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# Perceptions of trainee teachers regarding their training experience in subjects with legal content

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### Abstract

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The objective of this research was to describe trainee teachers' perceptions in two institutions of higher education in Colombia regarding their learning in subjects with legal content. The study was framed within the analytical, empirical paradigm, the descriptive quantitative approach and the non-experimental-transversal deductive method. With a population of 750 students, the sample consisted of 255 individuals ( $Z_c=95\%$  and  $E=5\%$ ), to whom an instrument was applied with 27 questions related to the following variables: sociodemographic characteristics, 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 information collected was analyzed through descriptive statistical procedures. The results show that the participants, in general, perceive that training in the framework of legal subjects has allowed them to strengthen their understanding of legal topics relevant to general and preschool education, their motivation to learn these topics and the recognition of their usefulness in the field of the teaching profession. Therefore, it is concluded that, in both higher education institutions, students' perceptions are favorable towards subjects with legal or juridical content, although they require further deepening in the exercise that leads to applying educational regulations in contextualized scenarios.

**Keywords:** *perceptions; trainee teachers; learning experience; subjects with legal content; legal training for non-lawyers*

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## Resumen

El objetivo de esta investigación fue describir las percepciones de docentes en formación de dos instituciones de educación superior en Colombia respecto de su aprendizaje en asignaturas con contenido jurídico. El estudio estuvo enmarcado en el paradigma empírico analítico, el enfoque cuantitativo de nivel descriptivo y el método deductivo no experimental-transversal. Con una población de 750 estudiantes, la muestra estuvo integrada por 255 individuos ( $Z_c=95\%$  y  $E=5\%$ ), a quienes se les aplicó un instrumento con 27 preguntas relacionadas con las variables: características sociodemográficas, 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. La información recolectada se analizó a través de procedimientos de estadística descriptiva. Los resultados muestran que los participantes, en general, perciben que la formación en el marco de asignaturas jurídicas les ha permitido fortalecer la comprensión sobre temas legales relevantes para la educación en general y preescolar, la motivación hacia el aprendizaje de estos tópicos y el reconocimiento de su utilidad en el campo de la profesión docente. Se concluye que, en ambas instituciones de educación superior, las percepciones de los estudiantes son positivas y favorables frente a las asignaturas con contenido legal o jurídico, aunque requieren una mayor profundización en el ejercicio que lleve a la aplicación de la normatividad educativa en escenarios contextualizados.

*Palabras clave: percepciones; docentes en formación; experiencia de aprendizaje; asignaturas con contenido jurídico; formación legal para no abogados*

## INTRODUCTION

Today there is a marked urgency: to democratize law -or legal knowledge- among citizens and professionals from different areas because it is a transversal field with the incidence in different dimensions of human life (Jones, 1997; Twining, 2018; Grimes, 2021). Some research studies even warn of the need for non-lawyers to provide legal services in response to international obligations of timely and effective access to justice in some territories with particular characteristics (McQuoid-Mason, 2018; Nottage *et al.*, 2021).

Understanding and applying legal norms is directly associated with other phenomena such as legitimacy, legality and justice (Pérez, 2000; Alvarado, 2015). The ideal would be that every citizen, from the training they receive, can be able to: 1) recognize that they are holders of rights and guarantees, and 2) distinguish the instances to which they can turn to demand their due protection (Cortés, 2015). However, understanding legal norms and institutions is not simple, particularly for those who do not intend to exercise the right.

Indeed, legal sciences keep particular characteristics due to their ontological and epistemological nature, and these specificities lead to a particular abstraction that hinders their easy apprehension and understanding (Pezzetta, 2016; Teubner and Bourdieu, 2000; Dugalich, Alontseva and Ermoshin, 2018). Indeed, law, which has as its object the study of the norm, integrates into its ontoepistemological field: methods, structures of knowledge, practices and discourses that deserve conscious attention for its management (Joglekar, 2020; Zakhartsev and Salnikov, 2018; Lazo, 2011; Bahadur and Zhang, 2021). These characteristics produce that the teaching of law is installed on special strategies and actions that are planned, managed and implemented by teachers who have knowledge and mastery in this field (Mastache and Devetac, 2017; Abdelnour, 2014; Balsam, Brooks and Reuter, 2017; Blengino *et al.*, 2019).

It can be pointed out that there are people trained in law for the professional practice of law and who acquire the title of lawyer. However, there are others who, without seeking the professional activity of a legal advisor, are trained in legal issues and legal topics due to their relevance, transcendence and necessity in their work and personal life (Morris, 2007; Braye *et al.*, 2006). In coherence with this, different higher education institutions incorporate the curricula of university programs, subjects, courses, or subjects with legal content for students of business administration, public accounting,

management and public administration, and international business, among others (López, 2015; Doorey, 2008; García, 2008).

This is also the case with training teachers pursuing degrees in education or pedagogy. The purpose of this type of transversal training of a legal nature is for students to develop knowledge, skills and abilities in multidisciplinary contexts useful for the practice of the profession (García, 2008; Garbey-Árias, 2016). Thus, the integration of subjects or courses such as educational legislation, public educational policies, school legislation, human rights, children's rights in international instruments, democracy and citizenship, among others, can be evidenced in the curricula of different Bachelor's degrees.

However, one issue is key in these cross-cutting and multidisciplinary training scenarios: the legal or juridical contents and the vision of learning this type of knowledge must be harmoniously articulated with the essence of pedagogy as a field of knowledge. Indeed, it would not be a matter of training teachers to study and apply legal norms and institutions, but rather basic knowledge of conceptual elements of a legal nature that are useful and necessary for the practice of teaching and all that this implies. Thus, the issue is to recognize that teaching practices must vary because a course with legal content aimed at lawyers is not the same as one whose objective is to complement teacher training (Braye *et al.*, 2005; Morris, 2007; Morris, 2010; Silvera *et al.*, 2015). Therefore, teaching practices and strategies should constantly be rethought, as well as the disciplinary content itself, so that it dialogues coherently and harmoniously with the training profile and the graduate profile of an undergraduate student.

In these contexts of multidisciplinary training, particularly in what has to do with teaching legal topics for non-lawyers, it is required to design procedures and strategies supported by educational means and resources that enable the interpretation, reflection and understanding of legal norms and institutions among learners. For this, it is essential to recognize the subjects' prior knowledge so that broad conceptual frameworks can be created to support new learning (Twining, 2018). In other words, seeking the generation of stable, clear and adequately organized cognitive structures in each subject so that the learning and retention of new objects become permanent or meaningful (Ausubel, 1962; Ausubel, 2012).

This type of knowledge that is discussed is specific to the pedagogical field and constitutes the essential basis of the teaching task: recognizing the best didactics, the use of principles in the field of teaching, the understanding of the phenomenon of learning, the conceptions linked to the role of the teacher and the student, the values and beliefs that underlie the action, the reflection or praxis as the essential axis of the teaching task, among many others (Ball, 2003; Avendaño *et al.*, 2022). The development of this knowledge and discourse is the product of training that must be judicious, serious and committed (Freire, 2008). However, this is not the case for lawyer professors who teach legal subjects in law schools and other training programs. In the Colombian context, it has been established that professionals from other fields require a minimum course of 120 hours in pedagogy to teach.

This minimal pedagogical training requirement is undoubtedly a factor that can generate limitations in the teaching exercise and affect practices and knowledge. This situation is also part of the problem described in this introduction because it is not only about the onto-epistemological nature of legal knowledge with its specialized abstract language (Cucco, 2016; Mellinkoff, 2004) but also about the teaching practices configured and employed by teachers due to those disciplinary foundations. Although the university culture generates spaces for lifelong learning among teachers, strengthening their pedagogical dimension (Avendaño *et al.*, 2022), the truth is that it is urgent to provide more value to this component that has an impact on teaching practices (Skwarok, 1995; Maharg, 2007; Wiratraman, 2019; González, 2003). In coherence with the above, the objective of the research was to describe the perceptions of trainee teachers from two higher education institutions in Colombia regarding their learning in subjects with legal content.

## **METHODS AND MATERIALS**

The study was framed within the analytical, empirical paradigm, the descriptive quantitative approach and the non-experimental-transversal deductive method. The research was conducted in two public

higher education institutions in Medellín and Cúcuta in Colombia. The sample consisted of 750 students studying in the Bachelor's degree program in Early Childhood Education and who, in their process, must take legal subjects. Therefore, the inclusion criterion was established as having seen a subject of this nature in the last two semesters -or taking the subject at the time of data collection. To establish the sample, the following statistical formula was applied:

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

Where:  $Zc = 95\%$  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  $N = 750$  is the population.

With a population of 750 students, the sample consisted of 255 individuals ( $Zc=95\%$  and  $E=5\%$ ), to whom a Likert scale questionnaire with 27 questions located in five dimensions with different elements of analysis was applied as a data collection instrument:

1. Sociodemographic characteristics. Related to demographic and social factors such as age, sex, socioeconomic status, semester attended and legal subjects studied.
2. Understanding of legal language and concepts in the general and preschool educational field, related to the perception of the understanding of specialized legal language, legal norms associated with the professional field, the structure of the institutions linked to legal norms and the origin/scope of normativity.
3. Skills in the application of legal knowledge in general education and preschool contexts, related to the perception of a variety of skills to develop in professional situations where the understanding of legal norms is required, as well as to solve problems, describe and explain associated concepts, make interpretative and critical readings, and produce texts in which the use of legal norms related to one's own disciplinary and professional field is required.
4. Motivation towards learning legal knowledge relevant to the field of general and preschool education, related to motivation towards different elements such as the legal standard, teaching/teacher didactics and autonomous learning.
5. The relevance of legal knowledge for comprehensive training and the teaching profession is related to the perception of relevance and usefulness of learning in comprehensive training, professional performance and the exercise of citizenship.

Except for the sociodemographic characteristics dimension, the items were formulated as statements. The participants marked how much they agreed with these statements: strongly disagree, somewhat disagree, neither agree nor disagree, somewhat agree and strongly agree. The instrument was validated through the judgment of experts and a pilot test, both to guarantee its operability, as well as its clarity, relevance and coherence. The call was made openly with the support of teachers from both faculties through a Google Forms form that was closed once the required responses were met according to the established sample. The information collected was systematized through descriptive statistical procedures and then analyzed, interpreted and discussed.

## RESULTS

*Sociodemographic characteristics.* Most of the students who participated in the study were female (83.9%), which can be interpreted as a cultural issue because preschool teaching is particularly female in the Colombian context. Likewise, a predominance of young students was observed in the age ranges of 16-18 years (42.7%), 19-20 years (34.9%) and 21-22 years (13.7%). Furthermore, most of the participants are in the low and middle socioeconomic strata (2= 44.3% and 3= 35.7%) according to the stratification scale used in the country, which ranges from 1 to 5, the latter being the one with the best income according to the sector of residence and the characteristics of the dwelling inhabited.

The study participants at the time of the field research work were studying any of the semesters of the degree, so representative data were collected from all subjects, mainly from levels 3-4 (47.5%) and 5-6 (38.4%). The subjects with legal content taken by the participants and indicated were: Political Constitution, School Legislation, Educational Legislation, Colombian Educational System and Educational Public Policies.

*Dimension of understanding of language and legal concepts in the general education and preschool fields.* Table 1 describes the findings related to the analyzed dimension of understanding legal concepts. The majority of the students participating in the study consider that they are facilitated to understand legal terms and concepts used by the teachers who teach the subjects with legal content in the framework of the early childhood education degree (51.8% strongly agree and 32.5% somewhat agree), as well as legal phrases or expressions commonly used in law (46.7% agree 38.4% somewhat agree) and legal norms associated with preschool education and education in general discussed in class with teacher mediation (55.3% agree and 36.5% somewhat agree). Regarding the norms, the participants perceive that they recognize the origin of the legal norms proper to the disciplinary/professional field (49.4% strongly agree and 36.5% somewhat agree).

Similar results are observed in the rest of the items in this dimension. Thus, most of the participants consider that, as a result of their understanding of the legal norms associated with the field of preschool education, they can recognize institutions and entities that are related to this legal knowledge and that should be identified in application scenarios (52.2% strongly agree and 34.9% somewhat agree), as well as actors or persons who, due to their functions, have responsibility or link in the educational sphere by legal mandate (49.4% strongly agree and 36.9% somewhat agree). In the same way, and from the findings, the participants perceive that they understand the commitments generated to the professional field and the teaching practice from the legal norms. In order to somehow confirm the findings, the participants consider that their classmates also show understanding of the language, terms and knowledge of a legal nature associated with preschool education (50.2% strongly agree and 31.0% somewhat agree).

Table 1. Results of the dimension of understanding language and legal concepts in the general education and preschool fields.

<i>Item</i>	<i>Options</i>	<i>No</i>	<i>%</i>
I am facilitated to understand legal terms and concepts used by professors who teach subjects with legal content in the framework of the degree in early childhood education.	a. Strongly agree	132	51.8
	b. Somewhat agree	83	32.5
	c. Neither agree nor disagree	27	10.6
	d. Somewhat disagree	13	5.1
	e. Strongly disagree	0	0
I am facilitated to understand legal phrases or expressions used by teachers who teach subjects with legal content in the framework of the degree in early childhood education.	a. Strongly agree	119	46.7
	b. Somewhat agree	98	38.4
	c. Neither agree nor disagree	25	9.8
	d. Somewhat disagree	13	5.1
	e. Strongly disagree	0	0
I am facilitated to understand legal norms associated with preschool education and education in general, and which are discussed in class with mediation of the teacher in the subjects with legal content in the framework of the degree in early childhood education.	a. Strongly agree	141	55.3
	b. Somewhat agree	93	36.5
	c. Neither agree nor disagree	14	5.5
	d. Somewhat disagree	7	2.7
	e. Strongly disagree	0	0

As a result of the understanding I have gained about the legal norms associated with preschool education and education in general, it is easier for me to recognize and identify institutions or entities linked to this type of legal knowledge in the educational context.	a. Strongly agree	133	52.2
	b. Somewhat agree	89	34.9
	c. Neither agree nor disagree	24	9.4
	d. Somewhat disagree	9	3.5
	e. Strongly disagree	0	0
As a result of the understanding I have gained about the legal norms associated with preschool education and education in general, it is easier for me to recognize and identify actors or people who are linked to this type of legal knowledge in the educational context.	a. Strongly agree	126	49.4
	b. Somewhat agree	94	36.9
	c. Neither agree nor disagree	32	12.5
	d. Somewhat disagree	3	1.2
	e. Strongly disagree	0	0
I am facilitated to understand the origin of the legal norms associated with preschool education and education in general, and which are discussed in class with mediation of the teacher in the subjects with legal content in the framework of the degree in early childhood education.	a. Strongly agree	126	49.4
	b. Somewhat agree	93	36.5
	c. Neither agree nor disagree	27	10.6
	d. Somewhat disagree	8	3.1
	e. Strongly disagree	1	0.4
It makes it easier for me to understand how I am committed to legal standards as an early childhood education graduate.	a. Strongly agree	143	56.1
	b. Somewhat agree	82	32.2
	c. Neither agree nor disagree	17	6.7
	d. Somewhat disagree	8	3.1
	e. Strongly disagree	5	2.0
I can affirm that my classmates in legal subjects can understand the language, terms and general knowledge of law associated with preschool education and education in general.	a. Strongly agree	123	50.2
	b. Somewhat agree	76	31.0
	c. Neither agree nor disagree	42	17.1
	d. Somewhat disagree	4	1.6
	e. Strongly disagree	0	0

*Dimension of skills in applying legal knowledge in general education and preschool contexts.* Table 2 shows the findings of this dimension, which refers to that set of abilities and skills for the management of situations, problem-solving, oral communication, reading and writing of texts framed in the professional field - preschool education where legal norms have incidence, connection or usefulness. In contrast to the results of the dimension on comprehension in Table 1, the percentages in the very much agree on option decrease in the dimension of aptitudes.

It can be observed that most participants are in the somewhat agree option for the items of the skills dimension. Thus, respondents perceive that they can: 1) employ legal knowledge relevant to preschool education in contexts of professional practice (54.3% somewhat agree and 30.5% strongly agree), 2) solve problems in the field of the teaching profession with the support of relevant and valuable educational, legal norms (54.1% somewhat agree and 31.8% strongly agree), and 3) incorporate concepts and expressions of a legal nature in discourses associated with the profession and education (49.4% somewhat agree and 25.9% strongly agree). Likewise, it should be noted that there is a significant percentage of students who do not feel they have developed these skills (neither agree nor disagree, somewhat disagree and strongly disagree): situation management (15.2%), problem-solving (13.1%) and management/elaboration of discourses (24.7%).

The other abilities and skills also show strengths from the perception of most of the participating students: 1) reading and understanding texts associated with the teaching profession with legal content of a legal nature (47.1% somewhat agree and 29.8% strongly agree), and 2) writing texts associated with the profession or education with the support of legal elements (47.1% somewhat agree and 27.1% strongly agree). However, there is little development in these areas for 23.2% of the participants in reading comprehension and 18.8% of the students in writing.

Table 2. Results of the skills dimension in applying legal knowledge in general education and preschool contexts.

<i>Item</i>	<i>Options</i>	<i>No</i>	<i>%</i>
I feel that I can use knowledge of a legal nature relevant to preschool education in the professional field of training and management of situations.	a. Strongly agree	78	30.5
	b. Somewhat agree	139	54.3
	c. Neither agree nor disagree	28	10.9
	d. Somewhat disagree	9	3.5
	e. Strongly disagree	2	0.8
I can solve problems in the teaching profession where educational, legal standards are relevant and useful.	a. Strongly agree	81	31.8
	b. Somewhat agree	138	54.1
	c. Neither agree nor disagree	28	11.0
	d. Somewhat disagree	7	2.7
	e. Strongly disagree	1	0.4
I feel that I can incorporate concepts or expressions of a legal nature in the teaching and professional discourse.	a. Strongly agree	66	25.9
	b. Somewhat agree	126	49.4
	c. Neither agree nor disagree	45	17.6
	d. Somewhat disagree	17	6.7
	e. Strongly disagree	1	0.4
I feel I can read and understand texts associated with the teaching profession where concepts or expressions of a legal nature are integrated.	a. Strongly agree	76	29.8
	b. Somewhat agree	120	47.1
	c. Neither agree nor disagree	42	16.5
	d. Somewhat disagree	14	5.5
	e. Strongly disagree	3	1.2
I feel that I can write texts associated with my profession or linked to education with support in legal norms and concepts, for example, essays, analyses, opinions and others.	a. Strongly agree	69	27.1
	b. Somewhat agree	120	47.1
	c. Neither agree nor disagree	50	19.6
	d. Somewhat disagree	15	5.9
	e. Strongly disagree	1	0.4
I can affirm that my classmates in the legal subjects have developed problem-solving skills, situation management, writing and reading texts where educational, legal norms are applied.	a. Strongly agree	93	36.5
	b. Somewhat agree	114	44.7
	c. Neither agree nor disagree	38	14.9
	d. Somewhat disagree	9	3.5
	e. Strongly disagree	1	0.4

*Motivation dimension towards learning legal knowledge relevant to the field of general and preschool education.* Table 3 shows the questionnaire results regarding the motivation of students towards legal topics related or connected to general and preschool education. Again, positive results similar to that of the first dimension of understanding are evident. In general, the participants consider that, as a result of the subjects with legal content taken, they are motivated to 1) read texts on general and preschool education with legal content or approaches (53.3% strongly agree and 32.5% somewhat agree), 2) promote the learning of legal knowledge related to general and preschool education (47.1% strongly agree and 36.1% somewhat agree), and 3) promote autonomous and independent learning in these topics (50.6% strongly agree and 38.8% somewhat agree). In addition, it is observed that between 10.6% and 16.5% of the participants do not feel motivated and that the percentage decreases in comparison with the other items when asked about their perception concerning the motivation of their classmates in these subjects (42.7% somewhat agree and 38.0% strongly agree), and 19.3% even consider that their classmates are not motivated.

Table 3. Results of the dimension of motivation to learn legal knowledge relevant to the field of general education and preschool education.

<i>Item</i>	<i>Options</i>	<i>No</i>	<i>%</i>
I feel motivated to read texts based on legal norms associated with my profession and the field of education due to the legal courses I have taken.	a. Strongly agree	136	53.3
	b. Somewhat agree	83	32.5
	c. Neither agree nor disagree	22	8.6
	d. Somewhat disagree	8	3.1
	e. Strongly disagree	6	2.4
I feel motivated to learn legal knowledge associated with the profession and the field of education due to the legal subjects taken.	a. Strongly agree	120	47.1
	b. Somewhat agree	92	36.1
	c. Neither agree nor disagree	30	11.8
	d. Somewhat disagree	12	4.7
	e. Strongly disagree	1	0.4
I am motivated by the legal knowledge associated with the profession and the field of education; therefore, I promote independent and autonomous learning.	a. Strongly agree	129	50.6
	b. Somewhat agree	99	38.8
	c. Neither agree nor disagree	26	10.2
	d. Somewhat disagree	0	0
	e. Strongly disagree	1	0.4
I can affirm that my classmates in the legal subjects are motivated to read texts related to preschool education with legal content and independent learning of legal knowledge.	a. Strongly agree	97	38.0
	b. Somewhat agree	109	42.7
	c. Neither agree nor disagree	42	16.5
	d. Somewhat disagree	6	2.4
	e. Strongly disagree	1	0.4

*Dimension relevance of legal knowledge for comprehensive training and the practice of the teaching profession.* Table 4 evidences the last findings of the study related to the participants' perceptions regarding the relevance of this type of legal topic associated with education and therefore, the importance of multidisciplinary training with the incorporation of subjects of a legal nature in early childhood education programs. This is the component with the best results in comparison with the



other dimensions because the students consider that the legal knowledge and legal contents associated with education in general and preschool, and which were the object of discussion in the subjects, are relevant and necessary for comprehensive training (56.9% strongly agree and 36.1% somewhat agree), the teaching practice (60.8% strongly agree and 29.8% somewhat agree) and the exercise of citizenship (62.0% strongly agree and 22.4% somewhat agree).

Table 4. Results of the dimension of the relevance of legal knowledge for comprehensive training and the practice of the teaching profession

<i>Item</i>	<i>Options</i>	<i>No</i>	<i>%</i>
I consider that the legal knowledge and contents associated with the field of preschool education, which were the object of discussion in the subjects, are relevant and necessary for my integral formation.	a. Strongly agree	145	56.9
	b. Somewhat agree	92	36.1
	c. Neither agree nor disagree	17	6.7
	d. Somewhat disagree	0	0
	e. Strongly disagree	1	0.4
I consider that the legal knowledge and contents associated with the field of preschool education, which were the object of discussion in the subjects, are relevant and necessary for my teaching practice.	a. Strongly agree	155	60.8
	b. Somewhat agree	76	29.8
	c. Neither agree nor disagree	18	7.1
	d. Somewhat disagree	4	1.6
	e. Strongly disagree	2	0.8
I believe that the legal knowledge and content associated with the field of preschool education, which were the subject of discussion in the subjects, are relevant and necessary for the active exercise of citizenship.	a. Strongly agree	158	62.0
	b. Somewhat agree	57	22.4
	c. Neither agree nor disagree	39	15.3
	d. Somewhat disagree	0	0
	e. Strongly disagree	1	0.4

## DISCUSSION

The research findings indicate that the participants of the study have a positive perception of the legal subjects taken in the framework of preschool teacher training, as well as their impact on the development of skills and abilities for the understanding of topics associated with these courses and the implementation of specific knowledge to the scenario of the teaching profession or the teacher's practice. In addition, the participating students recognize that as a result of the multidisciplinary training that links legal elements with education and pedagogy, they have strengthened their ability to understand concepts, terms, phrases or expressions used in the legal field, which is directly connected to teacher training.

In general, the results on the Likert scale of the instrument allow inferring that they also manage to approach educational, legal norms with sufficient capacity of understanding, recognizing their origin, actors and instances involved. However, a minimal percentage of students indicate that they do not feel they understand these topics sufficiently (less than 15.0% for the totality of the items). Positive academic self-perception may be due to different factors such as being working, age, and psychological well-being, among others (He et al., 2018; Jackson and Wilton, 2017; Law and Breznik, 2017), without ignoring that legal language, legal terminology and the structure in general from which law is founded is abstract and particular with a high degree of complexity (Dugalich *et al.*, 2018).

Two key points should also be highlighted as part of the positive findings. On the one hand, the motivation expressed by students regarding these interdisciplinary topics that contribute to their training more globally and holistically, and especially, how this motivation promotes the reading of interdisciplinary texts related to general and preschool education but located in legal topics regulating

the teaching activity; as well as autonomous and independent learning. On the other hand, the recognition made by teachers in training to legal topics related to general and preschool education is emphasized, which today more than ever should be assumed with responsibility and critical awareness (Garbey-Árias, 2016; Cuan & García, 2017; Abreu, Meneses & Lemus, 2019).

Now, although the results regarding the aptitudes for situation management, problem-solving, discourse elaboration, reading and writing of texts where elements of pedagogical/educational knowledge are linked to the legal aspect cannot be taken as unfavorable, it becomes peremptory to consider that these abilities and skills may be those that require better management by teachers who mediate the training in subjects with legal content. In this sense, use can be made of particular strategies in the law such as the analysis of jurisprudence, case analysis and problem-solving.

## CONCLUSIONS

It is concluded as a result of the study that in both institutions of higher education under investigation, the perceptions of the Bachelor's Degree in Early Childhood Education students are positive and favorable towards the subjects with legal or juridical content. Thus, it is inferred that the teaching has been adequate to the extent that they manage to understand legal issues associated with education in general and preschool. However, they require further deepening and exercise in applying educational regulations in contextualized scenarios. It is relevant that as a product of the training, they have been able to enhance the motivation towards learning this type of multidisciplinary topic and construct a perception of relevance and usefulness towards the educational, legal knowledge with an incidence in the exercise of the profession.

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