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El gobierno de la universidad desde la perspectiva de la teoría de agencia : abriendo la caja negra

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Propositions

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1. Strong external pressures do not necessarily ensure that Chilean universities will achieve a high level of internal strategic alignment. The universities studied show varying levels of alignment between formal institutional priorities and the operational objectives pursued by academic units. The level of strategic alignment is strongly influenced by the power balance between the main components of institutional governance: Board of Directors, Central Administration and Faculties.
2. The power balance between these main components of institutional governance is conditioned by three factors: regulatory governance arrangements, individual capacities of those who exercise as authorities, and their particular interests.
3. The functioning of institutional governance differs from that established in the internal norms. The governance relations between the main institutional authorities show gaps between the expected and actual behavior in relation to their internal regulations.
4. There is no mandatory relationship between the type of ownership and the governance model of the university. Evidence suggests that the governance model is determined by a set of internal and external factors that interact with each other.
5. In recent years in Chile, the managerial trend has had varying degrees of influence in changing the internal governance of universities. This occurs as a result of diverse responses that emerge from different institutional cultures, and distinct internal adaptation processes.
6. Chile's Higher Education Law (N° 20.091/2018) increases government influence through heightened public regulation and greater public funding. However, there remains a strong predominance of both academic self-rule and market in the governance of the Chilean higher education system.
7. Recent changes in the institutional governance of Chilean state universities (Law N° 21.094) point in the opposite direction to the international trend. This regulation reduces the participation of external stakeholders in the higher body and consolidates democratic election as the main mechanism for the appointment of single-person academic authorities and the nomination of representatives to collegial bodies. This could be explained by the strong pressure exerted from academic communities on the Government and Parliament.
8. Conceptual approaches aimed at studying the university as an organization have contributed to the field of higher education studies. In particular, the Agency Theory offers a simple and consistent conceptual framework that contributes to the study of university governance from the perspective of the interests and objectives of its institutional authorities.

9. Chilean universities with a strong academic tradition are operating in a hybrid governance configuration based on various combinations of collegial and managerial forms. This could be explained mainly by the strong competition that institutions face to capture public and private funding.
10. The institutional governance of Chilean universities requires a higher level of professionalisation, especially regarding the composition and functioning of Boards of Directors or equivalent bodies.
11. During the last decade, changes produced in matters of institutional arrangements, regulation and financing of the Chilean higher education system have been strongly influenced by mobilisations and political pressures from the student sector. Considering the social uprising that took place in October 2019 and the scenario of politicisation projected for the coming years, it is likely that these pressures will intensify to promote greater Government influence over the system, as well as strengthening democracy and collegialism as the underpinning of institutional governance.