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Demographic Drivers of Workplace Deviance: A Survey of Clinical and Non-Clinical Hospital Professionals

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ABSTRACT

This paper aims to determine the extent to which employee demographic characteristics (gender, age, tenure and professional group) predict an employee's decision to participate in deviant workplace behavior. We conduct a quantitative field study consisting in a survey of 113 clinical and non-clinical professionals at the three largest hospitals in Brazil. ANOVA and linear regression were used to test the hypothesized model. Our results reveal that those most prone to deviant behavior are the short tenure, young and administrative professionals. Although we found no association between gender and workplace deviance, our results generate specific knowledge on relevant behavioral issues involving clinical and non-clinical hospital professionals. The knowledge of the demographic characteristics that may predict workplace deviance will allow managers to design and implement more accurate control systems and training programs that could reduce this dysfunctional behavior and its negative impact on organizations and society.

1. Introduction

Workplace deviance refers to observable and voluntary employee behavior infringing on organizational rules. This deviance, also known as counterproductive work behavior, includes a wide range of pervasive behaviors (e.g. alcohol/drug consumption, theft, mobbing, bullying and the disclosure of confidential information) in all kinds of organizations across the world. These behaviors represent a hazard to the organization's well-being (organizational deviance) and/or to its workers (interpersonal deviance) (Bennett and Robinson, 2000). Recent healthcare management studies highlight the prevalence of workplace deviance in hospitals and its adverse impact on financial, social and psychological cost as well as on healthcare quality and efficiency (Gallant-Roman, 2008; Christian and Ellis, 2014; Chu, 2014; Fida, Laschinger, and Leiter, 2018). In this respect, the healthcare sector is among the world's top-5 sectors with the highest frequency of deviant work behavior (Association of Certified Fraud Examiners, 2016). In the U.S. alone, over 22,428 disciplinary actions against practicing medical physicians were reported from 2008 to 2012 (Federation of State Medical Boards, 2014).

Existing socioeconomic conditions have made it crucial to analyze the effectiveness and financial sustainability of healthcare institutions (Gonzalez-Sanchez, Lopez-Valeiras, and García-Montero, 2014). In this line, the study of employee deviance predictors in healthcare institutions has made great progress over the past few years (Issel, 2017). Current research mainly focuses on organizational factors (e.g. organizational justice (Faheem, 2015), intention to quit (Christian and Ellis, 2014) or stress) (Chen et al., 2008) and social factors (e.g. the influence of the work group (Dabney, 1995) or the influence of supervisors (Peng, Tseng, and Lee, 2011; Chu, 2014). Although psychology and management literature traditionally recognizes the influence of demographic variables like gender, age, tenure and professional group in explaining employee behavior (Henle, Giacalon, and Jurkiewicz, 2005; Salas-Vallina, Alegre, and Fernández, 2017) little is known about this relationship within a hospital setting.

Expanding knowledge about the impact of individual demographic characteristics[1] on the workplace deviance can be fundamental for its management. For example, younger employees compared to older managers tend to be more determined and aggressive in an effort to succeed in their professional careers (Hambrick and Mason, 1984) or to prove

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[1] Recently upper echelon literature focused of a set of demographic characteristics at team level, such as homogeneity or heterogeneity (Naranjo-Gil, 2016; Wang et al., 2016).

that they are competent (Kor, 2006). Tenure can be another important feature in workplace deviance. In this regard, Michel and Hambrick (1992) suggest that it can be associated with social cohesion and shared cognitive structures, and these attributes can increase socialization, and consequently lead to a better relationship at work. Male employees are overconfident when compared to female employees. In addition, women are more cautious in their decisions, which can be a factor linked with workplace deviance. Particularly in hospitals, the professional group (eg, clinical and administrative) can be another variable associated with workplace deviance.

We have chosen the healthcare sector due to its complex environment with multiple activities, tasks and interdependent processes. In general, hospitals demand professionals with different backgrounds to provide a wide range of services to society, who often present their own views of how activities should be carried out. In addition, these activities require teamwork, which includes frequent interactions and joint decisions. By understanding the characteristics of employees, coordination of activities and the work environment can be improved, which can increase efficiency in the use of resources in hospitals (Naranjo-Gil, 2016).

Moreover, most research addressing the drivers of workplace deviance in hospitals focus on homogeneous groups of clinical professionals (Strandmark and Hallberg, 2007; Chu, 2014; Nicholson, Leiter, and Laschinger, 2014; Zaghini et al., 2016; Fida, Laschinger, and Leiter, 2018; Viotti et al., 2018). So researchers have ignored the complexity of all other professional hospital groups and their link to deviant behavior. Recent research highlights the prevalence of workplace deviance both at non-clinical (Keyvanara, Maracy, and Ziari, 2015) and clinical hospital departments (Chu, 2014). What is more, it shows significant behavioral differences between these two professional groups based on their distinctive individual backgrounds (Pepermans et al., 2001; De Harlez and Malagueño, 2016).

Starting from a previously validated workplace deviance measure in hospitals (Lunkes, Gomez-Conde, and Lopez-Valeiras, 2015), this study aims to identify the determinants of hospital workplace deviance. To this end, it clarifies and complements findings in psychology and management and proposes the following research question: "What type of hospital employees are more likely to participate in deviant behavior?" In response to this question, we use four demographic employee characteristics (gender, age, tenure and professional group) to predict two types of deviant workplace behavior (organizational

deviance and interpersonal deviance) (Aquino, Tripp, and Bies, 2001; Henle, Giacalon, and Jurkiewicz, 2005; Lunkes, Gomez-Conde, and Lopez-Valeiras, 2015). Apart from extending existing literature, our results may also have implications on hospital management by helping practitioners reduce losses due to employee deviance.

2. Framework and Conceptual Model

The Upper Echelon Theory suggests that characteristics such as gender, age, tenure and professional group, are important proxies explaining implicit differences in cognition, perception and value (Carpenter, Geletkanycz, and Sanders, 2004). These variables substantially affect employee decision-making and behavior (Hambrick and Mason, 1984).

First, women and men have different behaviors and perceptions in decision-making. Women are more risk-averse than men and they tend to have superior leadership, communication and listening skills (Eagly and Carli, 2003). For example, male doctors make different decisions than women do when prescribing medication, i.e., female physicians perceive generic medication more negatively than do their male counterparts (Johannesson and Lundin, 2002).

Second, we suggest age is another factor that may predict an employee's decision to participate in workplace deviance. Younger employees are more innovative and aggressive, while older employees are more conservative. Younger employees are more enthusiastic; they are more capable of taking risks and have a greater tendency to do so (Wiseman and Gomez-Mejia, 1998). Younger employees may also be more capable of learning and integrating information into decision-making, and may be more confident about their decisions. They may have superior technological know-how (Bantel and Jackson, 1989), and may be capable of taking risks because they have left their concerns about financial and career security far behind (Barker and Mueller, 2002).

Third, long tenure employees tend to behave differently. Short tenure employees are more likely to take risks to prove their competence to themselves and others (Kor, 2006). Contrarily, long tenure employees may deploy risk aversion of lower pressure on them (Barker and Mueller, 2002; Henderson, Miller, and Hambrick, 2006). In fact, clinicians with tenures over 10 years disagree to given statements more strongly than they do with less time (Tsaprantzi et al., 2016).

Finally, differences in education, background and experience of professionals with clinical and administrative profiles may lead to distinct behavior. For instance, team-

based and cooperative behavior characterize non-clinical backgrounds while autonomous and competitive behavior characterize clinical backgrounds (De Harlez and Malagueño, 2016). In addition, differences in decision-making may be linked to ethical issues and professional standards. Previous studies recognize that clinicians behave or decide based on deontological codes allowing their decisions to be challenged; but these expectations do not apply to administrative employees or managers (Devlin and Magill, 2006).

Following the above discussion, employee demographic characteristics (gender, age, tenure and professional group) predict an employee's decision to participate in workplace deviance.

3. Methods

3.1. Sample and data collection

We use a five-page survey instrument containing sections on workplace deviance (22 items) (Bennett and Robinson, 2000) and sociodemographics (10 items). To carry out our research question, we use items on employee demographic characteristics (gender, age, tenure, and professional group) and employee workplace deviance (organizational and interpersonal). The survey is widely used to measure behavior in healthcare organizations (Fida, Laschinger, and Leiter, 2018). We pay special attention to the translation of the original scales from English to Portuguese. Moreover, following previous studies (Dillman, Smyth, and Cristian, 2014), we pre-test the survey on six academics and three hospital professionals for the sake of clarity, ambiguity, and face validity (Lopez-Valeiras, Gomez-Conde, and Lunkes, 2018). The procedure yielded valuable suggestions that improved the understandability of the final version of the questionnaire.

Data were collected at the three largest hospitals (Ahmed, 2012; Marx, 2014; Weech-Maldonado et al., 2018) in the State of Santa Catarina (Brazil) between October 2013 and January 2014. One of them was a private hospital (198 beds), another was a state-administered public hospital (329 beds) and the third was a public hospital school managed by the federal government (228 beds). The scientific committees of the hospitals gave ethical approval and authorized the study. The general manager of each hospital scheduled a meeting where researchers and a representative from each of the professional groups (physicians, nurses, pharmacists and administrative employees) discussed data collection (Ahmed, 2012). All of them agreed that a member of the research team would distribute the questionnaires (on paper) personally and randomly to employees within the

hospital premises. The questionnaires, following a letter explaining the research and a note acknowledging participation, were anonymous. Collected questionnaires were put into a box specifically designed for this purpose to ensure respondents would feel free from any external interference, i.e., free of any constraint or pressure.

We received 135 surveys (29.67% of the sample) out of the total of 455 delivered questionnaires; 22 of them were not valid for this study. So the final number of usable questionnaires was 113 (29 physicians, 26 nurses, 7 pharmacists, and 51 administrative employees). Chi-square statistical tests showed no significant differences between the former and latter responses. Table 1 provides the survey demographics including hospital ownership, employee contract type, and human resource outsourcing.

	Number	*%*
Ownership	113	100
Private	54	47.79
Public	59	52.21
Contract	113	100
Fixed term	84	74.34
Non-fixed term	29	23.66
Human resource outsourcing	113	100
External employee	20	17.70
Own employee	93	82.30

Table 1. Sample demographics.

3.2. Outcome variables

We follow a previously validated measure of workplace deviance in healthcare organizations (Bennett and Robinson, 2000; Lunkes, Gomez-Conde, and Lopez-Valeiras, 2015) that assess two dimensions: (a) organizational deviance, and (b) interpersonal deviance. On the one hand, organizational deviance refers to deviant behavior directly harmful to the organization (Bennett and Robinson, 2000). We measure this using 11 items rated on a 7-point Likert scale (1-Never; 7-Daily) where respondents were asked about their participation in the following actions at the workplace: (i) Coming in late to work without permission; (ii) Calling in sick when they were not; (iii) Neglecting to follow boss's instructions; (iv) Intentionally working slower than they could have; (v) Discussing confidential company information with an unauthorized person; (vi) Leaving

work ahead of time without permission; (vii) Leaving work for someone else to finish; (viii) Repeating a rumor or gossip about their boss or coworkers; (ix) Making an obscene comment at work; (x) Putting little effort into work; (xi) Intentionally working slowly to obtain overtime.

On the other hand interpersonal deviance includes behavior directly harmful to other individuals within the organization (Bennett and Robinson, 2000). We measured this using 11 items rated on a 7-point Likert scale (1-Never; 7-Daily) where respondents were asked about their participation in the following workplace actions: (i) Acting rudely toward someone at work; (ii) Saying something hurtful to someone at work; (iii) Repeating a rumor or gossip about the company; (iv) Making an ethnic, religious, or racial remark at work; (v) Littering the work environment; (vi) Cursing at someone at work; (vii) Telling someone about the lousy place where they work; (viii) Losing their temper at work; (ix) Making fun of someone at work; (x) Acting rudely with someone at work; (xi) Publicly embarrassing someone at work.

Reliability of both constructs was assessed using Cronbach alpha, with values of 0.807 and 0.847, respectively, above the cut-off value of 0.5.

3.3. Explanatory variables

We consider four explanatory variables: (i) gender, (ii) age, (iii) tenure and (iv) professional group. We use a dichotomous variable (1 = female, 0 = male) to measure gender. We measure age in years and tenure (the time the employee has been carrying out a specific job) in months. We also use a dichotomous variable to measure professional group; "1" represents a non-clinical employee (i.e. administrative), and "0" represents a clinical employee (i.e. physician, nurse, or pharmacist) (De Harlez and Malagueño, 2016).

4. Results

We use version 22 of SPSS (Statistical Package for the Social Sciences) software to analyze the data; and we use OLS regressions to test the suggested links. Table 2 shows the descriptive statistics for the explanatory variables as well as for the items included in both outcome variables: organizational and interpersonal deviance. Respondents generally reported low levels of workplace deviance. The mean age of employees was 38.21 (SD = 10.54), ranging from 19 to 60 years of age. On average, 62% of the hospital

employees were female and 45% of the hospital employees were administrative. Lastly, the mean number of months (tenure) was 94 (SD = 105), ranging from 0 to 456 months.

	Mean	SD	Range
Organizational deviance			
Coming in late to work without permission	1.826	1.101	1-6
Calling in sick when they were not	1.091	0.367	1-3
Neglecting to follow boss's instructions	1.382	0.744	1-4
Intentionally working slower than they could	1.491	0.904	1-6
Discussing confidential information with an unauthorized person	1.144	0.397	1-3
Leaving work ahead of time without permission	1.468	0.822	1-5
Leaving their work for someone else to finish	1.411	0.797	1-6
Repeating a rumor or gossip about boss or coworkers	1.652	0.988	1-5
Making an obscene comment at work	1.532	1.084	1-6
Putting little effort into work	1.473	0.896	1-6
Intentionally working slowly to obtain overtime	1.143	0.610	1-6
Interpersonal deviance			
Acting rudely toward someone at work	1.596	1.087	1-7
Saying something hurtful to someone at work	1.616	0.984	1-7
Repeating a rumor or gossip about the company	1.910	1.199	1-6
Making an ethnic, religious, or racial remark at work	1.773	1.131	1-6
Littering the work environment	1.327	0.769	1-6
Cursing at someone at work	1.270	0.626	1-4
Telling someone about the lousy place where they work	1.682	0.999	1-5
Losing their temper at work	1.764	1.034	1-7
Making fun of someone at work	1.459	0.799	1-5
Acting rudely with someone at work	1.600	1.054	1-7
Publicly embarrassing someone at work	1.259	0.660	1-4
Gender	0.619	0.488	0-1
Age	38.214	10.548	19-60
Tenure	94.135	105.316	0-456
Professional group	0.451	0.471	0-1

Table 2. Descriptive statistics.

Table 3 displays the correlation matrix. Both constructs of workplace deviance, interpersonal and organizational deviance, show a high correlation (0.619, p < 0.01).

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Tenure and Age also show a high correlation. Concerning correlations between expected explanatory variables and explained variables, tenure and age show significant and negative coefficients on Workplace deviance, while Professional group correlates positively and significantly with deviant behavior. Gender presents no correlation with workplace deviance.

	1	2	3	4	5	6
1. Interpersonal deviance	*1.000*					
2. Organizational deviance	0.619***	*1.000*				
3. Gender	-0.066	0.085	*1.000*			
4. Age	-0.160*	-0.294***	-0.119	*1.000*		
5. Tenure	-0.202**	-0.177*	-0.038	0.574***	*1.000*	
6. Professional group	0.188**	0.246***	-0.152	-0.002	-0.080	*1.000*

*P < 0.1; **P < 0.05; ***P < 0.01

Table 3. Correlation matrix (Pearson).

Table 4 presents test of differences on workplace deviance among groups of explanatory variables. Gender (male/female), age (categorization based) (Lunkes, Naranjo-Gil, and Lopez-Valeiras, 2018) and tenure (categorization based) (Gould and Hawkins, 1978; Allen and Meyer, 1993) present no significant differences in both dimensions of workplace deviance. Professional group shows significant differences in both organizational and interpersonal deviance. The differences between non-clinical and clinical employees are the main drivers of these results.

Panel A. T-tests on gender				
	Difference	*Mean difference*	*t*	*P value*
Organizational deviance	Female-Male	-0.174	-0.899	0.371
Interpersonal deviance	Female-Male	0.134	0.695	0.489
Panel B. ANOVA and Bonferroni on Professional group				
	F			*P value*

Organizational deviance		4.610		0.004
Interpersonal deviance		3.020		0.033

	I	*J*	*Mean difference (I-J)*	*P value*
Organizational deviance	Physician	Nurse	-0.487	0.314
		Pharmacist	-0.824	0.598
		Administrative	-0.720	0.004
	Nurse	Physician	0.487	0.314
		Pharmacist	-0.337	1.000
		Administrative	-0.233	1.000
	Pharmacist	Physician	0.824	0.598
		Nurse	0.337	1.000
		Administrative	0.104	1.000
	Administrative	Physician	0.720	0.004
		Nurse	0.233	1.000
		Pharmacist	-0.104	1.000
Interpersonal deviance	Physician	Nurse	-0.042	1.000
		Pharmacist	-1.084	0.207
		Administrative	-0.479	0.146
	Nurse	Physician	0.042	1.000
		Pharmacist	-1.042	0.315
		Administrative	-0.437	0.612
	Pharmacist	Physician	1.084	0.207
		Nurse	1.042	0.315
		Administrative	0.605	1.000
	Administrative	Physician	0.479	0.146
		Nurse	0.437	0.612
		Pharmacist	-0.605	1.000

Panel C. ANOVA and Bonferroni on Age (years)

		F		*P value*
Organizational deviance		2.846		0.062
Interpersonal deviance		1.457		0.237

	I	*J*	*Mean difference (I-J)*	*P value*
Organizational deviance	Under 30	Between 30 and 50	0.430	0.138
		Over 50	0.616	0.117

	Between 30 and 50	Under 30	-0.430	0.138
		Over 50	0.187	1.000
	Over 50	Under 30	-0.616	0.117
		Between 30 and 50	-0.187	1.000
Interpersonal deviance	Under 30	Between 30 and 50	0.359	0.296
		Over 50	0.338	0.780
	Between 30 and 50	Under 30	-0.359	0.296
		Over 50	-0.021	1.000
	Over 50	Under 30	-0.338	0.780
		Between 30 and 50	0.021	1.000

Panel D. ANOVA and Bonferroni on Tenure (months)

			F	*P value*
Organizational deviance			0.263	0.770
Interpersonal deviance			1.719	0.184
Organizational deviance	Under 25	Between 25 and 75	0.0176	1.000
		Over 75	0.1472	1.000
	Between 25 and 75	Under 25	-0.0176	1.000
		Over 75	0.1296	1.000
	Over 75	Under 25	-0.1472	1.000
		Between 25 and 75	-0.1296	1.000
Interpersonal deviance	Under 25	Between 25 and 75	-0.201	1.000
		Over 75	0.250	0.732
	Between 25 and 75	Under 25	0.201	1.000
		Over 75	0.451	0.228
	Over 75	Under 25	-0.250	0.732
		Between 25 and 75	-0.451	0.228

Table 4. T-tests and ANOVA.

Table 5 displays the regression analysis. The outcome variable is workplace deviance. Column 1 shows a regression of the four explanatory variables on organizational deviance (Model 1). Professional group shows a positive and significant impact on organizational deviance ($\beta = 0.253$; $p < 0.01$) while age shows a negative and significant one ($\beta = -0.288$; $p < 0.05$). Gender and tenure present a non-significant effect on organizational deviance. Thus, young workers and administrative employees are the ones that drive organizational deviance. Tenure explains no organizational deviant behavior.

	Outcome variable	
	Organizational deviance	*Interpersonal deviance*
Gender	0.084	-0.075
	(0.911)	(-0.786)
Age	-0.288**	-0.072
	(-2.595)	(-0.628)
Tenure	0.015	-0.151[†]
	(0.132)	(-1.313)
Professional group	0.253***	0.154[†]
	(2.754)	(1.613)
F (sign.)	4.468***	2.135*
R^2	0.145	0.075
R^2 (adj.)	0.113	0.040
Max. VIF	1.059	1.059

[†] *Significant at 0.1 level on one-tailed test; *$P < 0.1$; **$P < 0.05$; ***$P < 0.01$*
Table 5. Linear regressions of demographic factors on organizational and interpersonal deviance.

Column 2 shows a regression of the four explanatory variables on interpersonal deviance (Model 2). Here we see that professional group has a positive and significant impact on interpersonal deviance ($\beta = 0.154$; significant at one-tailed test) just like it did in the first model. Tenure, however, presents a negative and significant impact ($\beta = -0.151$; significant at one-tailed test). Gender and age reveal non-significant effects on interpersonal deviance. Just like in organizational deviation, employee professional group accounts for interpersonal workplace deviance. That is to say, administrative employees seem to be more potentially predisposed towards this kind of behavior. By contrary, employee tenure reduces interpersonal deviance. The maximum VIF of 1.059 is below the general threshold of 10 (Hair Jr. et al., 2006).

5. Discussion and Conclusion

This study examines the extent to which gender, age, tenure and professional group may predict an employee's decision to participate in organizational deviance and/or interpersonal deviance. Organizational deviance corresponds to behavior harmful to the organization while interpersonal deviance corresponds to behavior harmful to other individuals within the organization.

The study of this phenomenon in healthcare management literature has made great progress over the past few decades. However, a clear interpretation of the underlying mechanisms is essential (Bennett and Robinson, 2003). Much remains to be known about the potential influence of employee demographic characteristics on workplace deviance in hospitals. This study also contributes to previous research in psychology and management literature by identifying the role of demographic characteristics in the decision to adopt deviant behavior within a complex institutional environment with multiple stakeholders and, oftentimes, ambiguous objectives.

Overall, we find that the determination of hospital professionals to participate in workplace deviance varies according to their demographic characteristics. This result falls in line with previous research in psychology and management indicating that demographic variables may predict deviant behavior even though they may represent the lesser part of the variance. Firstly, we find that professional group relates positively with organizational and interpersonal workplace deviance. That is to say, non-clinical personnel are potentially more predisposed than clinical professionals towards deviant actions, harmful to both the organization and its members. Our results therefore clearly suggest that an administrative professional group may be significant in explaining deviant behavior. In light of previous literature suggesting paramount differences in the behaviors of non-clinical and clinical staff based on their different individual backgrounds (De Harlez and Malagueño, 2016).

Studies carried out in several countries have shown that professional groups (clinical and non-clinical) can exhibit different behaviors. For example, Naranjo-Gil (2016) conducted a study in Spanish hospitals and found that management teams with clinical experience influence behavior using more flexible and dialogued controls. De Harlez and Malagueño (2016) researched hospitals in Belgium and found that the interactive use of controls generated greater performance, when managers had clinical experience. Lunkes, Naranjo-

Gil and Lopez-Valeiras (2018) studied large Brazilian hospitals and showed that clinicians do not see any use in adopting horizontal controls. Our results trigger discussion on the complementary role of a few variables linked to predisposition towards deviant actions such as salary level, social norms, relative status within an organization and nature of the job (Bennett and Robinson, 2003; Appelbaum, Iaconi, and Matousek, 2007).

Secondly, there is no consensus in psychology and management literature on the role of age and tenure as drivers of workplace deviance (Peterson, 2002; Henle, Giacalon, and Jurkiewicz, 2005). Our results suggest that both variables are important in predicting workplace deviance. Age correlates negatively and significantly with organizational deviance just like tenure does with interpersonal deviance. That is to say, employees who are young and new to their job are more likely to show deviant behavior. The study by Ertug et al. (2014) in a public hospital and a university hospital in Ankara, Turkey showed that nurses' ethical sensitivity increases with advancing age.

The intrinsic characteristics of a hospital setting pose plausible arguments for discussing this result, i.e. a young and short-tenured professional could experience more frequent situations of frustration, threats to self and perceived injustices than would a long tenure senior professional. Consistent with predictions derived from equity theory, the decision of a young and short tenure professional to participate in deviant behavior may stem as a reaction aiming to restore a state of equity undermined by perceptions of injustice (Fox, Spector, and Miles, 2001; Appelbaum, Deguire, and Lay, 2005).

Employees with less time in the hospital may lack legitimacy in the eyes of other colleagues (Miller, 1993) and are more likely to take risks to prove to themselves that they are competent (Kor, 2006). For example, largest risk zones of mobbing and single cases of harassment related to one occur in the start of professional career (Vveinhardt and Štreimikienė, 2017). Thus, they may be more willing to take more aggressive or improper attitudes in the workplace. On the other hand, longer employees can take a more leadership approach, with openness and negotiation behavior. They can emphasize reputation and stability (Barker and Mueller, 2002) and avoid making decisions that lead to workplace deviance (Kor, 2006).

Like the time in office, younger employees will be more inclined to pursue risky strategies and actions, while older employees tend to be more conservative (Hambrick and Mason, 1984, Barker and Mueller, 2002). Younger employees may be more prone to committing workplace deviance for three main reasons. First, younger employees

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may be better able to learn and integrate information into decision making and may have overconfidence in decisions (Taylor, 1975). Secondly, as they received their education more recently, younger employees have superior technological knowledge (Bantel and Jackson, 1989). Third, younger employees may be able to take risks because their concerns about safety and career are far away (Vroom and Pahl, 1971; Barker and Mueller, 2002). Older employees who are prone to risk aversion and with security and career concerns tend to choose more conservative stocks, while younger managers may be more willing to risk it. When employees mature, there is a decrease in physical and mental vigor, which can lead to a reduction in deviant behavior in the workplace. Although, studies indicate that the pre-retirement age can be critical in relation to bullying at work (Vveinhardt and Štreimikienė, 2017).

Finally, we find no evidence of the relation between gender and either type of workplace deviance. By contrast, healthcare researchers have demonstrated a correlation between gender differences and non-ethical behavior, e.g. empathy or compassion (Hamblin et al., 2015) in clinical staff. Socialization theories are a widely used framework supporting the existence of this gender effect. In this sense, it is argued that family and educational institutions socialize women to make them look nicer and friendlier than men (Hamblin et al., 2015), and by nature they are more cautious than men (Mendes et al., 2017; Lunkes et al., 2019). However, empirical results in psychology and management literature are inconclusive concerning the relation between gender differences and ethical and deviant work behavior (Peterson, 2002; Henle, Giacalon, and Jurkiewicz, 2005).

The literature on the differences between men and women in the workplace is not conclusive. For example, there are studies that provide evidence that women have greater communication skills and an effective leadership style in the contemporary environment (Peni, 2014) and that increases organizational equity (Cook and Glass, 2015). One factor is that women are more conservative than men (Croson and Gneezy, 2009).

Other studies argue that women can increase conflict, reduce cooperation, and impair performance in the workplace (Cook and Glass, 2015). Faccio et al. (2016) pointed out some of the possible causes for women's conservative behavior, such as lack of confidence, preference for fixed remuneration and for companies with low risk, greater fear of unemployment and women's difficulty in becoming CEO. A survey by Grant Thornton points out that half of the companies in Brazil (57%) do not have women in leadership positions. The country ranks 3rd among the least advantaged women. This lack

of possibilities of professional growth can generate frustrations in women and increase the possibilities of workplace deviance.

Some limitations of this study should be highlighted. First, the characteristics of the setting, the small size of the sample and the self-reported nature of the data call for a prudent interpretation and generalization of the results. Second, our model only includes a set of demographic variables. Several authors claim the need to further examine and clarify the potential interaction between demographic variables and attitudes (Hirshfield and Underman, 2016). Further research must analyze the relationship between demographic characteristics, attitudes and employee deviance in hospitals. Future research in healthcare management could also broaden the focus to explore the design of organizational control mechanisms (e.g. enabling vs. coercing) to support hospital managers in aligning individual and organizational interests (De Harlez and Malagueño, 2016).

6. Practice Implications

These findings have substantial implications on healthcare organization managers. The prevalence of workplace deviance at hospitals and its capacity to threaten the well-being of the organization is a great challenge to these institutions. Control systems are formal procedures that managers may use to increase motivation as well as to influence employee behavior by means of different strategies: punishing, rewarding, or a combination of both (Bolin and Heatherly, 2001; Lopez-Valeiras, Gomez-Conde, and Lunkes, 2018).

Management control system literature has traditionally drawn on economic and psychological theories to explain the effectiveness of each of these strategies in function of individual employee characteristics and the features of the task performed by the employee, among other issues. For instance, it has been argued that a control system directed towards coercing and punishing could harm performance in tasks that involve creativity and non-mechanical skills (Lopez-Valeiras, Gomez-Conde, and Lunkes, 2018). By signaling age, tenure and professional group as variables predicting deviant behavior, this paper allows managers to design and implement more accurate control systems that could reduce this dysfunctional behavior and its negative impact on organizations and society.

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The triple role of university academic staff and its effects on students' satisfaction: contractual tie and gender contextual analysis

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ABSTRACT

The university academic staff is a key element of the quality of universities. Therefore, it is essential to understand if performance in their three possible roles (teaching, research and management) affects the learning process of students and, more specifically, their satisfaction. A database of 992 satisfaction surveys conducted at the University of Girona was used to show that not all the roles affect these two aspects in the same way and that contextual factors such as contractual tie and gender are also significant.

KEYWORDS

1. Introduction

The assessment of university quality has become a significant issue for both university academic staff and university managers. In recent years a quality-based framework has been devised for assessing the quality of the university system. The Spanish universities are no exception in this worldwide trend and they have quickly moved from a classical model (a teaching university) to a modern one in which research is essential (Garcia-Berro et al., 2016).

The academic members of staff are obviously a key element in the quality of our universities because they are not only in charge of teaching students, but they also actively participate in research activities (Bentley et al., 2013). Every so often, the academic staff can apply for both their teaching and research performance to be officially recognized in merits. Obtaining official merits is viewed as a valid measure of performance since it considers a professional career over time and as such is a validation instrument that is widely recognised by the Spanish university community (Garcia-Berro et al., 2016). National public bodies are responsible for recognizing merits in teaching and research, which give academic staff the chance to receive pay bonuses and apply for better positions in the university.

In addition, there is a third role that some academic staff temporarily assume, and this is a management role. While both teaching and research are intrinsic roles for all university academic staff, the management role is not mandatory for everyone. Academic members of staff hold management responsibilities only in certain periods of their professional career.

This triple responsibility means that academic staff must find a balance among the three roles and managing their time among them becomes an important issue. Indeed, the balance among the three roles and how they influence the learning process of students is the main objective of this research paper. We are particularly interested in understanding how the experience of academic staff, mediated by teaching, research and management merits, impacts on the satisfaction of students.

Pursuant to this objective, the remainder of the paper is organised as follows. The second section provides a review of the literature and raises the hypotheses of the working model. The employed methodology is explained in the third section. The fourth and fifth sections present and discuss the results obtained, and the theoretical and practical implications are presented in the conclusion.

2. Literature review

2.1. Teaching experience and students' satisfaction

There is widespread consensus that the more experienced the academic staff member, the better their teaching performance is (Drule et al., 2014). It should be a given that previous experience provides academics with the tricks of the trade of how to better gain students' attention and consequently increase their satisfaction (Berbegal-Maribent et al., 2018). However, there are few studies that demonstrate this cause-effect relationship.

Prieto and Altmaier (1994) explored the effects of previous teaching experience, among other factors, on the teaching self-efficacy of graduate teaching assistants. Similarly, Shannon et al. (1998) analysed the impact of training and teaching experience in light of the fact that teaching assistants are taking on more responsibility in instructing undergraduate students due to the lack of stable full-time faculty positions. In both studies the authors concluded that the lecturers with previous teaching experience rate more positively than those without such teaching experience.

More recently, Berbegal-Maribent et al. (2018) analysed the mediating role of research intensity in the relationship between teaching experience and students' satisfaction, concluding that the research effort "competes" fiercely with teaching commitment. Accordingly, we hypothesise that:

H1: Greater teaching experience positively influences students' satisfaction.

2.2. Teaching experience and merits in teaching, research and management

The three roles of the academic staff in Spanish universities can be officially recognized in terms of merits in teaching (five-year terms), research (six-year terms) and management.

In Spain, and specifically in the region of Catalonia, the official national agency responsible for assessing teaching and research merits is different depending on the work contract of the academic staff. For the civil servant academic staff the body responsible for evaluating academic and research activity is CNEAI (ANECA, 2019), within ANECA. For academic staff with a non-civil servant contract the body responsible for assessing academic and research activity is the official Catalan Agency AQU (2019). The merits in management are assessed by each university based on a pre-agreed accumulated point scale.

Since obtaining merits depends on the performance of the academic staff over a certain period of time, clearly the number of merits recognized should be correlated with the length of the academic career. Therefore, beyond the performance of each academic, the longer their career in the university the more likely it is for each academic member of staff to have obtained official merits in teaching, research and management. Accordingly, we hypothesise that:

H2: The academic staff members with more teaching experience are more likely to have more merits

H2a: The academic staff members with more teaching experience are more likely to have more merits in teaching

H2b: The academic staff members with more teaching experience are more likely to have more merits in research

H2c: The academic staff members with more teaching experience are more likely to have more merits in management

2.3. Merits in teaching, research and management and students' satisfaction

To improve the skills of its academic staff the university values and stimulates good teaching and research because when a teacher is committed to teaching excellence they will be highly valued by the students (Xiao and Wilkins, 2015). According to Berbegal-Maribent et al. (2018), the greater the teacher's motivation, beyond other skills such as good communication or feeling what they teach, the more effective is the students' learning. Therefore, the motivation of the teacher should be determinant to achieve greater student satisfaction.

According to Garcia-Berro et al. (2016), the research merit is considered as an unquestionable measure of the quality of the research activity. However, they question whether this excellence in research is correlated with a high performance in teaching, concluding that there is a correlation but not as high as they would have expected. In fact, the relationship between teaching and research activities has long been a controversial issue in the field of higher education management (Halse et al., 2007; Robertson and Bond, 2005). However, they are expected to be mutually reinforcing when the two activities are observed from a learning process perspective (Burke and Rau, 2010). Accordingly, we hypothesise that:

H3: A higher number of merits positively influences students' satisfaction

H3a: A higher number of merits in teaching positively influences students' satisfaction

H3b: A higher number of merits in research positively influences students' satisfaction

H3c: A higher number of teaching merits in management positively influences students' satisfaction

Once the hypotheses have been raised, the whole proposed model is presented in Figure 1.
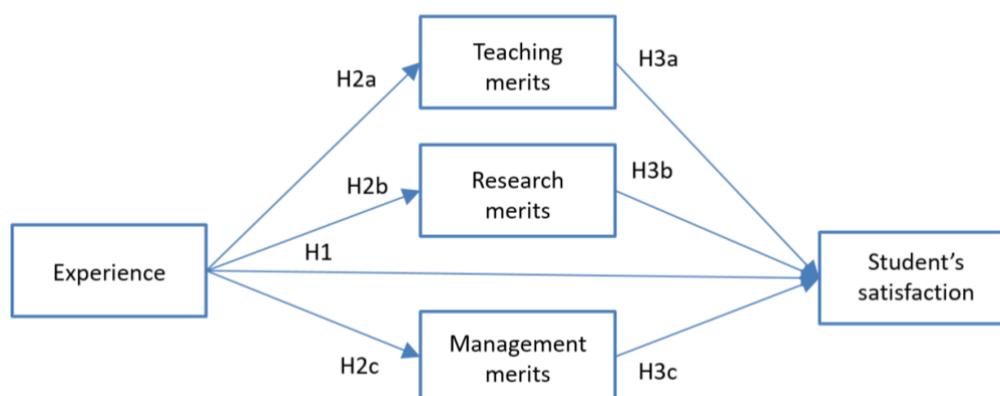
Figure 1. Proposed model.

3. Methodology

The database used to pursue the main objective of the present paper comes from the University of Girona. The University of Girona is a higher education institution located in the city of Girona in the region of Catalonia. The data is from the academic year 2015/2016. At that time, more than 14,000 students were enrolled at the University of Girona, distributed among bachelor's and master's degrees.

Specifically, two sources of data were used. The first was the professional information related to the full-time academic staff of the university, which included experience as academic staff in the university (in days), gender, contractual tie and recognition of academic, research and management roles (in number of periods). And the second was the satisfaction surveys that all the students must fill out for each subject they have taken during the academic year. In total, the number of questionnaires completed during the 2015/2016 academic year was 4,468.

However, since the structure of the satisfaction surveys for bachelor's and master's degrees was different and the total number of bachelor's degree students much higher, our analysis was limited to the bachelor's degrees. In addition, following Berbegal et al. (2018), on considering the values collected in the satisfaction surveys as representative,

we established a minimum response rate of 15% in the questionnaires to consider them as representative.

In summary, the sample used for this study was made up of 992 surveys from 491 full-time academic staff. Table 1 presents the descriptions of the sample. By knowledge area, most of the surveys were from the fields of engineering and architecture (37.5%) and social sciences (25.6%), which is where more of the undergraduate studies are concentrated. Regarding the most common profile for academic staff, it is a man (60.8%) with a civil servant professional contract (65.4%).

Satisfaction survey			Academic staff					
Knowledge area	n	%	Contract	n	%	Gender	n	%
Arts and Humanities	190	19,2	non-civil servant	170	34,6	Man	299	60,8
Science	98	9,9	civil servant	321	65,4	Female	192	39,2
Health science	78	7,9						
Engineering/ Architecture	372	37,5						
Social science	254	25,6						
Total	992	100,0	Total	491	100,0	Total	491	100,0

Table 1. Description of the sample by knowledge area and professional profile.

The reason why there are more satisfaction surveys than academic staff members is because during any given academic year the academic staff members can give lectures in several subject. To this effect, the satisfaction values collected in the surveys were weighted according to the percentage of credits given by the academic staff member with respect to the total number of credits of the subject they imparted.

The satisfaction survey for the bachelor's degrees of the University of Girona is structured in two sections. The first section is comprised of six questions (q1 – q6) about specific aspects such as organization and planning, implementation, interaction and results, following the recommendations of Pratt (1997). The second section consists of one question about the student's global satisfaction with the subject. For the purpose of this paper, student satisfaction is measured by means of the score in the global satisfaction question. All the questions in the survey are ranked on a five-point Likert scale, from totally disagree (1) to totally agree (5). Table 2 presents the statements and the mean scores of the satisfaction survey.

	N	Mean	Std.Dev.
q1: This teacher has clearly presented the programme of the subject and the assessment criteria	992	4.234	.631
q2: I learn with this teacher	992	4.060	.761
q3: This teacher motivates me to work hard and learn on my own.	992	3.859	.756
q4: The support materials that this teacher has provided have helped me	992	3.971	.685
q5: The evaluation process allowed me to reflect my knowledge	992	3.876	.680
q6: This teacher clarified my doubts where necessary	992	4.283	.674
Global satisfaction: I globally assess the teaching of this academic staff member as positive	992	4.033	.746

Table 2. Satisfaction survey: mean values and standard deviation.

The results can be considered as positive since on average all the means are higher than 3.8 (out of 5) and the global satisfaction score is higher than 4. Among the six questions, the two highest scores are obtained in question 6 (assessment of the attention received from the academic staff member), with a mean value of 4.28, and in question 1 (the programme of the subject and the evaluation criteria being clearly presented), with a mean value of 4.23. On the other hand, the lowest scores, also with similar values, are related to the motivation of the academic staff members (3.85) and the evaluation system of the subject (3.87).

Table 3 shows the descriptive statistics of the academic, research and management merits. As would be expected, the highest means in terms of merits are in teaching and research since these can be obtained at the same time as the academic staff member develops their professional career. The longer the professional career, the more likely they are to obtain teaching and research merits. On the other hand, the lowest score is for management merits because having a management position is optional.

Merits	Mean	Std.Dev.
Teaching periods (five years)	3.750	1.407
Research periods (six years)	1.482	1.298
Management periods (accumulation of points)	.526	1.226

Table 3. Descriptive statistics of the merits in teaching, research and management.

4. Results

The results are structured in three sections. In the first section, a bivariate correlation was performed between the measures, including the control variables of gender and contractual tie. In the second section, a structural equations model was carried out to contrast the above raised hypotheses. Last, a contextual analysis was performed to detect possible divergences when the sample was controlled in terms of gender and contractual tie.

4.1. Bivariate correlation

Table 4 shows the result of the bivariate correlation. All the variables are considered as continuous except for the control variables gender (0: man; 1: woman) and contractual tie (0: non-civil servant, 1: civil servant), which are considered as dichotomous variables.

		Global Satisfaction	Teaching merit	Research merit	Management merit	Experience	Contractual tie
Teaching merit	Correl.	-,107**	1				
	Sig.	,001					
Research merit	Correl.	,048	,146**	1			
	Sig.	,147	,000				
Management merit	Correl.	,046	,336**	,156**	1		
	Sig.	,160	,000	,000			
Experience	Correl.	-,133**	,765**	,091**	,241**	1	
	Sig.	,000	,000	,006	,000		
Contractual tie	Correl.	-,107**	,640**	,199**	,231**	,660**	1
	Sig.	,001	,000	,000	,000	,000	
Gender	Correl.	-,065*	-,070*	-,031	-,116**	-,068*	-,126**
	Sig.	,042	,032	,343	,000	,032	,000

Table 4. Bivariate correlation among the measure and the model and the control variables (n=992).

According to Table 4, there is a significant and positive correlation between the three types of merits. A possible explanation is that the three merits are proportional to the LENGTH OF SERVICE of the academic staff at the university. Therefore, the longer their professional career, the more likely they are to obtain teaching, research and management merits. This affirmation is confirmed by the correlation between the three merits and experience, especially in the case of teaching merits ($\beta = 0,765$).

On the other hand, the relationships between students' satisfaction and the three merits are different. While there is no relationship between satisfaction and research and management merits, there is a significant but negative relationship with teaching merits. This correlation is confirmed by the significant but also negative relationship between the satisfaction of the student and the length of the academic staff member's experience. Regarding the control variables, both are significantly and negatively correlated with satisfaction. Therefore, it seems that non-civil servant academic staff and men are the ones who obtain the highest scores in the satisfaction surveys.

4.2. Structural equation modelling

Structural equation modelling was performed using the maximum-likelihood method and the EQS 6.3 software was used to test the model. Table 5 shows the main fit statistics. In all cases the values are above the recommended cut-off values of 0.9 (Byrne, 1994). According to Schermelleh-Enge, Moosbrugger and Müller (2003) when three or more fit statistics are greater than the recommended values the fit of the model is accepted.

Statistic	Value	Cut-off value
BB-NFI Bentler-Bonnet Normed Fit Index)	.933	.900
CFI (Comparative Fit Index)	.935	.900
IFI (Incremental Fit Index)	.936	.900

Table 5. Fit indexes of the model

The standardized solution of the causal model is presented in Figure 2. All the causal relationships between experience and the three merits are significant and positive. These results confirm those of the previously performed bivariate correlation where a high dependency between obtaining merits and the experience of the academic staff member was detected. No such relationship could be established, however, between experience and students' satisfaction and only the relationship between management merits and students' satisfaction was significant.
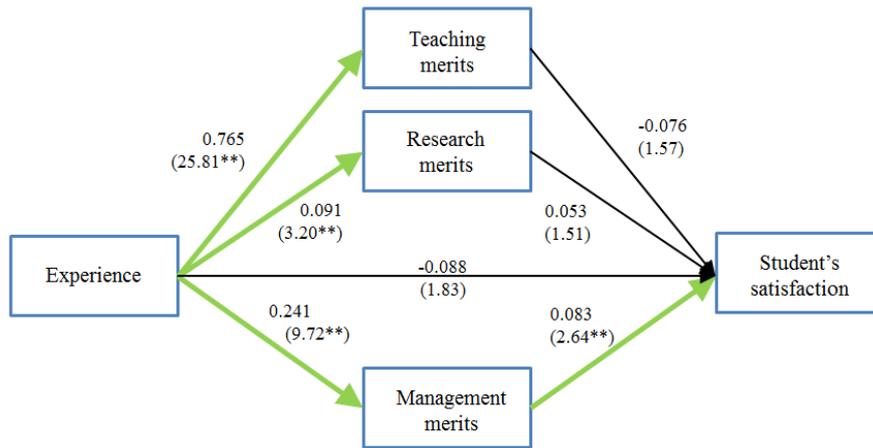
Figure 2. Maximum-likelihood solution (robust method).
*** Significant relationship at level 0.01*
** Significant relationship at level 0.05*

4.3. Contextual analysis

A contextual analysis was performed to verify whether the profile of the academic staff member influenced the results obtained in the model based on the whole sample. This decision was taken for two main reasons. First, because most of the previous results obtained were somehow running contrary to the popular knowledge that both experience and merits should increase students' satisfaction, and second because of the diversity of the academic staff that coexist in the Catalan public universities. According to Arcas et al. (2016), in 2015 the percentage of civil servant academic staff was reduced to below 40% of the total Catalan academic staff with a slight but continuous decreasing trend. Furthermore, the number of female members of academic staff has increased in the last years although they still represent less than half the total of the Catalan academic staff. Two endogenous variables were introduced: gender and contractual tie.

Table 6 presents a descriptive analysis of these two variables and the statistical differences between the groups. Numerous significant differences emerge in the results. The civil servant academic staff group obtained higher mean values in all the variables except students' satisfaction. From a gender perspective, fewer differences were detected with significant differences only in the number of teaching and management merits.

(mean)	Contractual tie			Gender		
	Civil servant	Non-civil servant	p-value	Male	Female	p-value
Experience (days)	7,909	4,546	.000**	6,807	6,594	.157
Teaching merits	4.312	2.303	.000**	3.753	3.62	.042*
Research merits	1.642	1.066	.000**	1.482	1.428	.644
Management merits	.702	0.070	.000**	.526	.339	.000**
Student's satisfaction	3.977	4.148	.000**	4.033	3.970	.055

Table 6. Descriptive analysis of the variables by contractual tie and gender.
** Significant relationship at level 0.01
* Significant relationship at level 0.05

Next, Table 7 presents the results of the contextual analysis for the model. By contractual tie, there are significant differences in any of the hypotheses except for the relationship between research merits and students' satisfaction. It should be pointed out that there are three hypotheses where the sign of the relationship is different according to the subsample. On the one hand, for non-civil servants there is a positive relationship between experience and research merits, and experience and satisfaction. However, on the other hand, for civil servants there is a positive relationship between management merits and students' satisfaction.

Similarly, significant differences are observed when the model is analysed by gender. Specifically, differences emerge for all the hypotheses except for the relationship between experience and teaching merits and the relationship between research merits and students' satisfaction. In addition, there are some interesting differences in terms of the signs in the hypotheses teaching merits → satisfaction and management merits → satisfaction.

Hypotheses	(n= 992)	Contractual tie		Δχ²(Δdf)	Gender		Δχ²(Δdf)
		Civil servant (n= 667)	Non-civil servant (n=325)		Male (n= 624)	Female (n= 368)	
H1: Experience → Satisfaction	-0.088 (1.83)	-0.093 (2.53**)	0.115 (1.14)	0.007(1)	0.053 (1.06)	0.171 (0.557)	0.016(1)
H2a: Experience → Teaching merits	0.765 (25.81***)	0.529 (9.44***)	0.837 (25.87***)	0.033(1)	0.734 (16.48***)	0.805 (23.97***)	0.311(1)
H2b: Experience → Research merits	0.091 (3.20***)	-0.069 (2.28**)	0.084 (1.40)	0.009 (1)	0.064 (1.73)	0.136 (3.07***)	0.029(1)
H2c: Experience → Management merits	0.241 (9.72***)	0.172 (6.71***)	0.010 (0.25)	0.001(1)	0.244 (7.80***)	0.229 (5.43***)	0.001(1)
H3a: Teaching merits → Satisfaction	-0.076 (1.57)	-0.013 (0.28)	-0.241 (2.30**)	0.032(1)	-0.148 (2.84***)	0.052 (0.577)	0.007(1)
H3b: Research merits → Satisfaction	0.053 (1.51)	0.025 (0.61)	0.152 (2.25**)	0.247(1)	0.067 (1.56)	0.034 (0.83)	0.064(1)
H3c: Management merits → Satisfaction	0.083 (2.64***)	0.118 (3.33***)	-0.155 (2.37**)	0.001(1)	0.127 (3.23***)	-0.171 (1.84)	0.003(1)

Table 7. Contextual analysis by contractual tie and gender.
** Significant relationship at level 0.01
* Significant relationship at level 0.05

5. Discussion of results

This study presents a conceptual path model for understanding the relationship between the experience of academic staff members and students' satisfaction. In addition, it analyses the indirect relationship between experience and satisfaction through academic staff performance, measured in terms of merits in teaching, research and management. According to the results, there is no significant direct relationship between the experience of the academic staff and students' satisfaction. This result runs contrary to the popular idea that the more experience in teaching the academic staff member has, the better the lectures are. Many reasons can explain this finding, one of the most well-known of which is probably burnout on the part of the academic members of staff. However, in their systematic literature review of the burnout phenomenon in university teaching staff,

Watts and Robertson (2011) concluded that younger staff members present greater emotional exhaustion than their older colleagues. Therefore, we cannot safely say that there is a direct cause-effect relationship between experience and students' satisfaction, so the first hypothesis is rejected.

The results are consistent for the second hypothesis. The greater the experience of the academic staff member, the more likely they are to obtain merits in teaching, research and management. The time factor is obviously the explanation for this conclusive causality effect. The fact that the three merits can be obtained based on a time range (five-year terms for teaching merits and six-year terms for research merits) or on points accumulated over a certain period of time (for management merits) explains this robust relationship. Therefore, the second hypothesis is accepted.

The third hypothesis is partially accepted. Of the three sub-hypotheses only one of them is slightly significant. For the whole sample, there is no significant evidence that academic staff members with a higher number of teaching and research merits generate greater satisfaction among their students. Similar to the first hypothesis, many uncontrolled determinants could explain these results and again they run contrary to the popular idea that the academic staff members with a greater performance (in terms of merits) are the ones that are most appreciated by their students in terms of satisfaction.

Last, the group analysis shown in Table 7 illustrates that there are significant differences when the model is analysed based on a particular subgroup of the sample, principally according to the contractual tie of the academic staff member with the university, but also depending on gender.

6. Conclusions

Previous analyses have led to a set of both theoretical and practical conclusions, some of them related.

From a theoretical perspective, one main conclusion can be drawn based on two findings. The first is that seniority alone is not enough to show students' satisfaction. There is no significant impact between experience and students' satisfaction. The staff members that have accumulated more teaching are not the most preferred by students. However, some differences arise when this relationship is controlled by the contractual tie of the academic staff. In the specific case of the civil servant staff, the relationship becomes significant but negative.

The second finding emerges from the analysis of the path between teaching merits and students' satisfaction. According to Boardman and Ponomariov (2007), academic staff CVs are mainly research focused, leading to the research activity occupying most of their time. In the same line, Berbegal-Maribent et al. (2018) conclude that the academics with the best research CVs abandon their teaching responsibilities along their career. However, according to our results, this conclusion is only valid when it is restricted to non-civil servant staff. Several determinants might explain this behaviour. One possible factor is the recent restructuring of the Spanish public university towards a model based on excellence in research (Garcia-Berro et al., 2016), meaning that young academic staff, who are mainly contracted as non-civil servants, have pushed to prioritize research over teaching compared to the older academic staff who are mainly contracted as civil servants. Therefore, from a theoretical perspective, the main conclusion is that considering academic staff as a homogenous whole implies missing relevant information due to the diversity of the academic staff that coexist in the public university system. The contractual tie with the university and the gender of the academic staff members can determine their motivation and performance within the university.

From a practical perspective, three further findings are noteworthy. First, seniority impacts strongly on teaching merits due to the measurement system in the university. Every five years most members of staff receive a reward, regardless of any consideration of the quality of their teaching. Seniority also impacts on management merits, which also makes sense if we consider that to be promoted to certain positions there are some requirements that only can be achieved after a certain time working in the university. These results should make policy-makers reflect on whether the three merits fulfil their initial motivating function of spurring academic staff to improve their performance. It would seem that rather than a recognition of the quality of their teaching performance they are simply an automatic bonus every fixed period of time, especially in the case of teaching merits.

Second, seniority also impacts on research merits albeit to a lesser degree, with the findings showing that some staff members are involved in research but other avoid their research responsibility. This is the case of a great number of professionals who have no intention of progressing in their academic career despite having a full-time contract with the university. The university should have mechanisms to control these specific behaviours as tools to motivate the academic staff to focus their efforts on the university.

Third, in terms of management, the comparative analysis by gender shows that men are significantly more active. This difference in behaviour can also be detected in the relationship between management merits and satisfaction. For both male and female academic staff the relationship is significant but with contrary results. For male academic staff the relationship is positive, while for female academic staff it is negative. Therefore, since women are increasingly present in the Catalan public university system there should be more mechanisms to enable a better balance in this sense.

The conclusions of this research must be interpreted with caution. Although it is based on a large representative sample, the authors are aware that the study might have certain limitations. First, the sample is based on a single university, which makes extrapolating the results to other universities difficult. Second, the authors limited the analysis to undergraduate degrees, which could explain why research merits do not impact on students' satisfaction. However, these limitations provide avenues for future research such as carrying out similar studies in other universities and analysing differences when comparing bachelor's degrees and master's studies.

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Company philosophy and its reputation through an analysis of the MERCO ranking

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ABSTRACT

Social responsibility has been incorporated as a fundamental aspect in the structuring of large organizations. It is inevitable from a communicative and social interpretation perspective of organizations, not to observe them as socially incorporated entities and active agents in society. In the last two decades there has been not only an advance in the theoretical conceptualization of social responsibility, but also a normative and strategic design of the implementation of SR in companies. In the present investigation, a comparative study is presented that analyzes the development and execution of Social Responsibility in Spanish and Mexican companies. For this, the index based on Corporate Reputation Corporate Monitoring (MERCO Ranking) will be taken as a basis, selecting those considered as the ten best companies positioned in Spain and Mexico. The objective of the study is to determine the coherence of the MERCO Reputation Index with the theoretical concept of social responsibility. As well as determining the real role of the SR in the organizational philosophy and the materialization of it.

1. Theoretically frame

Due to its importance, we must determine what we understand for Social Responsibility. We will use the interpretation of the concept, understanding that "social responsibility has its roots not in the simple balance between the economic and the environmental, but in an authentic ethical conduct" (Cortina Orts, 2010).

Starting in the 2000s, the concept of organizational social responsibility or corporate social responsibility is increasingly integrated into the actions to be achieved through comprehensive communication and relations with the public, from a strategic perspective of organizations, in particular in Spain, Brazil, Mexico and Colombia (Rebeil, Arévalo and Moreno, 2013).

The current importance of communication for organizations lies in providing a global vision that allows them greater competitiveness and the support of the public, as well as greater agility to adapt to continuous changes through generating fruitful relationships around organizations with the same identity but also, with interest Grupos around the world. Thus, in the evolution of integral communication for organizations, it can be seen that there are four phases that go from the functional to the contingent approach and from the attention of internal needs to the effective management of change.

Currently, business communication seeks to consolidate the image, reputation, credibility, trust, and therefore the global competitiveness of organizations, in a highly demanding environment and at unprecedented hyper-speed. The reputation of organizations - the harmony between identity and image consolidated over time - is the product of various previously planned strategies and actions that take the analysis of their different audiences as a priority so that effective communication occurs (Villafañe, 2004) and have been increased in their impact, through the integration of new technologies. MK Online –MK Digital, cookies, artificial intelligence, SEO traffic, leads, SEM, social networks such as Instagram, Facebook, Twitter, stand out among others.

The reputation of an organization, therefore, can be produced through a solid axiological dimension (corporate values and their compliance), committed corporate behavior (compliance with commitments), and proactivity in reputational management (performance beyond what is mandatory) (Villafañe, 2004). Besides, the reputation of an organization is not only given by fulfilling its objectives in communication, but by the business ones; since as much as we take care of the communication aspects, we must also fulfill the objectives of the company, in terms of economic results. (Cancelo-Barquero

2018). Derived from the above, comprehensive communication for organizations when using digital social networks, has a platform to show the identity of the organization, project its image with a positive profile of notoriety, and position it with a positive and increasingly solid reputation online. Particularly with the use of digital social networks and the conversations they generate (Pardo, 2010), comprehensive communication for organizations has increased their reach, making them a fundamental tool for achieving objectives. This is because organizations increasingly have interest Grupos that make up micro-segmented audiences that are difficult to characterize due to their particular different needs.

1.1. Business ethics

Once the applied concept of Social Responsibility has been defined, it is necessary to expand the theoretical context including the related aspect of business ethics. In so much business ethics is united and associated with social responsibility; which does not exclude achieving good results for the company or its shareholders.

On business ethics, a great number of theoretical documents have been written, not only in the academic field but also in business. What is Business Ethics?; as an approximation to the subject, let's review a definition by Adela Cortina, who writes that:

"... ethics is a type of knowledge that seeks to guide human action in a rational sense; that is to say, ethics wants us to act rationally. Unlike the preferably technical, contemplative knowledge, to which it does not matter in principle to guide action, ethics is essentially, knowledge to act in a rational way "(Cortina, 1994)

From the above, it can be concluded that, contrary to the instrumentalist vision of the organization that establishes profitability as the ultimate goal of a company, there is the non-utilitarian approach, where ethics is integrated as an inherent element, in such a way that business ethics looms as the way an organization recognizes its role in society and is willing to provide good examples with its behavior; that is, business ethics is an end in itself and not a way to generate profits.

The United Nations Global Compact, among its principles, establishes that companies must fight corruption in all its forms; However, in the last decades, the phenomenon of corruption has spread widely, encompassing all kinds of organizations (public, private and third sector) leaving in its wake serious financial, ethical, social and, in many cases, reputational damages. (UN, 2013)

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For some reason, Business Ethics is, in the 21st century, a trend to which organizations of all kinds continually join in, it is a subject that increasingly attracts attention in the academic world and is a fundamental factor in the formation of future leaders.

Undoubtedly, one of the features that characterize postmodern[1] societies is the great influence that organizations exert on daily life, on the subsistence and quality of life of the individuals that make them up; In this sense, as Chiavenato analyzes:

"The world we live in is an institutionalized society made up of organizations. All activities related to the production of goods (products) or the provision of services (specialized activities) are planned, coordinated, directed, and controlled by the organizations.... people's lives depend closely on organizations and these depend on the work of those organizations. first… people are born, grow, learn, live, work, have fun, and interact within organizations" (Chiavenato, 2000).

Hence, it can be argued that companies, especially in 21st-century societies, have a great capacity to influence the values and behavior of individuals by establishing clear criteria of conduct among their various stakeholders; It is for this reason that, at present, the phenomenon of corruption is considered a serious problem not only because it weakens the sense of integrity and ethics among the members of a community, but also because it has become an obstacle for the political and social development of the countries; also, it is "a threat to the economic growth and reputation of the organizations" (Duque, Y., M. Cardona & J. Rendón). Ethics in the short and long term are synonymous with the success within companies. (Cancelo-Barquero, 2018).

Now, if in recent years they have been particularly difficult for the business sector in Latin America and the world in general, the current economic crisis caused by the Coronavirus has had and will have serious consequences, affecting companies of all kinds, as they have had to face and will face a very complicated situation losing of competitiveness and increase in production costs. This situation becomes relevant for this research project, given that the consulting firm PricewaterhouseCoopers (PwC) indicates that:

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[1] According to Bauman "The term postmodernity renders accurately the defining traits of the social condition that emerged throughout the affluent countries of Europe and European descent in the 20Th Century, and took its present shape in the second half of the century" (Bauman, A sociological Theory of Postmodernity, 1996).

"… In times of crisis companies try to reduce expenses. This measure, which in principle seems adequate, can have serious consequences, because if the reduction in expenses is not carried out in a planned manner, there is a risk that part of this reduction in expenditure will be carried out to the detriment of internal control mechanisms. Consequently, the ability of companies to prevent and detect irregularities that eventually become unethical behavior is reduced. Indeed, the vulnerability of companies to raise their corruption rates in times of crisis is related to the weakening of their control mechanisms "(PricewaterhouseCoopers, 2009).

According to the Administrative Development and Auditing Secretariat in Mexico (SECODAM, 2008), six criteria allow an organization to apply Business Ethics: (1) the definition of its organizational culture; (2) the elaboration of a Code of Conduct; (3) the implementation of an internal and external communication strategy; (4) the development of a Corporate Government; (5) the application of community support policies; and (6) the commitment of its managers. Along these same lines, the Global Compact, as well as Transparency International and the International Forum of Business Leaders[2] (IBLF) propose three dimensions to comply with the principle of fighting corruption, namely, internal action, external and collective. For this project, only internal action is of interest. Although it will be explained in depth later, it is also necessary to establish that this type of action, in general, states that organizations must: (1) foster a culture of Business Ethics to prevent and face corruption; (2) adopt a Code of Ethics; (3) develop internal control mechanisms; (4) establish disciplinary measures to reinforce anti-corruption criteria and procedures; and (5) integrate and train its employees to ensure compliance with the Code of Ethics.

1.2. Corporate Reputation Business Monitoring (MERCO Ranking)

MERCO's analysis has become an important instrument in the strategic management of companies' values and competitive elements. We mean that MERCO was born on the university roof of the Complutense University of Madrid and from the hand of Professor Justo Villafañe at the beginning of 1999. What was initially a research project turned into a business development measuring corporate reputation.

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[2] International Business Leaders Forum (IBLF) is an international non-profit organization created to offer a platform that allows new entrepreneurs to come up with ideas for good practices, not only to reduce the risk of corruption but also to promote measures that help fighting it, in society.

After more than a decade of measurement, Merco has been established as a benchmark monitoring that reveals information on three essential factors in management: transparency, methodological rigor, and independence.

Currently, the Merco Ranking measures Corporate Responsibility in Spain, Argentina, Brazil, Bolivia, Colombia, Chile, Ecuador, Mexico, and Peru.

2. Methodology

The present investigation gives an account of a comparative study in which the development and execution of Social Responsibility in Spanish and Mexican companies is analyzed.

The objective of the research was to determine the existing coherence in the MERCO Reputation Index by comparing the theoretical concept of corporate social responsibility and its real role within the organizational philosophy of the sample analyzed; and also its materialization through concrete actions.

The study was carried out on a sample of 20 companies, 10 from Mexico and 10 from Spain, which were the ones with the best reputation in 2017, according to the index based on Corporate Reputation Business Monitoring (MERCO Ranking).

| España	México
Inditex	Coca Cola
Mercadona	Bimbo
Santander	Grupo Modelo
Repsol	Google
BBVA	P&G
Telefónica	PepsiCo
Caixabank	Femsa
Mapfre	Grupo Carso
Iberdrola	Microsoft
Once	Apple

Table 1. Companies analyzed

The research was carried out during February 2018 through the content analysis of the website of the sample of Mexican and Spanish companies, first identifying the presence

or absence of the following categories, both in their definitions of social responsibility as in the actions they carry out: 1) presence of four values in the organizational philosophy and/or in the actions of the analyzed brands (honesty, justice, respect, and openness); 2) type of social responsibility (economic, social and ecological); and secondly, through a comparative and coherence analysis between its narrative and its corporate social responsibility programs that are communicated through this means of communication.

3. Results

Among the ten best-positioned companies in the MERCO ranking in Spain, we can consider that the majority belong to the service sector, only two of them to the commercial sector and one to the third sector. These companies are included in the fields of banking, energy, information technology, holding, and sale of products of frequent consumption.
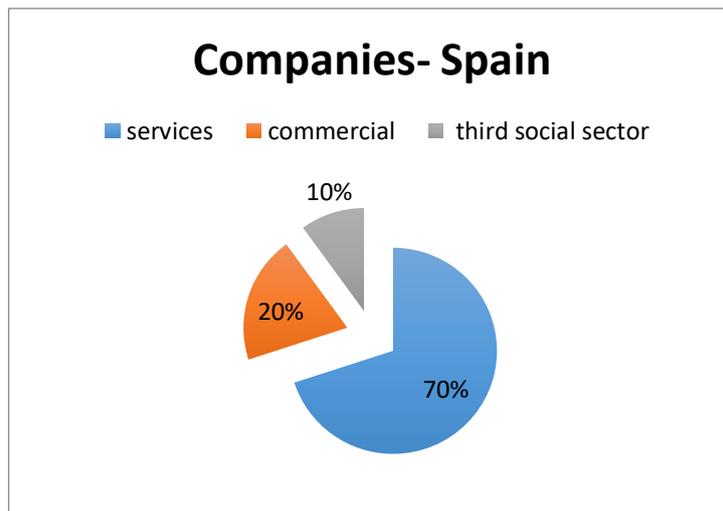

Figure 1. Sector of Analyzed Companies- Spain.

The list of companies is as follows (in order of positioning in Spain): Inditex, Mercadona, Santander, Repsol, BBVA, Telefónica, Caixabank, Mapfre, Iberdrola and Once.

We must highlight, although we will go on to analyze each of them later, that three of the ten belong to the banking sector, a fairly important consideration, taking into account the reputational and financial crisis that Spain has experienced in recent years.

The Inditex organization, an important Galician holding company made up of well-known brands in Spain such as Massimo Dutti, Zara, Pull & Bear, etc. ranks first in the MERCO ranking. If we analyze its website, this organization contains extensive content regarding the values related to its organizational philosophy, relating them to its messages and

actions, such as honesty (with an internal code of conduct, taxation, action and social capital), respect (towards human rights, workers, and towards the social community), openness (with projects with *Right to Wear*) or justice (social justice).

In the case of Mercadona, the second company in this ranking, they transmit these values of honesty with a quality management program, respect for the community and the environment, openness with food waste management programs, and justice concerning society.
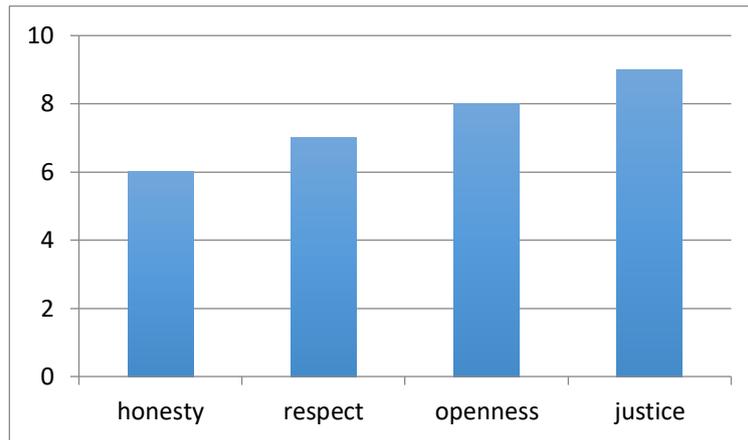
Figure 2. Companies Values - Spain.

The banking sector is represented in three organizations (Banco Santander, BBVA and Caixabank which occupy third, fifth and seventh place, respectively. All three have in common the codes of conduct that they share and are published on their corporate website, as they are related to the bad reputation that banks have developed during the economic crisis. Concerning this value, all three omit the value of justice (it is not even named). On the other hand, regarding respect, they show their support for policies for the improvement of the environment, as well as respect for suppliers and customers. What distinguishes them is the way they carry out the different actions of the CSR programs, although they all project it through specialized reports. All three develop these programs and they have foundations and Social Work: Banco Santander Foundation, BBVA Foundation, and La Caixa Social Work Foundation, the latter considered a national and international benchmark.
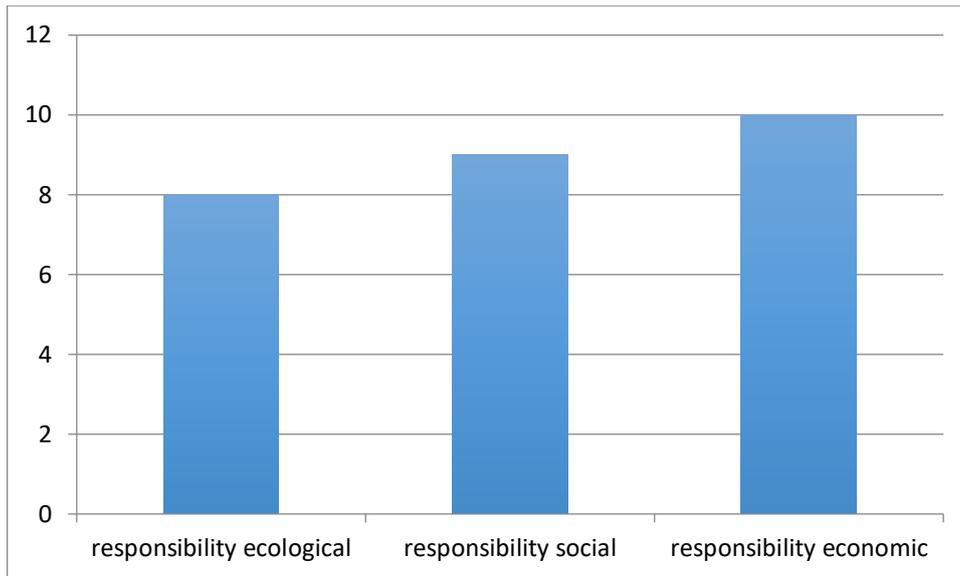
Figure 3. Company Values – Spain.

Regarding the case of Mexico, we indicate that the list of companies according to their position in MERCO is as follows: Coca-Cola, Bimbo, Grupo Modelo, Google, P&G, PepsiCo, Femsa, Grupo Carso, Microsoft, and Apple.


Figure 4. Analyzed Companies Sector Chart - México.

In Mexico's analysis, Merco places five organizations related to food and beverages as the top ten companies, being the leader of the evaluation Coca Cola, followed by Bimbo and Grupo Modelo (a company that is distinguished by its alcoholic products). The rest of the corporations belong to the IT and web services sector; we also find service holdings and a hygiene and cleaning products company.

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The companies that make up the MERCO monitoring in the Aztec country agree on the results of how the companies account for them, generating Grupos of similar behaviors among the best positioned in the ranking.

We find the values of honesty, respect, openness, and justice regarding its organizational philosophy, its actions, or messages.
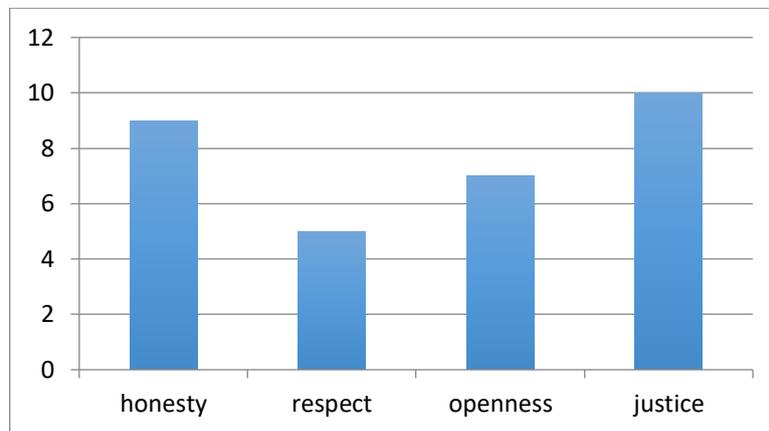

Figure 5. Companies Values - Mexico.

Out of the ten companies positioned, a total of nine refers to their organizational honesty as aimed at the external and internal public. Only Apple which is positioned in the last place, is the only one that does not refer to the value of honesty either directly or indirectly. Regarding the value of respect, five of the top ten indicate that they have the value of respect but do not indicate how they materialize it or the orientation of it. Among these, is the one positioned as the best: Coca Cola. Three of the multinationals do not include respect as a value in their philosophy as they communicate it. Only PepsiCo (6th place in the ranking), Grupo Carso (8th place in the ranking), and Apple (last place in the top ten) make an explicit indication of respect, targeting users, and different audiences. Concerning to openness, six of the ten companies allude directly to social openness and their interest in getting involved in the environment through different actions such as unions with organizations, their foundations, etc. Three companies do no allude to openness as a value and it coincides that they are the last three positioned (Grupo Carso, Microsoft, and Apple). Only Femsa refers to the fact that it contemplates the opening but does not indicate how it is applied. Regarding justice, half of the companies positioned make no allusion to this value in their philosophy, among them the two best positioned: Coca Cola and Bimbo, (first and second place respectively); four of the companies, position justice as a singular value in its organizational development (Grupo Modelo,

P&G, PepsiCo, and Grupo Carso). Finally Femsa refers to the value but does not make clear indications of how it is applied.

Regarding the types of social responsibility exercised by companies (ecological, social, and economic), the data indicates that eight of the ten positioned indicate clear actions related to ecological responsibility; only Google and Microsoft do not allude to this aspect. Regarding e actions of responsibility in the social field, six companies engage in social involvement. On the contrary, Grupo Modelo, Google, Microsoft, and Apple show no signs of actions aimed at social responsibility. Finally, regarding financial responsibility, the framework is divided between the five companies that indicate specific actions and those that do not show any application scenario, such as Microsoft, Apple, Grupo Modelo, Google, and P&G.
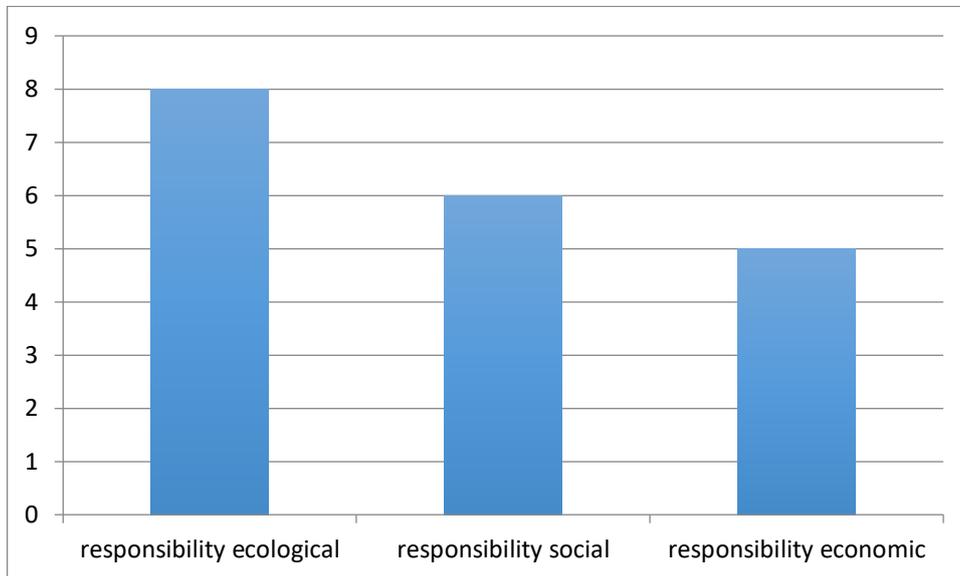
Figure 6. Corporate Responsibility Chart - México.

4. Discussion and Conclusions

The results of Merco's analysis in Spain and Mexico show notable differences both in the positioned companies and the aspects that lead them to that ranking in social corporate reputation.

In the Spanish case there is a wide sector of companies representing the financial sector such as banks and insurance companies, which is surprising in the context of the crisis of the financial sector and its damaged reputation manifested in the media. It is not surprising the position of Inditex for its size and strategic development not only at the national level but also internationally. In the last five years, this multinational has considerably

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expanded its orientation in social responsibility and reputation management. Like Repsol or Iberdrola's incursion, which in their sector represents the forefront in the management of social responsibility. Finally, it is important to allude to Mercadona in second place, a company that despite its success in the market and the data released by Merco is highly questioned by its internal public and in some media.

Mexico shows us a spectrum marked by beverage brands and technology. Of the ten companies located in the best positions, only four are national. The incursion of multinationals exclusively oriented to the Internet such as Google is striking, a company that in Europe is having wide criticism from the institutions of the European Union. In the companies analyzed in Mexico, it is shown that responsibility is made visible through concrete actions aimed at the vector areas of Social Responsibility such as the environment, social and economic. The values on business philosophy and ethics are largely suspended.

The comparative analysis between countries allows us to see that although there are companies with a presence in both nations, there is no coincidence in the ranking, presenting high disparity from the companies to the sectors to which they belong. In Spain, sectors such as banking and companies such as Mercadona, appear to be very well positioned, which makes the ranking stand out from the general public and media perception. Seeing that, it is necessary to consider what aspects guide both specters. It is also noteworthy that in the Spanish ranking the majority are national companies as opposed to the Mexican one where 60% are foreign multinationals, with clear US influence. In Mexican companies, like in Spain, social responsibility is an action in itself, while the exercise and integration of values in the Corporate philosophy and ethics are more diffuse and less perceptible. This last assessment is very remarkable in the Mexican case, since the companies that operate in the country are based on their philosophy of values as a guideline for internal communication and relationship with the environment. Regarding the implementation of business values and the exercise of activities consistent with them, there is a clear evolutionary need that commits companies to establish values oriented to business ethics as an important intangible value for both the organizational and public sectors. al. Regarding the direct exercise of the social responsibility materialized in the three vectors, substantial progress is shown in line with the contextual, legal, and also academic-professional development.

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