

This new issue of INNOVAR Journal comes on the scene after a series of announcements about budget cuts to funding for the National System of Science, Technology and Innovation<sup>1</sup>, due to the crisis affecting the economy and the domestic public budget. This condition is not unique to our country. Southern Europe countries have seen their funding for science and technology reduced after the crisis at the end of the last decade, causing a deep impact on research whose consequences persist nowadays<sup>2</sup>. Such situation may also be occurring in Latin America<sup>3</sup>. Reality contradicts public speeches by Government leaders and politicians who constantly point out their indisputable "commitment" to education, scientific knowledge and innovation. It is also an evident contrast with alleged public policies intended to improve education, social progress and equity, all of which require a great deal of innovation. Nevertheless, research has been the first category to receive less investment.

Currently, there is a strong tension between what is said and what is done in terms of research and innovation. This is true inside and outside universities and research centers. Moreover, this involves both researchers and research managers (university governing bodies), as well as politicians and public leaders. Another part of the tension comes in applied research carried out in the business world. Besides the constant claims for the profitability and the social and economic impact of research, budget cuts add now to discourage the already little-appreciated research work.

From this space for disseminating the results of academic research activity, we call for the different actors to seriously and rigorously think about the path of quality research and education for our country. Rhetoric is not useful when it comes to promoting and/or consolidating science, technology and innovation. These budgetary reductions of today will continue projecting the delays of the past into the future.

<sup>1</sup> <http://www.eltiempo.com/estilo-de-vida/ciencia/rechazo-a-reduccion-de-presupuesto-para-la-ciencia/16235196>.

<sup>2</sup> [http://elpais.com/elpais/2015/01/21/ciencia/1421839651\\_074890.html](http://elpais.com/elpais/2015/01/21/ciencia/1421839651_074890.html).

<sup>3</sup> [http://internacional.elpais.com/internacional/2014/12/03/actualidad/1417562044\\_908650.html](http://internacional.elpais.com/internacional/2014/12/03/actualidad/1417562044_908650.html).

The 58th issue of INNOVAR Journal includes eleven (11) articles, distributed in four (4) of our traditional sections. As it has been on through the last eight years, the diversity of countries our authors come from and their multiple collaborations, make of INNOVAR a world-class journal that reaches international audiences.

In the section corresponding to Strategy and Organizations, three (3) research articles have been published.

Professors Raquel Orcos and Sergio Palomas, of the universities of Navarra and Zaragoza, respectively, collaborate with their work entitled *Liberalization of the Banking Sector and Persistence of Organizational Forms*. In this research, a study of the Spanish banking sector is carried out in order to assess if changes in the regulations that liberalized the sector, influenced the transformation of former strategies and organizational forms that banks, savings accounts and credit unions used to have. The work uses a quantitative methodological approach to assess the strategic dimensions of the companies and define the implications of this change for organizational forms. All the entities that operated in the Spanish banking sector during 1992-2008 were evaluated. The main outcomes of this research state that there are important differences in the strategy followed by banks, savings accounts and credit unions despite the liberalization of the sector, which would have supposed a greater organizational homogeneity in their strategies and organizational forms.

Magdalena Cordobés Madueño and Pilar Soldevila García, Professors of the universities Loyola Andalucía and Pompeu Fabra, Spain, introduce the article *Management Control in Inter-organizational Relationships: The Case of Franchises*. This research aims at contributing to understanding the way in which relations among companies impact the instruments and tools for management control. It discusses the case of franchises (franchisor and franchisee), showing how relations between them imply using different tools for management control, both quantitative and qualitative. Results confirm, based on the model designed by Van der Meer-Kooistra and Vosselman (2000), the existence of patterns based on bureaucracy and trust in this type of relations.

The third paper of this section is entitled *Self-referencing as a Communication Strategy of the Quindío Coffee Growers Committee Organization*; the result of a research performed by María Cristina Ocampo Villegas, of Universidad de la Sabana, Colombia. This work discusses the topic of organizational communication, especially the concept of self-referencing. The grounds and object of this study are composed of the communications of the Committee of Coffee Growers of Quindío and the affiliated growers. By carrying out a descriptive research with a scope of almost twenty years and using a deep analysis of speeches and interviews, this work concludes that the self-referencing strategy reinforced different values in coffee growers, participating in the process to build cultural reality which had an impact on the positioning and strengthening of union processes in the region.

In this current issue, our section of Business Ethics and Social Responsibility consists of four (4) academic collaborations by international Professors.

The first paper in this section is an international collaboration between Chilean and Spanish Professors Carolina Nicolas-Alarcón, Leslie Valenzuela-Fernández, Alexis Gutiérrez-Caques and Jaime Gil-Lafuente, associated to the University of Chile, the Santo Tomas of Chile University and Barcelona University. The work entitled *Business Ethics Sensitivity* aims at identifying the relevant variables that could influence managers' ethical sensitivity. This work initially presents the contextual necessity for more ethical behavior in business, and it sufficiently explores and systematizes the literature on the topic, characterizing the increasing presence of contributions of this type in academic journals. Based on a quantitative and explanatory model of the construct "ethical sensitivity," an empirical work is developed with data collected from surveys to 143 Chilean managers, which then allows to contrast a group of hypothesis. This work shows that out of eleven (11) independent variables that were contrasted, only relativism is associated in a negative way, while the others present a positive and meaningful relation with ethical sensitivity.

From the University of Santiago de Compostela, Spain, researcher Ángeles Pereira and Professor Xavier Vence participate in this issue with the work *Environmental Policy*

*Instruments and Eco-innovation: An Overview of Recent Studies*. This research is a critical review of 40 scientific articles that analyze the instruments of environmental policies that promote eco-innovation. This work describes the most significant literature and findings on technological changes in environment aspects. Both the empirical and theoretical studies that were analyzed help to understand the role of market mechanisms in the impulse of these innovations. Improvement options regarding this topic are also identified.

From Universidad de Porto, Portugal, researchers Manuel Castelo Branco and Isabel Baptista participate in this section with the paper entitled *Commitment to CSR in the United Nations Global Compact*. This research discusses the commitment to Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) in Europe, after observing the (non) compliance by European companies in spreading the information on the United Nations Global Compact. For that purpose, a sample of 3,481 companies classified into five groups of European countries was analyzed. The main conclusions state, among other aspects, that companies in Nordic countries are more committed to CSR, compared to companies in Western Europe and those of the East European Bloc.

Finally, in this section for Business Ethics and Social Responsibility, we present the paper *University Social Responsibility: Empirical Study on the Reliability of a Set of Indicators for Corporate Governance*, written by Professors Montserrat Núñez, Inmaculada Alonso and Carolina Pontones, from Universidad de Castilla La Mancha in Spain. This work studies the role of some corporate government indicators in the process of accountability from the point of view of University Social Responsibility (USR). The authors are especially concerned about the reliability of indicators to measure the impact on organizations of USR. Through an empirical study, data was collected by using a questionnaire targeting experts in this topic who worked for Spanish universities. The answers provided by a group of 18 experts allow to identify that the most important characteristic to confirm the reliability of such indicators is the verifiability, while the least influencing matter is the image (representation).

In the Marketing section for this issue, we have included two (2) research papers.

The first contribution is entitled *Quality and Perceived Value in the Transport of Goods in Spain and its Importance for Customer Segmentation*, written by Spanish Professors Irene Gil, Gloria Berenguer, María Eugenia Ruiz and Santiago Ospina, from University of Valencia. Their research was carried out in companies that operate in the international transport of goods in Spain. The objective was to classify the targeting ability of perceived value for companies in this sector and present a conceptual system to measure service quality and the perceived value, in the sector being researched. The sample included 205 companies which, after being analyzed through an empirical study, led to conclude that there is a direct relation between quality and perceived value.

The second paper, is an international collaboration between Spain and Colombia. Professors John Cardozo, Bernabé Hernandis and Nélide Ramírez, from the National University of Colombia and the Polytechnic University of Valencia, present their research paper entitled *An Approach to the Categorization of Products Systems: Consumers Use and Experience as Configuring Elements*. This research intended to state the way in which use and experience influence product design processes. Eight (8) groups were proposed to describe the forms of interaction of consumers with the products by using the product system model. Based on 57 surveys to experts in the area of design, the level of involvement from the experience and use in the characterization of products systems was determined.

Closing our current issue the section Contributions to Research and Teaching embodies two (2) works.

Under the title *Design and Validation of a Questionnaire for Measuring the Perception on the Effectiveness of Using Active Participation Methodologies. The Case of Project-based Learning (PBL) in the Accounting Teaching*, Professors of the University of Seville, Carrasco, Donoso, Duarte-Atoche, Hernández and López, introduce an interesting instrument to measure the effectiveness of a strategy for active learning (based on projects). Authors not

only provide the instrument, which comprises 25 items, but additionally demonstrate its application on a group of 292 students of Management and Business Administration from the University of Seville, who took Accounting and Accounting Advanced Analysis courses. Observation was conducted for a period of four years by applying quantitative methods (factor analysis). Considering the content of items, the identified constructs were: usefulness for learning, decisions, teamwork, communication, management and information.

Our last paper, also from the University of Seville, written by Professors Jiménez-Caballero, Camúñez, González-Rodríguez and De Fuentes, is named *Determinants of University Students' Academic Performance in European Higher Education*. The purpose of this research was to analyze and quantify the influence that certain institutional and personal factors have on students' scores in the program or degree on Finances and Accounting. Through traditional techniques in Statistics, a sample of 572 students for the period (school year) 2009-2010 was studied. Results show different aspects about the lack of importance of gender, the importance of admission scores and the order of preference for admitting students, on the academic performance obtained and the efficiency in the use of educational and monetary resources.

We hope our readers find these works suggestive and useful. Moreover, we recognize the effort made by our authors in understanding the various fields of management and the study of organizations through research. For these reasons, we confirm we are absolutely convinced about the need for adequate funding for academic research, not only in Colombia but also in international scenarios.

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