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Perceptions of undergraduate students of a business school regarding their learning in law courses

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Abstract

The objective of this research is to describe the perceptions of university students of programs attached to a faculty of business sciences about their learning experience in the framework of subjects with legal or juridical content. The study was framed in the analytical empirical paradigm, the quantitative approach of descriptive level and the non-experimental-transversal deductive method. The sample consisted of 420 people from three professional programs: business administration, international commerce and public accounting of a public university in the city of Cúcuta in Colombia. A Likert-type questionnaire with 21 questions associated with four dimensions of analysis was applied as an instrument: understanding of legal concepts, aptitudes for the application of legal knowledge, motivation for learning legal knowledge and relevance of legal knowledge for professional training. The data collected were analyzed through descriptive statistical processes. The results allow inferring that, in general, university students positively perceive their learning within the framework of subjects with legal or juridical content, although a lower, but not irrelevant, percentage of participants deviate from this trend. It is concluded that the motivation associated with teachers' teaching practices and beliefs about the usefulness of this knowledge seems to positively influence their self-perception of learning and comprehension abilities and skills.

Keywords: *perceptions; university students; learning; legal subjects; business sciences.*

Resumen

El objetivo de esta investigación fue describir las percepciones de estudiantes universitarios de programas adscritos a una facultad de ciencias empresariales sobre su experiencia de aprendizaje en el

marco de asignaturas con contenido jurídico o legal. El estudio estuvo enmarcado en el paradigma empírico analítico, el enfoque cuantitativo de nivel descriptivo y el método deductivo no experimental-transversal. La muestra estuvo integrada por 420 personas de tres programas profesionales: administración de empresas, comercio internacional y contaduría pública de una universidad pública de la ciudad de Cúcuta en Colombia. Se aplicó como instrumento un cuestionario tipo Likert con 21 preguntas asociadas a cuatro dimensiones de análisis: comprensión de conceptos jurídicos, aptitudes frente a las aplicaciones de saberes jurídicos, motivación hacia el aprendizaje de saberes jurídicos y relevancia de saberes jurídicos para la formación profesional. Los datos recolectados se analizaron a través de procesos de estadística descriptiva. Los resultados permiten inferir que en general los estudiantes universitarios perciben su aprendizaje de manera positiva en el marco de las asignaturas con contenido jurídico o legal, aunque un porcentaje inferior de participantes, pero no irrelevante, se apartan de esta tendencia. Se concluye que la motivación asociada a las prácticas de enseñanza de los docentes y las creencias sobre la utilidad de estos conocimientos, parecen influir positivamente en su autopercepción de aprendizaje y capacidades de comprensión y aptitudes.

Palabras clave: percepciones; estudiantes universitarios; aprendizaje; asignaturas jurídicas; ciencias empresariales

INTRODUCTION

The sciences of law have specific characteristics in terms of epistemological foundations, objects of study, methods, knowledge structures and practices (Maharg, 2007; Zakhartsev and Salnikov, 2018; Joglekar, 2020; Bahadur and Zhang, 2021). The teaching of law, that is, legal norms and legal institutions is oriented, particularly, to people who pretend to be lawyers, although other professionals who, without pretending to be jurisconsults, must also integrate contents of a legal nature to their knowledge structure because they are relevant to their work activity (Braye *et al.*, 2006; Morris, 2007).

This is normal in many university programs, for example, business administration, bachelor's degree in education, public accounting, and social work, among others. In these kinds of professional programs, subjects of a legal nature are incorporated into the curricular plans (Doorey, 2008; López, 2015). Indeed, the curricula include courses in labor law or commercial law in careers such as business administration, international trade, public accounting, and others; as well as education law in education degrees, human rights and family law in social work or teacher training, or administrative law for public administrators. Many universities, therefore, offer short courses and even postgraduate degrees in law for non-lawyers.

From these initial clarifications, three fundamental points emerge to guide the interest of the researchers of this study. In the first place, law or legal sciences constitute a broad scenario of knowledge that cuts across other disciplinary or scientific fields because the legal norm aimed at regulation has a full impact on human and social life. Secondly, the urgency for an integral education implies an opening towards knowledge of a legal nature, for example, human rights, which have become a reference for several university programs. Finally, legal knowledge and expertise are found in subjects graduated from law programs materialized in discourses and knowledge characterized by an abstract language specific to this science that is not easily understood by the common citizen (Teubner and Bourdieu, 2000; Dugalich, Alontseva and Ermoshin, 2018; Pezzetta, 2016; Cucco, 2016).

The literature on the topic of teaching law or topics of a legal nature to non-lawyers evidence that this constitutes a long-standing debate that is located in the pedagogical, and therefore in the formative practices of teachers, although there are not numerous studies. Indeed, there is a considerable amount of research related to legal or legal education (Balsam *et al.*, 2017; Blengino *et al.*, 2019; Garzón and Romero, 2018; Mila *et al.*, 2022), but few focused on non-lawyer professionals. In Latin America, it is not possible to identify research related to this object of study, which legitimizes the interest of researchers in the topic addressed here.

The question could be summarized in this way -with no intention of reducing the problem-: are the teaching practices that are traditionally implemented in law school settings adequate and relevant in other professional training settings (Skawarok, 1995; Braye *et al.*, 2006; Morris, 2007; Braye *et al.*, 2005). This is not a minor issue, since teaching and learning in the framework of a comprehensive and meaningful education will always be a matter of interest for educators and universities, especially if the role of these institutions as scenarios of mediation and orientation towards dialectical, holistic, systematic and critical thinking is recognized (Pieper, 1964; Zabalza, 2002).

Regarding the research background on this topic, it is possible to cite some works: the study by Morris (2007), focused on students and professionals in Hong Kong, manages to determine that there are deficiencies in the curricular design and teaching practices of lawyers in the framework of the subjects they teach in programs outside the legal science. In another of his publications, Morris (2010) expresses the need to advance empirical and longitudinal studies that allow a better reflection on the issues that originate in the framework of this topic. Another relevant point stated in the literature is that the approach to legal issues requires training processes on general aspects of law, that is, broader conceptual frameworks for a better understanding of the legal norm and legal institutions (Twining, 2018). Likewise, some works argue the need for legal education to be democratized among citizens to overcome the problem of low legal literacy (Grimes, 2021; Twining, 2018; Jones, 1997).

However, the controversy that has been raised also has another side that deserves to be reviewed within the framework of this research: pedagogical and didactic knowledge is specific to professionals who have advanced studies within the faculties of education, that is, those who have been trained in this particular field of knowledge to be teachers, but this is not the case of lawyers. Different authors put their attention to this phenomenon, affirming the need to consider pedagogical/educational knowledge and practice as a fundamental and urgent issue among lawyer teachers as a means to improve their teaching methodologies (González, 2003; Wiratraman, 2019; Maharg, 2007; Rodríguez, 2016).

In turn, the educational sciences are expected to enrich the work of law teachers in pedagogical, didactic and evaluative aspects, without losing or excluding the nature and particularities of the disciplinary and scientific knowledge of law (Silvera *et al.*, 2015; Gómez *et al.*, 2019). Pedagogy, didactics, evaluation and curriculum, although they are central axes within the field of educational sciences, are also transversal lines to other disciplinary fields. The scenario of convergence between these is planning, teaching and comprehensive training (González and Sánchez, 2016). This comprehensive training, which is preceded by the pedagogical act of teaching, is related to an imperative need to train subjects beyond the disciplinary knowledge of the field and, therefore, to consider skills and competencies in cognition, thinking, citizenship, ethics, morals, critical reading and writing, formative and productive research, among others.

This vision of the subject to be trained corresponds to an urgency, in the sense that it is fundamental and peremptory to promote teaching that overcomes the traditional formative structure in higher education institutions: vertical and magisterial, decontextualized, based on contents and subjects, without pedagogical or disciplinary mediation, superficial, based on the grade or qualification, and in the absence of the construction of the 'being' (Scott *et al.*, 2018; Graff, 2003; Lund and Arndt, 2018). The university is called to transform itself and play a leading role in improving formative quality. In that sense, the objective of this research was to describe the perceptions of university students of programs attached to a business faculty about their learning experience in the framework of legal subjects or with legal content.

METHODS AND MATERIALS

The research was based on the empirical-analytical paradigm. Consistent with this, a descriptive quantitative approach, a deductive reasoning method and a non-experimental cross-sectional design were used. The population consisted of 4,500 university students from three professional programs of the School of Business Sciences: Business Administration (N=2,300), International Commerce (N=700) and Public Accounting (N=1,500). The setting of the study corresponded to a public higher

education institution in the city of Medellín. Only those groups that had already taken some type of subject with legal content were considered.

The sample was calculated through the following statistical formula, considering 95% certainty (Z_c) and 5% as the margin of error (E):

$$n = \frac{Z_c^2 \times P \times Q}{E^2 \times (N-1) + Z_c^2 \times P \times Q} \quad (1)$$

Where: $Z_c = 95\%$ or 1.96 is the level of certainty, under the normal curve; $P = 0.5$ is the probability of success; $Q = 0.5$ is the probability of failure; $E = 5\%-0.05$ is the level of error; and $N = 4,500$ is the population.

Thus, the sample consisted of 355 individuals, who had to meet the following inclusion criteria: 1) belong to a university program not related to the field of law, 2) have completed at least one (1) subject with legal or juridical content, and 3) have taken said subject within the period of the last two years counted from the application of the instrument. In the end, the instrument was answered by 420 university students. A 21-question Likert scale questionnaire was applied to the sample, as shown in Table 1:

Table 1: Structure of the Likert scale questionnaire applied: study variables and dimensions

<i>Variable</i>	<i>Dimensions of analysis</i>
Sociodemographic characteristics	Age (1)
	Sex (2)
	Socioeconomic stratum (3)
	Training program (4)
	Semester (5)
	Name of the subjects with legal content taken (6)
Understanding legal concepts	Understanding technical legal language (1, 2, 8)
	Understanding of the legal norms associated with the professional field (3, 8)
	Understanding of institutional structures associated with legal norms (4, 5, 8)
	Understanding of the instances associated with legal norms (4, 5, 8)
	Understanding of the origin of legal norms and their scope (6, 7, 8)
Skills for legal knowledge applications	Skills to perform in professional situations where legal norms are applied (9, 14).
	Skills to solve professional problems where the application of legal norms is required (10, 14).
	Ability to describe and explain concepts or phenomena to which legal rules apply (11, 14).
	Skills for effective reading of legal texts (12, 14).
	Skills for effective writing of legal texts (13, 14).
Motivation towards the learning of legal	Motivation towards learning legal norms and institutions (15, 18).
	Motivation from teaching and teacher didactics (16, 18).
	Motivation towards autonomous learning related to legal norms and

knowledge	institutions (17, 18).
Relevance of legal knowledge to professional training	Relevance for integral formation (19, 22)
	Relevance to professional performance (20, 22)
	Relevance to the exercise of citizenship (21, 22)

Except for the sociodemographic characteristics section, the questionnaire items were designed as statements against which the students had to mark how much they agreed, through the options: strongly agree, somewhat agree, neither agree nor disagree, somewhat disagree and strongly disagree. To ensure the validity and reliability of the instrument, a group of three experts in the field of education was asked to review and evaluate the items under the criteria of clarity, coherence, neutrality, consistency and sufficiency. The instrument was also applied in a pilot test to verify its operability and comprehension. The administration of the questionnaire was done through the Google Forms platform and the link was shared with the students. The data were analyzed through descriptive statistical procedures.

RESULTS

Sociodemographic characteristics. Of the total sample (n= 420), 62.6% of the participants were women and 37.4% were men. The age of the students ranged from 16 to 40 years, with a higher percentage between 16 and 22 years of age (65.5%). Regarding socioeconomic level -or socioeconomic stratum as it is defined in Colombia-, most of the participants belonged to the lowest strata 1 and 2 (36.2% and 49.3%, respectively). The sample was distributed as follows according to the educational program: 30.5% business administration, 26.0% international commerce and 43.6% public accounting.

According to the semester attended, the participants are distributed as follows: 37.1% from semesters 1 and 2, 32.9% from semesters 7 and 8, 12.9% from semesters 9 and 10, 10.2% from semesters 3 and 4, and 6.9% from semester 5 and 6. Some of the legal subjects or legal content advanced by students at the time of answering the instrument were: 1) Constitutional Law and Democracy, 2) Introduction to Law, 3) Monetary Policy and Business Law, 4) Labor Law, 5) Tax Regime and Procedure, 6) Commercial Law and 7) Administrative Law.

Comprehension of legal concepts variable. Table 2 shows the results of the participants' responses associated with the variable *understanding of legal concepts*, which was oriented to the recognition of the degree of understanding of legal language, the legal norms associated with the professional field, the institutional structure and the instances linked to these norms, the origin of the norms and their scope. The data show that most of the participants are in the 'somewhat agree' option for the different statements made, which can be interpreted as an acceptable, but not a precise and clear understanding of the legal concepts, the rules, their origin and scope, and the institutional structure / related instances.

43.8% of the participants express that they understand legal terms and/or concepts used in the framework of subjects with legal content (43.8% somewhat agree and 39.3% strongly agree). The same tendency is observed for the understanding of legal expressions or legal norms associated with the professional field of training and used in subjects with legal content (52.9% somewhat agree and 29.0% strongly agree).

It is observed that most of the participants manage to identify in the comprehensive framework of these legal norms, institutions, entities and actors that have competence in the application of the same or significant relationship. It is also shown that there is an understanding of the origin of the norms associated with the profession and the procedures for their creation among the participating students (50.0% somewhat agree and 28.8% strongly agree), as well as of the responsibility and commitment generated by these legal norms for the professional field (44.3% strongly agree and 41.7% somewhat agree).

Finally, the participants indicate that among their classmates it is evident that there is an understanding of these terms, concepts and legal contents that are socialized in the subjects with legal content (51.9% somewhat agree and 23.6% strongly agree), although it should be noted that this is the item where the percentages for the options 'neither agree nor disagree', 'somewhat disagree' and 'strongly disagree' increase among the participants if compared with the results of the other questions (20.0%, 3.6% and 1.0%, respectively).

Table 2: Results of the variable understanding of legal concepts

<i>Ask</i>	<i>Options</i>	<i>No</i>	<i>%</i>
1. I understand the legal terms and/or concepts used in the development of the classes in the subjects with legal content.	a. Strongly agree	165	39.3%
	b. Somewhat agree	184	43.8%
	c. Neither agree nor disagree	57	13.6%
	d. Somewhat disagree	10	2.4%
	e. Strongly disagree	4	1.0%
2. I understand different legal phrases or expressions used in the development of classes in subjects with legal content.	a. Strongly agree	122	29.0%
	b. Somewhat agree	222	52.9%
	c. Neither agree nor disagree	63	15.0%
	d. Somewhat disagree	10	2.4%
	e. Strongly disagree	3	0.7%
3. I understand different legal norms that are associated with my professional field and that are discussed in subjects with legal content.	a. Strongly agree	122	29.0%
	b. Somewhat agree	222	52.9%
	c. Neither agree nor disagree	63	15.0%
	d. Somewhat disagree	10	2.4%
	e. Strongly disagree	4	1.0%
4. From the understanding of the legal norms, it is easier for me to recognize and identify the institutions or entities that are responsible for their application.	a. Strongly agree	145	34.5%
	b. Somewhat agree	201	47.9%
	c. Neither agree nor disagree	57	13.6%
	d. Somewhat disagree	15	3.6%
	e. Strongly disagree	2	0.5%
5. From the understanding of the legal norms, it is easier for me to recognize and identify actors or persons who have a responsibility in their application.	a. Strongly agree	132	31.4%
	b. Somewhat agree	214	51.0%
	c. Neither agree nor disagree	54	12.9%
	d. Somewhat disagree	15	3.6%
	e. Strongly disagree	5	1.2%
6. I understand the origin of the legal rules associated with the profession and the procedures for their creation.	a. Strongly agree	121	28.8%
	b. Somewhat agree	210	50.0%
	c. Neither agree nor disagree	72	17.1%
	d. Somewhat disagree	14	3.3%
	e. Strongly disagree	3	0.7%
7. I understand how different legal	a. Strongly agree	186	44.3%

norms commit me as a professional.	b. Somewhat agree	175	41.7%
	c. Neither agree nor disagree	50	11.9%
	d. Somewhat disagree	9	2.1%
	e. Strongly disagree	0	0
8. I have noticed that my classmates understand the terms, concepts and general knowledge of legal content within the framework of legal subjects.	a. Strongly agree	99	23.6%
	b. Somewhat agree	218	51.9%
	c. Neither agree nor disagree	84	20.0%
	d. Somewhat disagree	15	3.6%
	e. Strongly disagree	4	1.0%

Variable aptitudes for the applications of legal knowledge. Table 3 shows the results related to the variable 'aptitudes for the applications of legal knowledge', which seeks to reflect the self-perception of university students for their abilities to manage situations and solve problems, oral communication skills based on legal knowledge, and reading and writing skills for legal texts. In general, it can be noted that there is a favorable perception of the participants concerning these skills.

Most of the students feel they are capable of dealing with situations specific to their profession where legal norms must be applied (43.6% somewhat agree and 29.5% strongly agree). It is important to highlight that 27.0% of the students marked options in the questionnaire that allow inferring an unfavorable self-perception for this capacity. The same tendency is reflected in the perception of the ability to solve professional problems and those requiring the application of legal norms (44.3% somewhat agree and 28.6% strongly agree). Similarly, an unfavorable self-perception associated with this ability is shown in 27.2% of the subjects who participated.

Regarding communication skills in the legal knowledge scenario, the findings are in the same direction. Indeed, there is a favorable self-perception regarding the abilities to 1) orally present and provide explanations where the handling of legal concepts is required (45.7% somewhat agree and 26.7% strongly agree); 2) read interpretively and comprehensively texts that have legal content associated with the profession (50.0% somewhat agree and 29.5% strongly agree), and 3) write texts in which the handling of legal norms is required (44.5% somewhat agree and 22.1% strongly agree).

It is also important to highlight two key points in the findings for this variable. On the one hand, the percentage of students who indicate that they do not feel capable of communicating skills when mediating legal knowledge or legal norms is close to 30%. Note that 27.6% in the ability to present orally and provide explanations, 20.5% in the ability to read texts with legal content, and 33.3% in the ability to write texts in which analysis of legal norms is carried out. On the other hand, this is consistent with the findings of the last item, because although most of the participants perceive that their classmates have developed capacities for the application of norms in professional scenarios and/or problems associated with their future professional field (46.9% somewhat agree and 17.6% strongly agree), it is also representative that 35.6% of the students do not consider this to be the case.

Table 3: Results of the variable skills about the applications of legal knowledge

Ask	Options	No	%
9. I feel that I have the ability to perform effectively in situations specific to my profession where legal norms must be applied.	a. Strongly agree	124	29.5%
	b. Somewhat agree	183	43.6%
	c. Neither agree nor disagree	83	19.8%
	d. Somewhat disagree	25	6.0%
	e. Strongly disagree	5	1.2%
10. I feel I have the ability to solve	a. Strongly agree	120	28.6%

problems in my professional field where legal rules must be applied.	b. Somewhat agree	186	44.3%
	c. Neither agree nor disagree	79	18.8%
	d. Somewhat disagree	28	6.7%
	e. Strongly disagree	7	1.7%
	a. Strongly agree	112	26.7%
11. I feel able to incorporate in my speeches and explanations associated with my profession, concepts and expressions of legal norms.	b. Somewhat agree	192	45.7%
	c. Neither agree nor disagree	89	21.2%
	d. Somewhat disagree	24	5.7%
	e. Strongly disagree	3	0.7%
	a. Strongly agree	124	29.5%
12. I feel able to read legal texts or texts with legal content associated with my profession, achieving their interpretation and understanding.	b. Somewhat agree	210	50.0%
	c. Neither agree nor disagree	57	13.6%
	d. Somewhat disagree	22	5.2%
	e. Strongly disagree	7	1.7%
	a. Strongly agree	93	22.1%
13. I feel capable of writing texts with legal content associated to my profession such as essays, analysis, opinions or others.	b. Somewhat agree	187	44.5%
	c. Neither agree nor disagree	95	22.6%
	d. Somewhat disagree	34	8.1%
	e. Strongly disagree	11	2.6%
	a. Strongly agree	74	17.6%
14. I have noticed that my classmates have developed different abilities to apply legal norms to different scenarios or problems within the framework of the profession.	b. Somewhat agree	197	46.9%
	c. Neither agree nor disagree	120	28.6%
	d. Somewhat disagree	25	6.0%
	e. Strongly disagree	4	1.0%
	a. Strongly agree	49	11.4%

Motivation variable toward learning legal knowledge. Table 4 systematizes the results related to the variable 'motivation towards learning legal knowledge', an aspect that is essential due to the place of motivation in the framework of learning processes (Hidi, 2016; Renninger and Hidi, 2019). In general, the findings in these items evidence a motivation towards learning the legal knowledge associated with the profession among most of the participants (57.6% strongly agree and 32.4% somewhat agree). Likewise, the data indicate that the teaching strategies and practices of teachers in the framework of legal subjects have allowed motivation to be strengthened among students (49.3% strongly agree and 40.5% somewhat agree).

The results also show that this motivation allows students to carry out tasks for autonomous and independent learning for legal knowledge associated with the profession (46.4% strongly agree and 42.6% somewhat agree). For the majority of participants, their peers are motivated to learn in these thematic fields (40.0% somewhat agree and 34.0% strongly agree), although a smaller percentage of them think the opposite (26.0%).

Table 4: Results of the variable motivation to learn legal knowledge

Ask	Options	No	%
15. I am motivated towards learning legal standards associated with my profession.	a. Strongly agree	242	57.6%
	b. Somewhat agree	136	32.4%
	c. Neither agree nor disagree	34	8.1%
	d. Somewhat disagree	6	1.4%
	e. Strongly disagree	2	0.5%
16. I feel motivated to learn legal norms from the teaching strategies implemented by teachers in the framework of legal subjects.	a. Strongly agree	207	49.3%
	b. Somewhat agree	170	40.5%
	c. Neither agree nor disagree	30	7.1%
	d. Somewhat disagree	12	2.9%
	e. Strongly disagree	1	0.2%
17. I feel motivated to carry out activities and tasks that lead to an autonomous and independent learning of legal knowledge associated to my profession.	a. Strongly agree	195	46.4%
	b. Somewhat agree	179	42.6%
	c. Neither agree nor disagree	40	9.5%
	d. Somewhat disagree	3	0.7%
	e. Strongly disagree	3	0.7%
18. I have noticed that my classmates feel motivated to learn legal norms and that they seek to learn legal knowledge associated with the profession.	a. Strongly agree	143	34.0%
	b. Somewhat agree	168	40.0%
	c. Neither agree nor disagree	95	22.6%
	d. Somewhat disagree	12	2.9%
	e. Strongly disagree	2	0.5%

Variable *relevance of legal knowledge for professional training*. Table 5 shows the results related to the students' perceptions regarding the relevance or usefulness of legal knowledge in the framework of professional training. In general, the findings show that the participants perceive the legal knowledge of the legal subjects they have taken as a relevant and necessary component for comprehensive training (52.1% strongly agree and 37.4% somewhat agree) and professional training (53.8% strongly agree and 34.8% somewhat agree). In the same sense is the perception that the knowledge and skills developed in this scenario promote the exercise of citizenship and rights (48.1% strongly agree and 40.7% somewhat agree).

Table 5: Results of the variable relevance of legal knowledge to professional training

Ask	Options	No	%
19. I consider that the knowledge and skills that I have sought to develop within the framework of the subjects with legal content are relevant and necessary for my integral formation.	a. Strongly agree	219	52.1%
	b. Somewhat agree	157	37.4%
	c. Neither agree nor disagree	34	8.1%
	d. Somewhat disagree	6	1.4%
	e. Strongly disagree	4	1.0%
20. I consider that the knowledge and skills that I have sought to develop	a. Strongly agree	226	53.8%
	b. Somewhat agree	146	34.8%

within the framework of the subjects with legal content are relevant and necessary for my professional training.	c. Neither agree nor disagree	42	10.0%
	d. Somewhat disagree	5	1.2%
	e. Strongly disagree	1	0.2%
21. I believe that the knowledge and skills that have been sought to develop in the framework of the subjects with legal content are relevant and necessary for the exercise of citizenship and rights.	a. Strongly agree	202	48.1%
	b. Somewhat agree	171	40.7%
	c. Neither agree nor disagree	38	9.0%
	d. Somewhat disagree	8	1.9%
	e. Strongly disagree	1	0.2%
22. I have noticed that my classmates find relevant and necessary, the knowledge and skills that are sought to develop in the framework of the subjects with legal content.	a. Strongly agree	151	36.0%
	b. Somewhat agree	172	41.0%
	c. Neither agree nor disagree	84	20.0%
	d. Somewhat disagree	13	3.1%
	e. Strongly disagree	0	0

DISCUSSION

The results of the study allow inferring that the university students participating in the research positively perceive their learning within the framework of the subjects with legal or juridical content. This translates, from the perspective of the subjects, into acceptable learning because most of them feel that they understand terms and/or concepts proper to the legal world, they are facilitated in the interpretation of legal norms and manage to recognize that institutionality linked to legal norms, although it can be noticed that a percentage of students around 20.0% and 25.0% do not perceive themselves with the same capacities and abilities, an aspect that should be considered in the framework of this study in a holistic and integral sense. Some studies evidence that different factors can be related to a positive or negative academic self-perception, for example, age, work, and psychological well-being, among others (Law and Breznik, 2017; Jackson and Wilton, 2017; He *et al.*, 2018).

However, the results of the variable located in the area of know-how are not as positive as those associated with the understanding of terms, concepts and institutions in the legal framework, although they cannot be interpreted as unfavorable or negative. Most students perceive that they can manage situations and solve problems in a professional context where particular legal knowledge is required. The communicative skills for the production of oral and written texts in which the handling of legal concepts is required, as well as the reading of texts with normative content, are shown as competencies developed in the legal subjects from the perceptions of the participants. Even so, it should be recognized that a percentage of about 30% of the students, do not feel they have developed the skills that have been described and that may be associated with the abstract nature of legal language and legal terminology (Dugalich *et al.*, 2018).

The perception of favorably developed skills and abilities may be due to two components that were also analyzed in the present study: the teaching practices and strategies of teachers and the certainty that this type of knowledge is necessary and valuable for professional practice, which is consistent with some similar research focused on business studies (Farashahi and Tajeddin, 2018). Both allow ignition processes that, according to the findings, lead to the participating students feeling motivated in front of the legal knowledge that is mobilized in the formative scenario of legal subjects favoring autonomous and independent learning. Although studies on this specific topic are scarce, some research identifies a direct relationship between learning and motivation - intrinsic and extrinsic - in the case of students in the field of business sciences where teaching practices, value beliefs about tasks, emotions and satisfaction are relevant (Singh *et al.*, 2017; Rahman *et al.*, 2021; Pintrich, 1999; Schiefele, 1991).

CONCLUSIONS

The students of the programs attached to business sciences -or business studies- show favorable perceptions regarding their learning related to knowledge and contents of a legal nature, although their purpose is not professional training for the practice of law. The motivation associated with teachers' teaching practices and beliefs about the usefulness of this knowledge seems to have a positive influence on their self-perception of learning and their capacity for understanding and skills. Future work needs to explore the characteristics of the teaching practices of teachers who lead courses or subjects with legal content involving both teachers and students to extend the results of this research.

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