

## **Integrating values in the MBA curricula: Latin American Business Schools' practices in shaping 'well-rounded' leaders<sup>1</sup>**

### **Abstract**

The paper aims to examine the question of what methodologies appear to be most effective in the teaching value-intensive contents from the educators' perspective. An empirical in-depth qualitative study was conducted. Case-based teaching has gained ground in the teaching of value-intensive courses in all sampled organizations. We posit that the use of the case method increased because B-schools were compelled to give greater emphasis to value-intensive courses, since that methodology appears to have advantages in the teaching of value-intensive contents.

### **1. Introduction**

In the last years, citizens around the world developed enhanced expectations around a more constructive role for business in society (GlobeScan, 2013). Those expectations quickly reverberated towards the educational institutions that trained business leaders. Higher education institutions from around the world partnered with the UN Secretariat of the Principles for Responsible Management Education (PRME) and the Global Compact Office, committing to internalizing sustainable practices. But materializing that paradigm shift challenged the role the traditional role of educational institutions: "the new self-understanding of business schools should not primarily be one of a training center for functional specialists, but rather one of an institution which helps to improve organizations and companies in their functionality for society" (Bieger, 2011). Going beyond the transmission of technical knowledge in order to shape "well-rounded" leaders, could not be accomplished on a *business as usual* mode, and implied substantial changes in the way B-schools had operated for decades. Despite the repeated calls for adjustments in contents and methods, little is known about *how* that should happen. A recent review of the literature on the role of the MBA in society concludes that we need "scholarship that not only criticizes and describes, but also crafts and prescribes" (Rubin & Dierdorff, 2013); that is precisely what this multiple case-study sought out to do. In this paper we take a deep into the teaching practices of the leading higher-education institutions of Latin America, who train future business leaders through MBA programs (hereafter, Lat-Am B-schools, for short). Following Stake (2005), we have structured our case study around a small number of research questions. How did these Lat-Am B-schools react to societal demands for a "rounder education", one that incorporated ethical values, environmental and social concerns more prominently? What changes in content and pedagogical methods did those expectations bring about? We sought to extract lessons from those changes, looking in detail into the question of what methodologies appear to be

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most conducive to shaping “well-rounded” leaders, from the perspective of administrators and educators belonging to Lat-Am B-schools.

## **2. Bringing Lat-Am B-schools closer to societal concerns**

Plenty of attention has been devoted to the redefinition the role of B-Schools in a socially desirable direction. A review of the literature shows many normative calls for a stronger commitment to social and environmental topics by B-schools (Hulsart & Mccarthy, 2011). From a Latin American perspective, Leme Fleury & Wood Jr argue that “business schools should look (...) to encourage the development and dissemination of knowledge related to (...) social responsibility, sustainability, entrepreneurship, and the needs of the emerging ‘bottom of the pyramid’ (...) We argue that it is necessary to educate socially conscious change agents" (2012, p. 16). A number of studies have reported on the extent to which B-Schools have actually answered to that call, integrating in their curricula courses on social responsibility, environmental sustainability and business ethics (Christensen et al 2007; Rasche, 2013). However, none of those reports included Latin American B-schools as part of their sample. On a related strand of research, many published case studies have shared good practices in the teaching of sustainability, from the authors’ perspective (Benn & Dunphy, 2009; Hazen, Cavanagh, & Bossman, 2004; Sroufe & Ramos, 2011; Viswanathan, 2012). But to-date, no empirical study has addressed the all-important question of what methodologies appear to be most effective in the teaching value-intensive contents from the educators’ perspective. The remainder of this article is divided as follows. The next section reviews the literature on pedagogy that frames the discussion on the education of civic-minded business leaders. We then report the results of an in-depth qualitative study of how leading Latin American B-schools are approaching the teaching of value-intensive courses. Based on that analysis, we articulate a set of tentative propositions. After a brief discussion of those findings, we distill a number of conclusions.

## **3. Theory review<sup>2</sup>**

The discussion of how “well-rounded leaders” --individuals willing and able to play a constructive role in society— should be educated is framed by the tradition of progressive education, whose main tenets where developed by John Dewey (1998). He questioned the artificial division between school and life, and took experience as the starting point of learning. The pedagogical value of experience is also highlighted by constructivism. Skills are not developed by exposure to theory, it claims, but constructed through a succession of practices. Piaget (1972) argued

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<sup>2</sup> This review relies heavily on an earlier theoretical paper (XX, XX, & XX, forthcoming).

that knowledge is a product of the interaction between the experience of dealing with the reality of the surrounding environment, and the thought structures that individuals develop to adapt to such an environment. Knowledge is not built in the abstract, but always from previous experiences, and learning is an opportunity to revisit our current understanding—and eventually modify it. The theory of situated cognition (Lave & Wenger, 1991) further develops the social nature of learning. While individuals are protagonists of their own learning, they need the support of other ‘partners’ around them to solve complex problems that they cannot solve individually. In this way, learning has a social and communal dimension. Those ‘others’ are a fundamental part of the environment in which learners develop and, therefore, enjoy lifelong learning (Vygotski & Cole, 1978). Within this current school of thought, knowledge is always ‘situated’: it is part and product of the activity, context, and culture in which it develops. When decontextualized and abstract, education is ineffective: it disconnects the ‘know-what’ from the ‘know-how’, as if knowledge were independent of real-life situations. For situated teaching, learning and doing are inseparable, and therefore must always be situated in their relevant context (Díaz Barriga, 2003). Hence the importance of anchoring learning in situations with which the protagonist can identify with and assign relevance to. Group discussion is a way to move forward in the construction of more complex individual understandings from the confrontation of different understandings.

#### **4. Methodology**

**Case study research strategy.** This research is rooted in the grounded theory perspective, which seeks "the discovery of theory from data systematically obtained from social research" (Glaser & Strauss, 1967, p. 2). Although the nature of grounded theory has been debated<sup>3</sup>, we follow Corbin & Strauss (1990) and Charmaz (2006), for whom in grounded theory knowledge emerges from data, and is separate from the observer. Specifically, we followed a case study research strategy (Baxter & Jack, 2008; Eisenhardt & Graebner, 2007; Eisenhardt, 1989; Stake, 2005). Such an approach was deemed valid given our research questions, that focus on the "how" and "why" of a relatively unexplored phenomenon (Yin, 2003). Case studies are rich, empirical descriptions of a phenomenon, in real-life context; case study research involves using cases to create generalizable, testable propositions, based on empirical evidence. In that sense, it falls squarely within the positivist paradigm (Eisenhardt, 1989), placing a bridge between rich qualitative evidence and mainstream deductive research (Eisenhardt & Graebner, 2007).

**Data gathering.** Our sample is composed of leading B-schools in Latin America, as per the *América Economía*

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<sup>3</sup> Some authors classify grounded theory within the positivist paradigm, but others place it in the interpretivist one (Age, 2011).

2011 ranking, the region's most influential. From that ranking, we selected the leading institutional in each of the ten most important economies in the region –in terms of its 2010 nominal GDP (International Monetary Fund, 2011).

For a complete list of the organizations sampled, see Annex 1. From each of those schools, we selected a set of three key informants, which could be considered as proxies of their organization (Lavrakas, 2008). Two of them were faculty specialized<sup>4</sup> in what we defined as "value-intensive" courses: social responsibility, environmental sustainability, business ethics (or a combination of them).

**Data analysis.** Data was coded, or "fractured" (Strauss, 1987, p. 29) in order to rearrange it into categories, with computer aided qualitative data analysis software (CAQDAS) --specifically, with the program called Dedoose. Those codes were then clustered (data reduction or distillation), through what Corbin & Strauss (1990) call "axial coding": the organization of the categories and concepts that have been developed during open coding (those come from data) into wider categories. To have a more nuanced understanding of "size effects", relative hierarchies established according to coding frequency. The use of this technique, for descriptive purposes, is well accepted within qualitative research, and does not make our methodology mixed.<sup>5</sup>Finally, we resorted to data displays (matrices, tables and concept maps), which have been acknowledged as essential steps (Maxwell, 1996; Miles & Huberman, 1984) in the search for patterns, both within and across cases.

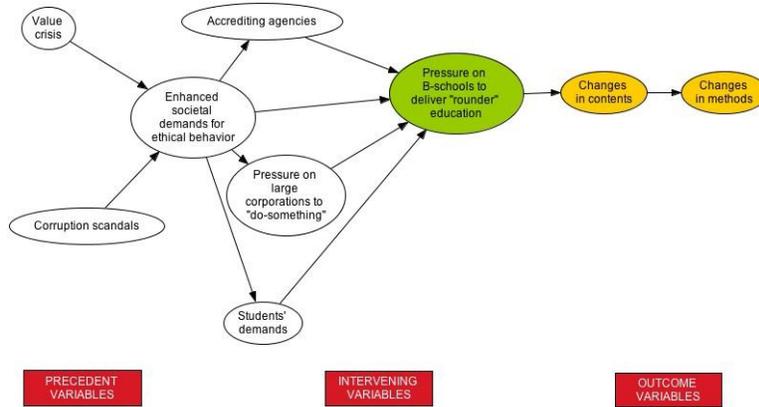
## 5. Results

When asked about how social-environmental-ethical values (SEE values, hereafter) came to be integrated in their school's curricula, interviewees describe a process heavily influenced by external pressures. This is not to deny the endogenous, mission-driven commitment of these institutions to a better society. However, when describing the adoption process, external pressures quickly came to the fore during the interviews. We now summarize those points, ordered as per frequency of coding (high to low). The conceptual map below summarizes the relations found through axial coding.

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<sup>4</sup> In this context, "specialization" means that those courses had a substantial portion of the faculty's teaching portfolio. The third was the senior manager in charge of the MBA; while in most cases this was the program's director, in a few cases we interviewed deans when these were directly involved with program management.

<sup>5</sup> "The use of numbers per se, in conjunction with qualitative methods and data, does not make a study mixed-method research. Numbers in the sense of simple counts of things (Becker's quasi statistics) are a legitimate and important sort of data for qualitative researchers" (Maxwell, 2010).



### 5.a. Enhanced societal expectations

The topic that came up most frequently is the perception of enhanced expectations around transparency and values. Words like “value crisis” or “ethical problem” came up frequently when interviewees described their context. In participants’ eyes, the process started since the 1980s and has been increasing ever since, triggered by high-profile scandals by public and corporate officials in Latin America and beyond. Interviewee E28 put it clearly: “corruption has been getting worse; thus, if we want to send well prepared students we simply cannot eschew training them in ethics (...) this has gotten stronger day by day (...) I think our context is setting the tone and imposing the agenda on universities”. The ethical component went hand-in-hand with pressures towards higher social involvement by the private sector--a force particularly intense in countries with left-of-center governments. As commented by E6, a Venezuelan educator, “I am convinced that if there is anything positive in [former President] Chávez legacy, is that we became aware of a painful social reality, different from what we and our students experience, that we had not considered, not suspected before...” In turn, this broad-based perception influenced two critical stakeholders: companies and students. Feeling the pressure to “do-something” from their own stakeholders, corporations have pushed for integration of SEV values into the MBA curricula. They may want up-to-date and locally relevant cases on successful implementation of CSR or BOP ventures, they may want to showcase their own projects, and they have demanded that kind of expertise from recruitment prospects, to internalize those dimensions into their own operations. “Companies themselves are dealing also with pressures from their own stakeholders, they want answers, and they come to business schools to obtain them” (E22). The profile of students attending an MBA has also changed: it is not necessarily an ambitious professional focused on individual success. More people came to B-

school with a wider agenda, in which “doing-good” may be play a role. Whereas it used to be that the typical employer for a newly minted Latin American MBA was a large bank or a consultancy, this is no longer the case. More and more entrepreneurs go on to form their own company, some of them with hybrid models (social enterprises, B-corporations, among others), or even not-for-profit organizations. In the words of E29, “after class some students approach me, saying 'at last I'm taking a course where my I see my own values reflected'... the thing is, they don't know how to bring this novel vision to their organizations, we need to empower them as change agents.” This finding is in line with has been reported by Datar et al. (2013). Finally, accrediting agencies appear to have played a relevant role. For leading B-schools, wearing a “crown” --as those certifications are informally called-- is a market-relevant base for differentiation. Accommodating the agencies’ requests for higher integration of SEV contents into the curricula did appear as a factor in many of the organizations sampled. E21 went as far as saying that those agencies were the single most important pressure towards increasing the role of ethics in her school’s curricula.

### ***5.b. The response of B-Schools***

As a result of those pressures and expectations, B-Schools engaged in a number of changes, both in content and pedagogical methods. Over the last years, B-schools incorporated changes, in a number of dimensions. Annex 2 summarizes in a table the broad trends found among sampled organizations. In this regard, the trend for Latin American B-schools is in line with broader trends reported elsewhere (Christensen et al., 2007; Rasche et al., 2013). A less known change in response to societal expectations has been the adjustment in methodologies carried out by B-schools in the last years, at least when it comes to teaching value-intensive courses --social responsibility, environmental sustainability and business ethics. A broad-based trend in the teaching of those courses has been the transition away from traditional, lecture-based methods, where contents are delivered top-down by a figure of central authority. These have been displaced by other methodologies, that can be grouped under the umbrella term *active learning* (Bonwell & Eison, 1991), where the person who learns is the guarantor of her own learning, and the instructor is merely the facilitator of the process. In the words of E21: "in the last five years, the trend around here has been towards more emphasis in active learning approaches, where student own their own learning, finding their own answers to the challenges posed to them; the traditional role of the professor as the class protagonist is dwindling". To provide an idea of the relative weight of the methodologies that interviewees employ in the teaching

of value-intensive courses in the collected data, Annex 3 shows frequency of coding among used methodologies. By far, the most preponderant has been the case-method. Because of this preponderance, the rest of the discussion focuses specifically on the case-method, although to some extent the observations can be extended to the others listed. The matrix below integrates quantitized data from the interviews (see 3 and 4 for full figures). Four observations are granted:

- 1. SEE values finding their way into the curricula.** While there are marked differences in boldness with which different institutions integrated S-E-E values in their curricula, most of them are located in the upper half--showing that none remained indifferent to societal demands for SEE contents into the fabric of managerial education.
- 2. Different levels of institutional attachment to the CM.** The larger disparities in results appear in the level of institutional commitment to the CM methodology. While some institutions have the CM engrained in their mission and brand identities, for others is just one more tool among many. They may support case training, but a par with other approaches. These differences are represented by the substantial differences in bubbles' sizes.
- 3. CM emerges as the predominant way of teaching SEE-intensive courses.** Despite these disparities in institutional attachment to case teaching, most bubbles fall in the right half of the chart, consistently showing relatively high levels of adoption of the CM by SEE faculty. For example, SEE faculty use of the CM at FGV or ITAM, with little or no institutional commitment to the CM is comparable to that of faculty at IAE or IESA, which have a mission-driven commitment to the methodology. The clearest outlier is the UAI, which scores low on all three dimensions.
- 4. SEE content and CM go hand-in-hand.** Perhaps the most interesting point emerging from the matrix is that SEE content and CM method appear to go hand-in-hand, as bubbles tend to cluster in the upper-right quadrant, that denotes both relatively high level of use of the CM by faculty who teach SEE (social, environmental, ethics) intensive courses, and relatively high level of integration of those contents with traditional courses. While analyzing data, we found this correlation intriguing.

The next section accounts for the reasons behind this correlation, in the view of the interviewees. Moreover, we posit that there may be a causal link between them. In other words, perhaps the CM is prevalent in SEE courses, because it is particularly well suited to do so.

**Figure 1: Integration of value-intensive courses in the curricula and use of the case method**

**Note:** the size of the bubbles reflects the degree of institutional commitment to the case method. See Annex 4 for the figure and how they were established.

### ***5.c. Value-intensive courses and the case method***

When asked for the reasons why the case-method was prevalent in value-teaching courses, interviewees coalesced around a group of arguments. We list those arguments below, illuminated by the findings of relevant literature. On that basis, we craft tentative propositions that articulate generalizations based on empirical data with previous findings from relevant literatures, as it is customary in case study research (Baxter & Jack, 2008). The data suggests that higher integration of SEE values in the curricula and the increased use of the case method, are not only correlated; there could be a relation of causality between both. The rest of the section tests a general proposition:

*P: The case method is particularly apt for value-intensive courses.*

#### **Changing basic attitudes**

In the views of interviewees, the case method is particularly fit to generate change in students' values, attitudes, and basic beliefs, which will form the foundation of their world views and professional identities –what Datar, Garvin, & Cullen call the “being” component of education (2011). MBA classes are learning communities, where “learning” goes way beyond the formal content. During those formative years, MBA's classroom experience can have a strong influence in students' basic orientations. For clarity sake, attitudes are defined as "a state of mind or a feeling; a disposition." It is a natural inclination to perceive things in a certain way, based on values or beliefs. While a skill necessarily involves action (we define the concept as "the quality of being able to do something") an individual's attitudes can show even if she refrains from any action.

Tolerance and empathy. Latin American MBA students do not find natural to challenge their peers' views. In cross-cultural studies Latin American nations tend to cluster towards the lowest end of the individualism scale (Hofstede, 2001). High group cohesion tends to foster groupthink, and it is often associated with low tolerance to dissent and a tendency towards uniformity (Hart, 1991; Janis, 1972, 1983). Yet, controversy and dissent are built into the very idea of case discussion; through successive iterations, students become familiar with the dynamics of respectful dissent. “In my opinion, one of the attitudes that is most changed through case discussion is how students relate to each other” (E24). The case method builds knowledge collectively; those who participate in a case discussion rarely

leave the classroom with the same perspectives they had beforehand. Individual differences are recognized and encouraged (a good discussion of a case never builds on a unique solution), but the discussion of differences becomes part of lateral learning among peers. By recognizing each other's views and having each student place herself "in the shoes" of other peers (Brown, Sautter, Littvay, Sautter, & Bearnes, 2010). "The case method teaches a highly valuable skill vis-à-vis society, which is to be exposed to a variety of opinions, to debate within the context of respect in the quest of truth" (E8).

Trust and reciprocity. From the iterative and sustained process exchange of ideas and experiences, students learn from each other and develop personally and professionally (Lave & Wenger, 1991). This development is only possible when based on mutual respect between members of a stable and committed group. Strangers can sustain a case discussion, but the method works best when group members know what to expect from each other. When groups internalize the values of respect and reciprocity as standards of behavior, they build confidence and facilitate cooperative working relationships (Lewis, 2008). Whereas in the first class sessions, interventions tend to be tentative, as the course progresses participants tend to be bolder, knowing that they are operating in a safe context, where "it is OK to defy conventional wisdom" in defense of their points of view. Successive iterations of group interaction through this set of rules will foster the bundle of "trust, norms and reciprocity" that can eventual form the basis for citizen cooperation to address community problems (Putnam, 1993). "Only through an ambience of trust and safety, you create the conditions for students to develop self-confidence, the courage to make a stand and be accountable for their positions" (E6). To wrap up this section, we craft a subordinate tentative proposition:

*P1: The case method is particularly apt for value-intensive courses due to its capacity to change students' basic attitudes.*

### **Critical thinking**

One of the most valued attributes of the case method, according to interviewees, is its capacity to generate critical thinking on students. "If we really want to stimulate critical thinking on our students, then the case method becomes a highly direct tool to that end" (E9). This methodology is seen as encouraging critical thinking because "as opposed to the traditional method, the professor has no monopoly on truth" (E11). As E6 put it, "there isn't a professor unleashing the truth on you... rather there is discussion where many people come to question their previously held views." There is no single definition of critical thinking, but at its core, it has been associated with skepticism about

existing truths, authority, and conventions, which leads to the identification of underlying assumptions in knowledge claims (Antonacopoulou, 2010; Caproni & Arias, 1997; French & Tracey, 2010; Neville, 2007; Whatley & Dyck, 1999). According to interviewees, case discussion promotes that. In the words of E26, “in the essence, what we want is not ‘give truth’ to our students, but to instill in them the intellectual habit of questioning, making her a critical person”. Critical thinking also emerged disguised in the way of other skills, as mentioned below. Based on these findings, we craft the following subordinate tentative proposition:

*P2: The case method is particularly apt for value-intensive courses due to its capacity to trigger critical thinking in participating students.*

### **Teaching values with cases: moral reasoning**

Civic virtues and ethical values can be learned, but they can hardly be transmitted top-down (Piper et al., 1993). Moreover, strictly speaking, they cannot be taught; they are difficult to encapsulate in a textbook or a spreadsheet. This inner exploration in which responses are not offered from above, but emerge from iterative interactions, prompts students “to philosophical awareness and possibly even to a philosophical reflection” (Gini, 1985, p. 352). According to interviewees, what they seek through case discussion is to enable this type of inner examination: “it’s about leading them to decide where they stand on any given ethical issue; that is the whole point” (E3). In the words of E18: “we do not really teach them values; what we do is to have them face a number of dilemmas through the case.” Or, in the words of E22: “what is really important here is to engage them in critical examination of their ethical behavior.” E26 elaborated on this point, when explaining how she goes about moral reasoning: “it isn’t about giving you the answers (...) but it isn’t about throwing out the questions and walking away, either. It’s about provoking you with difficult questions, and accompanying you as you go through the process of figuring out your answers.” Some interviewees were specific about the effectiveness of the process. E28: “I’ve had true conversions in my courses; I’ve had people really questioning their actions, their moral drives... some even left their jobs. That’s a true measure of success; not because I want my students to leave their jobs, but I do want them to become agents of change.” In the same line: “I’ve had students telling me that a given discussion had removed the ground under their feet, that they felt battered by their own self-examination of past behavior” (E6). Self-aware students are those able to question their reasons and practices (Antonacopoulou, 2010). Based on these findings, we craft the following subordinate tentative proposition:

**P3:** *The case method is particularly apt for value-intensive courses due to its capacity to enable self-reflection on the individual's own values.*

### **Practice-oriented skills development**

The iterative use of the case method enables the development of highly relevant practical skills --the “doing” component of education (Datar et al., 2011). The most widely cited is the capacity to **debate**, which entails ordering facts (separating the essential from the superfluous), finding relevant data, analyzing it (through quantitative and qualitative tools) and articulating arguments grounded in the evidence. “I don’t know about other countries, but in this country, where there is a culture of not delivering feedback, of not confronting other people’s ideas, the case method allows us each to develop a more active debating atmosphere” (E22). The ability to evaluate evidence, distinguish fact from opinion, identify holes in an argument, and determine if cause and effect has been established has been identified as a signal of critical thinking (French & Tracey, 2010). This debating skill is highly relevant to managers, and is otherwise difficult to develop: “Debating is like a muscle that you can only grow by exercising it (...) This is basically what they’ll have to do in real life” (E28). Many identified a related habit: that of making **facts-based decisions**. The ability to use a set of skills to effectively solve problems through rational decisions has also been associated with critical thinking (Reid & Anderson, 2012). Some consider this habit a valuable second-best: the closest you can get to having actual experience: "a way to develop applied skills that you couldn't actually develop before having a successful career as a manager" (E9). E28 articulated this point clearly: “The [case] methodology enables ‘prudential learning’, or the habit of making decisions that lack a clear technical basis. There are no theories that will be of help; you cannot give a book and tell them ‘go figure what the answer is.’”

Another critical skill that emerged as promoted by the CM is the capacity to engage in **active listening**. The iterative practice of case discussion enables the basic habit of listening to each other, in a patient and orderly fashion—as opposed to the cacophony of simultaneous interventions. The case method offers incentives to develop the capacity for careful listening: even if I disagree with what I’m hearing, it is most likely that your intervention will hold a seed of truth that I will then be able to use for my own purposes. Thus, each participant can build on the contribution of others, and the group collectively advances its understanding of the topic at hand. In the words of E25: “What we enforce during case discussion are basic rules, such as listening respectfully to each other... it’s not like I need to say ‘Let’s work on respect...!’ No, it is tacit and implicit in the class dynamic.” Another valued skill is teamwork.

Usually, case preparation is carried out in groups, and case discussion, by definition is always a collaborative collective endeavor. As E27 put it, very eloquently: “Because the case needs to be cracked in teams, you don’t hold back: you need to persuade others, you need to prepare for group discussion, you need to make yourself heard and listen to your peers’ arguments...” The literature agrees that promoting horizontal relations in the classroom and encouraging students to actively engage with their peers and instructors in meaning-making not only enhances the possibility of learning content, but develops skills, attitudes and values (Dewey, 1998; Greenhalgh, 2007; Herried, 2011; Merseeth, 1994; Winston, 1999). Based on these findings, we craft the following subordinate tentative proposition:

*P5: The case method is particularly apt for value-intensive courses due to its capacity to generate practice-oriented skills that will be valuable in the workplace.*

### **The case method and situated knowledge**

Knowledge is always ‘situated’: it is part and product of the activity and context where it develops. When knowledge is decontextualized and abstract, education is ineffective (Díaz Barriga, 2003). Hence the importance of anchoring learning in situations with which the protagonist can identify with and assign relevance to. The case method excels at anchoring learning in real world situations, in less-than perfect contexts that resemble the ones that students will find themselves in after they leave the program –“the world is not as elegant as some finance models (...) The case method allows us to place students in a world that is full of greys, where compromises need to be made” (E4). This attribute is useful on two dimensions. First, it captures students’ interest, as they are placed in dilemmas that they can relate to. Second, the knowledge that comes from the exercise is closely anchored in reality, thus highly situated. Bringing knowledge to life can also ease learning. This is particularly useful in subjects that otherwise could be dense or dry when not applied to a real life situation. “I’ve found the case method to be useful in having students commit to the subject [of business ethics], because it is not an easy sell, specially for regular MBA students. So I need from the perspective of case studies anchored in real situations, so that they can see what is going on and relate to the topic” (E22). Based on these findings, we craft the following subordinate tentative proposition:

*P7: The case method is particularly apt for value-intensive courses due to its capacity to make tangible and real abstract concepts.*

### **Internalizing knowledge**

Active methodologies allow participants to internalize learning more effectively (Dale, 1954). The case method seems to be effective in that regard: "just *knowing* something leaves a trace, but building a position through case discussion leaves a profound mark in participants" (E10). This is particularly effective while teaching value-intensive issues: "in accounting courses, we focus on giving them tools and having students memorize them; in CSR on the other hand we need students to really appropriate knowledge, to have them reflect on the issues, internalize them, discuss about available options..." (E25). E13 adds: "when it comes to arguing ethical positions, active commitment with the case discussion process leaves an indelible mark on these youngsters". E17 summarizes the concept: "when we internalize a concept and increase our understanding of reality, we transform ourselves". Based on these findings, we craft the following subordinate tentative proposition:

**P6:** *The case method is particularly apt for value-intensive courses due to its capacity to facilitate the internalization of knowledge.*

### **Awareness of self and others**

The case method seeks to develop action-oriented analytical skills, which will factor in all relevant data and consider the impact of those decisions on others, society at large, and the environment. The knowledge these discussions seek to create are not mere ideas, but rather "knowledge of consequence", conditional and composed of if-then statements (Hobbes, 1909, p. 348). Case discussion can bring clarity about "how you think the world works, and what the effects of what you intend to do will be (...) making you realize that perhaps the decision may be wonderful from a financial perspective, but it will imply collateral consequences in the life of actual people" (E6). Self-awareness, understood as being accountable for one's decisions (Antonacopoulou, 2010), enables students to be more thoughtful contributors to their organizations and societies (Caproni & Arias, 1997). This habit is extremely useful for those teaching value-intensive courses, where there are not a-priori pre-established answers. Particularly, it puts students in the habit of having to balance economic, social, ethical and environmental aspects of their decisions. In the words of E27: "Case discussion enables you to deal with complexity... When you need to weave different variables, when you need to factor in different viewpoints, where there isn't a single solution, this methodology is particularly appropriate." The ability to consider alternatives to the status quo, and recognize underrepresented views has also been identified as components of critical thinking (Caproni & Arias, 1997; Neville, 2007; Whatley & Dyck, 1999). To carry out such reflection, students need to consider multiple viewpoints, balance conflicting

interests at stake and eschew “black-or-white” solutions in favor of more nuanced ones. Solving these tensions will involve tolerance to ambiguity and nuances (Huber, 2003). The case method seems well suited to dilemmas where there is more than one correct answer, and seeks to enhance students’ understanding of reality, acknowledging its complexity (Kolb & Kolb, 2005). As an interviewee put, “Aristotle stressed the importance of the ‘practical habit’ on par with the ‘intellectual habit’ (...) You then leave school and find yourself asking the same type of questions that you faced in case discussion” (E26). Based on these findings, we craft the following subordinate tentative proposition:

***P8:** The case method is particularly apt for value-intensive courses due to its capacity to generate awareness of the consequences of one’s own decisions.*

## **6. Discussion**

The movement to ingrate higher SEE values in the curricula in some ways could be seen as a backlash to the “scientific revolution” of the late 1950s. That was a turning point for managerial education, what Foucault once called a “Cartesian moment,” where the quest for truth comes to interpreted as a purely cognitive phenomenon, and detached from the transformation of the subject.- In a way, the current drive to push managerial education beyond the purely technical domain, can be see as backlash from that movement: "in the 1950s, the Ford and Carnegie Foundations sponsored two reports to promote the scientific rigor and the academic legitimacy of higher business education (...) Today, business schools are challenged once more, this time to transform in the interests of making business sustainable. We need relevant, applied, integrative, trans-disciplinary, holistic, and learning-oriented approaches in education and research" (Globally Responsible Leadership Initiative, n.d.). We have noted elsewhere (XX & XX, forthcoming) the perils of such an approach. The risk is *not* scientific knowledge per se, but rather how we convey it. The Cartesian view is the hallmark of passive learning methodologies: professors’ role is limited to conveying knowledge, and students’ role is purely to receive it —ideas exchange hands, but those involved are left unscathed. As Sanz de Santamaría puts it, "when all that matters is the cognitive dimension of education, and the formative dimension is neglected (which is what we have been doing, according to my research) the almost inevitable effect will be the malformation of the student as a person" (2007, p. 14). In other words, a managerial education concerned only with the delivery of technical knowledge, without regards for context, long terms implications and impact on others, runs the risk of leaving future leaders anesthetized, and insensitive to the so-

called *externalities* (social, environmental, ethical) of their actions. The arguments put forward by our interviewees appear focused on preventing that at all costs. The effective teaching of SEE-intensive contents need methods that are anchored in contexts, and go beyond the transmission of knowledge, seeking to transform learners. Those arguments also suggest that such transformation (changing our basic attitudes, becoming a critical thinker, engaging in moral self-reflection, developing practice-oriented skills, or becoming aware of the others) is associated with something basic: the way we treat each other, how we interact in class as members of a learning community. As Vygotski & Cole pointed out (1991), "community" is essential for learning: those "others" are essential partners in the process of sense-making. It is only through the classroom community that we internalize and practice democratic skills (Dewey, 1998). Basic, face-to-face human interaction appears to be important for some of the "doing" and "being" changes that we are seeking to bring back to managerial training. This should give us pause to reconsider the ongoing "revolution" that blended learning, and/or distance learning (based on MOOCs or similar formats) is expected to bring to managerial training, and higher education in general. It seems unquestionable that these innovative formats will extend the reach of managerial training, unleashing learning opportunities that would have been unthinkable a few years ago. On the other hand, our findings contribute to that discussion with a note of caution. It is clear that the "knowing" part of education can be encapsulated, disaggregated and shipped in bytes via broadband. It is less clear that the "doing" and "being" components, which are critical in the learning of social, environmental or ethics intensive courses, can be delivered in remote fashion as effectively. The extent to which a classroom setting can be replicated virtually is still not clear. The tools available today, which work well in supporting a lecture to a classroom, lack the flexibility required to have a dynamic class-like case discussion. Time will tell if the obstacle is technological, or if there is something in face-to-face interaction that really transforms students. At the very least, we should keep this caveat in mind when pushing for more remote-based training in our schools. An often-overlooked implication of our findings has to do with how we evaluate the quality of teaching institutions and of its teaching faculty. In line with the scientific revolution of the 1950s, schools are ranked by the quantity and quality of its research. The employment prospects of newly minted PhDs are assessed by their publishing potential, and most career development milestones are defined in terms of publishing yardsticks. Young faculty are aware that their fates will be defined (they will be promoted or sacked) under the imperatives of "publish or perish". It is clear that the "knowing" component of education does matter, and that we have elaborated a well defined set of KPI to assess progress. It is not as clear, though, that we made similar progress in the "being" and

“doing” components of education. Where does that show in institutional rankings or accreditations? How much does it matter that a young professor has “transformative potential” (and what exactly does that mean, in any case)? It is only recently that we have started to pay attention to these dimension. A recent report by the AACSB International Doctoral Education Task has concluded that “The timing is right for greater attention to laying the foundations for effective teaching within doctoral programs” (2013, p. 22)(2013, p 22). However, we still have a long way to go to readdress matters, and we hope to have made a contribution in that direction.

## **7. Limitations**

In this paper, we sought to take an in-depth look at a number of limited, yet important research questions. Data analysis has uncovered a number of intriguing propositions, which we think make a number of important contributions to the ongoing discussion of the state of managerial education in Latin America. Yet, important as it is, our contribution has clear limitations. First, there is the issue of all exploratory designs: our sample is not representative in statistical terms of the B-school population. Additionally, we have purposely limited our quest to those schools that, in the view of a well-regarded ranking, lead their national markets. The problem is that "leading" schools do not necessarily “lead” the rest—in the sense that remaining players may follow completely different paths, as opposed to replicating a trend pre established by the former. Some could even question the validity of rankings to single out “leaders” at all. To overcome this limitation, others could consider quantitative studies, based on more robust data samples. Second, we focused our analysis on the case method, given that data showed it to be predominant among SEE-teaching faculty. On that basis, we implicitly took that methodology as a proxy for all active methods. However, that may or may not be a reasonable assumption: there may be relevant differences to be uncovered between case discussion and other active methodologies, as such problem-based learning (PBL), experiential learning, or others. Third, quantitized data has shown that the CM and SEE teaching do appear to go hand-in-hand in those institutions covered in the sample, and content analysis suggested reasons why that could be the case, in the views of participating faculty. However, it would wrong to claim that the CM is “the best method” to teach SEE-intensive courses, given that we have not really made any comparison to that end. Subsequent investigations could carry out comparative studies, to assess relative strengths and weaknesses of different methods for the teaching of SEE-intensive courses.

## **8. Conclusions**

In this paper, we have sought to look into the way in which Lat-Am B-schools have reacted to societal demands for the inclusion of ethical, environmental and social concerns in managerial education. In that quest, we paid particular attention to the changes in content and methods brought about by those external pressures. Data has shown there over the last decade, B-schools in the region have indeed made a consistent effort to integrate SEE contents in their curricula. A less know change, is that changes in content were associated with changes in the methodologies used. As long as the role of B-schools was limited to delivering technical data, top-down “passive” methodologies could do the job just fine. A person can stand in front of a group and simply deliver the tools. However, this changed once societal expectations prompted a new mandate for B-schools: to deliver “rounder” leaders, willing and able to play a more constructive role in society. The challenge with value intensive courses, is that they can be hardly be taught top-down: values cannot be imposed on others. Thus, this created the condition for a generalized migration towards active methodologies (the case-method in particular), at least for the sake of teaching courses that are intensive in social, environmental or ethics contents. In the views of interviewees, the CM is particularly well suited to those courses, because they seem to effective in changing students’ basic attitudes, in helping them become critical thinkers, engage in moral self-reflection, develop practice-oriented skills, or in becoming aware of the themselves and others. We hope to have made a contribution in our collective understanding of the role of B-schools in society, and how that can be changed for the better.

### Annex 1. List of the Latin American Business Schools sampled

#	Country	USD billions	Institutions
1	Brazil	2,090,314	FGV - EAESP
2	Mexico	1,034,308	ITAM
3	Argentina	369,992	IAE - AUSTRAL
4	Venezuela	293,268	IESA
5	Colombia	289,433	LOS ANDES
6	Chile	203,299	U. A. IBÁÑEZ
7	Peru	153,802	ESAN
8	Ecuador	57,978	IDE
9	Dominican Republic	51,626	This country has no institution represented in the AE ranking
10	Costa Rica + Nicaragua*	42,340	INCAE

(\*) Since the INCAE is a bi-national institution, with two campuses (in Costa Rica and Nicaragua) the GDP of both nations were aggregated for the sake of the ranking

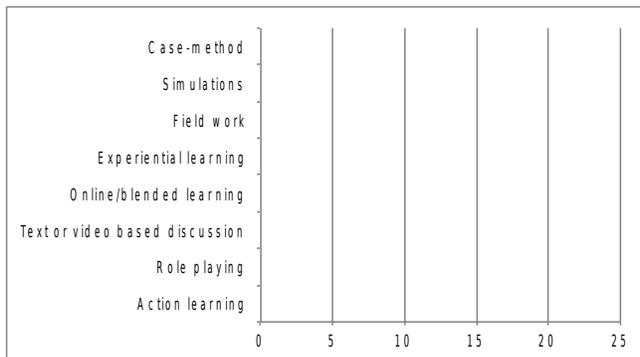
### Annex 2. Teaching value-intensive courses

In the last 10 years...

	... the MBA gained a course on CSR (+1)	... the MBA gained a course on environmental sustainability (+1)	...the MBA gained a course on business ethics (+1)	At least one of those courses is mandatory (+1)	...CSR, sustainability or business ethics were integrated with traditional courses (+1)	... the MBA gained an integrative (capstone) course that incorporated those contents (+1)	Total
ESAN	1	1	0	1	1	0	4
FGV	1	1	1	1		0	4
IAE	1	0	1	1	1	0	4
IDE	1	0	1	1	0	0	3
IESA	1	1	1	1	1	0	5
INCAE	1	1	1	1	1	1	6
ITAM	1	1	1	0	1	1	5
UAI	0	0	0	0	1	1	2
UASM	1	1	1	1	1	1	6

If one single course combines different topics (such as CSR, environmental sustainability and/or business ethics) only point was awarded, the course was placed in the first column.

### Annex 3. Frequency of coding among methodologies used for value-intensive courses



### Annex 4. Faculty use of case method and institutional commitment to the methodology

	Faculty A	Faculty B	Faculty use (average)	Institutional commitment	Since when?	Comments
ESAN	3	3	3	3	Organizational identity, since foundation	
FGV	3	3	3	1	Acquired overtime	No institutional support for specific methodologies, but active methodologies have been gaining ground lately. Both professors identified the case method as the one most used by them.
IAE	3	2	2.5	3	Organizational identity, since foundation	
IDE	3	3	3	3	Organizational identity, since foundation	
IESA	3	3	3	3	Acquired overtime	Commitment with the method does not stem from mission or organizational DNA. Rather, the Dean articulates it in terms of functional advantages.
INCAE	3	3	3	3	Organizational identity, since foundation	
ITAM	2	3	2.5	0	Never, N/A	One moderate user, although recognizes that use of case method has increased in the last years. The other is a heavy user. Most interesting: no institutional support for any methodology in particular.
UAI	1	1	1	1	Recent	Light commitment, both at the institutional and faculty levels. Faculty B states that he would like to use more cases, but doesn't do so because of lack of locally relevant cases.
UASM	3	1	2	2	Acquired overtime	No doctrinal commitment; increased presence over the last years.

Institutional commitment (working definition)	
Case method is part of our brand identity	3

Faculty use	
Heavy use	3

Case method is actively supported, over other methodologies	2
Case method is supported, on a par with many other methodologies	1
No support	0

Moderate use	2
Light use	1
No use	0

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