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Breaking barriers: the legacy and voices of women pioneers in accounting education in Peru

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ABSTRACT

This study examines the contributions of pioneering women in Peruvian accounting, both in scientific research and university teaching, in a historically male-dominated field. The research aims to highlight their academic impact and professional legacy. A qualitative approach was employed, utilizing the collective biography method phenomenological perspective. The study analyzed historical undergraduate and graduate theses from the Universidad Nacional Mayor de San Marcos (UNMSM) and conducted interviews with five distinguished female accounting professors. The findings reveal that these women made significant contributions in key areas such as financial auditing, management accounting, and environmental auditing, demonstrating adaptability and ethical commitment. In the educational sphere, participants emphasized their transformative teaching experiences, dedication to students, and the challenges posed by technology and social changes. The study concludes that these pioneers not only shaped the evolution of accounting education but also left a lasting legacy of academic and social engagement. The research underscores the need for gender equity policies and continuous technological adaptation in accounting education. These findings have practical implications for promoting diversity in academia and ensuring inclusive participation in the professional development of future generations.

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1. INTRODUCTION

Research on university teaching in Latin America shows that being considered a good teacher is not limited to mastery of the subject matter or the possession of didactic-pedagogical skills. For students, it is essential that the teacher also demonstrates interpersonal skills, an approachable attitude and a presence that motivates the group. In addition, tolerance and respect for the opinions of others are valued as fundamental elements in the educational process [1].

University professors in Latin America face the challenge of conducting research that contributes to raising the level of knowledge of their educational institution. However, progress in this area is limited, as evidenced by the small number of specialized accounting journals indexed in databases, such as Scopus. Likewise, the low proportion of professors who receive recognition from science and technology organizations is notorious [2].

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In the Peruvian context, university professors do not yet perceive research as a priority in their academic work. Consequently, they tend to be satisfied with accumulating experience in the transmission of knowledge, relegating the generation of new knowledge to a second plane [3]. In the medium term, this leads to teachers who are not properly updated in their subject and, therefore, reproduce students without the necessary scientific motivation for academic production.

The effects of the COVID-19 pandemic made the shortcomings of both teachers and students in Peru more evident [4]. In this context, traditional teaching resources were supplemented by computer tools and the growing incorporation of artificial intelligence. These technologies have acquired an increasingly relevant role in areas such as accounting and auditing, transforming educational, and professional practices [5]. Despite the panorama described, the participation of women in academia has historically been limited. In recent years, their presence in the publication of scientific articles has gradually increased, which represents a significant advance. However, they are still absent from the editorial committees of Peruvian scientific journals, demonstrating pending challenges in terms of gender equity [6].

The main purpose of this study is to identify the scientific contributions made by women in the field of accounting, in addition to documenting the experiences of teachers committed to accounting education. In this sense, the first academic contributions of women in the accounting discipline in Peru will be addressed. It will also analyze the experiences and perspectives of outstanding female accounting educators who continue to work in the country's university classrooms.

The specific objectives seek to analyze the scientific production of pioneer undergraduate and graduate women accountants considering the context in which they developed their work. They also seek to compile the experiences, motivations and points of view of the accounting teachers who are still active today. In this way, the research offers a comprehensive view of both the academic impact of these professionals and their teaching experiences.

The research highlights the relevance of the pioneering contributions of women accountants in scientific production and accounting education in Peru, a field historically dominated by men. By exploring their impact in key areas of economics and their dedication to teaching, it highlights efforts to overcome gender barriers and promote the professional and ethical development of new generations of accountants. This approach allows us to value their legacy and underscores the need to make visible and strengthen the role of women in higher education and scientific production.

The originality of this research lies in the application of a qualitative methodology based on collective biography, oriented to the analysis of the trajectory of pioneering women in accounting. This methodology combines the documentary examination of historical theses with interviews to outstanding teachers, offering an integral perspective. Through this approach, both historical contributions and their relationship with current challenges, such as the incorporation of emerging technologies and the drive towards gender equity in the academic and professional spheres, are highlighted.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1. Pioneers in accounting

Just eight decades ago, the image of the professional accountant was perceived as a middle-class man in full use of his intellectual and physical faculties [7]. Over the years, pioneering women accountants began to perform the activities essential to professional success, such as fostering support networks, adapting to dynamic environments and employing innovation as a means to develop effective solutions. The qualities of perseverance and assertiveness, together with ability to generate their own opportunities and solidarity towards other women, contributed to the advancement and development of the latter [8].

Although in some latitudes today, man is still the dominant in the accounting profession [9]. Several studies have shown that the accounting profession tends to be more associated with women than with men, given the demand for skills such as precision, patience, and meticulousness. These qualities, along with attention to detail and other related skills, are often culturally associated with the female [10], [11]. Other studies emphasize the significance of cultural factors, observing that professional accountants often prioritize loyalty to their work group, particularly when their skills and competencies are acknowledged and valued [12]. This difference is also evident when analyzing the results of the development programs for professional accountants, where an improvement in the effect on turnover intention is observed in men compared to women. This implies that, although men receive higher quality programs from the entity, their intention to look for another job is greater, since they perceive a greater bargaining power in the labor market [13].

Currently, female accounting graduates accounted for 50% of bachelor's degrees and 53% of master's degrees during 2017-2018. However, their participation in managerial positions continues to be lower [14]. In the area of academic production in accounting, an analysis of the three main journals in Colombia revealed that women accountants represent 33% of the scientific production. In terms of

authorship, the participation of female accounting researchers as sole authors amounts to 40%; when they collaborate with other female researchers, it reaches 20%; in a team with a male researcher, it stands at 16%; and in groups formed exclusively by women, it reaches 24% [15].

In education, differences related to ethical issues are significant when comparing students of different genders. Analyses show that male students tend to make less ethical decisions more frequently compared to their female peers [16]. This behavior underscores the importance of addressing ethics training as a key component of university education.

The changes observed in recent years with respect to the position of women accountants worldwide have been largely driven by examples of female leadership. A case in point is Mary Murphy, who became the first woman to become a certified public accountant (CPA) and the second woman to earn a doctorate in accounting in the United States. Her legacy extends as a writer and accounting educator [17]. A representative case is that of Larzette Golden Hale, who became the first African-American woman to obtain the CPA certification in the United States. She also achieved a doctorate degree, consolidating her academic trajectory. Throughout her life, she dedicated herself to teaching and strengthening the accounting profession, leaving a significant impact in the educational and professional spheres [18].

2.2. Accounting educators

Between the 1980s and early 1990s, an imbalance was evident in the academic field of accounting, both in terms of scientific production and faculty representation. However, this situation began to change between 1994 and 2004, when it was found that women accounting professors were no longer underrepresented in educational institutions granting doctoral degrees. This development reflects significant progress toward greater gender equity in accounting academia [19].

The presence of female professors in accounting departments can positively influence the career progression of female students. Studies show a positive correlation between the presence of female professors in leadership positions and the promotion of female graduates to partner positions in auditing firms [11]. However, this effect is less pronounced in the case of female full professors [11]. Women accounting professors have made important advances in access to managerial and administrative positions, especially in institutions that grant doctoral degrees. However, despite these achievements, their representation at the highest academic levels remains low. Globally, the presence of women in senior positions in academia remains limited [19], [20].

Female accounting professors often face gender discrimination, which can affect their professional growth and promotion possibilities. In some cases, this inequality is reflected in student evaluations, where bias can influence the perception of their performance. These biases are often related to the gender composition within the department and the type of courses they teach [21].

The participation of women in leadership positions within academia favors the professional development of female accounting graduates. However, female representation in senior management positions remains limited. This situation highlights the importance of promoting greater gender diversity both in higher education and in the professional practice of accounting [11].

Accounting teachers face difficulties in reconciling their work and family life, especially those who have caregiving responsibilities. Therefore, it is essential that institutions implement support strategies, such as flexible work arrangements. In addition, adjustments should be made to promotion and tenure criteria to ensure equitable conditions for their professional development [22], [23].

To mitigate gender bias in student evaluations and career progression, institutions should promote gender diversity and implement strategies to change student expectations about gender roles in academia [21]. In this regard, it is essential that universities adopt policies that promote inclusion and support for female accounting students. This will allow recognition of their outstanding academic performance and their valuable contribution to the development of the accounting profession [9], [24].

From the literature review, the study aims to answer the research question: what have been the scientific and pedagogical contributions of pioneering women in accounting education in Peru and how have they impacted the evolution of the profession and gender equity in academia? This study provides a unique perspective by analyzing the scientific and pedagogical contributions of pioneering women in accounting education in Peru, a field historically dominated by men. Its innovation lies in the application of a qualitative approach based on collective biography and interpretative phenomenology, combining documentary analysis of historical theses with interviews with prominent female accounting professors, which allows for a comprehensive understanding of their academic and social impact on the evolution of the profession.

3. METHOD

A qualitative approach has been considered to explore the legacy of women pioneers in accounting in Peru. This approach is appropriate because it seeks to understand complex phenomena from the

perspective of the participants, rather than measuring variables quantitatively. Qualitative research allows for an in-depth interpretation of the experiences and contributions of these women to accounting science, contextualizing their achievements within the social, economic and cultural challenges of their time.

The phenomenological approach allows for an in-depth analysis of the historical relevance of the contributions of these pioneering women, focusing on their experiences. Through this method, we examine how they perceived and faced the challenges of their environment [25]. Through interviews and the analysis of historical theses, we reveal not only their impact on the field of accounting, but also the subjective meaning that these experiences have for accounting science, showing how their legacy continues to influence the ethical and professional training of new generations in this field.

The study comprises the documentary analysis of the first undergraduate and graduate theses submitted for the award of bachelor's and master's degrees at the Universidad Nacional Mayor de San Marcos (UNMSM). This institution was selected for its prestige, being recognized as the oldest and most relevant university in America for its historical contribution to scientific development. Its academic trajectory and lasting impact justify its selection as the object of analysis in this research [26].

The sample collected includes all these submitted from the first one in 1971 to those completed in 1977, a period that coincides with the Velasco Alvarado administration. Similarly, for postgraduate theses, we considered from the first one in 1996 to those produced in 2011, framed within the influence of Alberto Fujimori's government. This approach makes it possible to analyze academic production in specific political contexts and its impact on the accounting discipline.

Likewise, personal accounts of classroom experiences are rarely collected for research purposes in accounting studies. However, they have considerable potential to uncover underlying issues and provide theoretical explanations about the nature of specific events. This study uses the collective biography methodology to investigate the experiences of accounting educators from the perspective of a novice accounting scholar. In such a way that explores their struggles, feelings, and emotions both inside and outside the classroom [27].

The collective biography methodology is oriented towards the resolution of specific thematic questions, formulated with a defined purpose. The texts produced in this process are transformed into data that are examined by the research team. This analysis makes it possible to generate, deepen and reformulate knowledge related to the topic of study [28]. Likewise, interviews were obtained from the main university professors with a recognized trajectory as teachers and belonging to public universities in Peru. Five teachers with the longest trajectory in the classroom were identified with affiliation to two historical universities in Peru: UNMSM and Universidad Nacional Federico Villarreal (UNFV). For qualitative studies, interviewing five people is an adequate number to sample [29].

The interviews were conducted in August 2024, which teachers in Peru have their rest period, and lasted an average of one and a half hours. The study authors themselves conducted the interviews with the accounting teachers. To do so, they used a series of guiding questions previously established (see Appendix). The data collection process included the following activities. First, informed consent was obtained from each participant, as seen in Table 1, explaining the purpose of the study before beginning the interview. Then, the interviews were conducted both in person and virtually, depending on the availability of the interviewees.

Subsequently, consent was obtained to record the interviews, which allowed for detailed analysis at a later stage. The recordings were then transcribed and sent to the participants for review. This gave them the opportunity to make corrections or clarifications if necessary. The study combines diverse sources, such as historical theses and interviews with experienced teachers. This triangulation approach not only allows corroboration of information from different perspectives, but also increases reliability by reducing bias in interpretation. The validity and reliability of the instrument used in the research are justified by methodological congruence, alignment with the objectives and the use of multiple sources to obtain consistent and meaningful results.

Data analysis was carried out using the thematic analysis method. First, familiarization with the data was carried out by repeated reading of the transcripts. Subsequently, patterns and emerging themes were identified and grouped into meaningful categories, allowing the findings to be interpreted in terms of the historical context of scientific production and the current landscape of education for the teachers interviewed.

Table 1. University teachers interviewed

Table 1. University teachers interviewed								
Professor Years of service in teaching Type of univers								
Olga Vildoso Picon	34	Public						
Ana Mercedes León Zárate	34	Public						
Inés López Valera	20	Public						
Gladys Escobar Córdova	23	Public						
Graciela Peña Velasquez	31	Public						

It is worth mentioning that interpretative phenomenology follows a structured process that begins with data collection, generally through in-depth interviews or personal accounts, allowing participants to express their experiences without restrictions. The data are then read and reread in order to become familiar with the stories and capture their essential meanings. Subsequently, an initial coding is carried out, where emerging themes and recurrent patterns in the described experiences are identified. These themes are grouped and analyzed in an in-depth interpretation stage, establishing relationships between them and generating a more structured understanding of the experience studied. Finally, the findings are integrated in a final report, where the results are presented, supported by textual quotations from the participants, compared with previous studies, and their theoretical and practical implications are reflected upon. This approach seeks not only to describe the experiences, but also to interpret them in their personal and cultural context, providing an enriched vision of how individuals give meaning to their reality [30].

4. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

4.1. Pioneering female accountants in undergraduate literature

After a documentary review of the first theses approved in Peruvian universities, it was found that 14 of them were the first written by women in the field of accounting. The topics addressed in these theses, together with their respective titles, are detailed in Table 2. This analysis makes it possible to recognize the initial contributions of pioneering women accountants in the academic field.

Table 2. Title of undergraduate documents

No.	Year	Subjects	Author	Title
01	1972	Financial	Acosta Castro, Alicia	The current financial needs of companies and their financing.
		statements	Aída	·
02	1974	Accounting and	Castillo Aguilar, Amanda	Administrative and accounting organization of a company extracting
		Administration	Grazia	and transforming aggregates for the construction industry.
03	1975	Accounting and	Castillo Villavicencio,	Administrative and accounting organization of the documentary
		Administration	Aida	credits department in a banking institution.
04	1971	Companies	Dávila de Fuente, Sandra	The limited liability company as applied to rice production
05	1974	Coomonativos	Betty Dávila Francia, María	Study of the administrative and accounting structure of a serious and
03	19/4	Cooperatives	Angélica	Study of the administrative and accounting structure of a savings and loan cooperative
06	1973	Cooperatives	Gutiérrez de la Torre,	Financial statements of agrarian cooperatives and agricultural
00	1973	Cooperatives	Dora	societies of social interest of the Agrarian Zone of Puno
07	1973	Financial	Julca Solís, Estela	The supplementary information of the financial statements
07	1773	statements	Juica Sons, Estela	The supplementary information of the inflancial statements
08	1974	Taxation	Lino Castillo, Armida	Tax treatment of foreign capital
09	1973	Taxation	Márquez Miranda, Laura	Tax regime of the fishmeal and fish oil industry in Peru
10	1975	Costs	Merino Chávez, Celia	Application of a cost accounting system in the carpet industry.
10	1770	Costs	Hildaura	Tapphounon of a cost accounting system in the curper mansay.
11	1972	Financial	Nakamura Muroy,	Study and application of financial analysis in a cotton yarn
		statements	Angélica	manufacturing plant.
12	1976	Financial	Pastor Chinga, Carlota	Study, evaluation and interpretation of the financial analysis in a real
		statements		estate company.
13	1972	Accounting	Urquizo Bolaños, Doris	Accounting of remunerations and the cost of social benefits in a
				commercial enterprise.
14	1977	Financial	Villasante Pérez,	Fixed assets and their depreciation in the pharmaceutical industry.
		statements	Hortensia Rebeca	

The period covered by the documents is the middle of the 1970s. Years in which Peru was living in a military dictatorship with characteristics of exacerbated populism and a deep nationalism. The contributions of the pioneering women accountants are applied to key sectors of the economy of that time, such as the construction, banking, agricultural and commercial sectors.

The conclusions of the theses show the relationship between accounting science, fiscal and corporate regulations, as well as their link with the different economic sectors of the time. In the field of financial analysis, the importance of providing companies with indicators that facilitate an accurate presentation of their liquidity, solvency and profitability is highlighted. These aspects are detailed in Table 3, highlighting their relevance in accounting and financial management. It is observed that there is no rigorousness as the current one, in terms of the number of pages and number of references. The average number of pages is 90 and the average number of references is 12. Likewise, one thesis has been identified without any references. A total of 50% of theses do not present more than 10 references.

Table 3. Conclusions of undergraduate documents

	Table 3. Conclusions of undergraduate documents		
Author	Conclusions	Pages	Refs.
Acosta Castro,	The capital needs of companies and their relationship with the financial supply available in	88	23
Alicia Aída	Peru during the 1970s are examined.		
Castillo Aguilar,	The relevance of having an adequate cost structure is discussed. It also highlights the	85	7
Amanda Grazia	importance of analyzing the financial statements to evaluate financial liquidity, inventory		
	turnover and working capital, in order to be prepared for possible future contingencies.		
Castillo	It is concluded that it is essential to prioritize the training of accounting personnel to ensure	91	5
Villavicencio, Aida	the satisfactory progress of banking entities. In addition, the importance and scope of		
	documentary credit is highlighted, emphasizing its application in both foreign trade operations		
	and domestic trade transactions.		
Dávila de Fuente,	Nineteen advantages associated with the use of the limited liability company in rice	108	26
Sandra Betty	production are presented.		
Dávila Francia,	From an interdisciplinary approach applied to credit unions in Peru, we analyze the	70	-
María Angélica	administrative structure of these institutions and its correlation with their financial health,		
	reflected in the absence of losses and the maintenance of adequate levels of liquidity.		
Gutiérrez de la	Presents the great importance of the analysis of the financial statements of the cooperatives.	43	7
Torre, Dora	Indicates the most important components that make up the financial statements of the		
	Cooperative.		
Julca Solís, Estela	The scope of the complementary information established by National Supervisory	64	11
	Commission of Companies and Securities (CONASEV) is analyzed. In addition, specific		
	recommendations are presented for each of the elements that make up such supplementary		
	information.		
Lino Castillo,	The advantages associated with the contribution of foreign investment in Peru are identified.	67	12
Armida	Likewise, it is proposed to increase the participation of national investors in the profits		
	generated, with the objective of eventually transforming the company into a national or mixed		
3.67	entity.	1.00	
Márquez Miranda,	Based on the high profitability observed in the fishmeal industry, the importance of	160	11
Laura	reinvesting profits is discussed. Finally, regulatory improvements related to the management		
M : CI	of fishing seasons, whether favorable or unfavorable, are proposed.	110	10
Merino Chávez,	Among the various cost accounting systems, the direct cost system is the one recommended	112	19
Celia Hildaura	for application in the carpet industry.	0.1	0
Nakamura Muroy,	In relation to the solvency and soundness ratios, an opinion is issued regarding the entity's	81	8
Angélica	ability to generate profits.	71	0
Pastor Chinga,	An analysis and interpretation of the solvency and financial soundness ratios is performed,	/1	8
Carlota	and an opinion is issued regarding the entity's capacity to generate profits. The treatment of remuneration and social benefits according to Peruvian law is determined.	165	24
Urquizo Bolaños, Doris	The treatment of remuneration and social benefits according to Peruvian law is determined.	103	24
Villasante Pérez.	The characteristics of fixed assets in the abandonoutical industry are described including	88	10
Hortensia Rebeca	The characteristics of fixed assets in the pharmaceutical industry are described, including those classified as intangible fixed assets. It also details the particularities of the depreciation	88	10
nortensia Kebeca	process, recommending the application of the indirect method. Finally, the accounting		
	treatment related to the revaluation of fixed assets is discussed.		
	treatment related to the revaluation of fixed assets is discussed.		

4.2. Pioneering female accountants in graduate literature

The first academic productions made by pioneering women in the field of accounting at the graduate level were identified, covering the period from 1996 to 2011. These works correspond to master's theses in accounting, with specific mentions in accounting: i) management accounting; ii) business management; and iv) senior auditing. The titles of these works are presented in Table 4.

Table 4. Title of postgraduate documents

No.	Year	Author	Title
1	2008	Abarca Vera, Sandra Catalina	Effects according to the environmental audit of the high level of fluids in the District
2	2011	B M . W A	of San Miguel in the Province of Lima.
2	2011	Baca Morante, Yanette Armida	The academic audit as a modern tool for the academic and managerial management of the Universities of Metropolitan Lima (2004-2008).
3	2011	Cartolin Pastor, Celia	The audit report in the identification of administrative, civil and criminal responsibilities as an instrument of control in public management.
4	1996	Gamarra Pastor, Maria Rosa	International and national accounting normalization and harmonization.
5	1999	López Díaz, Reyna	Situational analysis of financial auditing in the Departments of Amazonas, Cajamarca and Lambayeque.
6	2000	Pezo Bolívar, Aydé	Strategic Planning for the integral audit of municipal sanitation companies in the Southeast of Peru.
7	2002	Ramon Ruffner, Jeri Gloria	Contributions to a strategic approach to fraud and accounting error assessment
8	2007	Recavarren Ramírez, Flor Marlene	Management accounting as a strategic tool for the competitiveness of Peruvian SMEs.

Among the main conclusions, the contributions aimed at enhancing collaboration between accountants and internal auditors in fraud detection stand out, aligning with the principles of forensic accounting. The significance of reports issued by supreme audit institutions is emphasized as corrective mechanisms to address corrupt practices within public administration. Furthermore, the necessity of implementing environmental control programs is underscored. Additionally, the urgency of enhancing educational quality through audits that monitor the performance of educational institutions is emphasized, as seen in Table 5. Of the eight documents identified, the average number of pages is 192 and the average number of references is 35. This is a clear indicator of the rigorousness of the scientific productions. Currently, the number of references is much higher.

Table 5. Conclusions of postgraduate documents

Author	Table 5. Conclusions of postgraduate documents	Dogge	Dofe
Author Abarca Vera.	Conclusions The importance of implementing environmental control programs at the district level is	Pages 176	Refs.
Sandra Catalina	emphasized. In this sense, it is the responsibility of the Comptroller General's Office, through the Environmental Management and Cultural Heritage Department, to address this problem in a comprehensive manner.	170	
Baca Morante, Yanette Armida	The text emphasizes the relevance of academic audits as a fundamental mechanism for supervising the performance of university management. Through this procedure, it contributes to the improvement of the educational level of students. It also underlines the importance of student research conducted in an adequate manner under the guidance of the academic advisor.	140	18
Cartolin Pastor, Celia	The analysis of 38 governmental control reports carried out in public entities during the period 2000-2009 reveals that current officials do not act with the required speed, influenced by their employment ties. As a result, audit reports lack the necessary corrective impact to address deficiencies and acts of corruption in public management.	125	15
Gamarra Pastor, Maria Rosa	It is proposed that the National Public Accounting Directorate assume the role of harmonizing accounting standards. It is also proposed that a National Accounting Plan be drawn up to define contents and general valuation standards, thus facilitating the comparability of financial information. This plan should contemplate the transition from a planned economy to a free market economy, in addition to incorporating aspects related to environmental management and promoting the sustainable development of resources.	296	98
López Díaz, Reyna	In the departments under analysis there is limited supervision and financial control by the National Supervisory Commission of Companies and Securities, Superintendence of Banking and Insurance, Office of the Comptroller General of the Republic and National Institute of Statistics and Informatics.	194	32
Pezo Bolívar, Aydé	It is reported that the sanitation service providers perform their functions poorly, which generates dissatisfaction among users. In this context, the implementation of the Integral Audit is suggested as a corrective measure.	194	26
Ramon Ruffner, Jeri Gloria	Governments or political actors in office tend to intervene in the process of appointing authorities of institutions such as the Comptroller General's Office, the Superintendence of Banking and Insurance, the National Superintendence of Customs and Tax Administration, and the National Supervisory Commission of Companies and Securities. This interference may restrict the independence, transparency and objectivity of their functions. Faced with this context, the professional accountant must carry out a thorough and honest evaluation from the beginning of his work, as well as coordinate with the internal auditor to identify critical points and existing vulnerabilities. Additionally, it is necessary that the accountant transmits specific guidelines to his team in order to mitigate possible malicious acts.	248	25
Recavarren Ramírez, Flor Marlene	In order to ensure the sustainability of small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) in Peru, it is essential to implement management accounting. This discipline allows considering the specific context of each company and has the ability to anticipate the future dynamics of the business.	169	33

4.3. Experiences of women teachers

With respect to the teaching experiences of women, five professors from the accounting faculties of Peruvian public universities were interviewed. They were asked about memorable experiences in their years of teaching. Table 6 shows their opinions. The responses of the interviewees show the transforming impact of their teaching work in the lives of the students, highlighting not only their academic commitment, but also their ability to generate a supportive and motivating environment. The role of educators as guides and mentors who influence the integral development of their students is illustrated. It also shows how teacher accompaniment can make a significant difference, supporting students in complex situations, such as mental health problems, and celebrating their recovery and professional success. These experiences reflect the depth and scope of the impact of teachers on the academic and human development of their students. Main challenges in accounting education are can be seen in Table 7.

The interviewees' responses highlight a variety of challenges faced in accounting education, encompassing technological, economic and formative aspects. The impact of technology and the COVID-19 pandemic on educational processes is noted, along with the need for professional updating in emerging areas such as artificial intelligence. Resource limitations in some institutions and economic inequalities that affect students' access to quality education are also identified.

Table 6. Memorable experiences Reply "I encourage students to graduate and I have the satisfaction of seeing them do so." "Helping a student with mental health issues within the classroom. I saw him after years; he went back to school and today he is a professional who always thanks me." "That three students choose to do their thesis in the specialty of accounting expertise and that she has been named sponsor of the graduating class several times."

Escobar Córdova, Gladys
"I have several, Eva a student without parents and who lived with her uncles with whom she had no chemistry, and to have been an emotional support for 5 years and to see her shine in society today satisfies me."

Peña Velasquez, Graciela "When the classroom I taught won a college-level accounting contest."

Interviewee

Vildoso Picon, Olga Leon Zarate, Ana

Mercedes López Valera, Inés

Table 7. Main challenges

Interviewee	Reply
Vildoso Picon, Olga	"Technology, the age of corona viruses."
Leon Zarate, Ana Mercedes	"Professional update on artificial intelligence issues."
López Valera, Inés	"The lack of resources of some schools, as well as the economic disparities of students."
Escobar Córdova, Gladys	"Time for training."
Peña Velasquez, Graciela	"Relationships between the older adult and students. Constant technological updating."

Likewise, the difficulty of finding time for training, considering the multiple demands of the teaching role, and the importance of intergenerational relationships between students and older adults is highlighted, as well as the constant need to incorporate technological advances in educational practice. This panorama evidences the current challenges faced by educators in a constantly evolving environment. Personal obstacles faced are shown in Table 8.

The responses highlight obstacles such as envy in the work environment, lack of academic preparation and motivation of students, and the importance of having academic degrees, now essential for teaching. The teaching and personal life balance is can be seen in Table 9. The responses reflect different ways of balancing work and personal life, from an organized distribution of time and discipline, to a strong emotional attachment to teaching, considered a priority in their lives. The strategies to avoid burnout and stress are shown in Table 10.

The interviewees mentioned various strategies to prevent burnout, such as observing their colleagues' practices and taking short breaks. They also stressed the importance of physical activity, spending time with family and adopting habits that promote physical and mental well-being. These actions contribute to maintaining a balance between professional and personal life, reducing work-related stress.

Table 8 Personal obstacles

	Tuble 6. I elisonal obstacles
Interviewee	Reply
Leon Zarate, Ana Mercedes	"Only envy."
López Valera, Inés	"Students do not arrive with the necessary knowledge to reach the next level. Student motivation, discipline, and student organization."
Escobar Córdova, Gladys	"When you do not have the academic degrees that today are fundamental for every teacher as it is an investment."

Table 9. Teaching and personal life balance

Interviewee	Reply
Vildoso Picon, Olga	"I balance my work and personal life, in a calm way by distributing my time."
Leon Zarate, Ana Mercedes	"My personal life is totally linked to the classes."
López Valera, Inés	"I am organized and disciplined."
Escobar Córdova, Gladys	"After so many years, my second family is my job. My students are my adopted children."
Peña Velasquez, Graciela	"I have dedicated more time to my work as a teacher."

Table 10. Strategies

Interviewee	Reply
Vildoso Picon, Olga	"Observe the teaching of courses of the career by other colleagues."
Leon Zarate, Ana Mercedes	"Rest for about ten minutes with your eyes closed and breathe."
López Valera, Inés	"On weekends, I meet with my family and play sports."
Escobar Córdova, Gladys	"I play sports."
Peña Velasquez, Graciela	"I exercise, take vitamins and a little distraction."

4.4. Accounting pioneers in scientific production

4.4.1. Period 1971-1977

During this period in Peru, the phenomenon of Velasquismo occurred, due to the fact that the president at that time was Mr. Juan Velasco Alvarado. His ideology represented an effort to accelerate nation building in Peru. It sought to decolonize social relations by addressing injustices and reducing disparities, with the objective of uniting Peruvians around a project focused on social integration, redistribution of wealth and affirmation of the dignity and value of the urban and rural popular sectors. In essence, Velasquismo embodied aspirations long held by the middle- and working-class Creole populations [31].

In this context, the emergence of academic contributions by women accountants since 1971 reflects the expanding establishment of the middle class in Peru. This development was largely driven by the democratization and broad accessibility of education during the mid-1960s. A significant indicator of this progress is the increase in the number of universities, which rose from 11 in 1961 to 31 by 1969 [32].

During the 1970s, Peru underwent the era of "Velasquismo," characterized by a military government. This administration fostered a form of state capitalism, leading to a significant expansion of the state apparatus [33]. Economically, the agrarian reform process facilitated the transfer of rural property, which bolstered public sector activities while simultaneously encouraging private sector investments [31]. Given these circumstances, the accounting pioneers focused on emphasizing financial indicators to enable companies to secure access to credit.

Conversely, there is notable concern regarding the role of cooperatives in Peru. These entities often position themselves as banks or financial institutions, aiming to provide financial services to their members, primarily farmers and microentrepreneurs [32]. In response to this context, pioneer women accountants contributed not only from an accounting perspective but also by addressing administrative aspects.

The findings reveal that pioneer women accountants demonstrated a clear concern for the labor conditions of organizational employees, emphasizing both proper accounting management and the effective training of accounting personnel. Their contributions underscore the significant role these trailblazers played in advancing the accounting profession and promoting gender equality within the field.

4.4.2. Period 1996-2011

Peru, during the late 20th century and the early 21st century, experienced significant economic growth, a reduction in poverty levels, and greater formalization of its economy [34], [35]. However, despite these advances, the benefits of growth were not evenly distributed across all sectors of the population. This persistent inequality contributed to social and economic instability [35]–[37]. Pioneering women accountants engaged in postgraduate academic production demonstrated an acute awareness of their era, addressing topics that remain highly relevant to Peru's current challenges. Their work focused on nationally significant areas, including public accounting, management accounting and auditing, financial auditing, environmental accounting, academic auditing, and corruption, reflecting the primary concerns of their time.

4.5. Testimonials from the accounting educators

Similar qualitative studies in Latin American countries agree with the findings presented, in the sense of dedication, perseverance and empathy on the part of women teachers towards students and also with the lack of equal opportunities [15]. The experiences shared by the teachers interviewed highlight the importance of emotional and professional support for students. This support goes beyond the classroom, generating a lasting impact on their personal and professional development. The dedication and empathy towards students, especially in challenging situations such as mental health problems, highlight the need to promote teaching practices centered on the student and his or her context. Finally, technological challenges and demands for new competencies in areas such as artificial intelligence underscore the need for teachers to incorporate emerging technologies into their educational practice.

The female university professors interviewed highlight the inequalities in teaching careers and this occurs not only in the university but also in companies, women are underrepresented in high-level leadership positions and face slower career advancement compared to their male counterparts [19], [38], [39]. This underrepresentation is exacerbated by a patriarchal culture that influences career progression and maintains gender disparities [40]. With respect to educational policy, the underrepresentation of women in academic and editorial leadership positions reflects the need for policies that promote gender equity in higher education and accounting research. It is necessary to prioritize policies that encourage quality academic production among university professors, integrating resources and training to strengthen research capabilities in key areas of accounting. Economic and resource inequalities between institutions and students require policies that ensure equitable conditions for access to quality education and the necessary technological tools.

Historical limitations have been identified in the contributions of women educators in accounting education. Results along the same lines indicate that it is due to culture or patriarchal values that men's teaching contributions are considered more appropriate. Therefore, the possible contributions of women to

the profession are limited [9], [41]. Differences are evident in the salary treatment of teachers, with women receiving less for the same service or with fewer opportunities in the academic career [42], [43].

In terms of health, the study shows that anxiety and stress are common conditions in teaching over the years. This coincides with previous research indicating that women have greater heart rate variability. This physiological response allows them to develop a greater resistance to adverse situations [44].

The study does not emphasize the leadership aspirations of female teachers due to the age of the participants. However, other research indicates that the expectations of women in academia focus on greater inclusion, better salary conditions and flexible work options. In addition, their interest in greater participation in STEM areas is highlighted, promoting their presence in disciplines traditionally dominated by men [45].

5. CONCLUSION

The study highlights the fundamental role of pioneering women in Peruvian accounting, who, despite working in an environment traditionally dominated by men, have made substantial contributions in key areas such as auditing, management accounting and auditing. Their scientific production has addressed crucial issues for the national economy, such as financial analysis and environmental auditing, demonstrating their ability to adapt to the challenges of their time and their contribution to the consolidation of the discipline. In addition, the experiences reported by the teachers interviewed reflect the transforming impact of their pedagogical work, not only in the academic training of students, but also in their ethical and human development. These professionals have played an essential role in promoting inclusive practices focused on student learning, challenging gender barriers and institutional limitations, while facing contemporary challenges such as the technological gap and insufficient resources.

In this context, the research highlights the need to implement policies that promote gender equity in higher education and accounting research, as well as to update teacher training in emerging technologies, including artificial intelligence, to maintain the relevance of accounting education in a dynamic global environment. It is also recommended that future research expand the study of the contributions of women accountants in specific areas, such as tax auditing and international accounting, as well as explore regional variations in gender inclusion in the accounting profession. The incorporation of quantitative or mixed approaches, such as surveys and bibliometric analyses, will allow for a better understanding of the evolution of women's participation and the impact of equity policies on their professional development. Similarly, collaboration between universities and professional associations is essential for the design of strategies to reduce the gender gap, guarantee the representation of women in decision-making bodies, and promote their leadership in the academic and business spheres.

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CONFLICT OF INTEREST STATEMENT

Authors state no conflict of interest.

DATA AVAILABILITY

The data that support the findings of this study are available from the corresponding author [JMC-D], upon reasonable request.

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APPENDIX

Interview guide

Dedication to university education

Number of years of teaching experience:

- 1. How many years have you been teaching at the university?
- 2. Have you taught at other educational institutions before coming to your current university?

Hours dedicated to class preparation and related activities:

- 3. How many hours per week do you spend preparing teaching materials for your classes?
- 4. Do you participate in updating or continuous training activities to improve your skills as a teacher?

Participation in extracurricular activities related to teaching:

- 5. Do you participate in extracurricular activities such as tutoring, seminars, or study groups?
- 6. Have you participated in research or curriculum development projects in your teaching area?

Experiences and challenges faced as a university teacher

Positive experiences in the classroom:

- 7. What are the most rewarding aspects of teaching at the university?
- 8. Could you share any memorable experiences you have had while teaching?

Academic challenges faced:

- 9. What do you consider to be the main academic challenges you face as a university professor?
- 10. How do you address these challenges in your teaching practice?

Personal or professional obstacles overcome:

- 11. Have you faced any personal or professional obstacles in your career as a university professor?
- 12. How have you overcome these obstacles and what lessons have you learned from these experiences?

Job and personal satisfaction as a university teacher

Feelings of professional fulfillment:

- 13. How do you feel about your work as a university professor?
- 14. What aspects of your work give you the most satisfaction and professional fulfillment?

Satisfaction with the impact on students:

- 15. Do you feel that your work as a teacher has a positive impact on your students' learning?
- 16. Have you received feedback from your students that confirms this impact?

Work-life balance:

- 17. How do you manage to maintain a balance between your work life as a university professor and your personal life?
- 18. What strategies do you use to avoid burnout and stress related to your job?

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