

# ***RESEARCH IN ADMINISTRATIVE SCIENCES UNDER COVID-19***

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Edited by

**Mónica Lorena Sánchez Limón**

**María Luisa Saavedra García**



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# Research in Administrative Sciences Under COVID-19

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# Preface

For centuries past, particularly the present twenty-first, we have witnessed a variety of events that have pushed our planet to what we once thought was the limit. However, we had no idea what we would have to deal with when a new variant of a virus made its way across borders and turned into the very phenomenon we used to read about in history books: a pandemic. This book presents a variety of situations and topics presented in texts co-authored by renowned national and international academics under the coordination of Dr Sánchez Limón, President of the Academy of Administrative Sciences ACACIA; and Dr Saavedra García, President of the Research Commission of the Mexican Institute of Finance Executives - IMEF.

We are constantly receiving, consuming, and experiencing the effects of the pandemic whose prospective recovery I dare to call bleak and completely different from what we have had to deal with in previous global crises. In this sense, the five areas on which this research focusses offer a series of strategic factors to support the indispensable and necessary reinvention - from this year and onwards - of all organisations that contribute to our countries' society and economy. The key role that foreign trade, micro-, small-, and medium-sized enterprises (MSMEs), human capital, marketing, and business strategies play in the quest to create a more sustainable and inclusive world is undeniable. Ideally, we should all have been proactively focussing our actions for decades, prioritising our societies' survival. However, as the authors rightly point out, our country and region is made up of a population dependent on subsistence businesses that was already struggling with constant challenges, including the closing of borders and a subsequent reinforcement of the global economic crisis derived from the sudden transition to the virtual world.

In this respect, this work is intended to offer added value in view of such a transition and contributes to the efforts to diversify services and products that are undoubtedly underway. It also supports public awareness raising about the fact that any crisis requires the impact of our actions along the value chain to reach both the target audience of each of our sectors and society as a whole. These pages echo a clear unison of voices that - while recognising the difficult scenarios in terms of foreign investment, limited foreign trade, the impact of whether a service or product is a basic need, and our societies' affected purchasing power - also highlight the importance of access to and mastery of technology, as well as the relevance of the human factor. Finally, I note that, indirectly, through the perspective of the

economic and administrative sciences, this work brings to light just how negligent we have been of the impact suffered intensively by our population during the pandemic and the need to provide an innovative and empathetic response to it.

The impact of this work lies precisely in its attenuating approach to the complicated status quo and the joint work of the authors who, through different voices and perspectives, offer us a glimpse of the reality that the populations of Mexico and Latin America are experiencing in the field of management sciences. The work stands out for its focus on the voices of national and regional producers, the increasingly valued competitiveness, the indispensable value and understanding of human capital, the vital and necessary technology, and the understanding of the value of solidarity and responsibility towards society. I applaud the authors' imparting, throughout the research, of statistical data, methodologies, results, alternatives, and tools to improve our decision-making in light of today's 'new reality'. I hope you enjoy this as much as I have.

Dr Eduardo Ávalos Lira,  
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# Presentation

COVID-19 has forced states and economic and social agents to propose solutions to the unforeseen and complex challenges of the pandemic. In this context, '*Research in Administrative Sciences Under COVID-19*' provides an exceptional scientific approach from different areas of the administration to analyse and propose appropriate measures that will effectively contribute to curbing the economic and social crisis triggered by the pandemic and recovering the 'normality' that everyone longs for.

The approach employed in this work is exemplary in terms of transferring the knowledge that universities must provide in order to contribute to public well-being and social progress. The studies it includes address this objective in a prompt and innovative spirit. Its proposals are based on the factual situation, its rationale and study, and are pragmatically projected so that they can be assessed and monitored. All the studies presented contribute to decision-making in public and private organisations for the design of economic and social reactivation policies that improve companies' competitiveness and employment in COVID-19 crisis.

The work has been systematised into three main sections (Companies and SMEs, Human Capital and Knowledge Management, and Marketing and Business Strategies), reflecting the meticulous planning that went into delivering the proposed results. My sincere congratulations to the coordinators of the scientific work for their approach to the topics addressed and for their comprehensive structure. The sequence of the different studies included is decisive in making decisions on how to overcome the pandemic, particularly considering its effects on micro-, small-, and medium-sized enterprises (MSMEs).

Accordingly, the study on Latin American MSMEs competitiveness under COVID-19 emphasises the commitment to the priority focus on the inclusive development of citizens in the closest regional environments in order to overcome vulnerability in terms of self-employment. The proposals made for strengthening the implementation of MSME policies and the design of the new programmes and practices presented will help to bolster the economy of the affected sectors through entrepreneurship and self-employment. These proposals should be supported as launching pads for job creation and social recognition.

In the economic and social situation described, research into the innovative and proactive practices adopted by subsistence businesses makes it possible to measure the effort made and its evaluation as a reference of opportunities to adopt new marketing and consumption habits. The reflections presented in the work

ensure the reinforcement and singularisation of certain sales lines that must be consolidated through diversification and the incorporation of new technologies as guarantees of future permanence.

Analysing the effects of COVID on the export sector makes it possible to measure the stability of national production and its safeguarding, while at the same time helping to detect and promote opportunities and niches for new products with the greatest potential in pandemic situations. This line of research offers new studies of particular reference for the adoption of reinforcement measures for the national industry.

In all economic decisions and policies, knowledge management is a determining factor for company competitiveness, which in turn has a direct impact on a region's labour and social framework. The multiple case study of knowledge management at UNAM and the responses to COVID reinforce the need to link the university to groups within society. The evaluation of these results must be decisive in modulating the mission and vision of a modern and competitive university at the service of social well-being. The direct transfer of knowledge management to companies in the shortest possible time is one of the university's main objectives at all times but particularly in such times of economic and social crisis.

The study of the impact of burnout on the intention to quit among university workers in Tamaulipas is of particular interest. It offers an avenue for further research on staff training and response to unforeseen situations, specifically in overcoming the negative emotional states that the pandemic can engender. In the same direction, the analysis and reflection on the factors that have an impact on the academic stress associated with teleworking under COVID-19 and its effects on students opens up a line of research of maximum interest to implement strategies to strengthen a teaching-learning process that can favour comprehensive training, taking into account the high levels of stress and job burnout that the obligatory nature of online training can cause.

Indeed, the obligatory use of technological procedures for work (teleworking or virtual training) can lead in certain cases to situations of psychosocial suffering that directly affect the mental health of today's students. The results obtained from the study on technostress in university students on academic performance demonstrate the need for an in-depth examination of the evolution of student behaviour and its direct effects on academic achievement, both from the perspective of the student and the teaching staff. We must not forget that excellence in the acquisition of competences and skills in university education is the effective guarantee for the effective transfer of knowledge to society.

The pandemic and ensuing confinement have automatically led to an expansion of e-commerce. This is clearly demonstrated by the study on the influence of e-commerce on consumption habits under COVID-19 in the City of Durango. This significant expansion of e-commerce in times of pandemic calls for further research on its direct effects on the consumer and on the business sector.

The public service nature of the proposed research questions the application of the design thinking methodology to promote the economic reactivation of start-ups. The application of this methodology appears to be useful as a guide to steer the re-opening and re-launching of enterprises.

This book concludes with a study of the effects of COVID-19 on corporate social responsibility. The literature review reveals that the pandemic has led to a greater understanding of socially responsible practices, which have been boosted by public policy actions with competitive advantages for companies. These favourable measures should continue to be encouraged to reinforce social responsibility at the core of business, particularly in the service of the most vulnerable.

In sum, as I mentioned at the beginning, *Research in Administrative Sciences Under COVID-19* is a compilation of excellent scientific papers of immediate response of knowledge transfer from the University to contribute to citizen well-being and social progress. My sincere congratulations to the coordinators of the paper, Ms Mónica Lorena Sánchez Limón and Ms María Luisa Saavedra García, and to all the participants for the depth of their research and effective proposals to help overcome the economic and social crisis caused by COVID-19.

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