

Rights And Inclusion Of Pregnant And Breastfeeding Women In Ecuadorian Universities

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ABSTRACT

One of the most transcendental changes in women's lives is associated with pregnancy and breastfeeding since it makes them vulnerable during this time. The role of women as an integral and useful part of society, both in the domestic, labor, and educational spheres has been widely studied by intellectuals around the world. However, challenges associated with achieving similar performance for men and women are being identified daily. This purpose is limited by the social and traditional approach associated with the female gender and its state of gestation. The university, as part of society, also has to deal with these challenges to achieve inclusion. Therefore, the objective of the research was to know the perceived treatment of pregnant and lactating women at Uniandes University. To fulfill the proposed objective, theoretical methods such as synthetic analytical, inductive-deductive, historical-logical, and empirical methods such as interviews, observation, surveys, IADOV method, PESTEL, and AHP of Saaty were used. A low level of satisfaction was observed among the respondents, the possible causes were identified, hierarchized, and qualified for their solutions.

KEYWORDS: university, inclusion, pregnant women, infants.

RESUMEN

Uno de los cambios más trascendentales en la vida de las mujeres, está asociado al embarazo y la lactancia, ya que la convierte en una persona vulnerable por este lapso de tiempo. El papel de la mujer como parte integrante y útil de la sociedad, tanto en el ámbito doméstico como laboral y educativo, ha sido ampliamente estudiado por intelectuales alrededor del mundo. No obstante, cada día se identifican desafíos asociados al logro de un desempeño similar para hombres y mujeres. Este propósito se ve limitado por el enfoque social y tradicional asociados al género femenino y su estado de gestación. La universidad como parte de la sociedad, también tiene que lidiar con estos retos, en aras de lograr la inclusión. Por lo antes expuesto se propuso como objetivo de la investigación: conocer el tratamiento

percibido hacia las embarazadas y lactantes en la universidad Uniandes. Para cumplir el objetivo propuesto, se emplearon métodos teóricos como el analítico sintético, el inductivo deductivo, histórico lógico, métodos empíricos como la entrevista, la observación, encuestas, método IADOV, PESTEL y AHP de Saaty. Se observó un bajo nivel de satisfacción entre los encuestados, se identificaron las posibles causas, se jerarquizaron y calificaron para su solución.

PALABRAS CLAVE: universidad, inclusión, embarazadas, lactantes

INTRODUCTION

According to the United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), in

Article 26 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights: Everyone has the right to education. Education shall be free, at least as regards elementary and fundamental instruction, and such instruction shall be compulsory. Technical and vocational education shall be made generally available and access to higher education shall be equal for all, based on merit. The Sustainable Development Goal for education and the Education Framework for Action emphasizes that inclusion and equality are the foundations of quality education (Mendieta & García, 2018).

The European Union defines social inclusion as a process that ensures that those at risk of poverty and exclusion, have the opportunities and resources necessary to participate fully in economic, social, and cultural life, enjoying a standard of living and well-being that is considered normal in the society in which they live. Although educational policies for inclusion in higher education in some Latin American countries have shown positive results, they have also generated new dimensions of exclusion. This is since the multidimensional nature of higher education has not been taken into account. In Ecuador, there is the Higher Education Council (CES), which is the institution that gives guidelines for universities. Although the government is concerned about providing opportunities for higher education studies, some people present different reasons for not attending an educational establishment (Fajardo & Crespo, 2016).

Pregnancy is a stage of the life cycle that generates changes in various areas of people's lives. On the one hand, the news is assumed differently depending on whether it had been planned or not; for those who did not expect it, it means an abrupt change in their lives, and this becomes more complex according to the stage they are in. Pregnancy and its abrupt changes can have an impact on the abandonment of university studies. This is to dedicate themselves to work and thus obtain economic resources to support their children, in addition to the demand for time for care and upbringing. For student mothers, there remains the unexpected burden of responsibilities, which affect all areas of their lives (Quirama et al., 2020).

Today, having a professional career is of great importance for citizens as an alternative to improve the quality of life so longed for, but this dream is

overshadowed when a woman is pregnant, in other cases when facing a catastrophic illness, or is simply in physical or economic vulnerability. During this period, people with student difficulties, for many reasons, present changes in mood and stability in university studies, reaching the worst-case scenario, which is dropping out of the educational system. The disrespect towards people who have different characteristics from the usual ones is the reason why the state has been in charge of planning and developing programs, projects, regulations, rules, and laws that protect them, spreading them and preaching that the laws or projects that are developed after this, are based on it, for the progress of quality and warmth (Valencia Espín, 2019).

In a country that guarantees rights as in doctrine Ecuador is, it corresponds to analyze the situation of the working woman that due to her situation of gestation her economic needs are increased, facing a social reality in which getting a job is a very low possibility, in doing so a robust regulation is needed to protect her against acts of discrimination, therefore it is essential to point out that as an obligation the state will establish measures to counteract negative effects on her rights due to pregnancy, given the inequality that women suffer (Cascante Cabezas, 2018). Although gender parity is a constitutional status, there are still traits of discrimination, in terms of women's labor environment, this transcends to implications related to their remunerations, promotions, and training, which leads to the precariousness of the labor situation, and this is even more aggravated if the woman is pregnant (Moya, 2018).

The General Conference of the International Labor Organization (ILO), revised the Convention on Maternity Protection and Recommendation, to maintain the promotion of labor equality for all working women and the progress on the protection that maternity is worth in the legislations of the subscribing countries; reform that comprises 21 articles that guide the agreement on the rights that working women possess, such as the right to health, pregnancy leave, pregnancy sick leave, benefits, employment protections, non-discrimination and breastfeeding periods (Mancheno, 2018). During the breastfeeding period, the mother with her son or daughter constitutes an inseparable biological and social unit, by nutrition and affective bond, but

differentiated in each case. Breastfeeding as a subject of study has been the focus of various disciplines. The focus of legal analysis regarding breastfeeding has been limited to the family and work environment, leaving gaps in the reflection of the Ecuadorian legal system. Breastfeeding should be recognized as a right with several holders and those responsible for its priority protection, and the need to strengthen the capacity of breastfeeding women to make decisions and demand its enforceability before the State, recognizing the causes of the situations of vulnerability they face (García Alarcón, 2019).

Legal protection to defined groups constitutes the mechanism implemented by the states, for social integration and equalization of opportunities, with the approach of a constitutional state of rights and justice that urges the application of the principles of formal and material equality for general development, as strong demand for social justice (Saldanha & Limberger, 2020). The group of priority attention is the social conglomerate, which, by presenting specific, particular, and inherent characteristics to their person, are deserving of immediate care by the state and its public entities.

Therefore, their demands must be immediately and timely satisfied. The state should establish public policies and programs of attention to these people, which take into account the specific differences between urban and rural areas, gender and ethnic inequalities, culture, and the differences between individuals, communities, peoples, and nationalities; also, to promote the highest possible degree of personal autonomy and participation in the definition and implementation of these public policies that meet the specific demands of the priority group of attention.

According to the Directorate for the Attention of Priority Groups, its purpose is to ensure compliance with the rights of persons who, according to the Constitution of the Republic of Ecuador 2008, are protected and protected especially, establishing that the state will provide special protection to people in a condition of double vulnerability. Although there are already entities that ensure the safety of these groups, it does not mean that educational institutions should lack this system, on the contrary, they should be more immersed in helping the integration of these

groups into society and its developments (Novillo Díaz, 2019).

At the international level, women are supported by a series of treaties and conventions, which aim to make their roles equal, thus ensuring parity of opportunities in each of the social spheres of their environment. States parties are called upon to adopt internal measures to prevent discrimination on the grounds of maternity, reinforcing the importance of family education. The protection of pregnant women also implies that, as a result of this condition, there should be reinforced stability in their labor environment, for which within this legal body it is sought to protect the right to work, for which it is urged that the member states, through the legal reform of their normative bodies in labor matters, prevent women from being dismissed for this reason, as well as granting them paid maternity leave, special benefits and breastfeeding period (Moya, 2021).

Taking into account the consideration of priority attention groups, laws have been enacted such as the Organic Code for Children and Adolescents, the Organic Law on Intercultural Education, the Law on Free Maternity, the Organic Law on Disabilities, the Reform to the Organic Law on Health, the Reform to the Law on Social Security, the Law on Sports, Physical Education and Recreation, and the Organic Law on Citizen Participation. Article 35 of the Constitution states that the elderly, children and adolescents, pregnant women, persons with disabilities, persons deprived of liberty, and those suffering from catastrophic or highly complex diseases shall receive priority and specialized attention in the public and private spheres.

The same priority attention will be given to persons at risk, victims of domestic and sexual violence, child abuse, and natural or anthropogenic disasters. The State shall provide special protection to persons in conditions of double vulnerability (Ecuador, 2008). Article 43 of the aforementioned constitution states that the state shall guarantee pregnant and breastfeeding women the right not to be discriminated against because of their pregnancy in the educational, social, and labor spheres, free maternal health services, priority protection and care of their integral health and life during pregnancy, childbirth and postpartum, as well as the necessary facilities for their recovery after pregnancy and

during the breastfeeding period. For the above reasons, it is of interest to know the perceived treatment of pregnant and breastfeeding women at Uniandes University.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

Theoretical methods

Synthetic analytical method: the analytical method allowed the decomposition of the whole in specific aspects to understand and comprehend the structure; it facilitated the observation to better understand the components. In this context, this method implies synthesis, i.e. the union of dispersed elements to form a total component (Mellado, 1974).

Inductive-deductive method: this research method allows logical reasoning. While the inductive method starts from specific premises to reach general aspects, the deductive method is the opposite, since it starts from the generic to reach particular aspects. However, both methods are essential in the construction of knowledge (Newman, 2006).

Logical Historical Method: These methods allow the construction of the research from the historical elements that build the research to understand the essential elements of the research and its historical evolution (Falcón & Serpa, 2021).

Empirical Methods:

Interviews: will be applied to the sample of selected experts. Structured interviews were prepared to obtain information on the real problems and possible solutions, to obtain valid conclusions, and support the results.

Observation: to check how the phenomenon under investigation behaves.

Surveys: a survey was elaborated and applied to students, pregnant and breastfeeding women included as students or workers, and managers of the organization.

Population: universe of individuals to be considered for the study

Sample: representative quantity of the population under study to be determined with the following formula:

$$n = \frac{N\sigma^2Z^2}{(N-1)e^2 + \sigma^2Z^2} \quad (1)$$

Where:

n = sample size.

N = population size.

σ = standard deviation of the population which, generally, when its value is not available, is usually a constant value of 0.5.

Z = confidence level value of 95%.

e = is the maximum permissible margin of error is 5%.

IADOV: V.A. Iadov's technique in its original version was created by its author for the study of career satisfaction in pedagogical careers. This technique was used to evaluate satisfaction with the profession in professional pedagogical training. It consists of five questions: three closed and two open. It constitutes an indirect way to study satisfaction since the criteria used are based on the relationships established between three closed questions that are inserted within a questionnaire whose relationship is unknown to the subject. These are related through what is called the "Iadov's Logical Table".

The unrelated or complementary questions serve as an introduction and support of objectivity for the respondent, who uses them to position and contrast the answers. The number resulting from the interrelation of the three questions indicates the position of each subject on the satisfaction scale. (Alfredo Cacpata et al., 2019).

Table 1. Evaluation system for experts

Category	Score
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A	Clearly satisfied	3	(+1)
B	More satisfied than dissatisfied	2,3	(+0,5)
C	Not defined	1.5	(0)
D	More dissatisfied than satisfied	1	(-0,5)
E	Clearly dissatisfied	0	(-1)
C	Contradictory	2	(0)

Source: satisfaction scale. (Calle et al., 2019)

Table 2 IADOV Logic Chart

Iadov's Logical Framework	1st question		
	Yes	I don't know	No
	2nd question		
	Yes- I don't know -No	Yes- I don't know -No	Yes- I don't know -No
	3rd question		
I like it a lot	1 2 6 2	2 6 6 6	6
I like it more than I dislike it	2 3 3 2	3 3 6 3	6
I am indifferent	3 3 3 3	3 3 3 3	3
I dislike it more than I like it	6 3 6 3	4 4 3 4	4
I do not like it	6 6 6 6	4 4 6 4	5

I don't know how to say	2	3	6	3	3	3	6	3	4
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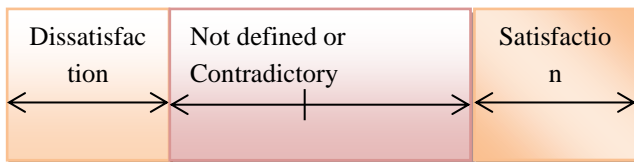
Source: (Calle et al., 2019)

The group satisfaction index (GSI) is obtained using the following formula:

$$ISG = \frac{A(+1) + B(+0.5) + C(0) + D(-0.5) + E(-1)}{N}$$

Where: N is the total number of respondents and the letters correspond to the number of respondents in the categories indicated in Table 1.

The group satisfaction index can range from [-1;1], divided into the following categories:



-1 -0,5 -0.49 0 +0,49
+0,5 +1

Figure 1. Categories of satisfaction. Adapted from (Calle et al., 2019)

PESTEL (1)

It is a strategic analysis technique to determine the external environment affecting the following factors: political, economic, socio-cultural, technological, ecological, and legal. It consists of determining the forces that affect the specific environment: sector, employment market, target groups, and competition, among others. It is a technique to analyze a business that allows and determines the context in which it moves, in turn, allows the design of strategies to defend, take advantage or adapt to anything that affects the sector (Perez, 2018).

PESTEL dimensions of analysis.

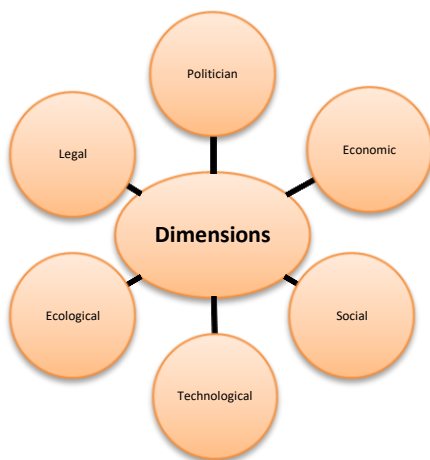


Figure 2. Source: Own elaboration

AHP Saaty Method

The Analytic Hierarchical Process (AHP Saaty) was proposed by Thomas Saaty in 1980 (Saaty, 2014). It is one of the most widespread methods for solving multi-criteria decision-making problems. This technique models the problem leading to the

formation of a hierarchy representative of the associated decision-making scheme. This hierarchy presents at the top level the objective to be pursued in the solution of the problem and at the lower level includes the different alternatives from which a decision must be made. The intermediate levels detail the set of criteria and attribute considered.

In the late 1970s Professor Saaty (1980), a doctor of mathematics at Yale University created a mathematical model called the Analytical Hierarchy Process (AHP) as an effective way to define measures for such elements and use them in decision-making processes. AHP is a theory oriented towards the decision-maker and serves to identify the best alternative according to the resources allocated. This method can be applied to situations involving

technical, economic, political, social, and cultural factors. In other words, it aims to be a scientific tool to address those aspects that are difficult to quantify, but sometimes require a unit of measurement (Saaty, 2014).

The process is based on several stages. The formulation of the decision-making problem in a hierarchical structure is the first and main stage. This stage is where the decision maker must break down the problem into its relevant components. The basic hierarchy is composed of general goals or objectives, criteria, and alternatives. The hierarchy is constructed in such a way that the elements are of the same order of magnitude and can be related to some of the next levels.

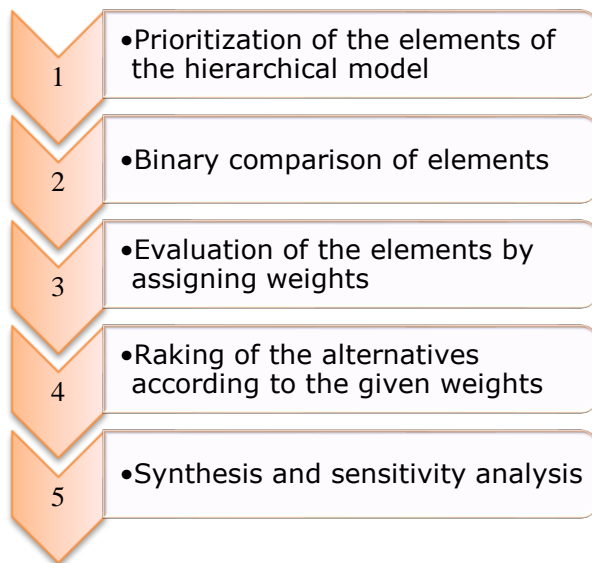


Figure 3. Saaty's AHP methodology.
Source: Own elaboration

For step 1, the following evaluation scale proposed by the author of the method will be used:

Table 1 Saaty evaluation scale (Verbal judgment rate).

Scale
9 Extremely most preferred
7 Most powerfully preferred
5 Powerfully more preferred

3 Moderately more preferred

1 Also preferred

Source: (Saaty, 2008)

The following is an algorithm for calculating it (this must be applied for all criteria):

- ✓ For each row of the pairwise comparison, matrix determine a weighted sum based on the sum of the product of each cell by the priority of each corresponding alternative or criterion.
- ✓ For each row, divide its weighted sum by the priority of its corresponding alternative or criterion

- ✓ Determine the mean λ_{max} of the result of the previous step.
- ✓ Calculate the consistency index (CI) for each alternative or criterion.

$$CI = \frac{\lambda_{max} - m}{m - 1} \quad (2)$$

Where m is the number of alternatives

- ✓ Determine the Random Index (AI) of table 2.
- ✓ Determine the consistency quotient index (the ratio between the consistency index and the random index).

Table 2 v Random index for the calculation of the consistency coefficient

Number of alternatives for decision n	Random index
3	0.58
4	0.9
5	1,12
6	1.24
7	1.32
8	1.41
10	1,49

Source: (Saaty, 2008)

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Given that it is desired to know the perception of students and teachers about the inclusion and treatment of pregnant and lactating women at Uniandes University.

Sample size calculation

Population: for the research, the population is a total of 256 students and teachers of Uniandes.

Sample: the formula was applied, resulting in the application to 154 people, including among them the group of pregnant and lactating women (total at Uniandes).

$$n = \frac{N\sigma^2Z^2}{(N-1)e^2 + \sigma^2Z^2} \quad (3)$$

Where:

n = sample size.

Table 3. Category of respondents

Groups	Respondents
Managers	27
Pregnant and lactating women (MEL)	13
Students	114
Total	154

Source: own elaboration

Proposed data collection instrument:

Estimate:

The purpose of this instrument is to collect information on how the treatment of pregnant and breastfeeding women is perceived at Uniandes University. We inform you that this survey is completely anonymous and the data obtained from it will be processed for research purposes. We thank you for your contribution to the development of this study.

N = population size.

σ = standard deviation of the population, which, generally when its value is not available, is usually a constant value of 0.5.

Z = generally accepted confidence level value of 95% is 1.96.

e = is the maximum permissible margin of error is 5%

$$n = \frac{(256) (0,5)^2 (1,96)^2}{(256 - 1) (0,5)^2 + (0,5)^2 (1,96)^2}$$

$$n = 154$$

1- Do you know the rights of pregnant and breastfeeding women in Ecuador?

2- Do you think that what is legislated on the rights of pregnant and breastfeeding women in Ecuador is sufficient?

3- Do you perceive that pregnant and breastfeeding women receive adequate treatment at the university?

Yes _____ Don't know _____ No _____

4- Do you agree with the actions for the inclusion of pregnant and breastfeeding women in universities?

Yes _____ Don't know _____ No _____

5- Do you think that the protection provided to pregnant and breastfeeding women in the university framework is sufficient?

- I like it very much _____
- I like it more than I dislike it _____
- I am indifferent _____
- I dislike it more than I like it _____
- I don't like it _____
- I can't say _____

Source: own elaboration

The resulting responses were processed using the IADOV technique.

ISG Comparison by Group

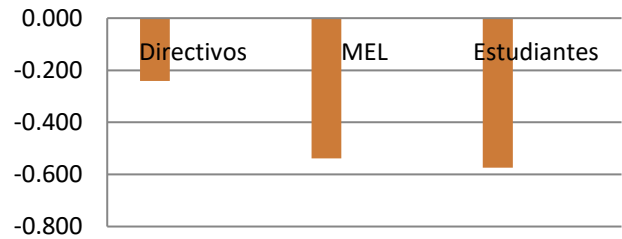


Figure 2. Comparison according to the category to which respondents belong. Source: own elaboration

Interpretation: In general, there is a level of lack of knowledge and dissatisfaction, since the values obtained are in the range of -1 to -0.5, for the treatment of pregnant and breastfeeding women in the university setting, among the respondents of the Uniandes. The behavior is similar in the groups, although it is more accentuated among the MELs and students. Using the interview as an auxiliary method to the survey, the causes that could be influencing this dissatisfaction were identified, which was done through the PESTEL analysis as shown:

Table 1. Results by PESTEL

Dimension	Factor
Political	1. To increase protection to every part of social life where the MEL intervenes, both in the labor and student areas.
	2. The need to protect pregnant and breastfeeding students and workers in the university environment.
Economic	3. High cost of life support by assuming responsibility for a minor child.
	4. Value of university studies and supplementary materials required.
Social	5. Prejudices are associated with the role of women as caregivers of children.
	6. Communities with limited economic resources.
Technological	No

Ecological

No

Legal

7. Lack of a legal framework at the university level that makes MEL studies more flexible

Source: Own elaboration

ones to start acting on. For this purpose, Saaty's AHP method is applied, as shown below:

Once the main limitations have been defined in each of the dimensions, they are ranked to know which

Table 4. Matrix A for pairwise comparison of the criteria or factors

Criteria	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
1	0.37	0.80	0.70	0.90	0.60	0.80	0.70
2	0.50	0.37	0.30	0.50	0.30	0.40	0.50
3	0.60	0.20	0.37	0.70	0.80	0.50	0.30
4	0.30	0.50	0.60	0.37	0.40	0.10	0.60
5	0.90	0.60	0.50	0.10	0.37	0.30	0.50
6	0.20	0.20	0.40	0.20	0.50	0.37	0.30
7	0.30	0.80	0.90	0.70	0.80	0.70	0.37
Total	3.17	3.47	3.77	3.47	3.77	3.17	3.27

Table 5 Normalized Matrix

Criteria	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
1	0.12	0.23	0.19	0.26	0.16	0.25	0.21
2	0.16	0.11	0.08	0.14	0.08	0.13	0.15

3	0.19	0.06	0.10	0.20	0.21	0.16	0.09
4	0.09	0.14	0.16	0.11	0.11	0.03	0.18
5	0.28	0.17	0.13	0.03	0.10	0.09	0.15
6	0.06	0.06	0.11	0.06	0.13	0.12	0.09
7	0.09	0.23	0.24	0.20	0.21	0.22	0.11

Table 6 Paired matrix consistency study

Paired matrix consistency study						
Criteria	A x Weight	Approx. eigenvalues				
C1	0.66	3.274419065				
C2	0.42	3.461900206				
C3	0.49	3.416136468				
C4	0.43	3.625531939	IC		-0.59	
C5	0.51	3.70198408	RC		-0.44	$\leq 0,10$
C6	0.30	3.40203446				
C7	0.61	3.261518836				CONSISTENT
		3.44907501	Own value			

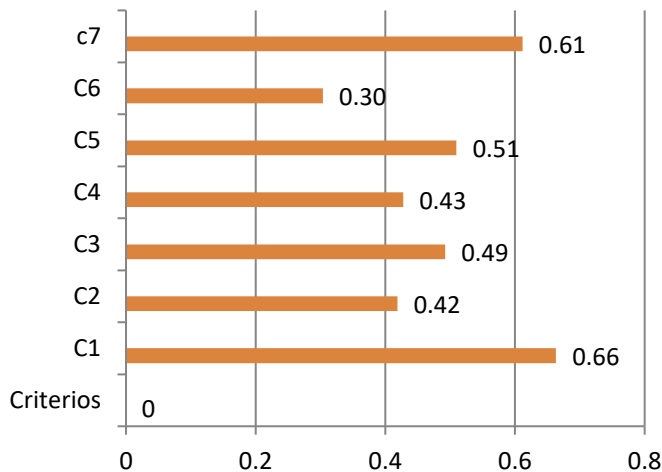


Figure 3. Weight according to Saaty's AHP. Source: own elaboration

To determine the key constraints to be strengthened, the following hierarchy should be followed:

$C1 > C7 > C5 > C3 > C4 > C2 > C6$, according to Saaty AHP modeling.

The AHP Saaty modeling defines as the highest hierarchical level factor to:

1. Increasing protection to every part of social life where MEL intervenes, both in labor and student.

Lack of a legal framework at the university level that makes MEL studies more flexible.

5. Prejudices associated with the role of women as caregivers of children.

3. High cost of life maintenance when assuming responsibility for a minor. 4.

4. Value of university studies and supplementary materials needed.

The need to protect pregnant and lactating students and workers in the university environment.

6. Communities with limited economic resources.

CONCLUSIONS

Upon completion of the research, it can be concluded that:

One of the most transcendental changes that occur in women's lives is that associated with pregnancy and lactation.

During the breastfeeding period, the mother and her son or daughter constitute an inseparable biological and social unit, due to nutrition and emotional bonding.

Pregnancy and its abrupt changes can have an impact on the abandonment of university studies.

The working woman, in her situation of gestation, increases her economic needs, in the face of a social reality in which getting a job is a very low possibility, and in doing so, she needs protection against acts of discrimination.

At the international level, women are supported by a series of treaties and conventions, which aim to ensure that the role of women is equal, thus guaranteeing equal opportunities in each of the social spheres of their environment, which is materialized in Ecuador, through the Constitution.

The students, MELs, and managers surveyed showed a low level of satisfaction with the treatment of MELs in the university environment.

Some of the causes that may be causing the dissatisfaction were determined and analyzed using the PESTEL method.

The causes determined were ranked using Saaty's AHP method, where the first place was occupied by the need to increase the protection of each part of social life where MEL is involved, both in the labor and student areas. Then the lack of a legal framework in the university environment makes MEL studies more flexible. Prejudices are associated with the role of women as caregivers of children. The high cost of

maintaining life by assuming responsibility for a minor. The high cost of university studies and complementary materials are required. The need to protect pregnant and lactating students and workers in the university environment and, lastly, communities with limited economic resources.

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