



Escuela de Administración

Relación entre la experiencia del cliente, el valor percibido y la reputación en las universidades.

Tesis Doctoral  
Por compendio de publicaciones

Marelby Amado Mateus

Bogotá  
2023



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Director PhD. Fernando Juárez

Doctorado en Ciencias de la Dirección

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### **Agradecimientos.**

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## **Declaración de autonomía**

Declaro bajo gravedad de juramento, que he escrito la presente tesis de doctorado por mi propia cuenta, y que, por lo tanto, su contenido es original. Declaro que he indicado clara y precisamente todas las fuentes directas e indirectas de información, y que esta tesis de doctorado no ha sido entregada a ninguna otra institución con fines de calificación o publicación.



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## **Declaración de exoneración de responsabilidad**

Declaro que la responsabilidad intelectual del presente trabajo es exclusivamente de su autora. La Universidad del Rosario no se hace responsable de contenidos, opiniones o ideologías expresadas total o parcialmente en él.



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25 de julio de 2023

## Introducción

La reputación se ha convertido en un indicador determinante para la atracción de estudiantes, ya que tiene influencia en la selección y evaluación de la calidad de las universidades (Plewa et al., 2016) y, en su ventaja competitiva (Miotto et al., 2020). Sin embargo, el servicio de educación superior al ser de naturaleza intangible, requiere que el usuario del servicio, en este caso, el estudiante, haga uso del mismo, es decir, tenga una experiencia (Marquina et al., 2014), para poder evaluar lo que él considera que es de valor para su formación (Lemon y Verhoef, 2016). Adicionalmente, porque de su experiencia y aprendizaje dependen el desarrollo de sus competencias, así como el desempeño de las Instituciones de Educación Superior (IES) en procesos de investigación e innovación, la posición en los rankings (Mora, 2015, pp. 50-51), y el resultado obtenido en las pruebas de conocimiento tanto nacionales como internacionales; este resultado se convertirá en un indicador con el cual se valorará la calidad educativa de las IES, y como resultado final, su reputación (Organización para la Cooperación y el Desarrollo Económicos [OCDE] y Banco Mundial, 2012).

Por la anterior, la gestión de la reputación se ha convertido en un desafío para las IES, las cuales han invertido recursos financieros importantes para lograr percepciones favorables (LaFuente et al., 2018) tanto de los estudiantes, como de sus otros públicos de interés (Mora, 2015, p. 69), con el fin de incrementar la misma y posicionarse en el mercado con estrategias innovadoras (Suomi et al., 2014) en cada una de las funciones sustantivas (Mora, 2015, p. 34). Para el aseguramiento de la calidad, algunas universidades han optado por las acreditaciones y certificaciones de alta calidad educativa, tanto internacionales como nacionales (Ministerio de Educación Nacional, [MEN], 2001), sin embargo, se evidencia una brecha entre las IES categorizadas como Universidades, que optan por estas certificaciones de tipo nacional, ya que del total de IES activas, el 37% no están acreditadas (SNIES, 2020), si se amplía el análisis a las otras categorizaciones como Instituciones Técnicas Profesionales, Instituciones Tecnológicas, y las Instituciones Universitarias o Escuelas Tecnológicas, la brecha es aún más amplia. De igual forma es importante precisar que la acreditación de alta calidad es una certificación voluntaria que permite a las IES agregar valor a su

oferta académica para enfrentarse a competidores locales, nacionales e internacionales (Consejo Nacional de Acreditación [CNA], 2006).

Dentro del contexto internacional la educación superior en Colombia ha venido fortaleciéndose paulatinamente a través del esfuerzo y los resultados de sus IES (MEN, 2016a). Según el ranking QS que mide la fortaleza del sistema de educación superior a nivel mundial [QS Higher Education System Strength Rankings], para el año 2022 Colombia ocupó el puesto 34 (mismo puesto que ocupó en el estudio realizado en el año 2018) de 75 países estudiados. Este ranking destaca los países con los sistemas de educación superior más sólidos en el mundo a través del análisis de 4 áreas: fortaleza del sistema, el acceso, el desempeño de la institución y el contexto económico (QS Top Universities, 2019) y aunque algunos países han mejorado en temas de calidad, es importante anotar que la calidad es subjetiva y se aplica en función del contexto (Calma y Dickson-Deane, 2020). De igual forma, organizaciones como el Banco Interamericano de Desarrollo (BID), la Organización de las Naciones Unidas para la Educación, la Ciencia y la Cultura (UNESCO) y la OCDE, entre otras, así como el gobierno colombiano se han enfocado en el mejoramiento de la calidad de la educación en el país, porque reconocen que es la base para el desarrollo económico (ver MEN, 2019; BID, 2014; UNESCO, 2015; OCDE, 2019).

Pese al importante avance, son muchos los desafíos a los que se enfrenta la educación superior en temas de calidad, comportamiento de las matrículas, deserción, cobertura, gasto público, y competitividad en lo referente al posicionamiento en los principales rankings de reputación a nivel mundial. Al respecto, la OEI (2021) realizó una revisión de la literatura sobre los retos de la calidad de la educación en Iberoamérica y dentro de ellos encontró que 1) los resultados de la investigación académica y aplicada son escasos, 2) existen problemas de infraestructura, 3) se presenta una baja cualificación docente, 4) un aumento de las universidades privadas con menores estándares de calidad en sus ofertas, 5) así como, deficiencias en los sistemas de aseguramiento de la calidad y 6) la inexistencia de modelos de educación superior completos y transversales a la región. En este sentido las investigaciones que abordan lo que está ocurriendo en el sector de educación superior, no solo son importantes, sino necesarias para lograr aportar en la superación de estos retos.

Por esta razón, el centrarse solo en el cumplimiento de los indicadores desvía la estrategia institucional a la consecución de resultados cuantitativos en el corto plazo, sin contar con las opiniones y percepciones de todos los interesados, lo cual sesga el enfoque estratégico que desarrollan las IES y les hace tomar decisiones que tiene importantes implicaciones en la calidad educativa, y este repercute en la imagen y reputación de la IES. En este sentido, se encontró que existe un vacío en las investigaciones empíricas que abordan dichas problemáticas desde otras perspectivas como la gestión y el marketing, y desde la percepción del estudiante. Adicionalmente, las investigaciones respecto a la valoración de reputación en el área de la educación superior y desde el marketing, aún son insuficientes (Del-Castillo-Feito et al., 2019) para comprender cómo gestionar la reputación y qué variables inciden en la obtención de mejores resultados (Lafuente-Ruiz-de-Sabando et al., 2018), no así en otros ámbitos organizacionales, donde el desarrollo ha sido mayor (Plewa et al., 2016).

Por lo anterior, la presente investigación se enfoca en comprender el desarrollo del concepto de reputación en el sector de la educación superior, desde la perspectiva del estudiante, y la relación con su experiencia y su percepción de valor, con el propósito de ofrecer evidencias a las directivas de las universidades que ayuden a mejorar la gestión de su reputación organizacional. En consecuencia, el objetivo de esta investigación fue analizar las relaciones de influencia que existen entre estas tres variables: experiencia del cliente, valor percibido y cómo el resultado de dicha relación afecta directamente a la reputación de las universidades.

Para dar alcance al objetivo, se plantearon tres objetivos específicos. El primero fue identificar la relación teórica-empírica de las variables valor percibido del servicio, experiencia del estudiante y la reputación institucional. El segundo fue evaluar los factores que intervienen en los constructos de reputación, valor percibido y experiencia del estudiante en el contexto de las universidades colombianas, y el tercero, determinar la relación entre dichas variables tanto en el contexto nacional como internacional, así como entre IES acreditadas y no acreditadas. La metodología utilizada fue de corte cuantitativo con un diseño causal-comparativo y de influencia entre las variables mencionadas. Dado que esta tesis se desarrolla por compendio de publicaciones, se proyectaron tres artículos atendiendo a cada uno de los objetivos planteados y con un diseño metodológico

específico. Sin embargo, en el desarrollo de la tesis fueron necesarios algunos cambios de cara a las publicaciones, por lo cual en total se escribieron siete (7) artículos y actualmente tres (3) de ellos están publicados, tres (3) sometidos en journals y uno en revisión.

El abordaje del primer objetivo, dio como resultado dos artículos. El primero corresponde a una revisión sistemática de literatura sobre la reputación universitaria con el cual se caracterizaron los estudios sobre reputación en educación superior y se identificaron sus principales relaciones. El artículo fue titulado “*Reputation in Higher Education: A Systematic Review*” y publicado el 29 June 2022 en la revista *Frontiers in Education* con categoría SCImago Journal Rank (SJR) Q2. El segundo artículo lleva como título “*Una mirada a la gestión de la reputación en las Universidades*”, fue publicado en diciembre de 2022, en la Revista Internacional de Tecnología Ciencia y Sociedad con categoría SJR Q4. Este artículo aborda la reputación universitaria desde el punto de vista de la gestión y la necesidad de entender las dimensiones sobre las cuales se construye la reputación al interior de las Universidades.

El desarrollo del segundo objetivo implicó la validación de las tres escalas a utilizar en el estudio, y dio como resultado tres artículos. El primero fue la validación y adaptación cultural de la escala de reputación, el título del artículo es “*Validity of the Multidimensional Reputation Perception Scale in Private Universities*” fue sometido a la revista *Corporate Reputation Review* y está en proceso de revisión por pares. El segundo fue la validación de la escala de experiencia del estudiante, el título de artículo es “*Student experience scale: Factor analysis in higher education institutions*” y fue publicado también en *Frontiers in Education* el 4 de enero de 2023. El tercer artículo correspondió a la validación de la escala de valor percibido, el título del artículo es “*Evaluation of psychometric properties of perceived value applied to universities*” fue sometido a la revista *Plos One*, el 12 de julio de 2022 y está en etapa de correcciones de los revisores.

Por último, para el desarrollo del tercer objetivo se realizaron dos artículos. El primero es el modelo de ecuaciones estructurales que buscó evaluar las relaciones expuestas anteriormente, en el contexto colombiano entre universidades acreditadas y no acreditadas, titulado “*Relationship Between Perceived Value, Student Experience, and University Reputation: Structural Equation*

*Model*”. El artículo fue sometido al Journal of Marketing for Higher Education categorizado en SJR Q2. El segundo corresponde a un comparativo del modelo Colombia - España, el título es “*Modelo para medición de reputación a partir del valor percibido y la experiencia del estudiante: comparativo Colombia – España*”, y se encuentra en revisión por parte de los investigadores de la Universidad de Alicante con quienes se llevó a cabo la investigación. Se tiene como revista tentativa para sometimiento, la revista Comunicar categorizada en SJR Q1.

Para este tercer objetivo se había propuesto aplicar encuestas en otras dos ciudades de Colombia, sin embargo, y luego de evaluar que no existían diferencias en el comportamiento del modelo entre universidades acreditadas y no acreditadas en Colombia, se optó por comparar el modelo propuesto en otros países con la finalidad de conocer su posible generalización. Con lo anterior se buscó que los resultados de la presente tesis no solo impactaran a la comunidad académica colombiana sino a otros países de habla hispana.

El desarrollo de los siete (7) artículos permitió cumplir con el objetivo general propuesto en la candidatura doctoral, con un alto rigor metodológico en cada uno de los artículos realizados con lo que se ha garantizado que los editores, en una primera etapa, observen el avance en el campo del conocimiento llegando a instancias de revisión y publicación en revistas caracterizadas por su alta calidad al estar indexadas en Scopus.

Los resultados mostraron que existe una relación entre el valor percibido y la experiencia del estudiante, y éstas también se relacionan positivamente con la reputación. Otro aporte de la tesis, fue demostrar que el modelo estructural propuesto se valida y comporta igual tanto en universidades acreditadas y no acreditadas, así como el contexto colombiano y español, dando evidencia de su robustez, integralidad y la capacidad de ser generalizable a otros contextos geográficos, sobre todo de habla hispana. De igual forma, con la validación de las escalas utilizadas se brindan nuevas herramientas para que las IES puedan evaluar estos tres constructos. Además, con esta validación se presentan evidencias complementarias sobre la robustez de estas escalas, las cuales se encontraban en una etapa exploratoria para su uso. A continuación, se presentan los artículos en el orden que fueron descritos.

**Artículo uno**  
**Reputation in higher education: A systematic review**  
***Frontiers in Education***

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**Keywords:** Reputation, Higher education, Systematic review, Reputation management, Reputation theory.

**Abstract**

Published research on corporate reputation has increased in the last 10 years in various sectors. The higher education sector is no stranger to this growth; however, theoretical developments and empirical research have been conducted across various disciplines of knowledge and theoretical approaches, which has made it difficult to theorize about it. In addition to this, the dimensionality of the construct, its dependence on the perception of public interest, and the difficulty of its measurement have made it a challenge for universities. This article develops a systematic review of reputation in higher education institutions. While there is evidence of contributions in the development of the theory and its conceptualization, these have occurred in other sectors such as banking, service industries, retailing, tourism and hospitality, and are not specifically focused on the higher education sector. As such, we seek to identify and characterize how reputation has been studied in this sector, highlighting conceptual and theoretical approaches that have supported the studies, which will help to overcome the fragmentation of the same from an integral definition applied to the education service.

**Introduction**

The concept of *corporate reputation* dates back to the 1970s when the relevance of the different assessments made by stakeholders of the company's reputation began to be identified (Spence,

1973) and the importance of public reputational signals for company performance and competitiveness became evident (Caves and Porter, 1977). Reputation is beginning to be understood as a group of attributes and characteristics of an organization that are the result of its past actions (Weigelt and Camerer, 1988), of the evaluation of the organization's performance (Rao, 1994; De Quevedo et al., 2005) and the perceptions that stakeholders have of them (Fombrun, 1996, p. 72), through a process of legitimization (Miotto et al., 2020).

Thus, a positive reputation can impact financial performance, customer behavior (Jung and Seock, 2016), competitiveness (Fombrun, 1996), stakeholder decision-making (Hemsley-Brown, 2012), corporate survival and success (Christensen and Gornitzka, 2017) as well as the integration of general management functions (Goldring, 2015). As such, it is important to know how to manage reputation and better invest resources to improve stakeholder perceptions (Lafuente et al., 2018).

Within the university context, reputation is defined as the sum of the impressions received by stakeholders from the communication and interaction they have with the university (Rindova et al. 2005), therefore it is evaluative, reflects consensus judgments (Roberts and Dowling, 2002), is related to a "strong tradition" (Chevalier and Colon, 2003) and, like organizational reputation, it takes time to consolidate a positive reputation in its stakeholders and therefore requires an institutional commitment to excellence in educational processes and results, as well as in research results (Arambewela and Hall, 2009; Delgado-Márquez et al., 2013; Roberts and Dowling, 2002). Although reputation is linked to research productivity, this indicator is widely criticized because of its limitation, in addition, as expressed by Nicholas et al. (2015), reputation is evaluated with only one activity, which is research, the product of which are articles and the product of these articles, citations.

Reputation is built through the student's experience with the university (Chen and Esangbedo, 2018), and influences student attraction (Plewa et al., 2016), student selection of the university (Lafuente et al., 2018), faculty attraction (Christensen and Gornitzka, 2017), the knowledge held by stakeholders (Vogler, 2020a) both internally and externally (Verčič et al., 2016), as well as the valuation and rating of universities (Del-Castillo-Feito et al., 2019). In addition, previous studies have found that reputation requires management and has an important impact on the internal

processes carried out by the university, including university reforms (Steiner et al., 2013), which have a significant effect on the quality of the university's educational service. Within such management, the media play an important role, because they provide the channel and space where stakeholders know, identify, give their opinion and discuss the reputation of an institution (Deephouse, 2000). This is why more and more universities faced with a competitive context, turn to marketing to improve the perception of their image and reputation, in order not only to attract students, but also teachers and financial resources (Wilkins and Huisman, 2015).

From this perspective, as stated by Reznik and Yudina (2018), reputation is a public evaluation, product of the opinion that stakeholders have of the university, and that can be divided into internal and external, the internal referring to the faculty, administrative staff and students, and external referring to representatives of the external environment. Therefore, *reputation management* implies an important knowledge of how it is built, and how the different stakeholders (both internal and external) perceive and evaluate it (Ressler and Abratt, 2009). In short, it is essential to know how to respond and meet the expectations and needs of each stakeholder and make it a strategic priority for university managers.

However, inconsistencies have been evidenced in the conceptualization of reputation in the *higher education* sector given the rules of operation in the education sector are different to those in the other corporate sectors (Vercic et al., 2016) and the absence of a consensus in the literature (Del-Castillo-Feito et al., 2019; Plewa et al., 2016) in management research (Ali et al., 2014; Veh et al., 2019), as well as its proximity to other terms such as identity and image (Alessandri et al., 2006; LaFuente et al., 2018) which are different but interconnected constructs. The identity is a multidimensional construct composed of communication and visual identity, behavior, culture, and market conditions (Melewar and Akeel, 2005), and image is also a higher order multidimensional concept that can be managed to influence other variables such as student satisfaction and loyalty (LaFuente et al., 2018). Additionally, other factors that make its definition difficult are intangibility (Nguyen and LeBlanc, 2001a), given the reputation of the university is the result of the provision of the education service that is essentially intangible and difficult to evaluate in advance. The multidimensionality (Vercic et al., 2016) since the reputation is composed of multiple dimensions

such as performance, product, service, leadership, governance, workplace, citizenship and innovation (Vidaver-Cohen, 2007), especially with regard to origins of corporate reputation research (Veh et al., 2019), and the assessments of the different stakeholders (Plewa et al., 2016) that respond to their different expectations (Vidaver-Cohen, 2007).

Although the contributions found in the *systematic review* conducted by LaFuente et al. (2018) who have sought to differentiate the concepts of image and reputation in higher education institutions (HEIs), the analyses carried out allowed them to conclude that the stakeholders of a university's academic offerings, such as teaching and research resources, graduate education, and affective image have a positive and significant influence on the image of the university, and that this assessment varies to the extent that the various perspectives of the stakeholders are adopted, and even more so when citizens of other countries are included. The contributions of Rashid and Mustafa (2021) who have studied the background of corporate reputation of higher education institutions by recognizing it as an intangible asset in all types of organizations, including HEIs, from the employees' perspective, and Prakash (2021) who conducted a literature review on the concept of service quality in higher education institutions where he inquired among several things on the methodologies to measure quality, and found that in some of them, reputation is an important dimension to measure to operationalize it. However, it is necessary to continue investigating its conceptual development, characteristics, tools and relationships with other variables within the context of higher education.

Given the above factors, and the diversity and fragmentation of this concept specifically in the context of higher education, where the contributions are still insufficient (Watkins and Gonzenbach, 2013; Del-Castillo-Feito et al., 2019), it is necessary to conduct a systematic review on reputation in universities (HEIs) with three objectives. First, to understand how empirical reputation research (these studies might be quantitative, qualitative, or mixed methods studies (Creswell, 2014) in these institutions has been characterized. This will be conducted through a bibliometric analysis using the SciVal tool of Elsevier; second, to identify the variables and/or constructs related to reputation. This will be performed through an analysis using the VOSviewer tool and a direct review of the documents; third, to determine how reputation has been

conceptualized in HEIs. This will also be approached through a direct review of documents using the four-eyes principle to avoid bias. These objectives will provide an overview of the construct, and a comprehensive picture to improve the understanding of the university's reputation.

This article begins with a description of the methodology used, then presents the characterization of the articles reviewed, followed by an analysis of the relationships found concerning reputation. This is followed by a compilation of the definitions of corporate reputation — specifically those applied to higher education — and its benefits and weaknesses. Finally, the conclusions, limitations of the research, and the agenda for future research are presented.

## **Method**

This paper will use a systematic literature review based on previous studies, as a method of analysis of empirical research conducted on reputation in HEIs. This allows a broad and continuous review of the literature, providing a frame of reference to compare the results of this study with previous ones (Creswell, 2014, p. 60). Such a study is also used to find relevant information in the selected context (Aveyard, 2014) and is fundamental in academic works (Lunde et al., 2019), and scientific activities (Mulrow, 1994) in management. Among the benefits of conducting a systematic literature review is understanding the theoretical relationship between the problem to be investigated, the objectives and, the discussion (Rocco and Plakhotnik, 2009). It also facilitates the identification, evaluation, and summary of findings of relevant studies on the topic, providing a strong foundation for the research, which will result in better development of the different investigations and their relationship with the conclusions (Centre for Reviews and Dissemination, 2008).

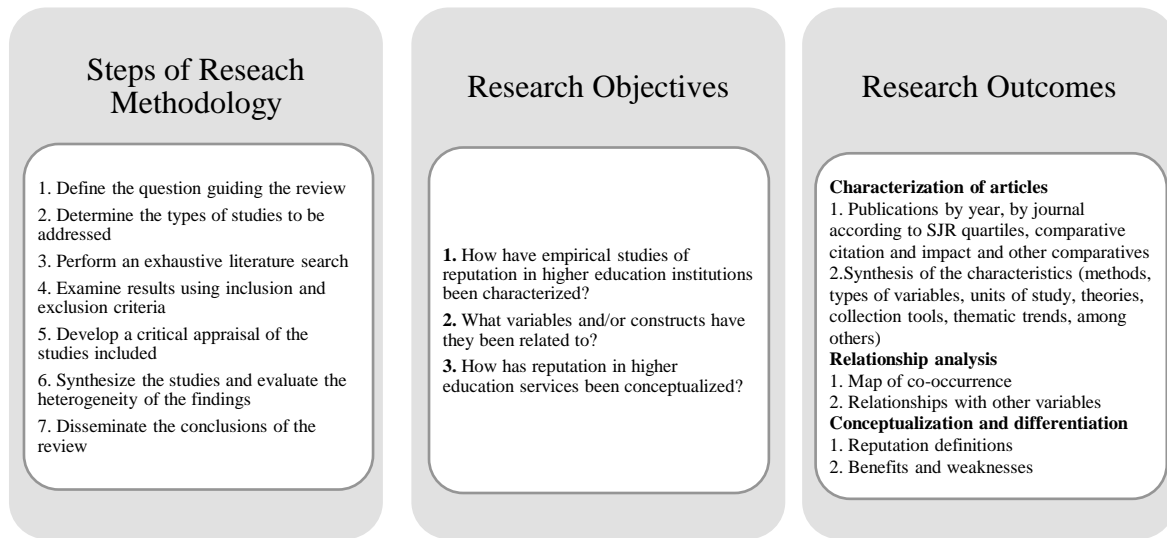
Petticrew and Roberts (2006) propose a methodology for developing systematic reviews, consisting of the following steps: 1) define the question driving the review, 2) determine the types of studies that need to be addressed to answer the questions, 3) conduct a comprehensive literature search 4) examine results with inclusion and exclusion criteria, 5) develop a critical appraisal of the studies included to ensure that key aspects of the study are addressed, 6) synthesize the studies and assess the heterogeneity of the findings, and 7) disseminate the conclusions of the review.

## Question formulation:

*Step 1. Define the question that directs the review.* For the development of the first step, the questions posed that will direct the review are: How have empirical studies of reputation in higher education institutions been characterized? Based on this characterization, with which variables and/or constructs has it been related? How has reputation in higher education services been conceptualized? The results will contribute to the identification of a comprehensive overview in order to improve the academic and administrative community's understanding of the implications of reputation management. Figure 1 presents a summary of the methodological steps, the questions guiding the work, and the results of the analysis that respond to the questions posed.

**Figure 1**

### *Research design*



## Article selection

*Step 2. Determine the types of studies to be addressed.* To comply with the second step, the types of studies included in this review are empirical research articles and systematic reviews applied to the higher education sector and published in journals categorized in quartiles 1 and 2, which represent a higher impact factor and quality (Marín and Arriojas, 2021). Critical analyses, editorials, or essays are omitted.

*Step 3. Conduct an exhaustive literature search.* In this step, a search is performed in Scopus and Web of Science (WoS) over a period of 10 years (2010 - July 2020), as it is considered sufficiently extensive for the review and is consistent with the indicator of obsolescence of the scientific literature (Price, 1965). Also, these years show the highest number of publications on the subject as will be seen below. The language selected for the review of the articles is English because it is the most recurrent language in the documents of the selected databases considering as keywords: reputation, higher education, university(ies).

In the WoS database, two searches were performed, the first with reputation and higher education, the second with reputation and university; for the Scopus database, reputation, higher education, or universities or university<sup>1</sup> was used. Subsequently, we proceeded to search and download the documents in the WoS and Scopus databases, of which only five could not be accessed.

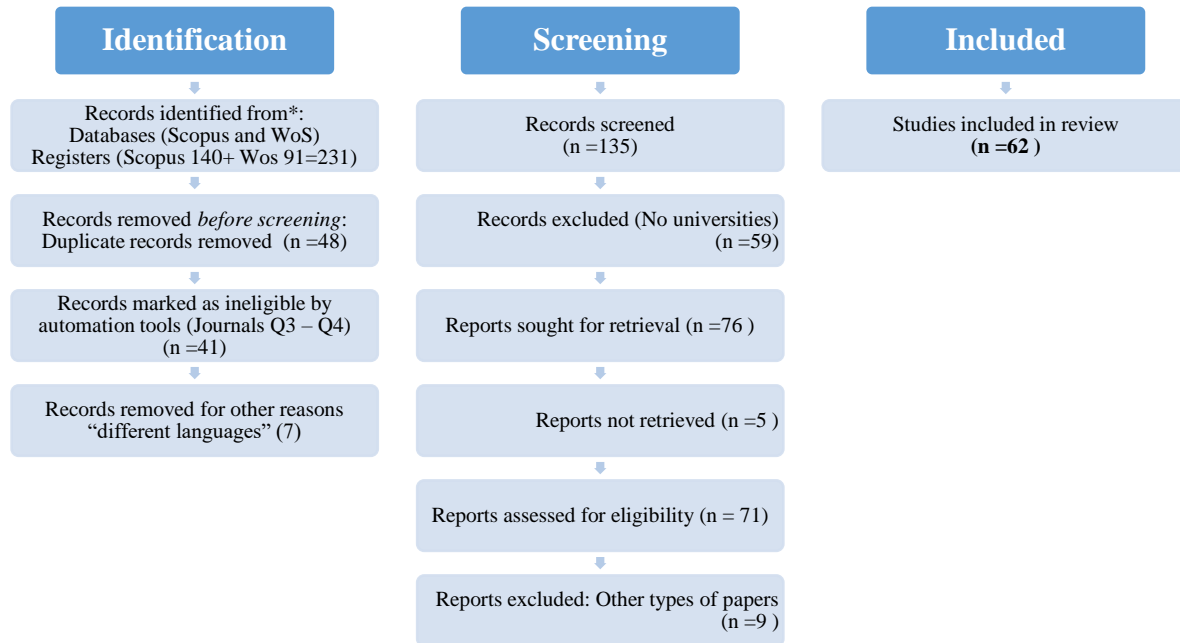
*Step 4. Examine the results with inclusion and exclusion criteria.* For the development of the fourth step, Figure 2 shows the result of the screening and consolidation of the two searches and the selection process of the articles, indicating the inclusion and exclusion criteria that were taken into account following the PRISMA methodology.

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<sup>1</sup> Boolean code used in Web of Science: TITLE: (reputation) AND SUBJECT: (higher education) and the second TITLE: (reputation) AND SUBJECT: (university). In the Scopus database, the following Boolean code was used: (TITLE ( reputation ) AND TITLE ( higher AND education ) OR TITLE ( universities ) OR TITLE ( university ) ) AND DOCTYPE ( ar OR re ) AND PUBYEAR > 2009.

**Figure 2**

*Search results in Scopus and Web of Science*



*Step 5. Develop a critical appraisal of the studies included.* Once the selection process is completed a critical and taxonomic assessment of the 62 selected articles is carried out. This provides relevant information to answer the research questions posed, evolved from the review of the definitions on which the studies are based; the variables with which they are related; the theories on which the studies are based; the measurement methods identified; as well as the benefits and weaknesses found in reputation management. To present the characterization of the 62 articles found from the process described above, this research performs a bibliometric analysis through Elsevier's SciVal tool, used to analyze the behavior of research in a particular field, make comparisons, associations, identify trends and create reports (Elsevier, 2022). We also use the VOSviewer, which is a program created to build and visualize bibliometric networks (VOSviewer, 2022). In addition, we perform an analysis of texts collected by a reviewer and verified by another researcher, using the four-eyes principle, to reduce the risk of bias (Hiebl, 2015).

## Results

### How have the empirical studies of reputation in higher education institutions been characterized?

Using Elsevier's SciVal tool, in March 2022, we analyzed the publications per year within the time range addressed in the study (2010- July 2020), the citation behavior, the Field-Weighted Citation Impact (FWCI), which is the impact of citations obtained compared to the average number of citations expected in the subject field (Elsevier, 2020), citation behavior data by year, publications by journal quartile, and an analysis of the institutions, their type, country of publication and journals.

The number of articles on reputation in higher education institutions has been increasing in the last 10 years, as shown in Table 1, where it is evident that the year with the highest number of articles is 2018 with 13 publications, followed by 2019 with 12 publications, and 11 publications as of July 2020.

It is observed that the years with the highest number of citations were 2011 (219 citations) and 2016 (191 citations), as shown in the table. This trend had an impact on the weighted citations per field, which are 3.88 in 2011, and 3.89 in 2016, the highest evidenced in the period studied. This shows the importance of reputation in the field of study, which may be due to the international collaborations that occurred in those years, as can also be seen in Table 1.

**Table 1**

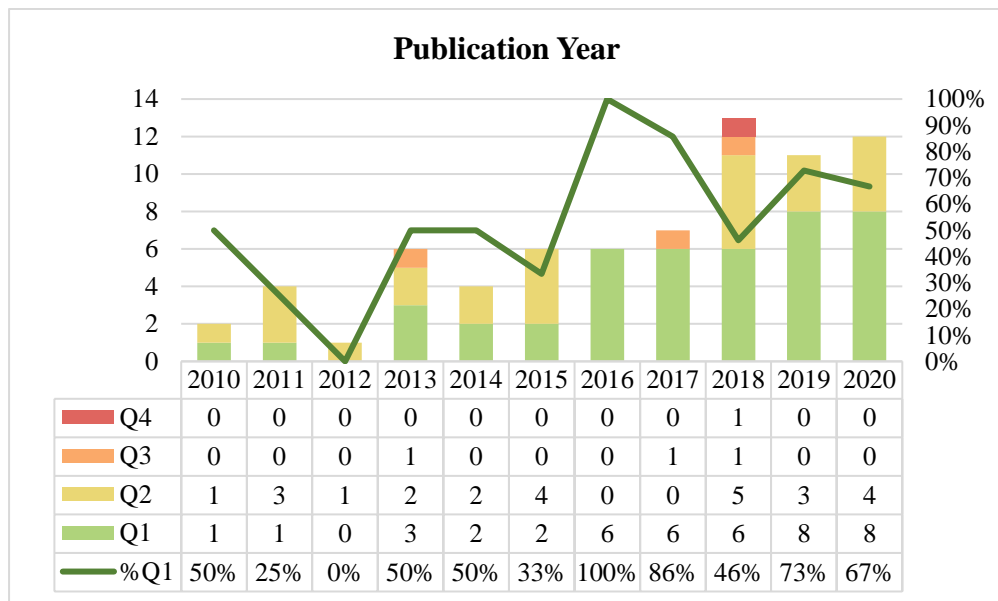
*Citations, FWCI and international collaboration, by year of publication.*

Year	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020
Citation Count	117	219	4	82	74	50	191	46	57	54	16
Field-Weighted Citation Impact	2,43	3,88	2,81	0,88	1,37	0,78	3,89	1,1	1,07	2,21	1,51
International Collaboration (%)	0	50	0	0	50	16,7	50	12,5	23,1	0	16,7
Total articles published	2	4	1	7	4	6	6	8	13	12	11

In turn, a review of the impact of the quartiles in the publications analyzed within the period studied was carried out, showing that 90.3% of the articles on their date of publication were in journals categorized within the Q1 and Q2 quartiles<sup>2</sup> (37 and 19 articles, respectively). It should be clarified that on the date the quartiles of the publications were searched, some of them had improved their performance, placing them in the first two quartiles. Since 2018 there is a growth in the number of articles published on this subject, and in 2016 all published articles are in the Q1 category, as evidenced in the results presented in Figure 3.

**Figure 3.**

*Publications in Q1, Q2, Q3 and Q4 Journal Quartile by SJR vs Publication Year.*



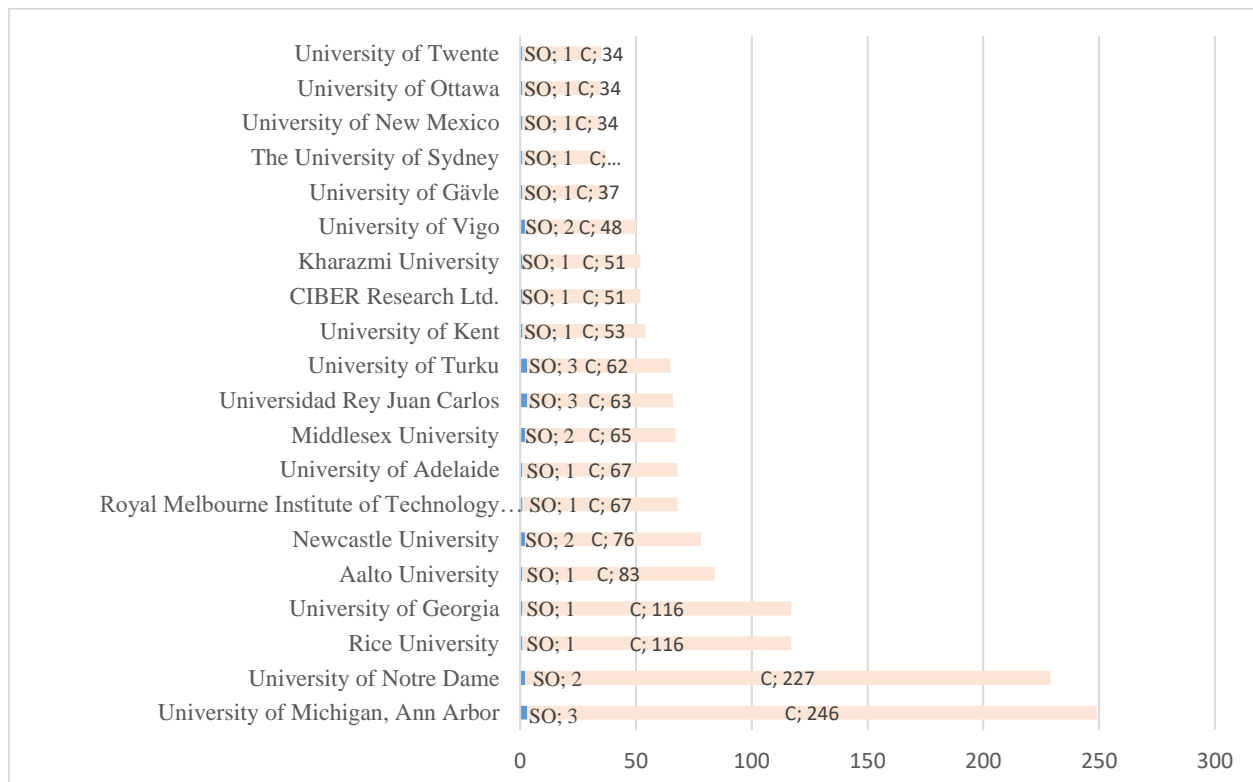
In contrast, the institutions with the highest academic production, citations, and authors researching and writing on the subject of reputation were reviewed, and it was found that the University of Turku in Finland, the Universidad Rey Juan Carlos in Spain, and the University of Michigan, Ann Arbor in the United States had the highest academic production with three articles each. However, the articles from the University of Michigan are the most cited of the three universities. It also had

<sup>2</sup> taking into account the SCImago Journal Rank (SJR), which weights the value of a citation based on the subject field, quality and reputation of the source (Elsevier, 2020).

the highest number of citations among the institutions analyzed, followed by the University of Notre Dame with 227 citations, and Rice University and the University of Georgia with 116 citations each, as shown in Figure 4. In terms of the number of authors per institution publishing the most on reputation are Florida State University with five authors, and Mount Royal University, University of Salerno, Indonesia University of Education and, Zhejiang Sci-Tech University with four authors each.

**Figure 4.**

*Institutions, scholarly output, and citations.*



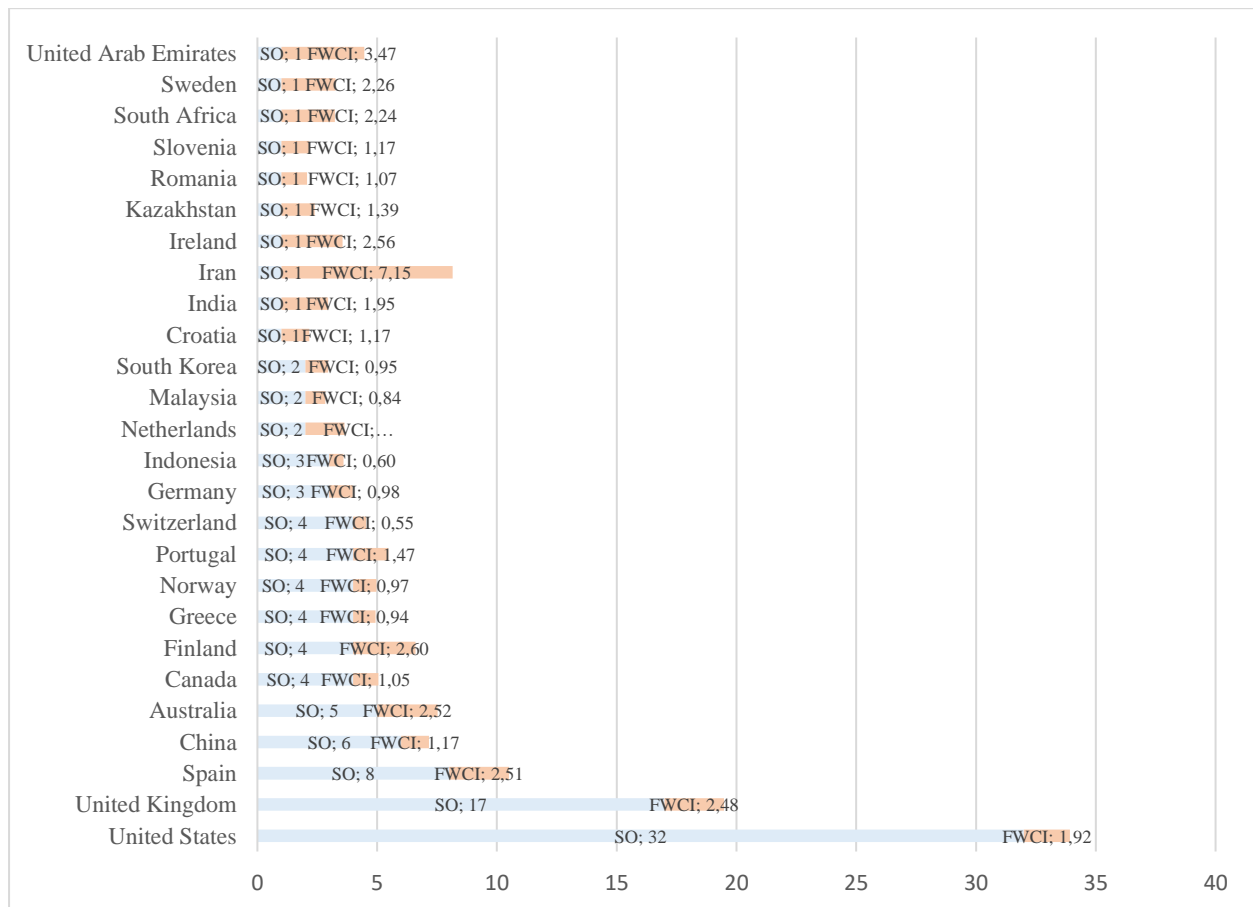
*C= Total citations and SO= Scholarly Output.*

Within this same analysis, a review was made of the publications by each country, their academic production, and the Field-Wide Citation Impact (FWCI). Figure 5 shows 26 countries where research has been done on reputation in higher education institutions, with the most representative in terms of academic production being the United States (32), United Kingdom (17), Spain (8) and China (6). The two countries with the highest impact factor are Iran (7.15) and the United Arab

Emirates (3.47), which may be related to academic production or its quality, followed by Finland (2.60), Ireland (3.56) and Australia (2.52). It is worth mentioning that of the 98 institutions that participated in the publication of the articles analyzed, 94 correspond to higher education institutions, three to governmental entities and, one to independent corporate research entity.

**Figure 5.**

*Academic production and FWCI by country.*



Finally, a review of the journals with the highest number of articles on reputation in higher education was carried out, and it was found that Studies in Higher Education (Q1), Corporate Reputation Review (Q2), Higher Education (Q1), International Journal of Educational Management (Q2), Journal of Business Research (Q1) are the journals that have published the highest number of articles. The four most representative journals that have published at least three

articles on the subject of reputation are Corporate Reputation Review, Higher Education, International Journal of Educational Management, and Journal of Business Research.

**Synthesis of the articles reviewed:**

*Step 6. Synthesize the studies and assess the heterogeneity of the findings.* To synthesize the content of the articles found, (Table 2) below summarizes their structural characteristics in terms of the methods used to approach the research, the types of variables or the way of analyzing reputation, the units of study used in the articles, the theories that underpinned the research and the collection tools.

**Table 2**

*Characteristics of the articles reviewed.*

<b>Methods</b>	Quantitative (39 papers) Qualitative (11 papers) Mixed (12 papers)
<b>Variable types</b>	Reputation as a: Dependent variable (38 papers) Independent variable (25 papers)
<b>Population</b>	Students (17 papers) Universities (13 papers) Databases and rankings (11 papers) Internal stakeholders (two or more) (10 papers) External stakeholders (2 papers) Teachers (3 papers) Employers (2 papers) Graduates (2 papers) Literature review (2 papers)
<b>Theories</b>	University, academic, media and corporate reputation theory (Drydakís, 2015; Fine and Wohl, 2018; Vogler, 2020b; Delgado-Márquez et al., 2013), Stakeholder theory (Lafuente et al., 2018; Foroudi et al., 2020; Del-Castillo et al., 2020) Institutional theory (Miotto et al., 2020; Martin et al., 2018) The neo-institutional theory (Christensen and Gornitzka, 2017; Christensen et al., 2020; Bastedo and Bowman, 2010)

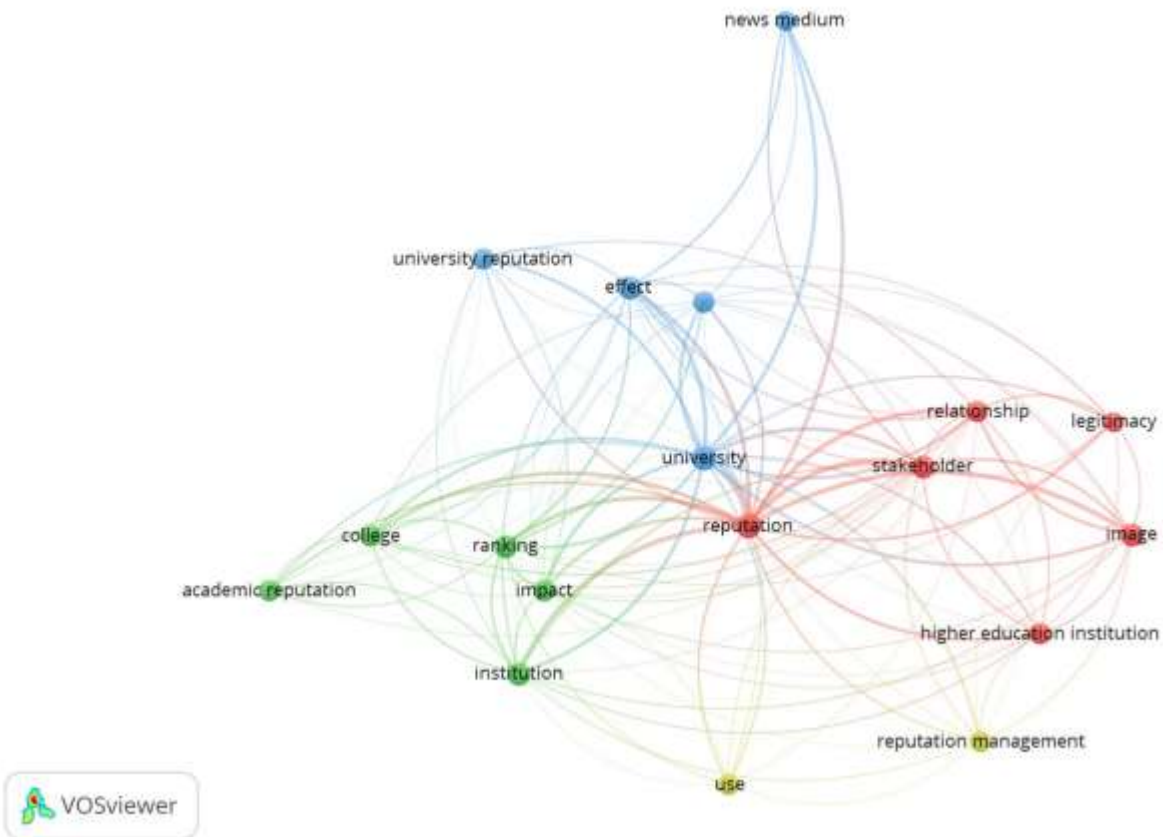
	Resource-based theory (Plewa et al., 2016; Parente et al., 2015; Steiner et al., 2013) Signal theory (Lee and Stuen, 2016; Kaushal and Ali, 2019; Bouchet et al., 2017) Theory of strategic alliances and game theory (Steiner et al., 2013) Configuration theory (Plewa et al., 2016) Management theory (Finch et al., 2015)
<b>Collection tools</b>	Secondary data analysis (26 papers) Surveys (15 papers) Mixed methods (e.g., analysis, surveys, interviews, focus group) (12 papers) Interviews (4 papers) Literature review (3 papers), Experimental essays (2 papers)

### 3.2. With which variables and/or constructs has it been related?

To evaluate the heterogeneity of the findings, a descriptive analysis of the concept of reputation is carried out. First, to understand the main relationships and co-occurrence of the terms found in the articles, the co-occurrence map of the VOSviewer tool was used, where the titles and abstracts of the 62 articles were reviewed. The program helped visualize four different but interrelated clusters. Each of the terms found is represented by a node and its size corresponds to its relevance. Each node has a color; in this case, the red node will be called cluster 1, the green node cluster 2, the blue node cluster 3, and the yellow node cluster 4. The intensity of the color will reflect the relevance of the relationship (Cantos-Mateos et al., 2013). Based on this score, 65% of the most relevant terms were selected (5% more than suggested by the system to increase the number of items), with a total of 18 terms grouped as follows: cluster 1, higher education institution, image, legitimacy, relationship, reputation, stakeholder. Cluster 2, academic reputation, college, impact, institution, ranking. Cluster 3, effect, information, news medium, university, university reputation. Cluster 4, reputation management, use. Figure 6 shows the co-occurrence map.

**Figure 6.**

*Co-occurrence map.*



From a detailed analysis of the composition of each of the clusters based on the thematic focus of the articles, it can be inferred that the articles in *cluster 1 (red)* focus on highlighting the importance of the relationship with stakeholders, the projected image and legitimacy; the articles in *cluster 2 (green)* analyze the impact of rankings on institutions and academic reputation; those in *cluster 3 (blue)* study the effect of information and the media on university reputation; and *cluster 4 (yellow)* includes the management and use of reputation. The following is a proposal that groups the articles reviewed in each of the four clusters found.

### **Cluster 1: relationship with stakeholders, projected image, and legitimacy**

In this cluster, we find studies such as the relationship of proximity, stakeholders, and reputation (Finch et al., 2015); the multidimensionality of reputation through stakeholders (Verčič et al., 2016); the use of social networks, reputation, and stakeholders (Carrillo-Durán and García, 2020); the influence of university identity, image on reputation (Steiner et al., 2013); identity and image management on reputation (Maduro et al., 2018); the relationship between image, legitimacy, and reputation (Del-Castillo-Feito et al., 2019; Del-Castillo-Feito et al., 2020); co-creation of value, image and reputation (Foroudi et al., 2019; Foroudi et al., 2020); reputation and image (Lafuente et al., 2018).

### **Cluster 2: the impact of academic rankings and reputation on institutions**

In this cluster is the influence of rankings on reputation (Bastedo and Bowman, 2010; Bowman and Bastedo, 2011); the Google Ngram viewer and reputation (Stergiou and Tsikliras, 2013); athletic rankings and reputation (Bouchet, et al., 2017); the average h-index as a predictor of reputation as measured via the U. S. News & World Report (Smith et al., 2018); reputation as a result of citation networks via PageRank (Massucci and Docampo, 2019); the influence of ranking, credibility signals and reputation on student selection (Haas and Unkel, 2017); the impact of reputation and rankings on teaching income (Wolf and Jenkins, 2018).

### **Cluster 3: the effect of information and media on university reputation**

The following papers are part of cluster 3: university resources, public relations and news content (Lee et al., 2015); communication strategy and reputation (Sataøen and Wæraas, 2016); the importance of media on reputation and stakeholders (Vogler, 2020a); university mergers influence reputation (Aula and Tienari, 2011); research-related activities and reputation (Jamali et al., 2016); reputation as a source of information influences managers' (Martin et al., 2018) and students' (Brewer and Zhao, 2010; Lee et al., 2018; Munisamy et al., 2014; Priporas and Kamenidou, 2011) decisions; reputation, tribalism, use of Facebook in relationship building (Liu et al., 2017); effects of reputation in the media on third-party funding (Vogler, 2020b).

#### Cluster 4: the management and use of reputation

Finally, this cluster is formed by reputation and risk management (Reznik and Yudina, 2018); the identification and management of reputation risks (Suomi and Järvinen, 2013); university performance, reputation and professional staff (Baltaru, 2020); university resource management - multidimensionality of reputation (Chen and Esangbedo, 2018; Esangbedo and Bai, 2019; Plewa et al., 2016; Suomi, 2014); performative, moral and professional symbols as categories of reputation management (Christensen and Gornitzka, 2017).

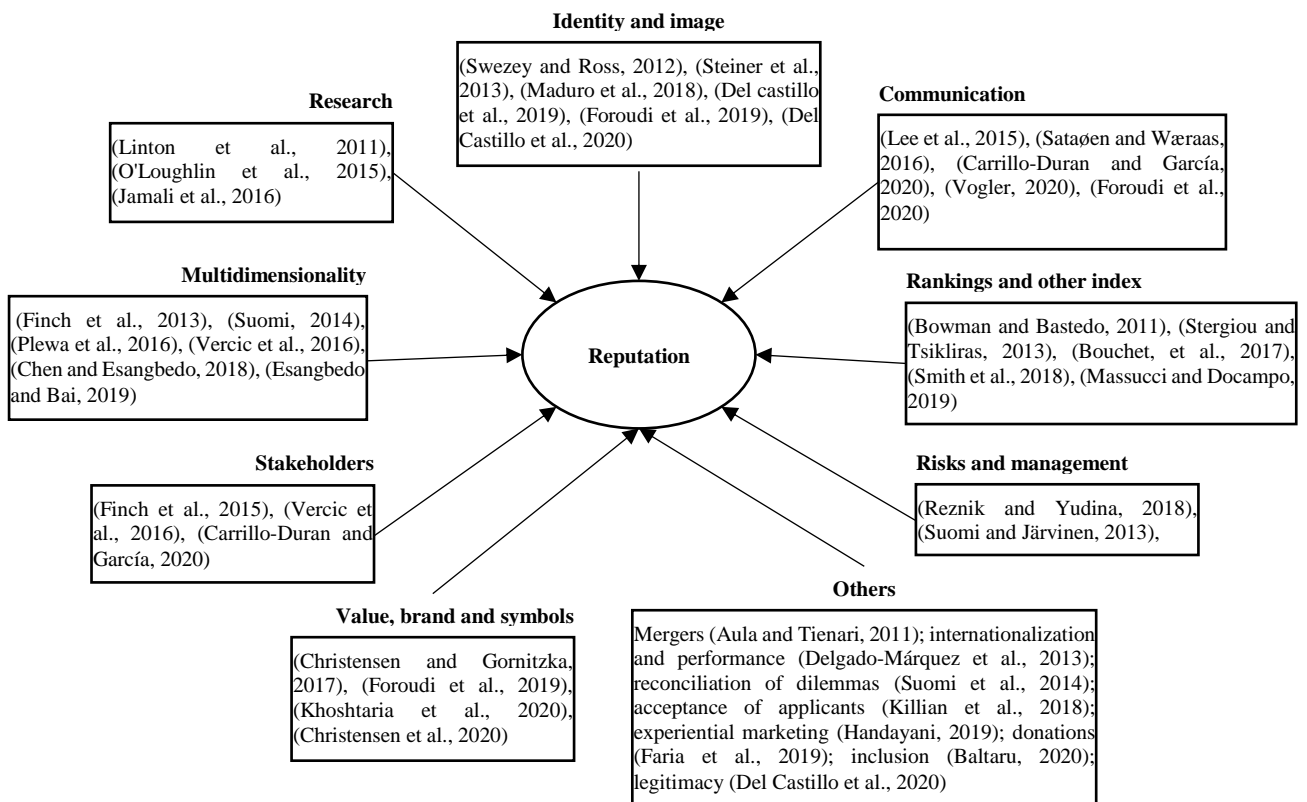
#### Relationships found in the review of the articles

To deepen the relationships found in the papers reviewed, an analysis of the typology of the variable reputation or the direction of influence attributed to reputation was performed. In addition, the variables commonly studied together with university reputation were grouped by similar themes. Figure 7 shows the variables that influence reputation and Figure 8 shows the variables on which reputation has some type of influence.

**Figure 7.**

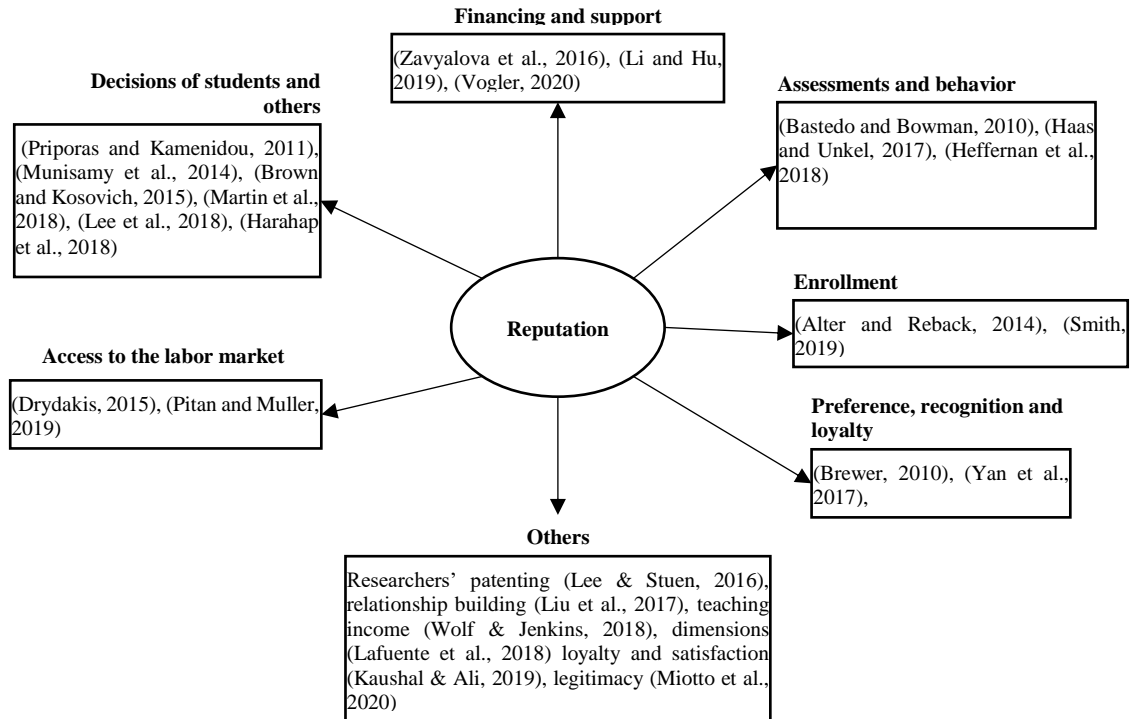
*Variables influencing reputation.*

The following are the variables on which reputation has an influence or impact:



**Figure 8.**

*Variables are influenced by reputation.*



The papers also found other variables to which reputation was related: career prospects (Munisamy et al., 2014); entry standards (Drydak, 2015); motivation to study abroad (Lee et al., 2018); tribalism (Liu et al., 2017); voice-to-voice (Harahap et al., 2018); quality of life (Alter and Reback, 2014); personality and brand attachment (Kaushal and Ali, 2019); co-creation (Foroudi et al., 2019; Foroudi et al., 2020); proximity and strategic character (Finch et al., 2015).

### **How has reputation been conceptualized in higher education services?**

In each of the 62 articles, the concept of reputation and the authors with the highest number of citations were reviewed; and Fombrun was found to be the most cited author in the literature. Fombrun (1996) has nine direct citations and at least 16 others with various authors: Fombrun and Shanley (1990) - six citations, Fombrun et al. (2000) - four citations, Fombrun and Van Riel (1997, 2003, 2004, 2007) – eight citations. They are followed by Rindova et al. (2005) who have at least

14 direct citations not counting those with other authors in 2010. Next is Suomi (Järvinen and Suomi, 2011; Suomi and Järvinen, 2013; Suomi et al., 2014; Suomi, 2014), with nine citations in total. Then there is Alessandri et al. (2006) who presents eight citations.

Most of these authors, define reputation at the organizational level. As such, it is common to find that their "corporate" definition applies to different sectors of the economy. This behavior was observed in a large part of the articles reviewed since some researchers chose to take up the organizational definition to support their research works that were applied to the higher education sector. In this sense, it is important to mention that globalization and the intensification of competition have caused universities to lose their social and formative focus, and become producers of competitive services by adopting more market-oriented approaches (Maringe and Gibbs, 2009, p. 4). Therefore, a summary of the definitions found was made, which is listed in Table 3 (the complete list can be found in the supplementary material).

**Table 3.**

*Definitions of reputation.*

<b>Definition</b>	<b>Authors who cite</b>
<i>Reputation ...</i>	
...is a description of the evaluation and attitude of various people concerned about the state of a company (Fombrun and Shanley, 1990).	Harahap et al. (2018)
... has been conceptualized as the public recognition and social approval of an organization (Fombrun and Shanley, 1990).	Zavyalova et al. (2016)
... is a social construct defined as the generalized level of esteem for an organization held by a stakeholder (Fombrun and Shanley, 1990).	Finch et al. (2013)
...is a collective system of subjective beliefs among the members of a social group (Bromley, 1993, 2000, 2002).	Munisamy et al. (2014)
... is a summary of the impressions or perceptions held by external stakeholders (Bromley, 1993).	Lee et al. (2015)
... can vary between stakeholders based on each group's perception of the degree to which the organization in question meets their unique expectations (Bromley, 2002).	Aula and Tienari, (2011)
... "the perceptual representation of a company's past actions and future expectations that describes the overall first attractiveness for all its key constituents compared to other rivals" (Fombrun, 1996, p. 72). * <i>One of the most cited</i>	Vogler (2020a) Miotto et al. (2020) Finch et al. (2013)
...refers to the fact that the term reputation serves to characterize the distribution of opinions (the open expression of the collective image) about a	Maduro et al. (2018)

person or entity, by a stakeholder that is constituted over time. It is a valuable intangible asset (Fombrun, 1996).	
...relates to the general esteem in which constituents hold an organization, incorporating four key elements, which include credibility, trustworthiness, reliability, dependability, and accountability (Fombrun, 1996).	O'Loughlin et al. (2013)
...a good reputation is important because of its value-creating potential and the fact that its intangible nature makes it difficult for competing organizations to copy (Roberts and Dowling, 2002).	Suomi et al. (2014)
... is based on an overall, global assessment; reputation is reflected in consensus judgments and is evaluative (i.e., good vs. bad) (Roberts and Dowling, 2002).	Delgado-Márquez et al. (2013)
... is a collective assessment of an organization's ability to deliver results of value to a representative group of stakeholders (Fombrun et al., 2000).	Miotto et al. (2020) Heffernan et al. (2018)
... has been defined as multi-stakeholder assessments of the company's ability to meet its expectations over time (Fombrun and Van Riel, 2003).	Munisamy et al. (2014)
...is one of the key antecedents of consumer organization identification (Fombrun and Van Riel, 2003).	Heffernan et al. (2018)
...is a collection of perceptions and beliefs, both past and present, that reside in the consciousness of an organization's stakeholders. Reputation = Experience Expectations (Rayner, 2005, p. 1, 69)	Suomi et al. (2014)
...refers to the public perceptions of the organization shared by its multiple constituents over time (Sung and Yang, 2008).	Munisamy et al. (2014)
... as having three distinct dimensions. First, it includes being known: the general awareness of a subject, i.e., an organization. Second, being known for something, when an organization's reputation is linked to results relevant to a specific audience, is a more strategic approach, and third, widespread favorability (Lange et al., 2011).	(Finch et al., 2015) (Kaushal and Ali, 2019)
...is more of an extrinsic signal, which evolves through the flow of information between users (Loureiro et al., 2017).	(Kaushal and Ali, 2019)
...is seen as society's opinion about the quality, advantages, or disadvantages of someone, something, person, organization, or product (Reznik and Yudina, 2018).	(Reznik and Yudina, 2018)
...involves the point of view of both staff (identity) and customers (image). Corporate reputation is more than the image an organization conveys. It is the perception that the different audiences with which a company interacts have about it over time (Maduro et al., 2018).	(Maduro et al., 2018)

Although it is common to find the aforementioned definitions in research works, some authors have adapted the definition of reputation and applied it to the higher education service, since they understand the characteristics and particularities that differentiate it from other services. The definitions found in the review focus on showing the importance of the interaction of stakeholders with the university (Rindova et al., 2005; Chen and Esangbedo, 2018) over time (Alessandri et al.,

2006, p. 261) and the incidence of opinions of third-party experts (Roberts, 2009). They also focus on showing the social and economic capital it generates (Federkeil, 2009, p. 32), taking into account that it is a valuable asset that influences differentiation and competitive advantage (Luque-Martínez and Del Barrio-García, 2009). Further, it also serves as a proxy for assessing university quality. Therefore, it influences university selection and evaluation (Hemsley-Brown, 2012; Munisamy et al., 2014) and the trustworthiness of its image (Van Vught, 2008, p. 169), attracting and retaining students (Munisamy et al., 2014). From a student's perspective, public relations, marketing communication, crisis and/or risk management, and corporate branding perspectives are key (Maringe and Gibbs, 2009). A summary of the definitions of university or higher education reputation is shown in Table 4 (see supplementary material).

**Table 4.**

*Definitions of reputation in universities or higher education.*

<b>Definition</b>	<b>Authors who cite</b>
<i>University reputation...</i>	
...is a function of information sharing and organizational performance, as prestige in higher education is largely a function of instructional resources and financial performance (Brewer et al., 2001).	(Bastedo and Bowman, 2010)
... is the result of the accumulation of impressions received by stakeholders due to communication and interaction with universities (Rindova et al., 2005).	(Steiner et al., 2013)
... is conceptualized as a process of continuous evaluation by relevant stakeholders (Rindova et al., 2005).	(Aula and Tienari, 2011)
... is considered a valuable intangible asset for organizations due to its relationship with positive performance (Rindova et al., 2005).	(Del-Castillo-Feito et al. 2019)
... is defined as the vision, representation, or impression that people form in their minds based on information or data about a university obtained through interaction with the elements or components of the university (Cole and Bruch, 2006).	(Chen and Esangbedo, 2018)
the collective representations that the university's multiple constituents have of the university over time (Alessandri et al., 2006, p. 261).	(Harahap et al., 2018)
the reputation of an institution of higher education is defined as the image of quality, influence, and trustworthiness it has in the eyes of others.	(Stergiou and Tsikliras, 2013)

Reputation is the subjective reflection of the various actions an institution takes to create an external image. An institution's reputation and its quality may be related, but they need not be identical. Higher education institutions try to influence their external images in many ways, not just by maximizing their quality (Van Vught, 2008, p. 169).	
the reputation of an institution from the perspective of the consumer (student) who has many choices due to the variety of providers in the educational marketplace. They identified four key perspectives of organizational reputation applicable to the higher learning environment which are public relations, marketing communication, crisis/risk management, and corporate brand perspective (Maringe and Gibbs, 2009).	(Munisamy et al., 2014)
...is defined not by what universities say about themselves but by the unsolicited opinions of respected third parties (Roberts, 2009).	(O'Loughlin et al., 2013)
University reputation, which has different meanings for different groups and scientific fields, is a form of social capital within the higher education system that can also be transformed into economic capital (Federkeil, 2009, p. 32).	(Stergiou and Tsikliras, 2013)
the reputation of HEIs represents an intangible capital and a valuable asset and is recognized as playing an important role in differentiation and competitive advantage vis-à-vis the competition. This competitive environment together with the limitations of public resources for higher education makes the image an essential part of HEI strategic management (Luque-Martínez and Del Barrio-García, 2009).	(Maduro et al., 2018)
...serves as a critical surrogate for quality, guiding university selection and evaluation (Hemsley-Brown, 2012).	(Plewa et al., 2016)
...is the subjective reflection of the various actions that an institution undertakes to create an external image.	(Stergiou and Tsikliras, 2013)
<i>Definitions given by the same authors of the paper</i>	
Reputation is described as the sum of beliefs, ideas, and impressions a person has about an object, individual, institution, or organization based on past and current events. University reputation (UR) is an institutional status built as people constructs regarding university goals, ethics, work methods, and treatment received by students. In other words, UR refers to a natural and spontaneous character, expectations, and exchange that people have with the university.	(Chen and Esangbedo, 2018)

### **Benefits and weaknesses of reputation**

Reputation generates a huge impact both for universities and companies in other sectors. As such, we analyzed its benefits and weaknesses, considering the importance of examining both sides of the coin and identifying where the most important challenges in the conceptualization and

management of reputation lie. Table 5 shows a summary of the main benefits attributed to reputation, and the authors cited.

**Table 5.**

*Benefits of reputation.*

<b>Benefits</b>	<b>Authors</b>
Reputation...	
reduces risks, lowers costs, and offers many other benefits such as financial value, the attraction of investors and resources, sustainable competitive advantage, and organizational success.	(Altbach, 2004; Barney, 1991; Burke, 2011; Deephouse and Carter, 2005; Chapleo, 2007; Christensen and Gornitzka, 2017; Deephouse, 2000; Dierickx and Cool, 1989; Feldman et al., 2014; Finch et al., 2013; Fombrun, 1996; Fombrun and Shanley, 1990; Gardberg and Fombrun, 2002; Marginson, 2016; Pfarrer et al., 2010; Rayner, 2005; Rindova et al., 2005; Vogler, 2020a)
serves as a sign of product quality.	(Bigné et al., 2001; Bolton et al., 2004; Dawar and Parker, 1994; Hemsley-Brown, 2012; Jin et al., 2008; Loureiro and Kastenholtz, 2011; Nguyen and LeBlanc, 2001b; Priporas and Kamenidou, 2011; Rindova et al., 2005; Suomi, 2014; Veloutsou and Moutinho, 2009)
reduces stakeholders' uncertainty in their decision-making processes by generating confidence in the quality, value, and differentiation of the product.	(Fombrun et al., 2000; Hemsley-Brown, 2012; Lange et al., 2011; Miotto et al., 2020; Munisamy et al., 2014; Rindova et al., 2005)
shows the company or university as the best place to work, thus attracting the best of employees, teachers, and students; improving their intellectual capital and increasing their tacit knowledge.	(Brown and Whysall, 2010; Deephouse, 2000; Fumasoli and Huisman, 2013; Gaultier-Gaillard and Louisot, 2006; Lemmink et al., 2003; Pfarrer et al., 2010; Rayner, 2003; Roberts, 2009)
generates higher levels of stakeholder confidence even in crises.	(Coombs and Holladay, 2006; Csiszar and Heidrich, 2006; Feldman et al., 2014; Fombrun, 1996; Fombrun and Shanley, 1990; Koufaris and Hampton-Sosa, 2004; Lange et al., 2011; Liu et al., 2017; Love and Kraatz, 2009; Melewar, 2003; Pfarrer et al., 2010; Rayner, 2005; Schnietz and Epstein, 2005)
improves the recruitment of graduates as they possess more social, cultural, and human capital.	(Morley and Aynsley, 2007; Rindova et al., 2005)

is a key factor in a student's choice of university.	(Bourke 2000; Bowman and Bastedo, 2009; Briggs, 2006; Conard and Conard, 2000; Dowling, 1994; Fumasoli and Huisman, 2013; Munisamy et al., 2014; Nguyen and LeBlanc, 2001b)
contributes to the payment of a higher price to an organization - charging higher rates.	(Fowles et al., 2016; Rindova et al., 2005; Sauder and Lancaster, 2006; Shapiro, 1982, 1983; Vidaver-Cohen, 2007)
is a driver of university reforms and development work as well as research performance.	(Ho and Peng, 2016; Steiner et al., 2013)
can be used to measure organizational effectiveness as well as improved financial performance.	(Baden-Fuller and Hwee Ang, 2001; de Chernatony, 1999; Feldman et al., 2014; Van Riel and Fombrun, 2007; Fombrun and Shanley, 1990; Kitchen and Laurence, 2003; Roberts and Dowling, 2002; Walker, 2010)
increases student satisfaction as well as student loyalty.	(Bartikowski et al., 2011; Bigné et al., 2001; Caruana and Ewing, 2010; Davies et al., 2002; Fombrun, 1996; Jin et al., 2008; Liu et al., 2017; Loureiro and Kastenholtz, 2011; Roberts and Dowling, 2002; Beerli et al., 2002; Plewa et al., 2016; Sung and Yang, 2009)
relates to the positive attitudes of customers towards the company's products.	(Bartikowski et al., 2011)
can positively affect students' priorities in social and academic life.	(Arambewela and Hall 2009; Delgado-Márquez et al., 2013; Park, 2009)
is considered crucial for survival given the stiff competition between universities and creates barriers to entry.	(Aula and Tienari, 2011; Alves and Raposo, 2010; Feldman et al., 2014; Lafuente et al., 2018; Rao, 1994)
attracts positive media coverage.	(Rayner, 2005; Suomi et al., 2014)
influences the favorable evaluation of an organization and the positioning of the university.	(Curtis et al. 2009; Chapleo, 2007; Dodds et al., 1991; Hemsley-Brown, 2012; Jin et al., 2008, p. 327)

As regards the weaknesses of reputation referred to in the articles, the authors mention that reputation cannot be improved quickly (Chun, 2005; de Chernatony, 1999), and lacks a common definition regarding which no consensus has been reached yet (Miotto et al., 2020). Further, it presents a lack of clarity regarding its management and remains a challenge for universities (Šontaitė and Bakanauskas, 2011). It shows a degree of complexity within which the following

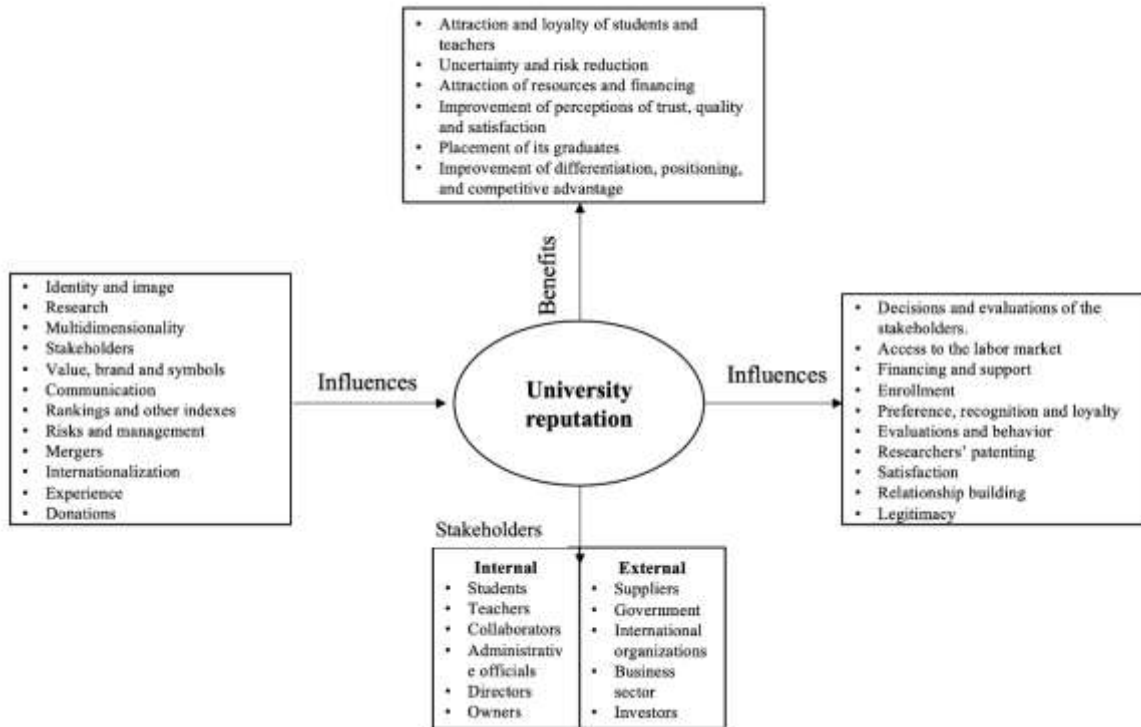
aspects can be highlighted: heterogeneity in terms of stakeholders and, as a consequence, differences in their expectations (Suomi and Järvinen, 2013; Vidaver-Cohen, 2007). When reputation is not successfully managed in the organization it is exposed to numerous risks (Suomi and Järvinen, 2013). In universities specifically, where it is understood as the quality of education, reputation is difficult to evaluate before being experienced (Suomi et al., 2014).

### **Summary of findings**

Taking into account the above findings, an outline is made with the most relevant points in the definition of university reputation. This is done with the understanding that it is the result of assessments made by both internal and external stakeholders of the performance and results obtained in the management of its substantive functions, namely, teaching, research, and extension during a given period. Internal stakeholders include students, graduates, teachers, researchers, administrative and managerial staff, with the student being the main beneficiary of the educational service (Maringe and Gibbs, 2009, p. 29). External stakeholders include students' families and friends, research centers, private and public business sectors, the state, rankings, and suppliers, among others. Figure 9 shows the results graphically.

**Figure 9.**

*Elements of university reputation*



**Conclusions**

The methodology developed for the literature search on reputation in higher education resulted in 231 articles. Not all of them were included taking into account the exclusion criteria within the screening process. However, it did allow for observing the growing interest in this topic given the impact it has on organizations, in this case, in the higher education sector.

In addition, and as expected, definitions of organizational reputation were adopted and applied to the processes of university reputation management. However, some authors chose to make adaptations of these definitions to the context of higher education institutions, emphasizing the importance of identification and relationship with stakeholders (Carrillo-Duran and García, 2020; Finch et al., 2015; Martin et al., 2018; Verčič et al., 2016; Zavyalova, 2016), understanding the differences between the needs and knowledge that each one has of the organization, as well as

underscoring the concern over the time it takes to develop a solid reputation in the market (Brewer and Zhao, 2010; Loureiro et al., 2017), which is different and generates value and competitive advantage (Burke, 2011; Feldman et al., 2014; Marginson, 2016; Munisamy et al., 2014). As regards reputation built over time, universities must compete to gain a position (Chapleo, 2007) in the local, national and international markets, which are becoming more complex, given the impact that rankings — which have become a benchmark of the quality of universities — have on the valuation of stakeholders (Bowman and Bastedo, 2011; Drydakis, 2016; Wolf and Jenkins, 2018).

Therefore, it was found that reputation is decisive in the student's shopping experience (Handayani, 2019; Pitan and Muller, 2019), which includes university selection, influencing, their lived experience in the training process (Sajtos et al., 2015), placement or job attainment rates (Finch et al., 2013; Laker and Powell, 2011; Smith et al., 2008), and development of entrepreneurship (Parente et al., 2015). From the institutional point of view and within the framework of the purchasing experience, reputation management also helps in areas such as retention of students (Del-Castillo-Feito et al., 2019), relationships with the business sector, agreements with other educational institutions, advancement of research (Morphew et al., 2016), exchanges at the national and international level (Plewa et al., 2016), and relations with the media (Deephouse, 2000), etc.

To capitalize on each of these findings, Figure 9 shows a compendium of the points considered most relevant in the search, on the variables that influence reputation, the variables that are influenced by reputation, its benefits, and main stakeholders categorized as internal and external, following Verčič et al., (2016, p. 165). In the evaluations made by external stakeholders, a critical point is the knowledge they have about the university given its proximity which influences their opinions that may be biased but have an impact on the reputation and quality of work of a university (Steiner et al., 2013). For its part, reputation management among internal stakeholders, mainly students, have a positive impact on their attitudes (Foroudi et al., 2019) and is a key element for the success and survival of universities (Christesen and Gornitzka, 2017), which currently operate in a complex and competitive environment, in which they must compete with other HEIs for access to different resources and meet the expectations of all their stakeholders.

## **Discussion and agenda for future research**

The challenges of reputation management in educational institutions are evident in the literature review addressed. Issues such as the increase in academic offerings in terms of scope and variety of programs (Maringe and Gibbs, 2009), changes in funding structures (Steiner et al., 2013), internationalization of education (Plewa et al., 2016), globalization and mobility of students and faculty (O'Loughlin et al., 2013), as well as the focus on achieving high quality certifications as a strategy to show university differentiation and influence the images received by the various stakeholders, especially the student as the main user of the service, are crucial issues for university competitiveness. In fact, it is important to clarify that reputation and quality are related, but not necessarily identical (Van Vught, 2008). In addition, authors such as Roberts (2009) point out that, in order to achieve the main objective of the university, in terms of offering a high quality service that responds to the needs of society, it is necessary and indispensable to work together and articulate between employees and departments with mechanisms that support management to achieve a positive reputation.

This management implies that universities adapt to these new models and systems of evaluation and measurement to show indicators of academic quality (Steiner et al., 2013), which is why managers also focus their attention on improving their performance in the different rankings (O'Loughlin et al., 2013). Among the prominent rankings to measure the reputation of the most prestigious universities in the world, are the Academic Ranking of World University ARWU (also known as the Shanghai ranking), the British ranking Times Higher Education -THE, and the Quakerelli Symonds -QS. Each of them has different indicators and weights in their measurement. The ARWU for example, takes into account graduates and teachers with Nobel Prizes and Fields Medals, the most cited researchers, the amount of indexed articles and their respective citations. However, these rankings have been criticized for their focus on the research capacity of universities and the way in which the individual indicators used to obtain the synthetic indicator are weighted (Parellada and Alvarez, 2017). And indeed they have had an impact on the "publish or perish" message received by university faculty and professors, further evidencing the value of research (Linton et al., 2011). Despite the negative biases of this type of measurement,

rankings remain an important variable that influences reputation and, in fact, is consolidated in cluster 2, found in this study.

Subsequent research work can focus on further developing and understanding the multidimensionality of the concept of university reputation, in the light of a theoretical corpus that continues to evolve based on the characteristics and particularities of higher education and the challenges posed by the social, economic, political, and environmental contexts in which it develops its substantive functions. They will also be able to validate the relationships between the variables found, as well as to propose new variables that have not been contemplated and that may have an important and predictive impact on the performance of the construct.

### **Limitations**

This review focused on a 10-year period, by analyzing two databases, WoS and Scopus. As such, other databases that might contain articles on university reputation were not considered. Similarly, we did not include languages other than English, given that the number of documents found in the searches was sufficiently extensive only in that language. Besides, as mentioned earlier, most of the literature is in English. Further, articles indexed in journals located in quartiles 3 and 4 were not taken into account. As such, articles that may have contributions or theoretical perspectives different from those found could have been omitted. Furthermore, it is understood that a sample of 62 articles is only a part of all the literature found on reputation in universities and that a broader more inclusive review could generate different conclusions and can even be directed towards the problems experienced by HEIs that affect their academic processes and activities and, therefore, their reputation, such as high turnover of professor, student desertion, fundraising for research, and graduate employability rates, among others. However, this systematic review was carried out exhaustively, analyzing each of the documents found to generate the results presented here.

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**Declaration of Competing Interest**

The authors declare that the research was conducted in the absence of any commercial or financial relationships that could be construed as a potential conflict of interest.

**Author Contributions**

FJ contributed to design of the study. MA completed the majority of the literature review and wrote the first draft. FJ supervised both the development of the research and the manuscript.

**Supplementary Material**

The Supplementary Material for this article can be found online at:

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## Artículo dos

### Una mirada a la gestión de la reputación en las universidades

#### **A look at reputation management in universities**

*TECHNO REVIEW. International Technology, Science and Society Review /Revista*

*Internacional De Tecnología, Ciencia Y Sociedad*

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**KEYWORDS:** Managemet, Reputation, Universities, Stakeholders, Models

## **ABSTRACT**

Managers of higher education institutions (HEIs) have faced the challenges brought about by increased competition in the sector, and the difficulties in developing, communicating and positioning a differential in their academic proposals. This has implied a change in the strategic approach to marketing and university reputation management. However, there is still a lack of clarity about what reputation management implies in universities and what its dimensions are, so a structured literature review is proposed to answer these questions.

## **RESUMEN**

Los directivos de las instituciones de educación superior (IES) se han enfrentado a los desafíos que trae consigo el importante aumento de la competencia en el sector, y las dificultades en el desarrollo, comunicación y posicionamiento de un diferencial en sus propuestas académicas. Esto ha implicado un cambio de enfoque estratégico desde el marketing y desde la gestión de la reputación universitaria. Sin embargo, aún falta claridad sobre qué implica la gestión de la reputación en las universidades y cuáles son sus dimensiones, por lo cual se plantea una revisión estructurada de literatura para dar respuesta a estos interrogantes.

**PALABRAS CLAVE:** Gestión, Reputación, Universidades, Grupos de interés, Modelo

## **1. Introducción**

La reputación en las universidades se ha convertido en un factor determinante para el posicionamiento, la competitividad de las universidades (Roberts y Dowling, 2002) y como una fuente de diferenciación (Pfarrer et al., 2010), de manera que reduce la incertidumbre en la toma de decisiones de sus públicos de interés tanto de los futuros estudiantes como de docentes (Rindova et al., 2005; Munisamy et al., 2014) y aumenta la confianza en el servicio (Smith et al., 2010). El enfoque tradicional de conceptualizar la reputación es basado en la valoración y percepciones de los públicos de interés o stakeholders sobre una organización (Fombrun, 1996). Estos stakeholders

son usualmente divididos en internos y externos (de Chernatony y Harris 2000; Reznik y Yudina, 2018). Dentro de los internos están los docentes, el personal administrativo y los estudiantes, éstos últimos son considerados de vital importancia para las universidades ya que ellos son los usuarios que tienen la experiencia directa con el servicio de educación (Marquina et al., 2014). De igual forma, en cuanto a los docentes, la buena reputación atrae al mejor talento y facilita su retención (Lemmink et al., 2003; Suomi et al., 2014) generando una mayor lealtad tanto de usuarios del servicio como del talento humano (Fombrun, 1996). Sin embargo, lograr altos índices de reputación no es tarea fácil para ninguna institución y mucho menos para aquellas relativamente nuevas en el mercado, dado que la reputación requiere de tiempo para desarrollarse (Miotto et al., 2020), y por ser un constructo multidimensional presenta desafíos para su gestión (Del-Castillo-Feito et al., 2019).

Aunado a lo anterior, la literatura académica ha identificado que tanto la reputación como la imagen y la identidad son activos intangibles de gran valor para la gestión que realizan las universidades (Maduro et al., 2018). De hecho, se considera el activo organizacional más valioso (Gibson et al., 2006, p. 15), que sirve como sustituto de la calidad a la hora de seleccionar y evaluar una universidad (Hemsley-Brown, 2012; Munisamy et al., 2014), sirve de soporte para los graduados que buscan su nuevo empleo (Alessandri et al., 2006; Finch et al., 2013) ya que los graduados de las universidades prestigiosas y reconocidas tienen una mayor seguridad de conseguir un empleo acorde con sus expectativas y para la empresa, asegura la consecución de talento humano calificado (Sultan y Wong, 2012). También se ha evidenciado que una reputación e imagen positivas influyen en la satisfacción de estudiante con la universidad (Palacio et al. 2002; Davies et al. 2002). Sin embargo, la construcción de capital reputacional depende de las valoraciones de los stakeholders, tal como se mencionó, y esto se convierte en una fuente de riesgo que es necesario gestionar (Fombrun et al., 2000), ya que tal como lo afirma Becher (1989, p. 52) "la moneda principal para el académico no es el poder como lo es para el político, o la riqueza, como lo es para el empresario, sino la reputación". Asimismo, es importante precisar que la reputación es un indicador de la capacidad que tiene una institución para dar respuesta las necesidades de sus usuarios y en general de los stakeholders (Nguyen y LeBlanc, 2001).

Con el fin de lograr mejoras en dicha gestión, los directivos han realizado esfuerzos y han invertido recursos tanto humanos como financieros, para incidir en las percepciones tanto de los estudiantes como de los demás públicos de interés (LaFuente-Ruiz-de-Sabando et al., 2018). En este esfuerzo, algunas las universidades han generado propuestas y estrategias tendientes a mejorar sus funciones sustantivas a saber, docencia, investigación y extensión o relacionamiento con la comunidad, mientras que otras han gestionado la reputación desde el área de marketing, desde donde se hacen importantes aportes en investigación (Plewa et al., 2016). Sin embargo, no es claro cuáles son las dimensiones relevantes de la reputación, cómo se construye y cuáles de sus elementos constitutivos tienen un mayor impacto. Por esta razón se planteó como objetivo de estudio, un análisis de la gestión de la reputación dando respuesta a las siguientes preguntas de investigación: 1) ¿Cómo se ha entendido la gestión de la reputación?, 2) ¿Cuáles son las dimensiones de la reputación o cómo se construye?

Para cumplir con este objetivo se realizó una revisión estructurada de literatura sobre la gestión de la reputación y dentro de ella se identificaron las dimensiones y los elementos con los cuales se construye la reputación de las universidades, así como los modelos propuestos. Para lo cual, este artículo presenta en primer lugar, una aproximación conceptual a la reputación en las universidades, una descripción de la metodología, los resultados, la discusión y las conclusiones.

## **2. Aproximación conceptual a la reputación en universidades**

La definición más representativa en la literatura académica sobre la reputación corporativa es la planteada por Fombrun en el año de 1996, hasta la fecha es una de las más citadas (Walker, 2020; Amado y Juarez, 2022). Su definición se enfoca en tres pilares importantes, 1) la reputación se fundamenta en las percepciones, lo que hace difícil ejercer el control sobre ella, y pone en duda la objetividad de dichas percepciones, 2) es la percepción agregada de diversos los stakeholders tanto internos como externos los cuales tienen diferentes intereses y conceptos valorativos, razón por la cual, Walker (2010) plantea que no es apropiado sumar los conceptos de los stakeholders tanto a favor y en contra para desarrollar una suma total de sus percepciones y, 3) es comparativa tanto

con los competidores directos, como también con los estándares de servicio o de calidad (Brown y Longsdon, 1997; Fombrun, 1996; Walker, 2010; Wartick, 2002). Para Lange et al., (2011) la reputación consta de tres dimensiones también, la primera se refiere a que la organización o institución debe ser conocida, la segunda, es que se requiere ser conocido por algo, y la tercera, la favorabilidad generalizada que se entiende como la percepción general positiva. Ambas propuestas tienen en común la percepción y la valoración colectiva de los stakeholders.

De igual forma, para Chen et al. (2015) la reputación se construye a través de tres dimensiones, a saber, creación de valor, recursos estratégicos y comunicación corporativa. El primero de ellos, referente a la creación de valor, se relaciona con la calidad del servicio brindado y la experiencia que obtiene el estudiante de ese paso por la universidad. El segundo, referente a los recursos estratégicos, implica que la reputación se convierta en una fuente de ventaja competitiva que envíe un mensaje claro a los estudiantes de las fortalezas que tiene la institución. Y, en tercer lugar, la comunicación corporativa, en donde la reputación actúa como herramienta para influir en las percepciones de los estudiantes, en sus decisiones y en la relación a largo plazo estudiante-universidad (Nguyen et al., 2016). Es decir, que la reputación es un concepto que depende de diversos factores, variables y constructos asociados, como, por ejemplo, la imagen (Del-Castillo-Feito et al., 2019).

En lo que respecta a la definición de la reputación en las universidades, Šontaitė y Bakanauskas (2011) la definen como el reconocimiento y la evaluación colectiva pero también subjetiva que realizan todos los stakeholders durante un período de tiempo, y que está influenciado por el comportamiento pasado de la institución, la comunicación y la capacidad de ésta para cumplir con las expectativas de su cliente en comparación con sus competidores. El proceso como tal de la gestión de la reputación que realiza la institución comienza con la formulación de la estrategia, que implica una revisión cuidadosa de la identidad de la organización que sirve de base para definir la visión que será la forma en que los stakeholders perciban la organización (Wæraas y Byrkjeflot 2012; Kuoppakangas et al., 2019). De igual forma, Alessandri et al. (2006, p. 261) definen la reputación de las universidades como las “representaciones colectivas que los múltiples constituyentes de la universidad – varios constituyentes externos, incluidos los medios de comunicación – tienen de la universidad a lo largo del tiempo”. También Cole y Bruch (2006), la

definen como una representación o visión que tienen las personas en su mente creada a partir de la información que tiene sobre una universidad y su interacción con los diversos puntos de contacto. Otros autores definen la reputación como un conjunto de creencias, asociadas a una característica organizacional, que son generalizadas y difundidas de cierta manera (Barron y Rolfe, 2011; Maduro et al., 2018).

En todas las definiciones abordadas, la comunicación y el marketing juegan un papel importante para entregar el mensaje que las universidades quieren transmitir a sus stakeholders, y especialmente al futuro estudiante, a través del cual se posicionará con un diferencial que le permitirá obtener una ventaja competitiva, sin embargo, y dado que las instituciones de educación superior están ampliamente reglamentadas, los procesos, los enfoques de enseñanza-aprendizaje, las propuestas académicas, e incluso las actividades de relacionamiento con la comunidad pueden ser similares entre universidades, así como los resultados de investigación que tiene un peso importante en los rankings, más no en la experiencia del estudiante, donde el valor que percibe proviene de diversos factores tangibles e intangibles (Sánchez y Iniesta, 2007). Este hace que sea cada vez más difícil encontrar un “diferencial” que se convierte en realidad en un distintivo que el estudiante valore e influya realmente en sus decisiones tanto de carrera, como en la experiencia que vive al tomar el servicio de educación superior.

### **3. Metodología**

Se realizó una revisión estructurada de literatura sobre la gestión de la reputación, siguiendo también algunos lineamientos de las revisiones sistemáticas de literatura (Tranfield et al., 2003) para dar mayor rigor a la revisión realizada. Dentro de la gestión de la reputación se identificaron las dimensiones y los elementos con los cuales se construye la reputación de las universidades, así como los modelos propuestos. Para esto se realizó una búsqueda en la base de datos Scopus de artículos que contienen las palabras claves “gestión de la reputación” “educación superior” y

“universidad” (todas en inglés), en un período de tiempo de 10 años<sup>3</sup>. En total se obtuvieron 48 artículos, de los cuales se seleccionaron artículos de investigación empírica y se omitieron proceedings que en total sumaron 8 artículos, y adicionalmente, se eliminaron otros 2 artículos a los cuales no se obtuvo acceso. En total se revisaron 38 artículos en una segunda fase, y se identificaron aquellos que permitían dar respuestas a las preguntas planteadas, no solo desde sus propios conceptos y hallazgos encontrados en su investigación, sino a la luz de otros autores que los precedieron y fueron citados en el documento. En una tercera fase, se revisaron en profundidad 13 documentos que abordan la reputación universitaria con un sustento teórico y conceptual necesario para los fines de este estudio.

Para caracterizar los artículos revisados los años que tienen más artículos publicados son 2021 con 3 artículos, los años 2015, 2018, 2019 con dos artículos respectivamente, y los años 2014, 2016, 2020 y 2022 con un artículo respectivamente. En cuanto al enfoque y la herramienta de recolección de información, los artículos en su mayoría utilizaron un enfoque cuantitativo (9 artículos) a través de la encuesta, en menor proporción fueron los estudios cualitativos con 2 artículos que utilizan focus group y entrevistas, y con enfoque mixto fueron 2 artículos que utilizaron encuesta, análisis DOFA y entrevistas semiestructuradas. La población de estudio más utilizada fueron estudiantes con un total de 7 artículos, seguido de un enfoque a diversos stakeholders tanto internos como externos, con un total de 5 artículos y uno que analizó los resultados de las universidades.

#### **4. Resultados**

Como parte de la revisión general realizada, se desarrolló un mapa de co-ocurrencias mediante la herramienta VOSviewer, y a través del método de conteo completo, el programa identificó un total de 34 términos, de los cuales el sistema automáticamente selecciona el 60% de los términos más relevantes, seleccionando 20 términos, sin embargo, se eliminó el término “paper” ya que se

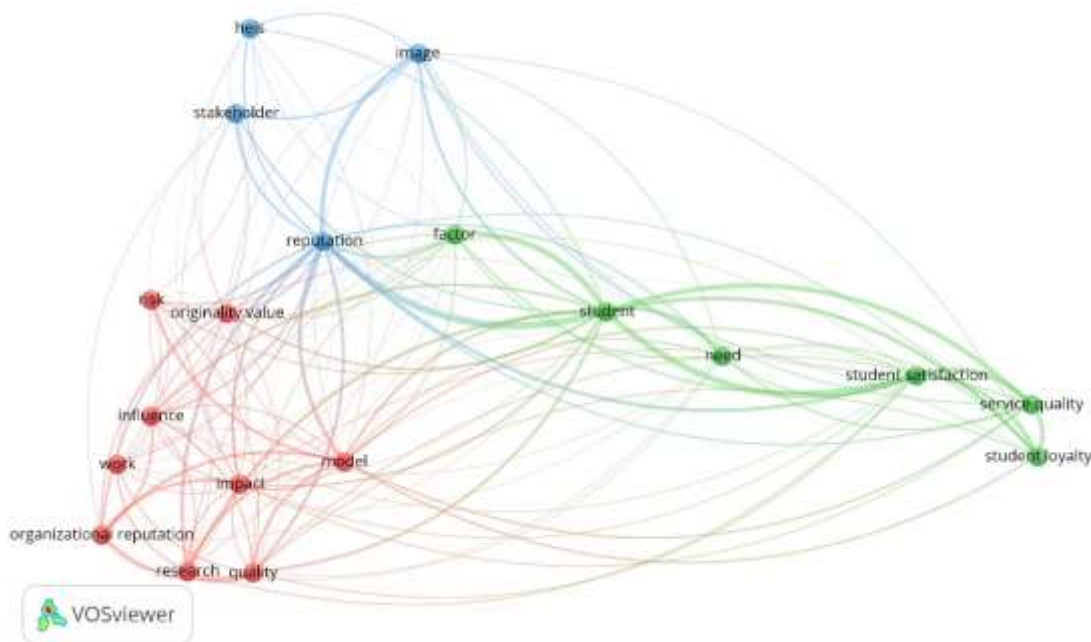
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<sup>3</sup> Código Boleano de búsqueda: ( TITLE-ABS-KEY ( reputation AND management ) AND TITLE-ABS-KEY ( higher AND education ) AND TITLE-ABS-KEY ( university )) AND PUBYEAR > 2011 AND (LIMIT- TO (SUBJAREA, "BUSI"))

consideró que no era necesario en el análisis de términos reales de las investigaciones, razón por la cual, se analizaron 19 términos. En la Figura 1 se muestra el mapa de co-ocurrencias resultante.

## Figura 1.

### *Mapa de co-ocurrencias*



Fuente: Elaboración de los autores a partir del análisis de datos.

El programa generó tres clústeres de palabras que están correlacionadas. El primer clúster (color rojo) agrupa un total de 9 términos a saber: Impacto, investigación, influencia, modelo, calidad, riesgo, trabajo, valor de originalidad y reputación organizacional. El segundo clúster (color verde) agrupa 6 términos, factor, necesidad, calidad del servicio, estudiante, lealtad del estudiante y satisfacción del estudiante. Por último, el tercer clúster (color azul) agrupa cuatro términos, HEIs (Higher Education Institutions), imagen, reputación y stakeholders.

El primer clúster aborda las investigaciones respecto de los modelos de reputación organizacional enfocados en el análisis del impacto, la influencia y los riesgos. Dentro de esos estudios están, la investigación sobre el impacto de las dimensiones del valor de marca en la reputación universitaria en Georgia (Khoshtaria et al., 2020), el análisis de cómo influyen las actividades de marketing en la reputación de las HEIs desde la gestión de las impresiones (Angulo-Ruiz et al., 2022) y un estudio que abordó los modelos de mercadeo relacional en educación y su articulación con el docente universitario (Gómez-Bayona et al., 2019). El segundo clúster, se centra en el estudio del estudiante, sus necesidades y los factores que afectan su satisfacción y su lealtad, así como la calidad en el servicio, entre ellos están, la investigación que estudia el efecto de la calidad del servicio en la lealtad del estudiante y el rol mediador de la satisfacción (Khoshtaria et al., 2016), la aplicación del método Servqual (Service Quality) para la evaluación de la calidad de los servicios educativos en la educación superior (Ulewicz, 2014), el modelo de cambio de gestión basado en el empoderamiento y su relación con la mejora de la calidad universitaria (Sanusi et al., 2016). Por último, el tercer clúster, relaciona la reputación con la imagen y los stakeholders en las HEIs, dentro de los estudios están, la relación entre la imagen y la reputación en las universidades públicas españolas (Del-Castillo-Feito et al., 2019), una revisión de la literatura sobre la imagen y la reputación en educación superior (Lafuente-Ruiz-de-Sabando et al., 2018) y una investigación que abordó la reputación en la educación superior a través de la proximidad de los grupos estratégicos (Finch et al., 2015).

Una vez analizadas las correlaciones temáticas encontradas en los artículos revisados, se procede a abordar y dar respuesta al primer cuestionamiento sobre ¿qué se ha entendido como gestión de la reputación?, ya que desde la perspectiva de los directivos universitarios es importante comprender como gestionar la reputación a partir de la comprensión de las actividades y procesos que abarca, lo que presenta un importante reto desde la gerencia estratégica. Razón por la cual, en la Tabla 1 se presentan los diversos acercamientos y abordajes conceptuales sobre la gestión de la reputación. Cabe aclarar, que se incluyen menciones de la gestión, dado que los conceptos sobre gestión de la reputación, fueron escasos.

**Tabla 1.***¿Qué se ha entendido como gestión de la reputación?*

<b>Gestión de la reputación</b>	<b>Autores</b>
Los activos intangibles como la identidad, la imagen y la reputación corporativa aparecen como elementos muy valiosos que presentan una importancia creciente en la gestión de las universidades. Las IES han entrado en un contexto de mercado donde la sostenibilidad requiere la adopción de más pautas de gestión empresarial.	(Ruão y Carrillo, 2005)
A una empresa le lleva tiempo construir su reputación a través de una gestión adecuada.	(Foroudi et al., 2014, 2016)
La gestión de la reputación requiere una comprensión de la construcción de la reputación y de cómo los diferentes grupos objetivo la perciben y responden.	(Ressler y Abratt, 2009)
La tarea clave en la gestión exitosa de la reputación es determinar qué quiere cada parte interesada	(Argenti, 2000, p. 177)
Las propiedades importantes de la gestión de la reputación incluyen su “naturaleza estratégica, que asegura una transición de soluciones locales (relacionadas con la actitud de la sociedad hacia la organización) con efecto a corto plazo a la lógica de múltiples pasos de un progreso constante y sostenible hacia la meta”	(Oleynik y Lapshov, 2003)
Para lograr el objetivo principal de la universidad, satisfacer las necesidades de la sociedad y sus ciudadanos individuales en servicios educativos de alta calidad, se necesita un trabajo eficaz de los empleados y departamentos de la universidad en su conjunto, lo que conduce a la creación de una reputación positiva. Para lograrlo, se deben utilizar los mecanismos de gestión de la reputación.	(Roberts, 2009)
La reputación es difícil de controlar, pero es importante y crucial para la competitividad de las empresas que gestionan su reputación para ser más coherentes en sus acciones y un mayor diálogo con su público.	(Federkeil, 2009, p. 32)
El tamaño, las estructuras, la cultura, los estándares y la credibilidad de la empresa son influyentes de percepción tangibles e intangibles. Esta idea carece de una comparación entre identidad e imagen. Suponiendo que la imagen (externa) está vinculada a la identidad (interna), se debe considerar que la gestión y el control de la reputación se realizan desde dentro de la organización	(Davies et al., 2003, 2004)
La gestión de la reputación en las universidades es importante para la eficiencia, para retener un puesto en un sistema político-administrativo y para mejorar su capacidad de actuar con eficacia.	(Hemsley-Brown, 2012)  (Munisamy et al., 2014)
la gestión de la reputación puede considerarse un proceso racional o instrumental. Como se observa en los estudios de branding	(Wæraas y Maor, 2015, pág.5)

<b>Gestión de la reputación</b>	<b>Autores</b>
relacionados con las ciencias políticas, los líderes centrales de las organizaciones públicas, sus expertos en comunicación o los especialistas en tecnología utilizarán estrategias sistemáticas para posicionar sus organizaciones en la perspectiva de las partes interesadas internas y externas para promover sus objetivos e intereses básicos	
Como reflejo de la importancia y la justificación de las estrategias de gestión de la reputación en los negocios, las instituciones de educación superior han comenzado a centrarse cada vez más en la marca, la comunicación corporativa y la reputación como prioridades estratégicas	(Waeraas y Solbakk, 2009)
<p>La intención de la gestión de la reputación es proporcionar apoyo y desarrollar la buena voluntad y la holgura en general, así como generar apoyo específico para adquirir recursos.</p> <p>Por lo tanto, las instituciones de educación superior y las universidades tienen el desafío cada vez mayor de gestionar lo que representan y cómo se perciben, y una institución puede tener muchos perfiles diferentes que deben alinearse bajo una sola marca paraguas</p>	(Cyert y March 1963) (Easton, 1965)
la gestión de la reputación puede caracterizarse por "pirotecnia retórica - bonita a la vista pero de poca consecuencia estructural" o puede lograr un equilibrio entre ser "excesivamente vaga o irrealmente aspiracional o ambas cosas".	(Morphew y Hartley, 2006, pp. 456-7)
<p>Se pueden formular tres perspectivas diferentes sobre las fuerzas que impulsan la gestión de la reputación.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. la reputación está relacionada con un contexto cultural y social,</li> <li>2. la gestión de la reputación puede considerarse un proceso racional o instrumental, y</li> <li>3. el perfil de reputación puede reflejar principalmente los valores y normas culturales convencionales de la organización.</li> </ol>	(Christensen et al., 2007)
con base en una perspectiva neoinstitucional o socialconstructivista, la reputación está relacionada con un contexto cultural y social global más amplio y, por lo tanto, las organizaciones pueden estar fuertemente influenciadas por el macroambiente o pueden utilizar este contexto	(Meyer et al., 2006)
La gestión de la reputación se basa en mitos y símbolos, no en la realidad; por lo tanto, puede ser "hipócrita" o "doble discurso"	(Brunsson, 1989)
Los actores intermediarios en los campos organizacionales, como organizaciones internacionales, firmas consultoras globales, organizaciones de monitoreo y certificación, y organizaciones de medios y no gubernamentales, brindan información "objetiva" (por	(Elsbach y Kramer, 1996).

<b>Gestión de la reputación</b>	<b>Autores</b>
ejemplo, clasificaciones, recetas y estándares) que influye en la gestión de la reputación	
Los símbolos de reputación pueden ser un medio para fines instrumentales. La interpretación racional de la gestión de la reputación incluye una perspectiva económica o de racionalidad limitada	(Rindova y Martins 2012)
el perfil de reputación puede reflejar principalmente valores y normas culturales convencionales de la organización, como sus características institucionales centrales. Los líderes promueven las "necesidades de la historia" en su marca.	(Selznick, 1957)
Los símbolos de reputación indican dependencia de la ruta; es decir, representan las "raíces" que determinan las "rutas" o trayectorias a seguir	(Krasner, 1988)
El camino cultural reflejado en los símbolos puede estar asociado con un contexto macroinstitucional, características culturales sistémicas o características microculturales de un país.	(Fombrun, 2012)
La gestión de la reputación es el uso organizado y sistemático de símbolos reputacionales.	(Busuioc, 2016)
las instituciones de educación superior realizan una inversión sustancial en el desarrollo y la gestión de sus marcas, lo cual es una tarea compleja dado que los servicios en cuestión son a la vez intangibles e inseparables	(Curtis et al., 2009)

Fuente: Elaboración de los autores

Según lo evidenciado, la gestión de la reputación implica un enfoque estratégico para gestionar los activos intangibles de la universidad como la identidad, la imagen, la marca, y en general, sus símbolos reputacionales. Pero la tarea más importante es la necesidad de un diálogo y comunicación constante con los diferentes stakeholders para conocer y comprender lo que éstos requieren, perciben y responden, así como para desarrollar su buena voluntad. La gestión de la reputación también requiere de comprender tanto el contexto externo e interno de la universidad. En el contexto externo se debe considerar el macroambiente entendiendo el comportamiento socioeconómico y cultural a nivel local y global. En el contexto interno es importante el trabajo eficaz de los empleados y departamentos de la universidad, así como el tamaño, las estructuras, la cultura, los estándares y la credibilidad.

Por otra parte, y dando alcance al segundo interrogante, en la Tabla 2 se aborda cómo se construye la reputación, para lo cual se identificaron las dimensiones y factores desde los cuales los autores

consultados sugieren tomar como base y referente en la implementación y desarrollos de sus planes estratégicos de negocio, especialmente en las universidades que tienen áreas de encargadas de la reputación que usualmente dependen o están relacionadas con el departamento o área de marketing.

**Tabla 2.**

*¿Cómo se construye la reputación?*

<b>Dimensiones y constructos</b>	<b>Autores</b>
<p>Se identifican tres dimensiones de la reputación de una universidad: calidad del desempeño académico, calidad del desempeño externo y compromiso emocional.</p> <p>En el contexto de las instituciones de educación superior, se sugiere que las descripciones de "carácter estratégico" estén vinculadas a características como la tradición, el patrimonio y el prestigio.</p>	<p>(Alessandri et al., 2006)</p>
<p>La reputación organizacional se puede construir o institucionalizar a través de un tercero de alto estatus o de las evaluaciones de los interesados.</p>	<p>(Rindova et al. 2005)</p>
<p>Dos son los elementos clave en el proceso de construcción de reputación: la sociedad civil que recibe e interpreta información sobre nuevos proyectos empresariales y las comunicaciones de los medios, es decir, los canales a través de los cuales la información sobre proyectos empresariales llega a posibles interesados.</p>	<p>(Carayannis y Campbell, 2012) (Fombrun y Shanley 1990)</p>
<p>...incorpora las opiniones de los interesados internos y externos. y es relativa a los pares o rivales de un sujeto.</p> <p>Los elementos incluidos en esta dimensión son más intangibles e incluyen elementos como la confianza, la admiración y el afecto.</p>	<p>(Fombrun, 1996) (de Chernatony, 1999)  (Chun, 2005)  (Bromley, 1993)</p>
<p>En el contexto de las instituciones de educación superior, la "fuerte tradición" emerge como un elemento clave.</p>	<p>(Yang et al., 2008)  (Chevalier y Conlon, 2003)</p>
<p>Mediante la evaluación comparativa efectiva de la reputación (por lo que se conoce a una corporación en base a acciones pasadas) a la identidad (lo que una corporación defiende y por lo que desea ser conocida), se comunican mensajes positivos y consistentes, se fomentan las relaciones a largo plazo con las partes interesadas y se fomenta el éxito del mercado logrado.</p> <p>La reputación corporativa se basa en una evaluación general y global; la reputación se refleja en los juicios de consenso y es evaluativa (es decir, bueno contra malo).</p>	<p>(Roberts y Dowling 1997)  (Roberts y Dowling 2002)</p>

<b>Dimensiones y constructos</b>	<b>Autores</b>
La reputación corporativa solo puede construirse durante un largo período de tiempo.	(Srivastava et al. 2001)
Ganar reputación como una institución educativa es un proceso largo y arduo que requiere un compromiso con la excelencia en la entrega de resultados educativos y de investigación de calidad.	(Arambewela y Hall 2009)
Durante el formación de reputación, los medios de comunicación son críticamente importantes porque "proporcionan un foro donde las organizaciones y las partes interesadas debaten qué constituye una buena organización y qué organizaciones tienen buena reputación "	(Deephouse, 2000, p. 1,097)
Es impactada por la productividad de la investigación.	(Grunig, 1997)
La reputación se gana mientras que el estado se confiere.	(Podolny, 2010)
A medida que las universidades se han vuelto más expuestas a las fuerzas competitivas del mercado, el marketing se ha vuelto más importante para contribuir a la creación de imágenes institucionales favorables que ayuden a atraer estudiantes, personal y recursos.	(Wilkins y Huisman, 2015, págs. 1256–1257)
Propuesta de modelo conceptual para medir la reputación en el campo de las escuelas de negocios basado en el RepTrack Pulse y Reprtrack Index del Reputation Institute.	(Vidaver-Cohen, 2007)
Mencionan cinco elementos que comprenden la reputación general de una universidad, a saber: liderazgo, enseñanza, investigación, servicio y equidad. Se forma una reputación durante un largo período de tiempo a través de la interacción social y las comunicaciones públicas.	(Brewer y Zhao, 2010)
Cada contacto, cada mención de los medios, cada rumor, cada filtración, cada chisme desempeñará su papel en formar una impresión general de la posición de una organización.	(Rayner, 2005, p. 1)
La reputación de las IES se ve como una evaluación pública, una opinión sobre la universidad, que se crea bajo la influencia de diversos factores de su entorno externo e interno. La reputación de una institución de educación superior se puede dividir en externa e interna:  - Reputación externa: evaluación de las actividades de la universidad por parte de representantes de su entorno externo;  - Reputación interna: opinión del personal docente, el personal, los estudiantes de posgrado, los aspirantes, los candidatos a doctorado y los estudiantes de la universidad sobre dicha universidad.	(Roberts, 2009)
Seis factores que influyen en la elección de los estudiantes de un IES, que fueron la reputación de calidad de la institución, sus conexiones o colaboraciones con otras instituciones familiares para los estudiantes, el personal de alta calidad, el tamaño de su base de alumnos, el número de estudiantes matriculados en la institución, y el número de calificaciones de los estudiantes que se reconocen.	(Mazzarol y Soutar, 2002)

<b>Dimensiones y constructos</b>	<b>Autores</b>
Los estudiantes consideraron la disponibilidad de instalaciones, alojamiento y becas como parte de la reputación de una institución durante su proceso de toma de decisiones.	(Bodycott, 2009)
Los estudiantes consideran las cualidades de los hoteles y restaurantes, el alojamiento, las instalaciones de gimnasio, la biblioteca y las instalaciones de laboratorios multimedia, ya que podrían ayudarlos en su estudio y brindarles una experiencia industrial real.	(Shan et al., 2013)
Se enfatiza en la importancia de la calidad del servicio y el establecimiento de relaciones a largo plazo como el último medio para crear la reputación sostenible de las IES en lugar de centrarse en sus ingresos e instalaciones.	(Petruzzellis y Romanazzi, 2010)
Dentro de los elementos fundamentales está el carácter estratégico de la educación innovadora y el desarrollo de credenciales empleables.	(McCormick y Zhao, 2005) (Wickramasinghe y Perera, 2010)
La reputación está influenciada por las experiencias académicas, relacionales y físicas interconectadas de los estudiantes.	(Sajtos et al., 2015)
La reputación de las organizaciones públicas se divide en cuatro dimensiones: performativa, moral, técnica / profesional y procedimental.	(Hemsley-Brown, 2012) (Munisamy, et al., 2014)
Se ha interpretado de manera muy limitada, ya que se basa principalmente en una sola actividad académica (investigación), un producto de esa actividad (artículos de revistas revisados por pares) y en una medida de ese producto (citas). En todo caso, esta práctica se está volviendo más establecida y extendida en un entorno digital global altamente competitivo y abierto.	(Nicholas et al. 2015)
Se destaca el hecho de que el valor de la reputación es moderado por el grupo de partes interesadas y el país considerado.	(Ali et al., 2015)
A pesar de que existen muchos factores que afectan la reputación en el campo académico, las condiciones de los profesores y estudiantes, como los salarios y las tasas de graduación, aparecen como relevantes en la literatura.	(Volkwein y Sweitzer, 2006)
Se relaciona con liderazgo, docencia, investigación, servicio ofrecido y calidad	(Brewer & Zhao, 2010)
Se ha argumentado que las opiniones sobre la reputación de investigación de una universidad se basan principalmente en publicaciones de investigación.	(Clemens et al., 1995)
En un entorno que pone un énfasis significativo en la productividad de la investigación, el mantra de "publicar o perecer" impregna a las universidades a través de la ubicación geográfica y la disciplina	(De Rond y Miller, 2005)

<b>Dimensiones y constructos</b>	<b>Autores</b>
Muchas o todas las organizaciones en una categoría dada pueden tener la misma o similar reputación en medidas particulares, y las reputaciones pueden existir a nivel grupal.	(Wolf y Jenkins, 2018)

Fuente: Elaboración de los autores

En resumen, la construcción de la reputación puede desarrollarse a partir de diversas dimensiones y sobre todo desde diferentes enfoques. La reputación es el resultado de la calidad del desempeño académico, del desempeño externo y compromiso emocional, de las evaluaciones y juicios de stakeholders tanto internos como externos, de la sociedad que recibe la información y los medios de comunicación, y de la fuerte tradición de la universidad. En este sentido es preciso mencionar de forma reiterativa, que la reputación se construye en un largo período de tiempo, y está grandemente influenciada por la calidad de sus procesos de investigación y sus indicadores de productividad.

De igual forma, se evidencia otras dimensiones como la creación de imagen institucional, los elementos dentro de la universidad tales como el liderazgo, la enseñanza, la investigación, el servicio y la equidad. También se menciona la disponibilidad y calidad de las instalaciones, alojamientos, laboratorios, bibliotecas y becas, así como la calidad del servicio, las condiciones de los profesores, sus salarios y las tasas de graduación. Además, se afirma que el carácter estratégico de la educación innovadora puede generar mejoras en la percepción de la reputación. Por otra parte, y desde la perspectiva del estudiante quien es reconocido como stakeholder principal, se toman en cuenta sus experiencias académicas, relacionales y físicas.

Adicionalmente, se hizo una revisión sobre los modelos de gestión de la reputación en las HEIs o IES, y se encontró que la gestión es un elemento clave para manejar las relaciones y las percepciones de los públicos internos y externos. En la búsqueda realizada se encontraron dos propuestas de modelos para la gestión estratégica de la reputación en las universidades. El primero propone tres elementos clave que están relacionados con un sistema de ideas y principios: 1) el contexto institucional, 2) el marco de reputación institucional, y 3) la estrategia y el marco operativo (Maringe y Gibbs, 2009, p. 140).

El segundo, define la gestión en tres fases de forma secuencial: 1) Conocer, que implica la identificación de las percepciones de los stakeholders y los resultados de las funciones sustantivas de la IES. 2) Decidir, sobre lo que más aporta valor y que diferencia a la institución para luego planear la hoja de ruta. 3) Innovar, que implica la acción de las decisiones tomadas, la inclusión de toda la universidad y una estrategia de comunicación efectiva y eficiente (Mora, 2015, p. 53).

Dentro de la gestión de la reputación en IES es importante entender la importancia del papel del marketing para comunicar el valor, la diversidad de los stakeholders y el enfoque de la institución. En especial cuatro áreas donde el papel del marketing es transcendental: la complejidad de la oferta, el papel social de las IES, la importancia creciente del desempeño financiero, y el enfoque en el mercado que ve a los estudiantes como unos consumidores informados y con necesidades diferentes (Gibbs y Knapp, 2012).

## **5. Discusión y conclusiones**

El análisis realizado reveló que la gestión de la reputación debe ser una prioridad estratégica, ya que influye en la sostenibilidad de las universidades, así como en su eficiencia y eficacia. Se encarga de administrar lo que la universidad representa y como es percibida, ya que tiene una gran influencia, y a su vez es influenciada por las opiniones de los públicos de interés, por lo cual es imprescindible conocer las necesidades y deseos de los diversos stakeholders, porque esta información es la clave para una buena gestión reputacional, cuyos resultados e indicadores se ven reflejados en el mediano y largo plazo. La gestión de la reputación está inmersa en un contexto cultural permeado por los valores y las normas de dicha cultura, y requiere del esfuerzo constante y sostenido de la parte administrativa y docente de una universidad.

También se evidenció que la reputación es, en efecto, un elemento intangible de vital importancia para las universidades, pero que representa un reto importante para su gestión ya que es de difícil control por su dependencia de las valoraciones que realizan los diversos grupos de interés, quienes tienen diferentes percepciones de acuerdo con sus necesidades, expectativas y el grado de importancia, así como el valor que asignan a los elementos tanto tangibles como intangibles del servicio de educación prestado. De igual forma, se encontró una fuerte relación entre la reputación

y los símbolos reputacionales que son criticados por su falta de coherencia entre lo que proyectan y lo que en realidad son, respecto a la institución que representan, por lo que la reputación de la universidad se vuelve más retórica y aspiracional que real, y es tachada de hipócrita. En consecuencia, es necesario trabajar en diferentes frentes, como la comunicación y la marca, pero también, en la racionalidad de la reputación, y para ello, las métricas y rankings se convierten en un elemento fundamental para dar mayor objetividad en la valoración de los resultados.

Las tendencias temáticas de investigación sobre la reputación y su gestión, mostraron tres enfoques claros. El primero, relacionado con los aportes en la construcción de modelos de reputación, el estudio de su conformación, impacto, influencias y riesgos en el contexto económico y social, que entrega hallazgos importantes que los directivos de universidades pueden tomar en cuenta en la gestión estratégica y reputacional que realizan. Una segunda tendencia temática, investiga el papel del estudiante como actor y usuario principal del servicio de educación sus percepciones, necesidades, y los factores que impactan en la satisfacción y lealtad de los mismos. Estas investigaciones aportan información relevante para construir un mejor “customer journey map” adaptado al estudiante como co-creador de su proceso de aprendizaje, el cual le proporcionará una experiencia que se espera, sea perciba como valiosa para su formación profesional y personal. Y, por último, la tercera tendencia, es el estudio de la relación entre la imagen y la reputación a través de los diversos stakeholders. Las investigaciones han concluido que existen una relación de influencia de la imagen sobre la reputación, y que tanto la imagen como la reputación dependen de las valoraciones que realizan los diversos stakeholders, y con especial atención en las percepciones de los estudiantes.

También se observó que, las principales dimensiones de la reputación pueden dividirse en dos grupos, el primero de ellos las dimensiones relacionadas con lo racional, entre las que se identifica de forma importante la investigación y las publicaciones como principal elemento que influye en los indicadores y rankings donde las universidades esperan posicionarse con resultados educativos que evidencien su compromiso con la excelencia. Otra dimensión importante, es la relacionada con la gestión de espacios físicos como las instalaciones, bibliotecas, restaurantes, laboratorios etc. Sobre todo, para formación a nivel de pregrado. El segundo grupo de dimensiones, son relacionadas con la experiencia del estudiante en su proceso formativo, y que particularmente se

enfocan en elementos de corte más intangible y perceptivo, como el reconocimiento de la tradición, el patrimonio, el prestigio, la confianza, la admiración, el afecto, el liderazgo, los procesos de enseñanza, de investigación, servicio y equidad, que sumados permiten evaluar la calidad del desempeño académico, la calidad del desempeño externo y el compromiso emocional, así como el potencial para la creación de valor.

Por otra parte, también se resalta la importancia de la comunicación, los medios de comunicación y la interacción social en la construcción de la reputación, al igual que el papel del marketing para gestionar dichos esfuerzos, convirtiéndose en un recurso estratégico valioso que permitirá entregar el mensaje que la institución desea transmitir a los diferentes grupos de interés, iniciando por los grupos internos con el fin de generar la satisfacción y la lealtad, y los grupos externos con mensajes que atraigan tanto a estudiantes como a docentes calificados.

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## Artículo tres

### Validity of the Multidimensional Reputation Perception Scale in Private Universities

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#### **Abstract:**

University reputation is the result of the assessments that the stakeholders make of the university, especially the user of the education service, the student. The literature has shown an important impact of reputation on the student's perception of the university, and it has been related to success, competitiveness, sustainability, stakeholder decision-making and the differential of the value offer. Therefore, its evaluation has been the subject of several studies that seek to measure and assess reputation in higher education to understand how to manage it. This article evaluates the psychometric properties of the reputation scale in students at private universities in Colombia. The methodology used included an adaptation of the scale to the Spanish language, content validity analysis, reliability analysis, exploratory factor analysis and confirmatory factor analysis. The results showed the validity and reliability of the scale and, through the analyses carried out, provided evidence of the scale's robustness.

**Keywords:** reputation; universities; high quality; validation; psychometric assessment; management.

#### **1. Introduction**

University reputation has become a key determinant for higher education institutions (HEIs). However, both the management and measurement of reputation can be challenging, as reputation is based on the perception that stakeholders, including students, have of the institution and therefore presents a high degree of subjectivity (Verčič et al., 2016). For this reason, the results of such perceptions may vary among groups of stakeholders according to the level of fulfillment of the expectations that each group has with the organization (Bromley, 2002). In addition, as confirmed by Rindova (2005), reputation is the result of the exchanges of information resulting from the social interaction developed by the different actors (e.g., students, teachers, and administrators) in an institution. It has even been stated that reputation is an unconscious perception (Barnett et al., 2006). But being a

multidimensional construct (Rindova et al., 2005; Vidaver-Cohen, 2007), it is evaluated not only by the perception of different groups including society in general, but also by various university ranking systems, and in fact, it also includes positive media coverage (Munisamy et al., 2014).

The information that both the media and diverse groups have about an institution result in its prestige or reputation and is often more important than, even, its actual quality, because it becomes a representation of perceived excellence that significantly influences the decisions of prospective students (Gatfield, 1999). Moreover, in fact, it has been claimed that reputation influences the attitudes that students have towards a course or university (Davies, 2000). Therefore, reputation is a determining factor in attracting students, since it influences the selection and evaluation of the quality of universities (Verčič et al., 2016) and their competitive advantage (Bromley, 2002). However, the higher education service requires the student (Mora, 2015, p. 29) to make use of it, that is, to have an experience (Barnett et al., 2006), in order to be evaluated, and this evaluation is based on his perception of what he considers to be of value for his education (Vidaver-Cohen, 2007). In this regard, both the experience and learning that the student has, will influence the development of their competencies, and the performance of HEIs in research and innovation processes, the position in rankings (Mora, 2015, pp. 50–51). In addition, the result obtained in national and international standardized evaluation tests; this result becomes an indicator with which the educational quality of HEIs is assessed, and as a result, their reputation (OECD & International Bank for Reconstruction and Development and The World Bank, 2013). In other words, reputation influences the processes of attraction, student experience, as well as their perception and insertion into the labor market.

Therefore, HEI administrators have had to face the challenge of reputation management according to their experience and have invested significant financial resources to achieve favorable perceptions (Lafuente-Ruiz-de-Sabando et al., 2018) both from students and from their other stakeholders (Mora, 2015, p. 69). These stakeholders can be categorized as internal and external; within the internal stakeholders are those related to academia such as students, professors, scientists, among others, and within the external stakeholders are political actors, authorities or NGOs, among others (Verčič et al., 2016, p. 165). In the end,

what administrators seek is to increase the reputation of HEIs and position themselves in the market with innovative strategies (Suomi, 2014) in each of the substantive functions (Mora, 2015, p. 34).

In addition, there has been growing competition between public and private universities in terms of attracting students and obtaining external resources for the development of research and social projection (Rachmadhani et al., 2018). For these reasons, and in order to comply with quality assurance and build reputation, some universities have opted for accreditations and certifications of high educational quality, both international and national (Ministerio de Educación Nacional [MEN], 2001, 2016). Moreover to making use of university ranking systems worldwide, the most widely used to measure the performance of HEIs being the Academic Ranking of World Universities (ARWU), Times Higher Education (THE) and Quacquarelli Symonds (QS) (Chen & Esangbedo, 2018), although they are widely criticised (Parellada & Álvarez, 2017).

Similarly, organizations like the Inter-American Development Bank (IADB), the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) and the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD), among others, as well as the Colombian government have focused on improving the quality of education in the country, recognising that it is the basis for economic development (Banco Interamericano de Desarrollo [BID], 2014; Ministerio de Educación Nacional [MEN], 2019; OECD, 2019; United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization [UNESCO], 2015). In order to improve quality in Colombia, the National Accreditation System and bodies such as the National Accreditation Council (CNA), which grants high quality accreditation certificates, and the National Council for Higher Education (CESU), which proposes policies and plans for the development of higher education, were created. However, a gap is evident among HEIs categorised as Universities, which opt for national high quality certifications, since 37% of the total number of active HEIs are accredited (Sistema Nacional de Información de la Educación Superior [SNIES], 2020). And if the analysis is extended to other categorisations such as Professional Technical Institutions, Technological Institutions, and University Institutions or Technological Schools, the gap is even wider, since only 23% are accredited. In this sense, it is important to point out that high quality accreditation is a

voluntary certification that allows HEIs to add value to their academic offer in order to face local, national and international competitors (Consejo Nacional de Acreditación CNA, 2006).

Given this scenario, and taking into account factors such as the restriction of public spending on education and the increase in private resources of families to pay for their children's education, together with the low income of these families, has generated inequalities in access and coverage of public and private education. There are also the implications for consumer behavior and the relevance of students' perceptions of HEI performance, since this performance is evaluated as the university's reputation. For these reasons, it is necessary to generate new research on the subject, since empirical research on the assessment of reputation in the area of higher education and from marketing is still insufficient (Del-Castillo-Feito et al., 2019), despite the fact that it plays a relevant role in the management of HEIs.

Following the above, this article aims to contribute to the development of research on reputation in HEIs by adapting the reputation perception scale developed by Del-Castillo-Feito et al. (2019), to the Spanish language and to the Colombian context. Keeping as population the university students, which is the same population evaluated in the original study, in order to confirm the measurement model and its psychometric properties in another context. The reasons for this selection revolve around the potential of such a scale to assess reputation perception in universities on the domains of governance, innovation, citizenship, service, performance, and work climate. With the evidence obtained in the validation of this instrument, it is hoped to contribute, firstly, with the strengthening of its use due to its growing popularity among the academic community. Secondly, with the exposure of its robustness to the academic community, since the studies developed have been based on the instrument in its exploratory stages, so that so far, a more conclusive vision is lacking. Additionally, with the final variables that made up the instrument, we sought to establish the behaviour of the sample under study by creating subgroups with the specific characteristics of the individuals.

To achieve this objective, the paper is divided into four sections. First, a theoretical approach to reputation is presented, followed by a description of the methodology used, the results obtained and, finally, a discussion of the findings and conclusions.

## **2. Theoretical approach to reputation**

The concept of corporate reputation dates back to the 1970s when the relevance of different stakeholder assessments of company reputation began to be identified (Spence, 1973) and the importance of public reputational signals for company performance and competitiveness became evident (Caves & Porter, 1977). Based on the above, conceptual proposals of the term reputation are generated, one of which mentions that reputation consists of grouping attributes and characteristics of an organisation that are expressed as a result of past activities and actions (Weigelt & Camerer, 1988). Years later, reputation was defined as the perception that stakeholders have of the company, considering its past behaviour, its future projection and its differential in comparison with other rival companies (Fombrun, 1996, p. 72).

Reputation, on the other hand, refers to the collective knowledge of stakeholders about the company in its organisational field (Brown et al., 2006; Rindova et al., 2005). It is also suggested that a company's reputation is stronger when the firm is prominent in its organisational field, i.e. there are more interested parties who know about it, and it is positively evaluated by stakeholders (Deephouse, 2000; Rindova et al., 2010). Other work mentions that reputation is predicted by past performance (Fombrun & Shanley, 1990), as well as by costly investments in pricing and advertising (Milgrom & Roberts, 1986; Shapiro, 1983). In fact, from a marketing perspective, a good reputation results in customer maintenance and loyalty (Chun, 2005).

The concept of reputation has traditionally been developed from the stakeholder approach (Freeman, 1984, 2004), in which it represents the result of the evaluations that internal stakeholders, such as owners, employees, managers, etc., and external ones, such as suppliers, customers, partners, investors, etc., make about the organisation itself (Carrió, 2013, p. 14; Lafuente-Ruiz-de-Sabando et al., 2018). Accordingly, reputation is described as a socially constructed asset, which is created and sustained through a legitimisation process that involves a constant and thorough assessment of the organisation's performance in each period, resulting in the organisation's reputation (Rao, 1994; De Quevedo et al., 2005), or as the result of the customer's assessment of an organisation and their response to all interactions they have with the company and even with any of its representatives, involving employees, general managers, senior managers, junior managers, and other customers (Walsh & Beatty,

2007). In a synthetic version, reputation is simply the way in which the organisation is perceived (Doorley & García, 2015).

Within the university context, a university with a good reputation is described as one that has a good standing in the community in which it provides its educational services, so that the degree obtained from it has greater value in the eyes of the business sector, which benefits its graduates and generates confidence in the students' parents (Khoi, 2021). Both trust and reputation of HEIs affect students' identification with each institution (Heffernan et al., 2018), which is why it is important to know how to assess reputation, and several authors have made important contributions (Chen & Esangbedo, 2018; Sontaité & Bakanauskas, 2011; Verčič et al., 2016) among others and adaptations to both schools and universities.

In the systematic review conducted by Amado and Juarez (2022) it was recognized that there are several variables that influence reputation such as identity and image, communication, rankings and other indicators such as multidimensionality, research, stakeholders, value, brand and symbols, among others. Reputation, in turn, influences other variables like financing and support, assessments and behavior, enrollment, preference, recognition and loyalty, decisions of students and other, access to the labor market, and others. In the systematic review conducted by Prakash (2021), it was found that within the processes involved in providing a higher education service, there is a two-way interaction between students, the faculty and support staff members, identifying 40 dimensions that operationalised service quality in HEIs, with reliability, responsiveness, tangibility, empathy, assurance, programme design, academic and non-academic processes, reputation and institutions being the most relevant ones found.

University reputation has been established as the strategic factor of institutional character that measures the credibility of universities (Chen & Esangbedo, 2018), it is also defined as the vision or representation that people form in their minds from their interaction with the university, its processes, people and the information they obtain from these interactions (Cole & Bruch, 2006), and like organizational reputation, university reputation is formed as a collective representation that stakeholders make over a long period of time (Alessandri et al., 2006), These publics of interest or stakeholders have been categorized as internal and external (Verčič et al., 2016), within the internal ones are the professors, undergraduate,

graduate and doctoral students, applicants, administrative staff, teaching and research assistants, department heads, deans, area and school coordinators (Reznik & Yudina, 2018; Verčič et al., 2016) and within the external ones are suppliers, government, international organization, business sector, investors (Amado & Juárez, 2022), external evaluators such as accreditation agencies and administrative peers, academic peers, patent university (Vidaver-Cohen, 2007).

Although a systematic and complete proposal has not been developed that clearly identifies university stakeholders, it is recognised that both groups evaluate institutions in very different ways due to the knowledge that each one has of the academic system (Vogler, 2020). However, there is evidence of a clear influence of the perceptions of internal groups on the perceptions of external groups (Bromley, 2002), which influences the assessment and rating of universities (Del-Castillo-Feito et al., 2019). Therefore, the ratings that can be produced are subjective, as it is nothing more than the way the university and its performance is perceived and how these can lead to the satisfaction of its customers, in this case, the students (Plewa et al., 2016). Consequently, universities, being recognised as highly reputable institutions, are conferred with attributes that are transferable to students and although they are not observable, they are widely valued by organisations, such as self-confidence, self-efficacy, commitment and other skills, and therefore graduates have better employment prospects (Drydakis, 2015).

Therefore, reputation management is crucial to ensure the survival and success of universities, as well as for the processes of attracting and retaining stakeholders (Del-Castillo-Feito et al., 2019), and is also a business strategy that involves an integration of general administrative functions, including communication and the delivery of value propositions (Goldring, 2015). In this sense, positive reputation can mean a reduction in costs, the possibility of setting higher prices and an increase in profits, in addition to improving purchase intention, attitude and brand loyalty (Jung & Seock, 2016), creating competitive barriers to entry and also generating sustained competitive advantage [28]. It also has a positive effect in terms of attracting students (Plewa et al., 2016) and even teachers, hence the importance for university administrators and managers to focus their attention on managing their reputation.

For assessing reputation in organisations in general, the most well-known instrument in the literature is the Reprack from Reputation Institute (Fombrun, 1996). Therefore, some authors have made adaptations to their economic sector and the characteristics of the organisations belonging to that sector such as banking, service industries, retailing, tourism and hospitality among others (Veh et al., 2019; Walker, 2010). In the case of higher education services, adaptations have also been made, one of the most cited being that of Vidaver-Cohen (2007) who assessed reputation in business schools using Reprack as an initial reference. Other studies, such as that of Sontaitė and Bakanauskas (2011) analysed measures of corporate reputation in higher education institutions from the consumer perspective, using a model built from the proposals of RepTrack, Vidaver-Cohen (2007), Walsh and Beatty (2007) among others. Martín-Miguel et al. (2020) built their model from scales already developed by other authors, such as Henderson and Kane (1991) and Verčič et al. (2016), to analyse the effect of sustainability, innovation, perceived performance, service quality, working environment and good governance on reputation in public schools at the graduate level, proposing a scale that assessed these variables; however, their results showed that only sustainability, service quality and good governance had an influence on reputation.

A recently used scale adapted by Del-Castillo-Feito et al. (2019) was selected for this study to measure reputation in Spanish universities. This scale has been used in other studies and contexts such as those developed by Del-Castillo-Feito et al (2020), Pascual-Nebreda et al. (2022), and Blanco-Gonzalez et al. (2021). The scale was adapted from the Vidaver-Cohen model (2007) and takes six reputation predictors (performance, innovation, citizenship, services, governance and workplace), which in turn were developed in the RepTrack model proposed by the Reputation Institute (2006). For the purposes of this analysis, a comparison is made of the factors and topics developed in the scales of the following three authors, Vidaver-Cohen (2007), the authors' original source (Del-Castillo-Feito et al., 2019), Angliss (2022), whose study takes up Vidaver-Cohen (2007) and the Reputation Institute (2006), as well as the scale proposed by Del-Castillo-Feito et al. (Del-Castillo-Feito et al., 2019) to analyze its composition.

Performance is recognized as an important predictor of reputation, especially at the strategic level, and is one of the seven predictors of reputation according to RepTrak (Ressler &

Abratt, 2009), adapted by Vidaver-Cohen (2007) and reoriented to the characteristics of university business schools, which is categorized as intellectual performance, relationship performance and financial performance. For Angliss (2022), performance is measured in two items, financial and future growth prospects, while Del-Castillo-Feito et al. (2019) addresses performance in research, in the profitability of work practices, but like Angliss (2022), in growth prospects. Innovation is understood by Vidaver-Cohen (2007) from curricular innovation, innovative teaching methods, to rapid adaptation to change. For Angliss (2022), innovation focuses on products and services, their entrepreneurial characteristics, the exploitation of opportunities and adaptation to change, and like Del-Castillo-Feito et al. (2019) who divide it into two, adaptation to change and teaching methods.

Similarly, the citizenship factor that focuses on the behavior and relationship of universities with the business sector, and in which Vidaver-Cohen (2007) addresses issues such as service to the community, good causes, positive influence on society. Angliss (2022) additionally addresses sustainability in the way of doing business, and Del-Castillo-Feito et al. (2019) includes concern for the welfare of stakeholders, as well as Vidaver-Cohen's positive influence and good causes. The characteristics of higher education services are measured by Vidaver-Cohen (2007) in terms of job placement of its graduates, skills training, high quality of training received, and good value for money. Angliss (2022) additionally addresses the issue of responsiveness to stakeholder needs and service support. For Del-Castillo-Feito et al. (2019) the coherence of the offer with market trends is relevant, and takes up the training of competent students and the quality-price ratio.

Governance is focused on the ethical and social behavior of the university, and for Vidaver-Cohen (2007) it addresses issues such as openness and transparency, demonstration of ethical behavior, fairness in transactions with stakeholders. Angliss (2022) takes up the same issues and only adds the fair way of doing business, while Del-Castillo-Feito et al. (2019) includes the vision of the objectives guiding the university, takes into consideration the opinions of stakeholders in management decisions, and like the previous two, integrates the issue of ethics and transparency. Finally, the workplace focused on the internal environment of the university, according to Vidaver-Cohen (2007) is measured by the way, in which the institution rewards employees, the concern for their welfare, and equal opportunities. For

Angliss (2022) equal opportunities focuses on "good opportunities", and for Del-Castillo-Feito et al. (2019) it is important to distinguish the competence of teachers and administrative staff, as well as the evaluation of the university as a good place to work.

After this analysis and a thorough review of the composition of the scale, the factors and its items, as well as, an understanding of the context of university education in Colombia, the decision to adapt the original scale proposed by Del-Castillo-Feito et al. (2019) was confirmed because of its closeness to higher education approaches, including research, the division of roles in the service, faculty and administrative staff, its market orientation, its consistency with other instruments and its completeness.

### **3. Materials and Methods**

#### **3.1. Design**

The focus of this study was a quantitative cross-sectional study, which sought to adapt and validate the customer reputation scale in undergraduate students at private universities in Colombia. The research and data collection protocol were approved by the Research Ethics Committee of the Universidad del Rosario in the Social Sciences Department. A translation and back-translation of the scale was carried out and a pilot test. Subsequently, a content validity analysis was performed, and the data collected from the surveys were analyzed by means of an exploratory factor analysis (EFA) performed in SPSS, followed by a confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) using SPSS AMOS.

#### **3.2. Sample and Participants**

The questionnaire was conducted at two universities with students enrolled in undergraduate programmes and of legal age. A total of 484 surveys were collected from undergraduate students in November and December 2021 and February and March 2022. For the application, teachers' support was requested. They invited their students, and those who were willing to participate responded freely.

The sample consisted of 285 women and 199 men. The age ranges were 328 participants aged between 18 and 21 years, 88 participants aged between 22 and 25 years, and a total of 68 participants over 25 years. Most of the students who responded to the survey were in their second and third year of their degree with 170 and 125 students each, 90 students in their first year, 63 students in their fourth year and 36 students in their fifth year.

### **3.3. Instrument**

For the assessment of reputation in the education sector, the scale proposed by Del-Castillo-Feito et al. (2019) was used, which evaluates the reputation of universities through 6 factors: performance, innovation, citizenship, services, governance and work place behaviour. The instrument contains 17 items or statements, and a ten-categorical Likert scale was used. The appendix A presents the codes and translations of the questions in both English and Spanish.

To adapt this scale, it was first translated into Spanish by two bilingual experts, since it was in English original presented in English. Subsequently, a back-translation into English was made and sent to two experts with doctoral degrees, who in turn reviewed the back-translations made and sent their acceptance, agreeing the back-translation with the original version. Also, a pilot test was also conducted to evaluate whether the language used was clear and lacked ambiguity and confusion to a total of 25 students, who took about 15 minutes to respond; however, no suggestions or comments were received on the questions or their response items beyond the length of the questionnaire.

### **3.4. Statistical procedures**

For the analysis, a validation process was carried out in three phases. The first one corresponded to content validity the Aiken V statistic (V); the second stage involved an exploratory factor analysis (EFA); and the third one verified the preliminary exploratory findings by means of a confirmatory factor analysis (CFA). A description of each of these stages is presented below.

The selection of this procedure differs from that of Del-Castillo-Feito (2019) and Del-Castillo-Feito (2019) (*Doctoral dissertation*), who focused their work on the development of a Composite Confirmatory Analysis (CPA) through partial least squares regression (PLS-SEM), which is characterised as being associated with the exploration and development of theory, whereas CFA is more often associated with theory confirmation (Aiken, 1985), thus CFA can provide new evidence of the validation of factors and scale items.

#### **3.4.1. Validation of content**

For the validation of the content of the scale, the Aiken V statistic (V), a coefficient that computes the ratio of a data obtained over the maximum response of the difference of possible values, was used. This statistical test is the result of the evaluation of a group of expert judges on a series of aspects of a scale (Aiken, 1980, 1985). The possible results are evaluated from 0 to 1, where a value of one means perfect agreement among the judges, and zero means general disagreement. The value of this statistic is considered acceptable after values greater than 0.7 (Merino & Livia, 2009). For this study, the following aspects of the Spanish version of the scales were assessed: relevance, pertinence, response induction, sufficiency, clarity, and wording, as well as the scale of the response.

#### **3.4.2. AFE**

With the data collected from the sample, a AFE was carried out to determine the possible clustering of the scale items in the student population under study. The statistic Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin (KMO) and Bartlett's test of sphericity (BTS) were used to check whether the data were suitable for this type of analysis. In the case of the KMO it was considered adequate for values greater than 0.80 (Godfrey et al., 2019) and for the BTS it was assessed that the value of  $X^2$  was sufficiently large with significance (p-value) less than 0.05. Subsequently, using the criteria established by Cronbach (1951), Godfrey (2019) and, Comrey and Lee (2013), the AFE was performed using the component method with Varimax rotation, eliminating items with factor loadings lower than 0.30, setting the exact number of factors to be extracted at six, as in the original scale.

### 3.4.3. AFC

For the development of the AFC of the scale, the conformation of the factors of the AFE was taken as a basis. The univariate and multivariate normality of the items of each of these factors were established, where it was found that they did not fit this type of distribution. Hence, for the operationalisation of the AFC, estimates were made based on the free asymptotic distribution for the reputation scale. The bootstrap was used, i.e. 2,000 bootstrap samples with 95% confidence intervals, taking Oppong and Agbedra (2016) as a reference for this procedure.

The results of the AFC were evaluated using the following statistics: Chi-square ( $X^2$ ), minimum discrepancy ratio ( $X^2/df$ ), goodness-of-fit index (GFI), adjusted goodness-of-fit index (AGFI) and root mean square error of approximation (RMSEA). According to the specialised literature of the AFC, especially the works of Marsh et al. (2004), Hooper et al. (2008) and Useche (2020), the recommended thresholds for each of the statistics were defined in Table 1.

**Table 1.**

*Thresholds for model evaluation.*

<b>Statistic</b>	<b>Recommended thresholds</b>
$X^2$	Better the smaller and with a p-value > 0.05
$X^2/df$	< 5
GFI	> 0.80
AGFI	> 0.80
RMSEA	< 0.08

When the AFC did not meet the recommended threshold, especially the RMSEA, it is proceeded to evaluate which variables had standardised regression values of less than 0.6 for elimination, as well as the modifications in the covariances of the errors of each of the factors from the largest and theoretically most parsimonious modification indices as described by Marsh et al. (2004).

Subsequently, the convergent analysis of the factors of each dimension was carried out, for which the Analysis of Variance Extracted (AVE), reliability evaluated from the CR statistic (composite reliability), as well as Cronbach's Alpha ( $\alpha$ ) were determined. In the case of AVE,

values greater than 0.5 were considered acceptable, for CR values greater than 0.7, and for  $\alpha$  values greater than 0.8. Finally, for the divergent analysis of the factors, the Maximum Shared Variance (MVS) and the Average Shared Variance (AVS) were calculated, being considered acceptable when MVS and AVS were lower than AVE.

### **3.5. Behaviour on variables**

With the variables resulting from the instrument, we proceeded to check the behaviour of the study participants on each of the variables. For this purpose, the variables age, semester, and the accreditation status of the HEIs were used to determine the differential characteristics of each of the subgroups. For this purpose, the mean difference was used. For subgroups with two categories, the U-Mann Withney statistic was applied, and in the case of more than two subgroups, the Kruskal Wallis statistic was used. In both cases differences were considered statistically significant when the p-value was less than 0.05.

## **4. Results**

### **4.1 Scale validation**

Firstly, the content validity analysis of the scale was carried out on the aspects of pertinence ( $V = 0.97$ ), relevance ( $V = 0.99$ ), response induction ( $V = 1.00$ ), sufficiency ( $V = 1.00$ ), as well as clarity and wording ( $V = 0.82$ ) the judges presented a high level of agreement, only for the response scale was the statistic considered acceptable, being equal to  $V = 0.71$ . Due to the validity of the content of the scale, we proceeded with the development of the AFE.

For the AFE the KMO statistic was 0.95 therefore the instrument variables were partially correlated. For the Barrllett's Test of Sphericity the value was  $X^2=11,044.73$  with p-value = 0.00 hence the data were adjusted for this type of statistical analysis, since the items were able to explain the factors extracted from the present AFE. Subsequently, the six-factor conformation was able to explain 90.79% of the total variance of the extraction. The variance explaining the first factor was 73.75%, the second factor 5.15%, the third factor 4.07%, the

fourth factor 3.07%, the fifth factor 2.68% and the sixth factor 2.05%. Table 2 presents the values of the factor loadings.

**Table 2.**

*Factor loadings on the AFE reputation scale.*

<b>Code</b>	<b>Factor one</b>	<b>Factor two</b>	<b>Factor three</b>	<b>Factor four</b>	<b>Factor five</b>	<b>Factor six</b>
DES1	0.69					
DES2	0.81					
DES3	0.72					
INN1		0.72				
INN2		0.76				
CIU1			0.75			
CIU2			0.81			
CIU3			0.74			
SER1				0.49		
SER2				0.46		
SER3				0.65		
GOB1					0.65	
GOB2					0.70	
GOB3					0.73	
CLIMA1						0.72
CLIMA2						0.81
CLIMA3						0.65

Based on the factor analysis, we proceeded to the development of the AFC. For the scale, the standard AFC indicated that the data showed a suitable fit without the need to eliminate variables by having factor loadings greater than 0.60, with  $\chi^2=321.08$  p-value = 0.00,  $\chi^2/ df =3.08$ , GFI=0.85, AGFI=0.79 and RMSEA=0.06. While the  $\chi^2/ df$ , GFI and RMSEA indicators were adjusted, a better fit of the CFA was sought, thus errors between the variables GOB1 and GOB2, CIU3 and CIU2, as well as SER1 and SER3 were adjusted. With these modifications the new values of the statistics were  $\chi^2=281.32$  p-value = 0.00,  $\chi^2/ df =2.75$ , GFI=0.87, AGFI=0.81 and RMSEA=0.06 showing better fit results. Table 3 presents the comparison between the weights of the standardised CFA regressions obtained in this study and the loadings of the original CPA components of the scale (Del-Castillo-Feito, 2019, p. 47).

**Table 3.***Comparison of AFC and CPA reputation scale changers.*

<b>Factor</b>	<b>Code</b>	<b>AFC</b>	<b>CPA</b>
Factor 1	DES1	0.93	0.42
	DES2	0.90	0.33
	DES3	0.97	0.38
Factor 2	INN1	0.96	0.38
	INN2	0.94	0.68
Factor 3	CIU1	0.97	0.43
	CIU2	0.96	0.19
	CIU3	0.98	0.53
Factor 4	SER1	0.95	0.14
	SER2	0.98	0.44
	SER3	0.98	0.52
Factor 5	GOB1	0.96	0.40
	GOB2	0.97	0.50
	GOB3	0.95	0.25
Factor 6	CLIMA1	0.97	0.28
	CLIMA2	0.98	0.22
	CLIMA3	0.91	0.60

From the standardised regressions extracted (see Table 3) the Analysis of Variance Extracted (AVE), the reliability assessed from the CR statistic and Cronbach's Alpha statistic ( $\alpha$ ) were considered high. Thus, demonstrating the convergent validity of the factors. Similarly, the discriminant validity of the scale was confirmed as MVS and AVS were lower than AVE. Table 4 shows the results.

**Table 4.***Convergent and discriminant validity and reliability analysis*

<b>Factors</b>	<b>Code</b>	<b><math>\alpha</math></b>	<b>AVE</b>	<b>CR</b>	<b>MVS</b>	<b>AVS</b>
Factor 1	DES1	0.90	0.87	0.95	0.76	0.73
	DES2					
	DES3					
Factor 2	INN1	0.93	0.90	0.94	0.81	0.76
	INN2					
Factor 3	CIU1	0.96	0.94	0.98	0.92	0.86
	CIU2					
	CIU3					

	SER1					
Factor 4	SER2	0.92	0.94	0.98	0.92	0.83
	SER3					
	GOB1					
Factor 5	GOB2	0.95	0.92	0.97	0.88	0.82
	GOB3					
	CLIMA1					
Factor 6	CLIMA2	0.93	0.91	0.96	0.88	0.80
	CLIMA3					

## 4.2 Behaviour on variables

In relation to age, students were grouped into three categories. The first was between 18 to 21 years old (n = 328), the second between 22 to 25 years old (n = 88) and the third over 25 years old (n = 68). In this case, statistically significant differences were observed in the perceptions related to CIU1 and DES1. In the case of CIU1, the perception of the 18-21 age group was lower than that of the 22-25 age group. For DES1 the difference was between the 18-21 and 25+ age groups.

**Table 5.**

*Results of Kruskal Wallis statistic by age groups.*

Hipotesis	P-value	Result
The distribution of GOB1 is the same across age categories.	0.21	Rejected
The distribution of GOB2 is the same across age categories.	0.95	Rejected
The distribution of GOB3 is the same across age categories.	0.87	Rejected
The distribution of CLIMA1 is the same across age categories.	0.92	Rejected
The distribution of CLIMA2 is the same across age categories.	0.78	Rejected
The distribution of CLIMA3 is the same across age categories.	0.90	Rejected
The distribution of CIU1 is the same across age categories.	0.04	Accepted
The distribution of CIU2 is the same across age categories.	0.57	Rejected
The distribution of CIU3 is the same across age categories.	0.32	Rejected
The distribution of DES1 is the same across age categories.	0.00	Accepted
The distribution of DES2 is the same across age categories.	0.07	Rejected
The distribution of DES3 is the same across age categories.	0.10	Rejected
The distribution of INN1 is the same across age categories.	0.08	Rejected
The distribution of INN2 is the same across age categories.	0.72	Rejected
The distribution of SER1 is the same across age categories.	0.23	Rejected
The distribution of SER2 is the same across age categories.	0.20	Rejected
The distribution of SER3 is the same across age categories.	0.75	Rejected

For the semester categories, ten groups were formed. There were 49 students in the first semester, 41 in the second, 62 in the third, 108 in the fourth, 73 in the fifth, 52 in the sixth, 31 in the seventh, 32 in the eighth, 27 in the ninth and 9 in the tenth. That said, statistically significant differences were observed in GOB2, GOB3, CLIMA2, CLIMA3, CIU1, CIU2, CIU3 and DES1.

**Table 6.**

*Results of Kruskal Wallis statistic by semester groups.*

<b>Hipotesis</b>	<b>P-value</b>	<b>Result</b>
The distribution of GOB1 is the same across semester categories.	0.27	Rejected
The distribution of GOB2 is the same across semester categories.	0.01	Accepted
The distribution of GOB3 is the same across semester categories.	0.00	Accepted
The distribution of CLIMA1 is the same across semester categories.	0.27	Rejected
The distribution of CLIMA2 is the same across semester categories.	0.01	Accepted
The distribution of CLIMA3 is the same across semester categories.	0.01	Accepted
The distribution of CIU1 is the same across semester categories.	0.01	Accepted
The distribution of CIU2 is the same across semester categories.	0.00	Accepted
The distribution of CIU3 is the same across semester categories.	0.00	Accepted
The distribution of DES1 is the same across semester categories.	0.06	Accepted
The distribution of DES2 is the same across semester categories.	0.41	Rejected
The distribution of DES3 is the same across semester categories.	0.24	Rejected
The distribution of INN1 is the same across semester categories.	0.11	Rejected
The distribution of INN2 is the same across semester categories.	0.04	Rejected
The distribution of SER1 is the same across semester categories.	0.32	Rejected
The distribution of SER2 is the same across semester categories.	0.05	Rejected
The distribution of SER3 is the same across semester categories.	0.46	Rejected

However, with regard to the high-quality accreditation status of HEIs, two sub-groups were formed. In the first category of accredited institutions, n was equal to 268, and in the second category of non-accredited institutions, n was equal to 216. In this context, differences were only evident between the DES1, DES3, INN1 and SER3 variables.

**Table 7.***Hypothesis*

<b>Hypothesis</b>	<b>P-value</b>	<b>Result</b>
The distribution of GOB1 is the same across accreditation categories.	0,062	Rejected
The distribution of GOB2 is the same across accreditation categories.	0,367	Rejected
The distribution of GOB3 is the same across accreditation categories.	0,390	Rejected
The distribution of CLIMA1 is the same across accreditation categories.	0,544	Rejected
The distribution of CLIMA2 is the same across accreditation categories.	0,007	Rejected
The distribution of CLIMA3 is the same across accreditation categories.	0,057	Rejected
The distribution of CIU1 is the same across accreditation categories.	0,069	Rejected
The distribution of CIU2 is the same across accreditation categories.	0,552	Rejected
The distribution of CIU3 is the same across accreditation categories.	0,432	Rejected
The distribution of DES1 is the same across accreditation categories.	0,001	Accepted
The distribution of DES2 is the same across accreditation categories.	0,334	Rejected
The distribution of DES3 is the same across accreditation categories.	0,036	Accepted
The distribution of INN1 is the same across accreditation categories.	0,000	Accepted
The distribution of INN2 is the same across accreditation categories.	0,071	Rejected
The distribution of SER1 is the same across accreditation categories.	0,206	Rejected
The distribution of SER2 is the same across accreditation categories.	0,217	Rejected
The distribution of SER3 is the same across accreditation categories.	0,000	Accepted

## 5. Discussion

The validation of the reputation scale suggested by Del-Castillo-Feito et al. (2019) in the Colombian context provides new evidence of its validity and reliability for measuring university reputation perception. It is important to take into account that the authors Del-Castillo-Feito et al. (2019) perform a structural modelling with SmartPLS which is suggested in small samples and in instruments in exploratory stage, however for this study a confirmatory analysis was carried out, with good statistical results as evidenced in the results, taking into consideration that the results of the X<sup>2</sup> statistic are highly sensitive to the sample (Merino & Livia, 2009).

A closer look at the results reveals some differences in the text. For example, the instrument used by Del-Castillo-Feito et al. (2019) was applied to several stakeholders in a Spanish public university, whereas in this study only students from private universities were used as a sample. The scale consisted of six factors measuring the attributes of reputation, taking as a reference part of Vidaver-Cohen's theoretical model (Vidaver-Cohen, 2007) developed for business schools, with six predictors of reputation (performance, innovation, citizenship,

services, governance and workplace). Meanwhile, Vidaver-Cohen (2007) took as a reference the Reputation Institute's Reprtrack, which proposes a Reprtrack Index and a Reprtrack Pulse.

This scale has the potential to measure reputation in terms of the factors expressed, such as the scale proposed by Angliss (2022) which is also an adaptation of the REPTRAK™, model, added to the specific characteristics of the university, resulting in six factors (products service, performance, institutional behaviour, workplace behaviour, leadership, leadership, physical attributes) and the research conducted by Khoi (2021), model, added to the specific characteristics of the university, resulting in six factors (products service, performance, institutional behaviour, workplace behaviour, leadership, leadership, physical attributes).

Thus, for the Colombian case and despite the difference between the cultural and social context of the countries, the difference in educational models between Spain and Colombia, and the differences in student perceptions, the Del-Castillo-Feito et al. (2019) scale showed a good fit and good statistical results, being suitable for measuring reputation in universities in Colombia, from the student's perspective, and with potential for application to other stakeholders, which could be analysed in future research.

In addition, the results of the behavior of the participants according to their age and semester showed that. In the case of age, there was a significant difference between the 18 to 21 year-old group and the 22 to 25 year-old group in the item "exerts a positive influence on society". This may be due to the way in which students perceive the impact that the actions of universities have on society and their participation in these actions (Coelho & Menezes, 2022). For the case of the age groups between 18 and 21 years old and over 25 years old, significant differences were observed in the response to the item "my university has a high level of research". This may respond to the degree of knowledge and involvement in research processes in the classroom and those associated with voluntary research groups and as degree projects. As well as cultural behaviors according to generations (Kaushal & Ali, 2019).

Additionally, in the three items of the citizenship factor, in two items of the governance and workplace behavior factors respectively, and in one performance item, there were significant differences in the students' perceptions as they progress through the semesters of their university program. As in the previous comparison, factors such as student maturity,

experience, knowledge and involvement in the activities carried out by the university, allow them to evaluate each of the factors in a different way.

Similarly, the differences between the two groups of universities, accredited and non-accredited, were compared, finding differences in the topics "My university has a high research level", "Has growth perspectives", "It adapts quickly to change" and "It has good value for money". This finding shows the differences in the perceptions that students have in each university, taking into account that accredited universities communicate more their actions both in research and in relationships and that these actions, together with others, such as pedagogical innovation (Nel, 2017), positioning in rankings (Haas & Unkel, 2017), among others, can influence perceptions and value the educational service received and its reputation as of higher quality.

Finally, in this analysis it is noteworthy that, in the three comparisons made, the DES1 item related to the levels achieved in research appears with significant differences in each of the groups compared. This result is in accordance with the two fundamental tasks of universities according to Engwall (2020) the distribution of established knowledge and the creation of new knowledge. Which suggests that research processes, their results and their communication have a high impact according to the degree of maturity of the student, but also according to the importance, quality and visibility of the research processes carried out by the institution, and their impact on the knowledge-based economy (Chen & Esangbedo, 2018) which for the case of accredited universities is greater than those that are not accredited.

## **5. Conclusions**

The objective of this study was to analyze the psychometric properties of the Spanish adaptation of the multidimensional reputation perception scale in university students. The statistical results of the confirmatory factor analysis for the Colombian case verified the behavior of the scale evaluated in six factors and coincide with the original scale, showing that it has the ability to explain the construct of reputation through these factors (Del-Castillo-Feito et al., 2019) and a cross-cultural goodness of fit. These findings make a significant

contribution to research on university reputation, the valuations of stakeholders, especially students, and reputation management. Likewise, it provides evidence on the measurement of reputation in universities where the theoretical approaches are ratified and can be used by both Colombian and foreign universities from the student's perspective by providing an adapted and validated scale for the use of subsequent studies on reputation. The use of the scale is convenient for research purposes, since it provides researchers with an adapted and validated scale to apply in university contexts, but also for practical purposes, since the managers of higher education institutions can use it to measure students' perceptions of the university's reputation and take actions in their management.

The findings showed that the scale presents satisfactory psychometric properties and high reliability and validity; however, there may be some considerations in its use, given that the validation or adaptation process was based on a Colombian context, and on a sample of university students, so that its application in other countries, including Spanish-speaking countries, could lead to different results, when applied to other populations and for other purposes. In this sense, semantic equivalences carried in the translation process may have an important implication and, therefore, a cross-cultural evaluation of the questionnaire before use is suggested.

Regarding the behavior of the variables studied with respect to the demographic variables, in general it was found that there were no significant differences, with some exceptions of two items related to age, eight items related to semesters and four related to the type of university. However, for future research, we suggest analyzing the behavior of the variables analyzed with respect to moderators such as age, semester and type of university, since there could be significant differences that could help explain the relationships.

**Informed Consent Statement:** Informed consent was obtained from all subjects involved in the study.

**Conflicts of Interest:** The authors declare no conflict of interest.

## Appendix A1. Items in English and Spanish.

Factors	Code	English Item	Spanish Item
Performance	DES1	My university has a high research level.	Mi universidad tiene un alto nivel de investigación.
	DES2	It obtains lucrative job placements.	Obtiene prácticas laborales lucrativas.
	DES3	Has growth perspectives.	Tiene perspectivas de crecimiento.
Innovation	INN1	It adapts quickly to change.	Se adapta rápidamente al cambio.
	INN2	Uses innovative teaching methods.	Utiliza métodos de enseñanza innovadores.
Citizenship	CIU1	Exerts positive influence on society.	Ejerce una influencia positiva en la sociedad.
	CIU2	Supports good causes.	Apoya buenas causas
	CIU3	My university cares about their stakeholders' wellbeing.	Se preocupa por el bienestar de sus partes interesadas
Services	SER1	The formative offer responds to market trends.	La oferta formativa de mi universidad responde a las tendencias del mercado.
	SER2	It trains competent students.	Forma a estudiantes competentes.
	SER3	It has good value for money.	Tiene una buena relación calidad-precio.
Governance	GOB1	There is a clear vision of the objectives that guide my university.	Hay una visión clara de los objetivos que guían mi universidad.
	GOB2	It is managed with ethics and transparency.	Se gestiona con ética y transparencia.
	GOB3	It takes into consideration its stakeholders in their management decisions.	Toma en consideración a sus partes interesadas en sus decisiones de gestión.
Workplace behaviour	CLIMA1	My university's professors are competent.	Los profesores de mi universidad son competentes
	CLIMA2	The administrative personnel is competent.	El personal administrativo es competente.
	CLIMA3	In general, my university is a good place to work.	En general, mi universidad es un buen lugar para trabajar.

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## Artículo cuatro

### Student experience scale: factor analysis in higher education institutions

*Frontiers in Education*

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**Keywords:** psychometric assessment, student experience, higher education institutions, student satisfaction.

#### Abstract

In the context of higher education, the student experience (SX) has an important impact on student satisfaction and the perceived value of the training service received. For these reasons, higher education institutions (HEIs), which are focused on student-centred learning, need to know more about the experience that results from student interaction with the service and support systems that meet their needs in these institutions. However, despite the progress made in the analysis of SX, further research is still needed to know how to measure and manage it, and for this, it is essential to know the student's perceptions. For this reason, an SX scale was selected to have a suitable tool for experience management. Thus, the psychometric properties of the selected scale were evaluated in undergraduate students at two Colombian universities. The validation process consisted of an adaptation of the scale, a content validity analysis, an exploratory factor analysis and a confirmatory factor analysis. The results were satisfactory showing the reliability and validity of the student experience scale in the context of universities. Therefore its cross-cultural goodness is confirmed in the student segment and it is suggested to perform this same process for other university audiences.

## **Introduction**

The student experience (SX) has been a topic of great interest to the higher education services sector since the beginning of 2010 to date (Matus et al., 2021). The changes and trends brought about by globalisation and the commercial focus of higher education institutions (HEIs) (Brumby, 2014; Dropulić et al., 2021), have led these organisations to seek financial sustainability and to improve their image and reputation in relation to their competitors (Aleixo et al., 2018; Altbach et al., 2019; Izquierdo-Yusta et al., 2020). Similarly, the constant transformation of HEIs (Friga et al., 2003) has led to their strategic and management approaches being influenced by other factors, for example, the connection with industry (Collofello, 2000; Friedman y Deek, 2003) which is essential to know the relevance of the academic programme, especially in the social sciences; the influence of public policies in higher education (Puentes, 2019); the increased use of information and communication technologies (ICT) that impact on the learning experience in the classroom (Tang and Austin, 2009), among other variables. In this regard, the intensive use of ICT applied to higher education has influenced the roles of teachers and students, as well as the management of HEIs (Izquierdo-Yusta et al., 2020). This increased even more during and after the COVID-19 pandemic (Román, 2020).

Moreover, the concept of SX is characterised by its imprecise use in higher education (Pötschulat et al. 2021) and does not have a universally accepted meaning. This concept is often adapted to the specific objectives of each study, as mentioned by Matus et al. (2021), and in general, it has been a variable widely criticised by some experts due to the inconsistencies that can arise (Tan et al., 2016). Despite this, the focus on defining and developing experience improvement strategies has been an increasing emphasis in recent research studies (le Rouz and van Rensburg, 2014; Pötschulat et al. 2021). SX is recognised as a substitute for quality in today's highly competitive educational context (Klaus and Maklan, 2013). However, some consensus has been reached, where authors argue that SX is the result of their interaction with products, services and systems provided by HEIs, especially those that prioritise student-centred teaching and are oriented towards learning processes (Matus et al., 2021).

Another feature of the study of SX in higher education settings is the relationship with several variables. This was evidenced, in the study by Chandra, et al. (2018), who found that educational service characteristics have an important relationship with SX and conclude that HEIs should focus on improving experience levels by providing high quality of services to compete in the market and gain profits. Moreover, Klaus and Maklan (2013) said that experience is a key determinant of consumer behaviour and becomes a key strategic objective, especially for companies in the service sector. Similarly, Nadiri et al. (2009) concluded that service quality in higher education is related to student experience and satisfaction. In this respect, it is claimed that SX refers to the satisfaction they have with the services and educational programmes offered by HEIs (Yap et al., 2022). However, authors such as Iglesias et al. (2019), differentiate satisfaction from experience; for example, satisfaction is more objective and related to the results, while experience is more subjective in nature, taking as a reference not only the result but also the process (Shapiro et al., 2017; Srivastava y Koul, 2016; Izquierdo-Yusta et al., 2020).

The importance of the study of SX becomes evident given the different theoretical and empirical positions found in research. It is also relevant to understand that students may have varying expectations of the levels of service quality they expect to find in the HEIs where they choose to pursue their training programme. For this reason, HEIs are required to understand and manage these expectations effectively to achieve positive student experiences in order to attract and retain students (le Roux & Van Rensburg, 2014). This implies the need to develop strategies to solve non-conformities and to carry out continuous improvement aimed at achieving quality in the educational service (Yap et al., 2022). In the case of private HEIs, the pressure is greater as they have to meet budgetary targets to ensure their financial sustainability, therefore they have to create and develop innovative strategies to attract and retain students (Xu et al., 2018). Competition for both students and resources for the development of the substantive functions of research and relations with the external sector in the context of higher education is becoming increasingly intense (le Roux y van Rensburg, 2014). But in this reality, it is important not to lose focus of the fact that HEIs fulfil a social, academic, and educational function. But its greatest commitment is to the offer to students, who rely on the HEIs to help them develop their skills, abilities, competencies, attitudes, and

values for their future professional development (Olmos-Gómez et al., 2020). Therefore, students become a consumer of academic services and, consequently, the focus of university activity (González-Marcos et al., 2016).

Due to its importance, several scales and questionnaires have been developed to assess customer experience, and from these, adaptations have been made to assess SX. These evaluations, together with the comments collected, become an effective tool for improving the quality of both the academic programmes and the HEIs themselves (Chandra, et al., 2018). But these have been subject to various criticisms, as SX is usually assessed on the basis of satisfaction (Matus et al. 2021), and also because the methods used are questionable (Callender et al., 2014; Sabri, 2013), and insufficient to encompass the concept of experience (Pötschulat et al. 2021). In this respect, research such as that carried out by Pötschulat et al. (2021) has taken the Russell Group study as a source of information. The research identified that HEIs have implemented several strategies, including the establishment of 'student experience' committees, offices, and departments in UK universities. They also found that there are several measures for assessing the performance of HEIs and among their criteria is "student experience". These measures include national student surveys, the TESTA (Transforming the Student Experience through Assessment) test and the QS World University Rankings. Additionally, Matus et al. (2021) identified that experience is measured by instruments such as the National Survey of Student Engagement (NSSE), the Student Experience in the Research University Survey (SERU-S), the Student Experience Survey (SES) and, the Student Experiential and Engagement Value Index (SEEVI), all of them related to the quality of the education they receive from HEIs, based on satisfaction with the quality of the education they receive. The research by Pötschulat et al. (2021) and Matus et al. (2021) measures differently. The former considers SX as a relevant factor within a broader questionnaire that addresses other variables, while the latter approaches SX as a complex construct that deserves to be studied across several factors.

Against this background and taking into consideration the importance of the study of SX for HEIs, and the already developed and validated proposals of scales in the educational context, this article aims to adapt and confirm the factors of the SX scale proposed by Xu et al. (2018).

These authors explored the development of a six-factor scale, consisting of *student-centred service, diversity and global citizenship, co-production of the learning experience, teacher dependence accountability and whole-person development*, which measures SX in the context of higher education, using a mixed-method approach. In this study, the scale was translated into Spanish and adapted to the Colombian context, retaining students from private HEIs as the target population, to assess its psychometric properties and thus provide evidence of its reliability and validity. This was carried out because Xu et al. (2018) designed the scale from an exploratory perspective and in this study, they sought to provide confirmatory validity to the instrument. This article presents the results of the research in the following five sections. First, the theoretical framework of customer experience and SX is established; second, the methodology used is described; third, the results obtained are shown; fourth, the discussion of the findings is addressed; and finally, the conclusions are presented.

## **Theoretical framework**

### **Customer experience and student experience**

The concept of customer experience and SX is often used indistinctly in the literature. However, it is important to keep in mind that although the concept of SX is born from the customer experience, calling the learner "customer" has brought some disagreements among researchers, and also conflicting positions (Eagle and Brennan, 2007; Matarranz and, García-Madariaga, 2021). Pötschulat et al. (2021) claim that “Academic uses largely take ‘the student experience’ at face value, in the process muddling measures of student satisfaction, socialisation outside the university and pedagogy” (p. 4). For this reason, this research distinguishes and differentiates the two concepts, following the objective set by Matus et al. (2021), who conducted a systematic literature review to clarify the concept of SX in higher education. Given this scenario, this research develops a general review of the two terms to contextualise the research conducted, so it first presents a conceptualisation of customer experience and then the conceptualisation of SX.

## **Customer Experience**

In the context of marketing, the concept of customer experience was born at a time when both businessmen and academics noticed that people were not focused on the product but on the satisfaction generated by the experience (Abbott, 1955). In the development of this concept, the contributions of authors such as Philip Kotler are recognised (1967), John Howard and Jagdish Sheth (1969), who made theoretical contributions to the understanding of the customer experience (Lemon and Verhoef, 2016). This experience implies a successive and gradual process over time, in which the client actively participates from the beginning and even in advance and develops an emotional bonding resulting in a unique and differential experience, standing out from the proposals offered by the current market and which become common for the client (Dewey, 1963). Therefore, from an analysis of human behaviour, the importance of emotional aspects in decision-making and experience are pointed out (Holbrook and Hirschman, 1982). Later, Pine and Gilmore, (1998) stated that experiences are something different in goods and services, indicating that a consumer buys an experience to become personally involved and enjoy the activities and events that the company planned, to have a memorable time. For these authors, successful experiences are those that a customer finds unique, due to something extraordinary, memorable, and sustainable, which refers to the fact that they will repeat the same behaviour in the future.

Experience is also the result of the different levels of interaction that the customer has with the elements of the environment designed and created by a service provider organisation. As a result of this interaction, unique sensations and knowledge are generated which will be conceptualised as experience (Gupta and Vajic, 2000). In this sense, the experience is the internal and subjective result of all the direct and indirect points of contact that the customer has with the organisation. Direct contact refers to the purchasing process and indirect contact refers to all those intentional marketing actions, the same word of mouth recommendations and contacts that have been planned with an employee or representative of the company (Meyer and Schwager, 2007). For Jain et al. (2017) it is an internal, holistic, and subjective reaction to any contact, both direct and indirect, that a customer has with the organisation. An excellent customer experience can significantly increase the likelihood of recurring transactions with the company, as well as the likelihood that they will tell their friends and

family about it (Kumar et al., 2007). It should be noted that each point of contact, which may or may not be within the organisation's control, must be managed (Homburg et al., 2017). The customer experience construct focuses on a customer's cognitive, emotional, behavioural, sensory, and social responses to a company's offerings (Lemon and Verhoef, 2016) and in turn is influenced by sensory, cognitive, behavioural, and relational values (Schmitt, 1999). For Lemon and Verhoef (2016), the customer experience is considered a multidimensional construct understood as the "journey" which the customer undertakes with a company over a period of time, associated with the buying cycle, which implies a proximity to multiple contact points. This journey includes action and performance at all steps of the consumer purchase process, ranging from the pre-purchase, purchase, and post-purchase phases (Lemon and Verhoef, 2016). Fitzsimmons and Fitzsimmons point out that experiences should "create added value by engaging and connecting with customers in a personal and memorable way" (2006, p. 11).

Several studies have shown that customer experience has a direct influence on satisfaction, loyalty, and customer satisfaction (Anderson and Mittal, 2000; Caruana 2002; Shankar et al. 2003; Fornell et al. 2006; Klaus and Maklan, 2013; Ali et al., 2016), and in the word of mouth (Keiningham et al. 2007b). At the same time, it has been shown that experience has a positive effect on customer emotions and behavioural intentions, and that this relationship is mediated by customer satisfaction (Tsaour et al., 2006). Therefore, the customer experience must be a priority for marketing and must be managed appropriately to gain an advantage that differentiates it from the competition (Sujata, 2014). Moreover, those experiences categorised as "memorable" have also been found to affect a change in customer behaviour in the short term by influencing emotions to establish a close relationship that will influence a rational response, and ultimately the purchase of a product or service (Ahn and Back, 2018). Fatma (2014) developed a conceptual model of the antecedents and consequences of the customer experience, categorising it into three stages, the pre-experience, the customer experience, and the post-experience. Pre-experience relates the activities of imagining, searching, planning, and budgeting the experience. The experience stage has as its antecedent's brand performance, multi-channel interaction, service interface, physical environment, social environment, price and promotions, and is further categorised into

emotional, functional/pragmatic, and relational values and sources. Finally, the post-experience stage addresses issues such as pleasure, entertainment, learning, skills, nostalgia, fantasising, and evangelisation, and in turn has implications for customer loyalty, satisfaction, and value.

In addition, the evaluation of the experience is the result of the comparison between the customer's expectations and the results of the interaction with the company in the different interactions and moments (Ebrahim et al., 2016). Taking into consideration the proposal made by Sheth et al. (1999), the experience is based on the concept of customer attitude, which is the result of three factors, the characteristics of the stimulus, the context, and the situational variables. To measure customer experience, Maklan & Klaus (2011) mention six basic principles; first, it is necessary to evaluate it as an overall perception of customers and not only the shortcomings of their expectations; second, the evaluation is based on the overall value of use and not on the sum of results during some episodes of the service; third, the experience has a broader scope than proposed by the SERVQUAL tool, as it includes emotional and social components; fourth, the experience starts before the first encounter and continues until after the first encounter; fifth, the experience takes into consideration all service encounters in all channels; sixth, the measure should be linked to customer behaviour and business performance. These principles provide clarity on the approach by which customer experience should be assessed and highlight the difficulties that may be encountered by research that takes as its benchmark certain scales that are not designed to measure experience as a holistic concept beyond satisfaction.

### **Student Experience**

Experience in services, such as higher education, is different from others, as such experience is longer and has more interactions with different stakeholders (Xu et al., 2018). Therefore, the competences in the educational model are those that represent the value that the student obtains from his or her experience at HEIs (Dziewanowska, 2017). This competence development makes the process a lengthy one as it involves different aspects of each step including the search for internal and external information and the assessment of past experiences (Lemon and Verhoef, 2016). In the framework of higher education, institutional

policies designed to improve the quality of education have focused on SX and have generated various initiatives such as the implementation of best practices in the teaching-learning process, support for diversity and inclusion, among others, where the student plays an active role; in parallel to the usual aspects of assessment, such as the adequacy of learning resources, classroom design, and the achievement of learning outcomes (Calma and Dickson-Deane, 2020).

### **2.1.3. Review of instruments for measurement of the Student Experience**

SX is a relevant factor determining the success of HEIs (Shapiro et al., 2017). Therefore, authors such as Nadiri et al. (2009) assert that universities should focus on attracting, serving, and retaining students, taking into account both their needs and their perceptions before and after the service, as these are directly related to the quality of the service. In the systematic review by Matus et al. (2021), the authors found that the concept is used repeatedly by HEIs for advertising purposes to attract students, as an indicator of quality and/or satisfaction, and goes beyond the teaching-learning process to involve interactions outside the classroom. In this sense, Matus et al. (2021) also conclude that, according to the studies analysed, the student experience focuses on three aspects, learning and teaching, student engagement and student well-being. In addition, they identified three dimensions, the social, educational, and personal dimensions.

The measure of SX takes into consideration the "earnings" obtained by the student because of the quality of the service (Clemes et al., 2008). For Clemes et al (2013) there are four sub-dimensions of quality: academic development, general education, professional preparation, and personal development. On the other hand, Yap et al., (2022) in their literature review they found the 20 most cited SX attributes, and in their factor analysis these were grouped into five categories. The first relates to the professionalism and competence of teachers, the second focuses on the quality of academic services and support facilities, the third addresses interpersonal connections and external considerations, the fourth concerns programme design and course content, and finally the fifth relates to the physical environment and facilities.

The research led by le Roux and Van Rensburg (2014) has a prominent importance as it sought to contribute to the understanding and application of customer/student experience measurement in the higher education environment, the scale contained 18 statements measuring the experience of service encounters with administrative staff. In addition, there was the Student Consumer Questionnaire (SCOQ) developed by Koris and Nokelainen (2015) which sought to identify the categories of SX in HEIs. The questionnaire is divided into two networks, the institutional network, and the learning situation network, in the institutional network the following categories are grouped together: student feedback, graduation, curriculum design, communication with service staff, rigor. The following categories can be found in the learning situation: grading, classroom behaviour, classroom studies, individual studies, teaching methods, course design. Koris et al. (2015) published another article, where they tested their questionnaire on students at one university, finding that students expect HEIs to be "customer" oriented in some but not all educational experiences.

Similarly, Bertaccini et al. (2021) assesses the overall quality of the university experience of graduates in terms of internal and external effectiveness using the ECSI index (European Customer Satisfaction Index). This study identified eight latent variables, motivation to attend HEIs and enrol in study programmes, expectations in relation to future work, perceived quality of support facilities, perceived quality of teaching and administrative staff, value of university experience, loyalty and career, external effectiveness of the training programme in relation to work and training measuring the external effectiveness of the degree issued by HEIs in relation to the need for further training.

In addition the scale proposed by Xu et al. (2018) was considered as it was applied in higher education, and investigates students' perception of their roles, as well as the study conducted by Naylor et al. (2020) in Australia where it is ratified that students can have different roles, the first referring to students as evaluators, the second, students as participants who are involved in decision making, the third, which identify students as co-creators of the service with a more active role, and finally, in fourth place are students as agents and leaders of change. Reviewing the rigor of the exploratory study by Xu et al. (2018), the authors

identified how educational experiences as measured by six factors, namely student-centred service, diversity and global citizenship, co-production of experience and learning, teacher dependence, accountability and whole-person development, influence their satisfaction with their choice of university. For the purposes of this study, this scale is selected for its relevance, the completeness with which the authors designed it, its statistical results, and its recent application. The equations should be inserted in editable format from the equation editor.

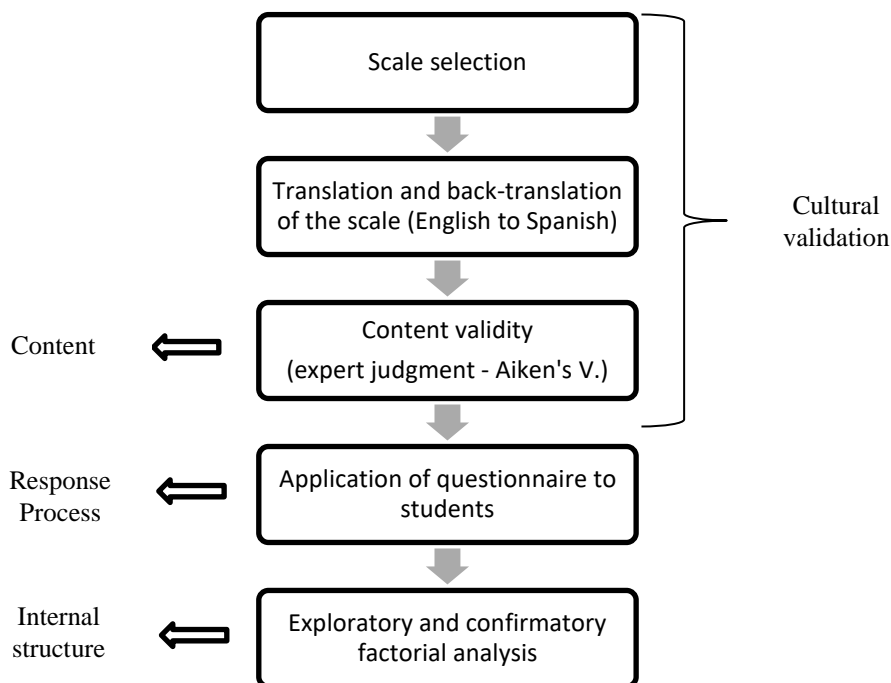
## **Methodology**

### **Design**

This research is quantitative and cross-sectional. The validation procedure of the experience scale was carried out with undergraduate students from private universities in Colombia, including cultural adaptation, which was composed of a careful selection of the scale, translation and back-translation of the scale, and content validity through expert judgement. The questionnaire was then applied, after approval by the Research Ethics Committee of the Universidad del Rosario in the Social Sciences Room, and with the data extracted, an exploratory factor analysis (EFA) was carried out using the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS), followed by a confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) using SPSS AMOS. A summary of the validation process is shown in Figure 1.

**Figure 1.**

*Validation process performed.*



### **Sample and Participants**

The scale was applied at two universities to students, of legal age, enrolled in undergraduate programmes with a population of 3,270 students enrolled by the end of 2020 (Ministerio de Educación Nacional, 2022). A total of 484 surveys were collected from undergraduate students by means of convenience sampling. The sample consisted of 58.9% females and 41.1% males. In terms of age, 68% of participants were between 18 and 21 years old, 18.2% of participants were between 22 and 25 years old, and 13.8% were over 25 years old. The students who responded to the survey were in their first year 18.6%, 35% in their second year, 26% in their third year, 13% in their fourth year, and 7.4% in their fifth year.

## Scale

As mentioned, for the study of SX, the scale proposed by Xu et al. (2018) applied in higher education is considered, which uses a Likert scale of 1-5, which is composed of 24 statements and six factors, which are described as follows:

*Student-centred service:* It addresses teaching, service, administrative support, and consideration for students. This factor is relevant in higher education, on which student-centred models of higher quality experience have been designed (Clewes, 2003) and it has also been shown that student-centred teaching leads to student success and higher job satisfaction for teachers (Weimer, 2002).

*Diversity and global citizenship:* It includes prospective issues, such as the future of the industry, relationships with students and prospective students, cultural differences and the wider citizenship in which they develop their training experience. In this regard, Tan et al. (2016) found that students' self-esteem and social ties have direct positive effects on their civic behaviour, which has an important impact on relationship marketing strategy and on improving students' experience on campus.

*Co-production of experience and learning:* This factor considers the active role of the student in their formative process and looks at the contributions the student makes in the classroom, their participation in projects, relationships with peers and demonstrated leadership. In fact, co-production models have also been developed on this factor, such as the one proposed by (2009) who mentions that it is the appropriate way to understand the relationship between the student and the university in the "marketised" context of higher education. Further, in more recent contexts, the importance of the student's active participation in the co-creation of the experience was recognised (Dropulić et al. 2021).

*Teacher dependence:* The relationship that students have with their teachers is fundamental to their experience. This factor inquiries about the behaviour of teachers, the motivation they develop in the learning experience, the extent to which they deliver knowledge, the teaching methods they use to attract attention and how they can influence the personal issues of their

students. Similarly in the study by Yap et al. (2022), the teacher factor and teacher competencies were found to have a significant relationship with satisfaction and SX.

*Accountability:* This factor relates to the student's behaviour in assuming academic responsibilities to self and others, as well as their ability to solve problems. In this regard, Havenga and de Beerla (2016) stated that self-management and acceptance of responsibility are part of the learning process that determines the academic success of students.

*Whole-person development:* It addresses issues such as social responsibility, ethical behaviour of students, and the conditions for creating well-rounded students. It is also important to mention that there are different elements of the environment that can influence the SX, their learning process and their personal development (Jones, 2018).

To adapt the scale, the first step was the translation from English to Spanish by two bilingual experts in the field of marketing. Second, the scale was back translated into English and reviewed by two experts, who agreed with the original version, only made an observation on the perceived value instrument, since the translation mentioned the word "career" and "degree" was suggested as more appropriate. Table 1 shows the codes and items in both English and Spanish.

**Table 1.**

*Items in English and Spanish.*

<b>Factors</b>	<b>Code</b>	<b>English Items</b>	<b>Spanish Items</b>
1.Student-centred service	SCE1	Teaching is student-centred.	En mi universidad la enseñanza está centrada en el estudiante
	SCE2	The school/university provides good service to me.	Mi universidad me brinda un buen servicio
	SCE3	The school/university provides enough administrative support to me.	Mi universidad me brinda suficiente apoyo administrativo
	SCE4	The school/university cares about the students.	Mi universidad se preocupa por los estudiantes
Diversity and global citizenship	DYC1	I am aware of the future state of the hospitality and tourism industry.	Soy consciente del estado futuro de la industria para la cual me estoy formando

<b>Factors</b>	<b>Code</b>	<b>English Items</b>	<b>Spanish Items</b>
Co-production of experience and learning	DYC2	I can share with future students some information about the school and university education.	Puedo compartir con futuros estudiantes información sobre la educación escolar y universitaria
	DYC3	The school/university helps me develop local and global citizenship.	Mi universidad me ayuda a desarrollar la ciudadanía local y global
	DYC4	The school/university helps me recognize cultural differences.	Mi universidad me ayuda a reconocer las diferencias culturales
	DYC5	I have the opportunity to learn from other students.	Tengo la oportunidad de aprender de otros estudiantes
	CPEA1	I can express my rights and opinion.	Puedo expresar mis derechos y opiniones
	CPEA2	I contribute to the learning in class.	Contribuyo al aprendizaje en clase
	CPEA3	I actively participate in group projects and class discussions.	Participo activamente en proyectos grupales y debates en clase
	CPEA4	I teach my fellow students.	Enseño a mis compañeros de estudio
	CPEA5	I can play the role of leader.	Puedo desempeñar el papel de líder
	Teacher dependence	DDM1	Teachers provide suggestions to my personal and life issues.
DDM2		Teachers motivate me to learn.	Los profesores me motivan a aprender
DDM3		The teachers provide me with everything I need to learn.	Los profesores me proporcionan todo lo que necesito aprender
DDM4		The teachers use ways which appeal to our generation to teach us.	Los profesores usan formas que atraen a nuestra generación para enseñarnos
Accountability	RES1	I am trained to take responsibilities for other people.	Estoy capacitado para asumir responsabilidades para otras personas
	RES2	I am trained to be responsible for myself.	Estoy capacitado para ser responsable de mí mismo
	RES3	I am trained to fix problems by myself.	Estoy capacitado para solucionar problemas por mí mismo
Whole-person development	DIP1	The school/university is a small community where I perform civil responsibility.	Mi universidad es una pequeña comunidad donde realizo responsabilidad social
	DIP2	The school/university creates all-rounded students.	Mi universidad crea estudiantes integrales
	DIP3	The school/university creates ethical students.	Mi universidad fomenta el comportamiento ético de los estudiantes

## **Statistical procedures**

For the analysis of the scale, a validation process was carried out consisting of a content validity analysis, an Exploratory Factor Analysis (EFA), and a Confirmatory Factor Analysis (CFA). There is a description of each aspect below.

### **Content validation**

The Aiken V statistic was used to validate the content of the scale (V). This statistical test is the result of the evaluation of a group of expert judges on a series of aspects of a scale (Aiken, 1980; Aiken 1985). The possible outcomes are evaluated from zero (0) to one (1), where a value of one implies a perfect level of agreement among the judges, and a value of zero implies widespread disagreement. The value of this statistic is considered acceptable after values greater than 0.7 (Merino and Livia, 2009). For this study, the following aspects of the Spanish version of the scales were assessed: relevance, pertinence, response induction, sufficiency, clarity, and wording, as well as the scale of the response, and each of these aspects was evaluated on a scale of one (1) to five (5). Eight professionals, all with master's degrees, seven of them marketing or related professors, with average experience in research processes as well as one entrepreneur, were invited to give their judgement for the scale of student experience.

### **EFA**

Based on the results obtained in the content validation, a EFA was carried out to determine the possible grouping of the items of each of the scales in the student population under study. The Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin (KMO) statistic and Bartlett's test of sphericity (BTS) were used to check whether the data were suitable for this type of analysis. In the case of the KMO it was considered adequate for values greater than 0.80 (Godfrey et al. 2019) and for the BTS it was assessed that the  $X^2$  value was sufficiently large with significance (p-value) less than 0.05. Subsequently, using the criteria established by (1951), Godfrey et al. (2019) and Comrey and Lee (2013), the EFA was carried out using the principal components method with VARIMAX rotation, eliminating items with factor loadings of less than 0.60. It should be noted that the exact number of factors to be extracted was set at six.

## CFA

The development of the CFA was based on the conformation of the factors of the EFA. The univariate and multivariate normality of the items of each of the scales was established, where it was found that they did not fit this type of distribution. Due to the above, for the operationalisation of the CFA, estimations were made based on maximum likelihood. The bootstrap (i.e., 2,000 bootstrap samples with 95% confidence intervals) was used, taking Oppong and Agbedra (2016) as a reference for this procedure.

The CFA results were evaluated using the following statistics: Chi-square ( $X^2$ ), minimum discrepancy ratio ( $X^2 / df$ ), comparative form index ( $CFI$ ), normed fit index ( $NFI$ ), Tucker-Lewis index ( $TLI$ ), incremental fit index ( $IFI$ ), goodness-of-fit index ( $GFI$ ), adjusted goodness-of-fit index ( $AGFI$ ) and root mean square error of approximation ( $RMSEA$ ). According to the CFA literature, especially the works of Marsh et al. (2004), Hooper et al. (2008) and Useche (2020), the recommended thresholds for each of the statistics were defined in Table 2.

**Table 2.**

*Thresholds for model evaluation.*

<b>Statistic</b>	<b>Recommended threshold</b>
$X^2$	Mejor cuanto menor y con p-valor > 0.05
$X^2 / df$	< 5
$CFI$	> 0.90
$NFI$	> 0.90
$TLI$	> 0.90
$IFI$	> 0.90
$GFI$	> 0.80
$AGFI$	> 0.80
$RMSEA$	< 0.08

When the CFA did not meet the recommended threshold, especially the  $RMSEA$ , we proceeded to assess which variables had standardised regression values of less than 0.6 for elimination, as well as the modifications in the covariances of the errors of each of the factors from the largest and theoretically most parsimonious modification indices as outlined by Marsh et al. (2004).

Finally, the convergent analysis of the scale factors was carried out, for which the Extracted Variance (AVE), reliability evaluated from the CR statistic, as well as Cronbach's Alpha ( $\alpha$ ) were determined. In the case of the AVE, it was considered acceptable with values greater than 0.5, for the CR values greater than 0.7, and finally for  $\alpha$  values greater than 0.8. In addition, convergent validation was developed using the Maximum Shared Variance (MVS) and Average Shared Variance (AVS) statistics, being considered acceptable when MVS and AVS were lower than AVE.

## Results

Regarding the content of this scale, the judges presented a high level of agreement for the aspects of pertinence ( $V = 0.97$ ), relevance ( $V = 0.99$ ), induction to the answer ( $V = 1.00$ ), sufficiency ( $V = 0.98$ ), as well as for clarity and wording ( $V = 0.90$ ); only the scale aspect of the answer was considered acceptable, so the V statistic was 0.82. Considering these results, where the validity of the content of the scale was observed, it was proceeded to the execution of the EFA. In the case of the KMO statistic, the value obtained was 0.93, thus the variables were partially correlated. Likewise, for the Bartlett's Test of Sphericity the value was  $X^2 = 9,538.17$  with p-value = 0.00, thus the data were suitable for the execution of an EFA.

**Table 3.**

*Factor loadings of the EFA SX scale.*

Item	Factor one	Factor two	Factor three	Factor four	Factor five	Factor six
SCE1	0.73					
SCE2	0.77					
SCE3	0.82					
SCE4	0.79					
DYC1		0.70				
DYC2		0.73				
DYC3		0.68				
DYC4		0.61				
DYC5		0.64				
CPEA2				0.63		
CPEA3				0.76		
CPEA4				0.74		
CPEA5				0.78		
DDM1			0.74			
DDM2			0.72			

Item	Factor one	Factor two	Factor three	Factor four	Factor five	Factor six
DDM3			0.65			
DDM4			0.71			
RES1						0.63
RES2						0.80
RES3						0.82
DIP2					0.708	
DIP3					0.697	

The CFA of the SX scale did not present a good fit, the values of the statistics were:  $\chi^2/df = 4.24$ ,  $CFI = 0.92$ ,  $NFI = 0.90$ ,  $TLI = 0.91$ ,  $IFI = 0.92$ ,  $GFI = 0.86$ ,  $AGFI = 0.82$  and  $RMSEA = 0.08$ . Therefore,  $DYC2$  and  $DYC4$  were covaried to find a better fit of the CFA. With the modified CFA the fit was improved, with the new value of the statistics  $\chi^2/df = 3.99$ ,  $CFI = 9.33$ ,  $NFI = 9.13$ ,  $TLI = 9.20$ ,  $IFI = 9.33$ ,  $GFI = 0.87$ ,  $AGFI = 0.82$  y  $RMSEA = 0.07$ . Table 4 shows the standardised regression weights for each of the items assessed by the instrument.

**Table 4.**

*Result standardised values of the AFC regression SX scale.*

Item	Factor one	Factor two	Factor three	Factor four	Factor five	Factor six
SCE1	0.81					
SCE2	0.88					
SCE3	0.85					
SCE4	0.88					
DYC1		0.68				
DYC2		0.82				
DYC3		0.86				
DYC4		0.84				
DYC5		0.80				
CPEA2				0.78		
CPEA3				0.83		
CPEA4				0.75		
CPEA5				0.78		
DDM1			0.70			
DDM2			0.88			
DDM3			0.83			
DDM4			0.86			
RES1						0.70
RES2						0.94
RES3						0.90

Item	Factor one	Factor two	Factor three	Factor four	Factor five	Factor six
DIP2					0.91	
DIP3					0.91	

The Analysis of Variance Extracted (AVE), the reliability assessed from the CR statistic and Cronbach's Alpha statistic ( $\alpha$ ) were considered high. Thus, demonstrating the convergent validity of the factors. Similarly, the discriminant validity of the scale was confirmed as MVS and AVS were lower than AVE. Table 5 shows the results of the convergent and discriminant validity and Figure 2 shows the CFA with regression weights and covariance values between factors.

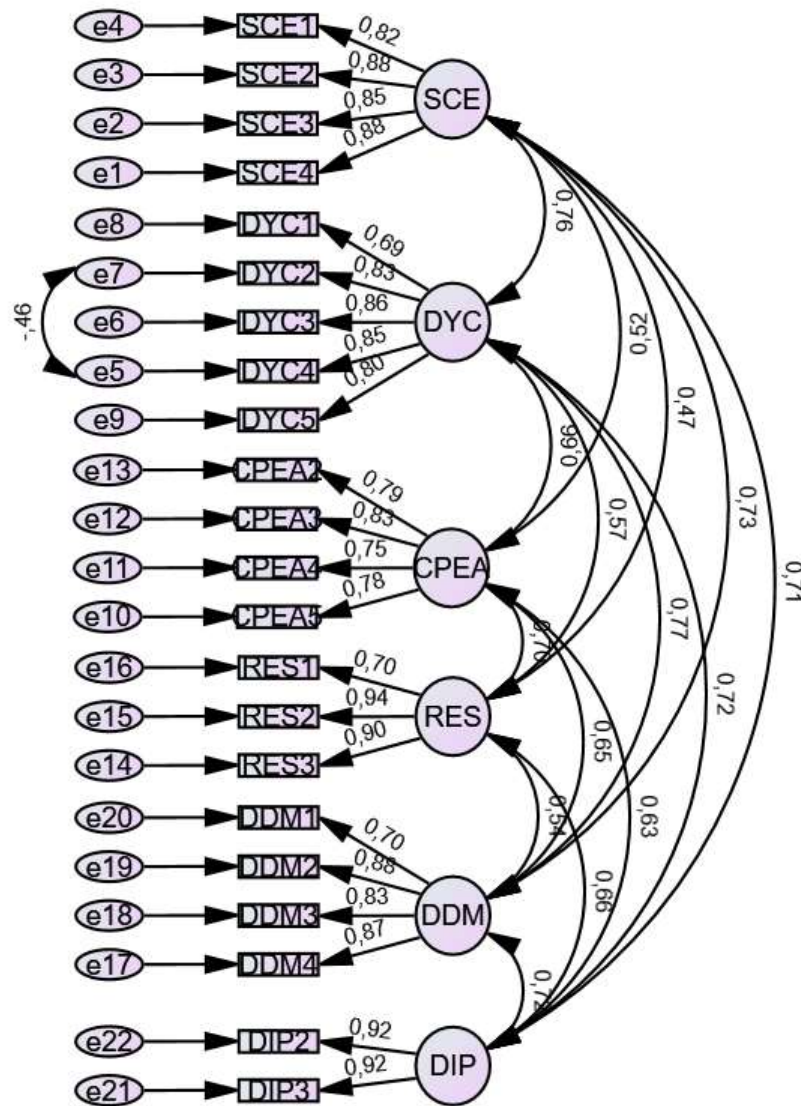
**Table 5.**

*Convergent and discriminant validity result.*

Factors	$\alpha$	AVE	CR	MVS	AVS
SCE	0.91	0.73	0.91	0.60	0.32
DYC	0.89	0.65	0.90	0.60	0.49
CPEA	0.86	0.62	0.86	0.49	0.40
RES	0.87	0.73	0.89	0.49	0.35
DDM	0.88	0.68	0.89	0.59	0.47
DIP	0.91	0.84	0.91	0.51	0.47

**Figure 2.**

*CFA with regression weights and covariance values between factors.*



*Note: It is important to point out that the software was developed in Spanish, therefore the comma "," represents the decimal separation.*

## **Discussion**

This study analysed the psychometric properties of the SX scale in HEIs. The statistical results of the exploratory and confirmatory factor analyses for the Colombian case, confirmed the factor structure proposed by Xu et al. (2018). However, it was necessary to eliminate two items, one of them from the factor of co-production of the learning experience on whether the student can express his/her rights and opinions. This factor is composed of five items, i.e. the remaining four items measure the students' perception of the co-production of their experience and may not contribute enough to the understanding of this topic. The second item eliminated corresponded to the factor of integral development of the person that asked if the university is a small community where the student performs social responsibility. This item may be ambiguous or redundant since three items that measure responsibility and another five items that measure diversity and citizenship and refer to these topics, so this topic would already be widely addressed. Originally, the study developed by Xu et al. (2018) assessed SX with higher education service in Hong Kong from an exploratory factor analysis. In this research, we went a step further by conducting both exploratory factor analysis and confirmatory factor analysis. In this way, the reliability and validity of the scale can be tested in another cultural context.

Considering the results, the scale performs well in the Latin American context and its cross-cultural goodness is confirmed. This contributes to the development of the study of the student experience in Spanish-speaking contexts, but it should be noted that although it is an important step, cultural adaptation is recommended for future research in other countries. The scale retains the original six factors (student-centred service, diversity and global citizenship, co-production of the learning experience, trust in the teacher, accountability, and the development of the whole person) and the instrument is made up of 22 items, which allow the evaluation of the experience from the key characteristics of the higher education process from the student's point of view.

In accordance with the results, the scale helps to provide broad and sufficient information for educational management and to establish coherence between the characteristics of the teaching-learning process and the administration of the resources and mechanisms that allow this process to be perceived as high quality by the students. The psychometric properties and

the statistical results make it possible to have confidence in the measurement made by this instrument, and at the same time to perceive the satisfaction of the students. In this way, this instrument ends up being a part of the decision-making process in academic, administrative, research and welfare terms, based on the student's experience within the institution. In other words, the academic managers will be able to count not only on the feedback achieved in the classroom about the teaching work, but they will also be able to review the teaching work connected to the different points where the student interacts with the institution's complementary services.

The measurement of SX based purely on the perception of the individual contributes to generate information corresponding to the evaluation of what the institution has done and at the same time to the evaluation of what the institution itself requires, projected on the needs reported by the students. Although academia argues for the prioritisation of teaching in the work of the HEIs, this instrument allows us to find the relevance of these HEIs being managed based on the principles of customer service, considering the particularities demanded by the academy from the principles of knowledge construction.

## **Conclusions**

The HEIs require tools such as the SX scale to truly monitor the contribution they can make to their students in their vocational training process. To this end, the information gathered must have the characteristics of transferring the definition of experience from a 360° vision where the student reports each aspect that he/she perceives as necessary or complementary to his/her training. For HEI administrators, this culturally sensitive scale also serves as a management tool to determine future strategic plans, short-term action plans and budget management for the different academic bodies.

From a statistical and data quality perspective, the SX scale presents an appropriateness among both its component factors and items, in which the categories designed for measurement are captured in a meaningful way. The various indicators of instrument quality and reliability allow those implementing the instrument to be confident that their efforts in administering the instrument will result in a good collection of information. Finally, this

instrument contributes to strengthening both the theories and the conceptualisation of what the experience represents for a student in higher education. This is fundamental for the development of the concept of university according to the socio-economic contexts in different times. The SX scale ratifies and enables the study of the best ways to learn and manage learning in HEIs.

### **Limitations**

The findings showed that the SX scale has satisfactory psychometric properties and high reliability and can be applied to university students to find out their perceptions of their university experience. However, there may be some limitations given that the validation and adaptation process is based on a Colombian context and its applicability in other countries, including Spanish-speaking countries, could generate other results. In this sense, semantic equivalences carried in the translation process may have an important implication. Therefore, a cross-cultural evaluation of the scale before use is suggested.

On the other hand, factor analysis allows us to demonstrate the validity and increase the reliability of the scale but given its interpretation and the use given to the scales in this study, as well as the population, in this case university students, it may differ from the results applied to other populations and for other purposes.

### **Conflict of Interest**

The authors declare that the research was conducted in the absence of any commercial or financial relationships that could be construed as a potential conflict of interest.

### **Author Contributions**

Methodology, MA; validation, MA; data analysis and results writing, AG; original draft-writing, MA; writing-revising and editing, YC; supervision, AG. All authors have read and accepted the published version of the manuscript.

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## Artículo cinco

### Evaluation of psychometric properties of perceived value applied to universities.

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#### Abstract

Over the last 20 years, the construct of perceived value has been the subject of much research, most of them applied to the service sector. The intangible nature of this sector requires in-depth analysis of the customer's perceptions of what he/she gives and what he/she receives. In this research, perceived value is applied in the context of higher education. In this type of service, there is widespread debate about whether the student is a customer or not, since the student is a key stakeholder group. This is due to the fact that the quality perceived by the student has a tangible component that is related to their experience when they receive the education service, and an intangible component that is related to the image and reputation of the university. In addition to the increasingly competitive environment of universities, it is important to understand which factors influence student perceptions of value. To contribute to the understanding of perceived value in universities, a scale of perceived value was selected, and its psychometric properties were evaluated. Cultural adaptation, exploratory factor analysis and confirmatory factor analysis techniques were used for this evaluation. The statistical results showed the validity and reliability of the scale applied to universities in the Colombian context.

**Key Words:** psychometric assessment, perceived value, quality higher education, students' perception, quality private education.

## **Introduction**

The higher education sector has been impacted by the changes generated by globalisation, high competition at local, national, and international levels (Doña-Toledo et al., 2017) and specific educational trends with an important virtual component. These factors have forced universities to change their social and educational focus to a more commercial, market-oriented approach (Maringe and Gibbs, 2009, p. 4; Amado and Juarez, In Press). Consequently, higher education institution (HEI) administrators have had to manage their internal and external processes to attract students, position the institution with differentials which are increasingly difficult to obtain and maintain, reduce ineffective recruitment, and mitigate poor data management as well as inadequate student care (Gabelaia, 2021). This means that HEIs prioritise the attraction of students while focusing on improving the quality of the education service provided, as this is related to a better perception of value by students and influences their contentment (Annamdevula and Bellamkonda, 2016).

In an attempt to improve quality, HEIs have opted for high quality certification (Matarranz and García-Madariaga, 2021) at the local level, for example in the Colombian case with the high quality accreditation system for higher education institutions, as well as at the international level, for example, through the main accreditation agencies, among the best known of which are the European Quality Assurance Agency [EQAA] and Accreditation Service for International Schools, Colleges and Universities [ASIC]. These certifications become criteria that students value positively when it comes to selecting the university where they will study (Matarranz and García-Madariaga, 2021). Moreover, the HEIs choose to enhance the student's educational experiences and thereby generate better perceptions of value (Ledden and Kalafatis, 2010). Managing student perceptions involves considering the quality of the education service from an objective approach where physical, technical, and technological aspects are addressed, and a subjective approach involving other components (Del Río-Rama et al., 2021) as well as the reputation and image of the university. Such management from the concept of perceived value (PV) presents ambiguity, as each student has his or her own perception of what quality and value are for them (Flint et al., 2002).

Other authors observe that quality management in higher education focuses on two dimensions, one of service where it refers to the tangible (facilities, cafeterias, libraries, etc.) and a second, which is the educational dimension focused on teaching, research, and community relations (Sultan and Wong, 2010). Aunque en Colombia se concibe dicho enfoque, esta investigación se ciñe al primer tipo de gestión de las percepciones. In this sense, marketing and communications play a relevant role in knowing and confirming students' expectations about the education service they will receive and its impact on their professional profile in order to be placed in an organisation or to generate their own company.

Authors like Matarranz and García-Madariaga (2021) address the mercantilist approach that has generated a debate between whether or not to recognise the student as a customer (Mok, 1999) as some authors indicate that this approach blurs educational standards and undermines the teacher-student relationship (Eagle and Brennan, 2007), creates a short-term vision, and sacrifices educational and social goals that are only recognised in the long term (Bay and Daniel, 2001). More recent research has concluded that digital marketing has a significant impact on student relationship management (Vicente-Ramos and Cano-Torres, 2022), but that students can be considered as customers, only in the recruitment process but not in the educational process (Matarranz and García-Madariaga, 2021). Thus, the student is understood as "a collaborative partner" (Bay and Daniel, 2001, p. 1) where his active role in the educational service is recognised, therefore the perceived value is the result of a "collaborative act of consumption" (Ledden et al., 2011, p. 1246).

This collaborative act of consumption implies that university managers, faculty and support staff develop a management focused on the value perceived by the student, as this can increase the probability of success of organisations (Khalifa, 2004), can have an impact on improving university performance, as well as on profitability (Doña-Toledo et al., 2017). However, understanding the concept of perceived value is a complex task not only because of the characteristics attached to the service, such as intangibility, separability, and expiration, among others (Del Río-Rama et al., 2021). It is also rendered complex by the particularities of higher education, such as student participation in their training process, the satisfaction of needs through the various stakeholders, continuity of service and the

permanence of services that do not expire in a short period of time (Annamdevula and Bellamkonda, 2016). In view of the difficulty of conceptualising perceived value (Harvey and Green, 1993), there are also difficulties in its valuation, however, empirical studies have addressed the measurement of value through quality as such, from the perspective of students using and adapting, as mentioned by Wong and Sultan (2021), instruments such as the SERVQUAL, the SERVPERF and the HEdPERF.

Similarly, various proposals by authors who have sought to evaluate the perceived value of universities were reviewed, such as Ledden et al. (2007) and Clemes et al., (2013), among others. They have sought to understand students' perceptions and relationships with other constructs to improve the student's academic journey, in line with the rigorosity of the formative and experiential processes that directly impact the student's teaching-learning process (Kolb et al., 2000). This article adapts the perceived value scale developed by Ledden et al. (2007), to the Spanish language and the Colombian context in order to assess its ability to measure this construct. In this way, new evidence is presented on the consistency of the scale, since, in the original study, the analyses developed were exploratory in nature. This study provides a first approach to the validation of the scale from the approach of *Covariance-Based Structural Equation Modeling (CB-SEM)*. To this end, this article first presents a conceptual approach to perceived value; secondly, it describes the methodology and process used; thirdly, it shows the results obtained; and finally, a discussion of the findings and conclusions are presented.

### ***Concept of perceived value***

The concept of value is one of the foundations of marketing (Alves, 2011) and its development took place shortly before the 1990s (Eggert and Ulaga, 2002). In this respect, one of the first and most relevant definitions is that proposed by Zeithaml (1988), who defined value as the consumer's evaluation of a product or service, based on his perception of the result of the exchange between what he gives and what he receives. From there, other contributions have been generated around the same idea (Ver, Spreng et al., 1993; Woodruff, 1997). According to consumer value theory, perceived value attempts to explain why

consumers buy what they buy, suggesting five main categories of consumer values (Sheth et al., 1991; Lai et al., 2012):

- 1) functional value (related attributes, physical, and utilitarian performance)
- 2) social value (symbolic and group belonging)
- 3) emotional value (affective responses)
- 4) epistemic value (curiosity, innovation, and knowledge)
- 5) conditional value (specific situation)

Despite its development in the area of marketing, the concept of value has interpretations such as value, utility, price and quality (Sánchez and Iniesta, 2007), and even as a quality of people. Similarly, value is understood as the result of an evaluative judgement, while the term values refer to the standards, rules, criteria, objectives, or ideals that serve as the basis for such an evaluative judgement (Holbrook, 1994). Value then is a judgement of preference and values are the criteria by which people make such judgements, in short, the two concepts are related, but at the same time, they are distinct (Ledden et al., 2007).

The functional concept of value is developed in the purchase or use of a product or service and is evidenced by the recognition of the benefit obtained and the sacrifice made by the consumer based on his or her expectations (Spreng et al., 1993). Consequently, value is more focused on the evaluation of the perceived performance of a product or even a service, in terms of its attributes and characteristics such as ease of use and disposal, considered preferable for the achievement of its particular purposes and objectives (Woodruff, 1997). It should be noted that value is a different concept from quality, although they are related, as quality is an antecedent of value (Cronin et al., 1997, 2000).

In the same sense, perceived value is the result of evaluating the usefulness of the product or service through the perception of the benefit obtained versus the cost of that product (Hermawan, 2001; Ledden et al., 2007). In addition, the alternatives available and their comparative nature are considered, specifying that there is a perceived value between the different offers or alternatives offered by the suppliers (Eggert and Ulaga, 2002). Likewise, it is understood as a cognitive-affective evaluation of the exchange relationships within any

of the stages of the purchase decision process, which includes tangible and intangible elements that play a transcendent role in the decisions and in the comparison made by the customer, where factors such as time, place, and the circumstances of evaluation, among others, converge (Sánchez and Iniesta, 2006).

Perceived value is the result of marketing actions; its importance lies in the fact that it influences the customer's decision making, which in turn influences their intention to repurchase and the intention to share with others the positive messages through word of mouth and the willingness to pay the price of the product or service, involving other factors such as perceived cost, sacrifice, intrinsic and extrinsic attributes (Doña-Toledo et al., 2017). In short, perceived value is a trade-off between the most important components of what the customer feels they give and the performance they receive, with an important influence on loyalty (Usman and Mohd, 2017).

In the case of higher education, perceived value has been analysed by means of scales such as that of Clemes et al. (2013) which sought to analyse the relationships between Chinese students' behavioural intentions, satisfaction, service quality, perceived value, and university image and which was carried out considering previous scales (Wang, 2012), but adjusted by means of focus group carried out with students. The results showed a multilevel model composed of three main dimensions and 13 sub-dimensions to conceptualise and measure perceived service quality (Clemes et al., 2013). Another important research was the one conducted by Doña-Toledo et al. (2017) which set out to validate a model of antecedents and consequences of the perceived value of university among graduates, and to analyse the moderating role of their level of engagement with higher education. The scale developed by Doña-Toledo et al. (2017) to measure perceived value is an adaptation of the scale proposed by Zeithaml (1988) and Cronin et al. (2000), their results showed that perceived quality determines perceived value and this, in turn, decisively influences contentment. The scales also concluded that value determines satisfaction exclusively among graduates with a low level of involvement. The Ledden et al. (2007) scale was selected for this research with the purpose to examine the functional relationship between personal values and perceived value

in the educational sphere. This instrument is selected because of its relevance and wide application in various countries in the education sector

## **Methodology**

### **Instrument**

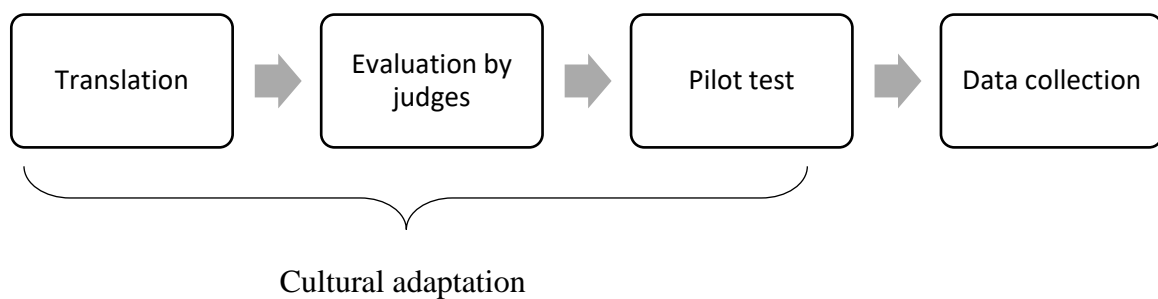
To measure the construct of perceived value, the instrument used is the one developed by Ledden et al. (2007), who divide the concept of value into two dimensions and eight factors. The first dimension is "what you get", where six factors are assessed, namely functional value, epistemic value, social value, emotional value, conditional value, and image. In the second dimension of "what is given", two factors are assessed, monetary and non-monetary sacrifice. The instrument contains 26 items, and it uses a Likert scale from 1 to 7. The permission to use the instrument was requested to the corresponding author who, in addition, provided the original instrument which was applied to his study.

### **Adaptation and data collection procedures**

For the analysis of the perceived value scale, a four-step process of cultural adaptation and data collection was carried out, as illustrated in Figure 1.

#### **Figure 1.**

##### *Adaptation procedures*



**Traslation:** In order to adapt the scale, the first step was to translate it from English into Spanish. This process was carried out by two bilingual experts. Then, a reverse translation into English was made and sent to two experts with doctoral degrees, who reviewed the scales

translated into English and presented their acceptance. Table 1 presents the codes and translations of the questions in both English and Spanish.

**Table 1.**

*Items in English and Spanish.*

<b>Factors</b>	<b>Code</b>	<b>English Items</b>	<b>Spanish Items</b>
Functional value	TYTUC1	My degree will allow me to earn a good/better salary	Mi título universitario me permitirá ganar un buen / mejor salario
	TYTUC2	My degree will allow me to achieve my career goals	Mi título me permitirá alcanzar mis objetivos profesionales
	TYTUC4	My degree will lead to promotion in my current/future job	Mi título conducirá a un ascenso en mi trabajo actual o futuro
Epistemic value	ECDC1	The content of my course keeps me interested	El contenido de mi carrera me mantiene interesado
	ECDC2	I learn new things from my course	Aprendo cosas nuevas de mi carrera
	ECDC3	The course content contributes to the high value of my education	El contenido de mi carrera agrega valor a mi educación
	ECDC4	The academic guidance I receive from my lecturers has enhanced the value of my degree	La orientación académica que recibo de mis profesores agrega valor a mi título
Social value	TCROP1	People who are important to me think that taking my course is a good thing to do	Las personas que son importantes para mí piensan que cursar mi carrera es algo bueno
	TCROP2	People who influence what I do think that taking my course is a good idea	Las personas que influyen en mí creen que es una buena idea tomar mi carrera
	TCROP3	My current/future employer will see me in a better light when I have finished my degree	Mi empleador actual o futuro me verá mejor cuando termine mi carrera
	TCROP6	The support of my friends and family has been important in helping me	El apoyo de mis amigos y familiares ha sido importante para ayudarme en mi carrera
Emocional value	TCPS1	through my course I feel proud that I'm taking my course	Me siento orgulloso de estar cursando mi carrera

Factors	Code	English Items	Spanish Items
Conditional value	TCPS2	Taking my course has boosted my self confidence	Cursar mi carrera ha aumentado mi autoestima
	TCPS5	Taking my course has given me a sense of self-achievement	Cursar mi carrera me ha dado una sensación de autorrealización
	OFRCC1	The support materials supplied to me on my course (e.g., study packs/texts)	Los materiales de apoyo que me proporcionaron en mi carrera (por ejemplo, libros/ textos de módulos) me han ayudado a aprender
	OFRCC2	have helped my learning Study-group work has been a beneficial part of my course	El trabajo en grupo ha sido una parte beneficiosa de mi carrera
	OFRCC3	The Kingston Hill campus and its facilities have contributed to the value of my course	El campus y sus instalaciones han contribuido al valor de mi carrera
Non-monetary sacrifices	LSHSC2	My studies have reduced the time I spend with my family	Mis estudios han reducido el tiempo que paso con mi familia
	LSHSC3	My studies have reduced the time I spend with my friends	Mis estudios han reducido el tiempo que paso con mis amigos
	LSHSC5	The monetary price paid for my course is reasonable when I consider what I	El precio monetario pagado por mi carrera es razonable cuando considero lo que obtengo de él
Monetary sacrifices	LSHSC6	am getting out of it When considering the monetary price of my course, I believe that the quality is good	Considero que el precio monetario de mi carrera está acorde con la calidad
	LPAU1	The reputation of KBS influences the value of my degree	La reputación de mi universidad influye en el valor de mi título
Image	LPAU2	The image projected by KBS has an influence on the value of my degree	La imagen proyectada por mi universidad influye en el valor de mi título
	LPAU3	I believe that employers would have positive things to say about KB	Creo que los empleadores tendrían cosas positivas que decir sobre mi universidad
	LPAU4	I have heard positive things about KBS	He escuchado cosas positivas sobre mi universidad
	LPAU5	I believe that KBS has a good reputation	Creo que mi universidad tiene una buena reputación

**Evaluation by judges:** This evaluation was carried out by eight expert judges in marketing or management. To measure content validity and Aiken's V statistic (V) was used to analyse

the responses. The possible outcomes ranged from zero to one, where a value of one represents a perfect degree of agreement among the judges and a value of zero is general disagreement. The value of this statistic was considered acceptable at values equal to or greater than 0.7 (Merino and Livia, 2009). For this study, the following aspects were assessed: relevance, pertinence, response induction, sufficiency, clarity and wording, as well as the scale of the response.

The content analysis of the present scale showed that for the aspects of relevance ( $V = 1.00$ ), relevance ( $V = 1.00$ ), response induction ( $V = 1.00$ ), sufficiency ( $V = 0.86$ ), as well as for clarity and wording ( $V = 0.92$ ) the judges had a high level of agreement; only for the case of scale of the response it was considered acceptable, being the  $V = 0.71$

**Pilot test:** A pilot test was carried out to confirm the comprehensibility of the scale in undergraduate students at a private university in the field of management. This evaluation was carried out with a sample of twenty students who, in addition to answering the survey, provided feedback on the clarity and wording of both the scale and the initial prompts. The results of the assessment showed a clear understanding of the items and instructions, and no additional adjustments were necessary.

**Data collection:** The next step was to apply the questionnaire online and share it with students at two universities with the prior consent of the Research Ethics Committee of the Universidad del Rosario <sup>4</sup>. This process was supported by the course teachers, who shared the link and facilitated the questionnaire. The period of time for this process was from September 2021 to February 2022.

### **Participants**

The scale was administered to students enrolled in undergraduate programmes and of legal age at two universities in the city of Bogotá, Colombia. A total of 484 surveys were collected. The sample consisted of 285 women and 199 men. Most of the students are between 18 and 21 years old (68%) and are in their second and third year of their studies. The highest share

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<sup>4</sup> The Universidad del Rosario is the sponsor for the development of this research.

of responses was obtained from the following programmes: business administration, international business administration, logistics and production management, public accounting, market management technology, marketing and digital business, and psychology.

### **Statistical analysis**

For the analysis of the data obtained, an Exploratory Factor Analysis (EFA) was developed and the preliminary findings of the exploratory one was verified by means of a Confirmatory Factor Analysis (CFA), which corresponds to the CB-SEM approach.

**EFA:** Based on the data collected, an EFA was conducted to determine the possible clustering of scale items among the sample of students. The statistic Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin (KMO) and the Bartlett's test of sphericity (BTS) were used to check whether the data were suitable for this type of analysis. The principal factors method with varimax rotation was also used, eliminating items with factor loadings below 0.30 and taking as a reference the criteria established by Cronbach (1951), Godfrey et al. (2019) and Comrey and Lee (2013).

**CFA:** For the CFA, the factors of the EFA were used as a basis for conformation of the factors. Univariate and multivariate normality was established for the items of each of the scales. For the operationalisation of the CFA, maximum likelihood estimates were made using the maximum likelihood. The bootstrap (i.e., 2,000 bootstrap samples with 95% confidence intervals) was also used with reference to Oppong and Agbedra (2016) for this procedure. The following were taken into account for the CFA evaluation statistic: minimum discrepancy ratio ( $X^2/df$ ), comparative form index (*CFI*), normed fit index (*NFI*), Tucker-Lewis index (*TLI*), incremented fit index (*IFI*), goodness-of-fit- index (*GFI*), adjusted goodness-of-fit index (*AGFI*) and root mean square error of approximation (*RMSEA*). Where thresholds for  $X^2/df < 5$ , *CFI, NFI, TLI e IFI* > 0.90, *GFI y AGFI* > 0.80, and *RMSEA* < 0.08.

Following this, the convergent analysis of the factors of each of the scales was carried out, for which the Extracted Variance (AVE), reliability evaluated from the CR statistic, as well as Cronbach's Alpha ( $\alpha$ ) were determined. For AVE, values greater than 0.5 were considered acceptable, for CR values greater than 0.7, and for  $\alpha$  values greater than 0.8. Finally, for the

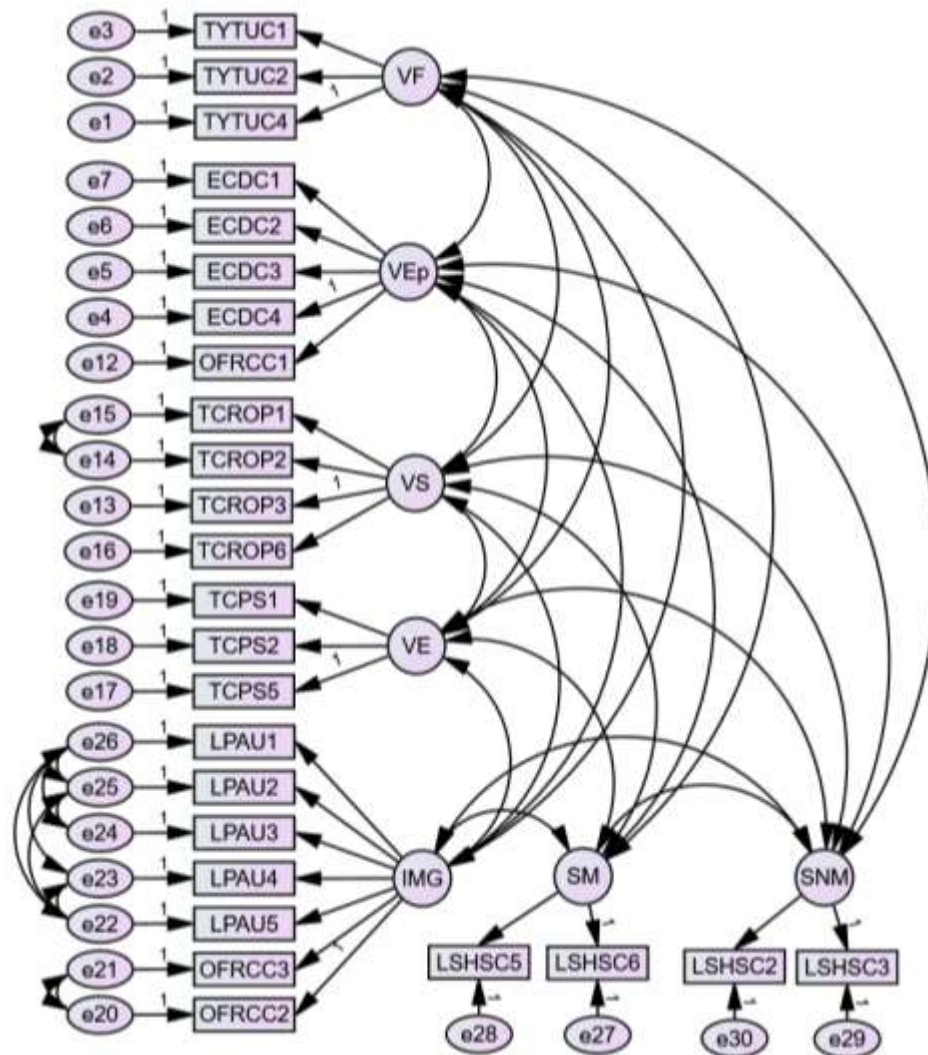


OFRCC3			0.32
LSHSC2	0.98		
LSHSC3	0.86		
LSHSC5		0.78	
LSHSC6		0.79	
LPAU1			0.84
LPAU2			0.85
LPAU3			0.65
LPAU4			0.59
LPAU5			0.44

Based on the factor analysis, the development of the CFA was proceeded. Sobre la base del análisis factorial, se procedió al desarrollo del CFA  $\chi^2/df = 6.03$ ,  $CFI = 0.90$   $NFI = 0.83$ ,  $TLI = 0.90$ ,  $IFI = 0.90$ ,  $GFI = 0.77$ ,  $AGFI = 0.72$  and  $RMSEA = 0.01$ . Based on the above, no standardised regression weights of less than 0.60 were detected, so no variables were eliminated, and the errors were covaried according to the most parsimonious modification indices as shown in Figure 2.

**Figure 2.**

*CFA with error covariation*



With the modifications developed in the standard CFA the new values of the statistics were  $\chi^2 / df = 3.81$ ,  $CFI = 0.94$ ,  $NFI = 0.92$ ,  $TLI = 0.93$ ,  $IFI = 0.94$ ,  $GFI = 0.85$ ,  $AGFI = 0.81$  and  $RMSEA = 0.07$ , which represented a good fit. Table 3 presents the weights of the standardised loadings for each of the variables.

**Table 3.***Standardised regression weights for perceived value scale.*

<b>Factor</b>	<b>Variable</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>7</b>
Functional value	TYTUC1	0.91						
	TYTUC2	0.94						
	TYTUC4	0.90						
Epistemic value	ECDC1		0.91					
	ECDC2		0.95					
	ECDC3		0.97					
	ECDC4		0.90					
Social value	OFRCC1		0.78					
	TCROP1			0.83				
	TCROP2			0.85				
	TCROP3			0.80				
Emotional value	TCROP6			0.83				
	TCPS1				0.91			
	TCPS2				0.86			
Non-monetary sacrifices	TCPS5				0.90			
	LSHSC2							0.91
Monetary sacrifices	LSHSC3							0.93
	LSHSC5						0.86	
Image	LSHSC6						0.96	
	OFRCC2					0.72		
	OFRCC3					0.65		
	LPAU1					0.67		
	LPAU2					0.72		
	LPAU3					0.85		
	LPAU4					0.88		
LPAU5					0.90			

Based on the weights of the standardised regressions, it is identified that the scale has adequate convergent validity for all the factors, showing that, for the factors of functional value, epistemic value, emotional value and non-monetary sacrifice, the value of the AVE was higher using the CFA than the AVE developed by the PLS-SEM method of the original scale. Regarding discriminant validity, it was observed that there are indications that, for the social value and image factors, there are high correlations with the other factors; however,

this is not conclusive given that for these factors the ASV is lower than the AVE. Table 4 shows the values of the convergent and discriminant validity statistics.

**Table 4.**

*Convergent and discriminant validation statistics perceived value scale.*

<b>Factor</b>	<b>Variable</b>	<b><math>\alpha</math></b>	<b>AVE</b>	<b>CR</b>	<b>MSV</b>	<b>ASV</b>	<b>AVE<sup>5</sup></b>
Functional value	TYTUC1	0.94	0.84	0.94	0.74	0.52	0.71
	TYTUC2						
	TYTUC4						
Epistemic value	ECDC1	0.95	0.81	0.95	0.74	0.54	0.67
	ECDC2						
	ECDC3						
	ECDC4						
	OFRCC1						
Social value	TCROP1	0.90	0.65	0.89	0.83	0.55	0.66
	TCROP2						
	TCROP3						
	TCROP6						
Emotional value	TCPS1	0.91	0.79	0.92	0.67	0.49	0.64
	TCPS2						
	TCPS5						
Non-monetary sacrifices	LSHSC2	0.91	0.84	0.91	0.07	0.05	0.88
	LSHSC3						
Monetary sacrifices	LSHSC5	0.90	0.83	0.90	0.66	0.40	0.73
	LSHSC6						
Image	OFRCC2	0.92	0.70	0.91	0.83	0.53	0.72
	OFRCC3						
	LPAU1						
	LPAU2						
	LPAU3						
	LPAU4						
	LPAU5						

<sup>5</sup> This AVE corresponds to the original instrument results and is placed for comparative purposes

## **Discussion of the results**

Regarding the results obtained in the perceived value scale, it was found that the items were grouped into seven factors (see table 2), and not eight, as in the original scale. The factor that was disseminated was the "conditional value" factor which consisted of three items related to other factors in the study programme. In the analyses performed, the items were like other values, so they did not have the capacity to assess the factor and were disintegrated. The items of this factor were as follows, OFRCC1 "The support materials supplied to me on my course (e.g., study packs/texts) have helped my learning", OFRCC2 "Study-group work has been a beneficial part of my course", OFRCC3 "The campus and its facilities have contributed to the value of my course". Within the epistemic value, which addressed the issue of career content, item OFRCC1, which relates to support materials, was included, as it was understood as a more career-related characteristic and not as another factor. As for the items OFRCC2 and OFRCC3, the first related to teamwork and the second related to facilities, were included in the "image" factor, and if the two items are reviewed in depth, OFRCC3 is more related to the emotional component of the image as expressed by Nguyen and Leblanc, (2001) since they are aspects resulting from the experiences that the students have with the organisation. The OFRCC3 item refers to one of the components related to the cognitive image that includes the knowledge and perceptions that the student has regarding the facilities, courses, requirements, among others (Galiniené et al., 2009). Although the results differ in only one factor compared to the original model taken from Ledden et al. (2007) which was developed in the UK, the values, functional, epistemic, social, emotional, and image are still maintained in the dimension of receiving, while in the dimension of giving, monetary sacrifices and non-monetary sacrifices are still retained, with a total of 26 items, which were the original ones since it was not necessary to eliminate any of them.

For Ledden et al. (2007) the value is conceptualised as a higher-order formative latent variable, i.e. an index of its constituent dimensions. Its scales are the product of modifications of other scales developed by different authors such as LeBlanc and Nguyen (1999), Cronin et al. (1997) and Halstead et al. (1994). To further elaborate on the construction of the scale proposed by Ledden, the original authors were reviewed. LeBlanc and Nguyen (1999), proposed a 33-item scale that addressed different aspects of a business school's service

offering as components of perceived value, including functional value (which focused on want /satisfaction), epistemic value (knowledge), image (included image and reputation), emotional value (relationship with the course and the personal effort), functional value (which grouped aspect of price/quality) and social value. On the other hand, Cronin et al. (1997) conducted a study relating the effects of service quality, satisfaction and value on consumers' behavioural intentions in six service industries. Halstead et al. (1994) proposed a model, in which student satisfaction with higher education is a function of two attributes, performance and disconfirmation: intellectual environment and job readiness, which was tested with business school graduates at Eastern University in the United States

Subsequent studies tested the scales proposed by Ledden et al. (2007) with the following results. Kubat (2011) conducted a study to analyse the relationships between personal values, perceived value of education and satisfaction among students at Akdeniz University in Turkey. This study took the scales of Ledden et al. (2007) to measure perceived value, from the dimension of giving and receiving, and the satisfaction. Their results showed that perceived value is a predictor of satisfaction, and that the dimension of receiving is removed to relate the values directly, finding that social value had the greatest influence, and that image had the least influence, it was also identified that, for students, the reputation of the university is not of great value, in the resulting model the non-monetary sacrifice was also removed. The study conducted by Matarranz and García-Madariaga (2021) to measure the relationship between perceived quality, perceived value and repurchase intention of former graduate students at a university in the United States, used part of the Ledden et al. (2007) scale, taking from the giving dimension only the items related to functional value and some items from the receiving scale, as well as a modification of the scale by Dlačić et al. (2014) scale to measure perceived quality independently, and their findings show a relationship between perceived quality and perceived value, and between perceived value and repurchase. Dlačić et al. (2014) postulated perceived value as a multifaceted concept, divided into three, the functional aspects of the experience, the students' emotions, and the comparison with other alternatives.

Following up on research developments regarding perceived value in postgraduate higher education programmes, Ledden et al. (2011) adapt their model, keeping the dimensions of giving and receiving, but notably reducing the items, especially in the dimension of receiving, where the functional, epistemic and other values are found, in general in the dimension of what is given, the authors make modifications in the monetary and non-monetary sacrifices and use the approach of sacrifices of money and time, keeping 5 of its 6 items. A fundamental change in the model is that the satisfaction dimension is treated as a concrete attribute with only one measure. The adaptation made by the original authors of the scale shows that it is still important to further analyse the issue of value, adjusting it to different types of institutions (private - public) and students, whether undergraduate, postgraduate, or doctoral, since at certain stages of academic life, perceptions of value may be different

In the case of Latin America and especially Colombia, as Peña (2014) states, the results given in the previous studies are not generalisable. However, the results obtained were very similar to those proposed by the authors, and the contributions of the study of perceived value in HEIs carried out in Colombia by Serna-Loaiza et al. (2019) and applied to 1569 students in virtual mode, with a scale composed of 83 items, which resulted in the conformation of 10 factors that influenced the perceived value: functional value, emotional value, social value, epistemic value, conditional value, spiritual value, and ethical value and ethical-conditional value, socio-emotional value, ethical-functional value, ethical-social value, and ethical-spiritual value.

## **Conclusions**

The objective of this study was to analyse the psychometric properties of the Spanish adaptation of the perceived value scale in a population of university students. The statistical results of the confirmatory factor analyses for the Colombian case showed a model very close to the original one, with seven factors, evidencing that there was consistency between the theoretical factor structures (Ledden et al., 2007) and the empirical factor structure. Despite the cultural differences of Colombian students, combined with the differences between the education systems compared between the UK and Colombia, the results are similar, showing the validity and reliability of the scale.

For HEIs in Colombia, the validation of this scale represents the need to focus their management and relationship efforts towards students in terms of creating value and ensuring results within the programmes that the student decides to undertake. The student not only perceives the quality of education from the contents of the learning process but is also susceptible to those aspects where he/she analyses the value of the tuition fee and the good name he/she can obtain upon graduating from a given higher education institution. Finally, as in other parts of the world, when deciding where to study, students will always consider the perception of the institution based on its reputation and image in the context of the country.

For HEI managers, it is important to link the management of student perception to the strategic plans of the institutions and to consolidate the strategic planning axes around the link between the quality of education and the elements that students value when acquiring this level of training.

### **Limitations**

The results provided evidence of a scale that measures, through the seven factors, the value that students perceive of their university experience and serves not only for empirical research purposes but also for practical purposes, so that university administrators can learn about their students' perceptions and act with respect to the processes and procedures they develop to improve students' experiences. However, the researchers recognise that further empirical research is needed to test the adaptability and measurability of the value construct in other cultural contexts, and even in the Colombian context.

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## Artículo seis

### Relationship Between Perceived Value, Student Experience, and University Reputation: Structural Equation Model

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#### Abstract

Research regarding university management from the field of marketing has been increasing, as well as the differential strategies designed by universities to attract and retain both students and teachers. One of them is obtaining high quality accreditations. Its impact on the process and purchasing behavior of educational services is recognized. For this reason, this research aims to relate the three constructs in higher education institutions and compare their behavior both in high-quality accredited universities and in non-accredited ones in order to identify the incidence of accreditation. The research used an analysis of the data by structural equations model and the results showed that both the student's experience and the perceived value influence reputation. Meantime, the student's experience influences the perceived value and no differences are evident in the model because of the accreditation in high quality.

**Key words:** Perceived value; student experience; university reputation; higher education; SEM; structural equation modeling.

#### Introduction

The effects of changes in the provision of higher education services, added to the highly competitive environment (Del-Castillo-Feito et al., 2019), have generated significant challenges for higher education institutions (HEIs). This has led HEIs to focus on other strategic areas such as the development and strengthening of their brand, as well as its communication (Hemsley-Brown & Goonawardana, 2007) to their stakeholders. In this regard, it is becoming increasingly complex to manage education with a commercial

approach (Maringe and Gibbs, 2009, p. 4) that involves marketing strategies with a view to attracting and retaining both students and teachers (Plewa et al. ., 2016; Christensen & Gornitzka, 2017).

The management of the higher education service takes into account, first of all, compliance with national legislation in which the directors of the HEIs are governed by the requirements of the national regulatory entities (Ministry of National Education, 2020), for that matter of Colombia, the Ministry of National Education, which is the entity in charge of the formation of educational policies and also of the promotion of quality and competitiveness of the institutions that provide education services (Ministry of National Education, 2022), and continues with the development of strategies that involve other types of more voluntary decisions in order to differentiate themselves from the competition with innovative educational proposals (Suomi et al., 2014) and in accordance with the needs and requirements of the business sectors and industry (Miotto et al., 2014). al., 2020). Within these decisions, HEIs can opt, voluntarily, for high-quality national accreditations (National Accreditation Council [CAN, the acronym in Spanish for Consejo Nacional de Acreditación], 2006; Ministry of National Education, 2001), but also international ones with a view to quality assurance.

Other differentiating elements are the relationship programs with the private and public sector (Friedman and Deek, 2003) to obtain resources, mostly for research (Morphew et al., 2016), as well as for the achievement of spaces for business practices ( Del-Castillo-Feito et al., 2019), for the relationship with other HEIs both national and international in the processes of internationalization and exchange of students and teachers (Plewa et al., 2016), and for the strengthening of both networks that allow sharing knowledge, methodologies and tools for pedagogical innovation, as well as for the strengthening of research processes (Morphew et al., 2016).

In recent years, there has been a decrease in the gap between HEIs categorized as *universities*, which opt for high-quality national certifications since, of the total number of active universities, 71% of them have high-quality accreditation. (SNIES, acronym in Spanish for

Sistema Nacional de Información de la Educación Superior, 2022), but if the analysis is extended to other categorizations such as professional technical institutions, technological institutions, and university institutions or technological schools, only 27% have high-quality accreditation. Likewise, it is important to specify that high-quality accreditation is a voluntary certification that allows HEIs to add value to their academic offer to face local, national, and international competitors (National Accreditation Council [CNA], 2006). This makes it possible to see that accreditations are not a strategic bet for a large number of HEIs that opt for other more commercial and niche strategies. Despite the figures shown, it is important to specify that the level of quality demonstrated by HEIs is the result of a constant process that must be regularly updated to maintain and improve quality standards (Dlačić et al., 2013).

In addition to the institutional decision to be accredited or not in high quality at the national level, HEIs require the development of other differential strategies to obtain a sustainable competitive advantage, even more, taking into account the diversity of training proposals (Luque-Martínez & Del Barrio- Garcia, 2009). In this regard, some HEIs have focused on obtaining international accreditations, both institutional and from schools or faculties (e.g., European Quality Assurance Agency [EQAA], The Association to Advance Collegiate Schools of Business [AACSB] and Accreditation Council for Business Schools and Programs [ACBSP]) and some other HEIs, to a lesser extent, have focused on entering the competition and categorizing themselves in the main international reputation rankings.

These include the Academic Ranking of World Universities (ARWU, also known as the Shanghai Ranking), the British Times Higher Education (THE) Ranking, and the Quaquerelli Symonds (QS) Ranking. Each of them has different indicators and distribution percentages in their measurement (Parellada and Álvarez, 2017). In the Colombian case, for the year 2022, only two universities managed to enter the Shanghai Ranking which are the National University of Colombia and the Los Andes University (Shanghai ranking, 2022). In the Times Higher Education (THE), 25 Colombian universities entered, 10 of them directly entered the ranking and the other 15 entered the reporter classification of young universities (Times Higher Education, 2022). Lastly, 19 universities entered the QS ranking for the year

2022 (QS Quacquarelli Symonds, 2022). However, despite the advances and results obtained, greater efforts are required to achieve better categorizations since Colombian universities are not among the first places in world rankings and it has been found that different stakeholders, mainly students, value the achievements of the HEIs.

In this sense, future students in their role as prospects or clients (role assigned before entering the university) value this type of distinction as relevant criteria for decision-making about their choice of career and HEI (Plewa et al., 2016), because they understand that this will impact their training process and their insertion in the labor market (Drydakis, 2015). It is precisely there, where both the reputation of the HEIs as well as the student experience and the perceived value play a preponderant role in the consolidation of a competitive differential compared to other HEIs, both national and international (Miotto et al., 2020; Sujata, 2014; Woodruff, 1997).

In this regard, various studies have shown the importance of managing each of these constructs independently (Del Río-Rama et al., 2021; Lemon & Verhoef, 2016; Chen & Esangbedo, 2018). In the first place, reputation is a multidimensional construct (Verčič et al., 2016), product of the perception (Maduro et al., 2018) that stakeholders have (Finch et al., 2015) about the performance and results of an organization (Fombrun et al., 2000) over time (Sung & Yang, 2008). In addition to its multidimensionality, reputation is influenced by variables such as identity and image, communication, research, indexes and rankings, risks and management, value, brand and symbols, but it also influences variables such as financing, evaluations and behavior, registration and enrollment, recognition and loyalty, student decisions, and graduate access to the labor market (Amado and Juarez, 2022). Given its importance, it is essential that it be managed taking into account the assessments of the stakeholders and especially the student, who is the direct user and who builds their experience with all the touchpoints of their training process (González-Marcos et al., 2016).

In the same way, various investigations have shown that the student experience—which shares along with reputation, the multidimensional characteristic (Lemon & Verhoef, 2016)—requires attention and management at the different points of the journey that the

student makes, and that is going from the career and university decision process to the loyalty process, since this affects the value perceived by the student and their satisfaction (Nadiri et al., 2009) with the professional training process and market insertion rates employment (Kertechian et al., 2022) or the development of their entrepreneurship, mainly in business schools. Also, studies such as the one carried out by Chandra et al. (2018), identify that it is important to improve student experiences since they are related to the quality of the educational service. However, it has been identified that the experience goes beyond the teaching-learning process, since it also requires the commitment that the student develops with their training process, along with an active role within it, as well as the welfare processes managed by the HEIs and of which the students are beneficiaries (Matus et al., 2021). Since the training experience is a long-term process (Xu et al., 2018) depending on the level of training, it implies a constant management and review and activities to identify opportunities for improvement in order to guarantee the quality of the service throughout the process (Yap et al., 2022), the improvement of student perceptions, and with it, the success of the HEIs (Shapiro et al., 2017).

The value that results from the process of improving perceptions of the students' experience (Ledden and Kalafatis, 2010) requires special attention since it involves tangible aspects such as physical facilities and intangible aspects such as teaching and research processes in which frame the educational processes (Sultan and Wong, 2010) and the student is placed in an active role (Ledden et al., 2011) that challenges the directors of the institutions to develop a management focused on the value perceived by students (Khalifa, 2004), who evaluate their process taking into consideration what they give and what they receive in return (Usman and Mohd, 2017). In this evaluation, marketing activities have an important influence when making decisions related to repurchases, the transmission of their experience to other people, satisfaction and loyalty, among other behaviors (Doña-Toleda et al., 2017; Ledden et al., 2007). Perceived value, as well as reputation and student experience are multidimensional constructs which measurement is complex and they are influenced by various variables and, in turn, influence other variables such as satisfaction, word of mouth, and loyalty.

As will be seen later in the literature review, various studies have been found that relate two of the variables, for example, experience and perceived value (Prahalad and Ramaswamy, 2003), perceived value and reputation (Caruana and Ewing, 2010), and experience and reputation. However, this relationship is usually expressed unequivocally because reputation requires customer experience to be evaluated. In this regard, Grunig and Hung (2002) differentiate primary and secondary reputations based on participation and personal experience with organizations. In fact, the experience that each individual experiences affects the reputational nature of the organization (Coombs, 2000; Sung and Yang, 2008). However, there was no evidence of research that relates the three variables and that takes the student's experience as a construct, and not as a prerequisite for participation in the research.

For this reason, this research recognizes the importance of understanding these relationships and their implications for the management of HEIs and proposes to relate the three constructs, namely, student experience, perceived value, and reputation, with two comparison groups, HEIS in the category "universities" that have high-quality accreditation granted by the Ministry of National Education of Colombia, and unaccredited universities, to understand not only the relationship between the variables under study, but also the influence of accreditation on the perception of the students. To develop this objective, this article firstly presents a literature review with a special focus on the definitions of the focal construct and the conceptual model that is proposed. Secondly, the methodology used is explained. At this point, the selection of the sample and data collection, the measures and the methods used are described. Thirdly, the analyzes carried out are shown. Finally, in fourth place, the conclusions, discussion and managerial implications are presented.

## **Literature Review**

### ***Focal Construct Definitions***

#### *University Reputation*

The concept of university reputation has been adapted from the original concept of corporate reputation (Amado and Juárez, 2022). In this sense, corporate reputation is "the perceptive representation of past actions and future expectations of a company that describes the first

general attractiveness for all its key components compared to other rivals” (Fombrun, 1996, p. 72). According to this, the reputation of universities corresponds to the result of the impressions obtained from the interactions of the interested parties with the universities (Rindova et al. 2005), over time (Alessandri et al., 2006). At this point, reputation is understood as the sum of the perceptions and evaluations that different stakeholders have about an HEI (Chen & Esangbedo, 2018).

Other authors specify that reputation is the reflection or result of all the actions carried out internally by a university which influences the image projected to the different publics of interest (Van Vught, 2008). Also, the university reputation serves as a substitute for the quality of the educational service which influences the decisions made by future students (Hemsley-Brown, 2012) and teachers in the selection and evaluation of the university where they will enter (Wolf & Jenkins, 2018). Summarizing, “reputation is the result of the evaluation made by both internal and external stakeholders of the performance and results obtained in the management of its substantive functions, namely, teaching, research and extension over a specific time” (Amado and Juárez, 2022).

The benefits of reputation are wide-ranging. They include reduced uncertainty in stakeholder decision-making which builds trust (Miotto et al., 2020; Munisamy et al., 2014), improving graduate recruitment (Morley & Aynsley, 2007), increasing student satisfaction and loyalty (Plewa et al., 2016; Liu et al., 2017), creating entry barriers (Lafuente et al., 2018), reducing risks and costs management (Christensen & Gornitzka, 2017), attracting investors, and creating a sustainable competitive advantage (Marginson, 2016; Pfarrer et al., 2010).

### *Student Experience*

The student experience, like the reputation of universities, arises from the adaptation of the concept of customer experience which focuses on the cognitive, emotional, behavioral, sensory and social responses of a customer to the offers of a company (Lemon and Verhoef, 2016). In the context of higher education, the student experience has been an objective pursued by the directors of HEIs through improvements in teaching-learning processes,

support for diversity, sufficiency of teaching resources, learning, classroom design, achievement of learning outcomes (Calma & Dickson-Deane, 2020), among others. Just as Lemon and Verhoef (2016) define the customer experience as the “journey” that the customer has with the product or service, Temple et al. (2016) propose “the student journey” composed of four elements which are the application experience, the academic experience, the campus experience, and the postgraduate experience.

However, despite the complexity of its measurement and management resulting in the extension or duration of education services, and due to the large number of interactions with different elements and stakeholders with which the student interacts (Xu et al., 2018), and to the different roles that students have during their studies, which go beyond the role of clients (Dropulić et al. 2021), the concept of student experience presents inconsistencies in its definition (Tan et al., 2016). According to Matus et al. (2021), does not have a widely accepted meaning and each author adapts it according to the objectives that he/she has proposed in his/her study. Despite this, universities have understood its importance and have designed institutional education policies that have focused on the student’s experience and have generated various proposals for improvement (Calma & Dickson-Deane, 2020).

Among the benefits of experience management is the increase in repurchase intentions and the word of mouth (Kumar et al., 2007). It has also been pointed out that proper management can lead to a differential advantage, especially, in organizations of service (Sujata, 2014). Xu et al. (2018) which argue that to improve the student’s experience it is important to listen to them. This can be done through various channels in order to improve the educational service and to adapt to their needs. In this regard, Nel (2017) states that the role of students is fundamental in the process of pedagogical transformation and in the use of new technologies, making their experiences more meaningful and better. It is also recognized that the competencies in the educational model are those that represent the value that the student obtains from their experience at the university.

### *Perceived Value*

The definition of perceived value most used in research on this subject is the one carried out by Zeithaml (1988), who defines it as the evaluation that the consumer makes regarding a product or service, based on their perception of the result of the exchange between what he/she gives and what he/she receives. For his part, Holbrook (1994) points out that value is the result of an evaluative judgment, while the term values refer to the standards, rules, criteria, objectives or ideals that serve as the basis for said evaluative judgment. For Ledden et al. (2007), the perceived value is the result of evaluating the utility of a product or service through the perception of the benefits obtained in comparison with the cost. Just as in the case of reputation and student experience, perceived value is influenced by other variables and in turn influences still others.

Likewise, the results of the study carried out by Doña-Toledo et al. (2017) showed that quality determines the perceived value, which itself determines satisfaction. Other authors such as Ivy (2001) found that the students build an image of the university in their mind, based on their perceptions of strengths and weaknesses as a result of the perceived value of the evaluation carried out. A direct relationship between perceived value and the satisfaction level was also found (Ledden et al., 2007). In this regard, Sánchez-Fernández and Iniesta-Bonillo (2006) affirm that the satisfaction itself is idiosyncratic to an offer or a training proposal of a specific HEI, while the value is generic to all offers or formative proposals, which has important implications for the measurement of each construct.

The perceived value of the education service allows the student to build trust and loyalty towards the HEI (Hashim et al., 2015) and implies, taking preference into account, the result of compensation received and an interaction between the student and the HEI. In summary, Sánchez-Fernández and Iniesta-Bonillo (2006) affirm that the perceived value presents the following characteristics: it is interactive, since it implies a relationship between the subject and the object or between subject and subject; it is relative, because of its comparative, personal, and situational character; it is perceptual in nature; it has a high level of abstraction, since it presents a hierarchical level higher than that of other concepts, and it is cognitive-affective, because it is based on the traditional result of value for money. Similarly, Alves'

work (2010) is recognized, because he carried out an extensive review of the literature on the perceived value in higher education.

### *Concept Model*

#### *Relation between Student Experience and Perceived Value*

The relationship between customer experience and perceived value has been analyzed in empirical research from various economic sectors. One of them tried a model that considers the effects of factors such as price and variety on perceived value and these in turn were assumed to be determinants of customer experience (Baker et al., 2002). Likewise, it was found that the creation of value is defined by the customer's experience at a certain time and place within the context of a specific event (Prahalad and Ramaswamy, 2003). Within the basic principles of the measurement of the customer experience, it was found that this is evaluated as a perception of the global value of the use of a service, it includes the emotions and influences of third parties, it begins before the meeting and continues after the meeting has occurred, and evaluates all channels, among others (Maklan & Klaus 2011; Klaus and Maklan, 2013). Fitzsimmons and Fitzsimmons (2006, p. 11) mentioned that experiences must "create added value by engaging and connecting with customers in a personal and memorable way."

It was also evidenced that the concept of perceived value is a multifaceted construct that considers the functional aspects of the customer experience in higher education (Ledden et al., 2007). Similarly, the emotions of the students themselves and the comparison they make with other alternatives are taken into account (Dlačić et al., 2014). Gupta and Vajic (2000, p. 34) stated that "an experience occurs when a customer has some sensation resulting from some level of interaction... created by the service provider." The concept of total customer experience (TCE) was introduced by Petre, Minocha, and Roberts (2006:189), who state that it influences customers' perception of value and service quality and, consequently, it affects their fidelity. Therefore, the following hypothesis is proposed:

*Hypothesis 1. Student experience influences perceived value*

### ***Relation between Student Experience and University Reputation***

There is evidence of some research that links experience with reputation, such as that carried out by Handayani (2019), which concluded that experiential marketing has a positive and significant effect on the reputation of private universities. Also, White (2015) investigated the emotions experienced by students in the classroom and determined that they influence satisfaction and loyalty to the institution, specifying in his conclusion that a better understanding of the student's experience and the management of such experience can lead to a better reputation and higher enrollments. In the case of contexts other than education, the research on this relationship is much broader. One of them studied the moderating effect of consumer experience on the value of reputation over price and found that customers with different levels of experience can register very different reputation ratings. These results suggested that more experienced customers are less likely to pay a premium price and trust their reputation system (Yang et al., 2019).

Additionally, another investigation recognized the relationship between these two variables, stating that the experience that a consumer has with the company, its products and/or services, even with its level of reputation, will make the customer perceive the company as trustworthy and respectful (Bhattacharya & Sen, 2003). In the same way, it was found that unique, attractive and lasting experiences generate a source of competitive advantage that seeks to achieve an emotional connection with the client through the provision of tangible and intangible elements with which important interactions will be generated. This will give as a result the construction of reputation (Terblanche, 2009). Taking into account the findings and conclusions that relate the two constructs, the following hypothesis is proposed:

*Hypothesis 2. The student's experience influences university reputation*

### ***Relation between Perceived Value and Reputation***

The relationship between perceived value and reputation in higher education has been investigated with growing interest in the publications consulted and important contributions were made. For example, Caruana and Ewing (2010) examined the interaction of perceived value and reputation and established a significant relationship between both dimensions. In

the work carried out by Tournois (2015) on the conceptualization of reputation, various antecedents of reputation were found, among which are attachment, satisfaction and value. In the research conducted by Kausahal et al. (2021), it was found a significance of indirect relationships in their proposed model that involved perceived quality, image, perceived value, satisfaction, attachment, and reputation. However, in the study conducted by Kaushal et al. (2021), it was found that perceived value is not related to reputation.

For their part, Hashim et al. (2015) pointed out important correlations, suggesting that the perceived value is positively correlated with the image of the institution; students' trust in the university is significantly correlated with the image of the institution and the perceived value of the university's activities. Similarly, student loyalty is correlated with engagement and reputation. In addition to this, the image projected by the university has been considered as a reason why students make their choice, so that the image that the student has before entering the chosen university is more important than the concept they form about it once their time at university is over (Ahmed et al., 1997; Matherly, 2012).

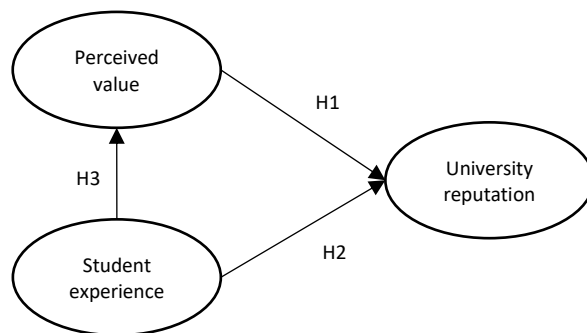
Besides this, evidence of the relationship between quality and perceived value was found, given that, in the value equation, which comprises most of the conceptualizations of the "receiving" component, the consumer can implicitly include abstract factors such as prestige, related with reputation, and convenience (Doña et al., 2017). In fact, in choosing their university major, the students take into account, in addition to costs, the reputation of the school and the program, job opportunities, the study plan, class sizes, and the ease of interaction with members of their faculty. This is why universities try to create comprehensive experiences that add value to the student and meet the objectives of HEIs (Goh et al., 2017; Dredge et al., 2012; Xu and Wu, 2018). In this relationship it is also affirmed that quality is an antecedent of perceived value, which is a significant determinant of satisfaction. The perceived quality determines perceived value and this influences satisfaction (Doña et al., 2017). It has also been argued that perceived value positively affects customer relationship development (Kant et al., 2019). Therefore, the following hypothesis is proposed:

### *Hypothesis 3. Perceived value influences university reputation*

Figure 1 shows the conceptual model where the three variables that will be related in this study are visualized.

**Figure 1.**

#### *Conceptual Model*



#### **Methodology**

The proposed study is quantitative and cross-sectional, since it seeks to relate the three constructs of the model proposed in Figure 1, in two HEIs categorized as universities. One of them with high quality accreditation and the other one without high quality accreditation in Colombia. The research and data collection protocol was approved by the Research Ethics Committee of the Universidad del Rosario on September 22, 2021.

#### ***Sample selection and data collection***

The questionnaire was applied in two universities to students enrolled in undergraduate programs and adults. In total, 484 surveys carried out by undergraduate students were collected in the period of November and December of the year 2021, and also during February and March of the year 2022. For the application, it was requested the support of teachers who invited their students and only the ones who were willing to participate responded freely.

The sample consisted of 285 women and 199 men. The age ranges were 328 participants between the ages of 18 and 21, 88 participants between the ages of 22 and 25, and a total of 68 participants older than 25 years. Most of the students who responded to the survey were in the second and third year of their career with 170 and 125 students respectively; 90 students who answered were in first year; 63 were in fourth year and 36 in fifth year.

### ***Instruments***

For the study of experience management, it was used the instrument proposed by Xu et al. (2018) that is applied in higher education, in which six dimensions were identified, namely: student-centered service, diversity and global citizenship, co-production of the learning experience, trust in the teacher, responsibility and the complete development of the individual. The instrument contains 24 statements and uses an interval measurement scale through a five-category Likert scale.

To measure the perceived value construct, it was taken the instrument developed by Ledden et al. (2007), who divide the concept of value into two dimensions and eight factors. The first dimension is “what you get”. In it, there are evaluated six factors, namely, the functional value, the epistemic value, the social value, the emotional value, the conditional value and the image. In the second dimension of “what is given”, two factors are evaluated: the monetary and non-monetary sacrifice. The instrument contains 26 items and a Likert scale from 1 to 7 is used.

To assess reputation in education, it was used the scale proposed by Del-Castillo-Feito et al. (2019) which evaluates the reputation of universities through 6 factors: performance, innovation, citizenship, services, governance, and work environment. The instrument contains 17 items or statements and a Likert scale of 10 categories was used.

### ***Data Analysis***

The data analysis was developed from a Structural Equations Model (SEM). Given the nature of this type of model, the analysis of the results was divided into two parts. The first one,

sought to evaluate the measurement model; the second one, to verify the structure model and the hypotheses in both accredited and non-accredited institutions.

### ***Measurement Model***

For the development of the measurement model, each of the scales was submitted to a Confirmatory Factor Analysis (CFA), for which the factors formed in the studies by Xu et al. (2018), Ledden et al. (2007) and Castillo-Feito et al. (2019). It was determined that the data did not fit a normal distribution, either univariate or multivariate for each of the items evaluated. Given the above, for the development of the AFC estimates were made based on free asymptotic distribution. Similarly, the Bootstrap Method was used to guarantee the reliability of the results, that is, 2,000 bootstrap samples were developed with 95% confidence intervals, taking Oppong and Agbedra (2016) as a reference for this procedure. The CFA results were evaluated using the Chi-square ( $\chi^2$ ), minimum discrepancy ratio ( $\chi^2/df$ ), goodness-of-fit index (GFI), adjusted goodness-of-fit index (AGFI), and root mean square error of approximation (RMSEA). For this, the following thresholds were taken into account:  $\chi^2$ , the smaller the better with  $p\text{-value} > 0.05$ ,  $\chi^2/df$  less than 5, CFI, NFI, TLI, IFI, GFI and AGFI greater than 0.8 and RMSEA less than 0.08.

When the CFA did not present a good fit, especially the RMSEA, we proceeded to evaluate which variables had normalized regression values lower than 0.6 for their elimination, as well as the indices of modification of the covariance of the errors of each one of the items, covarying those larger and theoretically more parsimonious indices, as described by Marsh et al. (2004).

Subsequently, the convergent and discriminant analysis of each of the factors of the instruments was carried out. In the case of convergent validity, the Extracted Variance Analysis (EVA) was determined, as well as the reliability evaluated from the CR statistic (Composite Reliability) and also as Cronbach's Alpha ( $\alpha$ ). In the case of the EVA, values greater than 0.5 were considered acceptable; for CR values, the greater than 0.7; and for  $\alpha$  values, the greater than 0.8. Finally, for the discriminant analysis of the factors, the Maximum

Shared Variance (MSV) and the Average Shared Variance (ASV) were calculated, being considered acceptable when the MVS and ASV were lower than the EVA.

### ***Structure Model***

In order to verify the hypotheses, we proceeded to evaluate the goodness of fit of the proposed model, keeping the statistics and thresholds of the measurement model stage. If necessary, the largest and theoretically most parsimonious modification indices were covaried. The hypothesis contrast was developed with the adjusted model, being accepted when the p-value of Beta (estimated) was less than 0.05. Similarly, under the previously described procedure, the hypotheses for the group of students belonging to non-accredited and accredited HEIs were contrasted.

## **Results**

### ***Measurement Model***

In relation to the scales, we proceeded to guarantee their reliability and validity before testing the hypotheses using the structural model, in order to find out which factors explained the construct evaluated by each instrument. That said, in the case of the student experience scale, the CFA indicated a good fit  $\chi^2/ df=3.99$ , CFI=0.93, NFI=0.91, TLI=0.92, IFI=0.93, GFI=0.87, AGFI=0.82 and RMSEA=0.07. The EVA, the reliability evaluated from the CR statistic and the Cronbach's Alpha statistic were considered high, confirming the convergent validity of the instrument. Similarly, the discriminant validity of the scale was confirmed as the MSV and ASV were lower than the EVA. Table 1 shows the values of the reliability and validity statistics of the student experience scale.

**Table 1.**

*Reliability and Validity of the Student Experience Scale*

<b>Factor</b>	<b>Item</b>	<b>Factor Loading</b>	<b><math>\alpha</math></b>	<b>EVA</b>	<b>CR</b>	<b>MSV</b>	<b>ASV</b>
Student Centered Service	SCE1	0.81	0.91	0.73	0.91	0.60	0.32
	SCE2	0.88					
	SCE3	0.85					
	SCE4	0.88					

		DYC1	0.68					
Diversity and Global Citizenship		DYC2	0.82					
		DYC3	0.86	0.89	0.65	0.90	0.60	0.49
		DYC4	0.84					
		DYC5	0.80					
Co-production of the learning experience		CPEA2	0.78					
		CPEA3	0.83	0.86	0.62	0.86	0.49	0.40
		CPEA4	0.75					
		CPEA5	0.78					
Teacher		DDM1	0.70					
		DDM2	0.88	0.88	0.68	0.89	0.59	0.47
Depending		DDM3	0.83					
		DDM4	0.86					
Accountability		RES1	0.70					
		RES2	0.94	0.87	0.73	0.89	0.49	0.35
		RES3	0.90					
Integral development of the individual		DIP2	0.91					
		DIP3	0.91	0.91	0.84	0.91	0.51	0.47

Compared to the perceived value scale, the CFA presented a good adjustment, being  $\chi^2/df=3.81$ , CFI=0.94, NFI=0.92, TLI=0.93, IFI=0.94, GFI=0.85, AGFI=0.81, and RMSEA=0.07. It was identified that the scale has an adequate convergent validity for all the factors. However, in relation to the divergent validity for the social value and image factors, there are high correlations with the other factors as MSV is greater than EVA, although the above cannot be taken as confirmatory since MSV was less than EVA. Table 2 shows the values of the reliability and validity statistics of the perceived value scale.

**Table 2.**

*Reliability and Validity of the Perceived Value Scale*

Factor	Item	Factor	$\alpha$	EVA	CR	MSV	ASV
		<b>Loading</b>					
Functional	TYTUC1	0.91					
	TYTUC2	0.94	0.94	0.84	0.94	0.74	0.52
Value	TYTUC3	0.90					
	ECDC1	0.91					
Epistemic	ECDC2	0.95	0.95	0.81	0.95	0.74	0.54
	ECDC3	0.97					

	ECDC4	0.90					
	OFRCC1	0.78					
Social	TCROP1	0.83					
	TCROP2	0.85					
Value	TCROP3	0.80	0.90	0.65	0.89	0.83	0.55
	TCROP6	0.83					
Emocional	TCPS1	0.91					
	TCPS2	0.86	0.91	0.79	0.92	0.67	0.49
Value	TCPS5	0.90					
	LSHSC2	0.91					
Non-monetary Sacrifices	LSHSC3	0.93	0.91	0.84	0.91	0.07	0.05
	LSHSC5	0.86					
Monetary Sacrifices	LSHSC6	0.96	0.90	0.83	0.90	0.66	0.40
	LPAU1	0.67					
	LPAU2	0.72					
	LPAU3	0.85					
Image	LPAU4	0.88	0.92	0.70	0.91	0.83	0.53
	LPAU5	0.90					
	OFRCC2	0.72					
	OFRCC3	0.65					

Finally, for the reputation scale, the CFA showed a good fit, for which the value of the statistics was  $\chi^2/df = 0.27$ , CFI = 0.80, NFI = 0.73, TLI = 0.73, IFI = 0.81, GFI = 0.87, AGFI = 0.81, and RMSEA = 0.06. From the factorial loads (see Table 3), the EVA, the reliability evaluated from the CR statistic and the Cronbach's Alpha statistic were considered high, demonstrating in this way the convergent validity of the factors. Similarly, the discriminant validity of the scale was confirmed as MSV and ASV were less than EVA.

**Table 3.**

*Reliability and Validity of the Reputation Scale*

Factor	Item	Factorial Load	$\alpha$	EVA	CR	MSV	ASV
Factor 1	DES1	0.93					
	DES2	0.90	0.90	0.87	0.95	0.76	0.73
	DES3	0.97					

Factor 2	INN1	0.96	0.93	0.90	0.94	0.81	0.76
	INN2	0.94					
Factor 3	CIU1	0.97	0.96	0.94	0.98	0.92	0.86
	CIU2	0.96					
	CIU3	0.98					
Factor 4	SER1	0.95	0.92	0.94	0.98	0.92	0.83
	SER2	0.98					
	SER3	0.98					
Factor 5	GOB1	0.96	0.95	0.92	0.97	0.88	0.82
	GOB2	0.97					
	GOB3	0.95					
Factor 6	CLIMA1	0.97	0.93	0.91	0.96	0.88	0.80
	CLIMA2	0.98					
	CLIMA3	0.91					

### *Structural Model*

Regarding the adjustment of the structural model, this was considered adequate when the following values were presented for the statistics of  $\chi^2/df=2.90$ , CFI=0.85, NFI=0.78, TLI=0.84, IFI=0.85, GFI=0.58, AGFI=0.56, and RMSEA=0.04. Table 4 presents the contrast of the hypotheses.

**Table 4.**

#### *Contrast of the Hypotheses of the Model*

<b>Hipótesis</b>	<b>Estimate</b>	<b>S.E.</b>	<b>C.R.</b>	<b>p-valor</b>	<b>Result</b>
H1 (EXP > VP)	1.23	0.06	19.87	***	Accepted
H2 (EXP > REP)	1.59	0.13	11.67	***	Accepted
H3 (VP > REP)	0.85	0.08	10.48	***	Accepted

H is accepted when p-value < 0.05. Note: \*\*\* represents significance with p-value < 0.001

### *Hypothesis Contrast between Groups*

With the proposed structural model, it was identified that both for the group of students linked to non-accredited and accredited HEIs, H1, H2 and H3 are accepted (see Table 5 and Table 6).

**Table 5.***Contrast of the Hypotheses of Non-accredited IES Students*

<b>Hypothesis</b>	<b>Estimate</b>	<b>S.E.</b>	<b>C.R.</b>	<b>p-value</b>	<b>Result</b>
H1 (EXP > VP)	0.88	0.08	10.77	***	Accepted
H2 (EXP > REP)	1.48	0.14	10.48	***	Accepted
H3 (VP > REP)	0.96	0.10	9.54	***	Accepted

H is accepted when p-value < 0.05. Note: \*\*\* represents significance with p-value < 0.001.

**Table 6.***Contrast of the Hypotheses Accredited IES Students*

<b>Hypothesis</b>	<b>Estimate</b>	<b>S.E.</b>	<b>C.R.</b>	<b>p-value</b>	<b>Result</b>
H1 (EXP > VP)	1.72	0.93	18.47	***	Accepted
H2 (EXP > REP)	2.21	0.41	5.37	***	Accepted
H3 (VP > REP)	0.48	0.20	2.35	0.01	Accepted

H is accepted when p-value < 0.05. Note: \*\*\* represents significance with p-value < 0.001.

### **Conclusions and Managerial Implications**

The results of the factor analysis of each one of the scales showed reliability and validity of each one of them. The general structural equation model showed a good fit and the three hypotheses were verified. The student's experience influences the perceived value (H3) as found in the studies carried out by Baker et al. (2002), Prahalad and Ramaswamy (2003), Petre et al. (2006), and Ledden et al. (2007). The relationship between student experience and university reputation (H2) was empirically verified, confirming the statements of authors such as White (2015), Handayani (2019) and Terblanche (2009). Likewise, the influence relationship between perceived value and reputation (H1) was confirmed, as in the investigations carried out by Hashim et al. (2015) and Kaushal et al. (2021).

Regarding the comparative model where the implications of high-quality accreditation on the results of the student experience, perceived value and reputation were analyzed, it was found that the model behaves in the same way in both institutions. Despite the fact that in both

models the hypotheses are accepted, a lower level of significance is observed in the relationship between perceived value and reputation for accredited universities. However, statistically, the values allow confirming the hypothesis. These data allow us to conclude that high-quality accreditation is an element that can be considered in the selection of the university, but it does not influence the relationship of the variables studied, student experience, perceived value and reputation. In line with the proposal made by Vidaver-Cohen (2007), accreditation is a certificate of the quality of the educational service, but the student can perceive other institutional factors as fundamental in their training process and that, as Rybinski (2021) addresses), the student's experience could exert a greater influence.

The findings are relevant for the various stakeholders of the universities and especially for managers, since they identify factors that should be considered in greater depth in the management of institutional resources. Among the findings is the importance of managing the student experience before, during and after the provision of the education service. In this regard, all private universities can develop promotional strategies to attract students to their different academic programs offered, promising excellent training and quality independent of high-quality certification. However, when the role of the client changes to that of active student, the experience within the institution can be positive or negative and can confirm or not the previous expectations of the student and this is what will generate a perception of value which, added to the evaluations of other students and other stakeholders, become the reputation of the evaluated university. Therefore, high-quality accreditation could be a differentiating element, but not definitive in influencing student perceptions.

With the confirmation of the hypotheses, the literature was strengthened to the extent of the tendency of the studies to concentrate on a maximum of one or two constructs. The foregoing provides a new panorama for decision makers within HEIs in order to continue building their reputation based on perceived value and student experience. As there is no difference in the contrast of the hypotheses, accreditations and institutional rankings do not necessarily mediate the reputation of HEIs.

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## **Artículo siete**

### **Modelo para medición de reputación a partir del valor percibido y la experiencia del estudiante: comparativo Colombia – España**

Marelby Amado, Alfredo Guzmán, Fernando Juárez, Irene Ramos, Daniel Rodríguez

#### **Abstract:**

Ante un entorno cada vez más globalizado y competido, las universidades han adoptado un enfoque comercial para diferenciarse de la competencia y mostrar valor como institución a través de sus funciones sustantivas, docencia, investigación y proyección social. Es por ello, que las universidades se han enfocado en mejorar su desempeño. Sin embargo, los resultados muestran que p como Colombia, están en un proceso incipiente en comparación con otros países. Los resultados obtenidos por las universidades usualmente no son analizados desde la perspectiva de sus stakeholders, en especial el estudiante, y no se toma en cuenta la influencia de su comportamiento y necesidades cambiantes, adaptadas al entorno, la cuales podrían influir directamente en los resultados que obtienen las universidades. Razón por la cual, este estudio analiza las relaciones entre la experiencia del estudiante y el valor percibido de su proceso formativo, así como la influencia de ambas variables en la reputación de las universidades comprando dos universidades, una de Colombia y otra de España. El estudio utilizó un modelo de ecuaciones estructurales. Los hallazgos confirmaron la relación entre las variables estudiadas para ambos países, y no se evidenciaron cambios motivados por variables culturales o sistemas educativos.

#### **Key Words**

University reputation, student experience, perceived value, higher education, quality, SEM, Colombia, Spain.

#### **1. Introduction**

El sector de la educación superior en Colombia ha evidenciado importantes mejoras en algunos indicadores de desempeño. Por ejemplo, las políticas de calidad han mejorado su enfoque y han identificado al estudiante como principal actor en el servicio educativo

(Instituto Internacional de la UNESCO para la Educación Superior en América Latina y el Caribe, 2023). En cuanto al panorama nacional, las matrículas de universitarios han tenido un crecimiento del 4% promedio anual, al igual que la tasa de graduados con un crecimiento del 4.3% entre el período comprendido entre los años 2010-2018. Al respecto, uno de los pilares fundamentales del Plan Nacional de Desarrollo "Pacto por Colombia, pacto por la equidad" 2018 – 2022 (Departamento Nacional de Planeación [DNP], 2019), fue la educación. Dentro de este plan se propuso “Impulsar una educación superior incluyente y de calidad” (DNP, 2019).

Según el informe presentado por el Ministerio de Educación Nacional (MEN), la cobertura de las universidades públicas creció, al igual que las Instituciones de Educación Superior (IES) de carácter público, las cuales han optado por la acreditación en alta calidad que pasó de 18 IES públicas en 2018 a 24 en 2021. Adicionalmente, se evidenciaron mejoras en el desempeño de los estudiantes en las Pruebas Nacionales “Saber Pro” en el 60% de las IES públicas (MEN, 2022), y un aumento considerable del gasto total tanto público como privado en todos los niveles educativos, ubicando a Colombia en un punto medio, por encima de países como Chile (OCDE, 2016).

Pese al importante avance, son muchos los desafíos a los que se enfrenta la educación superior en temas de calidad, deserción, cobertura, gasto público, y competitividad en lo referente al posicionamiento en los principales rankings de reputación a nivel mundial. Aunado a lo anterior, según el diagnóstico realizado por la Fundación para la Educación Superior y el Desarrollo (Fedesarrollo) dentro del panorama educativo del país, se presenta un problema central que radica en los altos índices de deserción con un 49% en estudios universitarios (Valora Analitik, 2022). Los resultados obtenidos en materia de educación en Colombia, están por debajo de los registrados en países pertenecientes a la Organización para la Cooperación y el Desarrollo Económicos [OCDE] (la Organización de Estados Iberoamericanos [OEI], 2021).

Del mismo modo, el Banco Mundial (2019) llama la atención sobre lo que está sucediendo con estas políticas, ya que cada gobierno en Colombia propone y desarrolla un plan diferente

en cada período de gobierno, que no siempre está articulado con los objetivos del Ministerio de Educación Nacional. Esto redundaría en la fragmentación de los programas y en deficiencias de políticas. Por otra parte, también se evidencia la falta de un sistema de información y la gestión del mismo, para análisis de los resultados a nivel de educación, de forma que aporten información relevante con miras a la mejora de la calidad.

Al respecto, la OEI (2022) realizó una revisión de la literatura sobre los retos de la calidad de la educación en Iberoamérica y dentro de ellos encontró que 1) los resultados de la investigación académica y aplicada son escasos, 2) existen problemas de infraestructura de la educación superior, 3) la cualificación docente sobre todo con formación doctoral es escasa, 4) se presenta un aumento de las universidades privadas con menores estándares de calidad en sus ofertas, 5) así como, deficiencias en los sistemas de aseguramiento de la calidad y 6) la inexistencia de modelos de educación superior completos y transversales a la región. Asimismo, en temas de investigación –otra de las funciones sustantivas-, según Sapiens Research (2023) más de un 32% de IES no publican en revistas científicas de alto impacto. Y Según el ranking U-Sapiens que clasifica a las universidades colombianas según sus resultados de investigación, en 2022-2 se clasificaron tan solo 71 IES de 361 IES analizadas. Para categorizarse en este ranking, las IES deben tener al menos un producto en cada una de las tres variables: revistas indexadas, maestrías y/o doctorados y grupos de investigación.

Éstos resultados, según lo afirma la OEI han repercutido en la posición competitiva de las universidades Iberoamericanas en los rankings internacionales como el Academic Ranking of World Universities (ARWU). En el cual ninguna universidad de Iberoamérica se encuentra en las 100 mejores, pero para el caso de países como España, la situación es diferente ya que dentro de mismo período analizado – 2020-, 40 universidades estaban posicionadas en el ARWU (OEI, 2022). Aunque es importante precisar que este no es el único ranking que evalúa el desempeño y la reputación de las universidades, ya que tal como lo afirma Mazzara et al. (2022) también están las clasificaciones internacionales como Times Higher Education (THE) y Quacquarelli Symonds (QS), en las cuales las universidades buscan aparecer para mejorar su reputación.

Con respecto al ranking THE para el año 2022, 10 universidades en Colombia habían sido categorizadas, y en el 2023 ya se cuentan con 15 universidades categorizadas y compitiendo a nivel mundial. En el caso de QS, 25 universidades colombianas han ingresado al ranking en 2023 y en tanto que en 2022 fue de 19 instituciones. Estos datos muestran los resultados de los esfuerzos y estrategias que realizan las universidades para mejorar y posicionarse (Qazi et al., 2022) tanto a nivel nacional como internacional a través de los rankings. Una de estas estrategias es la internacionalización, que más allá de ser un requerimiento del Ministerio de Educación Nacional y el Consejo Nacional de Acreditación (CNA). Es una forma de hacer transferencia de conocimiento y realizar alianzas con universidades de otros países que pueden transferir sus conocimientos y compartir sus experiencias (Martínez y Méndez-Romero, 2022). Ya que se ha encontrado que la internacionalización influye de manera positiva en la reputación de la universidad, y esto se relaciona con el desempeño de la institución, la calidad de la investigación y la enseñanza, así como la empleabilidad de sus egresados (Delgado-Márquez et al., 2013).

Pese a la importancia de la internacionalización tanto para el estudiante como para la universidad, el ingreso al país de universidades extranjeras que ofrecen sus programas tanto presenciales como en modalidad virtual, complejiza aún más la situación (Groepel-Klein et al., 2010; Hashim et al., 2015; Iskhakova et al. 2021). Por lo cual las universidades se han visto presionadas a preparar estudiantes para un mercado más internacional (Estrada-Real & Cantu-Ortiz, 2022), no solo con el objetivo de responder a los desafíos de la globalización, sino como respuesta a la competencia de universidades extranjeras con propuestas diferenciadas. En este sentido, la gestión de la reputación es determinante y dentro de ella, el reconocimiento de la valoración que hacen los diferentes stakeholders, iniciando por el estudiante quien tiene un rol activo dentro de este proceso (Amado & Juárez, 2022). Los estudiantes se consideran clientes sobre todo en el inicio del proceso de compra correspondiente a la atracción (Matarranz y García-Madariaga, 2021) por lo cual las estrategias de mercadeo (Ledden et al., 2011) se direccionan a atraer estudiantes mostrando su credibilidad, el valor en sus propuestas académicas, en la experiencia educativa y la posibilidad de ubicarse rápidamente en organizaciones una vez obtenga su título.

Por lo anterior, las universidades buscan diferenciarse con la adquisición de certificados tanto nacionales como internacionales en alta calidad. Con la firme creencia que, certificando su servicio como de alta calidad, el futuro estudiante podrá seleccionar más fácilmente la institución y obtener valor de sus experiencias (Plewa et al., 2016). También se espera que las certificaciones en alta calidad den como resultado un desempeño positivo que redunde en la reputación de la universidad, y no solo se enfoquen en las estrategias encaminadas a mejorar su posición en los rankings. Ya que las ofertas deben generar valor y resultar en la mejora de su posición competitiva. Pero algunas universidades no lo están entendiendo de esta forma y en vez de mejorar sus procesos tomando en consideración a sus stakeholders, están imponiendo resultados en diversas áreas, como la investigación, con consecuencias negativas. Y esto se debe, en parte a los factores de medición que utilizan los diferentes rankings (Linton et al., 2011). Es por ello, que autores como Vidaver-Cohen (2007) enfatizan en el cuestionamiento que hacen tanto académicos, agencias y consumidores sobre dichos rankings y las falencias en la medición de la reputación (Liu y Chen, 2005).

Tomando en consideración el impacto de los rankings internacionales en las percepciones y decisiones de los stakeholders (Linton et al., 2011), su impacto cuestionable en el comportamiento y la calidad de las universidades (Collins & Park, 2019), y los factores deficientes en la prestación de los servicios de educación superior (OEI, 2022), este estudio propone analizar las relaciones que se dan entre la experiencia educativa del estudiante y el valor que percibe de su proceso formativo, así como la influencia de dichas variables en relación con la reputación de la universidad. Esto con el objetivo de aportar información relevante que las universidades puedan implementar en su gestión estratégica. Adicionalmente, en el marco de la globalización, este estudio realiza un comparativo entre las percepciones de los estudiantes colombianos y los españoles para identificar diferencias y similitudes, y en qué medida la cultura y el sistema educativo pueden influir en sus percepciones.

Para dar respuesta a lo anterior, este estudio aborda en primer lugar, una descripción general del sistema educativo de Colombia y España, en segundo lugar, se presenta una revisión de las investigaciones que se han realizado sobre estas variables en los países que son objeto de

este estudio (Colombia y España), y las relaciones encontradas entre el valor percibido, la experiencia del estudiante y la reputación universitaria (Amado et al., In press). En tercer lugar, se presenta la metodología y los modelos de medición, y, por último, en cuarto lugar, se presenta la discusión de los resultados y las principales conclusiones del estudio.

## **2. Contexto del sistema educativo Colombiano y Español**

El sistema educativo colombiano, según el MEN (2020a) está conformado por la educación inicial, preescolar, básica, media, superior y la educación para el trabajo y el talento humano. De acuerdo al MEN (n.d.), las instituciones de educación superior también pueden clasificarse en dos grandes grupos, el primero, según su carácter académico, y el segundo, según su naturaleza jurídica; por su carácter académico, las IES pueden clasificarse en: 1) Instituciones Técnicas Profesionales, 2) Instituciones Tecnológicas, 3) Instituciones Universitarias o Escuelas Tecnológicas, y 4) Universidades; esta última clasificación solo pueden alcanzarla por mandato legal, según el Art. 20 de la Ley 30 (1992), y solo pueden acceder a ella las instituciones que estén en la tercera categoría; por su naturaleza jurídica, las IES pueden ser privadas o públicas.

Por otra parte, Según el MEN y la Asociación Colombiana de Universidades [ASCUN] (n.d.) Colombia cuenta con un sistema de niveles de educación superior que van desde el técnico profesional, tecnológico, especialización técnica, especialización tecnológica, título profesional universitario, especialización universitaria, maestría, especialización médica, especialización médico quirúrgica, hasta el doctorado. En cuanto al sistema educativo español en lo que respecta a la educación superior y grados subsecuentes, España tiene un nivel de formación profesional de grado medio, una formación profesional de grado superior, grado universitario, máster oficial o universitario, especialidad en ciencias de la salud y doctorado. También existen otras diferencias entre los modelos del sistema de créditos académicos de ambos países, ya que en Colombia es de 48 horas para cada crédito académico, en tanto que el crédito académico en España está entre 25 y 30 horas según el Sistema Europeo de Transferencia de créditos (ECTS) (MEN y ASCUN, n.d.).

Adicionalmente, en España la Agencia Nacional de Evaluación de la Calidad y Acreditación [ANECA] es el ente encargado del aseguramiento de la calidad y la acreditación de los programas universitarios (MEN, 2017). En el caso de Colombia, se cuenta con el Consejo Nacional de Acreditación [CNA] es el ente encargado de regular el marco normativo del sistema de acreditación en alta calidad y del sistema para la obtención de los registros calificados (CNA, n.d.). Por otra parte, en España las instituciones educativas ofrecen estudios superiores que no hacen parte del sistema de aseguramiento de la calidad y, por lo tanto, no son convalidables por el MEN (MEN, 2017).

A pesar de esto, el interés de los colombianos por cursar programas académicos en el extranjero ha ido en aumento según las cifras de las convalidaciones realizadas. Los países donde cada vez más colombianos deciden cursar sus estudios son España con un 25%, seguido de Chile y Venezuela con el 8% en cada uno (MEN, 2020b). De hecho, según el portal educaedu-colombia.com (n.d.) en Colombia se tiene presencia de 93 universidades extranjeras de las cuales 40 universidades son españolas. Esto también se ha evidenciado en otros estudios como el de Levatino et al. (2018) donde menciona que España, ha sido el principal destino de los estudiantes extranjeros procedentes de América Latina (Gusau et al., 2022).

En cuanto a temas de investigación y graduación, existen diferencias importantes entre los dos países. Según Sabogal (2021), a pesar del importante avance en el impacto de la investigación realizada en Colombia desde las IES y la estructura del marco normativo que la aborda, la investigación en España tiene un significado más amplio y un uso mayor de la investigación formativa en todos los tipos de formación. Asimismo, la articulación entre la IES, los estudiantes, el conocimiento y la sociedad es mayor en España que en Colombia. En temas de graduación, según el informe de la OEI (2022), España tiene cifras mucho más representativas que Latinoamérica en programas doctorales. Sin embargo, los programas académicos que tienen mayor número de egresados en Colombia es Administración de Empresas y Derecho con un 46%, a diferencia de España que representa solo un 19.3% de sus graduados. En programas de Salud y Bienestar, los graduados corresponden a un 6.4% en Colombia y en España es mayor con un 16.8%. Sin embargo, en programas como las

Tecnologías de la Información y la Comunicación TIC, los porcentajes son unos puntos más altos para Colombia con un 48% y para España de un 3.9%. De estas cifras, según la OEI (2021) preocupa el hecho que programas como administración y derecho no tienen tantas oportunidades profesionales y que pueden ser automatizadas un futuro próximo. Y programas como los relacionados con las TIC no tienen tantos graduados, lo que sugiere una posible falta de habilidades específicas para la responder a la revolución digital, y a las necesidades de las organizaciones del siglo XXI.

Estos comparativos muestran que, en efecto, países en vías de desarrollo como Colombia, han avanzado en temas de oferta y calidad educativa, sin embargo, hay un camino extenso por recorrer y algunas barreras por superar. En este sentido, es importante no solo comprender las diferencias sino aportar en la superación de las mismas, para lograr mejorar la competitividad en temas de educación, ya que la educación es el principal motor de desarrollo y competitividad de un país (Martínez-Rodríguez y Amador, 2010). También es importante comprender el impacto de la cultura en la toma de decisiones de los stakeholders, así como en la gestión del servicio de educación superior (Li et al., 2016; Iskhakova et al., 2021). Es por esto, que este estudio busca identificar posibles elementos y acciones de mejora que ayuden a las IES a diseñar estrategias que redunden en mejores resultados basados en experiencias de valor para sus estudiantes y demás stakeholders.

### **3. Literature review**

Con el objetivo de identificar el estado de las publicaciones realizadas sobre reputación, experiencia del estudiante y valor percibido, se realizó una búsqueda diferenciada en Scopus en las áreas de las ciencias sociales y negocios tomando como rango temporal, los estudios publicados desde el 2010 hasta la fecha (enero 2023), con los siguientes resultados. En temas reputación, la búsqueda<sup>6</sup> evidenció un crecimiento sostenido desde 2010 con un total de 931 publicaciones, y dentro de los países con mayor número de publicaciones están, Estados Unidos con 170, UK con 145, Australia con 77, Malaysia con 51, España con 50, y Colombia

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<sup>6</sup> Código booleano de Scopus utilizado: ( TITLE-ABS-KEY ( reputation ) AND TITLE-ABS-KEY ( higher AND education ) ) AND PUBYEAR > 2009 AND ( LIMIT-TO ( SUBJAREA , "SOC" ) OR LIMIT-TO ( SUBJAREA , "BUSI" ) )

con 14 publicaciones. Para el caso de la experiencia del estudiante, los resultados de la búsqueda<sup>7</sup> también evidencian un crecimiento continuo de las investigaciones sobre el tema desde la década del 2010 a la fecha, con 475 publicaciones solo en 2022, y los países con mayor número de publicaciones son UK con 765 artículos, Estados Unidos con 661, Australia con 454 y South África con 131, España con 63 y en Colombia solo se evidencian 11 publicaciones en ese período.

Por último, en cuanto al valor percibido, los resultados de la búsqueda<sup>8</sup> también muestran un incremento, sin embargo, las publicaciones son menores con un total de 223 en el período de tiempo analizado, los países con mayor número de publicaciones son Estados Unidos con 58 publicaciones, UK con 32, Australia con 18 y España con 13, mientras que para el caso de Colombia solo se evidencia una publicación. En este panorama, las investigaciones en las tres variables, para el caso de Colombia son menores sobre todo en journals indexados. A continuación, se describen de forma sintética algunas de las investigaciones realizadas tanto en Colombia como en España incluyendo journals no indexados para ampliar la cobertura del análisis.

### **Reputación universitaria**

En *Colombia* se registran algunos estudios que han abordado la reputación universitaria como un resultado de las acciones y estrategias que realizan o deberían realizar las universidades para propender por su buen desempeño y, por ende, por la mejora de la reputación de la universidad. Por ejemplo, el estudio realizado Grajales-Montoya et al. (2021) concluyó que es necesaria la participación de los docentes en las acciones estratégicas y la sensibilización de los directivos con el fin de abordar el relacionamiento, la comunicación y estrategias para impactar el mercadeo educativo y la reputación. También se encontró el análisis documental

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<sup>7</sup> Código booleano de Scopus utilizado: ( TITLE-ABS-KEY ( "customer experience" ) OR TITLE-ABS-KEY ( "student experience" ) AND TITLE-ABS-KEY ( higher AND education ) ) AND PUBYEAR > 2009 AND ( LIMIT-TO ( SUBJAREA , "SOC" ) OR LIMIT-TO ( SUBJAREA , "BUS" ) )

<sup>8</sup> Código booleano de Scopus utilizado: ( TITLE-ABS-KEY ( "perceived value" ) AND TITLE-ABS-KEY ( higher AND education ) ) AND PUBYEAR > 2009 AND ( LIMIT-TO ( SUBJAREA , "SOC" ) OR LIMIT-TO ( SUBJAREA , "BUS" ) )

realizado por Villamizar-Loaiza (2021) quien concluyó que la legitimidad está relacionada con la reputación.

Por otra parte, y tomando en consideración la relación entre la reputación y la experiencia del estudiante, el estudio realizado por Gómez-Bayona et al. (2022) concluyó que tanto la innovación, como la experiencia y el relacionamiento influyen de manera importante en la construcción de la reputación tomando en consideración el enfoque del docente, por lo cual es importante que el docente entienda la importancia de la investigación, la proyección social o relacionamiento, adicional a las estrategias de enseñanza. Otro artículo anterior, publicado también por Gómez-Bayona et al. (2021), evidenció mediante un estudio cuantitativo, que el mercadeo relacional presenta tres variables fundamentales, la confianza, la satisfacción y la lealtad, y que el mercadeo relacional es necesario para generar reputación.

Otra investigación analizó la presencia e impacto de universidades de cuatro países en los que se encuentra Colombia, en las redes sociales digitales de investigadores tales como Researchgate.net y Academia.edu, sus resultados muestran que Researchgate.net tiene mayor presencia en Colombia, pero éstos no se correlacionan con la reputación según datos de otros rankings universitarios (Campos et al., 2014). Por su parte, los hallazgos de la investigación realizada por Erazo-Coronado et al. (2020) identifican que la reputación de la universidad se comporta variable moderadora entre la comunicación de las prácticas de responsabilidad social universitaria en los sitios web y la intención de la selección de la universidad por parte de los estudiantes.

A nivel de Latinoamérica, se encontró un estudio realizado en Bolivia donde se diseñó un experimento en el cual se enviaban solicitudes de estudiantes (hojas de vida) a empresas bolivianas, y encontraron que los estudiantes de universidades más reputadas, tienen hasta un 40% más de probabilidades de obtener respuesta positiva que las universidades menos reputadas (Nogales y Urquidi, 2020). Al respecto, otro estudio realizado en Colombia utilizó como muestra los egresados de programas universitarios para analizar la eficiencia de las universidades y dentro de ella, el impacto de la reputación de las universidades en la contratación de graduados (Saavedra-Caballero y Van Bellegem, 2022).

Para el caso de *España*, el estudio de la reputación en instituciones de educación superior es mucho más amplio que en Colombia y las investigaciones de tipo relacional son más comunes. Dentro de los estudios, se reconoce el trabajo realizado por Del-Castillo-Feito et al. (2019) donde relacionó la imagen y la reputación en las universidades públicas españolas, y en 2020 publicaron dos artículos adicionales, el primero relacionó la legitimidad, la imagen, y la reputación tanto en estudiantes como en docentes (Del-Castillo-Feito et al., 2020) y el segundo, relacionó la reputación y la legitimidad como factores clave para la ventaja competitiva de las instituciones de educación superior y fue realizado tomando como población a profesores de universidades españolas (Miotto et al., 2020). En relación con la imagen, otro estudio tomó como población a los estudiantes universitarios de la Universidad de Murcia en España, en el que se confirmó los efectos mediadores de la imagen y la reputación corporativas en la relación entre la responsabilidad social empresarial (RSE) y el atractivo emocional (Aledo-Ruiz et al., 2022).

Al respecto, Lafuente-Ruiz-de-Sabando et al. (2018) señalan la importancia de la investigación sobre imagen y reputación en las instituciones de educación superior. En este sentido, la investigación realizada por Gutiérrez-Villar et al. (2021) desarrolló una escala que mide la imagen de la universidad privada a partir de tres dimensiones, imagen funcional, imagen afectiva y reputación, y dentro de sus conclusiones mencionan que la reputación es un factor determinante para medir la imagen, esto es contrario a los resultados encontrados por Del-Castillo-Feito et al. (2019) quienes encontraron que la imagen es antecedente de la reputación, y que de hecho tiene un efecto positivo y significativo en la reputación de las universidades españolas.

Otro estudio realizado por García-Rodríguez y Gutiérrez-Taño (2021) en la Universidad de la Laguna, España, buscó explicar cómo se conforma la lealtad hacia una IES. Dentro sus hallazgos encontraron que la lealtad depende de la satisfacción y la reputación de la IES, sobre todo en el caso de los estudiantes. También se comprobó que la reputación tiene un efecto tanto directo en la lealtad, como indirecto a través de la satisfacción, y que los resultados del desempeño de las IES que perciben los stakeholders, tiene una influencia directa en la reputación.

Aunado a lo anterior, se encontró el estudio realizado por Gómez-Marcos et al. (2021) quienes analizaron la trayectoria de las universidades españolas en los rankings ARWU y THE en un período de 5 años, bajo el entendido de que dichos rankings contribuyen a mejorar la reputación internacional de las universidades y destaca la importancia de mejorar la visibilidad de las universidades. Por otra parte, el trabajo realizado por Martín-Miguel et al. (2020) analizó el efecto de la sostenibilidad, la innovación, el rendimiento percibido, la calidad del servicio, el ambiente de trabajo y el buen gobierno sobre la reputación en las escuelas privadas online de postgrado españolas y encontró que solo la sostenibilidad, la calidad del servicio y el buen gobierno influyen positiva y significativamente en la reputación.

También se encontraron otros hallazgos respecto al abordaje de la reputación que van allá de las investigaciones, tal es el caso de los libros y las instituciones. Por ejemplo, el libro “Improving University Reputation Through Academic Digital Branding” que aborda el tema de la marca digital y su influencia en la reputación tanto de instituciones como de programas académicos (Del Pino y Lloret, 2021) y Reputación de Universidades (Mora, 2015). Asimismo, instituciones como el Centre for Reputation Leadership con sede en España que dentro de su propósito buscan impulsar la gestión de intangibles claves para las organizaciones como los son la reputación y la marca, entre otros (Corporate Excellence, 2023).

### **Experiencia del estudiante**

Las investigaciones respecto a la experiencia del estudiante en *Colombia* se han enfocado más en poblaciones específicas y en el proceso de enseñanza-aprendizaje con estudios comparativos. Por ejemplo, García-Holgado et al. (2021) realizaron un estudio de corte cualitativo a mujeres en diez Instituciones de Educación Superior de países como Chile, Colombia, Costa Rica, Ecuador y México, para conocer la experiencia de mujeres estudiantes de programas de ingeniería y matemáticas, y encontraron que sus principales dificultades son la falta de conocimiento de los estudios, la brecha de género, los problemas para encontrar trabajo, estereotipos de género y dificultades de los estudios. También se encuentra el estudio realizado por Gutiérrez y Aguirre (2022) en estudiantes de poblaciones indígenas y

afrocolombianos en una universidad pública en Colombia y su experiencia en el aprendizaje del idioma inglés sobre lo cual precisan cuáles fueron sus experiencias, aprendizajes y las implicaciones. Asimismo, otra investigación realizada en una Universidad en Bogotá, Colombia, tomó como población los estudiantes de periodismo y analizó la experiencia pedagógica de la enseñanza transmedia a través del Aprendizaje Basado en Problemas (ABP) (Nieto, 2021). De igual forma, se abordó el tema de la experiencia de 10 estudiantes de educación superior en condición de vulnerabilidad económica en Colombia y sus implicaciones para el aprendizaje del idioma inglés (Mackenzie, 2022).

En cuanto a las experiencias de movilidad académica internacional, se encuentra el estudio realizado por Otero et al. (2019) que toma en cuenta las percepciones de estudiantes de Colombia y México. Asimismo, está la investigación realizada por Barragán-Díaz (2020) que aborda desde un enfoque sociológico, la experiencia de los estudiantes y afirma que éstos son los protagonistas del proceso de formación, con tres actividades clave, estudiar, trabajar para sostenerse y militar, este último referido a la necesidad de ser parte de un grupo, así como el contexto en el que desarrollan su proceso formativo y que influyen en su experiencia. En cuanto al proceso de selección de las universidades, el estudio realizado por Espinoza et al. (2022) encontró que la selectividad relacionada con los altos estándares de ingreso a la universidad (la cual se covaría con el prestigio o imagen) se relaciona con la satisfacción que tienen los estudiantes chilenos sobre su experiencia universitaria.

Por otra parte, El estudio realizado por Arboleda y Alonso (2017) abordó la experiencia emocional de los estudiantes en la universidad latinoamericana y encontró que las emociones positivas influyen en la lealtad de los estudiantes, y que sus experiencias deben hacer parte de la marca y verse reflejadas en los servicios y actividades tanto académicas como de vida universitaria. Estos autores critican el sesgo que existe al analizar la experiencia académica desde las encuestas de satisfacción ya que no permite evaluar la calidad de la IES. Además, mencionan que el enfoque debe ir en torno de las emociones de los estudiantes hacia la universidad y su experiencia no solo académica sino con las otras actividades que desarrolla en su contexto, tales como la recreación, la vida social, la seguridad, las instalaciones, etc.

En cuanto a los estudios realizados en *España* también se enfocan en identificar los factores que afectan la experiencia universitaria tanto de estudiantes como de otros stakeholders. Por ejemplo, un estudio realizado a estudiantes y exalumnos de la Universidad de Zaragoza, España, analizó la relación entre las competencias genéricas académicas y la satisfacción de los estudiantes y exalumnos producto de su experiencia de aprendizaje, esta variable fue medida con tres ítems, dos de ellos enfocados en la experiencia de aprendizaje y al relación de dicha satisfacción con la lealtad medida a través del voz a voz y la confirmación del comportamiento, los resultados mostraron que las competencias inciden positivamente en la satisfacción de la persona, y ésta en la lealtad, también encontraron un efecto mediador de la satisfacción (Borraz-Mora et al., 2020). Asimismo, en el estudio realizado por Jayadeva et al. (2021) a estudiantes y administrativos, se argumentó que tanto el sistema de educación superior español, como las experiencias de los stakeholders analizados, han tenido una transformación importante dada la mercantilización de la educación, por lo cual, los roles de los estudiantes y de los administrativos han cambiado notablemente, y esto difiere en el contexto de cada país.

Adicionalmente, se encontró la investigación realizada por Martínez y Toledo (2013) a los graduados, con el fin de identificar los factores más importantes de la experiencia universitaria, si en un escenario hipotético, los graduados pudieran volver a seleccionar una institución y un programa académico. Dentro de sus múltiples conclusiones, identificaron que la calidad de la enseñanza es el principal factor que influye en la intención de decidir tanto por la misma universidad como por el mismo programa, así como el desarrollo de capacidades, entre otros. También la investigación realizada por Luque-Martínez et al. (2022) analizó la satisfacción de los graduados respecto a la universidad donde cursaron sus estudios, las características sociodemográficas de la universidad, la experiencia universitaria (evaluada como la calidad y sus componentes), y datos de los graduados de posgrados, así como su situación laboral. Por último, otro estudio analizó las posibles causas de deserción académica en estudiantes de la Universidad de Málaga, España, y encontraron que los principales factores que inciden en la deserción son el no cumplimiento de las expectativas iniciales que se tenía de la carrera, las metodologías tradicionalistas entre otras, éstas variables se relacionan con la experiencia del estudiante (Santos-Villalba et al., 2023).

## **Valor percibido**

Como se mencionó en la parte introductoria de la revisión de literatura, en Colombia las publicaciones sobre valor percibido en universidades son escasas. Sin embargo, se encontró el estudio realizado por Gómez-Bayona et al. (2019) quienes identificaron que las universidades están incorporando estrategias de gestión y planeación enfocadas en acciones que les generen valor con el fin de mejorar la confianza de sus stakeholders, su visibilidad, reputación y su posicionamiento. Asimismo, la investigación realizada por Serna-Loaiza et al. (2019) a estudiantes de programas virtuales de universidades colombianas, donde confirmaron las dimensiones del valor percibido, a saber, funcional, social, emocional, condicional, epistémico, ético y espiritual, sin embargo, su análisis arrojó otras dimensiones adicionales a las evidenciadas en la teoría, como el valor ético-condicional, socio-emocional, ético-funcional, ético-social y ético-espiritual. En otros países vecinos, como Chile, un estudio confirmó que el valor percibido de los estudiantes con respecto al servicio recibido por parte de la universidad, influye en la satisfacción del estudiante, y se afirma que quienes se encargan de la experiencia del estudiante deben procurar que ésta sea buena de modo que la evaluación que el estudiante realice de lo que recibe respecto a lo que da, sea mayor (Veas-González et al., 2019).

Por otra parte, en *España*, los estudios sobre valor percibido son mayores. Ejemplo de ello, es el estudio realizado por Nuviala et al. (2015) que analizó el modelo de propuesto Murray y Howat (2002) para evaluar los servicios deportivos y abordó la relación de la calidad, el valor percibido y la satisfacción. Para el análisis del valor tuvo en cuenta las instalaciones, la comunicación, el personal de administración y servicios, la actividad, los materiales y los aspectos técnicos, al final los autores confirmaron que la calidad del servicio influye en la satisfacción y en el valor percibido de los usuarios. Asimismo, el estudio conducido por Gallarza et al., (2019) busco validar una escala para evaluar las expectativas de valor de los estudiantes internacionales “Erasmus” en España en función del costo y el beneficio que reciben de su experiencia, dando como resultado como los aspectos sociales y emocionales son las dimensiones de valor más importantes en la experiencia Erasmus de los estudiantes y consideran que el sacrificio versus el costo vale la pena por los beneficios que trae para ellos.

Aunado a lo anterior, también se evidenció la investigación conducida por Doña-Toledo y Duque-Martínez (2020) realizada a los estudiantes de la Universidad de Granada, España, y en donde encontraron que el valor percibido es determinante de la imagen, la satisfacción y la lealtad. Para medir el valor percibido tomaron en consideración la escala desarrollada por Zeithaml y Bitner (1996) y ampliada por Cronin Brady y Hult (2000). Otra investigación conducida por Latorre-Coscolluela et al., (2022) analizó las relaciones entre el bienestar emocional, el deseo de refuerzo social, la motivación intrínseca, el valor percibido de la tarea y las expectativas académicas y, dentro de sus hallazgos encontraron que la motivación es un predictor del valor percibido de los deberes y de las expectativas académicas.

### **Relación entre las tres variables:**

Tanto la reputación, como la experiencia del estudiante y el valor que cada estudiante percibe de su experiencia, son temas que se ha abordado mayormente de manera independiente en las investigaciones consultadas. Sin embargo, se encontró un estudio comparativo en universidades de España, Gran Bretaña y China conducido por Li et al., (2016), el cual se enfocó en comprender los factores que influyen en la selección de las IES así como la influencia en las expectativas respecto al valor que perciben. Los resultados arrojaron que en cuanto al valor funcional se toma en cuenta la infraestructura y las metodologías prácticas utilizadas por profesores, así como la calidad de la educación, y en cuanto a los beneficios sociales, se evidencian en experiencias fuera del entorno académico, los emocionales están influenciados por la reputación de la universidad y por la relación con los profesores. En temas de tiempo y esfuerzo, los resultados varían en función del programa, la nacionalidad y su entorno cultural. Razón por la cual se concluye que no es posible utilizar una misma estrategia para generar valor de un país a otro, el entorno cultural tiene una fuerte influencia. Sin embargo, en otros países se evidencian investigaciones bidireccionales que relacionan la experiencia del estudiante con el valor percibido (Gupta & Vajic, 2000; Petre et al., 2006; Ledden et al., 2007; Dlačić et al., 2014), la experiencia del estudiante con la reputación de las universidades (Handayani, 2020; White, 2015; Bhattacharya & Sen, 2003, Terblanche, 2009) y el valor percibido con la reputación (Doña et al., 2017; Goh et al., 2017; Dredge et al., 2012; Xu & Wu, 2018). Adicionalmente, se toma en consideración el estudio previo realizado por Amado et al. (In Press) realizado en Colombia donde se confirmó la relación

que la experiencia del estudiante tiene una influencia directa y positiva en el valor percibido, también se encontró que tanto la experiencia del estudiante como el valor percibido tienen una influencia en su reputación. Más allá de este estudio, la búsqueda no arrojó otras publicaciones que dieran cuenta de la relación de las tres variables en los dos países analizados.

Por lo tanto, se plantean las siguientes hipótesis:

Hipótesis 1 (H1): La experiencia del estudiante influye en el valor percibido.

Hipótesis 2 (H2): La experiencia del estudiante influye en la reputación.

Hipótesis 3 (H3): El valor percibido influye en la reputación.

Hipótesis 4 (H4): El modelo de las relaciones se comporta igual en Colombia y en España.

#### **4. Methodology**

Esta investigación tiene un enfoque cuantitativo, es de corte transversal, buscó comprobar las hipótesis, así como comparar los resultados entre los dos países Colombia y España. Por otra parte, la recolección de la información se desarrolló siguiendo los protocolos de investigación de cada país.

##### ***Sample selection and data collection***

El cuestionario se aplicó en dos universidades –España y Colombia- a estudiantes matriculados en programas de pregrado (grado para el caso de España) y mayores de edad. Para el caso de Colombia se realizaron 385 encuestas a estudiantes de programas de pregrado, entre julio y noviembre de 2022. En ese mismo período, se recolectaron datos de 333 estudiantes de España. Para la aplicación se solicitó el apoyo de profesores que invitaron a sus alumnos y respondieron libremente que estaban dispuestos a participar.

En el caso de los estudiantes de Colombia el 54.5% (n = 210) se encontraban en semestres inferiores o iguales a cuarto; caso contrario, 175 (45.5%) estaban en quinto a decimo semestre. El 80.5% (n = 310) eran mujeres y el 19.5% (n =75) hombres. En relación con la edad, el 79.2% (n = 305) tenían entre 18 a 21 años, el 16.9% (n = 65) entre 22 a 25 años y el

3.9% (n = 15) más de 25 años. Por último, en el caso del estrato cinco informaron pertenecer al estrato dos, 46 al dos, 132 al tres, 122 al cuatro, 58 al cinco y 22 al seis.

El 35.4% (n = 118) de los estudiantes españoles reportaron estar en primer semestre, el 27.0% (n = 90) en segundo semestre, el 28.5% (n = 95) en tercer semestre y el 9.0% (n = 30) en cuarto semestre. El 80.2% (n = 267) de los encuestados eran mujeres y el 19.8% (n = 66) hombres. Frente a la edad, el 81.4% (n = 271) indicaron tener entre 18 a 21 años, el 15.3% (n = 51) entre 22 a 25 años y el 3.3% (n = 11) eran mayores de 25 años. Dado a que en el caso de España no existe clasificación social por estrato, esta se realizó con base a la clase social. Así, el 1.2% (n = 4) afirmó ser de clase baja, el 5.7% (n = 19) clase media baja, el 39.3% (n = 131) clase media, el 49.2% (n = 164) clase media alta y el 4.5% (n = 15) clase alta.

### ***Instrument***

Este estudio tomo como instrumentos de medición, escalas ya validadas en otros países y adaptadas al idioma español. El instrumento se dividió en tres partes, según las tres variables y fueron seleccionados por su pertinencia con los objetivos de esta investigación, así como, su aplicación en el contexto de las universidades. La escala de la experiencia del estudiante fue tomada originalmente de Xu et al. (2018), y validada al idioma español por Amado et al., (2023). Para el valor percibido se tomó la escala propuesta de Ledden et al. (2007) y validada por Amado et al. (2023). Y, por último, para evaluar la reputación universitaria, se utilizó la escala propuesta por Del-Castillo-Feito et al. (2019) igualmente validada por Amado et al., (2023). El instrumento completo estuvo compuesto por 67 ítems, sin incluir las preguntas demográficas.

### ***Data analysis***

El análisis de los datos se desarrollada a partir de un modelo de ecuaciones estructurales SEM. Dada la naturaleza de este tipo de modelos, el análisis de los resultados se dividió en dos partes. La primera, buscó evaluar el modelo de medición, y, la segunda, comprobar el modelo de estructura y las hipótesis tanto en instituciones acreditadas como no acreditadas.

## Modelo de medición

Para el desarrollo del modelo de medición se sometieron cada una de las escalas a un Análisis Factorial Confirmatorio (AFC), para lo cual se tomó como base, los factores conformados en los estudios de por Xu et al. (2018), Ledden et al. (2007) y Castillo-Feito et al. (2019). Se determinó que los datos no se ajustaban a una distribución normal, de forma univariada o multivariada de cada uno de los ítems evaluados. Dado lo anterior, para el desarrollo del AFC, se realizaron estimaciones basadas en distribución asintótica libre. De igual forma, se utilizó el método de Bootstrap para garantizar la fiabilidad de los resultados, es decir se desarrolló 2.000 muestras de bootstrap con intervalos de confianza del 95%, tomando como referencia para este procedimiento a Oppong y Agbedra (2016).

Los resultados del AFC se evaluaron mediante los estadísticos de Chi-cuadrado ( $X^2$ ), relación de discrepancia mínima ( $X^2/df$ ), índice de bondad de ajuste ( $GFI$ ), índice de bondad de ajuste ajustado ( $AGFI$ ) y error cuadrático medio de aproximación ( $RMSEA$ ). Para esto, se tuvo en cuenta los siguientes umbrales:  $X^2$  entre más pequeño mejor con p-valor  $> 0.05$ ,  $X^2/df$  menor a 5,  $CFI$ ,  $NFI$ ,  $TLI$ ,  $IFI$ ,  $GFI$  y  $AGFI$  mayor a 0.8 y  $RMSEA$  menor a 0.08.

Cuando el AFC no presentará buen ajuste, especialmente el  $RMSEA$ , se procedió a evaluar que variables tenían valores de regresión normalizados inferiores a 0.6 para su eliminación, así como los índices de modificación de la covarianza de los errores de cada uno de los ítems, covariando aquellos índices más grandes y teóricamente más parsimoniosos, tal como describen Marsh et al. (2004).

Subsecuentemente, se procedió al análisis convergente y discriminante de cada uno de los factores de los instrumentos. Para el caso de la validez convergente se determinó el Análisis de la Varianza Extraída ( $AVE$ ), la fiabilidad evaluada a partir del estadístico CR (fiabilidad compuesta). En el caso del  $AVE$ , se consideraron aceptables los valores superiores a 0,5, para los valores de CR superiores a 0,7, y para los valores de  $\alpha$  superiores a 0,8. Finalmente, para el análisis discriminante de los factores, se calculó la Varianza Máxima Compartida ( $MVS$ )

y la Varianza Media Compartida (AVS), considerándose aceptables cuando la MVS y la AVS eran inferiores al AVE.

### **Modelo de estructura**

Con la finalidad de comprobar las hipótesis, se procedió a evaluar la bondad de ajuste del modelo propuesto, conservando los estadísticos y umbrales de la etapa del modelo de medición. En caso de ser necesario, se covariaron los índices de modificación más grandes y teóricamente más parsimoniosos. El contraste de hipótesis se desarrolló con el modelo ajustado aceptándose cuando el p-valor de Beta (Estimado) fuese menor a 0.05. De igual forma, se contrastó, bajo el procedimiento anteriormente descrito, las hipótesis para el grupo de estudiantes que pertenecían a las IES colombianas y a las IES españolas.

## **5. Results**

### ***Modelo de medición***

En relación con las escalas se procedió a garantizar la fiabilidad y validez de estas, antes de realizar la contrastación de las hipótesis mediante el modelo estructural para cada uno de los grupos de estudiantes. Lo anterior, se realizó con la finalidad de validar si los factores de cada una de las escalas explicaban los factores evaluados. Dicho esto, la escala de valor percibido presentó un buen ajuste en el CFA. En este sentido, los valores de los estadísticos fueron  $\chi^2/df = 3.57$ ,  $CFI = 0.96$ ,  $NFI = 0.94$ ,  $TLI = 0.95$ ,  $IFI = 0.96$ ,  $GFI = 0.90$ ,  $AGFI = 0.87$  y  $RMSEA = 0.06$ . En la Tabla 1, se presentan las cargas factoriales para la escala.

**Tabla 1.**

*Carga factorial ítems de la escala de valor percibido.*

<b>Factor</b>	<b>Ítem</b>	<b>Carga factorial</b>
Valor funcional	VF1	0.91
	VF2	0.91
	VF3	0.86
Valor epistémico	VE1	0.91
	VE2	0.90
	VE3	0.92
	VE4	0.89
	VE5	0.77

<b>Factor</b>	<b>Ítem</b>	<b>Carga factorial</b>
Valor social	VS1	0.77
	VS2	0.79
	VS3	0.82
	VS4	0.72
Valor emocional	VEM1	0.89
	VEM2	0.86
	VEM3	0.88
Sacrificios no monetarios	SNM1	0.88
	SNM2	0.91
Sacrificios monetarios	SM1	0.86
	SM2	0.97
Imagen	IMG1	0.76
	IMG2	0.81
	IMG3	0.90
	IMG4	0.84
	IMG5	0.83
	IMG6	0.66
	IMG7	0.52

La validez convergente de la escala de valor percibido fue adecuada para cada uno de los factores, dado a que presentó un AVE mayor a 0.5, así como la fiabilidad evaluada desde el estadístico CR fue de 0.70. Frente a la validez discriminante, los valores del estadístico MSV y ASV fueron menores a AVE, a excepción del factor de *imagen*; no obstante, no existe suficiente evidencia estadística para eliminar dicho factor dado a que el AVS fue menor que el AVE. En la Tabla 2 se presentan los valores de los estadísticos de validez convergente y discriminante para la escala de valor percibido.

**Tabla 2.**

*Validez convergente y discriminante de la escala de valor percibido por grupo de estudiantes.*

<b>Factor</b>	<b>AVE</b>	<b>CR</b>	<b>MSV</b>	<b>ASV</b>
Valor funcional	0.79	0.82	0.74	0.51
Valor epistémico	0.77	0.94	0.71	0.51
Valor social	0.60	0.85	0.44	0.51
Valor emocional	0.76	0.90	0.61	0.46
Sacrificios no monetarios	0.80	0.89	0.07	0.05
Sacrificios monetarios	0.84	0.91	0.46	0.36
Imagen	0.59	0.90	0.74	0.50

Para el caso de la escala de experiencia del estudiante, el CFA indicó un buen ajuste siendo  $\chi^2/df = 3.58$ ,  $CFI = 0.95$ ,  $NFI = 0.94$ ,  $TLI = 0.94$ ,  $IFI = 0.95$ ,  $GFI = 0.92$ ,  $AGFI = 0.89$  y  $RMSEA = 0.06$ . En la Tabla 3 se presenta la carga factorial de los ítems de la escala de experiencia.

**Tabla 3.**

*Carga factorial ítems de la escala de experiencia.*

Factor	Ítem	Carga factorial
Servicio centrado en el estudiante	SCE1	0.86
	SCE2	0.89
	SCE3	0.81
	SCE4	0.88
Diversidad y ciudadanía global	DYC1	0.62
	DYC2	0.75
	DYC3	0.89
	DYC4	0.85
	DYC5	0.79
Coproducción de la experiencia de aprendizaje	CPEA1	0.80
	CPEA2	0.73
	CPEA3	0.73
	CPEA4	0.73
Dependencia del profesor	DDM1	0.69
	DDM2	0.88
	DDM3	0.86
	DDM4	0.86
Responsabilidad	RES1	0.65
	RES2	0.88
	RES3	0.89
Desarrollo integral de la persona	DIP1	0.91
	DIP2	0.89

El AVE y la fiabilidad evaluada desde el estadístico CR confirman la validez convergente del instrumento, siendo para el caso del primero mayor a 0.5 y el segundo a 0.7. De forma similar se confirmó la validez discriminante de la escala para los factores de *servicio centrado al estudiante*, *coproducción de la experiencia de aprendizaje*, *dependencia del profesor*, *responsabilidad* y *desarrollo integral de la persona* al ser MVS y ASV menores que el AVE. Solo en el caso del factor correspondiente a *diversidad y ciudadanía global* podrían existir evidencia de correlaciones altas para los ítems evaluados; no obstante, el valor de ASV es

menor que AVE, por lo que no se cuenta con evidencia suficiente para descartar este factor. En la Tabla 4 se presenta los análisis de la validez convergente y discriminante.

**Tabla 4.**

*Validez convergente y discriminante de la escala de experiencia.*

<b>Factor</b>	<b>AVE</b>	<b>CR</b>	<b>MSV</b>	<b>ASV</b>
Servicio centrado en el estudiante	0.74	0.91	0.67	0.47
Diversidad y ciudadanía global	0.61	0.88	0.64	0.50
Coproducción de la experiencia de aprendizaje	0.56	0.83	0.49	0.42
Dependencia del profesor	0.68	0.89	0.67	0.50
Responsabilidad	0.66	0.85	0.31	0.19
Desarrollo integral de la persona	0.81	0.89	0.61	0.49

Por último, la escala de reputación presentó un buen ajuste en el CFA. Así, se presentaron los siguientes estadísticos  $\chi^2/df = 1.92$ ,  $CFI = 0.82$ ,  $NFI = 0.86$ ,  $TLI = 0.90$ ,  $IFI = 0.92$ ,  $GFI = 0.93$ ,  $AGFI = 0.89$  y  $RMSEA = 0.03$ . En la Tabla 5 se presentan las cargas factoriales de la escala.

**Tabla 5.**

*Carga factorial ítems de la escala de reputación.*

<b>Factor</b>	<b>Ítem</b>	<b>Carga factorial</b>
Desempeño	DES1	0.90
	DES2	0.83
	DES3	0.95
Innovación	INN1	0.97
	INN2	0.93
Ciudadanía	CIU1	0.97
	CIU2	0.93
	CIU3	0.96
Servicio	SER1	0.93
	SER2	0.95
	SER3	0.86
Gobernanza	GOB1	0.96
	GOB2	0.97
	GOB3	0.96
Clima organizacional	CLIMA1	0.93
	CLIMA2	0.92
	CLIMA3	0.95

Respecto a la validez convergente de la escala de reputación se evidenció que tanto el estadístico AVE y CR los valores fueron mayores a 0.50 y 0.70 respectivamente. En cuanto a la validez discriminante, el estadístico MSV del factor de *desempeño* fue mayor que AVE. Sin embargo, AVS fue menor o igual que AVE por lo cual no existe evidencia concluyente de la existencia de correlaciones parciales fuerte con los demás ítems del instrumento. Para el caso del factor *servicio* existe evidencia estadística que confirma las correlaciones entre los ítems de este, dado a que MSV y ASV fueron mayores que AVE, por lo que este factor no se tuvo cuenta para las etapas posteriores del estudio. En la Tabla 6 se presentan los resultados de la validación convergente y discriminante.

**Tabla 6.**

*Validez convergente y discriminante de la escala de reputación.*

<b>Factor</b>	<b>AVE</b>	<b>CR</b>	<b>MSV</b>	<b>ASV</b>
Desempeño	0.80	0.92	0.85	0.80
Innovación	0.90	0.95	0.85	0.81
Ciudadanía	0.91	0.97	0.87	0.81
Servicio	0.84	0.94	0.90	0.85
Gobernanza	0.93	0.97	0.90	0.82
Clima organizacional	0.88	0.95	0.83	0.79

A forma de síntesis, para el desarrollo del modelo de estructura y demás estadísticos la totalidad de los factores de la escala de valor percibido y experiencia fueron incluidos. En el caso de la escala de reputación se excluyó el factor de *servicio*.

### ***Modelo de estructura***

Respecto al ajuste del modelo estructural, éste se consideró adecuado al presentarse los siguientes valores para los estadísticos de  $\chi^2/df = 2.83$ ,  $CFI = 0.90$ ,  $NFI = 0.86$ ,  $TLI = 0.90$ ,  $IFI = 0.90$ ,  $GFI = 0.75$ ,  $AGFI = 0.73$  y  $RMSEA = 0.03$ . En la Tabla 7 se presenta el contraste de las hipótesis.

**Tabla 7.***Contraste de las hipótesis del modelo general.*

Hipótesis	Estimado	S.E.	C.R.	p-valor	Resultado
H1 (EXP > VP)	1.39	0.04	30.25	***	Se acepta
H2 (EXP > REP)	1.78	0.15	11.74	***	Se acepta
H3 (VP > REP)	0.64	0.09	6.91	***	Se acepta

Se acepta H cuando p-valor < 0.05. Nota: \*\*\* representa significancia con p-valor < 0.001

Ahora bien, frente al contraste por países, se confirma H1, H2 y H3. En la Tabla 8 y Tabla 9 se presentan los resultados para cada grupo.

**Tabla 8.***Contraste de las hipótesis del modelo estudiantes españoles.*

Hipótesis	Estimado	S.E.	C.R.	p-valor	Resultado
H1 (EXP > VP)	1.52	0.11	13.58	***	Se acepta
H2 (EXP > REP)	2.21	0.25	8.68	***	Se acepta
H3 (VP > REP)	0.49	0.11	4.21	***	Se acepta

Se acepta H cuando p-valor < 0.05. Nota: \*\*\* representa significancia con p-valor < 0.001

**Tabla 9.***Contraste de las hipótesis del modelo estudiantes colombianos.*

Hipótesis	Estimado	S.E.	C.R.	p-valor	Resultado
H1 (EXP > VP)	1.39	0.04	30.25	***	Se acepta
H2 (EXP > REP)	1.78	0.15	11.74	***	Se acepta
H3 (VP > REP)	0.64	0.09	6.91	***	Se acepta

Se acepta H cuando p-valor < 0.05. Nota: \*\*\* representa significancia con p-valor < 0.001

Frente a la hipótesis 4, las relaciones se comportan de manera similar en los dos países, por lo cual se rechaza la hipótesis 4. Sin embargo, para el caso colombiano, los errores estándar de la muestra son menores lo que indica la confiabilidad de la media y podría ser indicativo del comportamiento de la población general.

## 6. Discussion

Al igual que el estudio de Amado et al., (2023) tomado como referente, y similar a los hallazgos encontrados por Li et al., (2016), las hipótesis y el modelo se confirmaron en cada

país. Frente a la *hipótesis 1*, se confirmó que la experiencia del estudiante se relaciona positivamente con el valor percibido, al igual que en estudios anteriores (Gupta & Vajic, 2000; Petre et al., 2006; Ledden et al., 2007; Dlačić et al., 2014; Prahalad & Ramaswamy, 2003). Tanto en el caso de Colombia como en el de España, existe una fuerte correlación entre estas variables con coeficientes de 0.90 y 0.75 respectivamente. Esta relación en los entornos académicos se da por cierta como resultado de los hábitos y costumbres que tanto docentes como administrativos adquieren desempeñando sus funciones. Sin embargo, este estudio aporta evidencias empíricas que permiten comprender su impacto para la universidad, los factores que la conforman y una posible y probada forma de medición.

Frente a la *hipótesis 2*, se confirmó que la experiencia del estudiante influye en la reputación. Este hallazgo es congruente con investigaciones previas (Handayani, 2020; White, 2015; Bhattacharya & Sen, 2003, Terblanche, 2009). Los resultados de las correlaciones evidencian que tanto en el caso de Colombia como en el de España, se presenta una correlación media con 0.51 y de 0.63 respectivamente. Por lo cual, la experiencia de cada estudiante individualmente importa, y cuenta a la hora de evaluar la reputación de la universidad (Walsh & Beatty, 2009). Por lo tanto, la gestión que se haga de ella, impactará en el student journey map y en la estrategia de comunicación que desarrolle la universidad (Trubnikova & Sharakhina, 2022).

En lo que respecta a la *hipótesis 3*, se encontró que el valor percibido influye en la reputación. Al igual que en los hallazgos de estudios anteriores (Doña et al., 2017; Goh et al., 2017; Dredge et al., 2012; Xu & Wu, 2018). Si bien el valor estimado en la contrastación de esta hipótesis es menor que los dos anteriores, se confirma la hipótesis. La correlación de estas variables para el caso de Colombia fue media con un valor de 0.40, en tanto que para España la correlación fue baja con 0.28. Este hallazgo, aunado al anterior (hipótesis dos) permite identificar que estas dos variables impactan positivamente (con mayor o menor fuerza dependiendo del país) en la valoración de la reputación de la universidad desde el punto de vista del estudiante, quien es el usuario del servicio de educación y puede valorar si el resultado de su proceso formativo la genera o no valor.

Y, por último, la *hipótesis 4*, se confirmó, ya que el modelo de las relaciones se comporta igual en Colombia y en España. Por lo que se puede inferir que, para el caso de las dos instituciones estudiadas, y según la valoración realizada por los estudiantes, los modelos y contextos del sistema educativo, no tuvieron un impacto importante que diferenciara los hallazgos, tal como afirmó Li et al. (2016) en su estudio. Por lo cual, las relaciones se dan del mismo modo en ambos países, sosteniendo el modelo en distintos de contextos geográficos y culturales.

## **7. Conclusions**

Este estudio aporta a la construcción teórica de la gestión de la reputación, y su relación con otras variables como el valor percibido y la experiencia desde el punto de vista de estudiante en las universidades y que puede extrapolarse a otras IES. Como se mencionó, existen algunas evidencias de estudios similares dentro del sector de educación superior, pero ninguno hasta el momento, que comparara la relación entre las variables y la contrastara entre países, por lo cual se confirma su integralidad, validez y replicabilidad siguiendo los debidos procesos de adaptación cultural. Se confirma entonces, la existencia de un modelo general que es valido a pesar las diferencias entre los dos países, por lo que podría ser sujeto de generalizaciones.

En cuanto a la reputación universitaria, ésta puede ser valorada en ambos países mediante los factores propuestos por Del-Castillo-Feito et al. (2019), a saber, *desempeño de la universidad, la innovación, la ciudadanía, el servicio, la gobernanza y el clima organizacional*. En relación a la experiencia del estudiante, también puede valorarse a través de los factores propuestos por Xu et al. (2018), que corresponden a, *el servicio centrado en el estudiante, la diversidad y la ciudadanía, la coproducción de la experiencia de aprendizaje la dependencia del maestro, la responsabilidad y el desarrollo integral de la persona*. Por último, frente al valor percibo, también se confirma los factores de la escala propuesta por Ledden et al. (2007) a saber, *valor funcional, valor epistémico, valor social, valor emocional, sacrificios no monetarios, sacrificios monetarios y la imagen*.

## **Implicaciones prácticas**

Como se mencionó, todas las relaciones fueron confirmadas para ambos países. Sin embargo, es importante precisar que la calidad en la propuesta educativa, es algo que los estudiantes asumen como un requisito previo al seleccionar una universidad que cuenta con acreditación tanto nacional para el caso de colombiano y acreditaciones internacionales para el caso español. En razón de lo anterior, una de las principales premisas del estudio, es que las universidades deben gestionar sus procesos con altos estándares de calidad como un objetivo clave que direccionará su plan estratégico. Y los sellos de acreditación, son los que ratificarán que todo se cumpla. En este sentido, pensar que con la mera acreditación se alcanza la calidad educativa, es demeritar la importancia y la incidencia de la calidad educativa en el proceso formativo, en el alcance de los resultados, el desempeño y por ende la reputación de la universidad.

Aunado a esto, también es importante “comunicar” la visión y el objetivo estratégico a todos sus stakeholders, en especial a estudiantes y solicitantes o interesados. Para esto, el departamento de mercadeo de la universidad, debe encargarse de diseñar y gestionar los planes de comunicación y los mensajes que se transmitan tanto directos como indirectos. Al final lo que se busca es ratificar en cada una de las fases y procesos, el valor que cada stakeholder obtiene de su relación con la universidad y esto motivará valoraciones positivas de la reputación. Pero también es cierto, que lo que se comunique debe ser real, las falsas promesas que hacen las universidades a sus estudiantes traen como resultado un daño a su imagen y a su reputación.

Por lo anterior, las universidades deben enfocar sus esfuerzos en gestionar la experiencia del estudiante en cada uno de las etapas de su proceso formativo, teniendo en cuenta los factores antes mencionados. Y para esto, el student journey map, podrían ser una herramienta de gran utilidad. Siguiendo a Trubnikova y Sharakhina (2022), las universidades deberían identificar tres momentos importantes que se relacionan también con los roles que adopta el estudiante en su paso por la universidad. La atracción, comunicación y captura de información de los “solicitantes” o interesados, el desarrollo de su proceso formativo del “estudiante”, el cual incluye la mayor parte de los procesos, recursos y actividades. Y, por último, “el graduado”,

en esta etapa, las relaciones con el sector empresarial para la consecución de empleos bien remunerados o el desarrollo de emprendimientos es fundamental.

En cuanto al valor percibido, las universidades deben alinear su plan estratégico con la generación de valor de cara al estudiante, de forma que durante todos los pasos del journey el estudiante perciba valor, en lo que respecta al cumplimiento de sus objetivos y desarrollo profesional, la percepción positiva de su elección tanto por el mismo estudiante como por su círculo cercano, como familia y amigos. Éstas percepciones pueden lograrse a través de la gestión de la imagen de la universidad entre sus stakeholders internos, con programas de comunicación que ratifiquen la buena elección realizada.

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## Conclusiones

Esta tesis se enfocó en analizar la relación entre el valor percibido, la experiencia y la reputación universitaria desde la perspectiva de los estudiantes, con dos grupos de comparación, estudiantes pertenecientes a una universidad acreditada en alta calidad y estudiantes de una universidad no acreditada. Los resultados permitieron comprobar las relaciones teóricas en los dos grupos de comparación, sobre los cuáles no se encontraron diferencias que sugieran que la acreditación en alta calidad sea un elemento distintivo que influya en la experiencia del estudiante, el valor que percibe de su proceso formativo y la valoración de la reputación de la universidad.

Posteriormente, se realizó un estudio comparativo de este modelo en estudiantes de una universidad española y una colombiana. Esto con el fin de analizar el comportamiento del modelo propuesto en otros contextos geográficos. Los resultados confirmaron las relaciones del modelo, superando así el alcance inicial de la tesis. Dichos hallazgos evidenciaron la robustez del modelo teórico, ya que éste se sostiene en otros contextos geográficos con diferencias importantes desde lo cultural, social, económico y político.

Los resultados obtenidos responden a una brecha de conocimiento evidenciada en las revisiones sistemáticas realizadas en primera instancia. Ya que se encontraron estudios que evidenciaban un relacionamiento bidireccional entre las variables objetivo de estudio, pero ninguno que abordara las relaciones de la reputación como constructo, más allá de los factores e indicadores. Esto permite mostrar a los encargados de la gestión universitaria y sus directivos, evidencias del impacto de cada uno de los elementos tangibles e intangibles que conforman el proceso educativo, en la experiencia del estudiante. Así como la incidencia de los elementos que el estudiante toma en consideración para evaluar el resultado del intercambio entre lo que da y lo que recibe (Zeithaml, 1996), y a su vez, el impacto que la gestión de éstos dos constructos tiene en la reputación de la universidad.

También se evidenció que la gestión de las relaciones con los stakeholders, la imagen institucional, la legitimidad, los rankings, la comunicación y los medios, así como el uso y

los riesgos asociadas a la gestión de la reputación, son elementos que los directivos deben considerar e integrar en sus planes estratégicos. Es por ello, que desde el área de mercadeo se pueden diseñar planes de comunicación articulados al plan estratégico institucional, con acciones, actividades, medios, mensajes y mecanismos de medición específicos.

Esta integración permitirá mostrar una imagen institucional sólida con un mensaje claro, que legitime el accionar de las universidades e instituciones de educación superior para así obtener una ventaja competitiva sostenible, que sirva como defensa ante los riesgos reputacionales a los que las universidades están expuestas. También es importante anotar, que el éxito de la gestión universitaria, precisa que las actividades académicas y administrativas se desarrollen bajo altos estándares de calidad en sus procesos diarios. Asimismo, se debe integrar la innovación educativa y pedagógica según el enfoque institucional, adaptado a las reglamentaciones nacionales, así como a los estándares internacionales, y las necesidades cambiantes del comportamiento de los usuarios del servicio, es decir, de los estudiantes.

Para abordar dicho comportamiento, el diseño de un *student journey map* podría ser una herramienta valiosa en la identificación de los elementos, procesos, recursos y actores que contribuyen a la experiencia del estudiante, considerándose también importante la identificación de los diferentes roles que el estudiante desempeña a lo largo del proceso. Así, en la etapa de atracción, se entiende como prospecto o posible cliente, en la etapa del proceso educativo, cambia a estudiante y, por último, en la etapa final de graduación cambia a graduado y/o egresado. En cada etapa o cada rol, las necesidades y comportamientos son diferentes, por lo que es importante identificarlas para crear planes de comunicación y acción acordes y diferenciados que respondan a sus expectativas y las superen.

En el marco de la revisión de literatura realizada, también se pudo evidenciar que existen elementos fundamentales a considerar desde la gestión que realizan las IES, y que impactan directamente en su desempeño y su reputación. Dentro de las dimensiones encontradas están la imagen, el liderazgo, la enseñanza y la innovación, la investigación, el servicio, lo relacionado con la infraestructura, y los docentes, entre otros. También se concluye que las

dimensiones de la reputación pueden agruparse en dos, las racionales, como los indicadores de publicaciones, rankings y espacios físicos, y las relacionadas con la experiencia del estudiante en su proceso formativo que son de carácter intangible, como el prestigio y el compromiso emocional, entre otros. Pero un elemento importante y reiterativo en los estudios es la importancia de la comunicación para transmitir esos elementos de valor que los diferencian de otras universidades.

Por otra parte, los hallazgos evidenciados en cada uno de los artículos que integran la tesis, aportan al desarrollo de la teoría de la gestión de la reputación universitaria. Entregando evidencias contundentes de su relación con otros constructos como la experiencia y el valor, que son evaluados desde la percepción de los públicos de interés tanto internos como externos, y en este caso, desde el estudiante. También aportan en la confirmación de los postulados de la escuela del marketing de los servicios, ya que se evidencia que en efecto las percepciones de los estudiantes respecto a los factores evaluados como coproductor del servicio, tienen una influencia directa en la valoración de su experiencia, y en el impacto que esta tiene en los resultados obtenidos al finalizar su programa académico desde el valor funcional, epistémico, social y emocional. Lo anterior, permitirá que cada estudiante tenga una percepción clara del desempeño de la institución.

De igual forma se aporta al desarrollo de la teoría de la lógica de servicio dominante (SDL) desde los servicios de educación superior. Tomando en consideración que uno de los factores evaluados en la experiencia del estudiante es el servicio centrado en el estudiante y su valoración de sus aportes en el proceso como coproductor activo, así como los aportes de la institución a su proceso formativo. Por lo tanto, se reafirma la importancia de la integración de recursos de orden tangible como las instalaciones físicas, pero más aún, de los intangibles como los métodos de enseñanza, las características del servicio en sí, la gestión, el ambiente, el contexto, y el relacionamiento con otros públicos de interés entre otros. También se reafirma la naturaleza experiencial de valor, ya que el valor solo puede ser dado únicamente por el beneficiario del servicio.

Otro aporte práctico tanto para la gestión de las universidades como para la investigación en el sector de educación superior, es la validación de las escalas de experiencia del estudiante, valor percibido y reputación, cuyas propiedades psicométricas dan evidencia de la confiabilidad y validez para ser aplicadas en un contexto de habla hispana. El uso de dichas escalas permitirá recopilar información valiosa para los administrativos de las universidades con el fin tomar decisiones respecto de gestión estratégica que realizan. Invirtiendo de manera más eficiente los recursos financieros, físicos, tecnológicos y humanos en procesos y actividades clave centrada en el valor y así mejorar la rentabilidad y el desempeño de la universidad.

Por último, es importante mencionar que, si bien los objetivos del estudio se cumplieron, existen ciertas limitaciones respecto al alcance de la tesis. En lo que respecta a las revisiones sistemáticas realizadas, el proceso de cribado podría dejar fuera del análisis otros estudios que abordaran variables emergentes relacionadas con el tema de investigación presentado en esta tesis. Con referencia a la muestra, este estudio solo encuestó a estudiantes de pregrado de universidades, por lo que no se incluyeron otras categorías de IES y tampoco se incluyeron las percepciones de otros stakeholders que pudieran brindar nuevos elementos relevantes en la gestión de la reputación. De igual forma, si bien se realizó un comparativo con Colombia-España, solo se tomó en cuenta una universidad en cada país, el desarrollo de esta investigación en otros países de habla hispana con mayor número de instituciones y estudiantes podría aportar evidencias complementarias a este estudio.

En razón de lo anterior, se sugiere continuar realizando investigaciones sobre la gestión universitaria ampliando la muestra o incorporando otras perspectivas como las de los docentes, los administrativos e incluso los estudiantes de posgrado con el fin de ampliar el rango de stakeholders y determinar su influencia en el desempeño universitario. También se sugiere profundizar en estudios de corte descriptivo que involucren variables demográficas para identificar posibles perfiles de estudiantes y comportamientos relacionados que explicaran sus percepciones sobre cada una de las etapas del proceso del servicio educativo que recibe. De igual forma, la correlación de la reputación con otras variables como la

satisfacción, o la lealtad con estudiantes de programas de posgrado, podrían brindar información relevante del comportamiento de recompra y voz a voz.

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