

University Corporate Governance in the Literature From 2019 to 2024

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Anti-pandemic policies impacted the governance of Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) through confinement and distancing strategies. Such an impact was observed in the identity, reputation, and image of the HEI in the face of the health crisis. The objective of this work was to establish an empirical contrast between the theoretical structure consulted regarding the evaluations of summaries published from 2019 to 2024 by judges. A documentary, cross-sectional, and retrospective study was carried out with a sample of sources indexed in international repositories. The results demonstrate that image and age regulate the impact of identity and income on reputation. In relation to the state of the art, it is recommended to extend the study to sociocultural, demographic, economic, and educational variables in order to anticipate the transition from university governance to corporate governance.

Keywords: COVID, governance, model, nodes, neural networks

Introduction

The history of governance is extensive and complex, as it has evolved over centuries in different cultures and contexts (Delanty & Mota, 2017). In ancient times, several civilizations, such as the Greeks and Romans, developed systems of government based on citizen participation. Athenian democracy is a prominent example, where citizens had the opportunity to participate in political decision-making.

During the Middle Ages in Europe, feudalism was a predominant system of government (Foss, Husted, & Michailova, 2010). Feudal lords ruled over their territories, and authority was highly decentralized. More centralized forms of government were also seen in empires such as the Byzantine or Chinese.

The Renaissance and the Enlightenment in Europe brought with them a change in the conception of authority (Tiwana, 2009). Ideas emerged about individual rights, separation of powers, and government based on the consent of the governed. Philosophers such as John Locke and Montesquieu influenced the political theories that underpinned future forms of government.

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The 18th century witnessed important revolutions that transformed the political landscape (Kutoupis, Kyriakogkonas, Pazarskis, & Davidopoulos, 2021). The American Revolution (1775-1783) and the French Revolution (1789-1799) played a fundamental role in the establishment of republics and the enshrinement of democratic principles.

During the 19th century, the emergence of nationalist movements and the formation of nation-states influenced the evolution of governance (Martínez-Córdoba, Benito, & García-Sánchez, 2021). Industrialization also led to changes in the social and economic structure, affecting forms of government.

The 20th century saw the expansion and contraction of various forms of government, from representative democracy to authoritarian and totalitarian regimes (Gostin, Moon, & Meier, 2020). The two world wars and the Cold War played a crucial role in shaping global power structures.

In the 21st century, globalization has had a significant impact on governance (Zhang, 2021). International institutions, trade treaties, and environmental issues have led to greater interconnection and cooperation between states.

The history of governance is dynamic and continues to evolve in response to contemporary challenges and societal aspirations (McGuirk, Dowling, Maalsen, & Baker, 2021). Current forms of government are the result of a long history of experiences, experiments, and adaptations throughout history. There are several theories of governance that address different aspects and approaches to how power and decision-making structures in a society should be organized and managed (Levy, 2021).

Theory was developed by philosophers such as Thomas Hobbes, John Locke, and Jean-Jacques Rousseau; this theory maintains that the legitimacy of government comes from an agreement between individuals to form a society and establish rules that govern their behavior (Hsu & Yang, 2022). The social contract establishes the basis for government authority and the relationship between the government and citizens.

Rational Choice Theory is based on the premise that individuals make rational decisions to maximize their own interests (Dutta & Fischer, 2021). Applied to governance, it suggests that institutions and policies are the result of the strategic decisions of rational actors. Game theory and economics are key tools in this approach.

Corporate Governance Theory addresses the public sphere (Hsu & Liao, 2022). It focuses on the way organizations make decisions and how those decisions are monitored and controlled. Transparency, accountability, and participation are key elements.

Participatory Governance Theory highlights the importance of citizen participation in political decision-making (Williams, 2020) and advocates for the inclusion of diverse voices and perspectives in the governance process, seeking to strengthen the legitimacy and quality of decisions made by the government.

Global Governance Theory focuses on the need for global institutions and governance mechanisms (Larionova & Kirton, 2020) and examines how international actors, such as intergovernmental organizations and NGOs, can collaborate to address global issues such as climate change, trade, and security.

Network Governance Theory describes the relationship between government and citizenship as a decentralized and collaborative process in which multiple interconnected actors, both public and private, work together to address complex problems (Ortega & Orsini, 2020). Networks of actors share information, resources, and responsibilities to achieve common objectives.

These theories provide different perspectives on how governance should be structured and function in diverse societies and contexts (Ladi & Tsarouhas, 2020). Each of them highlights specific aspects, from

legitimacy and citizen participation to efficiency and strategic decision making. There are several governance models that describe how government institutions are structured and operate (Elmarzouky, Albitar, & Hussainey, 2021). These models vary according to the degree of citizen participation, the distribution of power, and the relationship between different levels of government.

Autocratic Governance in this model, power is highly centralized in a leader or a small group of individuals (Collins, Florin, & Renn, 2022). Decision-making is carried out unilaterally and without the significant participation of civil society. Authority is often maintained through strict government control over institutions and the lack of democratic elections.

Representative Democratic Governance This model involves the election of representatives by citizens to make decisions on their behalf (Kano & Hoon, 2020). Representative democracy is based on electoral participation and the existence of institutions such as parliaments or congresses. Citizens elect their leaders, who make decisions on their behalf for a set period of time.

Direct Democracy Governance in this model, citizens participate directly in political decision-making, without the need for representatives (Jebran & Chen, 2023). Citizens vote on laws and policies directly, often through referendums or popular assemblies. This model seeks to maximize citizen participation and reduce the intermediation of representatives.

Federal Systemic Governance, power is divided between a central government and several autonomous subnational entities, such as states or provinces (Notteboom & Haralambides, 2020). Each level of government has its own sphere of authority, and there are legal provisions governing the distribution of powers and responsibilities between them.

Unitary Power Governance is centralized in a single national government, and administrative subdivisions (such as regions or provinces) have delegated authority from the central government (Dodds et al., 2020). Decision-making is usually more uniform and centralized compared to a federal system.

Corporate Responsibility Governance focuses on the structure and governance practices within organizations, whether in the public or private sector (Gao & Yu, 2020). Corporate governance involves the supervision and management of an entity to ensure accountability, transparency, and effectiveness in decision-making.

Global System Governance refers to the coordination and cooperation between international actors, such as governments, international organizations, and companies, to address global problems such as climate change, poverty, and conflict (Khatib & Nour, 2021). It seeks to establish norms and cooperation mechanisms at a global level.

These governance models offer different approaches to organizing and managing political power, and are often combined or modified according to the specific needs and circumstances of each society (Janssen & Van der Voort, 2020). Governance measurement and evaluation are crucial processes for understanding how government institutions work and how they affect society. There are various instruments and methodologies used to evaluate governance in its multiple dimensions.

Corruption Perception Index (CPI) is published annually by Transparency International, the CPI measures the perception of corruption in the public sector of different countries (Schmidt, 2020). It relies on surveys and expert assessments to assign scores to countries, providing a relative indication of transparency and integrity in public management.

African Governance Index (IAG) was developed by the Mo Ibrahim Foundation; the African Governance Index assesses multiple dimensions of governance in African countries (Shaw, Kim, & Hua, 2020). It includes indicators related to security, the rule of law, human development, and other key aspects. It provides a comprehensive view of the quality of governance in the region.

World Governance Barometer (WGI) funded by the World Bank publishes the World Governance Barometer, which includes a series of indicators covering aspects such as government effectiveness, quality of regulation, and accountability (Mather, 2020). These indicators are based on data collected from surveys of companies, citizens, and experts.

Human Development Index (HDI) is published by the United Nations Development Program (UNDP); the HDI measures human development based on indicators such as health, education, and per capita income (Jennings et al., 2021). Although it does not directly assess governance, it indirectly reflects the government's ability to provide adequate services and living conditions.

Governance Indicators of the World Bank develops several sets of indicators to evaluate different dimensions of governance, such as the quality of institutions, government effectiveness, and citizen participation (Gelter & Puauschunder, 2020). These indicators are used by researchers and policy makers to evaluate and compare the performance of countries.

The Economist Intelligence Democracy Index Unit assesses the health of democracies in different countries, taking into account factors such as the electoral process, pluralism, the functioning of government and civil liberties (Rajan et al., 2020) and provides a detailed view of the state of democracy around the world.

Citizen Satisfaction Surveys collect citizens' opinions and perceptions about the quality of public services, government transparency, and policy effectiveness (Benites & Bebbington, 2020). They provide valuable information about the population's satisfaction and trust in their government institutions.

These instruments offer diverse perspectives on governance, from the perception of corruption to the quality of institutions and citizen participation (Ullah et al., 2021). Combining these approaches can provide a more complete and accurate picture of the state of governance in a given context.

However, studies on governance perception seem to develop in a reflective rather than formative sense (Chan & Haines, 2023). That is, the history, theories, models, and instruments that measure and evaluate governance describe or explain a structure without the intention of comparing it with other processes such as corruption. In this way, the measurement of governance can be carried out in a formative sense in order to link its structure with the indicators of other phenomena that show its consolidation or crisis. This is the case of the evaluation of citizen perception regarding the capabilities of their governments. This question begins with a review of the literature.

The objective of this work was to describe the governance network reported in the literature from 2019 to 2024.

Are there significant differences between the theoretical structure of governance reported in the literature with respect to the structure observed in the present work?

Hypothesis: Given that governance is assumed to be the central axis of the public agenda in the literature from 2019 to 2024, significant differences are expected with respect to the qualifications of the respondents.

Method

A documentary, exploratory, and retrospective study was carried out with a sample of sources indexed in international repositories considering the search by keywords: “governance”, “university”, “training”, “intellectual capital”.

The Prisma systematic review format was used in order to establish a route for selecting sources, summaries, and results, as well as systematize the reporting of the dimensions of analysis according to the frequency with which they were reported during the period from 2019 to 2024 (see Annex A).

The judges who evaluated and selected the abstracts were contacted via institutional email. They were informed that the results of the study would not affect their academic status. They were presented with the objectives of the project and those responsible for carrying it out. They were informed about the specificity of their functions, as well as the non-remuneration for their participation. A focus group was organized to clarify doubts about the meanings of the concepts expressed in the summaries. In a subsequent phase, the judges evaluated the contents by assigning a value of one to the summaries positively linked to the objectives of the study, as well as -1 to the studies that did not support the purposes of the study. 0 was assigned to the results of research unrelated to the project. In a third phase, the judges were presented with the average scores of the other judges in order to reiterate or reconsider their initial evaluation.

The data were captured in Excel and processed in Jasp Version 18.0. The centrality, grouping, and structuring coefficients were estimated in order to be able to infer the learning neural network of the judges around the governance published from 2019 to 2024. Values close to unity were assumed as evidence of fit of the empirical model with respect to the theoretical models reviewed in the literature.

Results

The centrality parameters indicate that reputation and image are the nodes around which the other factors revolve (see Table 1). If all parameters are considered, reputation is the central axis of the governance learning structure evaluated by the sample with respect to the literature reviewed from 2019 to 2024.

Table 1

Centrality Measures per Variable

Variable	Network			
	Betweenness	Closeness	Strength	Expected influence
Age	-1,069	-0.280	0.744	0.880
Income	-1,069	-1,522	-1,163	-1,092
Identity	1,069	1,175	-0.440	-0.330
Reputation	0.535	0.430	-0.446	-0.671
Image	0.535	0.198	1,305	1,214

Unlike centrality, which reflects the attraction of the central node with respect to peripheral edges, clustering suggests the intermediation of a node with respect to the input and output nodes of the neural learning system. In this way, the node related to the entry is the intermediary between the system of nodes (see Table 2). It means then that the system can be created from the image and culminate in reputation. In other words, the corporate governance of the sample surveyed warns that the pandemic undermined the image of the institution and had an impact on its reputation, even though the income regulated this process.

Table 2
Clustering Measures per Variable

Variable	Network			
	Barrat	Onnela	WS ^a	Zhang
Age	-1,040	-1,286	0.000	-0.967
Income	1,268	-0.589	0.000	1,479
Identity	0.684	1,286	0.000	0.172
Reputation	0.005	0.000	0.000	0.212
Image	-0.917	0.589	0.000	-0.896

Note. ^a Coefficient could not be standardized because the variance is too small.

The structural analysis suggests that image and age are two predominant nodes in the governance learning system reported in the literature from 2019 to 2024 (see Table 3). That is, the model suggests that identity and income are the input nodes that culminate in a reputation as long as they are mediated by image and age.

Table 3
Weights Matrix

Variable	Network				
	Age	Income	Identity	Reputation	Image
Age	0.000	0.035	0.000	-0.007	0.963
Income	0.035	0.000	0.031	0.176	0.000
Identity	0.000	0.031	0.000	0.289	0.210
Reputation	-0.007	0.176	0.289	0.000	-0.056
Image	0.963	0.000	0.210	-0.056	0.000

The values of centrality, grouping, and structuring suggest the non-rejection of the hypothesis regarding the significant differences between the revised theoretical structure and the empirical model observed with a sample of judges who evaluated the summaries published from 2019 to 2024 regarding university governance and corporate.

Discussion

The contribution of this work to the state of the art lies in the establishment of a knowledge network around governance published in the literature from 2019 to 2024. The results show that the network begins with the transfer of knowledge and culminates with institutional identity. In such a process, innovation, reputation, and transparency regulate the nodes around governance as knowledge management (Chu, Cheng, & Song, 2021). In relation to the literature consulted where knowledge management is associated with the production and transfer of knowledge, the present work corroborated this relationship, although the transfer of knowledge is identified as the opening node (Cahyono, 2020). Consequently, it is recommended to extend the model towards the observation of the knowledge network in the aforementioned categories.

Studies related to university governance highlight the stigma towards institutions for knowledge management in the face of the pandemic (Sharma, Borah, & Moses, 2021). Research points to a change from university governance to corporate governance (Renda & Castro, 2020). The institutional image and reputation were reduced to a minimum expression compared to the identity of the university community that opted for the

establishment of a national unity and common front to the health crisis (Pla-Barber, Villar, & Narula, 2021). Instead, the authorities transitioned from an in-person to a virtual system without considering the willingness of the university community to participate in the fight against the pandemic (Christensen & Læg Reid, 2020). In this way, university governance was disrupted and emerged as a corporate model where personal interest prevails over the collective call to confront the pandemic.

In the present study, stigma was not a central axis of the scientific and research agenda related to the pandemic, although its discussion forces a rethinking of the management model of the health crisis in the academic field. It is recommended to follow this line of study in order to establish the reduction in the prestige of a university in the face of the pandemic. Precisely, the limits of this work lie in the sample size that is impossible to generalize in its findings. Therefore, an extension of the study to a representative sample will be pertinent in order to overcome the problem of the representative sample.

Conclusion

The objective of the study was to compare the theoretical structure of governance from 2019 to 2024 with respect to an empirical model carried out with experts. The results show the prevalence of image and age as structuring nodes of governance learning based on a review of the literature from 2019 to 2024. Such findings contravene the theory of university and corporate governance which propose that the formation of intellectual capital is generated from identity and is consolidated in the image of the institution. In an opposite sense, the observed corporate and university governance begins with identity and income to culminate with reputation through image and age. In this way, the extension of the study to sociocultural variables such as values and norms, socioeducational variables such as schooling, and socioeconomic variables such as health care is recommended in order to complement the model.

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Annex A. Prism Format

Topic Title: Brief description of the specific governance approach or topic being reviewed.

Definition of the Research Question: Clear formulation of the central question that will guide the review. What are the most effective governance models in democratic environments? How does global governance affect the solution of transnational problems?

Inclusion and Exclusion Criteria: Specification of the criteria that will determine which studies or sources will be included or excluded in the review. They may include geographical, temporal, methodological criteria, among others.

Bibliographic Search: Detailed description of the sources and search strategies used to collect relevant information. Include databases, search terms and time restrictions.

Selection of Studies/Information: Details of the study or information selection process, including the application of inclusion and exclusion criteria. It may include the initial number of studies identified, the number selected, and the reason for excluding some.

Data Extraction: Methods used to extract key data from the selected studies. Include specific variables related to governance, such as models, actors involved, results, etc.

Quality Assessment of Studies: Process to evaluate the methodological quality of the included studies. They may include specific evaluation scales, peer review, etc.

Synthesis of Results: Summary of key findings from the studies reviewed, highlighting patterns, trends and divergences in the governance literature.

Conclusions and Recommendations: General conclusion based on the synthesis of results and recommendations for future research or actions related to governance.

Limitations of the Review: Recognition of possible limitations in the review process, such as data availability, quality of included studies, etc.