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# UNIVERSITY SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY AND HIGHER EDUCATION STUDENTS. EXPLORING OPINIONS IN EMERGING COUNTRIES. THE CASE OF ECUADOR, CHILE AND EL SALVADOR

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## SUMMARY

The challenges facing society have motivated the development of strategies aimed at meeting needs from different perspectives and areas of action. In this sense, social responsibility in education is an innovative model based on consensus, which aligns the expectations and needs of educational actors. In relation to this study, the objective is to analyze the perception of university students in emerging Latin American countries. An exploratory factor analysis is applied, descriptive statistics are determined,

and different statistics are explored according to the country category. Statistical differences are found in all the variables that constitute the model. Finally, it is essential that higher education institutions (HEIs) implement policies, strategies, and actions of social responsibility that are contextualized in alignment with the needs of each group that makes up the educational ecosystem. It is also recommended to expand the sample and include all the interest groups that make up each of the universities.

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## Introduction

Social responsibility in university contexts or university social responsibility (USR) is considered a consensual management model that seeks to satisfy the needs of educational actors such as students, teachers, staff, and the community in general (Acuña-Moraga *et al.*, 2022a). In this sense, this model is made up of strategies,

policies, programs, and actions that include the elements of a highly changing, dynamic, and complex society (Romero-Argueta *et al.*, 2024; Tójar-Hurtado *et al.*, 2024).

Social responsibility has been analyzed from various perspectives in university contexts, including volunteering and sustainability (Severino-González and Gaete-Quezada, 2019; Pegalajar Palomino *et*

*al.*, 2022; Acuña-Moraga *et al.*, 2022a). It has been explored according to the particularities of a university (Marchigiani and Garofolo, 2023), discipline (Cabedo *et al.*, 2018), and even country (Blaique *et al.*, 2023). Regarding this study, there are spaces for comparative exploration between countries that have initially or emergently implemented various social responsibility strategies

(Romero-Argueta *et al.*, 2020; Nahuat-Román *et al.*, 2024).

The value of social responsibility has motivated its analysis considering the opinion and background of universities (Comoli *et al.*, 2021). This contributes to the design of strategies according to the particularities of each of the higher education institutions (HEIs) in alignment with the needs of society (Severino-González *et*

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## RESPONSABILIDAD SOCIAL UNIVERSITARIA Y ESTUDIANTES DE EDUCACIÓN SUPERIOR. EXPLORANDO OPINIONES EN PAÍSES EMERGENTES. EL CASO DE ECUADOR, CHILE Y EL SALVADOR

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### RESUMEN

Los desafíos que enfrenta la sociedad han motivado el desarrollo de estrategias orientadas a satisfacer las necesidades desde diversas perspectivas y ámbitos de acción. En tal sentido, la responsabilidad social en la educación es un modelo innovador que se basa en consensos, y que alinea las expectativas y necesidades de los actores educativos. En relación con este estudio, el objetivo es analizar la percepción de estudiantes universitarios en países emergentes de América Latina. Se aplica un análisis factorial exploratorio, se determinan estadísticas

descriptivas y se exploran diferentes estadísticas de acuerdo con la categoría país. Se encuentran diferencias estadísticas en todas las variables que constituyen el modelo. Por último, es fundamental que las instituciones de educación superior (IES) implementen políticas, estrategias y acciones de responsabilidad social que estén contextualizadas en alineación con las necesidades de cada grupo que forma el ecosistema educativo. También se recomienda ampliar la muestra e incluir a todos los grupos de interés que forman cada una de las universidades.

## RESPONSABILIDADE SOCIAL UNIVERSITÁRIA E ESTUDANTES DO ENSINO SUPERIOR. EXPLORANDO OPINIÕES EM PAÍSES EMERGENTES. O CASO DO EQUADOR, CHILE E EL SALVADOR

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### RESUMO

Os desafios enfrentados pela sociedade têm motivado o desenvolvimento de estratégias orientadas para satisfazer necessidades sob diversas perspectivas e áreas de atuação. Neste sentido, a responsabilidade social na educação é um modelo inovador que se baseia no consenso, e que alinha as expectativas e necessidades dos atores educativos. Em relação a este estudo, o objetivo é analisar a percepção de estudantes universitários em países emergentes da América Latina. É realizada uma análise fatorial exploratória, são determinadas estatísticas descri-

vas e exploradas diferentes estatísticas de acordo com a categoria do país. São encontradas diferenças estatísticas em todas as variáveis que compõem o modelo. Por fim, é fundamental que as instituições de ensino superior (IES) implementem políticas, estratégias e ações de responsabilidade social que estejam contextualizadas em alinhamento com as necessidades de cada grupo que faz parte do ecossistema educativo. Também é recomendável ampliar a amostra e incluir todos os grupos de interesse que fazem parte de cada uma das universidades.

*et al.*, 2022; George *et al.*, 2024). The aforementioned is based on the development of values that socially responsible universities can promote in terms of the installation of empathy, dignity, solidarity, and social justice (García-Aracil *et al.*, 2023; Gallardo-Vázquez *et al.*, 2024).

In relation to all of the above, different investigations have shown the different opinions of students through their perceptions, attitudes, and behavior, which can be an input for the design of strategies that allow for a comprehensive education (Severino-González *et al.*, 2024a). That is why the research question of this work is: What is the social responsibility of university students in Ecuador, Chile, and El

Salvador? The objective of the study is to analyze the perception of university students in emerging Latin American countries, considering the case of students in Ecuador, Chile, and El Salvador. Concerning the hypotheses: null hypothesis: There are no significant differences in social responsibility between students from Ecuador, Chile, and El Salvador and, regarding the alternative hypothesis: There are significant differences in social responsibility between students from Ecuador, Chile, and El Salvador.

*Studies on university social responsibility in Latin America*

The study of USR in Latin America has shown the

importance of university management in promoting sustainable development, which includes ethical principles and respect for human rights (Severino-González *et al.*, 2019; Cuba Sancho *et al.*, 2023). The above is consistent with Hernández *et al.* (2024), since the research includes various approaches and areas of action such as ethical commitments and the training of university students, sustainable development, and social commitment. All of which has provided a theoretical and conceptual framework led by Pedro Severino-González (Chile) and Giuseppe Sarmiento-Peralta (Peru) (Urrunaga-Pastor *et al.*, 2023; Hernández *et al.*, 2024).

Higher education in Latin America has experienced

various challenges that have completely strained the educational system, including transformation due to digital technology, governance, and sustainability (Okoye *et al.*, 2023; Scavarda *et al.*, 2023; Brunner and Alarcón, 2024). In this sense, the SDGs have driven transformations that transcend the various substantive functions of HEIs (Pedraja-Rejas *et al.*, 2023; Severino-González *et al.*, 2025), motivating their exploration from an environmental, social, and governance (ESG) perspective. In this context, Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) has proven to be an innovative management approach, especially in countries where socially responsible actions are applied in an emerging manner since its

application more clearly demonstrates the social commitment of HEIs (Valencia-Arias *et al.*, 2024; Brandli *et al.*, 2025).

However, the study on CSR has shown the efforts in the delivery of timely responses by HEIs to each of the educational actors (Gallardo-Vázquez *et al.*, 2024), including environmental education under the mission of universities, territorial social responsibility (TSR) and comprehensive education (Severino-González *et al.*, 2024a). In this sense, the influence of interculturality is relevant due to the particularities of the context that fosters the construction of specific and relevant opinions concerning local needs and global requirements (Superti *et al.*, 2020; Gómez-Rivera *et al.*, 2024).

Finally, in literature, there are studies on the opinions, expectations, and needs of some interest groups that make up university communities (Sarmiento-Peralta *et al.*, 2021). In this sense, only occasionally do research consider comparisons between Latin American countries (Flores-Fernandez *et al.*, 2022; Nahuat-Román *et al.*, 2024). This has not allowed for a deeper understanding of cultural elements that could influence their understanding of USR. All of this sets up the challenge for the management of higher education that integrates global demands and local needs (Tójar-Hurtado *et al.*, 2024), which could generate inputs for a higher education focused on people with a global perspective (Ulkhay and George Joseph, 2024).

## Methodology

This research considers a quantitative approach and applies a descriptive design. This is due to the exploration of the perception of university students in Latin America, including the case of Ecuador, Chile, and El Salvador. In this context, a measurement scale is applied, and statistical tests are developed.

## Participants

The population consists of university students from Ecuador, Chile, and El Salvador. The sample is non-probabilistic and convenience-based, composed of 534 subjects enrolled in undergraduate professional courses in different disciplines and areas of knowledge. Table I shows the main sociodemographic characteristics, such as country (geographic location of the university), sex (male and female), educational level (curricular progress), and occupation (dedication).

## Instrument

The instrument comprises four sections: the first section, which includes informed consent and the items that constitute the filter questions; the second section, which considers the questions that allow for characterizing the research subjects of each country; the third section contains the measurement scale (Table II); finally, the fourth section contains the criterion item. Regarding the type of response, both the measurement scale and the criterion item are carried out using a Likert scale with five options: 1: Strongly disagree, 2: Disagree, 3: Slightly disagree, 4: Slightly agree, 5: Agree, and 6: Strongly agree.

The measurement scale used in this research was designed and validated by García-Ramos

*et al.* (2016) considering a group of second-year students from Francisco de Vitoria University (Spain). Subsequently, in Peru, a study was conducted in which a sample of students enrolled in universities in a city located in the central region of Peru was considered, where an exploratory factor analysis (EFA) and Cronbach's Alpha were applied (Sarmiento-Peralta *et al.*, 2021). In all cases, the reliability and validity indicators are high and acceptable (George and Mallery, 2006).

However, in Nahuat-Román *et al.* (2024), an exploration is conducted in which students from a public business school in southern Tamaulipas are included. EFA and Cronbach's Alpha are applied, where the indicators show that there could be a regrouping of the variables and adjustment in the measurement scale. Finally, in Chile, this scale was applied to university students. The work considered the application of quality indicators such as AFE and internal consistency coefficient (Severino-González *et al.*, 2023), demonstrating that all indicators are high and acceptable (George and Mallery, 2006).

## Procedure and data analysis

The instrument was made available online through a link associated with Google Forms®, which was disseminated via email and social media between 2020 and 2022. This study involved the

voluntary and confidential participation of students and did not affect their integrity. Likewise, such participation did not result in financial compensation during or after participation. Once the data had been collected, the database was exported through a Microsoft Excel® spreadsheet to be transferred to SPSS v18.

Regarding the analysis strategies, an exploratory factor analysis (EFA) was applied, using the principal component extraction method and Varimax rotation. Subsequently, the grouping of the variables using the Cronbach's Alpha indicator was validated. Then, the measure, median, and standard deviation (SD) of each variable were calculated. The distribution of the data was examined using the Kolmogorov-Smirnov and Shapiro-Wilk tests. Finally, statistical differences were determined according to the country in which the university student was enrolled

## Results

This section presents the main findings derived from statistical analysis based on the methodological design. These findings allow us to answer the research question, which corresponds to the objective of the study. The evaluation of the factor model is presented. Next, the descriptive statistics are discussed. Finally, the inferential analysis is developed, considering the dimensions of social responsibility of

TABLE I  
SOCIODEMOGRAPHIC CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SAMPLE

Category	Criteria	Values (%)
Country	Ecuador	48.7
	Chile	28.8
	El Salvador	22.5
Sex	Female	53.2
	Male	46.8
Level of education	1 to 2 years	41.0
	3 to 4 years	34.5
	5 years or more	24.5
Occupation	Only studying	53.6
	Studying and working	46.4

TABLE II  
SCALE FOR MEASURING SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY OF UNIVERSITY STUDENTS

Dimensions	Variable/Items
Commitment to others and the environment	v1. I have a global vision of the current situation in the world and I am aware of the urgent need for sustainable development. v2. This awareness increases my interest as a university student in contributing to the improvement of my immediate surroundings. v3. I question my personal position in the face of social injustice and the pain of others. v4. I put into practice my capacity for service and commitment to immigrants, the disabled, the homeless, children without resources, the elderly... v5. I consider that one of my obligations as a person is to help others, from a social commitment.
Personal discovery of values	v6. I believe that social commitment is based on the recognition and respect of the dignity of every person. v7. I recognize the need to open myself to others, to put myself in their place and seek the common good, above individualistic interests. v8. I consider that personal change is a previous and necessary step to change the reality that surrounds me. v9. I have experienced first-hand the happiness that comes with service and solidarity. v10. I believe that the experience of giving to others is beneficial for discovering personal values.
Development of social responsibility	v11. I believe that being a university student helps one become aware of the importance of social responsibility. v12. I have reflected on the importance of not remaining indifferent or oblivious to what happens to others. v13. I believe that to the extent that I study and prepare myself thoroughly at university, I will be able to contribute more to social change. v14. The training I will receive at university will contribute in practice to increasing my degree of social responsibility. v15. I believe that social responsibility is a skill that must be worked on at university.
Professional practice based on social commitment	v16. I consider the exercise of my future profession as a profession oriented towards the common good. v17. I believe that good professional practice involves commitment, teamwork, perseverance, empathy, tolerance, honesty and respect. v18. I believe that my personal fulfillment and my happiness come from being a professional committed to improving society as a whole. The university provides free and open access to its documents, norms, and procedures. The university disseminates its environmental policy to the university community.
Item criterion	As a summary, assess the degree to which you feel committed and socially responsible at this time.

Source: García-Ramos *et al.* (2016).

university students according to the country category.

#### Factor model evaluation

The evaluation of the factorial model through the EFA includes the determination of the Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin (KMO) coefficient and the Bartlett's sphericity test. For the KMO, a value of 0.973 was obtained, and regarding the Bartlett's sphericity test, the values are  $\chi^2 = 9,160.457$ ,  $df = 153$ , and  $p < 0.000$ . These values suggest that the underlying structure between the variables is adequate. The factor matrix after the extraction of principal components and the application of Varimax rotation is composed as follows: 1. Personal

discovery of values (v8, v6, v10, v7 and v9), 2. Approach to professional practice from social commitment (v18, v16, v19, v20 and v17), 3. Formation of social responsibility (v11, v14, v13 and v15) and 4. Commitment to others and the environment (v4, v3, v2 and v5). The variables that were eliminated are v1 and v12, due to epistemological and statistical reasons. Finally, the total explained variance was 78.56% (Table III).

#### Descriptive statistics

In Table IV, the mean, median, and standard deviation (SD) of each variable by dimension of the social responsibility measurement scale for

university students are presented. Concerning the dimension "Commitment to others and the environment," it can be observed that the highest values are found in variables v2 (mean= 4.933; median= 5; SD = 1.252) and v5 (mean= 4.933; median= 5; SD = 1.260), which reflect the value students place on awareness of actions that can contribute to society and the consideration of help as part of their social obligations.

On the other hand, regarding the dimension "Personal discovery of values," the highest value is found in v6 (mean= 5.112; median= 6; SD= 1.223), which is associated with recognition and respect for the dignity of people

as elements of the student's social commitment. Likewise, regarding the dimension "Formation of social responsibility," the highest value expressed by the students is found in v13 (mean= 4.94; median= 5; SD= 1.231), due to the recognition of the study as influential in the design of effective solutions to society's problems. Finally, in relation to the dimension "Approach to professional practice from social commitment," the highest value is located in v17 (mean= 5.277; median= 6; SD= 1.135), as students identify that professional practice involves commitment, teamwork, perseverance, empathy, tolerance, honesty, and respect in relation to one's ties to society.

TABLE III  
EXPLORATORY FACTOR ANALYSIS

Variable/Items	Dimension			
	Personal discovery of values	Approach to professional practice from a social commitment	Training in social responsibility	Commitment to others and the environment
v 8	0.782			
v 6	0.721			
v10	0.688			
v 7	0.675			
v 9	0.657			
v 18		0.706		
v 16		0.706		
v 19		0.704		
v 20		0.648		
v 17		0.625		
v 11			0.814	
v 14			0.758	
v 13			0.695	
v 15			0.555	
v 4				0.782
v 3				0.685
v 2				0.601
v 5				0.580
Explained Variance	23.028	20.359	19.174	15.995

TABLE IV  
DESCRIPTIVE STATISTICS

Dimensions	Variable	Mean	Median	SD	Alpha
Commitment to others and the environment	v 2	4.933	5	1.252	0.874
	v 3	4.713	5	1.271	
	v 4	4.502	5	1.286	
	v 5	4.933	5	1.260	
Personal discovery of values	v 6	5.112	6	1.223	0.934
	v 7	4.873	5	1.215	
	v 8	5.107	6	1.184	
	v 9	4.978	5	1.249	
	v 10	4.994	5	1.192	
Training in social responsibility	v 11	4.684	5	1.371	0.892
	v 13	4.94	5	1.231	
	v 14	4.8	5	1.282	
	v 15	4.831	5	1.370	
Approach to professional practice from a social commitment	v 16	4.929	5	1.183	0.943
	v 17	5.277	6	1.135	
	v 18	4.948	5	1.229	
	v 19	4.94	5	1.169	
	v 20	4.936	5	1.219	

Regarding the internal consistency coefficients determined in each of the dimensions, the following values were found: Commitment to others and the environment= 0.874, Personal discovery of values= 0.934, Formation of social responsibility= 0.892, and Approach to professional practice from social commitment = 0.943. These values, according to the Cronbach Alpha indicator, fall within the good to excellent range (Ferrando and Lorenzo-Seva, 2014).

#### Inferential analysis

The inferential analysis considers the origin of the university students. In this sense, the non-parametric Kruskal-Wallis H test was applied due to the non-normal distribution of the data and because the sample is divided into three groups (Chile, Peru, and El Salvador). The development of the analysis considers the dimensions of the student's social responsibility and the criterion item.

In Table V, the mean, median, standard deviation (SD), and p-value are presented according to the dimension of Commitment to others and the environment. It can be observed that there are statistical differences in each of its variables. In relation to the above, the highest value is found in v2, because the students from Ecuador state that awareness increases interest in the materialization of actions that improve the immediate environment (mean= 5.285; median= 6; SD= 1.074). On the other hand, the value is lower in v3, due to the low questioning of students from El Salvador regarding personal positioning in the face of social injustices (mean= 3.95; median= 4; SD= 1.295).

In Table VI, the mean, median, standard deviation (SD), and p-value are shown according to the Personal Discovery of Values dimension. In this table, statistical differences are identified for each of the variables. In this context, the highest value is found in v6, due to the recognition by Ecuadorian

TABLE V  
STATISTICAL DIFFERENCES DIMENSION COMMITMENT TO OTHERS AND THE ENVIRONMENT

Variables	Country									p-value
	Ecuador			Chile			El Salvador			
	Mean	Median	SD	Mean	Median	SD	Mean	Median	SD	
v 2	5.285	6	1.074	5.052	5	1.095	4.017	4	1.353	0.000
v 3	4.946	5	1.201	4.916	5	1.137	3.95	4	1.295	0.000
v 4	4.658	5	1.301	4.571	5	1.171	4.075	4	1.310	0.000
v 5	5.188	6	1.155	5.006	5	1.094	4.283	4	1.445	0.000

TABLE VI  
STATISTICAL DIFFERENCES DIMENSION PERSONAL DISCOVERY OF VALUES

Variables	Country									p-value
	Ecuador			Chile			El Salvador			
	Mean	Median	SD	Mean	Median	SD	Mean	Median	SD	
v 6	5.365	6	1.029	5.305	6	1.116	4.317	4	1.402	0.000
v 7	5.162	5	1.046	4.961	5	1.114	4.133	4	1.378	0.000
v 8	5.331	6	1.009	5.299	6	1.023	4.375	4	1.421	0.000
v 9	5.223	6	1.092	5.065	5	1.186	4.333	4	1.422	0.000
v 10	5.238	6	1.035	5.110	5	1.147	4.317	4	1.316	0.000

students of social commitment as an articulator of actions that promote respect and dignity for all people (mean= 5.365; median= 6; S = 1.029). On the other hand, the lowest value is found in v6 (mean= 4.317; median= 4; SD= 1.402) and v10 (mean= 4.317; median= 4; SD= 1.316), due to the low identification of El Salvadorian students concerning the development of social commitment as part of the recognition and respect for the dignity of people and, at the same time, due to the

decreased commitment they have with society as an articulator of experiences that create value for all those involved.

In Table VII, the mean, median, standard deviation (SD), and p-value are displayed according to the dimension Formation of social responsibility. In this case, statistical differences are evident in each of the variables. It can be identified that the highest value is located in v13, due to the importance that Ecuadorian students give to education in

correspondence with the adequate help to the community in coherence with social changes (mean= 4.992; median= 5; SD= 1.230). On the other hand, the lowest value is found in v15, because El Salvadorian students consider that social responsibility does not fully contribute to the development of competencies that the university should install (mean= 4.083; median= 4; SD= 1.435).

In Table VIII, the mean, median, standard deviation (SD), and p-values are presented

according to the dimension of the Approach to professional practice from social commitment. It can be observed that each of the variables presents statistical differences. The highest value is found in v17, in which students from Ecuador consider that part of the practice of the profession is articulated with actions that demonstrate a high commitment to society, which is a consequence of the installation of values such as empathy, tolerance, honesty, and respect

TABLE VII  
STATISTICAL DIFFERENCES DIMENSION TRAINING IN SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY

Variables	Country									p-value
	Ecuador			Chile			El Salvador			
	Mean	Median	SD	Mean	Median	SD	Mean	Median	SD	
v 11	4.992	5	1.230	4.565	5	1.4277	4.167	4	1.416	0.000
v 13	5.262	6	1.036	4.903	5	1.2302	4.292	4	1.362	0.000
v 14	5.204	6	1.066	4.571	5	1.3277	4.217	4	1.361	0.000
v 15	5.058	5	1.215	5.032	6	1.3692	4.083	4	1.435	0.000

TABLE VIII  
STATISTICAL DIFFERENCES DIMENSION APPROACHING PROFESSIONAL PRACTICE FROM A SOCIAL  
COMMITMENT PERSPECTIVE

Variables	Country									p-value
	Ecuador			Chile			El Salvador			
	Mean	Median	SD	Mean	Median	SD	Mean	Median	SD	
v16	5.346	6	0.968	5.058	5	1.1099	3.858	4	1.040	0.000
v 17	5.508	6	0.940	5.377	6	1.0608	4.65	5	1.370	0.000
v 18	5.292	6	1.050	4.903	5	1.1814	4.258	4	1.350	0.000
v 19	5.288	6	0.993	5.221	6	0.9983	3.825	4	1.034	0.000
v 20	5.227	5	0.990	5.058	5	1.139	4.15	4	1.424	0.000

(mean= 5.508; median= 6; SD= 0.940). On the other hand, the lowest value is identified in v19, since students from El Salvador relatively consider that the action of a good professional is conditioned by the contributions that could be generated in their immediate environment (mean= 3.825; median= 4; SD= 1.034).

In Table IX, the mean, median, standard deviation (SD), and p-value are shown according to the dimension Criterion item: "As a summary, assess the degree to which you feel committed and socially responsible at this time." In this table, it can be observed that the highest value is expressed by students from Ecuador, while the lowest value is associated with students from El Salvador. All of the above is consistent with the partial findings by dimension since students from Ecuador are more identified with practices, actions, and projections on responsibility, which is not consistent with the opinions of students from

El Salvador. Finally, students from Chile present an intermediate opinion. These findings can provide input for the installation of values with social responsibility as an exercise that promotes commitment to the community.

#### Discussion

This research aims to analyze the perception of university students in emerging Latin American countries, focusing on students in Ecuador, Chile, and El Salvador. Throughout the study, it is evident that the highest values are consistently expressed by Ecuadorian students, highlighting the need to replicate strategies successfully applied by universities in Ecuador. In contrast, there is an urgent need to implement actions that promote socially responsible behaviors in El Salvador. Meanwhile, in Chile, students express moderate and sometimes indifferent opinions, which should be considered when designing strategic

development plans and programs to establish a distinctive identity for their graduates.

In the study by Rababah *et al.* (2021), an analysis was conducted focusing on Brazil, Russia, India, China, and South Africa (BRICS), where it was determined that creativity in its various aspects stimulates the implementation of USR strategies. These insights underscore the importance of including creativity in strategic plans. Similarly, this research, based on student opinions, demonstrates the significance of social responsibility in alignment with environmental commitment in Chile, Ecuador, and El Salvador. However, in the study by Leko Šimić *et al.* (2022), comparisons of student perceptions and attitudes toward USR revealed statistical differences among countries.

According to Romero-Argueta *et al.* (2020), most students in El Salvador consider themselves socially responsible. Nevertheless, this study finds that Salvadoran students present the lowest values across most variables in García-Ramos *et al.* (2016) model of student social responsibility. Conversely, Severino-González *et al.* (2020) showed that Chilean students demonstrate a greater awareness of social responsibilities compared to Salvadoran students, highlighting the need for further research from diverse perspectives and areas of action.

Research on social responsibility in Ecuador remains

limited (Urrunaga-Pastor *et al.*, 2023). However, Severino-González *et al.* (2024b) conducted an inferential analysis considering university students' sociodemographic characteristics in relation to self-determination on social responsibility. Similarly, this research employs an inferential analysis focusing on students' social responsibilities across countries (Hashinaga *et al.*, 2023). Both studies indicate a favorable assessment of the variables constituting socially responsible actions.

In Chile, studies on social responsibility have been linked to the SDGs, socio-emotional competencies, and university management (Hernández *et al.*, 2024; Mundaca and Mundaca, 2024). These findings underscore the growing relevance of social responsibility in higher education (Acuña-Moraga *et al.*, 2022b; Guzmán-Valenzuela, 2024). Severino-González *et al.* (2024a) demonstrated the influence of specific dimensions within social responsibility strategies aligned with the SDGs, though without performing an inferential analysis. Future studies should include causality and inferential approaches to deepen the understanding of this phenomenon.

#### Conclusions

This research analyzes the perceptions of university students in emerging Latin American countries, focusing on Ecuador, Chile, and El

TABLE IX  
STATISTICAL DIFFERENCES CRITERION ITEM

Statistics	Country		
	Ecuador	Chile	El Salvador
Mean	5.1	5.0	4.1
Median	5.0	5.0	4.0
SD	1.05	0.9	1.2
p-value = 0.00			

Salvador. While these countries share cultural similarities, they also exhibit differences in implementing educational strategies that integrate disciplinary and moral competencies. Professionals today face challenges aligned with the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), prompting universities to adopt University Social Responsibility (USR) strategies. These strategies help students become more attuned to social issues; however, further efforts are needed to strengthen these initiatives in emerging countries.

This study has economic, social, and political implications. Strategies incorporating social responsibility values can support a country's economic development and contribute to the social well-being of educational communities. Institutional and organizational policies based on social responsibility may serve as catalysts for initiatives that foster societal development.

The findings can inform institutional strategies, public policies, and training models that promote empathy, solidarity, and justice while considering the unique challenges of emerging countries and the cultural characteristics of Latin America. Such measures could help address global impacts on human dignity. Future research should include larger samples for better representativeness, involve diverse stakeholders for greater objectivity, and apply varied analysis strategies for a deeper understanding of the topic.

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