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OPPORTUNITIES AND CHALLENGES OF THE HYBRID MODALITY IN HIGHER EDUCATION

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Abstract

A systematic review was conducted on the production and publication of research papers on the study of the opportunities and challenges of the Hybrid Modality in Higher Education in Latin America between 2018 and 2022 under the PRISMA approach (Preferred Reporting Items for Systematic reviews and Meta-Analyses). The purpose of the analysis proposed in this document was to know the main characteristics of the publications registered in Scopus and WoS databases during the and its scope in the study of the proposed variables, achieving the identification of 213 publications. Thanks to this first identification, it was possible to refine the results through the keywords entered in the search button of both platforms, which were HYBRID MODALITY, HIGHER EDUCATION, reaching a total of 12 documents, already excluding duplicates and those that did not meet the analysis criteria. The identified scientific publications were analyzed, hoping to know the main characteristics within the execution of research projects concerning the study of the advantages and disadvantages of the implementation of Hybrid Education strategies in higher education, highlighting the relevance of the institutionalization of hybrid strategies in vocational training as a mechanism capable of giving greater scope to the

educational system, higher level of innovation and competitiveness within the parameters of educational quality and continuous training of teachers in the use of Information and Communication Technologies within each training program.

Keywords: Hybrid Education, Higher Education.

1. Introduction

The educational sector has been as changing as the global reality itself. Although many methodologies have indeed preserved the traditional principles in academic training, it is also true that technological advances have influenced the way educational institutions carry out their teaching processes. One of the most latent needs within the education of a nation, as a Fundamental Right defended by non-governmental organizations and the Political Constitution of each country, is its coverage. The ease and willingness with which people can access their student education, whether public or private. Therefore, one of the most efficient educational coverage strategies proposed by Dave Cormier and Bryan Alexander in Canada in 2008 is the called MOOC (*Massive Open Online Course*), supported by Technologies for Education (Lopez-Meneses & Vazques, 2020), supported by Information and Communication Technologies (ICT), which, in short, consist of the possibility of accessing virtual courses to those who, due to multiple factors, would not be able to access them in person. In this way, since its proposal, it has been possible to guarantee the possibility of accessing many academic programs, thus increasing the offer of higher education institutions. This modality opened the way to a new era in education, which would be consolidated within the modalities offered by universities worldwide, thus gaining the acceptance of both students and teachers and administrative staff, as well as the recognition of governmental actors who regulate all training activities. It should be emphasized that virtual education must have certain aspects of great importance, such as the structure of the course, the learning activities, the didactic materials to be offered, the communication guidelines and strategies, the evaluation and the role of the tutor and moderator in order to guarantee the fulfillment of the objectives of the course (Rosales-Gracia et al., 2008). in order to guarantee the fulfillment of the academic objectives.

Currently, education, as well as many other social, economic and political sectors at a global level, are undergoing one of the most devastating health crises in recent history since the World Health Organization declared a pandemic due to the disease called Covid-19, which originated in China, thus generating great uncertainty in the population (Inter-American Development Bank, 2020), thus generating great uncertainty among the population. As a result, world governments forced their citizens to mandatory and indefinite confinement so that at that time, the future was uncertain in the absence of a vaccine to mitigate the effects of such a virus. For this reason, in response to the quarantine measures imposed by the health authorities, educational institutions closed their doors indefinitely, forcing their trainers to continue teaching-learning through virtual programs and digital tools. However, today, this crisis seems to be starting to reverse thanks to the strategies implemented in terms of vaccination, promotion and prevention campaigns and the measures adopted for this purpose, so that the educational sector is once again opening its doors to continue its sessions in person, even taking into account suggestions of social isolation and personal care.

Therefore, the adaptation of hybrid education strategies is achieved, which consists of implementing face-to-face and virtual sessions within the same training program, i.e., the alternation suggested by the authorities is applied where it is proposed that the contents of the subjects can be seen under the modalities included in the virtual and face-to-face strategies, namely, face-to-face, synchronous virtual (sessions in real-time), asynchronous virtual (assignment of academic commitments without real-time supervision by the trainers), face-to-face-virtual (face-to-face sessions with the real-time transmission in digital programs that students can access from different sites through their electronic devices), among others (De Obesso & Nuñez, 2020); (Hernández-Suárez et al, 2022). Therefore, it is necessary to know what has been the reality in which teachers and students of higher education develop within this new teaching modality, as well as their opportunities and challenges, through the documentary analysis applied to the set of publications identified through high-impact journals indexed in Wos and Scopus databases by Latin American institutions during the period between 2018 and the first three quarters of 2022.

2. General Objective

To analyze from a bibliometric and bibliographic perspective, the production of research papers on the variable Hybrid Educational Modalities, Challenges and Opportunities in Latin American Higher Education during the period 2018-2022.

3. Methodology

The present research is of a qualitative type. According to Hernández et al. (2015), qualitative approaches correspond to researchers that perform the procedure of obtaining information to review and interpret the results obtained in such studies; for this purpose, the search for information was carried out in the Scopus and Wos databases through the words HYBRID MODALITY, HIGHER EDUCATION.

3.1 Research design

The research design proposed for this research was the Systematic Review, which involves a set of guidelines to carry out the analysis of the data collected, framed in a process that began with the codification until the visualization of theories (Strauss & Corbin, 2016). On the other hand, it is stated that the text corresponds to a descriptive narrative because it is intended to find out how the levels of the variable effect; and systematic because after reviewing the educational material obtained from the scientific journals, the theories on knowledge management were analyzed and interpreted (Hernández et al., 2015).

The results of this search are processed as shown in Figure 1, which expresses the PRISMA technique for identifying documentary analysis material. It was taken into account that the publication was published during the period between the years 2018 and 2022, limited to scientific production originating in institutions of Latin American countries and open to any area of knowledge, as well as any publication, namely: Journal Articles, Reviews, Book Chapters, Book, among others.

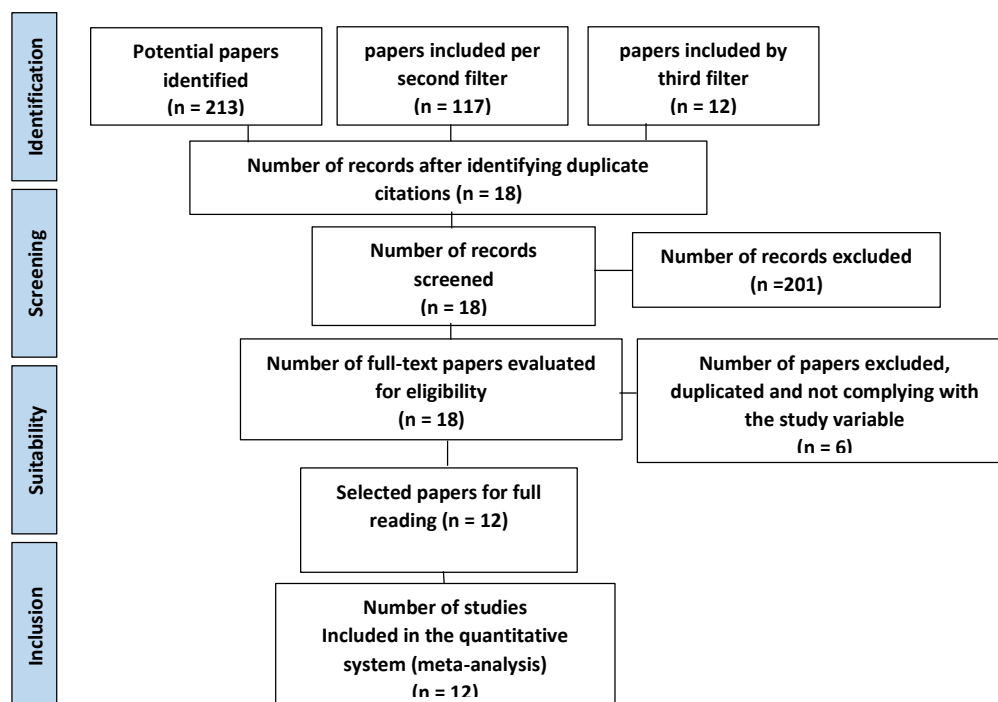


Figure 1. Flow diagram of systematic review performed under the PRISMA technique (Moher et al., 2009).

Source: Own elaboration; Based on the proposal of the Prisma Group (Moher et al., 2009).

4. Results

Table 1 shows the results after applying the search filters related to the methodology proposed for this research after recognizing the relevance of each referenced work.

No.	TITLE OF THE RESEARCH	AUTHOR/YEA R	COUNTRY	TYPE OF STUDY	INDICATION
1	<i>Playing the innovation subsidy game: Experience, clusters, consultancy, and networking in regional innovation support.</i>	Pulgar, J., Ramírez, D., Umanzor, A., Candia, C., & Sánchez, I. (2022).	CHILE, UNITED STATES	QUALITATIVE	SCOPUS
	<i>Health and educational perceptions conditioned by the COVID-19 pandemic: international exchange of teaching experiences, 2021</i>	Sedano, Carlos Alberto Calderón Send mail to Sedano C.A.C.;Núñez, Miriam Liz Hinojosa;Rojas, Davy Dario Veli;Rodríguez, María Nelly Castillo (2022)	PERU	QUALITATIVE	SCOPUS
	<i>Implementing and Evaluating Hybrid Classes in a Biostatistics Course for Dentistry</i>	Paiva, C. V., Cantarutti, C., & García-Huidobro, R. (2021, December).	CHILE	QUALITATIVE	SCOPUS
	<i>Emergency Remote Teaching Model for Massive Programming Classes</i>	Vásquez, A., Meza, F., & Barrera, P. G. (2021, October).	CHILE	QUALITATIVE	SCOPUS
5	<i>Teachers' Opinions on a Teaching-Learning Models during the Covid-19's Pandemic</i>	Pacheco-Cortés, A. M., & Montes-Ponce, D. (2020, December).	MEXICO	QUANTITATI VE	SCOPUS

	<i>The dynamism of distance and hybrid education in latin america and brazil</i>	Vitale, C.R., dos Santos, K.E.E., Torres, P.L. (2020).	BRAZIL	QUALITATIVE	SCOPUS
	<i>Supporting decision-making processes on blended learning in higher education: literature and good practices review</i>	Galvis, Á. H. (2018).	COLOMBIA	QUALITATIVE	SCOPUS
	HIGHER EDUCATION AND ITS HYBRID TEACHING-LEARNING PROCESS	Infante, RCH; Miranda, MEI and Lomas, CRH (2022-JUNE)	ECUADOR	QUANTITATIVE/QUALITATIVE	WOS
	CONTINUING EDUCATION, MANAGER OF LEARNING AND KNOWLEDGE IN HIGHER EDUCATION	Melendez Tamayo, C. F., & Flores Rivera, L. D. (2018).	ECUADOR	QUALITATIVE	WOS
	<i>A hybrid teaching and learning model for addressing the educational crisis caused by the COVID-19</i>	Montilva, J (Montilva, Jonas) [1] ; Celis, MT (Celis, Maria-Teresa) [2] , [3] ; Levy, PR (Rosenweig Levy, Patricia) [4] ; Benitez, S (Benitez, Sandra) [5] ; Silva, A (Silva, Analia) [5] ; Carrillo, D (Carrillo, Dayana) (2020)	VENEZUELA	QUALITATIVE	WOS
	<i>Effects of COVID-19 on the Perception of Virtual Education in University Students in Ecuador; Technical and Methodological Principles at the Universidad Tecnica Particular de Loja</i>	Torres-Díaz, J. C., Rivera-Rogel, D., Beltrán-Flandoli, A. M., & Andrade-Vargas, L. (2022).	ECUADOR	QUALITATIVE	WOS

exposed in the works related to the impact of Covid-19 regarding the change of modality from face-to-face to virtual; in fact, the word Covid-19 is also found among the study variables used most frequently in the identified research. The variables associated with this research group refer to studies on Simulators, Health Education, Distance Learning, Stress, Emotional Overload, Uncertainty, and Emotion Management, which have been manifestations associated with the new study modality imposed as a measure to mitigate the effects of Covid-19.

4.2 Discussion

The purpose of this article was to analyze, from a systematic perspective, the authors' contribution through their publications to the study of the opportunities and challenges evidenced through the Hybrid Modality in Higher Education in Latin America. In this way, it is possible to affirm that the publications indicated in the body of this document have carried out research at different levels whose findings contribute to the generation of new knowledge regarding the variables proposed for this study. Thus great contributions are identified as contemplated in the article entitled "The dynamism of distance and hybrid education in Latin America and Brazil" (Vitale et al., 2020) whose purpose has been to show how the hybrid modality in education has been consolidated in different experiences and that it should not be considered as a static model, on the contrary. This model invites to transform the context in which it is increasingly inserted, with the results of academic reflections on proposals implemented as the Inverted Classroom, and use of various applications, among others, in Higher Education in different countries. However, for the authors of the article entitled "Structured system for the management of virtual learning of the metropolitan university of Ecuador," implementing the hybrid modality of the virtual learning system in the metropolitan university of Ecuador has been a challenge (Espinoza et al., 2020). Implementing the hybrid modality in education must be based on a structured system that articulates teamwork between educational management, faculty, technical staff and trainers for continuous training and constant updating. Thus, although it can be argued that this modality can be flexible and not be taken as a rigid model, the bases from which the programs and strategies for its institutionalization derive must have certain rigid logistics that are capable of dealing with any novelty presented in the context of the teaching-learning processes. This can be explained more concretely in the article "Higher education and its hybrid teaching-learning process" (Infante et al., 2022), whose objective was to analyze the situation of the process, in the Hybrid Modality, in the context of collaboration in higher education, looking at the hybrid modality, as the answer to the scientific development of the globalized world. The authors agree with the need to maintain constant training of teachers through continuing education so that they have the tools to provide quality education to their students through the correct use of the technology available for this purpose. Current education, as mentioned above, has evolved along with the evolution of ICT since many of its processes are based on the use of digital tools for the communication of information, which undoubtedly represented recently, a "lifesaver" to the fulfillment of academic objectives despite the difficult health situation faced due to the pandemic caused by Covid-19, as highlighted in the article entitled "A hybrid model of teaching and learning to address the educational crisis caused by COVID-19", whose purpose was to propose a model of teaching and learning to address the educational crisis caused by COVID-19 (Montilva et al., 2020). The purpose was to propose a model of hybrid or blended teaching-learning systems to help continue the educational process in universities, despite the measures imposed to mitigate the effects of the disease, among which was the mandatory restrictive quarantine that forced the confinement of all persons except for certain exceptions established by each government.

The transition from face-to-face to virtual mode was experienced abruptly, without allowing an escalation of strategies and a migration to virtuality that would allow an ideal process of adaptation for both teachers and students, which represented a challenge, but from which derives an important advance in terms of attention to the coverage of higher education, which represents the hybrid model that combines face-to-face and virtual modalities, and adapts to the characteristics of each subject or teaching activity. It is important to mention that the hybrid models of education in the training of Latin American professionals conceive the complexity implicit in the articulation of face-to-face and virtual strategies; however, it highlights the importance of keeping both teachers and students updated, in the

use of new technologies for information and communication, as an important precedent to future generations with new and better learning techniques, providing quality to professional training.

5. Conclusions

This review article concludes by highlighting the importance of knowing the updated state of the bibliography published in databases such as Scopus or WoS regarding studying the opportunities and challenges of the Hybrid Modality in Latin American Higher Education. The reactivation of scientific publications on the subject mentioned above stands out, within the framework of the Covid-19 pandemic that forced universities to migrate from the face-to-face to the virtual modality as a response to the restrictive measures imposed by the different governments at a global level in order to reduce the number of infections and deaths caused by the same disease. It is important to emphasize that the challenges faced by universities in the implementation of the hybrid modality in professional training are reduced to preserve and increase the levels of educational quality in the face of the new needs identified in students today, as well as keeping the teaching staff updated through a good continuous training that manages to strengthen digital skills in them so that they can execute all the plans and strategies designed to meet the objectives set by the administrative management of both public and private universities. Among the opportunities that the authors have identified is the continuous construction of programs designed to adapt academic content to the hybrid modality, which represents a growth in innovation and competitiveness for educational centers in response to the growing demand for education globally and, of course at the Latin American level, which also represents for government actors, the fulfillment of state objectives among which is the attention and coverage in education to disadvantaged populations. This last point is one of the issues of greatest attention among the scientific community since, in support of public institutions, they have sought to design strategies that allow more and more people who, due to their socioeconomic reality, cannot have access to private institutions. Because of infrastructure, many are left out of the programs due to a lack of facilities to enter the training programs. Before this, the hybrid modality presented the possibility of expanding coverage as mentioned above; however, it is necessary to invest in connectivity and accessibility to digital devices to meet academic commitments. The above is part of a whole universe of possibilities, challenges and opportunities that new technologies bring with them in higher education, so knowing the current state of scientific production on this topic allows for building sufficient theories to generate interest in the scientific community and support the materialization of new knowledge.

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