions that companies should adopt to strengthen their corporate volunteering.

Despite the increasing number of specific corporate volunteering brands and websites for the management of programs that promote visibility, only Telefónica has dedicated social networks for these programs, which allows us to infer that corporate volunteer communication continues to be conceived as a more integrated action within the social responsibility plans or the actions of the foundation derived from the company, despite the fact that some companies identify this type of program in their external communication with their own *hashtag*.

Consequently, corporate volunteer programs in IBEX 35 companies must continue to be implemented and continue to be developed within companies that have already consolidated them with their own direction and management, improving employee participation with incentives and expanding communication.

The limitations of the study are focused on the fact that content analysis has been carried out at a specific moment in these corporate volunteering programs, so that future researches must address their evolution compared to what has been done in American companies due to the anticipation they have in the implementation of responsible actions and the perception that the public and employees show about these programs, determining the impact on the reputation of corporate brands.

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Contributions from the Civil Economy Theory to the argumentation of CSR

El aporte de la Teoría de la Economía Civil a la argumentación de la RSE

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Abstract

In spite the growing legitimacy of Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR), its theoretical argumentation presents great weaknesses. These weaknesses are explained, in part, because the argument is not based on a framework of economic theory, alternative to Neoclassical Economics, whose postulates and ideas support the main criticisms of the existence of CSR. The concept of CSR contradicts ideas such as: the end of the company consists exclusively on maximizing profits, the economic sphere is independent of the social sphere, the market is morally neutral, and economic relations are based exclusively in equivalent exchange without allowing reciprocity. This article argues that the school of Civil Economy provides a theoretical framework from which it is possible to respond to these criticisms and offer an argument for CSR based on its theories. The document was constructed using a bibliographic review and theoretical reflection by the author. It identifies five dimensions that characterize the concept of CSR. It then analyzes the neoclassical arguments that invalidate those dimensions. Finally, it presents the arguments from Civil Economy that legitimize.

Resumen

Pese a la creciente legitimidad que está adquiriendo la Responsabilidad Social Empresarial (RSE), la argumentación teórica de esa legitimidad presenta fuertes debilidades. Estas debilidades se explican, en parte, porque esa argumentación no está basada en un marco de teoría económica alternativo a la Economía Neoclásica, en cuyos postulados e ideas se apoyan las principales críticas a la existencia de la RSE. Para esta escuela el concepto de RSE entra en contradicción con ideas como la que el fin de la empresa consiste exclusivamente en la maximización de las ganancias, la esfera económica es independiente de la social, el mercado es moralmente neutro y que las relaciones económicas se basan exclusivamente en el intercambio de equivalentes sin dejar espacio para la reciprocidad. El presente artículo tiene la intención de argumentar que la escuela denominada «Economía Civil» aporta un marco teórico desde el cual es posible responder a esas críticas y ofrecer una argumentación de la RSE basada en esa teoría. El documento fue construido mediante revisión bibliográfica y reflexión teórica del autor. Se identifican cuatro dimensiones que caracterizan el concepto de RSE, luego se analizan los argumentos neoclásicos que invalidan esas dimensiones y finalmente, se exponen los argumentos de la Economía Civil que los legitiman.

Keywords | palabras clave

Civil Economy, Neoclassical Economy, Corporate Social Responsibility, stakeholder, externalities, ethics.
Economía Civil, Economía Neoclásica, Responsabilidad Social Empresarial, stakeholder, externalidades, Ética.

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1. Introduction

Although CSR currently has a significant degree of legitimacy in the corporate world and is an issue that occupies a relevant place in academic research, there are still strong criticisms of this concept that its supporters have not been able to refute in a clear and convincing way, in particular, the criticisms that come from the school of Neoclassical Economics.

If we analyze the most important international documents on CSR (such as the European Union Green Paper, the United Nations Global Compact or the ISO 26,000 guide) and the various theoretical elaborations on this concept, it is possible to conclude that they do not propose a foundation of economic theory for CSR or, if it is done, the foundation is formulated within the framework of the main concepts of the neoclassical theory of economics. It happens if the way in which the main problems that this concept involves are analyzed in detail: the management of negative externalities of companies, the relationship with *stakeholders*, ethical behavior in business, the involvement of the company in the solution of social problems or the creation of shared value. It is also likely that this explains the supremacy of an instrumental type of foundation, in which the need for CSR is proposed as an adaptive response of the company to a new environment or as a pragmatic and instrumental strategy aimed at profitability, more that as a new philosophical vision—fundamentally of a moral nature—about the role of the company in society.

The problem is that the concept of CSR involves a deep questioning of the dominant economic theory, although its proponents are not aware of it. This is the main cause that explains the difficulty that the promoters of CSR have to refute the arguments against this business philosophy, most of which are formulated from the perspective of neoclassical economic thinking, where a famous article by Milton Friedman stands out (1970). In addition, since the 1990s academic production on CSR practically abandoned theoretical reflection to give priority to the publication of results of empirical research, as pointed out by Carroll (1999). This is also demonstrated by the fact that the new definitions on CSR proposed in the twentieth century come from institutional documents, such as the Green Paper of the European Union or the ISO 26,000 Guide. This situation, which still persists, implied a *de facto* abandonment of the theoretical discussion regarding the economic foundations of CSR.

Hence, the need to look for a framework of economic theory, based on postulates different from neoclassic and that are consistent with the concept of CSR. This article argues that this framework is found in the school called «Civil Economy». The central objective of this article is to identify and analyze the contributions of this school to the theoretical foundation of CSR. The article identifies five dimensions that make up the modern concept of CSR, analyzes the logical inconsistency between these dimensions and the postulates of neoclassical economy and, finally, describes the theoretical elements of Civil Economy that give a foundation of economic theory to these dimensions of CSR.

2. The dimensions of the CSR concept

The analysis of the literature (academic and non-academic) on CSR in the last sixty years reveals the existence of a lot of contributions on this topic and, particularly, on

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the definition of the concept, as presented by Carroll (1999), Garriga & Melé (2004), Dahlsrud (2008) and Carroll (2015). In the second decade of the 21st century, this conceptual diversity seems to have converged into a definition that has broad consensus, both at the academic level and at the level of the institutional actors interested in promoting CSR (for example: UN, OECD, European Union). This consensus revolves around the definition and main ideas on Social Responsibility established in the ISO 26,000 Guide, which defines it as «the responsibility of an organization for the impacts of its decisions and activities on society and the environment, through transparent and ethical behavior» (ISO, 2011, p.106). In addition, this document states that the adoption of CSR results from a voluntary choice, is incorporated into the entire operation of the company and assumes compliance with local and international laws.

The review of the literature suggests that it is a complex and multidimensional concept, as evidenced by Carroll (2015), who analyzes the commonalities and overlaps between CSR and five other concepts: Theory of Shared Value, Theory of Stakeholders, Corporate Citizenship, Business Ethics and Sustainability. The review of the literature on CSR of the last sixty years highlights that this concept includes at least five dimensions: 1) responsible management of the impacts (externalities) of business activity on stakeholders, society and the environment; 2) the incorporation of stakeholders' interests and demands and the creation of shared value; 3) act ethically; 4) get involved in the solution of social and environmental problems of the community where the company operates, and 5) contribute to sustainable development.

The impact management of productive and commercial operation constitutes the main core of the definition of CSR proposed in the ISO 26,000 Guide. Davis & Blomstronm (1966) suggested the idea that companies should consider how their activity affects other actors. Fitch (1976) defined CSR as the attempt to solve the social problems they generate. Frederick *et al.* (1992) proposed that companies should be responsible for the effects of any of their actions in their community and the environment. The European Union affirmed that in order to fully exercise its social responsibility, the company must «identify, prevent and mitigate its possible adverse consequences» (Commission of the European Communities, 2011, p.7). More recently, Carroll (2015) observed that social responsible management of impacts covers two dimensions: on the one hand, to «protect» society from negative impacts and on the other, to contribute to «improve» the conditions of society through deliberately sought positive impacts. Similarly, Wymer & Rundle-thiele (2017), affirm that CSR is a notion through which organizations assume responsibility for the impact of their activities on a wide variety of stakeholders.

Johnson (1971) stated that social responsible company balances the interests of multiple actors, including employees, suppliers and local communities. Jones (1980, p. 59) associated CSR with the idea that companies have obligations with their stakeholders beyond what is established in laws and contracts. Evan & Freeman (1993) proposed that the true goal of the company is to serve as a vehicle to coordinate the interests of stakeholders. Likewise, Garriga and Melé (2004) argued that CSR requires balancing the interests of shareholders with the legitimate interests of all stakeholders. At the beginning of the 2000s, the concept of CSR began to be associated with the idea that the company must generate social and environmental value, in addition to doing so with economic value. This was called the «triple bottom line» approach (Van Marrewijk, 2001, Commission of the European Communities, 2002). Porter & Kramer (2011) proposed the concept of «shared value», which the Commission of the European Communities (2011) endorsed by stating that CSR implies that the purpose of business is to maximize the value shared with stakeholders and with the society.

McGuire (1963) included acting with «justice» among the components of CSR. Keith Davis (1967) argued that the essence of CSR stems from concern for the ethical consequences of actions that can affect the interests of others. Zenisek (1979) proposed a model of social responsibility based on the relationship between business ethics and the expectations of society. Carroll (1991) argued that socially responsible company strives to make a profit, act ethically and be a good corporate citizen. Epstein (2006) noted that social responsibility and ethics address issues and concerns that are closely related and even overlapping. Hopkings (1998) stated that CSR is related to treating stakeholders ethically. WBCSD (2000) defined CSR as the continuous commitment of companies to act ethically and contribute to economic development. According to Carroll (2015), in the second decade of the 21st century, the concept of Business Ethics was part of the CSR concept.

Eilbert & Parket (1973) proposed that CSR is a commitment of the company with the solution of various social and environmental problems, including pollution and racial discrimination. According to Matten *et al.* (2003) companies should be involved in solving these problems due to the increasing difficulties of States to do so. The definition of CSR proposed in the European Union's Green Paper establishes that CSR is the «voluntary integration by companies of social and environmental concerns in their commercial operations, and their relations with their stakeholders» (European Commission, 2001, p.7). There is a wide diversity of theoretical proposals on business commitment with the solution of these problems, ranging from purely philanthropic to those involving the productive and commercial activity of companies, as is the case of the so-called «Businesses at the Base of the Pyramid» (Prahalad & Hart, 2002).

The relationship between Sustainable Development and CSR began to be considered at the end of the 1990s, but it gained strength after the publication of the European Union Green Paper, which calls on European companies to have a sense of responsibility in relation to various issues, including sustainable development (Commission of the European Communities, 2001). The issue is present in the United Nations Global Compact of 1999 and is more clearly set out in the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) recently proposed by this organization. WBCSD (1999) defined CSR as the «commitment of companies to contribute to sustainable economic development by working with employees, their families, the local community and society in general to improve their quality of life».

There is also a more or less generalized consensus that CSR is located at the strategic level and even at the level of business philosophy, having overcome the first versions of the concept that confused it with philanthropy or reduced it to a set of targeted marketing tactics for the strengthening of a brand and the construction of corporate reputation. That is, CSR begins to be considered as a way of understanding the relationship between the company and its stakeholders (customers, employees, suppliers, investors, neighbors, etc.), society in general and the environment. Like all philosophy, CSR is based on principles, values, a concept of man (anthropology) and its relationship with other men and nature, as well as an idea about the relationship between economy and society. Therefore, behind the discourse of CSR it is possible to find different convictions about each of these topics. The problem is that most of the creators of these ideas are not aware of these theoretical and philosophical implications and, therefore, they are not explicit in their discourse.

3. The postulates of the Neoclassical School and CSR

The neoclassical criticism of CSR is based on a set of assumptions and postulates that include pseudo-scientific truths and assertions of a normative nature, as well as their respective logical inferences. These assumptions and postulates invalidate the five dimensions of CSR identified above, as explained below and illustrated in the second column of table 1. A classic text by Milton Friedman (1970), in which he argues that the only social responsibility of the company is to generate profitability for its shareholders with the only limitation being compliance with the law and respect for certain moral conventions, seems to have marked the agenda of the debate on the legitimacy of CSR.

For Friedman (1970) it is necessary to separate economic ends from social ends. These are specific to entrepreneurs as individuals and, therefore, contributions to society must be made individually and separately from the business. The company has exclusively an economic purpose, and the economic is independent of the social. In line with Friedman, Steinberg (2000) argues that the company is not intended to promote the public good, which contradicts with many of the dimensions of CSR. On the other hand, Peter (2004) points out that, from a neoclassical approach, legitimization in the market is automatic, breaking down all the arguments of some supporters of CSR who maintain that socially responsible behavior and the incorporation of ethics are necessary conditions to generate such legitimation. In addition, among the postulates of this school is the idea that economic relations are impersonal and morally neutral, which is clearly in contradiction with the ethical dimension of CSR.

To the extent that the purpose of the company is to maximize profits, relations with stakeholders are reduced to transactions based exclusively on the exchange principle of equivalents governed by the contract. According to this principle, once the contract is agreed upon, the parties cease to be free and the only thing that makes sense is that each one of them complies with what corresponds to them, this being their only responsibility. It is easy to infer that, if economic relations are reduced exclusively to the exchange of equivalents, it no longer makes sense for the company to minimize externalities or contemplate the expectations of stakeholders that are not included in contracts or laws. Hence, any argument of CSR must go beyond the exchange of equivalents and introduce reciprocity relationships between the parties in the economy.

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Table 1. The postulates of the Neoclassical Economy and the CSR dimensions

Dimensions of CSR	Postulates of Neoclassical Economy	Postulates of Civil Economy
Company responsibly manages negative externalities not prohibited by law or contracts.	The purpose of the company is to maximize the profits of the shareholders. The only limits to this end are those established by laws and contracts.	The actions of the company are limited by its aims and by the relational nature of the human being.
The company considers the interests of the stakeholders and creates shared value (triple bottom line).	The company considers only the interests of the shareholders. Economic relations are reduced to the exchange of equivalents	The purpose of the company is to satisfy the needs of all actors involved. The exchange of equivalents can be complemented with reciprocity relations.
The company incorporates ethical considerations in the decision making.	The market is morally neutral. The company does not need to ethically justify its decisions.	The market is not morally neutral. The company is ethically responsible for the consequences of its activity on other actors.
The company incorporates social and environmental considerations into the management.	The economic and the social are independent. The company deals exclusively with economic aspects.	The economic and social dimensions are inextricably linked by the relation of the economy. The company is social and has a commitment to the society in which it operates.
The company is committed to Sustainable Development.	The company only deals with private goods.	The company has a role to fulfill in relation to the Common Good.

Neoclassical thinking also postulates that the economic sphere is independent of the social, and that the only scope of action of the company is the economic. The company as an institution pursues only economic purposes. Hence, within the framework of the neoclassical perspective, concepts such as «social value», «shared value» or «triple bottom line» are contradictory with the functioning of markets and, therefore, contrary to business purposes. Consequently, the dimension of CSR to incorporating social and environmental considerations into business management is not valid. And, in particular everything related to the contribution of the company to sustainable development, active participation in the communities, the fight against poverty, the protection of Human Rights and the care of the environment.

Another implicit postulate of neoclassical thought affirms that the economy—and, therefore, the company—deals exclusively with private goods, leaving the management of public goods (*res publica*) and common goods (*commons*) to the State and society. This assumption reinforces the opposition to the idea of environmental responsibility, since it involves a special consideration of business impacts on common goods (such as water, air or sustainable development) or public goods (such as community infrastructure).

All of the above converges in the assertion that CSR is a private matter for entrepreneurs and *managers* and that, consequently, if they want to practice it, they should use their personal resources and not those of the company. While behind this statement lies a reductionism of CSR to social philanthropy, its formulation involves a direct questioning of a central idea of the concept of CSR: the one that establishes that it is not something peripheral to the business.

4. The contribution of the theory of Civil Economy to the foundation of CSR

4.1. The Civil Economy

The «School of Civil Economy» (Zamagni 2006, 2009, 2012) proposes a solution to the problem. Their anthropological assumptions and their postulates about the relationship between business and society, as well as their proposal about the ultimate goal of the company, provide a solid conceptual framework to support CSR, without having to resort to sophisticated arguments that logic easily destroys. This school supports a normative theory—*ergo* moral—that proposes an economy model and a type of social relations on which the person can unfold its essence and develop its relational potential. This school rebels against the determinist positions that condemn humanity to live in societies that act against the relationality of the person, those who maintain that the human is an essentially competitive being, moved by the desire to maximize his/her pleasure (the individualist philosophies), as well as those that turn human into a piece of machinery, establishing that the end of his/her life is to be at the service of that machinery (Marxism and other collectivist philosophies). While the individualist and collectivist theories do not explain their anthropological postulates and cover them with pseudo-scientific truths, «Civil Economy» not only makes them explicit, but also uses them in an explicitly transparent way to support the development of the theory.

Civil Economy refutes the selfish anthropological assumption that is at the base of the neoclassical scaffolding and states the hypothesis of the relational human. This school, which has its roots in the thought of the 18th century Italian philosopher and economist Antonio Genovesi (Bruni & Grevin, 2016), postulates that to exist, prosper and be happy, human beings need others, both in their personal lives and in their social and economic activities. According to Zamagni (2012):

> The thesis according to which prosociality and reciprocity are exceptions that are explained in the light of the «natural and historical preponderance» of «self-interest» seems as extreme as the opposite thesis. In his extraordinary complexity of behavior, man can be guided by a great variety of motivations (p. 39).

Despite its normative basis, «Civil Economy» does not simply consist of a conceptual scaffolding, inferred from anthropological assumptions and dispensing a contrast with reality. Several investigations on human behavior endorse the relational hypothesis and refute the individualist hypothesis (Zamagni, 2006, Hoevel 2009, Crivelli, 2003, Axelrod, 1984, Fehr & Gachner, 2000). These investigations show that, on certain contextual conditions, human beings prioritize cooperation over the maximizing competition of individual interests. In other words, «Civil Economy» proposes—in the normative sense, as a thing to be pursued—a type of economy (the civil market economy), under which the development of a society is possible—institutions, forms of relationship and coexistence—in which human beings can live consistently with their essence (as relational beings) and, moreover, empirically demonstrates that this economy is possible.

Both the individualist and relational approaches are based on normative views and beliefs about how the real world works. That is, both neoclassical and civil economists believe that human acts or tends to act in a manner consistent with his/her anthropological postulate. In addition, both find empirical evidence that support that conviction. On the one hand, the atrociously competitive and predatory behavior of many entrepreneurs seems to empirically validate the individualistic anthropological postulate. But, on the other, the multiple experiences of collaborative work in the business world do the same with the relational anthropological postulate. Now, since this postulate does not hold that people «always» act in a cooperative way—what it proposes is that the potential exists to do it—the individualist postulate assumes that human tends to maximize his/her pleasure, and that this «always» occurs in his/her economic relations.

4.2. A foundation of CSR based on the postulates of the Civil Economy

By invalidating the anthropological postulate of *homo economicus*, Civil Economy also invalidates the assumptions associated by CSR. The following describes how the relational anthropological hypothesis provides a foundation for each of the dimensions of CSR. In this way, «Civil Economy» offers its defenders a theoretical framework to refute the arguments that seek to invalidate it. These arguments are summarized in the third column of table 1.

Responsible management of externalities. The relational postulate establishes limits to the generation of negative externalities, since the damage that is generated to others threatens human essence. Under this postulate, and inversely to what the neoclassical approach preaches, it is morally correct to minimize negative externalities beyond legal and contractual requirements. Thus, the dimension of CSR regarding the responsible management of impacts is logically validated.

Consider the interests of stakeholders and build shared value. The way humans approach and practice their economic activities is conditioned by their relational nature. As a human construction, the company is an instrument at the service of the deployment of that relationality. Under this assumption, the company's main goal is the satisfaction of the material, emotional and spiritual needs of the people and the groups involved with it (its stakeholders), including the society in which it operates. The following text, taken from the *Centesimus Annus* encyclical, legitimizes the idea that the responsible company is one that builds shared value:

> [...] the purpose of the company is not simply the production of benefits, but rather the very existence of the company as a community of people who, in various ways, seek the satisfaction of their basic needs and constitute a particular group at the service of the whole society (Juan Pablo II, 1998, page 67).

The neoclassical pretension of reducing economic relations exclusively to impersonal relationships based on the contract omits the relational essence of the human being. This school proposes that, in carrying out their activity, employers leave out the «non-economic» part of their nature—affection, personal values, their other motivations, etc.—and therefore, the only thing they exchange in these relationships are equivalent economic values. Conceived in this way, economic relationships leave no room for trust, commitment or affection. Instead, associated with its anthropological hypothesis, «Civil Economy» maintains that in economic relations people can not dissociate from and omit this dimension of their nature. For this reason, according to this theory, the exchange of equivalents and reciprocity coexist in these relations. The principle of reciprocity is one of the main economic categories of this school (Groppa, 2014). Reciprocity begins with an act of gratuity by one of the parties—for example: giving an additional benefit to the workers—, which seeks to trigger another behavior of reciprocity in the person receiving it—for example: more commitment of the worker with the company. The assumption behind this proposal establishes that reciprocity allows generating virtuous circles that increase the benefit of all parties. It is important to note that the «Civil Economy» does not propose reciprocity as an alternative to the exchange of equivalents. On the contrary, what this school suggests to companies is that they complement the usual and necessary relationships based on the principle of equivalence, with behavior based on reciprocity.

Incorporate ethics. In addition, for «Civil Economy» the market is not a morally neutral institution. What happens in it affects the lives of people and this entails a moral responsibility. The idea of CSR as responsible for the impacts of the activity assigns a moral character to business behavior. According to Zamagni (2012) the concept of CSR presupposes an «ethics of responsibility», not in the sense that Max Weber granted to this concept, but in the sense proposed by the «Theory of stakeholders». Hence, ethical behavior, based on values and competencies to resolve the innumerable ethical dilemmas faced by the managers of companies, makes up the nature of the company. In addition, the «Civil Economy» postulates the need for an «ethics of virtue» in business managers because, according to Zamagni (2012, p.198), this type of ethics is what allows «to resolve and overcome the opposition between the focus on self-interest and interest in others; between selfishness and altruism».

Get involved in social and environmental problems. As mentioned above, one of the criticisms of the neoclassical school of CSR is to affirm that economic activity operates autonomously in social relations. As it follows that the company pursues only economic purposes, it does not make sense to be involved in the solution of social problems. Moreover, doing so would be morally wrong, because it could lead to self-destruction. Hence, within the framework of the neoclassical perspective, concepts such as «social value», «shared value» or «triple bottom line» are contradictory with the functioning logic of markets and, consequently, contrary to business purposes. From the perspective of «Civil Economy» this postulate is rejected, because «the economic and the civil have in common the relational structure of human existence» (Zamagni, 2006, p.18). According to Bruni & Zamagni (2003, p.11), in today's globalized markets «the company is asked to be social in its normal economic activity». «Civil Economy» puts forth the idea that the end of the company is social and that therefore its commitment is

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with the society. Under this approach, CSR is part of the nature of the company and not something that is added to its operation. It is for this reason that Crespo (2009, p.121) states: «It would be clearer, then, rather than speak about CSR, to speak about the responsibility of the company in society».

Contribute to sustainable development. Neoclassical thinking holds that the company should deal only with private goods. In this sense, it should not take responsibility for environmental problems or for sustainable development, since these issues refer to the commons and the Common Good. According to Zamagni (2007, p.23): «It is clear that in the horizon of (axiological) individualism there is no place for the notion of common good». However, nobody can escape the fact that the uncontrolled and irresponsible production of private goods is one of the current causes of the global environmental crisis —legitimized by the neoclassical assumption of the validity of externalizing everything not prohibited by law. Therefore, the neoclassical arguments are legitimizing the causes of this crisis; hence, are unable to provide a conceptual framework consistent with their solution. On the other hand, the «Civil Economy» proposes a conceptual framework under which the company has a role to play in the environmental crisis and the need for sustainable development, since its commitment to the Common Good derives from the relational postulate, as Zamagni argues (2007):

> The common good, affirming the primacy of interpersonal relationships over their exoneration, ... of personal identity over usefulness, must be able to find a space for expression everywhere, in any field of human action, including economics and politics (p. 42).

5. Conclusions

Despite being a concept that arises within the framework of the capitalist market economy, CSR has many points of contact with «Civil Economy». As demonstrated in this document, if one carefully reads the definition proposed in the ISO 26,000 guide, it is inferred that the concept of CSR is much closer to the conceptual structure of the «Civil Economy» than to that of the Neoclassical School, provider of the moral and theoretical foundation of the capitalist version of the market economy, reason for which this article argues that «Civil Economy» provides the theoretical arguments to refute the criticisms of CSR presented by the Neoclassical school.

Within the framework of the capitalist market economy, CSR emerges as a business philosophy that promotes the adoption of behaviors aligned with the civic ethics of a civil market economy. Without intending that CSR modifies the essence of the capitalist system, the «Civil Economy» perceives it as an opportunity to generate economic behaviors that break away—albeit partially—from the limitations imposed by the rules of capitalism. Given that the evolution of humanity towards a civil economy is not guaranteed (because the proposals of Civil Economy are not deterministic), its supporters—among whom the Catholic Church stands out—adopt CSR as a business philosophy that, within the framework of the capitalist economy market allows to generate, within specific constraints, business behaviors typical of the civil economy. The following text by Zamagni synthesizes this idea:

> When there are still no civil and just institutions, or when they are incomplete, the common good requires something more and something different from the correct and honest search of particular interests. Therefore, a socially responsible company is the one that helps define civic ethics... Respecting the given rules is too little, especially when those rules have to be changed; that is, when we have to overcome the Calvinist conception of capitalism [...] (Zamagni, 2012, p. 187).

Given that the company is a human work, created and directed by people, the adoption of CSR as a business philosophy depends on the will of those who direct it. If the individualistic anthropological postulate is true, entrepreneurs and business executives would tend to act in the opposite direction to that proposed by CSR and this would be no more than a beautiful utopia. However, «Civil Economy» argues the falsity of the postulate of *homo economicus* and of the main assumptions of neoclassical thought that invalidate CSR: the end of the company is exclusively the maximization of profits, the economic is independent of the social, the market is morally neutral, economic relations are based exclusively on equivalent exchange, etc. Similarly, «Civil Economy» contributes a foundation of philosophical anthropology (the relational nature of the human being) and economic theory to CSR, while demonstrating that, under certain circumstances, economic actors seek cooperation and tend to adopt behaviors such as those promoted by CSR.

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Social Responsibility or sustainability: an approach from the environment and communication

La Responsabilidad Social o sostenibilidad: un enfoque desde el entorno y la comunicación

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Abstract

The purpose of this paper is to show the numerous academic contributions in the areas of Economy and Business Management about the Social Responsibility Theory, and to show the different settings or scenarios which are important to consider when this topic is studied. The main objective is to provide a view of Social Responsibility from an interdisciplinary perspective, supporting it with definitions of Social Responsibility Theory and contrasting different contributions. There is an analysis of the following concepts: Environment, Corporate Culture and Organizational Communication. The article states that Communication is directly related to SR, reason for which it should be considered in every aspect of human activity. The analysis, results, and suggestions presented are part of an exploratory and bibliographic research, which started at the end of the 1980s. The results obtained suggest that, although the subject of SR or Social Sustainability has been studied for more than three decades, it has only received public attention in the last 10 years, mainly in traditional media such as Radio, Press and TV. It is concluded that companies or corporations do not consider Internal Communication and Information as one of their basic responsibilities.

Resumen

El presente trabajo tiene como objetivo mostrar los diversos aportes que se han dado en el ámbito académico, especialmente desde las áreas de Economía y Administración Empresarial, sobre la Responsabilidad Social –RS– y mostrar los diferentes entornos que resultan necesarios considerar cuando ésta se estudia. Se pretende de esta manera entregar una visión sobre la RS desde una perspectiva interdisciplinaria, basándose en algunas de las definiciones que se han dado sobre esta teoría y contrastando los diversos aportes. Además, se analizan los conceptos de Entorno, Cultura Empresarial y Comunicación Organizacional, Institucional o Corporativa, por cuanto se plantea que la Comunicación está directamente relacionada con la RS, por lo que debiera ser considerada en todos los ámbitos de la actividad humana. Los análisis, resultados y sugerencias que aquí se exponen corresponden a una investigación de carácter exploratorio y bibliográfico, que se inició de manera independiente a finales de la década de los ochenta. Los resultados obtenidos señalan que la RS o Sostenibilidad, a pesar que su estudio a nivel académico data de hace más de tres décadas, sólo en los últimos 10 años en Chile ha tenido visibilidad pública, de manera especial en los medios de comunicación convencionales (radio, prensa y TV). Al mismo tiempo, se concluye que la Comunicación Interna y la Información no son consideradas como una de las responsabilidades básicas de toda empresa u organización.

Keywords | palabras clave

Social responsibility, sustainability, environment, communication, digital communication, organizational culture.
Responsabilidad Social, sostenibilidad, entorno, comunicación, comunicación digital, cultura organizacional.

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1. Introduction

It has been more than a decade since the beginning of the 21st century, and about thirty years since the beginning of research in the academic field on Social Responsibility—SR—, and it is paradoxical that figures show only 22% of the 100 largest multinationals in the world have made progress in incorporating SR into their daily operations (Rochlin, 2005).

For professionals of the Economic and Administrative Sciences—commercial engineers, economists, business managers—and for the companies, this situation is a mystery: «how to make Corporate Social Responsibility—CSR—a constituent element of the strategy and business philosophy of a company? » asks Steve Rochlin in the cited publication (2005).

It would be ambitious to state that this work will provide an answer to that question. It can affirm that with a critical vision and from a communicational perspective, this article will contribute to SR being understood, applied, considered and disseminated as a valuable tool for a company and necessary in all human activity, regardless of the type of organization or group, or the size and reputation of the institution. In short, the article postulates that SR must be intrinsically related to the human species.

Since the 80s, when studies started analyzing the «Theory of Social Responsibility», this line of theoretical-practical analysis has received several names, or, rather, various «surnames» have been added to it. Today, there are different terms such as Corporate Social Responsibility —CSR—, Business Social Responsibility —BSR—, University Social Responsibility —USR—. This article outlines Individual Social Responsibility.

This analysis is carried out on SR as such, without surnames, even without the last name —Individual SR—, which is mentioned in the preceding paragraph and which could lead to confusion, when it is stated that Social Responsibility must be intrinsically related to the human species.

In addition to SR, this article analyses the environment and communication. To this end, the contributions that Corporate Culture provides are considered.

2. Material and sources of information

2.1. SR: One or several responsibilities?

Just as there are various definitions of SR, there have also been different names given to this «Theory of Social Responsibility», which has among its most prominent ideologues Kenneth Andrews, who along with Ulrich Beck and others, are considered authorities in this matter. Andrews (1977), referring to SR, points out that:

> [...] these are demands that companies must address because they are part of society, which can demand things that are of concern and interest to it, which are changing over the time; in response to this, the Company must engage actively in public affairs and also in being responsible for the impact of its economic activity on society (p. 123).

Despite the multiple definitions of SR, all of them have in common the idea that it is a task that incorporates:

- Respect for ethical values,
- Respect for the people,
- Respect for communities, and
- Respect for the environment.

In some of the definitions, SR is presented as having a direct relationship with ethics. For instance, one of the definitions states that:

> To be socially responsible implies to assume, to recognize and to accept the social results derived from one's own and free operation, and therefore, take charge of the injustices and faults existing in society and whose solution is in our hands. In this way, a socially responsible organization ensures its sustainability in the long term, since it ensures the environment on which it depends to function (Ethics Blog, 2011, n/p).

What is expressed above shows SR as the commitment contracted by the actions or omissions of any individual or group, which generate an impact on society, which may fall on a person, organization, government or company. In addition, these actions usually bring about a positive or negative assessment by the community. That is, from the communications point of view we can talk about image and reputation, either negative or positive.

Continuing from the analysis above, it is possible to detect various types of social responsibility actions, for example, governmental —like «Bicing» or urban transport based on the shared use of the bicycle developed in Barcelona, Spain (Bicing, 2018)—; of non-governmental institutions, whose essence is socially responsible, as is the case of Greenpeace; and even personal or individual social responsibility actions are added, but the latter is not sufficiently substantiated and, in general, it is directly related to philanthropy acts or actions clearly geared to maintain or improve personal reputation, for instance, nominations made by UNESCO and UNICEF of «Goodwill Ambassadors», which designate people who are renowned in their work environment, such as soccer players and actresses, to disseminate the work carried out by these organizations in different countries.

This approach, although not directly related to SR, serves to illustrate the need to contemplate and assess Social Responsibility from a broad and personal perspective. For this we can turn to the affirmation, considered to be the philosophy of Social Responsibility, which states that «one cannot be inserted in this world and remain indifferent to its problems».

In order to understand this more clearly, we must share the meaning of the Responsibility value, as a conscious attitude assumed by the person who commits it to a given event or action. From this perspective, responsibility can be analyzed in two ways:

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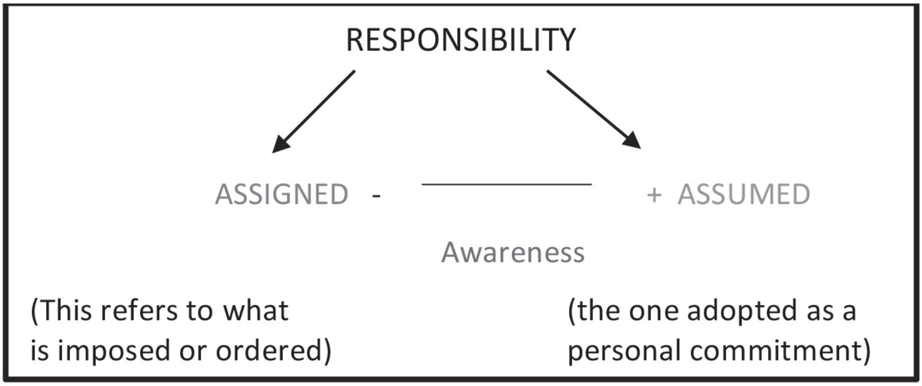
Figure 1. Types of adoption of Responsibility



Source: (Ethics Blog, 2011, n/p)

As shown in the preceding figure, assigned responsibility is imposed and refers to when it is assigned—forced—on a person or organization, through the authorities and the established parameters (laws, specific regulations), without there being a prior analysis and awareness on the side of the individual or institution. Although it is not denied that consciousness exists in this aspect, it is not usual since it is not assumed but imposed.

The other source of responsibility is assumed. Here, organizations and people adopt it voluntarily, based on their values, beliefs, ideas and raise awareness in greater depth. This type of responsibility is the one that lasts the longest and that achieves more positive impact on society. Therefore, it must be promoted in order to have a better quality of life.

Therefore, it can be inferred that SR is a voluntary attitude assumed by different people or organizations in order to improve and meet the needs of the environment in which they are located at a given time.

In the introduction to this article, some of the names assigned to the SR were provided. Here we add the one of «CRS» —Corporate Responsibility in Society—, a designation that is used in Argentina (Paladino *et al.*, 2006). It is necessary to explain this point, because, as the authors say, what happens in trans-Andean entrepreneurship is perhaps also what occurs in other countries. We refer to the fear or open rejection that the word «social» causes among some businessmen. According to Paladino *et al.* (2006) «the term CSR confuses entrepreneurs as they immediately associate it with the need for social investment».

Another term to refer to SR is «Corporate Reputation» —CR—, coined by Villafañe (2003), although the aforementioned author does not refer to Corporate Responsibility —CR, even if they share the same acronym. We must not confuse them, because Villafañe's Corporate Reputation has a certain relationship with CSR, insofar as it states that the reputation of a company is achieved by several measures, both internal and external, that the company must assume with respect to the society in which it is active.

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Continuing with the different denominations that are given to CSR, Corporate Social Responsibility—CSR— appears as an approach that it is also known as «Corporate Citizenship». The Center for Corporate Citizenship at Boston College defines «Corporate Citizenship» as the way in which the company integrates basic social values into its business practices, operations and day-to-day policies. According to the World Bank, «Corporate Citizenship» is based on the recognition that companies have rights and responsibilities that go beyond the maximization of profits in the short term (Navarro, 2012, p. 79).

With regard to CSR, it is necessary to mention Porter, a student of the topic of Social Responsibility, who in his books and articles makes use of the expression «Corporate Social Responsibility» and the scope he raises is valid for responsibility in general, that is, regardless the name used to identify it.

Porter & Kramer (2007) point out that most of the approaches on the issue of CSR make that society and the corporation or company face at each other as enemies, when the reality and the future of it is and must be different, in addition to the fact that both are interdependent. On this almost «confrontation», Porter & Kramer (2007) point out that «Governments, activists and the media have become adept at pursuing accountability on the part of companies for the social consequences of their activities» (pp. 24-38).

In this regard, the referenced authors provide several examples, such as the case of Nike, denounced by *The New York Times* for abusive labor practices with their Indonesian suppliers. On this point it is pertinent to add that, regrettably, this type of situation continues to occur, despite the complaints that are continually presented by the media.

It is important to add other valuable contributions regarding SR or CSR, such as those of Sen—Nobel Prize in Economics. Sen refers to responsibility but puts the accent on «Development Ethics», and Kliksberg delves into «Social Management» or «Social Capital» (Sen & Kliksberg, 2007). Both lines of analysis have as a starting point the person and the ethical act, and although they do not use the expression SR, their proposals are directly related to this theory.

In addition, it is necessary to consider the concept of «Decent Work», proposed by the International Labor Organization (ILO), which establishes the characteristics that a labor relationship must have; characteristics that comply with international labor standards, so that work is carried out under conditions of freedom, equality, security and human dignity. Under these standards, it must be considered that the Human Rights of the affected worker have been violated, and that there is no free work.

In total contrast to the authors mentioned is Friedman (1975), who does not deny the existence of social responsibilities, but points out that it is not the company who should respond to them, but individuals in their own way. His approach is opposed to most economists of the twentieth and twenty-first centuries. The trend started by Friedman has been called «Shareholder Theory» or «Theory of Optimization or Maximization of Benefits». Rostow, who is among Friedman's followers, points out that «SR is of individuals and not of entities, which should only be concerned with the fulfillment of their specific purposes: to obtain the greatest possible benefit for their shareholders»" (in Paladino *et al.*, 2006, p. 28).

Even when referring to massive damages to the population —such as pollution— they state that environmental damage will be maintained insofar as it does not affect that benefit, but something would be done to address it if the company's products are boycotted. On this point, comments are unnecessary. The assertion cancels itself out, even more so at the present time, in which issues such as carbon footprint, global warming, and the ozone layer, to name a few, are topics of interest and concern on a global scale.

In short, in relation to the question «One or several Social Responsibilities?», it is concluded that there is only one, which has been enriched and also adapted to the various fields in which it exists or should be present. The theory of SR, initiated in the field of research of Economic Sciences has received contributions from other disciplines, such as Philosophy, Sociology, Psychology and Communication Science, among others. Subsequently, every study in this field must be transdisciplinary. In this regard, this article states that the Science of Communication could make great contributions, especially in the Information Age and more recently in the Knowledge Era.

2.2. Environment

«Environment» is directly related to SR, because the latter is carried out in a specific scenario, real or virtual, material or human, internal or external. The word «environment», despite being commonly used in our language, has been analyzed in various areas for more than three decades, such as, for example, in Communication and in Economics.

The first investigations in the field of Communication stated that the public to which the messages of the traditional media were directed had the characteristics of being broad, heterogeneous and anonymous. Nowadays, the same occurs with «environment», a term that is also broad, heterogeneous and, unfortunately, often anonymous for organizations.

On this issue, Capriotti (2009) makes a detailed analysis and classification of «environment» and gives a definition by Robbins, who explains it as «the institutions or forces that affect the performance of the organization, and on which it has little or no control» (pp. 161-168). The author divides «environment» into general and specific. The general is composed of the following factors: political-legal, economic, socio-cultural and technological. For its part, the specific environment can be divided into competitive environment and work environment.

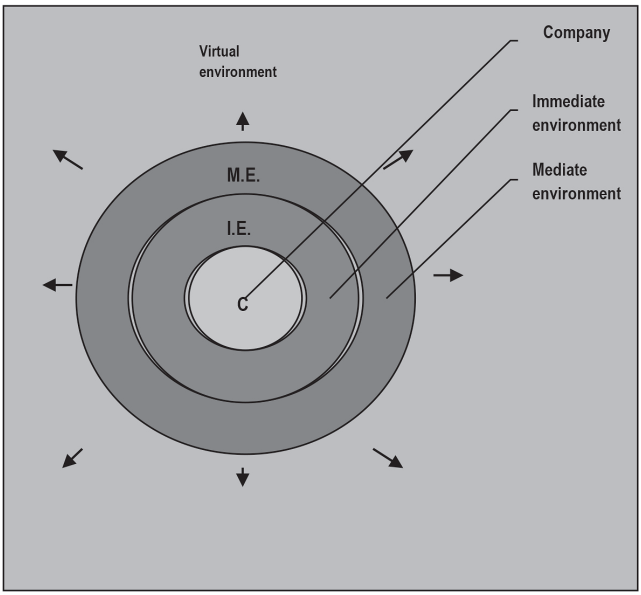
At this stage, it is essential to consider what was stated by Porter (1991, 2007), who refers to the «National Environment» as one that plays an important role in the competitive success of companies. Its approach is holistic and all variables that can be detected in an organization come together, including the training or preparation of managers and employees of a company.

Porter (1991; 2007) mentions that the success of companies is the result of having teams with suitable professionals within their area of competence. For example, furniture from Denmark is recognized worldwide and this is due to the fact that they have great designers, quality, and university education. A similar situation is that of Japan regarding electronics and computing, because Japan has a number of graduated engineers per capita, far superior to that of almost all other nations. This is part of the «advanced factors», as Porter (1991, 2007) calls those characteristics that make a nation more competitive in a particular subject.

When analyzing the «Environment», it is necessary to consider the relationship that the institution or company has with it, and this approach can be direct, indirect or virtual. From this, stems a differentiation that is established between mediate, immediate and virtual environments.

Before specifying what these three types of relationship consist of, «Environment» is defined as the varied and indeterminate set of people, institutions and norms, which are directly or indirectly related to the organization —company—, and whose task or presence affects other set of surrounding elements. Thus, the «Immediate Environment» is the diverse set of people, institutions and standards that are directly related to the organization —company—; the «Mediate Environment» is one that has a certain degree of relationship with the company and in many cases none; and the «Virtual Environment» is the varied set of public, broad, heterogeneous and anonymous elements which are in virtual relationship, that is, under the support of ICT. This environment is difficult to delimit or number, but it should not be ignored. The «Virtual Environment» is imposed on us naturally by the development of Information and Communication Technologies (ICT). Extending this classification of environments to SR, there is Internal SR, inside the organization, and External SR, everything that stands outside the institution.

Figure 2. Classification of business environments (E)



Note: Immediate Environment (IE), Mediate Environment (ME) and Virtual Environment (VE)
Source: Own elaboration

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2.3. Corporate Culture/Organizational Culture

It is necessary to talk about culture, or rather, business culture, when analyzing topics such as organization, compliance or SR vision, its environment and the role of communication in this broad field of study. Despite the fact that it can be deduced that Business Culture exists beyond definitions, it is necessary to provide one that facilitates sharing more clearly what we mean when we talk about it.

Business Culture is the set of rules, written or not, that provide the behavioral basis of the company's employees, inspiring both their internal relationships, as well as those they maintain with different audiences, from clients to society in general (Bell Mallen, 2004).

This definition, as the name implies, applies to CSR —Corporate Social Responsibility— but can be extended to all types of social organization. For this, it is necessary to change the expressions «business», «organizational», «company» for «institution» or «organization» and trade the word «clients» for «*stakeholders*» or «interest groups». In this way, we can refer to the Organizational Culture of every human group, which goes from the members or workers of a company, a Ministry, an NGO or a sports club.

Every human group organized under the same objective shares a culture, and a knowledge of that culture allows us to reflect about the group's image, to know it and to improve it, this from the investigative point of view of communication theory, i.e, from the theory and the practice in the field of Communication (Coast, 2001). This author refers to communication theory as applied Communication, which is the strategic bridge between theory and praxis, between social science and business sciences.

It should be noted that in most of the texts of the Economics and Communication specialties, business information is provided, but there is not a considerable bibliography regarding the Organizational Culture in non-profit institutions, that is, state organizations or foundations.

In many companies around the world, as well as in Chile, a series of concepts are being applied as constitutive elements of a culture definition. The main or the most widespread are those of vision, mission and values. These concepts are analyzed synthetically and with an emphasis on SR and Communication.

The vision must have the following characteristics: be imaginable and visualize, desirable for employees, possible to achieve although not easy, concrete in providing keys to managers, flexible to allow individual initiatives, and communicable in a simple and brief manner. That is, the vision is what the institution or company «intends to be». The mission serves to «humanize» the strategy of the company and it must present the answers of the questions: why does the organization exist, and why do people work there. It is the goal of the company, it is what must be done. External communication policies must be incorporated into the mission. Values, on the other hand, define the core of the company. «Values are the conduct axes of a company and are related to its purpose» as Cordón Portillo points out (2004). The outlined concepts define and compose the Culture of an organization and therefore are essential elements to consider in any plan of institutional Strategic Communication and in its internal administration.

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2.4. Strategic Organizational Communication

Communication studies allowed this area of knowledge to become a science around 1945, through multidisciplinary works and contributions, among which it is necessary to highlight those of Wiener and Shannon, considered as the creators of this discipline. Although the aforementioned studies had an important influence on other areas of knowledge, it is necessary to point out that from the perspective of Communication Science, the revolution with the greatest impact in the world occurred during the 70s and 80s, with the irruption of Digital Communication.

This is why, in this Age of Information or Knowledge Age, it is essential to know and consider Digital Communication, as well as to know how to make an adequate, efficient and effective use of Information and Communication Technologies (ICT). This affirmation is corroborated by figures and global statistics, for example, between 2000 and 2017 the use of the Internet in the world had a growth of 936%, and from the point of view of the Internet penetration in the world, by continent, the highest percentages occur in North America with 88.1%; Europe 77.4% and Oceania/Australia, 68.1%. In an intermediate level, Latin America 59.6% and the Middle East 56.7% and the lowest is in Africa, with 28.3%.

Table 1. World statistics of Internet and population

Regions	Population (2017 Est.)	Users Dec. 31 (2000)	Users (Mar. 31 2017)	Growth % (2000-2017)	Penetration (% Popula-tion)	Facebook June 30, 2016
África	1 246 504 865	4 514 400	353 121 578	7722,1%	28,3%	146 637 000
Asia	4 148 177 672	114 304 000	1 874 136 654	1539,6%	45,2%	559 003 000
Europe	822 710 362	105 096 093	636 971 824	506,1%	77,4%	309 576 660
Middle East	250 327 574	3 284 800	141 931 765	4220,9%	56,7%	76 000 000
North America	363 224 006	108 096 800	320 068 243	196,1%	88,1%	223 081 200
Latin America / Caribbean	647 604 645	18 068 919	385 919 382	2035,8%	59,6%	296 636 180
Oceania / Australia	40 479 846	7 620 480	27 549 054	261,5%	68,1%	18 239 110
WORLDWIDE TOTAL	7 519 028 970	360 985 492	3 739 698 500	936,0%	49,7%	1 679 433 530

Source: Miniwatts Marketing Group (2017).

It is important to mention that in addition to the economic development variables that are presented here, there is an age range of the population that «was not born with the chip incorporated»[2] (Rueda and Quintana, 2007) and for those people who are not technologically literate, it is necessary to investigate, know, apply and disseminate this communication modality, which is ultimately more used than known, that is,

2 Name that Rueda and Quintana (2007) give to the digital non-natives.

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people know more of these tools, such as the Internet or the Web, rather than Digital Communication as a specific area of study.

The Internet has gradually gone from being a huge library of information to a new medium of information and in some cases of communication, which offers attributes such as credibility, immediacy, complementation of multimedia services and constant updating, something that the rest of traditional means of communication lack, since the news heard in the morning on TV or on the Radio *is repeated* in subsequent broadcasts.

It is necessary to point out that among the characteristics of the Internet its instantaneity can be highlighted, which allows the delivery of information and the relationship of virtual networks; inter-textuality, that is, a new form of relationship with texts, and permanent interactivity. On the other hand, cyberjournalism or digital journalism has meant a new revolution within the Web, which has put journalists before the challenge of having at hand a medium that requires the dissemination of written information immediately, in real time, and with the advantage of updating it several times a day. In short, Digital Communication has advantages, but also threats, especially from the perspective of the «new concept of speed» (Postigo-Gómez, 2009) or time that occurs with ICT, referring to the immediacy in the delivery of information.

These new technological tools to inform have also had their influence on the different types of communication that occur in society, and in this case, in institutions or companies. Just as an example, it is pointed out that in an investigation carried out in Europe in 2002, it was detected that «Intranets are one of the main means for internal communication in companies, standing only below House Organs» (Bell Mallén, 2004). The mentioned conclusion was the result of an investigation carried out by the European Federation of Business Communication and the Department of Communication of the University of Salzburg, entities that published, at the end of 2002, a delphi study on internal communication in companies from Europe.

Organizational Communication, Institutional Communication, Corporate Communication, are some of the names that are given to Communication, both internal and external, in an organization. Additionally, we should add the concepts of Corporate Image, Corporate Identity, Organizational Climate, Corporate Branding and Social Responsibility, all of which consider communication as their starting point or purpose.

There is no doubt that communication is basic in any organization, and in addition, as stated by Watzlawick (1981), «everything communicates». However, Communication, like SR, is still not massively valued. Although there is a lot of literature on communication, there are still institutions or companies that do not believe in the importance it has for a successful management of any organization.

A clear example of the importance of this discipline is evident in Strategic Communication, which aims to «convert the links that organizations have with their cultural, social and political environments, into a harmonious and positive relationship from the point of view of their interests, with the ultimate purpose of changing those links into a competitive advantage» (Rojas, 2007). One of the fundamental tasks of Strategic Communication in an institution or company is to produce adhesion on behalf of both its target audience and its relevant environment.

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In short, it can be pointed out that communication is an essential element to be considered in any type of organization, regardless of the legal or social nature that defines it and gives its legal existence.

3. Discussion and conclusions

In the Introduction of this article, it is stated as a premise that Communication is one of the basic or elementary forms of SR, that is, every institution, organization or company, must communicate with / inform its environment, and not exclusively with an advertising or propaganda purpose, that is, to promote their products or services, but must inform those who are next to them, those around them, their environment, about who they are, what they do, how they do it and why.

It was also stated that SR, the Environment and Communication were united in their development and research field. The latter, as it is reiterated that information and communication are one of the needs that must be met and contemplated by any organization that wishes to be socially responsible and thereby achieve the desired prestige and reputation.

From the perspective of Digital Communication, it is considered that an organization is modern, if it has computers but that is not enough and it is not everything. It is necessary to train people in the use of these ICTs and at the same time inform managers about the advantages and threats that these instruments have.

There is still a lot to do or, rather, there is still a lot to report, in terms of SR and the role that corresponds to Communication in this area. When it is stated that there is still a long way to go in terms of reporting for public opinion, it is based on a concrete and verifiable fact: in Chile only seven or ten years ago, seminars, meetings and various educational-cultural activities on SR have been carried out, and information has been published regarding SR. However, at the end of the 1980s, in some Chilean universities, the Theory of Social Responsibility began to be studied, and it began in the Faculties and Majors of Economics and Business Engineering.

It cannot be said that this ignorance at a general level about SR is due to or is the responsibility of journalists, because they are not the ones who set the informative guidelines of newspapers, radios and television. Nor would it be fair to say that they are the owners of those media. The situation is more complex and here and now a response could not be delivered. However, a contribution can be made by saying that in this disinformation there are many influencing factors, the most evident being the diverse economic and socio-political powers of the country, the policies of Communication from universities and the media.

However, it is noteworthy that, at present, albeit belatedly, SR is being disseminated more widely, and it can be found both in the real world and in the virtual one, that is, on the Internet, from serious, scientific bibliography, to organizations created precisely on the basis of SR. In Chile, for example, Fundación Pro-Humano (2017), has made some contributions. Despite these advances, deficiencies, disinformation and some prejudices still persist. Additionally, in Chile and in several Latin American countries, public opinion, like civil society in general, has begun not only to expect but also to demand that organizations behave as «good corporate citizens». For companies that operate in Chile this is no longer just an ethical condition but an imperative one for the success of their business in the long term.

On the other hand, it is pointed out that there are few contributions from specialists in the Social Sciences in general and, in particular, in the Science of Communication to the subject of SR. In addition, although there are important advances in the academic fields in this area, they have not yet been sufficiently disseminated, and it is to be hoped that research will soon be carried out.

An example of the lack of knowledge and application that exists is the fact that only some companies and institutions carry out audits in Communication, a technique that is widely applied in organizations of first world countries. Some authors even go beyond a communicational audit and call it «Global Strategic Auditing». This «Global Strategic Auditing» is presented by Costa (2001), who states that:

> It is a fact that the term audit has accounting connotations: it designates a review of accounts, whose data is previously known by the company. My audit does not consist of reviewing and checking data that are well known a priori. It is the opposite: a revelation of ignored data, that exists regardless, is present and interacts in some way with the company (p. 241).

In relation to communication and information, it is added that the Law of Transparency and Access to Public Information (Chile), has as its principles the transparency of the public function, the right of access to information of the organs of the State Administration, procedures for the exercise of the right and for its protection and the exceptions to the publicity of information (Law No. 20,285, 2008). This legal body is mentioned because it is reflected, although in a tax, through the mandate of the law, one of the principles mentioned here, and it is the obligation and the need to inform the work carried out by state agencies. This same transparency is required by society in several other areas, extending to private activity.

For future research and research already underway, Communication will continue to be an object of interest, and here it is proposed to initiate research on Individual Responsibility, which would be directly related to the topic of Trust and How to Build Trust (Enderle, 2003, pp.131-132).

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Corporate Social Responsibility in Spanish professional soccer: a relationship for the development of a new citizenship?

Responsabilidad Social en el fútbol profesional español ¿Una relación para el desarrollo de un nuevo rol ciudadano?

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Abstract

This research explores the relation existing between Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) and Public Relations (PR) through the legitimization theory (Lindblom, 1994). With this project we aim to determine if soccer clubs are implementing Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) programs to legitimate their role in society as corporate citizens. The specific objectives are (1) to know how CSR programs are being introduced in Spanish soccer clubs; (2) to determine their main CSR polices and (3) to identify dialogue channels with stakeholders. The methodology is based on the interpretative and descriptive analysis of 42 professional soccer clubs in the Spanish League (2016/2017), including those in the first and second division. In particular, we will analyze annual reports, their corporate websites and finally, the foundations of these clubs as instruments to develop CSR policies. The results show little commitment to CSR, which emphasizes charity, actions aimed at the members and compliance with Transparency Laws. The main conclusion is that professional clubs are limited to comply with the legislation and do not have a real commitment to transparency and CSR. The concept of CSR is not applicable to the professional soccer sector in Spain.

Resumen

El presente trabajo se enmarca en la relación que se establece entre la Responsabilidad Social de las empresas (RSE) y relaciones públicas en las organizaciones, visto desde el enfoque de la Teoría de la Legitimación (Lindblom, 1994). Se plantea determinar si los clubes profesionales del fútbol español apuestan por la RSE como estrategia para legitimar su rol de ciudadano corporativo en la sociedad. Como objetivos específicos se pretende (1) conocer cuál es la situación de la RSE en los clubes; (2) determinar las políticas de RSE más habituales y, (3) identificar los principales canales de relación y diálogo con los stakeholders. La metodología empleada, con un carácter descriptivo-interpretativo, se focalizará en el estudio de los 42 clubes que componen la Liga de Fútbol Profesional (temporada 2017/2018), de primera y segunda división. Para ello se analizan las memorias anuales, las webs corporativas y las fundaciones de los clubes, por constituirse éstas como instrumentos para implementar políticas de RSE. Los resultados arrojan un escaso compromiso con la RSE, donde se enfatiza la acción social, las acciones destinadas a los socios y el cumplimento con la Ley de Transparencia. La conclusión principal demuestra que los clubes profesionales se limitan a cumplir con la legislación y no tienen un compromiso real con la transparencia y la RSE. El concepto de RSE no es aplicable al sector del fútbol profesional en España.

Keywords | palabras clave

CSR, public relations, citizenship, sport, soccer clubs, Spain.
RSE, relaciones con los públicos, ciudadanía, deporte, clubes futbol, España.

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1. Introduction and state of the question

The main objective of this work is to determine if professional Spanish soccer clubs use Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) as a strategy to legitimize their role as corporate citizens in society.

The relationship established between soccer and society could be analyzed from different perspectives, but it is CSR that will offer a more integral context in line with current society, which allows us to observe the relationship from commitment, responsibility and understanding. UEFA itself (2017), the governing body of the sport in Europe, states on its website that:

> Soccer, as an integral part of global society and as the most popular sport in the world, has an invaluable role to promote social development and exert its influence. Under the motto of RESPECT, UEFA's social responsibility strives to promote sustainable development in all aspects of soccer in cooperation with other stakeholders. This is not at the expense of benefits. Rather, it has to do with how these benefits are obtained.

In line with this message, the Spanish soccer «League» focuses on each of the actors of society, on citizens, the fans, to convey through their *Practical Guide for Amateurs* a relevant message of responsibility: «It is important that you assume your responsibilities and defend the fundamental values of soccer, of sports, and in particular of our competitions because you are an indispensable and irreplaceable part of soccer» (La Liga, 2015).

In search for references, Olabe (2012) discusses CSR as a reputation factor in professional soccer clubs, an asset associated with the emotions it generates. On the other hand, the work of López-Martínez and Fernández-Fernández addresses how professional soccer clubs «have become true companies that, in many cases, are not managed in accordance with the legal and ethical requirements demanded for the rest» (2015, p. 39). The management of these companies under standards of transparency (business ethics), Good Governance practices and CSR is considered as the way to fight against «an unsound and unrigorous management, with intolerable debts in any other sector» (López-Martínez, & Fernández-Fernández, 2015, p. 40).

It would be difficult to understand that professional soccer, which generates millions of euros, with great impact on society and which represents a formative aspect for many young people and children (Silva-Santos *et al.*, 2014), does not promote commitment with transparency, accountability and duty to society, under CSR based management. We cannot ignore the role that the players have in society and the influence of soccer inside and outside the field (Cano-Tenorio, & Paniagua-Rojano, 2017, Cano-Tenorio 2017). As mentioned by Castillo, Fernández, & Castillero (2016, p. 215) «the peculiarity of soccer as a modern spectacle means that it has millions of followers from all over the world» and therefore, its impact in society and the media cannot be ignored as a responsibility to society. It is not possible, in this sense, to forget the heterogeneous mass that makes up the so-called «followers», where a big part of them are made up of children, adolescents and young people who see soccer and, more specifically, soccer players, as sources of inspiration to be imitated.

In fact, the League is aware of this social responsibility and therefore, through its Directorate of Integrity and Security, together with the Higher Sports Council, is the lead in social commitment, editing the *Guide to Good Practices*. *Regulations and Principles for Spanish Federations*, *Leagues and Athletes* (La Liga, 2015). In this context, the *Map of Social Responsibility of Spanish Professional Soccer* is published by the Professional Soccer Foundation (La Liga, 2017), as «a real opportunity to add social value to the world of professional soccer (...) and jointly overcome the weaknesses detected». As a result of this work, they propose an approach to CSR from the joint work of clubs and foundations and with the development of the concepts of *Social Fair Play* and *Financial Fair Play*, as means to achieve an economic and social balance. In this area, they raise the model of ISO 26000[2] for the development of CSR actions and activities. In fact, we can see in the following statement, how the Spanish soccer world has detected that CSR represents an opportunity for their business as well: «we have seen that the greater the decrease-control of the public debt of the clubs, the greater the increase in their social action and, the greater SR, the better the impact on economic data» (La Liga, 2017); the question will then be to find out if a commitment to CSR really takes place and becomes part of the management strategies of sports organizations.

1.1. CSR and Public Relations

This work is conceptually framed in the relationship established between CSR and Public Relations. According to the Ethos Institute for Business and Social Responsibility (2017, p.17), CSR is:

> [...] a form of management that is defined by the ethical relationship of the company with all the publics to which it is related and by the establishment of business goals compatible with the sustainable development of society, preserving environmental and cultural resources for future generations, respecting diversity and promoting the reduction of social inequalities.

In this order of ideas, it is evident that companies must maintain a relationship (ethics) with their public, based on dialogue, taking into account their interests and demands; therefore, an approach from Public Relations is possible.

The management of relations with the public is postulated as one of the main functions of Public Relations (Harlow, 1975[3]; Seitel, 2002; Grunig, & Hunt, 2003), and these become a necessary element for the correct management and development of CSR; in addition to being a cohesive element of CSR by fostering a relationship between the organization and its stakeholders. Addressing the management of CSR from Public Relations is inevitable, since the management of relationships with stakeholders is at the heart of CSR as well as in the functions of Public Relations (Wang, & Chaudhri, 2009, p. 247).

To approach this idea theoretically, work will be done under the «Legitimation Theory» (Lindblom, 1994), which states that companies establish an explicit or implicit contract with society (Shocker, & Sethi, 1973). These authors point out that every social institution operates by virtue of a social contract, on which it depends for its survival and development, hence, justifies its existence. Therefore, «this situation forces the company

2 https://goo.gl/jqcGU9
3 Quoted in Seitel (2002, p. 12).

to a constant search for legitimacy, adapted to the social requirements and demonstrating the usefulness and necessity of their existence» (Ángel-Vega, 2009, p. 39).

According to O'Donovan (2002, p.344), «the theory of legitimacy is based on the idea that, in order to continue operating successfully, companies must act within the limits of what society identifies as acceptable behavior», whereas Lindblom (1994, p. 2) defines legitimacy as:

> A condition or state that exists when the value system of an entity is congruent with the value system of the broader social system. When there is a disparity, real or potential, between the two value systems, there is a threat to the legitimacy of the entity.

In the search for legitimacy, organizations respond to the expectations that stakeholders have about them. This social contract is represented by the concept of «corporate citizenship» (Capriotti, 2006), in which companies are involved in society as citizens, and where corporate values are also aligned with the values of society.

This approach from Public Relations is reinforced with other approaches that stem from the importance of the management of relationships with the public for the survival of the organization from a CSR perspective, specifically in theoretical efforts such as Freeman's «Theory of Stakeholders» (1984), Carrol's «Theory of the CSR Pyramid» (1999) and Cortina's «Ethical Approach to CSR» (1994). The «Theory of Stakeholders» (Freeman, 1984), proposes:

> The existence of a wide range of participants interested in companies, and also shows the relational condition between company and society. They are not two separate entities, but two components of the same loom that, when weaving or interacting, generate a capital or a profit called social capital. What is really valuable is the relationship, which requires mutual trust, only achievable through frank and honest dialogue (Castillo, 2009, p. 235).

This approach suggests that if we adopt the relationships between a company and the groups and individuals that can affect or be affected by it (known as stakeholders) as a unit of analysis, we have a better opportunity to deal with the problems/tensions that may arise between them (Freeman *et al.*, 2010, p. 5).

According to Carroll (1999) and the «Theory of the CSR Pyramid», we must consider four levels of CSR. These levels are (Carroll, 1999; Castillo, 2009, p. 225):

- Economic responsibility, where the main objective is the maximization of the benefit derived from economic activity.
- Legal responsibility, where the company acts in accordance with the laws and regulations that it must comply.
- Ethical responsibility, where the company must meet the expectations that stakeholders have regarding their social, labor and environmental behavior. It must act correctly and fairly, avoiding «harm».
- Philanthropic responsibility, where the company acts as a «good citizen» and is committed to contributing to the improvement of the welfare of society. This level does not imply an obligation and this status is acquired when the previous three have accomplished.

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Carrol (1999) developed a CSR strategy that combined, on the one hand, the maximization of benefits in compliance with the law (functionalist version), and on the other, business ethics and the responsibilities of companies towards society (Raufflet *et al.*, 2012, p. 34).

Cortina (1994), as a reference to the ethical approach in CSR, defines ethics as a «type of knowledge of those that intend to orient human action in a rational sense (...) to act in a rationally» (1994, p. 17) guiding action to make prudent and moral (Cortina, 1994, p. 18). In the field of organization, the search for happiness is interpreted as a social goal, understood as the goods/services that it provides to society and that legitimize its existence (Cortina, 1994, p. 22).

CSR is based on the assertion that companies, to the extent that they act freely and voluntarily, are made up of different people who live in a society with a certain conscience and ethics. They are, therefore, responsible (Navarro, 2008, p. 44).

As we have seen, the company has a social purpose as a citizen. When it does not comply with the premises that legitimize its presence in society, ethics in the organization guides the company toward what it should be (Navarro, 2008, p. 45). For García Marzá, «business ethics is not a part of CSR (...) responsibility is a part of business ethics concerned with the conditions that underlie the trust placed in the company» (2007, p. 186).

2. Material and methods

The hypothesis of this study suggests that clubs will opt for CSR activities as a way to legitimize their role in society as a corporate citizen. Guided by the objectives of the present investigation, this article addresses the following questions:

- What is the situation of CSR in Spanish soccer clubs?
- What are the most common CSR policies in these clubs?
- What are the main channels of relationship and dialogue used by these organizations to manage relationships with their stakeholders?

The methodology used is descriptive-interpretative, and focuses on the study of the 42 clubs that make up the Professional Soccer League (season 2017/2018, data 2016/2017), first[4] (20) and second[5] (22) division. We will perform a content and depth analysis of the following areas:

- Annual reports, to be identified as an element to meet the criteria required by the Transparency Law of Soccer (Transparency Law 19/2013, from December 9).
- Corporate webs of these clubs, as they constitute the main channel of active relationship with the public and provide a favorable context for the dialogue.

4 First division clubs, Santander League. https://goo.gl/SqRquh

5 Second division clubs, League 1|2|3. https://goo.gl/vxV4Tf

- The club's foundations, as they are constituted as instruments of general interest (AEF, s.f., p. 3), as channels for the implementation of CSR policies, from the evolution of sports clubs to anonymous sports societies (Law 10/1990, of October 15, Sports and Royal Decree 1251/1999, of July 16, on anonymous sports companies).

To this end, an analysis sheet has been designed to identify whether CSR is part of the club strategy or not, as well as CSR policies and actions and tools of dialogue and participation. The main dimensions of analysis are:

- Corporate governance and transparency.
- Relationship tools with stakeholders.
- CSR policies/strategic lines.
- Information about foundations.

Access to information was obtained through the content available on the corporate website of each club. The collection and analysis of the data was carried out during the first quarter of 2018 and a pretest was applied to 9.5% of the clubs under study. Fundamental elements are considered for a club to be included in the analysis process, including compliance with 2 of the 3 minimum criteria:

- That the club has a corporate website.
- That the website provides information on compliance with the Transparency Law.
- That the website offers information about the club's foundation.

If a club does not offer information on compliance with the Transparency Law and its Foundation, it is excluded because it does not offer data of interest for the present investigation. Likewise, we consider the web and its content as a transparency exercise platform, used as a communication tool where information of interest and usefulness for the user is published, without the user having to inquire on his/her own. Therefore, the analysis in its entirety focuses on the content that clubs publish on their websites.

3. Analysis and results

All first division clubs offer information regarding compliance with the Transparency Law on their official website, with the exception of Atlético de Madrid, which offers the memory of the previous season, and Getafe, which shows the directory and link, but does not provide any documents.

Only 60% of the clubs (12) offer economic information about their Foundation on the club's official website. Those who do not offer this information include: Deportivo Alavés, Atlético de Madrid, Deportivo La Coruña, Getafe FC, Girona FC, Club Deportivo Leganés, Real Celta de Vigo and Villarreal CF.

The Second Division clubs: Albacete Balompié, Lorca Fútbol Club and Reus Deportiu Soccer Club are excluded from the analysis because they do not offer information on their website regarding compliance with the Transparency Law and information about the foundation. In only one case (Granada Club de Fútbol SAD), the information is not updated, in another (Cultural y Deportiva Leonesa SAD), no information appears regarding compliance with the Transparency Law, but both cases present information on the club's foundations.

In seven cases, information on the foundation is not offered on their website (regardless whether they have one), but information on compliance with the Transparency Law is provided. Specifically, we refer to the Alcorcón SAD Sports Association, Córdoba Club de Fútbol SAD, Granada Club de Fútbol SAD, Cub Deportivo Lugo, Gimnàstic de Tarragona SAD, Real Oviedo SAD and Club Deportivo Tenerife SAD. Therefore, the analysis of second-division clubs has focused on a corpus of 17 members.[6]

3.1. Transparency Law

In 90% of the cases from first division clubs and in 76.5% of the cases of second division clubs, the memory is downloadable; while in 10% and 23.5%, respectively, the information is posted on the website. There are abbreviated summaries in half of the clubs from the first division. However, in the second we find abbreviated reports or executive summaries that enable a quick reading, identification of key data and interpretation. Likewise, it is surprising that 100% of the cases show an absence of web pages accessible and adapted according to accessibility protocols.[7] Regarding contact data, they appear in 76.5% of cases in the second division and a testimonial 5% in first division. The content index appears in 75% and 71%, and in 50% and 53% the index is linked to the memory content, facilitating navigation to the user, as well as the rapid identification of the content of interest. There is a presentation in 35% of the cases in the first division and 12% of the cases in the second division. In 30% of the cases in the first division and in no case in the second division can a welcome message from the club president be found.

In the totality of the first division clubs and in 94% of the second division cases, corporate information of the entities appears in the section. This is interpreted as due, mainly, to having a marked static character and its content does not adapt with much definition to the one referred to in the sections. Among the corporate content, we highlight:

- Organization chart (100% and 94%, respectively).
- History and/or background (100% and 88%).
- Milestones, achievements, track record (100% and 35%).
- Brand, logo, advertising (20% and 82%).
- Club sponsors (70% and 94%).
- Anthem (35% and 47%).
- Stadium (70% and 82%).

6 The data of FC Barcelona B and Sevilla AT have not been included in the analysis of the Second Division clubs because the first teams of each club are present in the First Division data.

7 Web Accessibility Initiative (WAI). https://goo.gl/8nUjyf

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- Others: virtual store, ticket sales, museum, mascot, promotions, facilities, former presidents, sports city, agenda, historical players, corporate image manual, etc.

3.2. Corporate governance

In the first division, the total number of clubs presents the structure of the governing or administrative council, and in half of the cases, we find women's participation, but in no case is male representation vis-à-vis the female explicitly mentioned. In 30%, the positions that the board members occupy outside the club are mentioned, in 65% the remuneration is mentioned (35% of the total explicitly mentions that they do not receive remuneration for their position in the company). In 80% of cases, the ethical code is eluded.

In the second division, in 82% of the cases the structure of the governing council/board of administration is presented, only in three cases we find a woman and in one case, two women. Consequently, in no case is male representation explicitly mentioned in relation to female representation. In 60%, the positions that council members occupy outside the club are mentioned, as well as remunerations. 47% refer to the ethical code.

3.3. Stakeholders and communication tools

In reference to the interest groups of the clubs analyzed in the first division, we can highlight that the main ones that appear are:

- Club (100%).
- Amateurs (100%)
- Subscribers (100%).
- Fans/followers (100%).
- Shareholders (90%).
- Sponsors (65 %%).
- Media (35%).
- Local administration/government (55%).
- Community and society in general (40%).
- Educational sector (35%).
- Professional sector (20%).
- Club companies (20%).
- NGO/Third Sector (20%).
- Employees (20%).

The group of amateurs, segmented, offers the greatest relevance, followed by sponsors and media. Out of these groups, those that have their own section on the web are: clubs (95%), shareholders (90%), fans and followers (85%), and subscribers (80%), sponsors (60%) and other groups that appear in with less than 25%, such as, for example, the media collective. The content that appears in the sections is merely informative and does not respond to any strategic approach with specific communication objectives or tools.

Regarding the interest groups of the clubs analyzed in the second division, we find that the main interest groups that are in the documents analyzed according to the frequency table are:

- Club (100%).
- Amateurs (100%)
- Subscribers (100%).
- Fans/followers (100%).
- Media (94%).
- Community and society in general (94%).
- Shareholders (64.7%).
- Sponsors (58.8%).
- Club companies (29.4%).
- Local administration/government (17.6%).
- Educational sector (17.6%).
- Professional sector (11.8%).
- NGO/Third Sector (5.9%).
- Employees (5.9%).

It is also observed how the groups related to the hobby and the media are recurrent in all cases, followed by shareholders and the community in general. From these groups, those that have their own section on the web are the supporters clubs (94%), fans, followers and subscribers (82%), media (82%), shareholders (41%), sponsors (35%), club companies (6%), community/society (6%). As is the case of the first division, in the second the content that appears in the sections is merely informative and does not respond to any strategic approach with specific communication objectives or tools.

The analysis of available communication tools, in the case of the first division (table 1) and second division (table 2), is presented below:

Table 1. Communication Tools First Division

Tool	Frequency (%)
Corporate web	100
Blog	10
Forums (online)	0
Suggestions/complaints/claims box	70
App	50
Online newsletters	30
Microsite/specific portals by public	20
Forums, conferences, meetings	80
Direct meetings with groups, regulatory bodies, associations, ...	90
Email	80
Corporate Magazine	40
Own TV channel	40

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Tool	Frequency (%)
Bank images	80
Twitter	100
YouTube (channel)	100
Flickr	20
Facebook	95
LinkedIn	30
Instagram	95
Snapchat	15
RSS (content subscription)	50
Other social networks (Google+, Weibo, Wechat, Viber, Pinter-est, Line, Dugout, Vimeo, etc.)	70

Table 2. Communication Tools Second Division

Tool	Frequency (%)
Corporate web	100
Blog	5,9
Forums (online)	0
Suggestions/complaints/claims box	58,8
App	0
Online newsletters	5,9
Microsite/specific portals by public	11,8
Forums, conferences, meetings	0
Direct meetings with groups, regulatory bodies, associations, ...	0
Email	100
Corporate Magazine	41,2
Own TV channel	0
Bank images	76,5
Twitter	100
YouTube (channel)	100
Flickr	17,6
Facebook	94,1
LinkedIn	5,9
Instagram	100
Snapchat	0
RSS (content subscription)	58,8
Other social networks (Google+, sportcam, Weibo, WeChat, Mi-aoHai)	29,4

Other tools used by the clubs, which are identified in the exploration of the present investigation are:

- Press room.
- Interviews and reports on demand (specific mention on the web).
- Online radio (direct and podcast).
- Surveys.
- Social Wall.
- Downloads.
- WhatsApp for partners.
- Newspaper library.
- Intranet for journalists and partners.
- Program for each game.
- Welcome guide fans.
- Electronic Headquarters.
- Posters announcing matches.

3.4. CSR

Only in three cases does a microsite dedicated to CSR emerge (FC Barcelona and Deportivo Alavés from the first division, and Unión Deportiva Almería SAD from the second), but without information that could be analyzed.

Although no specific sections where clubs address CSR as an integral commitment to the management of the entity itself have been found, CSR issues or areas of action with which they seem to be most involved are identified (Tables 3 and 4):

Table 3. CSR Scope First Division

Areas	Frequency (%)
Art and culture	45
Education and formation	80
Research, R+D+i, quality, technology	60
Families	75
Environment	15
Poverty and marginalization/social assistance	75
Equality and conciliation (specific actions for women's day)	40
HR/Employees	10
Help in catastrophes	0
Volunteering (corporate)	25
Cooperation and solidarity	70
Health (internal and external) and safety	15

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Areas	Frequency (%)
Integration and diversity (immigrants, disabled, prisoners, rehabilitated, ...)	55
Violence in sport (violence, racism, xenophobia...)	100

Table 4. CSR Scope Second Division

Ámbitos	Frecuencia (%)
Art and culture	0
Education and formation	94,1
Research, R+D+i, quality, technology	17,6
Families	35,3
Environment	5,9
Poverty and marginalization/social assistance	64,7
Equality and conciliation (specific actions for women's day)	29,4
HR/Employees	0
Help in catastrophes	5,9
Volunteering (corporate)	23,5
Cooperation and solidarity	94,1
Health (internal and external) and safety	64,7
Integration and diversity (immigrants, disabled, prisoners, re-habilitated, ...)	76,5
Violence in sport (violence, racism, xenophobia...)	100

3.5. *Foundations*

In 100% of the cases it is deduced that the foundations are privately owned. In the first division, 60% offer economic information about the entity, 40% give information regarding bylaws and composition, as well as information regarding their employees.

In no case does the second division offer economic information of the foundation, nor do they provide bylaws or employee information, if they are different from those of the club to which it is linked. Only 20% provide a date of incorporation and list of board members.

The areas of interest for foundations in the first division are: sports (100%), culture (70%), society (80%) and history (65%). Other topics found are training, youth, etc.

The areas of interest for the second division foundations are sports (100%), culture (70%), society (50%) and training (40%). In a different set of topics, we find international alliances, sustainability and social innovation, solidarity, health and art.

The channels used in the first division by the foundations to contact include mail (45%) and dedicated social network profiles (35%), as well as the telephone (20%). Among the networks, Facebook and Twitter stand out (25%), as well as Instagram. Other noteworthy contents are feedback forms, suggestion boxes, online publications, etc.

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Among the channels to contact the foundation in the second division, those which stand out include dedicated email (60%), specific microsites (70%), telephone (40%) and dedicated social networks (20%). Networks include Twitter (20%), Facebook (20%), YouTube (10%) and Flickr (10%). Other important contents are image databases (20%), news (40%) and bulletins (20%).

4. Discussion and Conclusions

The websites of the first division clubs present data with greater depth, since the percentages, in the majority of the cases, are higher in all the parameters analyzed.
In the analysis of the information related to the Transparency Law, in most of the cases the available and downloadable information appears with more details of composition data of the directors board, details of incomes (in many cases, explaining that it does not exist), as well as references to ethical codes.

The websites of the Spanish soccer clubs are not adapted according to accessibility protocols and, therefore, they are not accessible for people with visual impairments. It is advisable, in this regard, to highlight the existing legislation on digital accessibility and that should be applied in all cases, specifically:

- Law 34/2002, of July 11, 2002, on services of the information society and electronic commerce (LSSICE).[8]
- Law 51/2003, of December 2, 2003, on equal opportunities, non-discrimination and universal accessibility for people with disabilities (LIONDAU).[9]

Likewise, it is remarkable that in all cases the information is presented fulfilling with the sections included in the Transparency Law, which conveys that clubs limit Zthemselves to complying with the law and do not have a real commitment to transparency and CSR, that is, they do not go any further.

The areas of stakeholder analysis and communication tools used in both categories show the most similarities, since they are segments of interest and purposes which coincide in both divisions. The differences are accentuated, however, in social networks, where first division teams have more of them available to their fans, in response to the demand for segmented information (Dugout), the maturity of their corporate structures (LinkedIn) and the internationalization of their markets (Weibo), among other reasons.

The similarity is also high among the objectives within the corporate social responsibility of the clubs. As a trend, it is worth mentioning that the first division teams are oriented towards training, while the second division teams strive for social and solidarity objectives.

In the foundations of the clubs, we find more transparency in the information, depth of structure and variety of communication tools in the entities of the first division; however, in the second division special attention is paid to those entities, to the

8 Available at: https://goo.gl/8pkFQ6
9 Available at: https://goo.gl/gGNcge

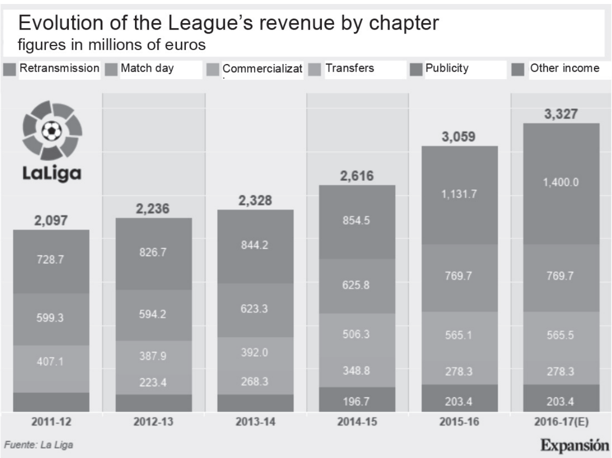
point of generating a greater number of differentiated sites. Regardless, the information provided on these websites is insufficient.

In the area of CSR, the absence of CSR plans or declared CSR reports is relevant. In fact, soccer clubs do not develop CSR policies, but rather work under the social action or philanthropy and are not aware of the impacts they generate on society and their responsibility to it. Working within a responsible approach implies accepting that, as an organization, they generate impacts for which they are responsible; that they must create shared value and that it is their obligation, and therefore, their commitment to reduce the negative effects of their activities. This approach is aligned with the renewed EU strategy for CSR published in 2011, where CSR is understood as:

- The responsibility of companies for their impact on society. (...) To fully assume their social responsibility, companies must implement, in close collaboration with stakeholders, a process to integrate social, environmental and ethical concerns, respect for human rights and consumer concerns into their business operations and basic strategies, in order to:
- maximize the creation of shared value;
- identify, prevent and mitigate possible adverse consequences (European Commission, 2011, p. 7).

After the data presented, it cannot be said that Spanish soccer clubs take CSR as a commitment to society and the impacts of their activities, assuming their new role as citizens. While revenues continue to rise (3327 million, 2016/2017 season, see figure 1), the debt with the Spanish Treasury decreases, but not in the same proportion as income increases, as they still owe 184 million euros to the public coffers (Mazo *et al.*, 2017). We cannot ignore the fact that Spanish soccer clubs have an impact on our society and, given the above definition, the concept of CSR is not applicable.

Figure 1. League's income (Expansión, 2017)



Source: Expansion[9]

The League, as employer of the entities or clubs that make up the professional competition, champions a commitment approved in its assembly unanimously and with full commitment. However, the data reflected in our study indicates that the action policies of each of the clubs are still far from fulfilling their particular share of responsibility defended by the entity, which projects global commitments higher than the particular sum of the members that compose it.

In relation to the hypothesis, which held that clubs will opt for CSR activities as a way to legitimize their role in society as corporate citizens, we can say that this is not confirmed. We can conclude with a reflection not at all catastrophic, by stating that clubs try to legitimize their role in society with social policies, but it would not be appropriate to define them as CSR, but as social action.

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Strategies of Corporate Social Responsibility in companies from the construction sector in Medellín

Estrategias de Responsabilidad Social Empresarial en organizaciones del sector construcción en Medellín

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Abstract

Social responsibility continues to be a topic of special interest for organizations and companies given its correspondence with new global challenges. The purpose of this research is to describe the corporate social responsibility strategies used by companies in the construction sector in Medellín. It is a research developed under the integrated holistic paradigm, under a contemporary cross-sectional descriptive design. A literature review was carried out making possible the conceptualization of the object of study. A structured scale based on a questionnaire of 15 items was applied, with information units corresponding to those in charge of the Social Responsibility function of the construction companies subscribed in FENALCO, Antioquia. The findings show that the practice of corporate social responsibility in the companies under study is very new, less than 10 years old. It is focused on strategies oriented towards the community and workers. The research verifies that socially responsible marketing strategies are also applied, using mainly tools related to the environment and which are envisioned as a form of corporate social responsibility in its initial stages. Recommendations include the diversification of social responsibility strategies in correspondence with the factors and indicators that provide the various tools and mechanisms of corporate social responsibility.

Resumen

La responsabilidad social sigue siendo tema de especial interés para organizaciones y empresas dada su correspondencia con los nuevos retos glocales. La presente investigación tiene como propósito describir las estrategias de Responsabilidad Social Empresarial empleadas por las empresas del sector construcción en Medellín. Se trata de una investigación desarrollada bajo el paradigma holístico integrado, de tipo descriptiva bajo un diseño contemporáneo de fuente mixta-transeccional descriptiva. Se realizó una revisión documental que posibilitó la conceptualización de la variable objeto de estudio al tiempo que se aplicó una escala estructurada con base en un cuestionario de 15 ítems, teniendo como unidades de información a los encargados de la función de Responsabilidad Social de las empresas del sector construcción inscritas en FENALCO Antioquia. Los hallazgos evidencian que la práctica de la Responsabilidad Social Empresarial en las organizaciones objeto de estudio es muy joven, pues evidencian menos de 10 años de práctica y está enfocada en estrategias orientadas a la comunidad y a los trabajadores. Se verifica también que aplican estrategias de Mercadeo Socialmente Responsable y usan fundamentalmente herramientas del medioambiente con lo que se vislumbra como una estrategia de Responsabilidad Social Empresarial de iniciación. Se recomienda la diversificación de estrategias de responsabilidad social en correspondencia con los factores e indicadores que proveen las diversas herramientas y mecanismos de Responsabilidad Social Empresarial.

Keywords | palabras clave

Social Responsibility, company, organizations, strategy, corporate social responsibility.
Responsabilidad social, empresa, organizaciones, estrategia, responsabilidad social empresarial.

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1. Introduction

Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) is a key role among individuals and organizations by virtue of the need to revalue the conditions of life and relationships on the planet. Companies globally have persisted in the development of suitable forms of social responsibility that allow better conditions for productivity and competitiveness, in correspondence with organizational publics (stakeholders).

Responsibility is a centenary concept according to the considerations of Cardona (2017) and Rincón (2017), emphasizing that its conception has had a *boom* since the beginning of the 21st century, given the link with interest groups in public and private organizations to guide a change of inclusive paradigm and integration for the sustainable development of economies.

The purpose of this research is to describe the Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) strategies used by companies in the construction sector in Medellín (Colombia), identifying the orientation of Corporate Social Responsibility strategies with the public groups or interest groups (stakeholders). In this sense, the aim is to determine the social responsibility strategies used and identify social responsibility tools within the framework of the companies under study.

In Colombia, the use of social responsibility as a strategic organizational dimension is increasingly recurrent. For this reason Pérez (2014) affirms that Colombia exceeds Chile and Mexico in social responsibility reports. According to Rincón, Caridad & Salazar (2017):

> [...] today's society is making more and more recurrent demands and claims to organizations so that they act according to the *triple bottom line*, referring to the three economic, social and environmental vectors that condition the insertion in markets competitively, in favor of sustainable development in the face of a welfare economy (p. 49).

Companies in the construction sector do not escape the need to provide socially responsible actions since, given their nature, they articulate the social, economic and environmental component in accordance with the «triple bottom line», making it necessary to observe how companies from this important economic sector apply actions of Corporate Social Responsibility, and «although it is fashionable for many, it guides the ability to respond by coordinating actions to the needs of a collective that is increasingly better informed, more organized and willing to achieve common goals and objectives» (Rincón, 2017, n/a).

The construction sector in Colombia is a determining factor in GDP growth, particularly due to its generation of employment, economic growth, and diversification (DANE, 2017).

2. Literature review

2.1. State of the art

Below are some recent research works on Corporate Social Responsibility, specific to the construction sector or related to it as much as possible. The research of Padilla, Arévalo, Bustamante & Vidal (2017) is presented first. In their work entitled «Corporate Social Responsibility and Financial Performance», they analyze the relationship between Corporate Social Responsibility practices and the financial performance of companies belonging to the industrial plastic sector. A survey was used and designed with a likert scale, as a method of gathering information to demonstrate how companies can be socially responsible. For this, a sample of 192 companies from Quito (Ecuador) was selected.

On the other hand, Padilla *et al.* (2017) determined the correlation existence of CSR variables with financial indexes. In addition, they observed that Ecuadorian companies show a medium implementation level of the concept of CSR. This correlation does not show statistical significant dependencies between the CSR index and financial performance. According to the results of this study, there is a significant relationship between the pillar of social responsibility and return on sales or assets (ROS), and between the pillars of economic and environmental responsibility with respect to the return on equity (ROE).

In accordance with international referents on the subject, Poussenkova, Nikitina, Rowe & Fjaertoft (2016), in their research «Introduction to the Issue of Policy Recommendations for Corporate Social Responsibility for Arctic Petroleum», carried out an analysis on CSR in the exploitation and extraction of oil, focusing with special attention on the impact it generates on the environment.

The methodology applied by Poussenkova *et al.* (2016) was quantitative, through field work in four case studies in which semi-structured interviews were conducted: Hammerfest, Murmansk, Komi Republic and Nenets Autonomous Okrug (NAO). The information units were members of the local population, regional and local authorities, NGOs and representatives of oil companies. The most outstanding findings are related to the development of an input-output model of economic analysis to determine how much oil contributes to the improvement of the economy in the Komi Republic (Russian Federation). The results were compared with Norway in order to investigate the capacity of the oil industry to boost regional growth in both countries (Russia and Norway).

On the other hand, Tai & Chuang (2014), in «Corporate Social Responsibility» refer to the fact that companies should not only be a useful tool for the growth of cities, but also responsible for the care of stakeholders and their needs. In this way, it is clear that business practices require a structure that complies with the standards and objectives for sustainable development.

The methodology used by Tai & Chuang (2014) was quantitative-qualitative. The findings that stand out in the research specify that multinationals are responsible for the interest groups. Therefore, companies must focus on the values of the global economy and social responsibility that create long-term security objectives for the transactions based on the needs of all suppliers, investors and employees.

Tai & Chuang (2014), conclude in favor of social responsibility and promote this strategy from conceptual theory to practice, as one of the most important in the industry. It is suggested in the aforementioned investigation that it is necessary to make more investments in marketing to improve customer loyalty, through the innovation of goods and services.

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Another contribution of interest is observed in the research carried out by Cheng, Ioannou & Serafeim (2014), entitled «Corporate social responsibility and access to finance», in which it is highlighted that a superior performance in CSR strategies leads to better access to business financing. This research corresponds to a quantitative methodology in which the hypothesis that better access to finance can be attributed to the reduction of agency costs, since the commitment of the interested parties and the reduction of asymmetry information due to increased transparency is raised and verified.

The hypothesis stated by Cheng, Ioannou & Serafeim (2014), was tested through a study of 45 companies, resulting in companies with a better CSR performance facing significantly lower capital restrictions. The findings provide evidence that both commitment from stakeholders and transparency about CSR performance are important to reduce capital constraints. The results are confirmed with several alternative measures of capital restrictions, executing an analysis based on the qualifications for the performance of CSR, with a focus on instrumental variables and simultaneous equations.

It is also necessary to point out the study of Ospina and Sotelo, «Corporate Social Responsibility: economic, social and environmental benefits for stakeholders» (2013), in which they set as an objective to establish the situation of companies in the construction sector facing the issue of CSR as a generator of economic value based on information already documented from some models proposed by different authors and cases of some companies in the sector. The methodological approach of Ospina and Sotelo study (2013) consisted in making an analysis of social or sustainability reports, in the first instance, but when the companies did not present these reports they resorted to the management reports of each company. Through these reports and the variable system, a qualitative and descriptive research was developed.

Ospina and Sotelo (2013) stated that the importance of CSR is not only to benefit the interest groups or stakeholders, because organizations should aim to maintain a social balance, so that the damage caused to society can be reduced. They conclude that interest groups can obtain economic, social and environmental benefits when companies are socially responsible, since the objective of the latter is to generate wealth for those who are part of or have a direct relationship with them. In this sense, the work is intrinsically dependent on society and its progress.

As a contribution, the work of Ospina and Sotelo (2013) provides information to the reader about how Corporate Social Responsibility is a useful and effective factor to improve the productivity of companies in Medellín (Colombia) since it meets the needs of an individual or group of individuals that can affect or be affected by the achievement of the objectives of an organization. In turn, they verify that CSR is a great opportunity to improve the profits of companies.

2.2. Legal bases of Corporate Social Responsibility in Colombia

Regarding legal sustenance, the Political Constitution of Colombia from 1991 mentions social responsibility in articles 20, 73, 95 and 333, focused mainly on the responsibility of citizens. However, article 333 recognizes business activity as a source for the social development of the country from the perspective of its social function. Another legal instrument is represented by ruling T-247 from 2010, which mentions that in compensation for the lucrative profit received by companies, they must assume social commitment. However, this decision is not mandatory for companies, as it seeks to be more voluntary and not imposed (Ruling T-247, 2010).

Additionaly in Colombia, four bills have been processed on the subject: Project Law 153 (2006) and Project Law 031 (2007), both on social responsibility and the environment, while Project Law 058 (2009) and Project Law 070 (2010) deal with CSR and child protection.

2.3. Social Responsibility

Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) refers to the role that the company has with society and bases its activities on ethical principles in accordance with the Law. It refers to the relationship that the company has with society, with its environment, and which materializes in the implementation of mutually beneficial actions (Duque, Cardona & Rendón, 2013).

Peláez & García (2014), define CSR as a strategic approach that is part of the management of the organization, providing competitive advantages and differentiation of companies vis-à-vis their stakeholders, society and the environment.

For the European Commission (2001), CSR is understood as the voluntary integration by companies to work towards social and environmental problems in accordance with their commercial operations and their relationship with society. In addition, it points out that being socially responsible does not only mean complying with legal obligations, but also going beyond compliance, investing more in human capital, in the environment and in relations with interest groups. Based on this definition, CSR is based on three aspects: a) Will, b) Identity and sustainability, and c) Relationship with stakeholders.

In none of these aspects is observed compliance with standards as an inherent factor in CSR, constituting only some of the actions that organizations must implement. Consequently, social responsibility actions should not imply the fulfillment of a regulatory obligation. Rather, they should be part of the strategic understanding of the relationship of the organization. Will must start from the particular interest that the company has to take action in favor of the social and environmental surroundings in which it is immersed. The principle of identity and sustainability indicates the commitment that the company has to aligning its economic growth with environmental sustainability, which is called «sustainable development». In this sense, CSR focuses on the welfare of all its stakeholders: customers, shareholders, suppliers, employees; as an integral part of it.

As stated by the General Secretariat of the Government of Salta (2014), one of the greatest qualities that organizations must develop today is to consolidate all the aspects that allow cataloging it as «socially responsible». Economic development must be aligned with social commitment and respect for the environment, in such a way that immediate needs are met without sacrificing future ones. In this way, it also contributes to sustainable development and reverts to society part of the benefit that it gives to the organization, the productive system and, consequently, to the economy.

On the other hand, Rincón, Caridad & Salazar (2017), point out that «social responsibility is a function in the management and development of organizations, pro-

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tected in the collective consciousness for the promotion of actions of social, economic and environmental sensitivity» (p. 48).

The concept of CSR has undoubtedly presented an evolution. Initially it was understood as a basic responsibility of helping society, and with the time it has managed to cover the influence areas of its actions (social, environmental and economic), causing an active presence within society and an activity that is within the corporate strategy of organizations. In this regard De la Garza (2013), states:

> Increasingly, companies perceive that social responsibility is a subject that is not restricted only to social or environmental actions developed by the organization in the community, but also implies the practices of dialogue and interaction with the various publics of the company... For the company to work on the issue of social responsibility, from a systemic and broad perspective, it is necessary that it is incorporated into the management processes and, therefore, be treated as part of the business strategies and the internal planning system of a company (p. 23).

According to Carroll (1991) the orientation in the application of CSR in organizations is presented in four dimensions, which make up most segments of the construction sector. These are: the economic, legal, ethical, philanthropic and environmental dimension.

- The economic responsibility dimension: expects that the companies generate profit, its nature is effectively economic, and it is understood as a benefit that the companies produce when selling goods and services for the functioning of capitalism.
- The legal responsibility dimension: shows that the nature of companies fully responds to a legal context, their responsibility will be in accordance with the rules and regulations of the industry.
- The dimension of ethical responsibility: indicates that companies must demonstrate their duties and values with a focus on ethics, without harming their stakeholders.
- The dimension of philanthropic responsibility: shows that the company or society must be supportive, focused on helping others as a form of increasingly effective social management.

CSR can be categorized according to various factors or indicators, considering the «triple bottom line»—explained *ut supra*—, tools and instruments. An example of this is the «Millennium Development Goals»[2], and specifically the dimensions of social obligation, social reaction and social sensitivity of Donnelly, Gibson, Ivancevich & Konopaske (2011).

This allows seeing how society in general and the interest groups associated with commercial dynamics are increasingly aware of the importance of social, economic and environmental aspects, reflected in environmental care actions, their role as a consumer and as a user. Likewise, companies are concerned with satisfying the

2 Available at: https://goo.gl/sxgQtE (07/23/2018).

demands of the public and addressing issues not only intrinsic to the organizational process but also have a positive impact on the environment, and above all, favoring the organizational publics, understanding that the main responsibility of a company is to be productive, to stay active; thus, being able to guarantee its operation and permanence in the market.

CSR strategies are intended to meet the requirements of the various stakeholders of the organization, taking as a point of reference the pillars of CSR that are the social, economic and environmental commitment. Through the integral management of these areas, improvements are made in organizations by imposing mechanisms aimed at responsible practices that integrate the corporate strategies promoted by management systems. According to Yepes (2007) these strategies are: a) base market pyramid, b) supply chain, d) Corporate Social Responsibility cluster and, d) Responsible Social Marketing.

2.4. Corporate Social Responsibility Tools

In accordance with the above, the adoption of social responsibility by organizations has been made from various tools. In this regard, in April 1991, the United Nations and the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC) presented the document «Our Own Agenda» in which the following thirteen aspects are listed:

a. Peace and global disarmament.
b. New economic relations.
c. Confrontation of poverty.
d. Economic policies inconvenient to the sustainable development of the region.
e. Exploitation of natural resources.
f. Treatment of global environmental problems.
g. New financing mechanisms for the execution of environmental conservation programs.
h. Areas and scope of technical cooperation.
i. Conditionalities in environmental matters.
j. Financial cooperation required to advance the strategy of sustainable development.
k. Change of the consumption patterns in the north.
l. The treatment of drugs.
m. Population.

More recently, the «Global Compact», announced at the Davos Forum in 1999, forms a strategic instrument of free adherence, based on 10 principles that act in four areas in the field of social responsibility and sustainable development: Human Rights, labor environment, natural environment and fight against corruption.

In 2000, 189 member countries of the United Nations proposed the Millennium Development Goals, which were to be achieved by 2015. These goals are:

a. Eradicate extreme poverty and hunger.
b. Achieve universal primary education.

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c. Promote gender equality and women's autonomy.
d. Reduce child mortality.
e. Improve human health.
f. Combat HIV/AIDS, malaria and other diseases.
g. Guarantee the sustainability of the environment.
h. Promote a world association for development.

However, in 2015 the progress of these objectives was evaluated, giving way to a reformulation that currently extends to 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)[3] , based on the progress made through the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs). This adaptation was evident in the formulation of the so-called «2030 Agenda».

To date, Colombia continues to work intensively on the implementation of strategies that make it possible to accelerate the achievement of the MDGs, identifying «bottlenecks» and implementing short and medium-term solutions to ensure compliance with the goals that lag behind the most, supporting the construction of public policies that allow the overcoming of extreme poverty and hunger, with efforts made by National Government institutions such as those led by the Agency for the Overcoming of Extreme Poverty (ANSPE). The different Funds, Programs and Agencies of the United Nations System are working towards this same goal in the country, implementing solutions on issues of habitat, education, health, gender, governance, inclusive economic development and the generation of a culture of peace (UN, 2016).

Based on the political commitment of the country, the National Development Plan 2014-2018 «Together for a new country» includes strategic goals and objectives aimed at generating and strengthening the necessary conditions to build a peaceful, fair and educated society. Additionally, and in order to prepare for the implementation of the SDGs, on February 18, 2015, Colombia made a step that put it at the forefront of the issue in the world, through the creation of the «Interinstitutional High Commission for the Enlistment and the Effective Implementation of the Post-2015 Development Agenda and its SDGs» (UN, 2016).

The current task is to adapt the SDGs to the Colombian context as quickly and effectively as possible, through the design and implementation of public policies and incorporation into local government plans (within the new periods of government), that support the achievement of these new goals. (UN, 2016, p. 20).

There are also other tools that set the priority areas of attention for Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR), such as:

- Global Reporting Initiative (GRI).
- AccountAbility 1000 (AA1000).
- Ethical Management and Corporate Governance (Standard SGE21: 2008) (Forética, 2017).
- Green Paper of the European Union (European Commission, 2001).

3 Available at: https://goo.gl/jKJhA9 (07/23/2018).

- Management addressed to collaborators (SA 8000) (Economic and Social Department, 2015).
- ISO 26000 (ISO 26000, sf).
- Environmental Management (ISO 14001) (ISO 14001, 2015).
- Quality Management (ISO 9000) (ISO 9000, 2015).
- Ethos Indicators.

3. Materials and method

The present research is carried out with an integrating or holistic approach, which allows the researcher to understand the different phases involved in an investigation, facilitates knowing what has already been described, generates contributions to what was previously said and, in addition, accepts the integration of methods and techniques. Hurtado (2012), with the proposal of the holistic cycle, presents an integrating synthesis of the investigative process, which includes a complete vision of the object of study, allowing the researcher to be more than an observer and participate actively in the construction of knowledge. Therefore, a descriptive research was carried out to address the Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) strategies in the companies of the construction sector of Medellín (Colombia).

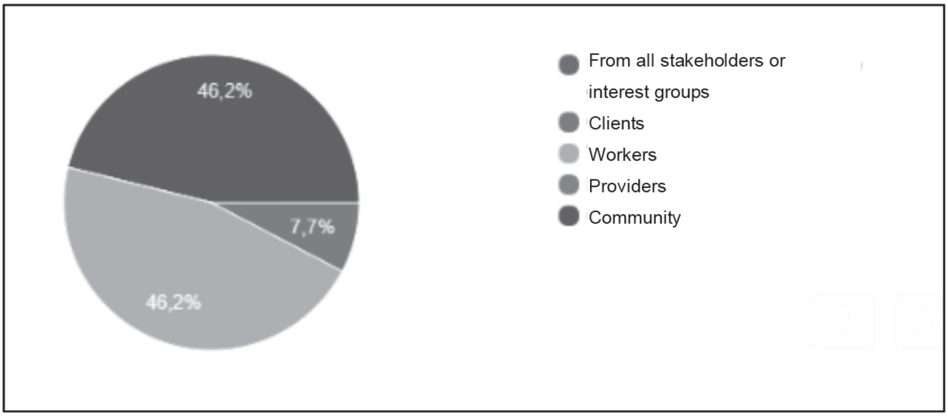
The research started with a literature review for the identification and selection of the information that led to the conceptualization of the subject, reviewing existing theories and definitions in order to compare, evaluate and integrate them in the search for the particularities that help in their categorization. In the development of the research, the predictive, projective, interactive, confirmatory and evaluative phases were fulfilled, as proposed by Hurtado (2012).

The study population was made up of companies in the construction sector of Medellin, taking as a sample reference those registered in FENALCO Antioquia, with a total of 13 companies, all legally constituted. In this sense, the population census technique was applied, considering that the sample under study is a reflection of the entire population. The technique used was the survey through a questionnaire consisting of 15 close questions.

4. Analysis of the results

In order to describe the Corporate Social Responsibility strategies employed by the organizations of the construction sector in Medellín, the results obtained are presented below:

Figure 1. Strategy orientation



As can be seen in Figure 1, 46.2% of the companies state that their Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) strategies are oriented to workers and in the same proportion to the community, while only 7.7% to the customers. It can be interpreted that the orientation of CSR is aligned towards the operative dimension of the company, focusing on internal collaborators and suppliers.

Figure 2. Type of strategy

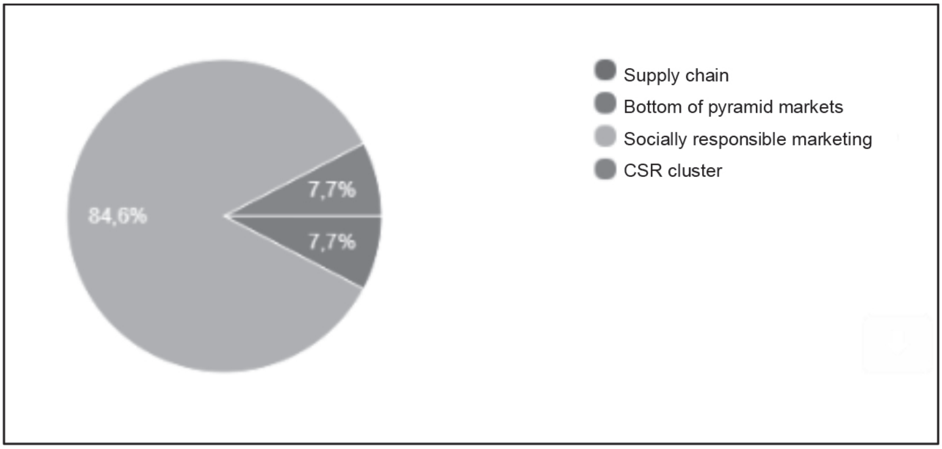
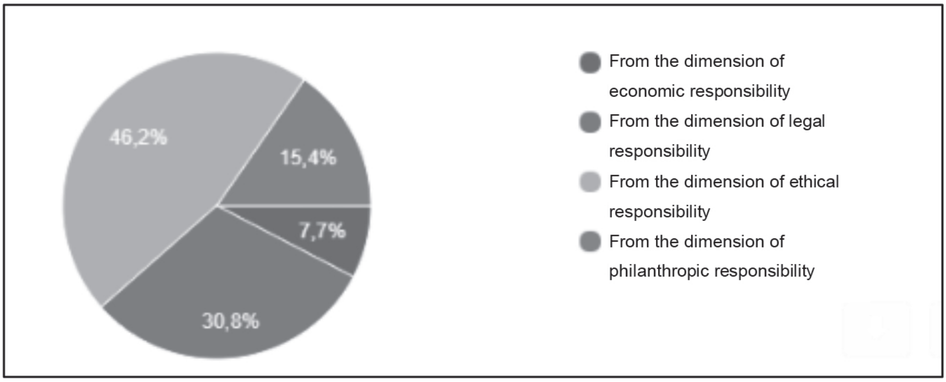


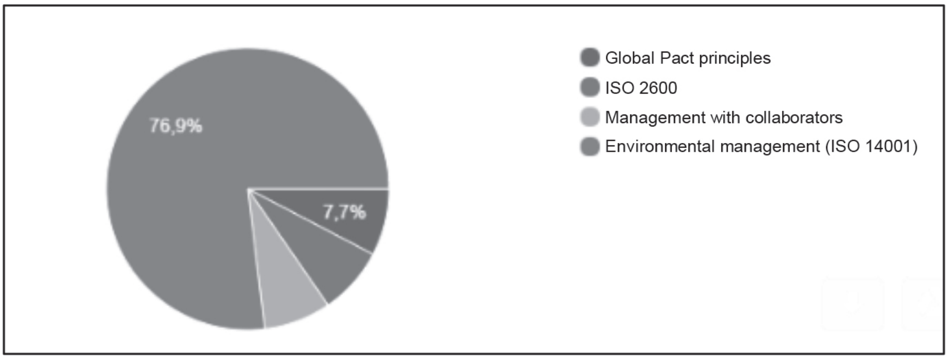
Figure 2 shows how 84.6% of companies apply responsible social marketing as a Corporate Social Responsibility strategy; followed by 7.7% applying bottom of pyramid markets and the remaining 7.7% using a CSR cluster. It is striking that while the orientation of CSR is around internal and intermediate audiences, the strategy employed is focused on responsible social marketing, which could be interpreted as a view towards external audiences or the organizational environment. At the same time, it could be seen as a generic strategy. In this regard, it could be observed that 84.6% of the companies have applied CSR strategies between 1 to 5 years, 7.7% less than 1 year, and the remaining 7.7% between 5 to 10 years, which shows that the sector is aware of the need to implement social responsibility strategies.

Figure 3. Application dimensions of the strategy



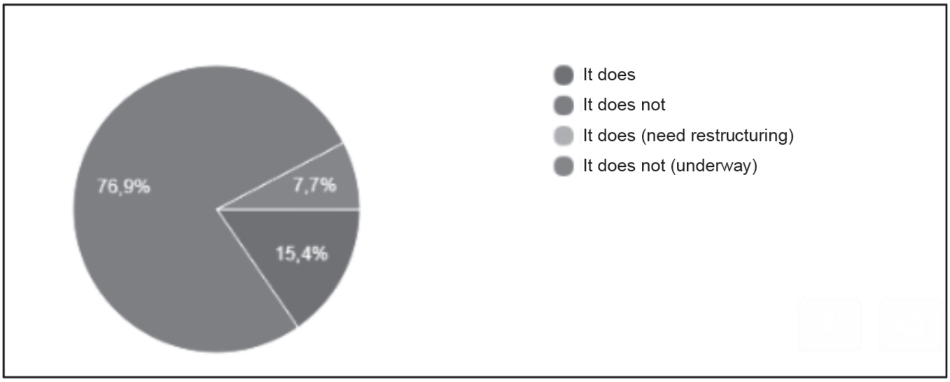
Regarding the dimensions of application (figure 3), CSR strategies of companies in the construction sector in Medellin are oriented at 46.2% to ethical responsibility; 30.8% consider their application from the legal dimension; 15.4% focus on the philanthropic dimension, and only 7.7% focus on economic responsibility.

Figure 4. Types of CSR tools that the company applies



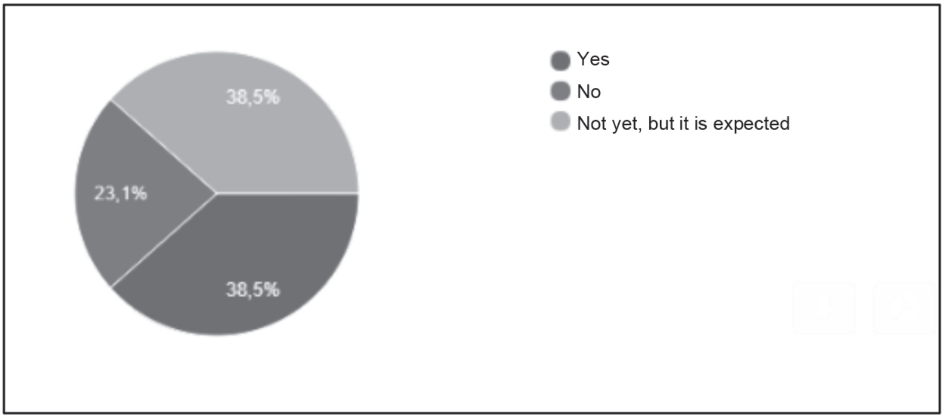
When considering the types of CSR tools applied by the companies referenced above (figure 4), it can be observed that 76.9% apply the ISO 14001 standard on Environmental Management as a CSR tool, 7.7% apply the principles of the Global Pact, another 7.7% apply the ISO 2600, coincidentally 7.7% prefer management with collaborators. It is evident that these companies are highly influenced by the ISO 14001 standard to determine the CSR strategies that apply.

Figure 5. The company has tools to know the improvement of internal and external CSR processes



As shown in Figure 5, 76.9% of companies do not have a program or tool to know the improvement in internal and external CSR processes; 15.4% have evaluation and control mechanisms; while 7.7% do not have them but assure they are underway. Once again it is confirmed that most of the companies worry about the structuring of CSR strategies and their implementation, but few control them and/or determine their impact.

Figure 6. Presentation of reports



When considering the presentation of reports on CSR (Figure 6), 38.5% of companies say they do so, reporting positive and negative impacts; this compared to an equal proportion of companies that still do not do it, but they hope to do it; while 23.1% do not.

These results show that companies need to focus more on impact evaluation, in establishing control, monitoring, evaluation and feedback mechanisms to ensure that the strategies comply with the objectives for which they were designed.

5. Discussion and analysis

With the descriptive analysis of the data obtained, it was possible to contrast the information with the theoretical postulates. Thus, when considering the first objective in which it was proposed to identify the strategic orientation of Corporate Social Responsibility with organizational audiences, it was possible to effectively demonstrate that most of the analysis sample orient their strategy towards the internal and intermediate publics of the organization, which ratifies the considerations of Rincón (2017) who states that:

> While for many [CSR] is fashionable, it guides the ability to respond by articulating coordinated actions to the needs of a collective that is increasingly better informed, more organized and willing to achieve common goals and objectives (n/p).

In relation to the second objective, which consists in identifying the social responsibility strategies applied by companies in the construction sector in Medellín, it was possible to specify that most of the companies focus on strategies oriented to the community and to workers, the strategy most often applied is responsible social marketing, in correspondence to what was pointed out by Yepes (2007).

Regarding the third objective, which consists in determining the social responsibility tools used by companies in the construction sector in Medellín, it could be seen that most companies apply the ISO 14001 standard on Environmental Management as a CSR tool. This rule aims, precisely, for each company to design and implement an Environmental Management System through which it achieves a balance between the environment, society and the economy. Although it is the norm of more application among these companies, it was identified that most do not have any program or tool to know the improvement of internal and external processes on CSR. This aspect should be solved when implementing an Environmental Management System, which shows that it is necessary to evaluate and improve the application of the standard.

6. Conclusions

Corporate Social Responsibility influences business aspects such as quality, productivity, competitiveness, identity, image and reputation. Likewise, CSR stands as an internal dimension of companies, organizational dynamics and therefore aimed at internal collaborators and interest groups with close links to the organizational operational level, which establishes a reflection on the culture and organizational climate; while at the level of the interest groups external to the organization, they perceive the aspects of responsibility through the dynamics of service provision and commercialization of the company, which often generates positioning, loyalty and value generation of the business brand and its associated brands. Therefore, it is necessary to make more effort when orienting CSR strategies in the organizational publics and interest groups in a balanced manner. In this sense, it is recommended to create a map of public and interest groups around the companies in the construction sector.

Likewise, the orientation of the social responsibility strategy is recommended in a balanced way in response to the various factors or indicators considering both the «triple bottom line», as well as the tools and instruments mentioned, including MDGs, SDGs and the dimensions of social obligation, social reaction and social sensitivity presented by Donnelly, Gibson, Ivancevich & Konopaske (2011).

Although most of the construction companies in Medellín (Colombia) implement CSR strategies and have clear guidance and application tools, there is evidence of the need to improve in terms of evaluation and monitoring mechanisms on the effectiveness of these strategies, since it has been identified that most companies only rely on planning and implementation, and few have taken action in the evaluation and feedback stages to achieve a real impact.

The ISO 14001 Standard, which establishes guidelines for the design and implementation of an Environmental Management System in organizations, serves as a guideline for most companies in the construction sector in Medellín. Therefore, the diversification of social responsibility strategies is recommended in correspondence with the factors and indicators that provide the various tools and mechanisms of corporate social responsibility referenced above.

The practice of Corporate Social Responsibility, in most of the construction companies in Medellin, is very new, having less than ten years of execution, and focuses mainly on strategies aimed at the community and workers. In this sense, they apply socially responsible marketing strategies and use environmental tools fundamentally, envisioned as a strategy of incipient corporate social responsibility.

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University social responsibility: the role of the media and its stakeholders

Responsabilidad social universitaria: el papel de los medios de comunicación y sus stakeholders

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Abstract

This article analyzes the growing importance of University Social Responsibility (USR), driven by a change of vision on the part of the governing teams of academic institutions. This change materializes in various aspects. This paper focuses on how the University implements its principles of USR through communication with its stakeholders. After a bibliographic review, Universidad de Málaga is taken as a case study and different communicative actions are analyzed related to how this institution informs referring to its USR to different interest groups. The analysis deals with two different communicative scenarios: direct communication of the University via its corporate pages, and the communication of its efforts through the media. Both types of communicative actions have differentiated dimensions and are directed to heterogeneous interest groups and work on different missions. Therefore, they are different manifestations of the same objective, guided in both cases by the principle of coherence and correspondence between the two. The analysis of the institutional information of Universidad de Málaga shows the importance of this responsibility, in addition to the degree of adequacy or compliance with the principles of social responsibility, their vision and identity as an organization.

Resumen

En este artículo se analiza la importancia creciente de la Responsabilidad Social Universitaria (RSU), impulsada por un cambio de visión por parte de los equipos rectores de las instituciones académicas. Ese cambio se materializa en diversos aspectos. En este trabajo nos centraremos en cómo la Universidad implementa sus principios de RSU mediante la comunicación con sus grupos de interés. Tras una revisión bibliográfica, se toma como estudio de caso la Universidad de Málaga y se analizan distintas acciones comunicativas encaminadas a que esta institución transmita a los distintos grupos de interés los aspectos referentes a su RSU. El análisis versa sobre dos escenarios comunicativos diferenciados: la comunicación directa de la misma Universidad a través de sus páginas corporativas y la comunicación de éstas a través de los medios de comunicación. Ambos tipos de acciones comunicativas tienen dimensiones diferenciadas, se dirigen a grupos de interés heterogéneos y cumplen misiones diversas. Por lo tanto, se tratan de manifestaciones distintas de un mismo objetivo, presidido en ambos casos por el principio de coherencia y correspondencia entre ambas. El análisis de la información institucional de la Universidad de Málaga muestra la importancia que ésta concede a la comunicación para transmitir a sus grupos de interés, además del grado de adecuación o cumplimiento con los principios de la responsabilidad social, su visión e identidad como organización.

Keywords | palabras clave

Social responsibility, university social responsibility, media, institutional communication, corporate communication
Responsabilidad social, responsabilidad social universitaria, medios de comunicación, comunicación institucional, comunicación corporativa.

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1. Introduction

The concern of society and social agents on Social Responsibility (hereinafter, SR) is growing. The University, as a socializing agent, also shows interest in developing a model of social responsibility adapted to its role and its social function. In this sense, with University Social Responsibility (hereinafter, USR), universities adapt and promote these principles to the essence and nature of their function as institutions.

During the last decade, social responsibility in the business world, and later also in institutions such as the University, has gained importance. Both in the business sector and in political institutions, scandals of different types have generated greater sensitivity to these issues, motivating companies and institutions to be more focused on transparency in their activities, a greater commitment to dialogue with society and an effort on the part of organizations to communicate their contributions in terms of SR to their stakeholders.

In this context of greater awareness of the impact that every business act has on markets, the people who make them up and the impact on citizens, the concept of social responsibility, that is, corporate social responsibility, becomes increasingly relevant. This paradigm has progressively been transferred to other institutions, under its adaptation to the nature, mission and vision of the organism or institution. This has been the case of universities. Thus, universities have also implemented the principles of corporate social responsibility applied to the context of their social function.

In this article, the increasing importance of USR is analyzed, driven by a change of vision on the part of the governing teams of academic institutions. This change is materialized, as will be detailed below. In this regard, this specific work describes how the University implements its principles of USR through communication with its stakeholders. For this, the analysis deals with two different communicative scenarios: the direct communication of the University via its corporate pages and the communication of USR through the media. Both types of communicative actions have different dimensions, are addressed to partially different audiences and fulfill different missions. However, they are different manifestations of the same objective and, therefore, must preside over the coherence principle.

2. University Social Responsibility

USR is at the point of intersection between: what the university wants to be (its mission, vision and values); what the university thinks it is (the image that its members have of it); what the university is and does (its actions and results) and what society expects from it (the expectations and opinions of its external audiences) (Vallaeys, De la Cruz & Siasa, 2009).

López & Gil (2011) carry out a literature review on the concept of USR and conclude that there are two ways to respond to this question. On the one hand, it can be considered that the University, by its very nature, fulfills its social function, and it is assumed that this social responsibility is part of its mission. On the other hand, companies and institutions must comply with and give an account of their responsible performance to their interested publics and, therefore, the University, although it has a social function in its essence, must also comply with the requirement of transparency

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and dialogue with agents, public or interest groups, and in this particular case it is the civil society.

Considering the social function, and its projection in the USR, some examples of USR missions could be the following: establishment of communities inside and outside the University that promote social responsibilities for the different stakeholders; promotion of activities that are ethical, inclusive and beneficial to the public; emphasis on environmental conservation, sustainability and balanced social development; promotion of the well-being and life quality of people, especially of populations which are vulnerable and in need; and the commitment to build a better world. In general, these missions are achieved through teaching, research and services within the university community and in collaboration with other organizations.

In this same sense, Ayala defines USR as «the ethical and intelligent management of the impacts generated by the organization in its human, social and natural environment» (2011, p. 37). According to this way of understanding social responsibility and the role of the University in society, we can agree to define USR as:

> The ability of the University to disseminate and put into practice a set of general and specific principles and values, through four key processes: management, teaching, research and extension (Domínguez, 2009, p. 39).

Vallaeys, De la Cruz & Siasa (2009) have made one of the greatest efforts to define and study University Social Responsibility. In their book University Social Responsibility, they propose to think about the University from the standpoint of its social responsibility. This implies that this organization has to «be accountable regarding the impacts of its mission of training, research and participation in society» (2009, p. 1). For this institution, the groups of interest, are encompassed in a broader context such as civil society as a whole; Vallaeys (2014) talks about the potential of USR, since it forces institutional self-criticism.

According to this theoretical model, USR offers advantages and benefits for the institution in the following aspects: relevance and social permeability; coherence and institutional integration; institutional dynamics towards innovation; and rationalization of university management (Vallaeys, De la Cruz & Siasa, 2009, p. 17).

Innovation plays a crucial role for Leyva & Farfán (2016), who consider that:

> The projection of educational innovation in the context of university social responsibility is part of the cultural itinerary of the universities and of the fundamental functions that sustain their imaginary and praxis (p. 18).

USR, although it emerges as something different and has a specific purpose, can be a reflection of the mission and values of the university institution. Hence the importance of a correspondence between the guiding principles and how these fundamentals are expressed and articulated with coherence through USR. This highlights the importance of institutional coherence, which, as defined by Vallaeys, De la Cruz & Siasa, «means at the same time a coincidence between action and institutional discourse and consistency among all areas of the university» (2009, p. 2).

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That is the reason USR should occupy a place among the guiding principles of the University, only in this way can they have maximum support from academic authorities. These principles of USR would be part of:

> The mission, vision, values and/or educational project of the institution, as well as its integration into the strategic planning process of the university with the necessary resources for the execution of the agreed upon programs (Vallaeys, De la Cruz & Siasa, 2009, p. 25).

In the same sense, as indicated by Domínguez (2009, p.60), Social Responsibility:

> In its double dimension of ethical requirement and rational development strategy for organizational intelligence, it asks organizations to respond to the world and the various social groups affected by their actions and consequences.

Hence, the University, given its nature as a social institution with other purposes, distances itself from the corporate social responsibility model, responding to these premises from its position as an institution with a differential social function.

Its obligations in the field of social responsibility respond to this differential nature. In fact, according to the objectives of the University, as a training agent, both human and professional, within the strictly academic sphere, as well as its role as a generator of knowledge through research, the University also tries to respond to the requirement to comply with the principles of social responsibility, but always under its own institutional model.

There is a correspondence between the objectives of the institution and USR. That is, as indicated by Aldeanueva and Jiménez (2013, p. 2) «each university usually reflects University Social Responsibility in its strategies and tactics».

This idea of the University's social pact is a concept proposed by Perić (2016), when he states that, as institutions responsible for the creation and dissemination of knowledge, universities must ensure that this knowledge is in line with current needs and future requirements of society. Indeed, in a context of economic, political and social changes, a broad reform has been undertaken to face the new social challenges that these institutions face. USR, from its field of action, also tries to respond to the social dimension of the University and its important role in society in the face of the changes that have appeared in recent decades (Larrán & Andrades, 2017).

Vallaeys (2008) also addresses the challenge of the University's social pact and defines this issue according to the way in which the University's concern for contributing to social development is articulated. It is the environment of an organization that gives meaning to SR. «Social responsibility develops when an organization becomes aware of itself, its environment, and its role in that environment» (Vallaeys, 2008, p. 2).

In this sense it is important to underline how USR can contribute to the reputation and social value of this institution. The importance of social cohesion as an ethical principle and, ultimately, the corporate name of the university is also an aspect underlined by Beltrán, Bajos, & Mata (2014).

Specifically, the social contribution of the University can be approached from different angles, that is, the University can intervene in social development through different actions. Domínguez (2009, pp. 47-48), in addition to the contribution of the university in society through what he calls educational, cognitive and epistemological impacts, establishes different lines of action that articulate the impact of the University in its environment and contribute to social development. These are: 1) the University directly intervening in its immediate environment, for example, through the creation of infrastructures to serve the population, such as cultural centers, clinics, etc. 2) intervention through community impact activities that, as in the previous actions, tend to cover specific needs, with activities carried out in the immediate environment, that is, public buildings near the university center; 3) technical assistance activities by supporting groups that require technical-technological support or knowledge transfer to improve their results; and 4) volunteer activities, in which students are encouraged to be involved in volunteer programs (Domínguez, 2009, pp. 47-48).

Delving deeper into the importance of the social environment and the commitment degree of the institution, Vallaeys (2008) suggests the need to design a new «social contract» between the University and society. In this regard, it is suggested that each University and teaching group design their own policy of action in relation to their own identity and social context (Vallaeys, 2008, p. 12).

This social environment and the degree of commitment of the university to society is what allows university social responsibility to become a reality, that is, «when the organization becomes aware of itself, its environment and its role in this environment» (Beltrán, Bajos, & Mata, 2014).

Following Vallaeys (2008), the three main axes of this university social contract would be the following: the social responsibility of science, training for democratic citizenship and training for development. Vila (2012) agrees on the structural role that citizens play in the conception of the USR. In this regard, it suggests establishing mechanisms of internal communication and real participation of citizens in the processes.

The very existence of an explicit USR policy is a way of contributing to the development of that social contract, because through the elaboration and application of USR, the authorities identify and commit themselves to those guiding principles declared as intentions and adopt the mission of the university and purposes or objectives (commitments). In conclusion, the existence of this statement of USR principles allows the institution, as well as the rest of the agents or interest groups (students, professors, administrators, civil society...) to check the degree of adequacy and compliance with the principles of USR declared by the institution. And, in turn, it is a way for the parties involved in complying with these USR principles to keep them in mind and govern their activity and professional performance to achieve these ends.

3. USR at Universidad de Málaga

Although there is a growing concern on the part of Universities to develop social policies, we must not forget that their function is academic training and contribution to knowledge. Their social commitment is articulated around these two pillars. And by responding to these two pillars, social inclusion, equality and other aspects related to freedoms and human rights are fostered.

Shek & Hollister (2017) carry out an analysis and literature review on USR, which they complement with case studies applied to different American universities.

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In their analysis they conclude that the universities studied have different objectives and strategies in regard to their USR initiatives. In addition, they observed that there are different USR plans, according to levels of resources and commitment, which can provide excellent frames of reference for the development of USR policies and programs of other institutions. They suggest that it is also necessary to intensify the work of evaluating USR initiatives by analyzing USR programs and initiatives, particularly those that study the impact of USR on stakeholders.

In Spain, González *et al.* (2016) apply a similar methodology for the application analysis of USR and conclude that less than half of the universities of the Spanish University System have a University Social Responsibility plan.

The implementation of USR in Spain arises in the context of modernization of the University in Spain and has as a backdrop the modernization process of this institution throughout Europe, following the recommendations of the European Commission.

With this background, the 2015 University Strategy plan was drawn up as a coordinated initiative between the Government of Spain, the Autonomous Communities and the Universities, «through the promotion of excellence in training and research, the internationalization of the university system and its involvement in economic change based on knowledge and improvement of innovation» (Ministry of Education, 2009). This Plan articulates the need for progressive implementation of SR plans in universities.

Out of the eleven Andalusian universities, all of them, except one, carry out USR actions and, in addition, except for two, the rest are part of the Forum of the Social Councils of the Andalusian Universities, which works as a network or working group in the field of Social Responsibility.

One of the universities committed to the development of an USR action plan is Universidad de Málaga (UMA), which makes explicit its commitment to society and its stakeholders through its USR Plan. UMA, like other educational institutions, fosters a dialogue with its community and stimulates the relationship with society, as it is reflected in its USR Report.

4. The role of communication in the articulation of USR

Through institutional information, the University transmits its vision, the model that defines its identity as an organization and the organizational culture that governs it. Communication with stakeholders is a continuous, constant and fluid process. Likewise, it should be presided by a dialogical spirit. We refer therefore to a communicative and dialogic process with its stakeholders, beyond annual accountability, which is a communicative act that summarizes all the activity carried out during the academic year.

The fact that the University remains attentive to the demands of its interest groups does not mean that it must maintain a constant dialogue, but it does enable the mechanisms that make it possible to be permeable to the exchange of information and opinion on how to improve and to better fulfill its mission and objectives.

Based on the premise that universities have different interest groups, the characteristics of communication with each of these audiences are analyzed below. Following Gaete's classification proposal (2011, p. 116), students, companies and other social organizations can be considered stakeholders; the Government is also included, as well as the resource providers for the operation of the institution, and all the personnel who perform their work within the institution.

First of all, it is worth highlighting the work carried out annually by the Rector team of Universidad de Málaga through the report or progress report regarding the application areas of SR, following the recommendations of the aforementioned 2015 University Strategy Plan. In the case at hand, the USR report of the University of Málaga is structured around eight blocks. In this report, the actions in each of the areas included in USR are reported. Each block groups the commitment of Universidad de Málaga with the following aspects: 1) organization and resources; 2) students; 3) staff; 4) society; 5) the environment; 6) research and knowledge transfer to the business sector; 7) constant improvement and transparency; 8) internationalization (Universidad de Málaga, 2016, p. 5).

However, as indicated in the Memory of Universidad de Málaga, the main interest group is its students. This is also reflected in its Statutes, which underline the mission and vision of this academic institution.

The annual USR report of Universidad de Málaga has been elaborated for years and supposes, on the one hand, an effort of compiling, revising and comparing the actions carried out by this institution in the matter of social responsibility. In addition, it contributes to communication with the agents involved, by giving an account of the development of the different activities and strategic plans aimed at implementing the commitment of Universidad de Málaga with USR.

It should be noted that these reports, in addition to serving as a tool for transparency of the actions of this institution, also allow a process of self-evaluation. In fact, the same report includes in its final section a self-rating, verification and correspondence with respect to the principles and suggestions established in the *Global Reporting Initiative* (G4). Likewise, this document incorporates the Forum Recommendations of the Social Councils of Public Universities of Andalusia and the guidelines of the Strategic Plan of Universidad de Málaga.

One of the aspects emphasized in the report is the social dimension of its commitment to interest groups, specifically with inclusion through its program of psychopedagogical intervention. This institution was the first public university to receive recognition as a socially responsible institution with functional diversity, offering tools to integrate equality policies in all its areas.

On the other hand, it should be noted that Universidad de Málaga articulates all its actions included within the USR through the area of Quality Services, Strategic Planning and Social Responsibility. The function of Quality Services is to provide technical support, advice and training to all Units of the University to show the culture of quality and encourage and implement continuous improvement and excellence in all areas of the university community.

Quality Services is also responsible for the preparation of the USR Report. Likewise, it keeps information constantly updated with all stakeholders. This service attends globally to the interest group formed by the students and graduates, providing all types of information that may be of interest to this group. Among this information, this service periodically reports on students enrolled and their origin, students in inter-

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national mobility, rate of success and performance, the supply and demand of registration of degree titles, and the evolution of the number of graduated students, all of this through a comparative analysis of the rates every year.

Likewise, it provides different reports on labor insertion and student internships in companies. This aspect is of great interest because, in these reports, the job insertion rate is analyzed by comparing the situation of the students one year and two years after graduating. Likewise, this information is completed with an analysis of employability of the graduates since 2010, which enables periodical analysis of how these numbers evolve. To this are added annual reports on the degree of performance in external curricular practices.

Of great interest, not only for the student group, but for the entire academic community, are the comparative reports on the opinion polls of the students regarding the performance of the teaching staff, the labor climate surveys of the personnel, satisfaction surveys of the students regarding the organization of the majors and centers, and the satisfaction survey of graduates, all of them on an annual basis and including an evolutionary analysis of the results obtained since its implementation.

Likewise, there is a centralized communication service that allows articulating different communication channels of the University with different interest groups. In addition to the direct information from Quality Service through the institution's website, the Communication Service is responsible for relations with the media, internal communication, editing and maintaining the institutional website and all types of communicative actions through social networks.

The different communication actions mentioned above cover, therefore, all interest groups. Non-teaching and teacher-researcher staff have their own communication channels, restricted to these groups, such as website and communication through email and distribution groups. In addition to the information available in the website, students and graduates have news published by the media via the communication service of Universidad de Málaga, which includes Radio Comutopia (radio station and university television), various fixed spaces in public and private media of regional scope, and the coverage that each medium gives to the information provided by the communication office of the University of Málaga.

5. Discussion and conclusions

The review of different authors allows providing some conclusions and suggestions for improving the accountability process of the universities to their stakeholders. Given their public nature and its social function, as Gaete (2011) points out, they have the obligation to explain to society the fulfillment degree of their social function.

This paper analyzes Universidad de Málaga and the different communication actions implemented by this institution to transmit aspects referring to its USR to different interest groups.

As stated by Larrán and López (2010), it would be advisable that this action be completed with an external verification system of the *Global Reporting Initiative*, which would allow a self-assessment validity of these reports. The system promoted by this institution allows internal and external self-evaluation for many institutions. It,

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through an international agreement, promotes the guidelines to guide companies and institutions in the preparation of their reports. Likewise, every company or organization can request to evaluate its memory to know its validity degree, as already done by Universidad de Málaga. In turn, this allows performing studies on the adaptation degree of different institutions and centers to the recommendations made by it. This is the case of the analysis carried out by Huerta-Riveros and Gaete-Feres (2017) in Latin America and the Caribbean, in which the referred authors conclude that the Universities that apply the *Global Reporting Initiative* verification system represent 17% of the total number of universities.

On the other hand, as Gaete (2011) points out, the preparation of USR reports, given that it is based on an accountability process, and the elaboration and transparency of the indicators allow the agents involved to evaluate the impact of the strategies and actions implemented by the institution in the field of USR.

The analysis of the institutional information of the University shows the importance that it grants to communication in order to transmit to its stakeholders their vision and identity as an organization, in addition to the degree of adaptation or compliance with the principles of social responsibility.

Beyond the annual report, this institution establishes a constant flow of communication with its stakeholders on a constant basis through its website. The news related to all kinds of initiatives occupy an important part of their website's home page. Therefore, from the department in charge of the communication, it is considered that communication with interest groups should be a fluid process that goes beyond the annual accountability process through the USR memory.

Among the mechanisms that make this exchange of information and opinion possible with interest groups is the student assistance office and a space on the web where all kinds of suggestions and requests for information are processed.

Within the set of stakeholders, the University grants priority to students. This is also observed in its Statutes, which underline the mission and vision of this academic institution. To coordinate communication with this interest group, the institution has different channels enabled, as mentioned above. We emphasize the importance that is given to the feedback process and, therefore, the University maintains constant self-assessment surveys of its work and attention to students.

Likewise, the University also attends to the information demands of other interest groups, such as companies and other social organizations, the Government, suppliers and all the staff members that carry out their work within the institution. Again, the institutional page has been functioning to communicate efficiently.

Likewise, in the Annual Report the governing team reports the progress of the institution in the different application areas of SR. The structure that maintains the report covers the most significant aspects of SR, such as organization and resources, activities of the institution, including research and the transfer of knowledge to the business sector, personnel, students and the society, the constant improvement and transparency; and, finally, its commitment degree to the institution's internationalization.

In short, the institution analyzed shows the importance of compliance with the principles of USR, an aspect that is reported annually through the preparation of a report. As this aspect is crucial in order for different interest groups to evaluate the adaptation and fulfillment degree of the social dimension of this institution's activities, it is important to reinforce the communicative aspects by means of a constant flow of information with its interest groups. Through the communication department and the coordinated work with the Quality department of this University, it is possible to maintain this constant communicative flow with different interest groups, which results in improving the social image of this institution.

In conclusion, if we agree that:

> The University has the social responsibility to promote debate, facilitate it, lead it and enrich it, giving the public the means to inform, reflect and judge, and to the companies the adequate knowledge to apply their own form of social responsibility (Vallaeys, 2008, p. 14).

It will be necessary to continue creating mechanisms to disseminate the monitoring degree of these principles, which will result in an improvement in the image of this institution and in the perception of the social value of it by the society.

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Miscellaneous Section

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Migration: challenges and opportunities from the perspective of Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)

Migración: retos y oportunidades desde la perspectiva de los Objetivos de Desarrollo Sostenible (ODS)

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Abstract

In line with the growing consensus that a post in the 2015 development agenda demands the approach of contemporary international migration with the aim of reducing poverty and inequality, while fighting against discrimination, exclusion and marginalization, this article describes how the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), framed in the 2030 Agenda, make visible and include migrations and refugees as topics for discussion. To do so, the article begins with a literature review regarding the normative and conceptual bases of the relationship between migration and development, providing a brief status of the migration behavior flows in Ibero-America with a focus on Latin American and the Caribbean—particularly the case of Venezuela and the exodus it is currently experiencing as a result of economic contraction, humanitarian crisis and political and social conflict—, to end with a reflection on the actors invited to participate in this effort and the actions that can be deployed in order to reduce the «involuntary large-scale migration» caused by «conflicts, disasters or environmental or economic reasons», which is within the top 10 global risks repeatedly contemplated in the reports published by the World Economic Forum between 2016 and 2018. The article hopes to contribute to the debate in favor of migratory and integration policies with better planning and management, and real impact on the lives of migrants.

Resumen

Al tenor del creciente consenso en torno a que una agenda para el desarrollo después de 2015 demanda el abordaje de la migración internacional contemporánea con el ánimo de reducir la pobreza y la desigualdad, a la par que combatir la discriminación, la exclusión y la marginalización, se describe, de modo sucinto, cómo los Objetivos de Desarrollo Sostenible (ODS), enmarcados en la Agenda 2030, visibilizan e incluyen a las migraciones y el refugio como temas de discusión. Para ello, se parte de una revisión documental en torno a las bases normativas y conceptuales que sustentan la relación entre la migración y el desarrollo, brindando luego un breve estatus de la situación migratoria en Iberoamérica con foco en América Latina y el Caribe –particularmente el caso de Venezuela y el éxodo por el que atraviesa en la actualidad como producto de la contracción económica, la crisis humanitaria y la conflictividad político-social–, para finalizar con una reflexión en torno a los actores convocados a hacer parte de este esfuerzo y las acciones que pueden desplegar de cara a aminorar la «migración involuntaria a gran escala» provocada por «conflictos, desastres o por motivos ambientales o económicos», la cual figura dentro de los 10 principales riesgos mundiales contemplados de manera reiterada en los informes publicados por el Foro Económico Mundial entre 2016 y 2018.

Keywords | palabras clave

Migration, refugees, displaced persons, sustainable development goals, diasporas, human rights.
Migración, refugiados, desplazados, objetivos de desarrollo sostenible, diásporas, derechos humanos.

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1. Introduction

Migration is not a new phenomenon. Almost always, leaving one's place of origin or moving to another place of residence, either within a country or abroad, especially in the case of the inhabitants of developing countries, may be the best, if not the only way to improve income opportunities, or have access to more and better education services and health. In making this decision, which is not exempt from uncertainty, lies the hope of combining one's talents with the resources of the destination country, for the personal benefit of close family members—who often accompany the migrant or follow them afterwards—,those who are left behind and for the new society (Castillo, 2015, UNDP, 2009).

However, migrants often suffer the rejection of those who fear «newcomers», which shows the impact of their presence on the cultural dimensions and attitudes of people in receiving societies, given the observed growth in the volume of displaced individuals and refugees during recent years due to political instability, criminal violence, persecution, natural disasters, environmental degradation linked to climate change, poverty and inequality (Vatican, 2017). This is the irruption of risks and vulnerabilities to which a large part of migrants are exposed; for example, refugees, who remain close to the country from which they flee, usually living in camps until the situation at home allows them to return; or the victims of human trafficking (accompanied by violence and sexual abuse), especially young women who are deceived with promises of a better life (World Economic Forum, 2018).

According to the *Global Forum on Migration and Development GFMD Turkey 2014-2015*, until 2014 the number of international migrants had increased by approximately 32%, reaching 232 million people, after which the remittances sent by them to developing countries experienced an increase of more than five times, registering an estimated sum of 436 billion US dollars. In the meantime, the number of forcefully displaced people following crisis situations (refugees and asylum seekers) reached 59.5 million of people.

Up to day, the migratory phenomenon is even more complex and permeable to negative readings due to the natural tension posed by globalization to the Westphalian nation-states with full sovereignty to manage and control their borders (Pinazo, 2017). As a result, those who want or are forced to migrate face more and more obstacles erected by governments to restrict, if not close, the entry and displacement, even in the midst of the paradox that is the reduction of barriers for the exchange of goods (UNDP, 2009).

Within this scenario, policies in the destination countries tend to favor people with a higher level of education, with students commonly being invited to settle with their families or to stay as soon as they get a degree. On the contrary, workers with low academic qualifications or few specialized skills face more impediments, being relegated to the demand for labor in sectors such as agriculture, construction, industry, manufacturing and services, which generates great controversy by the fact that they cover «vacant positions», but also oust local workers and cause lower wages.

All in all, migrants, regardless the reasons they have to leave their place of origin, deserve to be respected in their dignity, rights and freedoms, revealing the need to offer a joint response through international cooperation and shared responsibility to promote and adopt effective measures that protect and contribute to the improvement of their situation along with that of refugees, asylum seekers and internally displaced people, preventing them from becoming victims of criminal bands and human trafficking, exploitation and abuse (Vatican, 2017).

This is how, a post-2015 development agenda demands the approach of contemporary international migration with the aim of reducing poverty and inequality, while combating discrimination, exclusion and marginalization; this article describes how the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), framed in the 2030 Agenda, make visible and include migration and refugees as topics for discussion. It is based on a literature review about the normative and conceptual bases that sustain the relationship between migration and development, providing a brief status of the migratory situation in Ibero-America with a focus on Latin America and the Caribbean, to conclude with a reflection on the actors invited to participate in this effort and the actions they can take.

2. Migration, development and 2030 Agenda

With the advent of the 21st century, migration occupied an important place in the policy framework of the majority of the Member States of the United Nations (UN), a milestone in this line being the «High Level Dialogue on International Migration and Development», whose first edition was held in September 2006. This space provided the participating countries the possibility to approach migration from multidimensional perspectives, in order to determine the best mechanisms to maximize their benefits for the development and minimize their negative repercussions. Hence, the creation of the Global Forum on Migration and Development as a voluntary and non-binding platform aimed primarily at cooperation, together with the Global Migration Group, which is responsible for the follow-up on the application of international instruments and regional standards, in addition to the promotion of coherent, comprehensive and coordinated inter-institutional approaches.

This initiative would be endorsed by the II High Level Dialogue on International Migration and Development: *Getting the migration to work*, carried out on October 3 and 4, 2013 under the 68th annual session of the General Assembly of the United Nations (UN). The statement derived from this meeting highlighted the nature of human mobility as a crucial driver for sustainable development, underlining its contribution to the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs). On this basis, States were explicitly urged to defend the Human Rights of migrants, refugees and internally displaced people, and guarantee their enjoyment of freedoms.

In this way, the Declaration defines the context and tone of the Post-2015 Agenda, undoubtedly making a decisive contribution to the 2030 Agenda on the basis of an action plan that includes 17 objectives and 169 goals for the attention of the challenges that the three dimensions of sustainable development—economic, social and environmental—imply in the light of a global, integral and balanced vision in order to eradicate poverty, reduce inequality, protect the planet and ensure prosperity for all. It also includes the commitment to cooperate at an international level to ensure that migration is orderly, safe and regular, reaffirming the promise to «leave no one behind».

In accordance with this trend, the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development was approved by Heads of State and senior government representatives during the meeting of the General Assembly of the United Nations (UN) held in September 2015, being enforced from January 1, 2016. This first step was followed by the report of the General Secretary of the organization entitled *In conditions of security and dignity: response to the large displacements of refugees and migrants*, published in April 2016, which paved the way for an Extraordinary Summit in September. This led to the *New York Declaration*, in which the Member States of the United Nations Organization (UN) agreed to share the responsibility of receiving and providing assistance to migrants, with the aim of approving in 2018 a «Global Compact on Migration» in order to set up a global governance system to address human mobility (IOM, 2017: I).

At the time, the document called for a multifactorial reading of migration from a complex perspective that, articulated with the dynamics of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), recognized the needs of migrants as a vulnerable group in need of empowerment. Thus, although human mobility does not appear to be established as a specific objective or goal, transversally it can be seen as an explicit field with groups themes in which political action is inscribed, namely:

- The protection of Human Rights over other cultural or nationality factors.
- The fight against organized trafficking and human trafficking networks, given the high feminization component of migratory flows.
- The implementation of urgent measures with regard to the immediate schooling of infants as a first measure of social integration (access programs to primary and secondary education).
- The promotion of a host culture as opposed to expressions of xenophobia and racism.
- Support to the main receiving countries of migrants and refugees.
- The deployment of housing policies.
- The exceptional and temporary nature of the refugee camps.
- The commitment to expand legal channels for resettlement.
- The scientific analysis of data that allow to delimit the coordinates of migrations and the understanding of their causes (Fernández *et al.*, 2017).

Based on these considerations, in the breakdown of the objectives and goals of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, migration finds its place and reference as follows:

- Objective 1: End of poverty.

  Goal 1.3. Implement social protection systems, including minimum levels, and achieve sustainable coverage of the poor and vulnerable.

  Goal 1.5. Strengthen the resilience of the poor and those most exposed to economic, social and environmental crises and disasters.

- Objective 3. Health & Wellness.
  Goal 3.8. Achieve universal health coverage.

  Goal 3.c. Increase health financing and train health personnel to service developing countries.

  Goal 3.d. Strengthen the capacity of countries in terms of early warning, risk reduction and risk management for national and global health.

- Objective 4. Quality education.
  Goal 4.b. Promotion of scholarships for international education opportunities (student mobility).

- Objective 5. Gender equality.
  Goal 5.2. Eliminate all forms of violence against women and girls.

  Goal 5.6. Guarantee universal access to sexual and reproductive health and reproductive rights.

- Objective 8. Decent work and economic growth.
  Goal 8.7. Eradicate forced labor, end modern forms of slavery and human trafficking; eliminate child labor.

  Goal 8.8. Protect labor rights and promote a safe and risk-free work environment for all workers, including migrant workers.

- Objective 10. Reduction of inequalities.
  Goal 10.7. Facilitate orderly and safe migration through well-managed migration policies.

  Goal 10.c. Reduction of the remittance costs.

- Objective 11. Sustainable cities and communities.
  Goal 11.1. Ensure access to adequate housing and services; improve marginal neighborhoods.

  Goal 11.5. Reduce the number of deaths and people affected by disasters, as well as the associated economic losses.

- Objective 13. Action for the weather.
  Goal 13.1. Resilience against the risks related to climate and natural disasters.

- Objective 16. Peace, justice and solid institutions.
  Goal 16.1. Reduce violence and corresponding mortality rates.

  Goal 16.2. End the mistreatment, exploitation, trafficking, violence and torture against children.

- Objective 17. Alliances to achieve the objectives.

  Goal 17.16. Strengthen global partnerships among multiple stakeholders to promote the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals in all countries.

  Goal 17.18. Assist developing countries in increasing the availability of high quality data disaggregated by migratory situation (IOM, 2018).

In particular, Goal 10.7, which addresses migration in the broader context of reducing inequalities of all kinds [SDG 10], reflects the imperative for all States to improve the management and planning of their migration policies. This involves monitoring and measuring progress towards the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) at the national level, taking into account their multiple dimensions (both qualitative and quantitative), with the understanding that migration governance frameworks must be evaluated in three dimensions: investment in people; effectiveness for the creation of institutional capacity for the States (political coherence and policy coverage); and success in terms of opening more avenues for legal migration. Therefore, it is necessary to ensure the existence of a normative framework that promotes safe, orderly and regular migration; verify that the measures and methodologies applied are adequate for the purposes intended; define the indicators to be measured and the terms in which the goals and objectives to be achieved are described; and generate new sources of disaggregated data based on migratory status, gender, age and other relevant factors (IOM, 2017, pp. 13-14).

In this regard, the International Organization for Migration (IOM), in keeping with the status of an intergovernmental body conferred on it as a related agency of the United Nations (UN), supports its partners in the international community to face the challenges posed by migration management. Hence, the monitoring that it has carried out on the specific goals about Sustainable Development Goals (SDG), in addition to accompanying intergovernmental negotiations with a view to the «Global Compact for Safe, Ordered and Regular Migration», to be adopted in 2018.

In this process, the «Migration Governance Framework» (MIGOF) approved by the Council of Member Countries of the International Organization for Migration (IOM) through the Resolution No. 1310 of November 24, 2015, is notable. It embodies a valuable instrument for the administration of country evaluations based on a set of three principles and three coherent, comprehensive and balanced objectives, specifically:

- Principles:
  1. Adherence to international standards and respect for the rights of migrants.
  2. Formulation of contrasted policies and application of integrated government approaches.
  3. Collaboration with its partners to address migration and related issues.

- Goals:
  1. Promote the socioeconomic well-being of migrants and society.

2. Effectively address issues related to mobility in crisis situations.
3. Ensure that migration takes place in a safe, orderly and dignified manner (IOM, 2017b).

Another one is the «Migration Governance Index» (MGI), developed by the International Organization for Migration (IOM) in association with *The Economist Intelligence Unit* designed with the purpose of helping governments to measure the performance of their migration governance structures, taking into account its priorities, progress and shortcomings in five different policy areas:

1. Institutional capacity.
2. Rights of migrants.
3. Labor migration.
4. Management of a safe and orderly migration.
5. Regional and international cooperation and other alliances (IOM, 2017, p. 23).

Additionally, the International Organization for Migration (IOM) deploys its action through the «International Dialogue on Migration», a body founded in 2001 at the request of the member states of the organization, in the process of setting up a forum to sponsor more understanding of international migration problems; the establishment of groups of experts from different spheres and regions, with those responsible for formulating public policies to exchange normative points of view and effective practices in the future, and consolidate cooperation among governments with other partners dealing with this issue. In 2016, it convened two workshops focused on the review of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and, in particular, on the goals related to migration in the context of the 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). The first workshop took place at the headquarters of the United Nations Organization (UN), in New York, from February 29 to March 1, while the second was held in Geneva, on October 11 and 12 (IOM, 2017, p. 3).

However, each of the aforementioned instances has paved the way for the Global Action on Migration, which is expected to establish the principles and approaches to manage migratory flows at an international level in an innovative way during the following decades and promote more coherence among the migration policies of each of the States.

3. Main migration trends in Latin America

According to the International Organization for Migration (IOM) (2017), the majority of international migrants remain in their region of origin, with South-South migration emerging as the geographic component of fastest growth in human mobility, despite the fact that, as a tendency, currents have always been defined by the transit from developing countries to the developed countries of Europe, North America and Australasia (UNDP, 2009). In this context, the concern for migrations and refuge has been triggered exponentially in Ibero-America, revealing the difference in development between

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the countries of origin, transit and reception as the cause of the so-called «migratory bridges or corridors» (Fernández *et al.*, 2017).

It is no coincidence that the succession of Ibero-American Summits held since 1991, understood as a regional mechanism for meeting and dialogue, has created a space for the discussion of the main concerns and challenges in the field of migration in the Latin American context. In this sense, the meeting held in Montevideo (Uruguay) in November 2006 can be considered particularly significant, which led to the «Montevideo Commitment on Migration and Development», ultimately a valuable political instrument for guiding action insofar as it points out the relevance of migrations for the understanding of the history of this region of the world, positively assessing their social and intercultural contributions, without undermining the contributions to the economies of the host countries (Universidad Pontificia de Comillas and OBIMID, 2017).

Following the «Montevideo Commitment», the first two editions of the Ibero-American Forum on Migration and Development (FIBEMYD) held in Cuenca (Ecuador, 2008) and San Salvador (El Salvador, 2010) took place. Both initiatives would be endorsed by the South American Conference on Migration (CSM) held in 2010, serving as a backdrop for the approval of the «South American Plan for the Human Development of Migration, Context and Perspectives», which is based on a conception of governance migration focused on the Human Rights of migrants, regardless of their national, religious or ethnic origin; non-criminalization according to their migratory administrative situation, and non-use as an adjustment variable of the economies or labor markets.

Parallel to these efforts, the growing immigration in the countries of Latin America and the Caribbean has responded to an intraregional character due to the regional integration agreements, but also due to the economic and political crises that the countries face at different moments in their history (IOM and ECLAC, 2018). In this regard, according to the report of the Organization of American States (OAS) of 2015, until that year the zone had hosted 9.2 million migrants, from which half migrated to the United States and Canada, a quarter moved to other regions, and the other quarter moved among other countries of America.

Mesoamerica and the Caribbean are considered sub-regions of origin and transit, although irregular migratory flows from Cuba and Haiti, as well as from Asian and African countries, have increased significantly there. The countries that have most recently attracted intra-regional flows, such as Mexico, Belize, El Salvador, Panama and Trinidad and Tobago, have consolidated as countries of destination (IOM, 2017b).

With regard to South America, since the implementation of the Mercosur Residency Agreement (2009), more than two million temporary and permanent residences have been granted to nationals of the region, positioning Argentina as the main recipient country of immigrant flows from the region, seconded by Chile and Brazil. Workers represent the majority of the migration in sectors with high levels of low-skilled employment, subjected to irregular and precarious conditions (agriculture, construction, domestic work and self-employment). Recently, the countries of South America have received a growing number of extra-regional migrants from Africa, Asia, Europe, the United States and the Caribbean. Regarding extra-regional emigration, the

United States, Spain and other European countries and, to a lesser extent, Japan, are the main countries of destination (IOM, 2017b).

Currently, in the sub-region, the situation of the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela stands out, following the changes observed in its migratory tradition. Although it continues to be the second receiving country in terms of population, at the same time it registers an important increase in emigration, which practically doubled during the intercensal period of 2000-2010 to different countries, with the United States and Spain leading the list as the main destinations (185,000 and 155,000, respectively), and Colombia, Ecuador, Panama, Mexico, Costa Rica, Argentina and Chile (IOM and ECLAC, 2018). Since 2012, the climate of political and social conflict has intensified, with the aggravating circumstance that the country has once again entered a phase of economic contraction, with high levels of indebtedness, shortage of basic products and inflation that have strongly affected the population's purchasing power (Universidad Pontificia de Comillas and OBIMID, 2017).

Curiously, the Venezuelan government approved a Migration and Alien Status Law in 2004, stating the commitment to comply with the instruments subscribed and ratified in the various international scenarios and integration processes that the country is part of. However, the document does not include any title (or chapter) referring to the registration of Venezuelans residing abroad and the protection of their rights, which results in the lack of an action plan against the diaspora (Fernández, et al., 2017). From this point of view, the governmental spheres in Venezuela have not granted recognition to the growing cross-border community, because it would imply admitting that the political and economic model generates emigrants, because the political organization of Venezuelans abroad generates a bad image for the country's regime—for example, the protests led by groups in different cities of the world, denouncing the lack of civil and political freedoms: the famous «escraches» (BBC World, 2017). This fact has allowed official instances to politicize the issue and place it in a nationalist discourse that identifies the country and its sovereignty with the socialist project, presenting migration, in a symbolic context, as an «escape valve» due to internal pressures—exporting the opposition—, from which follows the legitimization of their exclusion and the moral justification of their repression—traitors to the homeland/allies of a foreign enemy (Bobes, 2012).

Since 2004, the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) has reflected the increase of Venezuelan citizens seeking protection in other countries, who have been granted the status of refugees or similar. In this context, UNHCR urges the receiving states and/or those that already host Venezuelans to adopt mechanisms aimed at providing international protection as a humanitarian act consistent with the spirit of solidarity, in accordance with the Convention on the Status of Refugees of 1951 and the Declaration of Cartagena. Recognizing this challenge, minimum standards must be guaranteed under all circumstances, specifically equality, accessibility, basic rights (medical care, education, family unity, freedom of movement, access to housing and the right to work), and guarantees of no return (UNHCR, 2018).

Ultimately, the ideological radicalization staged in recent years in Venezuela, along with political polarization, has led to disdain for the emigrants and the application of a «policy of no politics» as a result of having left the country and the political

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project led by Hugo Chávez, continued since 2013 by Nicolás Maduro (Muñoz, 2016). For the General Secretary of International Amnesty (AI), Salil Shetty, the «humanitarian and human rights crisis» that exists in Venezuela «is lurking» in South America, which calls for a «political» and «regional» solution.

4. Final guidelines

Managing migration effectively implies adopting a holistic approach that favors the human treatment of migrants—regardless their migratory status—, highlighting their dimensions and essential aspects as human beings.

Currently, there are many calls to create a global system of migration governance that allows governments to face challenges in a shared manner and generate responses, highlighting human development in the public policy agenda to increase benefits from the increasingly complex patterns of human movement in the world. Additionally, it is not crazy to assert that, from now on, they should consider the integration of migration into their respective planning processes and instruments, such as local, national and regional development plans.

The «how» and the «when» of the reforms will depend on a realistic examination of the economic and social conditions of each country, with the understanding that migration is a multidimensional and transnational phenomenon in which all, without distinction, are emitters, receivers and, even, places of transit for people. Hence, international cooperation, through bilateral or regional agreements, can result not only in a more efficient protection of the rights of migrants, but also in the exploitation of their potential and, with it, an increase of their contributions to the development of countries and communities of origin as well as the development of host countries and communities, in the framework of an inclusive globalization process.

However, it is not only the responsibility of governments to fulfill these objectives; rather, the achievements will be subject to a large extent, to their capacity to incorporate other people involved in the process, such as the business sector, civil society and diaspora communities. In the case of the former, their contribution is evident as it is one of the main drivers of long-term value creation in economic terms, with private companies being the main employers for the majority of migrants who move in search of jobs, in addition to providing recruitment services, travel services and transfer of funds. From this point of view, companies must not tolerate discrimination related to race, ethnic origin or religion, either in the workplace or in the supply chain, while also avoiding exploitation practices. Likewise, they must respect the rights of migrant workers to freedom of association and engagement in collective bargaining, raising awareness of the impact benefits of diversity on aspects such as innovation, new markets and productivity (MF Saltaji, 2017; IOM, 2017).

Regarding civil society, the acceptance of migrants represents an opportunity for new interactions based on mutual enrichment, identifying and overcoming, through awareness campaigns, sources of hostility and social tensions. The «invisibility» of migrants, which entailed leaving aside the consideration of their rights, their dignity and their needs, has now given way to sustained attention based on stereotypes, stigmas and generalized prejudices.

Last but not least, it is worth highlighting the role of diasporas in their potential as «bridges» between societies and agents of development, since they facilitate access to ideas, knowledge and resources that complement and, in some cases, intensify progress in the countries of origin (UNDP, 2009). Therefore, the next step is a more systematic study of migration profiles and their benefits, costs and risks on the part of States with significant departures of population abroad, coupled with the empowerment of a department or ministry dedicated to diaspora affairs, without discounting the assumption of national policies that offer support and defend the interests of migrant communities by appealing to consular protection and legal services (Vatican, 2017).

However, the knowledge of diasporas is not enough to promote collaboration; rather, effective participation strategies demand the creation of trust (IOM, 2017). It requires the adoption of different mechanisms to know how much of the population has established outside the national territory and under what circumstances, to form links with communities abroad and promote activities that contribute to the preservation of their links with their country.

These considerations agree with the approaches of international organizations in order to promote understanding about the dynamics of migration, the conditions in which it occurs, along with the opportunities and demands that it causes. The official recognition of the contribution of migration to the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) embodies a major breakthrough, promoting the design of integration strategies with real impact on the lives of the 244 million international migrants in the world, while simultaneously promoting regional and global debates in favor of better planned and managed migratory policies.

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Absorptive capacity: a literature review and a model of its determinants

Capacidad de absorción: revisión de la literatura y un modelo de sus determinantes

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Abstract

This article aims to carry out a review of the literature on one of the most relevant concepts in the study of organizational behavior that emerged from the work of Cohen & Levinthal (1990). We refer to absorptive capacity, which has received widespread attention and has been applied in different fields: learning and knowledge management, innovation processes and technological development, strategic management, human resource management, organizational design, among others. This research is based on a descriptive study with documentary design. It intends to advance the integration and comprehension of absorptive capacity through the identification and discussion of different aspects related to its origin, components, determinants, its relation with the cognition of individuals, and the importance it has for the development, performance and achievement of competitive advantages of a company. This provides a general vision for its management and application, and a model of its determinants. The factors that define the construct are presented through a model, among them: organizational, environment and cognitive. The latter is highlighted as a differentiating factor from the models that have traditionally been developed in the existing literature.

Resumen

El presente artículo tiene como objetivo llevar a cabo una revisión de la literatura sobre uno de los constructos más relevantes en el estudio del comportamiento de las organizaciones que surge inicialmente a partir del trabajo de Cohen & Levinthal (1990). El mismo se refiere a la capacidad de absorción que ha tenido una amplia aplicación en distintos campos de estudios de la organización, tales como: aprendizaje y gestión del conocimiento, procesos de innovación y desarrollo tecnológico, administración estratégica, dirección de recursos humanos, diseño organizativo, entre otros. La investigación, abordada bajo un enfoque metodológico de tipo descriptivo y con diseño documental, pretende avanzar en la integración y comprensión de este constructo a través de la identificación y discusión de diferentes aspectos referidos a su origen, componentes, determinantes, su relación con la cognición del individuo y la importancia que tiene para el desarrollo, el desempeño y el logro de ventajas competitivas, proporcionando así una visión general para su gestión y aplicación. Como resultado de la investigación se ofrece un modelo de los factores que definen la capacidad de absorción de la organización, alrededor de tres niveles principales: organizacional, del entorno y cognitivo, destacándose este último como un factor diferenciador de los modelos que tradicionalmente han sido desarrollados por la literatura.

Keywords | palabras clave

Absorptive capacity, environment, competitive advantages, cognition, organization, knowledge.
Capacidad de absorción, cognición, conocimientos, entorno, organización, ventajas competitivas.

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1. Introduction

The theory of organization provides conceptual and empirical tools that contribute to the study, analysis and understanding of the behavior of organizations (Zapata & Mirabal, 2018), thus helping «to explain a part of the organizational reality, in order to provide more understanding about its proper operation» (Sánchez and Nélida, 2017, p. 66). In this sense, and specifically, the concept of absorptive capacity (AC) has been a subject of special attention to understand various organizational phenomena (Gao *et al.*, 2017), especially those related to knowledge management processes, learning, innovation and performance.

In this regard, Lichtenthaler (2016a, p.1) points out that the literature «emphasizes the importance of absorptive capacity in the development of knowledge, the promotion of open innovation, the management of strategic alliances, in the development of learning, the creation of strategic variety and the improvement of financial performance». On the other hand, King & Lakhani (2011) indicate that frequent changes in the context of innovation have made the study of AC more important, a construct that was introduced by Cohen & Levinthal (1990) as a condition to achieve a high innovative competence (Duchek, 2013, 2015), which makes it possible for external knowledge available in the environment to be used within the organization (Schweisfurth & Raasch, 2018), thus becoming «a strong predictor of innovation and knowledge transfer» (Zou *et al.*, 2018, p. 1).

Absorptive capacity is the ability of the organization to identify the value of useful knowledge located in its environment, assimilate it, transform it and integrate it into its knowledge base, and apply it through the processes and actions related to innovation, R&D investment and competitiveness (Cohen & Levinthal, 1990). In this way, its development and maintenance are considered of vital importance for the survival and success of companies, since it contributes to improve, organize and direct knowledge towards the achievement of their goals and objectives (Zahra & George, 2002). Likewise, investment in AC allows for an increase in the ability of a company to anticipate market trends (Cohen & Levinthal, 1994). All this translates into competitive advantages, contributing to the notion that the process of technological innovation requires, the integration of internal and external knowledge with the inventive and creative competence of the organization (King & Lakhani, 2011).

In their seminal work, Cohen and Levinthal (1990) state that more research is required to understand the decision processes that determine the investments of organizations in AC. In this way, since the beginning of the article, works have been developed aimed at consolidating AC theory as a lever of support for researchers and academics dedicated to understanding and explaining the development and evaluation of the organization. Research in different areas related to organizational issues confirm this (see table 1).

Table 1. Research on organizational issues and absorptive capacity

Área	Authors
Knowledge management	Van den Bosch *et al*. (1999), Minbaeva *et al*. (2003), Camisón & Forés (2014), Mariano & Walter (2015), Valentim *et al*. (2016), Qian & Jung (2017).
Innovation processes	Volberda *et al*. (2010), Kostopoulos *et al*. (2011), King & Lakhani (2011), Chen & Chang (2012), Cassol *et al*. (2016), Kang & Lee (2017), Arias *et al* ., (2017), Saiz *et al*. (2018), Schweisfurth & Raasch (2018), Zou *et al*. (2018).
Strategic alliances	Hoang and Rothaermel (2005).
Study of foreign subsidiaries	Minbaeva *et al*. (2003, 2014) and Peltokorpi (2017).
Knowledge flow between regions	Schillaci *et al*. (2013), Miguélez & Moreno (2015), Ju-knevičienė (2017).
Organizational performance	Lane *et al*. (2001), Kostopoulos *et al*. (2011), Marabelli & Newell (2014), Cepeda *et al*. (2016), Lichtenthaler (2016a), Guisao *et al*. (2017), Zou *et al*. (2018).
Systems and information technology	Roberts *et al*. (2012), Gao *et al*. (2017), Guisao *et al*. (2017).
Organizational learning	Lane & Lubatkin (1998), Lane *et al*. (2001), Lane *et al*. (2006), Cepeda *et al*. (2016), Vargas & Muratalla (2017).
Hiring and labor mobility	Leiva *et al*. (2017).
Family businesses and innovation	Charão & Matos (2017).

Therefore, this investigation aims to carry out a review of the literature about the absorptive capacity construct, in order to discuss aspects related to its origin, meaning, components, levels of analysis, relationship with the individual's cognition and its importance in the development, performance and obtaining of competitive advantages for the organization. Finally, a model of its determining factors is proposed.

From the methodological point of view, this research was conducted under a descriptive approach and with documentary design. The protocol for the selection of bibliographic references began with the definition of the variables under study, in this case absorptive capacity as one of the fundamental components of the dynamic capabilities of the organization. The systematic reading of the fundamental theory was made, as well as the selection of research criteria in order to locate relevant materials in the administrative-managerial area according to the proposed objective. This process was carried out by the review of specialized databases such as InfoTrac, EBSCOHost and ProQuest, which offer full-text articles from refereed and indexed scientific journals which guarantee peer review in terms of content coherence and the rigorous application of methodological guidelines. This resulted in the emergence of 75 theoretical and empirical scientific articles, which were critically analyzed (Viniegra, 2001, Garcés

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& Duque, 2007 and Díaz, 2012). Additionally, 5 specialized books were selected, all with the purpose of integrating and substantiating the approach made in the proposal presented on the determinants of the absorptive capacity of organizations.

2. Origin and definition of absorptive capacity (AC)

AC originates in the seminal works of Cohen & Levinthal (1989,1990) who define it as «the company's ability to identify, assimilate and exploit knowledge from the environment» (Cohen & Levinthal, 1989, p. 569). In a later work, they point out that it is the company's ability to recognize the value of new information, assimilate it and apply it for commercial purposes and innovation processes (Cohen & Levinthal, 1990).

Cohen & Levinthal (1989, 1990) indicate that one of the company's primary capabilities are research and development activities that generate useful knowledge necessary for its good performance. This capacity is seen as crucial in the current environmental conditions (Camisón & Forés, 2014), characterized by being complex, changing and competitive.

From Cohen & Levinthal (1990) stems the importance of motivations and individual skills as key factors of AC (Minbaeva *et al.* 2003, 2014). In this regard, they point out that «our perspective implies that the ease of learning, and therefore the adoption of technology, is affected by the degree that a certain innovation is related to the base of pre-existing knowledge of its potential users» (Cohen & Levinthal, 1990, p. 148), for example «personal computers spread more quickly initially among consumers and companies that had previous experience in mainframes or minicomputers» (Cohen & Levinthal, 1990, p. 149). Thus, they consider that individuals learn by accumulating knowledge throughout their performance within the organization. In essence, AC revolves around the idea that the accumulated experience of adoption and invention improves the ability to recognize and absorb new high-quality knowledge, as well as to create new and valuable inventions (King & Lakhani, 2011); it is, therefore, a recursive activity.

Cohen & Levinthal (1990) also consider that the organization has a memory that facilitates the storage, recovery and application of associated knowledge both at an individual and organizational level, and that motivates the learning process, giving a vital importance to the cognitive model of the individual. However, they clarify that it not only refers to the sum of the absorptive capacities of its employees, but also implies organizational aspects that include, for example, organizational culture, investment in R&D, human resources practices and policies, and the organizational structure, which is the result of a series of relationships with the environment, strategy, structure, processes and organizational culture, as well as individual motivations and skills to get new knowledge (Lane *et al.*, 2006). In this sense, there are three levels of analysis of absorptive capacity: individual, group and organizational, that are related and coexist in the organization.

Absorptive capacity «plays a key role in innovation and performance, regardless the size of the companies and the level of resources» (Valentim *et al.*, 2016, p. 4), is crucial for the process of creating business knowledge (Charão & Matos, 2017), and plays an essential role so that the company's information technology capabilities influence its end results (Guisao *et al.*, 2017). Thus, companies with high levels of AC can manage external knowledge more efficiently (Escribano *et al.*, 2009). Therefore, it is critical for any company that seeks to achieve new forms of competitive advantages, superior performance and innovative results in the goods and services it offers according to the demands of the changing environment. It should be noted that AC is based on the fact that the organization does not have enough internal knowledge to improve or develop all its innovation processes (Aguilar-Olaves *et al.*, 2014, Duchek, 2015).

These ideas, therefore, allow AC to be located within the scope of two approaches identified in the theory of the organization: the *vision based on knowledge*, which is one of the derivations of the theory of resources and capabilities, and within the context of external control theories[1] of organization, specifically in the theory of dependence on resources proposed by Pfeffer & Salancik (1978). The latter states that the organization does not have the capabilities or self-sufficiency to produce and control all the resources and services needed to achieve proper functioning, so interchange and interdependence relations with other organizations are needed to obtain them. Within those resources, external knowledge is necessary in order to comply with the different organizational processes.

To synthesize, some definitions of absorptive capacity are presented in table 2.

Table 2. Definitions of Absorptive Capacity (AC)

Authors	Definition
Lane & Lubatkin (1998)	Ability of the company to assimilate and apply the knowledge from another company. That capacity depends on: (1) similarity between the companies; (2) base knowledge; (3) organizational structure; and (4) dominant logic. The latter is located within the framework of cognitive psychology.
Lane *et al.* (2006)	The company uses knowledge from the environment through three sequential processes: (a) the recognition and understanding of new knowledge through exploratory learning; (b) the assimilation of new knowledge by transformative learning; and (c) the use of assimilated knowledge to generate new knowledge through learning.
Todorova & Durisin (2007)	Capacity of a company to assess, acquire, assimilate or transform and exploit external knowledge in organizational processes.
Schillaci *et al.* (2013)	Extends the ability to absorb competition among regions or territories, and defines it as the capacity of a region to identify, assimilate and ex-ploit knowledge.
Chang *et al.* (2014)	Set of skills of the company to acquire, assimilate, transform and exploit knowledge to produce new capabilities.
Garzón (2015)	The ability of the organization to recognize the value of external knowledge (environment), acquire it and assimilate it within the scope of the organization, and apply it in the scope of its operations.

1 The following theories are located in the external control approach: contingent, resource dependence, institutional and population ecology. They are also part of the adaptation approach.

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Authors	Definition
Martink-enaite & Breunig (2016)	Set of sequential processes of exploratory learning, transformer and exploiter in which the individual and organizational skills interact dy-namically.
Peltokorpi (2017)	It is the capacity of the subsidiaries, through their members, to ab-sorb, assimilate and use new information available in the multina-tional com-pany.

3. Absorptive capacity as dynamic capacity of the organization

The theory of dynamic capacity is considered a branch of the theory of resources and capabilities (TRC). This focuses its analysis on the importance of the resources and internal capacities of the organization as the main source of its competitive advantages, paying little attention to the factors of the environment where it operates. It highlights the role played by internal characteristics—resources and capacities—as the key to establishing the policies and strategies of the organization (Zapata & Hernández, 2014, Zapata & Mirabal, 2018). Its beginnings rely on the approaches of Penrose (1959), who proposes that the center of distinctive competencies of the company are the resources —tangible and intangible—that it possesses, and the skills it uses to take advantage of them in the best way. This theory questions the idea that the development of the company depends mainly on the dynamics of the environment, as proposed by the adaptation and external control approach.

However, this epistemological position has been criticized by considering it restrictive and static (*v. Gr.* González & Hurtado, 2014) and by not paying attention, on the one hand, to the existing dynamics between the organization and the environment (Zapata & Mirabal, 2018), and on the other hand, by giving relevance to the heterogeneity and the characteristics of the resources—valuable, rare, non-imitable and not strategically equivalent— as strategic elements basic for the organization. In this regard, Cruz *et al*. (2009, p.111) state that «such characteristics will not last over the time in the face of changes affecting the factor and/or product markets», or in rapidly changing environments or highly globalized markets, the TRC does not have enough arguments to explain why companies with similar resources do not necessarily achieve the same performance (Chang *et al.*, 2014).

The theory of dynamic capabilities emerges at the end of the nineties, as a way to boost the focus of resources and capabilities in response to the need of organizations to adapt and innovate according to the requirements and dynamics of the environment (González & Hurtado, 2014; Zapata & Mirabal, 2018). Thus, Teece *et al*. (1997) and Teece & Leih (2016) state that dynamic capabilities contribute to the company's integration, construction and reconfiguration of resources and capabilities to provide fast responses to changing environments, and involve higher-level activities that allow it to direct and improve their ordinary capabilities in the search for the production of goods and services adjusted to the demands and circumstances of the environment; and that they also help in the design and implementation of a business model adapted to these circumstances (Teece & Linden, 2017).

Thus, AC is considered in the literature of dynamic capabilities as one of its main components (Wang & Ahmed, 2007, Valencia-Rodríguez, 2015, Garzón, 2015, Lin *et al.*, 2016, Vargas & Muratalla, 2017; Zapata & Mirabal, 2018). Already Cohen & Levinthal (1990, p. 133) had pointed out that «absorptive capacity not only resides in a single individual but depends on the bonding of a mosaic of individual capacities». It is a construct used to explain the complexity of organizational phenomena through their participation as a dynamic capacity that allows transformation by evolution or change in organizational and innovation processes (Vargas & Muratalla, 2017; Rodríguez & Da Cunha, 2018). AC is then recognized as a dynamic capacity, since through it the company can develop skills of assimilation, learning, transfer and exploitation of external knowledge (González & Hurtado, 2014; Vargas & Muratalla, 2017), which helps reconfigure the ordinary capabilities it possesses (Roberts *et al.*, 2012).

In this regard, Zahra & George (2002) suggest that the acquisition, assimilation, transformation and exploitation of knowledge integrated into the AC construct possess characteristics of dynamic capabilities, since they influence the company to create and deploy the knowledge necessary to build competencies, organizational functions such as marketing, distribution and production that make it possible to deal with turbulent environments. In this way, and following the previous ideas, Verona and Ravasi (2003), Lin *et al.* (2016) and Garzón (2015) show that the ability of companies to acquire new knowledge, assimilate it and integrate it into the existing knowledge base is a determining factor to generate and boost dynamic capacities. In the same order of ideas, Zapata & Mirabal (2018) argue that with AC it is possible for the organization to develop its own capabilities in the processes of production, organization and provision of services. In summary, while a company demonstrates greater AC, it will exhibit more dynamic capacity (Wang & Ahmed, 2007), which is recognized in the nature and generation of competitive advantages (Zahra & George, 2002).

4. Components of absorptive capacity

According to the Cohen & Levinthal model (1989,1990) absorptive capacity has a multidimensional nature that encompasses three capacities: (a) *recognition of the value* of new knowledge —explore knowledge—; (b) *assimilation* of that knowledge that implies understanding it and adding it to the processes and routines of the organization —knowledge transformation—; and (c) *application* of that knowledge to obtain new products —to exploit it. Similarly, Aguilar-Olavés *et al.* (2014) explain that companies go through a sequential process where the potentially valuable knowledge is first recognized (exploratory learning), then that knowledge is assimilated (transforming learning), and finally it is used to innovate and create new knowledge with market value (exploitative learning).

From the component definition of AC in the works of Cohen & Levinthal (1989, 1990), several models have been formulated that agree in a common point: it is a generator of competitive advantages. Below, some of the most relevant are described.

Lane *et al.* (2001). They highlight the critical role of AC during the learning process and interorganizational performance. In this way, they propose three components

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in an international *joint venture environment*: ability to understand external knowledge, assimilate it and apply it. The first depends on the existence of links in the fields of action of the companies, the similarity of their problems and the priorities assigned to them. On the other hand, the ability to assimilate external knowledge is related to the flexibility and adaptability implied by a high level of foreign partner training and prior learning that contribute to reducing the ambiguity of new knowledge and its connection with the existing knowledge. Finally, the application of external knowledge implies the ability to disseminate it and integrate it into the activities of the organization.

Zahra & George (2002). Under the idea of a reconceptualization of AC, they offer a change to the original three-dimensional model proposed by Cohen & Levinthal (1989, 1990). In this way, they conceptualize it as «a set of routines and organizational processes that allow the company to acquire, assimilate, transform and exploit external knowledge. These four organizational capacities reinforce each other to generate absorptive capacity» (Zahra & George, 2002, p. 186). These routines that the authors emphasize provide structural, systematic and procedural mechanisms that contribute with the company to create value in their products and obtain sustainable competitive advantages.

The modification of Zahra & George (2002) to the Cohen & Levinthal model (1990) is about the change from three to four dimensions: acquisition, assimilation, transformation and application. (a) Acquisition, identification and recognition of the value of the external knowledge that will be selected and then used in the operations of the company. (b) Assimilation, the ability of the company to absorb and transfer external knowledge. It is achieved through the set of routines and processes necessary to analyze, interpret and understand the knowledge acquired. (c) Transformation, the ability of the company to develop and improve the processes and routines that facilitate the transfer and combination of existing knowledge from a new one. This is obtained by incorporating or eliminating knowledge or interpreting it differently. And (d) application or exploitation, which «is based on routines that allow the company to refine, expand and take advantage of existing skills or create new competencies by incorporating the knowledge acquired and transformed into its operations» (Zahra & George, 2002, p. 190).

Zahra & George (2002, p. 191) with the argument that «the organization can acquire and assimilate knowledge, but not necessarily have the ability to transform it and exploit it to generate benefits», group the four dimensions into two categories: «potential absorptive capacity» (PACAP), and «realized absorptive capacity» (RACAP). PACAP considers the processes by which the company can absorb external knowledge through its acquisition and assimilation capacity, but its transformation and application is not automatically guaranteed (Kang & Lee, 2017); while RACAP incorporates processes that use external knowledge for the purposes of the organization, achieved through their transformation and exploitation skills. Supporting this argument, Cassol *et al*. (2016) explain that PACAP is an instrument to acquire and assimilate knowledge at a «relatively dormant» level, until there is a real reason for its use, becoming RACAP.

Todorova & Durisin (2007). They propose four components: (a) recognition of the value of knowledge, take up the initial idea of Cohen & Levinthal (1990); (b) acquisition; (c) transformation or assimilation; and (d) exploitation. Recognition of the value of knowledge is considered a step prior to its acquisition, an issue that places it within the acquisition process (Lane & Lubatkin, 1998, Zahra & George, 2002, Volberda *et al.*, 2010, Duchek, 2013, 2015). This ability to recognize the value of new knowledge is an important component of AC since its assessment is not automatic, it is biased and needs to lead to absorption, so «the ability to learn, that is, to absorb external knowledge depends on the ability to adequately assess new knowledge» (Todorova & Durisin, 2007, p. 777). Regarding assimilation or transformation —proposed by Zahra & George (2002)—, points out that the knowledge that the organization tries to absorb can advance and retreat between assimilation and transformation processes before they are successfully incorporated into their knowledge structures for further exploitation and application.

Forés & Camisón (2008) and Camisón & Forés (2014). They propose four different but complementary dimensions of AC: acquisition, assimilation, transformation and exploitation. Acquisition is conceptualized, starting from the ideas of Lane & Lubatkin (1998) and Zahra & George (2002), as «the ability of a company to identify, assess and acquire critical external knowledge for its operations» (Forés & Camisón, 2008, p. 37). On the other hand, assimilation is addressed as the company's ability to absorb external knowledge, which can be operational through the «routines and processes that allow the company to analyze, process, interpret and understand information obtained from external sources» (Forés & Camisón, 2008, p. 37). Transformation is the ability to develop and improve internal routines that facilitate the transfer and combination of prior knowledge with those already acquired. Finally, exploitation is considered as the competence of the company to apply new knowledge in organizational processes.

Lichtenthaler (2016b) describes three main components: (a) Exploration of knowledge, the process by which external useful knowledge is identified and acquired through different mechanisms for scanning the environment. In this activity, the dynamism of the environment—changes in knowledge, markets and technology— has a positive effect on the technological and market orientation during this exploration process (Lichtenthaler, 2016b), allowing the company to adapt to the latest developments in the different fields of action. (b) Retention of knowledge refers to the maintenance and reactivation of knowledge in the organization over the time. (c) Exploitation of knowledge, consists of the transformation of knowledge into new products and services. In summary, Lichtenthaler (2016b) points out that this proactive orientation of the organization constitutes a motivating element of the organizational processes.

5. Determinants and measurement of absorptive capacity

Absorptive capacity can be influenced by various external and internal knowledge sources (Van den Bosch *et al.*, 1999, Todorova & Durisin, 2007), such as prior knowledge, accumulated through experience, basic competences and shared common language, which facilitate and promote the recognition of the value of information, its assimilation, transformation and application (Todorova & Durisin, 2007, Mariano & Walter, 2015). It also depends on the training of the members of the organization and their accumulated knowledge (Roberts *et al.*, 2012), the investment and intensity of R&D, as well as the existence of organizational units devoted to research activities, the number

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of workers with university degrees with a high profile for R&D, the number of patents and the proportion of scientific and technical personnel in relation to the total number of employees (Escribano *et al.*, 2009; Kostopoulos *et al.*, 2011; Valentim *et al.*, 2016), all of which is combined in different forms of measurement and quantification of the AC, which have been studied in various qualitative and quantitative research (Duchek, 2015, Valentim *et al.*, 2016).

In Table 3, some determinants of AC are briefly described.

Table 3. Works on Determinants of Absorptive Capacity (AC)

Autor	Determinantes
Van den Bosch *et al.* (1999)	(1) *Organizational form.* The *functional structure* has a high potential for efficiency due to the economy of scale in the use of resources, but low flexibility in the process of absorbing knowledge, since it is more adapted to stable environments with markets and products with relatively long-life cycles. The *division* structure has more autonomy in operational terms and more direct contact with its environment. They suggest that this type of structure has a high potential for the flexibility of knowledge absorption due to its greater ability to function in dynamic environments. And the *matrix* forms have high flexibility for the absorption of knowledge by their ability to share it among the units that make up the projects.
Forés & Camisón (2008)	*Internal and external determinants*. *Internal*: knowledge of the company, culture of innovation and learning, organizational design open to learning, knowledge management systems, age and size of the company. *External*: degree of turbulence of the environment, existence of technological opportunities, knowledge characteristics of other companies and geographical distance.
Vega-Jurado *et al.* (2008)	(1) Organizational Knowledge: The set of skills, experiences, training and information that the company has, and has accumulated as a result of the processes of acquisition, learning, generation and application. (2) *Formalization*: Increases the efficiency in the acquisition of knowledge when establishing patterns of behavior; that is, it allows acting with low supervision, and facilitates the creation of organizational memory. (3) *Mechanisms of social integration:* Formal and informal associated with administrative practices, such as: rotation of personnel, team building, quality circles and methodologies to solve problems of participation and integration that facilitate the transfer, transformation and exploitation of knowledge.

Autor	Determinantes
Schillaci *et al*. (2013)	(1) *Human Resource Skills:* Related to their level of knowledge, experience and training, which facilitates access to the knowledge of the environment. (2) *R&D Investment*: Volume of financial resources used in the acquisition of technology, knowledge, equipment or any other resource to execute research projects. (3) O*rganizational Structure:* its adequate design facilitates the ability of the company to organize and stimulate the transfer of knowledge through all the units and people that are part of it.
Aguilar-Olaves *et al*. (2014)	They classify the determinants according to their *potential absorptive capacity* (*PACAP*) and *absorptive capacity* (*RACAP*). In the first, they identify the external sources of knowledge: clients, competitors, consultants, university institutions, research center and congresses. On the other hand, the activities that stimulate *RACAP*: implementation, application, conversion and re-coding of innovative effort, technological processes, and the introduction of new products or improvement of existing ones.
González & Hurtado (2014)	The authors identified the following indicators: (a) *Acquisition phase*: Investments in R&D, in technology transfer and in design engineering. (b) *Assimilation phase*: cooperation with suppliers and institutions to carry out scientific, technological and innovation activities. (c) *Transformation phase*: formation of employees, investment in technical assistance and consulting. (d) *Exploitation phase:* registration of intellectual property, improvement in the quality of products or services, or expansion of its offer.
Duchek (2015)	The attitudes and preferences of the actors in the organizational processes are determinants of AC. Deviations from formal rules are important conditions for the flexible absorption of knowledge and, therefore, for high levels of AC. It means that the management must accept that deviations from the rules may be necessary and, in some cases, encouraged.
Lichtenthaler (2016b).	(1) The technological and proactive orientation of the company towards the market affects positively the processes of exploration, retention and exploitation of the AC. (2) The dynamism of the environment has a positive moderating effect on the relationship of the company with the degree of technological and proactive orientation towards the market, and on the level of exploration, retention and exploitation of knowledge.
Zou *et al*. (2018).	The authors perform a meta-analysis on the concept of absorptive capacity and locate two fundamental determinants: *the size and age of the company*. From this analysis, they find a positive relationship for small businesses and negative for large companies. On the other hand, the relationship is negative for old companies and not significant for new ones.

6. The cognition of the individual and absorptive capacity

From the cognitive psychology, Qian & Jung (2017) argue that absorptive capacity is an effective mechanism to solve the problems of information and knowledge filters during the process of recognizing their effective value for the organization. These filters can be explained within the framework of cognitive theory through processes, biases and cognitive maps that, as a whole, shape the individual's cognition and cognitive capacity.

Cognitive processes allow understanding how knowledge is selected, organized, transformed, stored and used through the perception, interpretation, attention, thought, memory and language of individuals (Neisser, 1981, Banyard *et al.,* 1995). On the other hand, cognitive biases are tendency to think, perceive or remember in a particular way (Banyard *et al.*, 1995), so that the individuals responsible for making strategic decisions depend to a large extent on some judgments or cognitive biases —mental predispositions— to simplify or reduce tasks and decisions in complex situations (Zapata & Canet, 2009).[2]

Maps or cognitive schemes, besides representing a wealth of knowledge, experiences and images of the world, also suggest an active structure for the search, purification and interpretation of the information used to direct and create in the mind of the individuals the perceptions of the environment that surrounds them (Zapata & Canet, 2009). It constitutes a cognitive structure composed of expectations learned from experience and stored in the memory, and therefore helps people to simplify, filter and efficiently manage information, as well as direct courses of action under a complex and uncertain context (Gioia, 1986; Banyard *et al.,* 1995; *Hodgkinson et al., 2004*).

Child (1997) argues that the exercise of strategic activity and organizational design implies a prior assessment of the environment by those who lead the organization. This evaluation is carried out through cognitive filters that occur during perception (Milliken, 1987, Child, 1997, Walton and Dawson, 2001, Zabkar *et al*., 2013). In this way, Weick (1979) points out that organizations only recognize their environment through the « perception process » of those who direct them, being the product of an abbreviated, generalized and correctable organization of the different experiences within the mind that serve as initial frame of reference for the action, transformed into maps and cognitive biases[3] (Zapata *et al*., 2015), that then influence those perceptions (Zapata & Canet, 2009).

This is how the cognitive vision and the will of the agents define the environment where the company will participate and compete, which configures the voluntarist perspective. It is possible to talk about a cognitive determinism; that is, the will captured by one's own vision and conception of things (Peris *et al.*, 2006), which in essence constitutes the managerial or managerial vision, and inculcated with the way the company should be organized, directed and planned. All this contributes to the formation of the absorptive capacity of the organization.

In summary, the following general proposition (GP) can be formulated:

2 The following theories are located in the external control approach: contingent, resource dependence, institutional and population ecology. They are also part of the adaptation approach.

3 The following theories are located in the external control approach: contingent, resource dependence, institutional and population ecology. They are also part of the adaptation approach.

GP: *The processes, maps and cognitive biases, which constitute the cognition of the individual, have a positive and significant effect on the absorptive capacity of the organization.*

Finally, the determinants of the absorptive capacity of the organization can be integrated into: cognitive, organizational and environmental.

Figure 1. Determining Factors of absorptive capacity

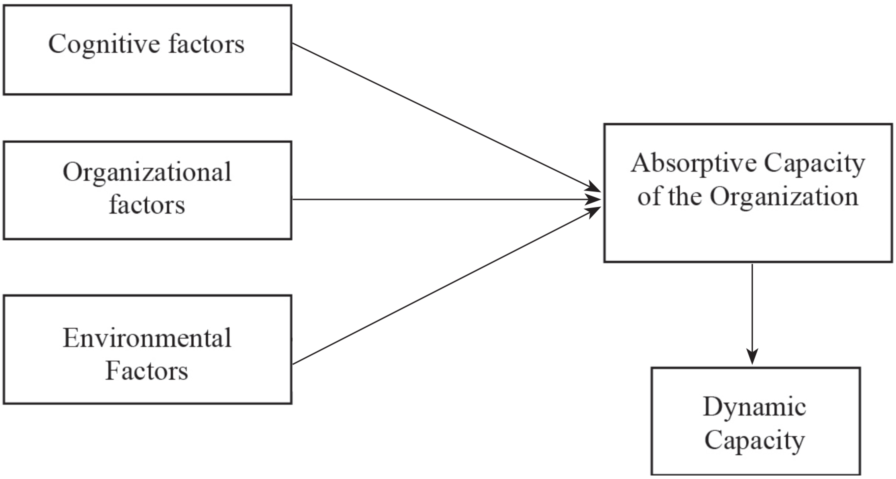

Table 4 shows some of these determining factors.

Table 4. Determining Factors of Absorptive Capacity

Cognitive factors	• Cognitive biases • Cognitive maps • Cognitive processes.
Organizational factors	• Organizational structure. • Human resources policies. • Culture and strategic orientation towards innovation. • Investments in R&D and technology • Level of staff training. • Leadership styles. • Knowledge and previous experiences. • Formalization degree of organizational routines, innovation processes and knowledge management. • Characteristics of the products that are elaborated and commercialized. • Size and age of the organization. • Development degree of information systems.

Environmental Factors	• Relations and cooperation agreements with other organizations involved with innovation and knowledge development processes (universities, training and research institutes). • Dynamism degree of the environment and organizational practices (competence, customers, suppliers and associates). • Government policy linked to innovation and the generation of knowledge. • Knowledge and technology available in the participants of the organizational environment. • Characteristics of the products and services demanded by the environment.

7. In conclusion

Through an extensive review of the specialized literature based on theoretical and empirical research, this document has made an attempt to advance in the study and understanding of the absorptive capacity of organizations. From its study and application by different components and forms of measurement, it is observed that it is a construct that contributes to a good extent to understanding the operation and behavior of the organization in an increasingly dynamic, complex and competitive environment, and especially when it comes to the processes of learning, innovation and knowledge management.

In the literature there has been an important emphasis on the idea that AC improves the results of innovation and learning processes of the organization that lead to obtaining competitive advantages. Thus, AC materialized through the search, recognition and acquisition of external knowledge to then assimilate, integrate, transform and apply it in organizational processes is seen as a fundamental activity for the organization to successfully face the demands and changes of the environment. Thus, it plays a crucial role in the learning and performance of the company, becoming a key capacity for its processes of innovation and competitiveness (Oumaya & Gharbi, 2017).

It is noteworthy that although the studies subsequent to the seminal work of Cohen & Levinthal (1990) have preserved the initial spirit of the AC concept, it is noted that the most important change was that of Zahra & George (2002) when associating it with a set of routines and strategic processes developed through orderly and persistent efforts in order to generate dynamic capacities (Forés & Camisón, 2008, Camisón & Forés, 2014). This change is accompanied by the proposal that considers AC divided into two sub-constructs which are not necessarily binding: «Potential absorptive capacity» *(PACAP)* and «realized absorptive capacity» *(RACAP)*. From these changes stems the idea that AC is a dynamic capacity of the organization, since through it the company can achieve superior performance and competitive advantages with the activities of search, acquisition, assimilation of useful external knowledge, and its transformation, transfer and subsequent application in all the activities of the company. It is highlighted by Saiz *et al.* (2018, p. 290), that «the influence of potential and realized absorptive

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capacity is significant on new products and causes effects on internal research and development in different ways».

Thus, AC is considered as a component of the dynamic capacities, becoming a subject of first order study both in academic research and applied in the organizational field.

An important contribution of this research is the proposal of a model of the determining factors of the absorptive capacity of the organization, established in three main ones: cognitive, organizational and environmental, which allow in some way their better systematization and understanding.

It should be noted that the review of the literature indicates there has been progress in the study of the AC with respect to its components, determinants and measurement forms. Similarly, there has been progress in the study on the effects of the cognitive capacity of those who direct the organization, defined by the processes, the maps and the cognitive biases whose conceptual bases are found in cognitive psychology, and that in this work have been identified as cognitive factors. The above is considered a line of research that promises important findings for understanding the behavior of organizations and of those who are part of it, and its link with the absorptive capacity and knowledge management.

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Investment in advertising, challenges for 21st century television

La inversión en publicidad, retos para la televisión del siglo XXI

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Abstract

The finance and management of public channels of television is a trending topic in Spain. In accordance with European regulation, advertising was excluded from public national channels from 2010, changing, therefore, the distribution of the market within private television and autonomic channels. The purpose of this work is to describe the evolution, from 2007 to 2017, of Aragon Television as a provider of advertising formats, and its impact on the business structure in the Autonomous Community of Aragon. The model of interdisciplinary methodological triangulation was used: cabinet investigations, a discussion group, in-depth interviews and two Focus Group meetings. On the basis of the results, we can see the lack of correlation between advertising contracts and the audience of autonomous channels, as well as big changes in the ways in which users search and obtain information through the use of technology. Programmatic advertising is perceived as a great threat by both mass media and more conventional agencies. The conclusions indicate that advertisers and agencies have doubts about the efficiency of television as a way of advertising. It is possible that agencies tend to disappear because the organizations will be the only one generating their own contents and publishing them through new digital media.

Resumen

La financiación y gestión de los canales públicos de televisión es un tema candente en España. En aplicación de la normativa europea, la publicidad fue excluida de los canales públicos nacionales a partir de 2010, alterando así el reparto del mercado a las televisiones privadas y las autonómicas. El objetivo del presente trabajo es describir la evolución, en el periodo 2007 a 2017, de Aragón Televisión como oferente de formatos publicitarios y el impacto que esto supone en el tejido empresarial de la Comunidad Autónoma de Aragón. Se ha utilizado el modelo de triangulación interdisciplinar metodológica: investigación de gabinete, un grupo de discusión, entrevistas en profundidad y dos sesiones de focus group. En los resultados destaca la falta de correlación entre la publicidad contratada y la audiencia del canal televisivo autonómico, así como grandes cambios en la forma en la que los usuarios buscan y acceden a la información por el uso de las tecnologías. La publicidad programática es percibida como una gran amenaza, tanto por parte de los medios de comunicación como las agencias más convencionales. Las conclusiones indican que los anunciantes y las agencias dudan de la eficacia de la televisión como medio publicitario. Es posible que las agencias tiendan a desaparecer porque las propias organizaciones sean quienes se encarguen de generar sus contenidos y que estos contenidos sean publicados en los nuevos medios digitales.

Keywords | palabras clave

Television, advertising, economy, technology, company, brand.
Televisión, publicidad, economía, tecnología, empresa, marca.

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1. Introduction and state of the art

Before the Internet changed the communication environment, a company had three alternatives to stands out: invest in advertising, make good publicity or hire the best sellers (Meerman, 2010). In recent times, persuasion has given way to the management of influence in business communication. And investments in mass advertising have shifted towards social networks, internal marketing and the management of relationships with stakeholders (Alloza, 2012).

New areas of communication, in which the consumer takes command, represent a situation that leads to the loss of control of the company over its brands. Communication no longer goes from an advertiser to a target audience, with media that act as neutral arbiters and diffusers of communication (Delgado, 2012). We have to reconsider the professional routines, and to stop thinking about advertising as a unidirectional communication tool.

Since 2008, the communication industry has been one of the most affected sectors by the economic situation in Spain (Perlado and Rubio, 2012). The arrival of the global economic crisis, with technological, legal and social changes (Berné, & Orive, 2013) disrupted the sector in many ways and caused a dramatic drop in investment in advertising.

These turbulences have given rise to a new paradigm, in form and substance, for the communication sector. All advertising media are affected by this profound change. And it has changed both the ways to access content and consumption models and creation of information, advertising or entertainment.

The advertising market shows two clear trends (Riesgo, 2005) that began at the end of the 20th century: one is globalization, a reality «in which innovation and entrepreneurship are decisive» (Platero, 2014) and the other is business concentration, the grouping of both media and advertisers.

We are facing a reality in which technology has allowed, more than ever, to establish strong social ties, even crossing borders.

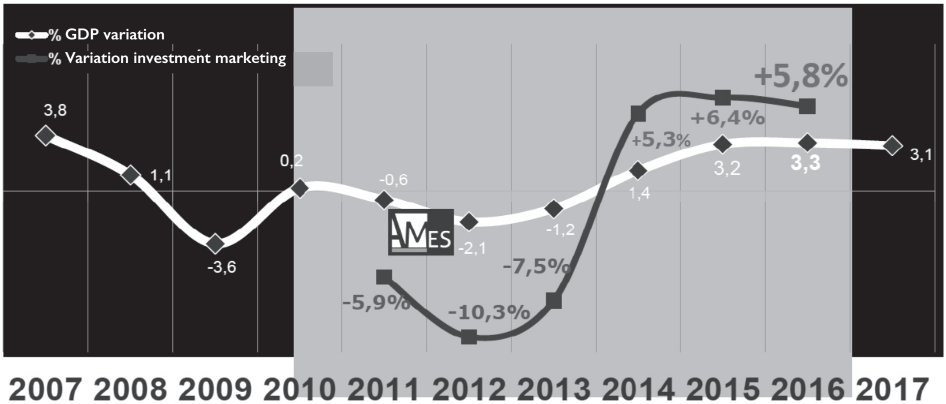
> In the 21st century, the so-called information and knowledge society group people by ideological, cultural, and union affinities. This sectorization makes groups according to the satisfaction of their needs or interests above, sometimes, of the individuals (Zalbidea-Bengoa, 2010, p.23).

The rapid growth of the digital offer is a challenge to all conventional media (Solanas, & Carreras, 2011) and, especially, to television, print media and external media.

The advertising sector represents 2% of the 94,266 companies incorporated in Spain in 2017 (Ctrl, 2018). These new agencies followed the trend towards concentration by opening their headquarters in Madrid (33%) or Barcelona (20%). Aragón is among the regions that bet the least on the creation of advertising companies in 2017 (1%).

As we can see in Figure 1, only when GDP seems to recover, advertisers have increased the volume of investment, while, in times of falling GDP, the decreases in marketing investment are more pronounced.

Illustration 1. Correlation of marketing investment with GDP in Spain, 2007 to 2017



Source: Marketing Association of Spain, 2017.

An increasingly demanding consumer, who rejects invasive advertising, forces brands to design new forms of communication (Arbaiza Rodríguez and Huertas García, 2018) with relevant and striking content.

In 1995, Internet users were 40 million, although "only 250,000 Spaniards had access to the network" (Fleming, 2000, p. 38) and it was enough for some publicists to consider a change in the way they do branding and start thinking about microaudiences. There are currently 3196 million active users on social networks, that is, 42% of the world's population.

Internet penetration in Europe reached 80% of the population in 2018, with 53% of European users of social media and 45% active in social networks (Kemp, 2018). In Madrid, 94% of adolescents can access the Internet and multiple applications through mobile phones (Méndez-Gago and González-Robledo, 2018). Youtubers are the new opinion leaders of Spanish and European young people, transmitting values that will shape the identity (Pérez-Torres, Pastor-Ruiz, & Abarrou-Ben-Boubaker, 2018) of today's adolescent citizens.

As such, «individuals, brands, companies and all kinds of institutions are struggling to gain a foothold in that permanent prime time that is the Network» (García-García and Gil-Ruiz, 2018, page 152) competing with each other through the generation of «agile and entertaining discourse».

> The consumer of the XXI century has at their hands an infinite catalog of contents that are constantly renewed and for which there are no closing times or holiday breaks; these are highly specialized, and can be accessed mostly for free where, when and how they want thanks to mobile support.
>
> This consumer, who used to be, with few exceptions, a passive agent receiving the message, is now an active party who comments, publishes, shares and sometimes conditions the contents like never before (Marta-Lazo, Segura-Anaya and Martínez-Óliván, 2017, p. 167).

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Cloutier (1973) put forth the «EMEREC» (emetteur/récepteur) theory, according to which interlocutors maintain relations as equals. In this case, all the subjects in communication are, at once, transmitters and receivers (Aparici, & García-Marín, 2018). Currently, we are in a multidirectional model (many to many) where social networks make up the profile of the new Internet audience (Flores, 2014) and this is a proactive, content-generating audience: it's the prosumer's era.

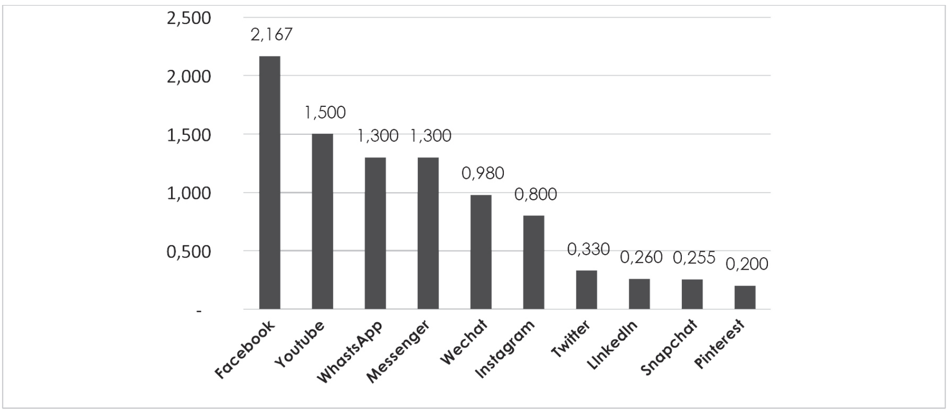
Toffler in his book The Third Wave (1980) introduced the term «prosumer» (de Pourbaix, 2016) uniting the concepts of producer and consumer. Therefore, users of social media also become communicators, in clear convergence and open competition with professional communicators to capture the attention and confidence of the audience.

In view of these new technological circumstances, marketing activity has focused on reaching the customer in a more direct way. Social networks Twitter and Facebook

> are positioning themselves as one of the main communication channels for online stores, facilitating the creation of a relationship of trust with the consumer (Fundación Telefónica, 2015, p. 46).

The mobile phone has become the most immediate form of communication among citizens and, therefore, with potential customers. «The convergence between media, means, systems, sources and participating agents allows us to continue talking about an evolution or the era of intermediates» (Marta-Lazo, 2014, p. 16).

Illustration 2 Active users monthly on social platforms, in millions



Source: Own elaboration, based on data from «Digital in 2018 Global Overview» (Kemp, 2018).

While new media take on this role, the channels that could be considered traditional continue to be powerful. 96% of users of visual content use traditional television, 88% listen to the radio, 79% read the newspaper on paper and 82% enjoy a printed magazine (Brown, 2018). Television drives 21.3% of purchasing decisions, although only 5% is a direct impact during a campaign.

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The synergistic effect of Facebook with television (González, 2018) increases the effectiveness of the campaigns by 10% when it reaches the social network (with an exclusive coverage of 4.5%) to people who do not watch the campaign on TV. Facebook concentrates 46% of its GRPs in the population least exposed to TV. Its incorporation into the media mix enabled access to a differential target with respect to the conventional television user, who presents a purchase ticket above the average (7%).

Not only in Spain but in other countries, it is noted that the traditional way of consuming television shows has changed. The personal and face-to-face conversations generated by the programs usually coexist with another type of non-face-to-face conversation, through the increasing use of second and even third screens.

A recent study by Lacalle & Gómez (2017) states that:

> There is a tendency to complement the reception with resources coming from the Network, while the interactions are extended through chats and social networks. Studies on multi-screen reception and feedback from viewers show different forms of participation that can guide us in understanding the digital audience (p.198).

The marketing myopia (Levitt, 1960) that is observed in traditional television channels is considerable. They have not understood, in our opinion, the new dimensions of the market in which they operate and, therefore, they are not reacting to the competition of the new operators. Facebook, YouTube, Netflix, HBO and other operators born in the digital environment have understood better than Antena 3, Telecinco, TVE or any other television that their business is not to broadcast content on a certain device. With 1.46 million subscribers (Scarpellini, 2018), Netflix is becoming the second most used platform in Spain behind Movistar - Yomvi.

Levitt (1960) marked the way long before the arrival of new technologies:

> The organization must learn to think about itself not as a producer of goods and services, but as a buyer of clients, that does the things that will make people want to do business with it.

This maxim is applicable to all types of organizations, whether public or private, large or small.

The economic development of any country requires that even the smallest company behaves in a professional manner and agilely incorporates the innovations within its reach. It is a fact that both the most developed and emerging economies have a large proportion of SMEs in their economic structure (Hoyos & Lasso, 2017).

In this new context, advertisers face great difficulties in measuring the results of their investment. A presence in social networks «provides an intangible return» (Gutiérrez Montoya, Sánchez Jiménez, & Galiano Coronil, 2018) in terms of brand recognition or as a promoter of changes in the attitude of potential customers. These effects of advertising communication are the same as those offered by other media, although with a considerable added value: interactivity in real time.

Neither in the professional community nor in academia there is a consensus when using protocols that clearly define how data is obtained, or how to select the most appropriate metrics to assess them (Leeflnag, Verhoef, Dahlström, & Freundt, 2014). A KPI (Key Performance Indicator) is a key indicator of performance that is organized

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in a scorecard to describe the results of a process in relation to the objectives that were set when it was launched. Therefore, there is an unequivocal will on the part of the advertising industry to define them correctly (Solanas & Carreras, 2011) and use them to update the contracting modalities in the media.

The abundance of statistics available dynamically and almost instantaneously on electronic media contrasts, both in types of measurement (KPI) and frequency of appearance, with the traditional measurements available in the studies most commonly used for measurement in traditional media, those issued by the Office of the Justification of Dissemination (OJD) and the General Media Study (GMS). Comparing with 2010, marketing activities (Asociación de Marketing de España, 2015) the greatest growth experienced in 2014 was:

- Digital Marketing (+ 39%)
- Relationship with clients, after-sales and CRM (+20%)
- Activity at the point of sale (+11%)

The role of the advertising agency in this new context (Martí, & Muñoz, 2008) consists in «directing, focusing, exploiting, managing, feeding, perhaps co-participating in the open conversation among consumers».

Competing with companies whose competitive record is based on capturing audiences from a position where the journalistic values of credibility and rigor prevail is not a trivial matter. The challenge of getting audiences that are of interest to advertisers is exciting. Are local televisions destined to disappear or, on the contrary, is this their great opportunity to generate a value that the giants cannot offer?

2. Methodology

The interdisciplinary methodological triangulation model has been used (Hernández, 2015) to develop consecutive phases of a validation system for the results obtained through different methodologies (Rodríguez, Pozo, & Gutiérrez, 2006). It starts with a cabinet investigation, followed by a qualitative phase through a discussion group, in-depth interviews and two focus group sessions.

As secondary sources, in addition to the academic publications, professional reports of the most prestigious specialized media consultancies were used. The study cabinet assumed the objective of describing the current situation of the Spanish advertising sector, focusing on the Autonomous Community of Aragon. To provide a temporal perspective, the current data was compared with the previous decade.

Based on the theory in European research on social discourse, the discussion group is a form of an open conversation about the subject under study. This conversation must be «generative of meaning and not only of information, characterized in fact by its non-directivity» (Domínguez, & Dávila, 2009, p. 96) in which the researcher works by redirecting and not participating. The moderator raises the issue, tries to involve all participants in a warm environment that promotes an active and respectful discussion.

In the selection of interviewees, the diversity share in the parity of both profiles was taken into account, seeking the inclusion of the feminine point of view in all qualitative field work. With the purpose of simplifying the reading, a concretion criterion was used by using initials in the denomination of the subjects under study:

- A: Agency
- E: Advertiser Company
- M: Media

The nomenclature used in the tables to indicate the charges of the study subjects is the following:

- CMO: Marketing direction
- CEO: General Management

The discussion group held in 2015 aimed to explore the most relevant issues for agents operating in the Aragonese advertising market. In this case, the call and the conversations were managed by CTRL, a veteran publication (Nebot, 2015) of great prestige as a professional magazine of the advertising sector.

The session was recorded in audio. An analyst directed the meeting following the guidelines provided in the design of the investigation. The researchers made the selection of participants and intervened during the session, observing and introducing into the conversation the questions that were to be analyzed in this investigation.

In order to contrast possible differences in opinions and perceptions based on gender, two focus group sessions were proposed. The one with female participants took place in August of 2017, and the one with male participants was held in the month of September of the same year.

Table 1. Interviewed subjects

Subject	Position	Sector	Gender
A01	CEO	Advertising	Man
A02	CEO	Design	Man
A03	Executive	Agency	Man
A04	CEO	Agency	Woman
A10	CEO	Web design	Man
E01	CMO	Industrial	Woman
E02	CMO	Industry	Man
E04	CEO	Several sectors	Man
E05	CMO	Retail	Man
E06	CMO	Health	Woman
E13	CEO	Tourism	Man
E14	CEO	Vending	Man
M1	CEO	Exterior	Woman

3. Analysis and results

Aragón is «a territory of micro-enterprises», according to the data and the claims of many of the subjects of study in our research. In the words of subject E04: «The small business mindset here is how to save as much money as possible. They do not pay for a service. That is why there will be a time when it is not surprising that the agency skips the media, the media skips the agency, etc.».

The billing of advertising agencies in the Autonomous Community of Aragon comes from the management of local media or the graphic production of advertising pieces. The low investment in local media of the Aragonese advertisers leads them to parameters of pure survival and to reformulate the value chain.

The structure of the communication means of proximity in Aragon is very weak, especially with regard to audiovisual media, due to the lack of an advertising market that can offer a stable economic return.

In the Autonomous Community of Aragón, *Heraldo de Aragón* is the head of the local press with the greatest impact, followed by *El Periódico de Aragón*, *Diario del Altoaragón* and *Diario de Teruel*. The local radio is integrated in the large national chains, with few stations of proximity (Sabés, 2010).

On April 21, 2006, with 8 hours of regular programming, broadcasts from Aragón *Televisión* (ATV), the Autonomous Television of Aragón, officially began. Despite its youth, a gap has opened up in the television consumption of the Aragonese and among advertisers, being in 2018 one of the Aragonese media with the most influence and local audience.

Aragón TV is the audiovisual medium that offers proximity to local advertisers, however, advertising revenues have only covered between 5% and 10% of their budgets, according to the data provided by the Aragonese Radio and Television Corporation in 2016.

With the exception of *TVE*, financed in Spain, both in private and regional television, makes it necessary to attract advertising as a source of income. The leaders of these entities face a great challenge. And, as a means of communication of great influence in public opinion, they have to compete with the new international giants of communication.

In 2007, the advertising market for conventional media in Spain grew 9.3% in year-on-year terms. However, as we can see in Table 2, this was the beginning of a period of dramatic reduction in advertising investment in the television.

Table 2 Investment in millions of euros, 2007 - 2017 variation

	2007	2017	Variation
Conventional media	7 925,10 €	5 355,90 €	-32,419%
National and autonomous TV **Autonomous TV** **Open national TV**	3 357,60 €	2 045,60 € 114,20 € 1 931,40 €	-39,076%
Themed channels / paid	60,10 €	94,60 €	57,404%
Local TVs	50,90 €	3,00 €	-94,106%
Total Spain Television	3 468,60 €	2 143,20 €	-38,211%
Aragon Television Investment	1,20 €	1,57 €	30,750%

Source: Own elaboration with data from Infoadex and CARTV

In these ten years, only paid television has managed to reinvent itself and obtain positive growth. While the set of local television stations has lost 94.1% of advertising investment and national and regional channels decrease by 39%, Aragón Televisión has managed to grow 30.7% in its advertising billing.

In 2017, advertising investment grew (1.8%) in Spain, for the fourth consecutive year, although progress was slower. The total amount of advertising investment equals 1.07% of the GDP (INFOADEX, 2017).

Compared to 2010, the sector of communication services companies lost 23% of jobs and 30% of turnover due to an 18% reduction in marketing investment by advertisers in 2017.

As we see in Table 3, the relationship between the number of agencies and the number of companies is similar to the Spanish ratio only in Zaragoza. The inexistence of agencies in Teruel makes the ratio in Aragón 0.24% compared to 0.28%.

Table 3 Relationship between companies and advertising agencies

Total entities			
	Business	**Autonomous**	**Total**
Spain	1 648 974	1 876 234	3 525 208
Zaragoza	35 481	35 663	71 144
Huesca	8 941	10 603	19 544
Teruel	4 435	6 279	10 714
Aragón	48 857	52 545	101 402
Total agencias			
	Business	**Autonomous**	**Total**
Spain	7 294	2 588	9 882
Zaragoza	143	50	193
Huesca	27	13	40
Teruel	4	4	8
Aragón	174	67	241
Proportion of agencies			
	Business	**Autonomous**	**Total**
Spain	0,44%	0,14%	0,28%
Zaragoza	0,40%	0,14%	0,27%
Huesca	0,30%	0,12%	0,20%
Teruel	0,09%	0,06%	0,07%
Aragón	0,36%	0,13%	0,24%

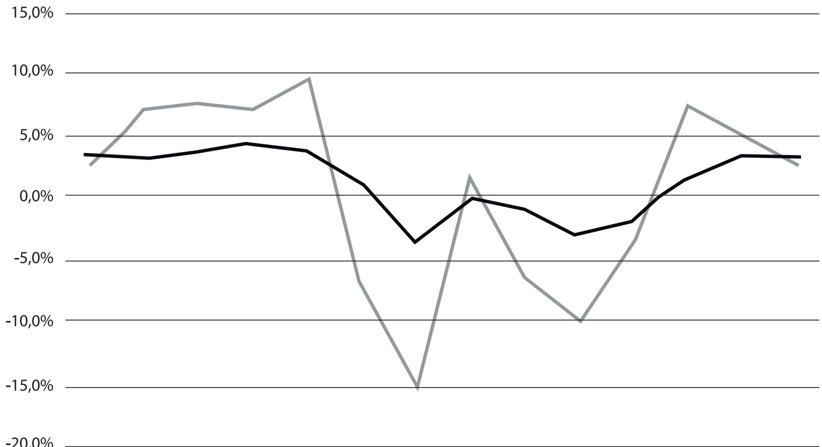
Source: Own elaboration based on Iberinform data extracted on November 29, 2016.

The offer of advertising and communication services in Aragón follows the usual pattern: bidding companies are concentrated in the localities most likely to find bigger clients or larger numbers of customers, the capitals of the area.

During 2007, Aragón TV advertised 153 advertisers from Aragón and 9 advertising agencies, with an average invoicing per advertiser of 7914.22 euros. In 2017, advertisers and 36 agencies contracted spaces on regional television, with an average annual investment of € 8530.31. The growing trend in attracting advertisers has disappeared, with a slight decrease as of 2015.

When relating the advertising investment with the variation of the Spanish Gross Domestic Product (GDP), a greater variability in the advertising investment is observed, especially in the investment in conventional media.

Illustration 3. Relationship of Investment in advertising media with GDP, at current prices in Spain in the period 2003-2016



	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016
Variation of advertising investment	2,6%	6,8%	7,4%	7,0%	9,3%	-7,5%	-14,8%	1,4%	-6,5%	-9,9%	-3,7%	7,2%	4,7%	2,8%
GDP variation	3,20%	3,20%	3,70%	4,20%	3,80%	1,10%	-3,60%	0,00%	-1,00%	-2,90%	-1,70%	1,40%	3,20%	3,20%

Source: Own elaboration from INFOADEX data (2017).

During the ten years analyzed in Figure 4, 107 agencies contracted advertising with ATV. Only 8% of them have been agencies with national implementation, such as Caralt or Proximia. 61.68% of the local agencies contracted in this period are no longer active, according to our research in 2018.

While new agencies have been incorporated, it is noteworthy that eleven of those who relied on ATV in its beginnings, are still working with this medium now.

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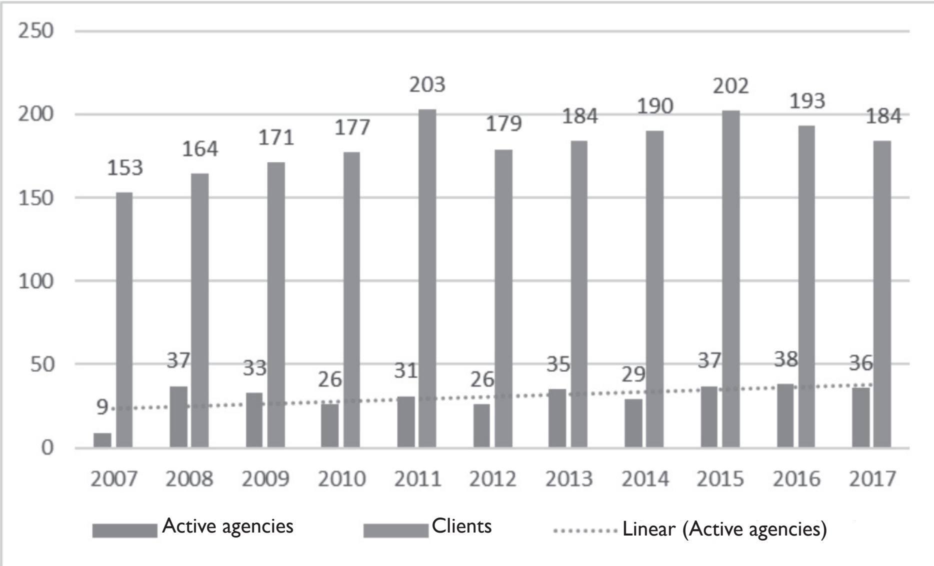
Illustration 4. Evolution of the contractors with Aragón TV 2007-2017

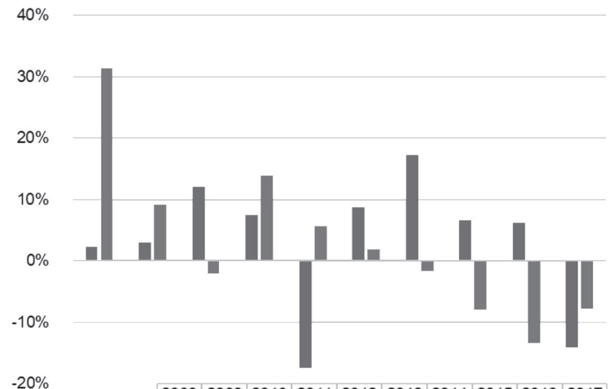


Own elaboration based on CARTV data

In Figure 5, we can see that there is no correlation between the evolution, measured by the interannual increases of the screen shares of Aragón TV and the investment in advertising captured by this medium. Both variables fluctuate and not always in the same direction or with the same intensity. In 2014 and until 2016, the billing had a positive behavior while the audience decreased.

The year 2017 was a bad one for ATV both in terms of audience and billing. In the opinion of the subjects who intervened in our study, Aragonese advertisers «have stopped investing in Television» (M3) and «rely on digital media» (A05). This change in demand coupled with the idea that «the customer belongs to no one» (M2) has increased the competition level. «Everyone does their own thing, you cannot say that there is a fluid relationship» (A07) between media and agencies.

Illustration 5. Variability of advertising and audience recruitment, comparative



	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017
Total billing	2%	3%	12%	7%	-17%	9%	17%	7%	6%	-14%
Screen quota	31%	9%	-2%	14%	6%	2%	-2%	-8%	-13%	-8%

Own elaboration based on data provided by CARTV

A complicated relationship in which the position of the media shows the lack of appreciation regarding the usefulness of this commercial relationship: «If the media had to live from the agencies, we would close almost all of them» (M2).

This is because the media's commercial departments:

> Are going to sell to the corner store and they tell them they have to advertise in one medium or another. In addition, they tell them that they will make the ad (if for example we were talking about the radio), and they become collaborators and competitors at the same time (E09).

M5 thinks that:

> It's not only about the relationship between the company and the advertiser. In ten years' time, what means are we going to have? I do not know if television in ten years will continue to exist or if we will continue to advertise on television. The road to the new stage has been so wild in the past five years, it has caught us all by surprise. The radio is already digital. Regardless the destination of technological magic, the important thing is the contents. Podcasts and other formats are already made. But I believe that before that, we have to consider what kind of media we are going to have in ten years and then what E11 and E10 say, this is very clear. It's just that the market is increasingly segmented, and everything works like this, based on data and we have to go to the specific client.

A09 provides the counterpoint:

> I believe that the other side of the panorama can be positive, because at the end the consumer will have the ability to find what they are looking for. That is, that all those advertisers are going to give you exactly what E12 or E07 want, and surely those two things will not be 100% the same.

"It's not so clear for me", comments E11:

Notice that I get the feeling that the more they know about us, the less we can choose because what they are going to send us will be addressed to what they already know about us. The surprise of going out and seeing shoes that you like and buying them when you had not thought to buy them may be lost. I believe that, as a user, the advertising links that they send me show the same thing, it's always more of the same.

I believe that the freedom we have to be able to open up to a much larger assortment of products is there. I believe that within ten years the advertising that reaches us will be focused on what we have been looking for on the Internet. Useful impact (A08).

Agencies, like A08, perceive these technological changes as a risk:

We have arrived at a level where an algorithm is going to make the campaign with programmatic advertising. It will depend, then, on what the media is like, that will be key. Google, Facebook and two more of this style will take over the market. They are going to be the agencies. Agency and media are going to be united.

4. Discussion and conclusions

In this information society, the post-industrial society, customers are an active part in the creation processes of products or services. We are currently talking about attraction marketing or inbound marketing as a new strategy: getting customers who are attracted to brands by putting at their disposal content they seek.

The transformation of the advertising sector has been a determining factor both in the appearance of new professional profiles in the communication areas of advertising companies, and in the profound transformation of the work of the providers of these services. Personal talent and the ability to create an efficient social network are the resources that make the difference.

In the last decade, technological evolution has provided tools that bring the management of advertising investment closer to any company. As a consequence, the demand for services from the agencies to channel this investment has been drastically reduced.

This, although the Aragonese market makes it less attractive for new competitors, implies an increase in competitive attacks among the incumbent companies that can threaten the survival of the weakest. Flexibility, innovation capacity, transparency, talent and ability to create quality professional relationships are the qualities that advertisers will look for in the agencies from now on.

A new work model appears that includes the agency or professional on the advertiser's team, with greater access to their data. And the data is, today more than ever, the essential resource to be able to make the best decisions in an agile and efficient way.

The opinion that we have observed when analyzing the national directories of the sector, according to which the value of the agency is now more necessary if possible, is in question in Aragon. We have verified that the purchasing behavior of Aragonese advertisers regarding their investment in television is not related to the audience data of this medium. It also highlights the high mortality of the advertising agencies to which ATV has been linked in this decade.

Big changes are observed in the way users search and access information. They have consolidated what were trends at the end of the twentieth century: the fragmentation of the audience, the dispersion of influence, the importance of search engines and social networks in attracting traffic to corporate websites.

On the other hand, the fact that users remain faithful to traditional media does not imply that they watch their content in the same way. New technologies have not only revolutionized conventional advertising but have also opened opportunities in the creation of non-advertising content. Virtual reality and augmented reality are clear examples of technology whose presence increases significantly and with considerable creative implications.

The digital has become the center of communication strategies of all companies, while other media, including television, are a complement in the programming of campaigns.

The final customer is the one who becomes the basis of the business strategy. To reach each customer segment based on their preferences is assumed as the key to any corporate communication campaign.

Sociological changes are expected that will result in changes in the behavior of consumers. Global connectivity, coexistence with machines capable of learning and new communication channels have transformed personal relationships and, above all, professional relationships. The new business models use as productive resources the growing capacity of human relationships and the large amount of information now available. It is a new era that many call the Fourth Industrial Revolution, favored by the development of Big Data, Machine Learning and the evolution of Social Networks.

Companies tend to digitalize, to change their organizational structures in what we call Enterprise 4.0 when integrating RICT (Relationship, Information and Communication Technologies) (Marta-Lazo, & Gabelas, 2016), either in the form of robotics, algorithms or in communication systems. Data driven businesses (Casado Quintero, 2015) have generated a new service standard that consists of providing customers with a unique experience through absolute personalization.

The current crisis context causes uncertainty in the sector, which affects the organizational behavior and causes some decisions to be made during stress, influencing the quality of the decisions. The price war and the concentration processes that usually accompany situations like the present puts in risk the survival of the weakest companies.

In the foreseeable and near future, technology greatly cheapens the dissemination of content. The important thing from now on will be the development of the idea and, above all, looking for new ways to sell it. Therefore, it is possible that communication and advertising agencies tend to disappear because the companies themselves will be responsible for generating their contents. Programmatic advertising, managed by algorithms, is perceived as a major threat, both by the media and the more conventional agencies.

The regional television of the Community of Aragón (Spain), as a public entity, has the capacity to act with the aim of establishing local talent, both in advertisers and in agencies. Its innovative career has created a favorable environment for effective communication in the Aragonese market. Its effective commercial action in recent years is remarkable, allowing it to overcome the stage of strong global economic crisis.

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Currently, together with the rest of the sector, it faces a great challenge that requires profound changes and a firm commitment to support the local economy.

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Editorial Guidelines

Basic writing rules

Universidad Politécnica Salesiana del Ecuador

1. General information

"Retos" is a bilingual scientific publication by the Universidad Politécnica Salesiana de Ecuador, which has been edited on a bi-annual basis since January 2011. The journal focuses on Development and transdisciplinary issues including Public Administration, Social Economics, Marketing, Tourism, Entrepreneurship, Management, Administrative and Economic Science, etc.

It is an arbitrated Scientific Journal that uses an external evaluation system known as *peer-review*, employing *double-blind review*, in accordance with the American Psychological Association (APA) style rules. By using this system, the authors have access to an objective, impartial and transparent review process, which facilitates their publication being included in databases, repositories, and international indexed references.

"Retos" is indexed in the selective directory and catalog of the Online Regional Information System for Scientific Journals in Latin America, the Caribbean, Spain, and Portugal (Latindex), in the REDALYC Scientific Information System, the Directory of Open Access Journals in repositories, libraries, and specialized catalogs in Ibero-America.

The Journal is published with two different editions: printed (ISSN: 1390-62911) and electronic (e-ISSN: 1390-8618), in Spanish and English, and each article is identified with a DOI (Digital Object Identifier System).

2. Scope and policies

2.1. Themes

Original contributions in Development issues, as well as related fields: Public Administration, Social Economics, Marketing, Tourism, Entrepreneurship, Management...and all other disciplines related to the central thematic issue.

2.2. *Contr*ibutions

"Retos" preferably publishes the results of empirical research about Development, written in Spanish and/or English, while reports, studies, and proposals are also accepted, as well as reviews of state-of-the-art literature.

All of the publications must be original, never have been published in any other journal, and not be undergoing any arbitration or publication processes. Contributions to the journal can include any of the following:

- **Research:** 5,000 to 6,500 words of text, including the title, abstracts, keywords, tables, and references.
- **Reports, Studies, and Proposals:** 5,000 to 6,500 words of text, including the title, abstracts, tables, and references.
- **Reviews:** 6,000 to 7,000 words of text, including tables and references. Justified, current, and selective references shall be evaluated, and should include around 70 publications.

"Retos" is published bi-annually (20 articles per year), in April and October, and each edition has two sections with five articles each, the first containing a **Monograph** theme edited by subject matter experts, and a second **Miscellaneous** section, made up of diverse contributions related to the publication's theme.

3. Presentation, structure, and submission of manuscripts

Papers are to be presented with Arial 10 typeface, single line spacing, all justified, without indentation or blank spaces between paragraphs. A space is only to be included between the major sections (title, authors, abstracts, keywords, credits, and epigraphs). All margins on each page must be 2 cm.

The papers are to be presented in Microsoft Word format (.doc or .docx), and the file is to be anonymous in the File Properties such that the author(s) is(are) not identified.

Manuscripts are to be submitted only through the OJS (Open Journal System), in which all authors must first register. Original papers sent via email or another interface are not accepted.

3.1. *Manusc*ript Structure

For papers that are empirical research, the manuscripts are to follow IMRDC structure, while Notes and Contributions epigraphs are optional. Papers that constitute reports, studies, proposals, and reviews are afforded greater flexibility in terms of epigraphs, especially in relation to Materials and Methods, Analysis and Results, and Discussion and Conclusions. All types of papers are required to include References.

1) **Title (Spanish) / Title (English):** Concise but informative, the first line in Spanish and the second, in English. Maximum 80 characters are accepted, including spaces. The Editorial Board is allowed to propose changes to the author's title.
2) **First and last names:** of each of the authors, organized in order of priority. Maximum three authors are accepted per original paper, although justified exceptions may be allowed, based on the theme, complexity, and length. The names are to be followed by the professional category, workplace, each author's email address and ORCID number. It is mandatory to include whether the author has a doctorate degree (Dr. before the name).

3) **Abstract (Resumen, Spanish) / Abstract (English):** This section can contain a maximum of 230 words, first in Spanish and then in English. The abstract shall concisely contain the following, and in this order: 1) Justification of the theme; 2) Objectives; 3) Methods and sample; 4) Main results; 5) Main conclusions. It should be written impersonally "This paper analyzes..." In the abstract, automatic translation is not accepted due to its poor quality.
4) **Keywords (descriptores, Spanish) / Keywords (English):** Six keywords are to be included for each language, and must be directly related to the paper's theme. This requirement shall be scored based on whether the keywords can be found in the UNESCO Thesaurus.
5) **Introduction and State of the Question:** The section proposes the question, the context of the issue surrounding it, justification, basis, and proposal for the study, using bibliographic references, including the most important up-to-date literature on the theme, both nationally and internationally.
6) **Material and Methods:** This is to be composed in such a way that the reader can easily understand how the research was performed. As appropriate, describe the method, sample, sampling, and refer to the type of statistical analysis used. If it is an original method, present the reasons for applying it, and describe any possible limitations.
7) **Analysis and Results:** This section should seek to highlight the most important observations, and without including any value judgments, describe the methods used. Throughout the text, essential tables and figures shall be included in a logical sequence, without repeating any data.
8) **Discussion and Conclusions:** This section summarizes the most important findings related to any observations from relevant studies, pointing out contributions and limitations, without repeating data from other sections. The discussion and conclusions paragraph is to include inferences and new lines of research for the future.
9) **Contributions and acknowledgment (optional):** The Science Editors Board recommends that the author(s) specify the financing source for their research. Priority shall be given to work endorsed by competitive national or international projects. Regardless, for the manuscript to be scientifically evaluated, it is to be anonymized with an XXXX only for the initial evaluation, in order to avoid identification of any of the authors or research teams, which are to be named in the Cover Letter and later, in the final manuscript.
10) **Notes** (optional) are included, only if necessary, at the end of the article (before the references). They are to be included manually, since the Word footnotes are not recognized by the layout systems. Note numbers are to be included using superscript, both in the text and in the final note. Notes including simple bibliographic references (without comments) are not allowed, since these are supposed to be included in the references.
11) **References:** Bibliographic references are to follow the text references. Under no circumstances should references be included that have not been cited in the text. There should be enough references in order to contextualize the theoretical framework, and be based on criteria of contemporary relevance and importance.

They are presented alphabetically, according to the author's last name (if the last name has more than one word, based on the first word of the last name).

3.2. Rules for references

Periodical publications

Journal article (one author) Valdés-Pérez, D. (2016). Incidencia de las técnicas de gestión en la mejora de decisiones administrativas [Impact of Management Techniques on the Improvement of Administrative Decisions]. *Retos*, *12*(6), 199-2013. https://doi.org/10.17163/ret.n12.2016.05

Journal article (up to six authors): Ospina, M.C., Alvarado, S.V., Fefferman, M., & Llanos, D. (2016). Introducción del dossier temático "Infancias y juventudes: violencias, conflictos, memorias y procesos de construcción de paz" [Introduction of the thematic dossier "Infancy and Youth: Violence, Conflicts, Memories and Peace Construction Processes"]. *Universitas*, *25*(14), 91-95. https://doi.org/10.17163/uni.n25.%25x

Journal article (more than six authors): Smith, S.W., Smith, S.L. Pieper, K.M., Yoo, J.H., Ferrys, A.L., Downs, E.,... Bowden, B. (2006). Altruism on American Television: Examining the Amount of, and Context Surronding. Acts of Helping and Sharing. *Journal of Communication*, *56*(4), 707-727. https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1460-2466.2006.00316.x

Journal article (with no DOI). Rodríguez, A. (2007). Desde la promoción de salud mental hacia la promoción de salud: La concepción de lo comunitario en la implementación de proyectos sociales. *Alteridad*, *2*(1), 28-40. (https://goo.gl/zDb3Me) (2017-01-29).

Books and chapters of books

Complete books: Cuéllar, J.C., & Moncada-Paredes, M.C. (2014). *El peso de la deuda externa ecuatoriana*. Quito: Abya-Yala.

Chapters of a book: Zambrano-Quiñones, D. (2015). *El ecoturismo comunitario en Manglaralto y Colonche*. En V.H. Torres (Ed.), Alternativas de Vida: Trece experiencias de desarrollo endógeno en Ecuador (pp. 175-198). Quito: Abya-Yala.

Electronic media

Pérez-Rodríguez, M.A., Ramírez, A., & García-Ruíz, R. (2015). La competencia mediática en educación infantil. Análisis del nivel de desarrollo en España. Universitas Psychologica, 14(2), 619-630. https://doi.org.10.11144/Javeriana.upsy14-2.cmei

All reference that have a DOI (Digital Object Identifier System) must be included in the References (which can be obtained at http://goo.gl/gfruh1). All of the journals and books that do not have a DOI are to appear with a link (to the online version, if available, shortened using Google Shortener: http://goo.gl) and the date of query in said format.

Journal articles are to be listed in English, except for those that are available in Spanish and English, in which case, both languages are to be included in brackets. All internet addresses presented are to be shortened in the manuscript, except for the DOI, which are to be included in the established format (https://doi.org/XXX).

3.3. Epigraphs, Tables, and Graphs

The epigraphs in the article's body are in Arabic numbers. These are to avoid all capital letters, underlining, or bold text. Numbering should use maximum three levels: 1. / 1.1. / 1.1.1. A carriage return is to be used at the end of each epigraph.

Tables are to be included in the text in Word format, according to their order of appearance, with Arabic numbering and captioned with a description of their content.

Graphics or figures should be kept to a minimum and incorporated into the text, in accordance with their order of appearance, with Arabic numbers and captions with a short description. Quality should be no less than 300 ppp, if necessary, using TIFF, PNG, or JPEG formats.

4. Submission process

The papers are to be submitted in two files through the journal's OJS system:

1) **Cover letter and title page,** which includes the title in Spanish and English, first and last names of the authors (standardized format) with ORCID number, abstract in Spanish and English, keywords in Spanish and English, and a declaration that the manuscript constitutes an original contribution that has not been sent for evaluation in another journal, confirmation of the authorship, acceptance (as the case may be) of formal changes to the manuscript according to the rules, and partial transfer of copyright to the publishing house (use the official format).
2) **Completely** anonymized manuscript in accordance with the preceding rules.

All authors are to register on the OJS platform, even if only one of them will be in charge of correspondence. No author can submit two manuscripts simultaneously, with a penalty of not being able to participate in four consecutive editions (2 years).