



# **Perception Study In Public And Private Organizations Regarding Social Responsibility In Occupational Health And Safety In Ecuador**

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## **ARTICLE INFO ABSTRACT**

Social responsibility is a commitment that companies assume to improve the welfare of the society in which they operate. In this document, an analysis is made based on documentary sources of public and private organizations regarding social responsibility in occupational safety and health involved in the construction of bridges and access roads in large cities in Ecuador. Occupational safety and health are a crucial issue in the construction industry, and it is important that companies are committed to ensuring a safe and healthy work environment for their employees. Social responsibility in this context implies that companies must take proactive measures to prevent accidents and occupational illnesses and ensure that their employees have access to the necessary medical care. In Ecuador, the construction of bridges and access roads in large cities is an important activity that involves both public and private companies. It is essential that companies assume their social responsibility and act together to ensure that construction safety and health standards are met.

Companies realize that success does not depend solely on profits, but that it is also necessary to contribute to the well-being of all those involved in them in order to make them more competitive. To achieve this, companies must undertake corporate social responsibility (CSR) actions. However, some companies that claim to be socially responsible are not completely so. In the construction sector, the work is one of the most exposed to suffer occupational accidents. In 2018, the Ecuadorian Institute of Social Security reported that 3.3% of occupational accidents in Ecuadorian industry were generated in the construction sector. It is important that companies assume their social responsibility in occupational safety and health, and work together to ensure that occupational risk prevention standards are met.

The results show that Corporate Social Responsibility is closely related to sustainable development; currently in Ecuador there are reforms, where priority is given to social and environmental commitment, where companies seek to be socially responsible, generating more resources, but at the same time raising awareness of the care and preservation of the environment and the welfare of their employees.

## **1. INTRODUCTION**

Corporate social responsibility (CSR), also known as corporate social responsibility, originated before the 1950s, thanks to Howard R. Bowen. In recent decades it has evolved, being today a model applicable to all types of organizations [1], focused as a voluntary commitment of companies to integrate social and environmental concerns in terms of business operations and in their relations with their stakeholders [2], it is a principle that governs the sustainable and economic growth of companies, through continuous improvement, which leads to the achievement of competitiveness [3]. Several authors focus on the social dimension of CSR, taking into account its close relationship with occupational safety and health (OSH), since the well-being, safety and health of workers are factors that make it possible to measure the overall progress of companies [3], the well-being of society and a cleaner environment.

Several bibliographical sources mention that there is an independence between CSR and OSH, in which it is observed that organizations cannot be sensitive and carry out external practices, since they have a poor internal social performance, especially in matters related to the OSH of their employees, a phenomenon that characterizes larger companies. According to Vives and Peinado-Vara (2011), they show how CSR in Latin America has undergone an evolution, from the more traditional business philanthropy, through corporate citizenship to responsible behavior as part of business strategy. Ecuador, faced with this reality, must align itself with the new transforming vision, towards the change of the productive matrix that leads to the establishment of public policies aimed at social, economic and environmental sustainability, considering that at present there are few studies on the approaches to integration between OSH and CSR in the country's companies, since there are no [2] statistical data that serve as the main source of information regarding social, labor, safety and health factors of the active subjects that interact in the labor market [4].

Considering the lack of primary sources that allow a clear picture of the business environment in relation to CSR and OSH variables, it is necessary to carry out this study with the objective of determining the internal social performance and occupational health and safety management of Ecuadorian companies through the statements of the working population. The results obtained provide an overview of the current panorama of the integration between CSR and OSH in the Ecuadorian business context [5]-[7].

## 2. METODOLOGY

This research was conducted through a literature review and used statistical techniques, was developed based on public and private companies in Ecuador and used the descriptive method with a qualitative approach [8]. The design used was non-experimental [9], because, as a researcher, there was no interference in the generation of the results; a bibliographic and analytical process was carried out. A transversal study was carried out, because the information collected was obtained in a determined period and it came from the registry of companies registered in the College of Civil Engineers of Cotopaxi, civil construction companies of the province and workers in the construction area. Using the field study method and the technique used, concluding with the open interview and surveys directed to each construction group [10][11].

### Subjects in the study

The research was carried out with information from the registry of companies registered with the College of Civil Engineers of Cotopaxi, civil construction companies in the province, and construction workers. A population of 90 companies was determined and randomly sampled, resulting in 34 companies for the study.

### Instrument

The survey was used as a data collection instrument, designed to collect information on the occupational safety practices of the companies. The interview, carried out with construction personnel, made it possible to obtain information on the occupational risks that occur in the construction sector [12]. An important actor for the study was the analysis of the criteria of professionals with profiles and knowledge related to occupational safety, the same information that made it possible to understand the perspectives and practices in occupational safety and health in the companies [13][14].

### Procedure

Once the study sample of the road and bridge construction companies was segmented, the surveys were carried out by preparing a questionnaire containing 14 closed questions addressed to the directors of the companies selected for the study. The time availability of each organization was also taken into account.

The information was collected through the application of surveys to professionals with profiles and knowledge related to occupational safety, based on the design of a questionnaire distributed in 9 questions, closed type, addressed to professionals, considering the availability of time of each person who conducted the survey. Interviews were conducted with company personnel in order to obtain broader criteria on occupational safety in their work.

The processing of the information was carried out through the use of instruments such as the Python programmer and Excel.

To obtain the results, the data were grouped by frequency of mention and classified into key ideas, in order to obtain clearer information on the subject of the study.

## 3. RESULTS

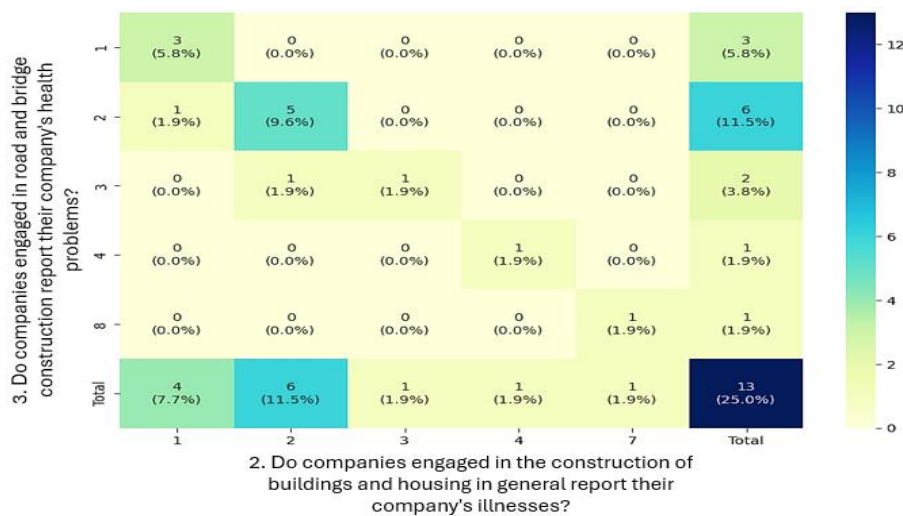
Since this is a perception study, an adaptable tool is needed that includes elements whose relevance has been compared with the regulations and legal competencies for their adequate application. This section shows the work carried out with respect to the collection of information on labor risk in companies that provide construction services in the province of Cotopaxi.

The survey was applied to a diverse set of professional profiles and organizations, reflecting an interest in understanding occupational health and safety perspectives and practices across different sectors. Participants included occupational physicians from the Ecuadorian Institute of Social Security and the Technical University of Cotopaxi, as well as the former National Director of Occupational Risks of IESS. Also participating were the Head of Occupational Health and Safety, the Manager of Ecadia, the Director of Industrial Relations of Empresa Eléctrica Riobamba S.A. and the Head of the Smelting Plant of Corporación Ecuatoriana de Aluminio. Within the governmental sphere, the study incorporated the director of Human Resources and the Occupational Health and Safety Specialist 2 of the GAD Latacunga, as well as Occupational Physicians from the Municipality of Latacunga and the Escuela Superior Politécnica de Chimborazo. Finally, the analysis was enriched with the contributions of an occupational physician from Espoch and an occupational health and safety specialist from the Ministry of Labor. This range of profiles ensures a comprehensive and multifaceted vision of occupational safety and health practices in Ecuador.

The following are the results obtained from the surveys applied to professionals with occupational safety profiles and knowledge.

**REPORTING OF ILLNESSES IN BUILDING AND HOUSING CONSTRUCTION AND REPORTING OF HEALTH PROBLEMS IN BRIDGE AND ROAD CONSTRUCTION.**

The results were obtained by taking into account the relationship between the variables in questions 2 and 3.

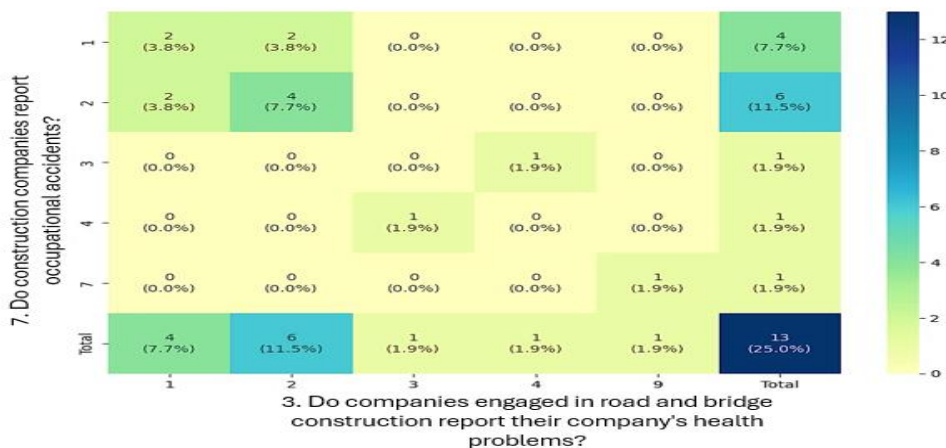


**Figure 1.-** Correlation between questions 2 and 3.

**ANALYSIS**

In Figure 1, it is evident that companies dedicated to the construction of buildings and housing in general report illnesses to their company, in the same way companies dedicated to the construction of bridges and roads report health problems to their company. This means that they do not need an external health service provider and are comfortable with the care received by their company.

**REPORTING OF HEALTH PROBLEMS IN BRIDGE AND ROAD CONSTRUCTION AND REPORTS OF OCCUPATIONAL ACCIDENTS**The results were made taking into account the relationship between the variables in questions 3 and 7.



**Figure 2.-** Correlation between questions 3 and 7

### ANALYSIS

According to Figure 2, a quarter of the companies involved in the construction of road infrastructure suffer from health problems in their organization. A statistical relationship is observed between the answers to questions 3 and 7. This implies that construction companies have a higher incidence of health problems due to the nature of their activity.

#### REPORTING HEALTH PROBLEMS IN BRIDGE AND ROAD CONSTRUCTION AND COMPLIANCE WITH OCCUPATIONAL HEALTH AND SAFETY REGULATIONS

The results were obtained by taking into account the relationship between the variables in questions 3 and 8.

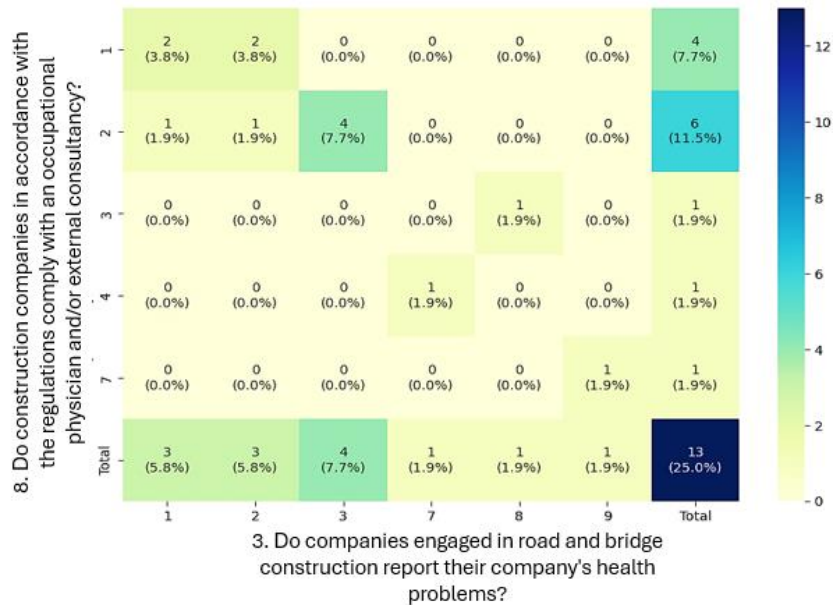


Figure 3.- Correlation between questions 3 and 8

### ANALYSIS

According to Figure 3, it can be seen that 13 of the 34 companies answer that, according to the regulations, they have an occupational physician.

#### REPORT OF HEALTH PROBLEMS IN THE CONSTRUCTION OF BRIDGES AND ROADS AND COMPLIANCE WITH THE NORMS OF THE OCCUPATIONAL HEALTH AND SAFETY MODEL

The results were obtained taking into account the relationship between the variables in questions 3 and 9.

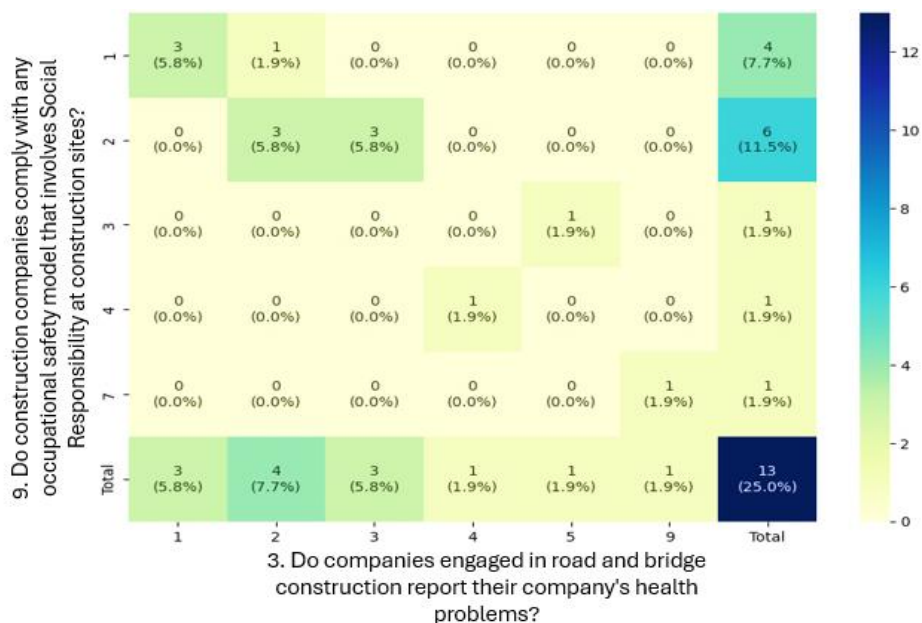


Figure 4.- Correlation between questions 3 and 9

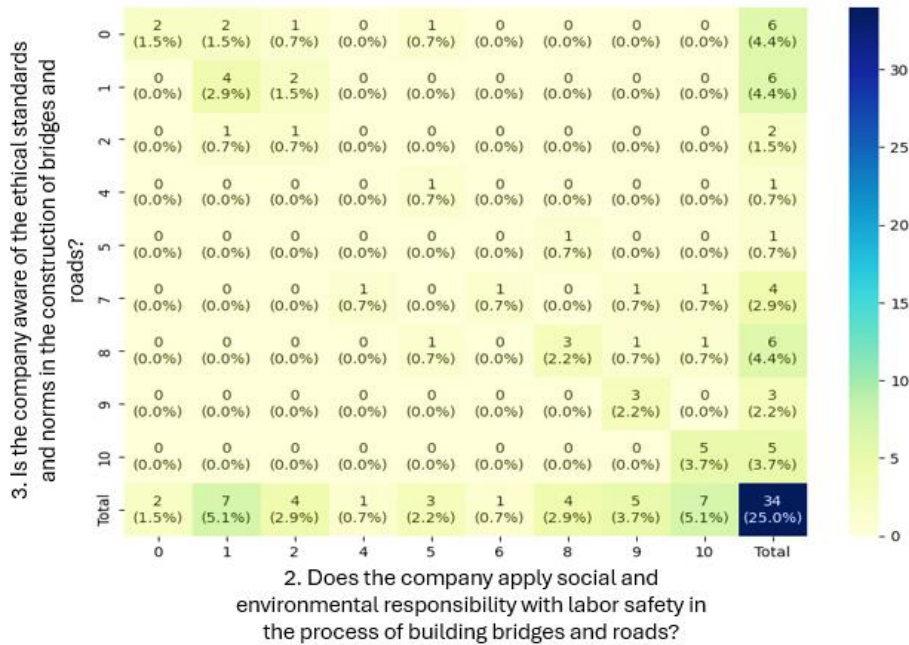


**ANALYSIS**

The results obtained from the data collection conducted with the companies dedicated to the construction of bridges and roads have a correlation, which comply with a safety model that involves social responsibility, with 11.5% of companies. The remaining 7.7% have no occupational safety models that involve social responsibility.

**KNOWLEDGE OF NORMS AND STANDARDS VS. APPLICATION OF RESPONSIBLE PRACTICES**

The results were obtained by taking into account the relationship between the variables in questions 2 and 3.



**Figure 5.-** Correlation between questions 2 and 3

**ANALYSIS**

As shown in Figure 5, there is no good correlation between compliance with social and environmental responsibility with the prevention of occupational hazards in road infrastructure works and knowledge of the ethical and regulatory criteria governing the construction of bridges and roads, with a correlation coefficient of 5.1%. This implies that companies that are concerned about the social and ecological impact of their projects should implement the health and safety of their workers and respect the regulations and ethical principles of the sector.

**UPDATED KNOWLEDGE OF SAFETY AND SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY TRENDS AND REGULATIONS AND THE IMPLEMENTATION OF PRACTICES**

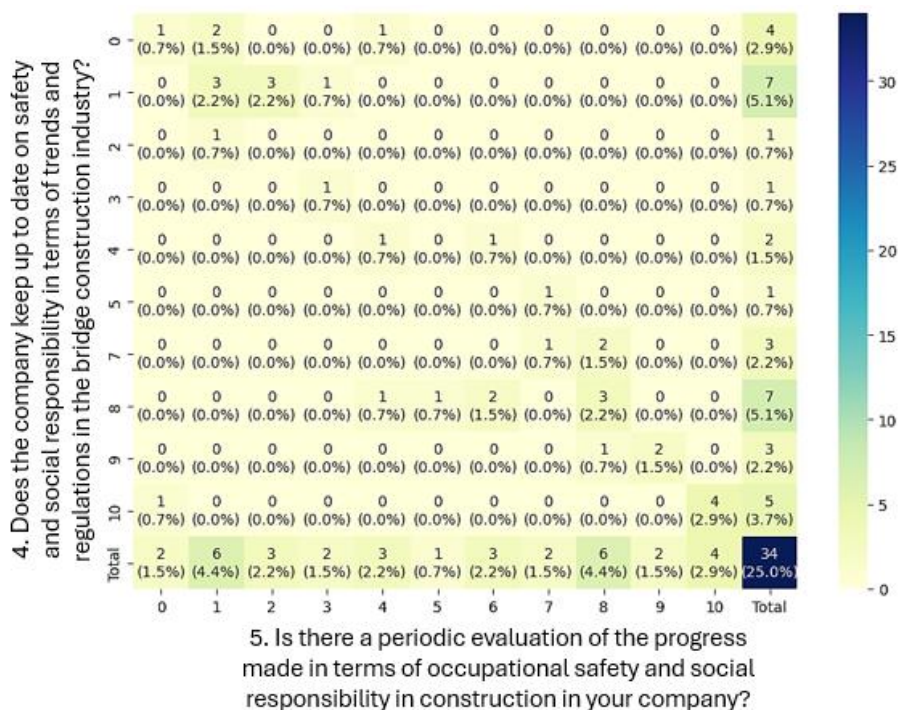
The results were obtained by taking into account the relationship between the variables in questions 4 and 2.



**Figura 6.-** Correlación pregunta 2 y 4  
**ANÁLISIS**

**EVALUACIÓN DE AVANCE Y CONOCIMIENTOS ACTUALIZADOS**

Los resultados se relizaron tomando encuesta la relación entre las variables de las preguntas 5 y 4.



**Figure 7.-** Correlation between questions 4 and 5

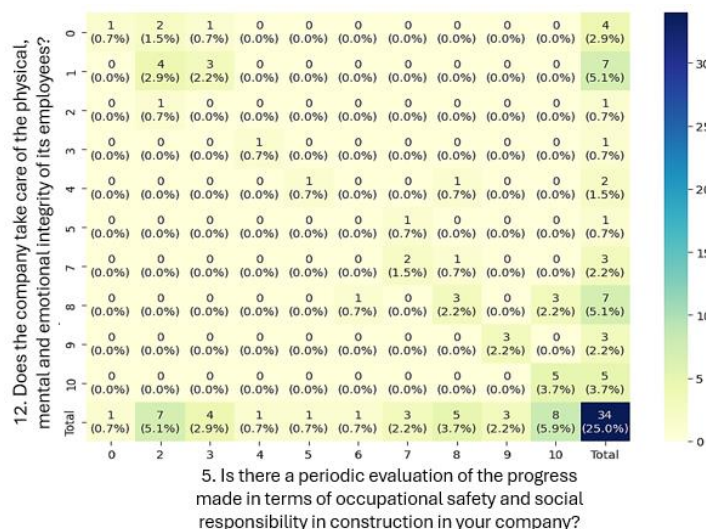
**ANALYSIS**

Figure 7 illustrates the relationship between the indicators of periodic evaluation and updating in terms of responsibility and safety. Only 5.7% of the surveyed companies express satisfaction with the following aspects: The company conducts periodic evaluation of progress in occupational safety and social responsibility, and the company is up to date with industry trends and regulations in the construction sector. Only 4 of the 34 companies state that there is a safety correlation in their organizations.

Periodic evaluation and updating in responsibility and safety is important, and what benefits it brings to companies and society.

**PERIODIC EVALUATIONS AND THE COMPANY'S CARE FOR ITS EMPLOYEES**

The results were made taking into account the relationship between the variables in questions 5 and 12.

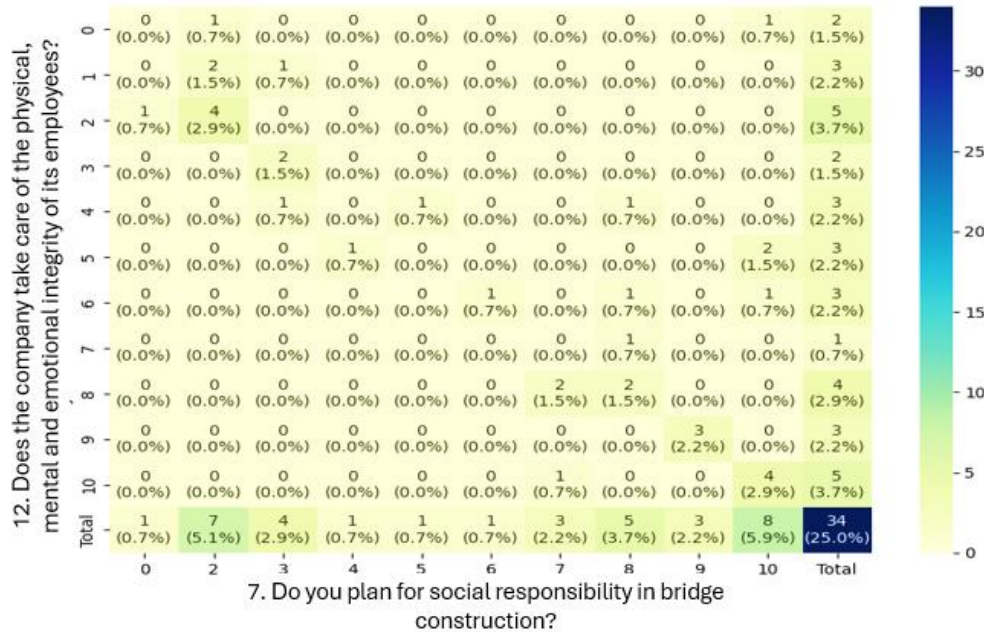


**Figure 8.-** Correlation between questions 5 and 12

**ANALYSIS**

Figure 8, represents the number of companies that make a periodic evaluation of progress in occupational safety and social responsibility in the construction sector and that their companies protect the physical, mental and emotional safety of their employees. Only 7 companies state that they are satisfied with the correlation of the mentioned parameters.

**PLANNING OF SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY AND CARE OF THE COMPANY TOWARDS ITS EMPLOYEES**  
 The results were made taking into account the relationship between the variables in questions 4 and 2.



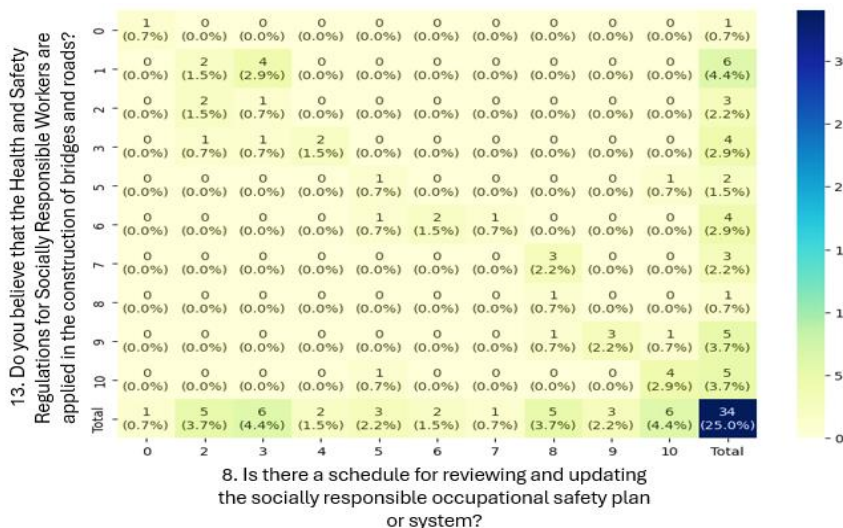
**Figure 9.-** Correlation between questions 7 and 12.

**ANALYSIS**

According to Figure 9, only 26.5% of the 34 companies surveyed take social responsibility into account when building bridges, but neglect the health and well-being of their employees. This implies that the companies do not consider the safety of their workers as a priority or an investment.

**PRESENCE OF A SCHEDULE FOR REVIEWING THE SOCIAL SECURITY PLAN AND PERCEPTION OF THE APPLICATION OF THE REGULATION.**

The results were obtained by taking into account the relationship between the variables in questions 8 and 13.



**Figure 10.-** Correlation between questions 8 and 13.



### ANALYSIS

According to Figure 10, only 14.7% of the 100% of companies surveyed have an occupational safety plan that is periodically reviewed and updated. This implies that most companies do not give much importance to occupational safety and its effects on their business.

#### IMPROVEMENT OF PRACTICES AND PERCEPTION OF THE APPLICATION OF STANDARDS.

The results were made taking into account the relationship between the variables in questions 9 and 13.

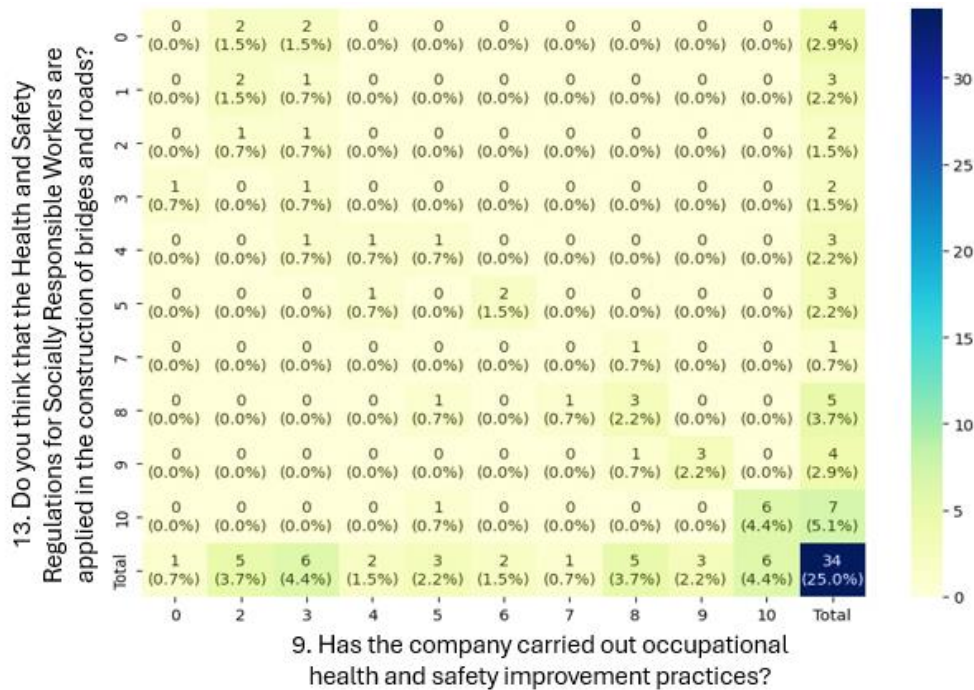


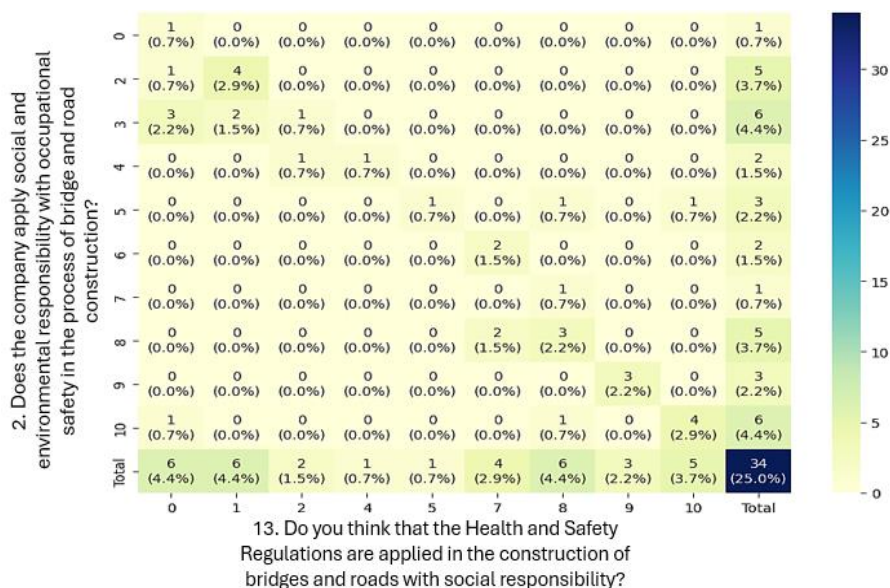
Figure 11.- Correlation between questions 9 and 13.

### ANALYSIS

According to Figure 11, only 20.6% of the 34 companies surveyed have implemented measures to improve the occupational safety and health of their workers. On the other hand, 50% of the companies agree that it is necessary to comply with the Safety and Health Regulations for workers with social responsibility in the construction of bridges and roads.

#### PERCEPTION OF THE APPLICATION OF NORMS AND APPLICATION OF NORMS.

The results were made taking into account the relationship between the variables in questions 13 and 2.



13. Do you think that the Health and Safety Regulations are applied in the construction of bridges and roads with social responsibility?



**Figure 12.-** Correlation between questions 2 and 13.

### ANALYSIS

According to Figure 12, only 17.6% of the 34 companies surveyed comply with the Health and Safety Regulations for workers with social responsibility in the construction of bridges and roads. The majority of the companies do not follow these regulations, indicating the need to investigate company policies and constantly follow up.

### 4. CONCLUSIONS

The analysis of this research has led to the conclusion that Corporate Social Responsibility is closely related to sustainable development; currently in Ecuador there are reforms, where priority is given to social and environmental commitment, where it is sought that companies are socially responsible, generating more resources, but at the same time raising awareness of the care and preservation of the environment and the welfare of their employees.

In addition, it should be mentioned that this study contributes to the companies to have a preliminary information tool on the current state of CSR and OSH in Ecuador. The analysis of the results has revealed that companies currently have a low level of social performance internally, in addition to not having contingency plans related to the management of occupational safety and health in both public and private companies, this factor has a direct impact on the achievement and creation of a culture of social responsibility.

The legislation regulating CSR and OSH must be disseminated among social and business agents in order to raise awareness of the advantages of promoting social responsibility, caring for the environment and improving the working conditions of workers.

CSR policies should be in place, implementing social, cultural or sports projects to create a social and environmental culture.

Public and private companies should evaluate the different risks that may affect the employee at a physical and psychological level, thus affecting the fulfillment of the work activities carried out in the workplace.

Insert occupational health and safety policies, giving priority to the welfare of employees, to mitigate occupational hazards that may occur at the time of performing their activities.

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