

Mirror, mirror on the wall, is there anyone in the accounting academia more intellectually humble than I?

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Abstract

Objective: This study sought to identify the characteristics that differentiate the intellectual humility of accounting researchers in Brazil.

Method: The research was conducted through a survey involving 226 researchers affiliated with Graduate Programs in Accounting. Initially, construct validation was performed using Exploratory Factor Analysis (EFA) and Confirmatory Factor Analysis (CFA). Subsequently, non-parametric tests for group differences were applied, comparing intellectual humility with variables such as age, gender, teaching experience, information consumption, academic success, and Machiavellianism.

Results: The findings reveal that age and teaching experience differentiate levels of intellectual humility, suggesting that maturity and professional experience favor an openness to revising one's beliefs. Conversely, gender, information consumption, and academic success do not appear to be relevant in the formation of intellectual humility among accounting researchers, suggesting the prevalence of other factors. Furthermore, the study found that higher levels of Machiavellianism differentiate lower levels of intellectual humility, which prompts sensitive discussions and reveals barriers to scientific development.

Contributions: By introducing the debate on epistemic virtues into accounting research, this study contributes by indicating that intellectual humility may be associated with scientific integrity, the mitigation of unethical conduct, and the promotion of collaborative knowledge construction. Additionally, it highlights the relevance of considering intellectual humility as a formative value within the accounting academy, suggesting its potential to foster more dialogical, critical, and collaborative practices, although such implications should be interpreted with caution.

Keywords: Intellectual humility; Researcher characteristics; Brazilian accounting academia.

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Introduction

Studies in the accounting field have focused on the diversity of themes, methodological aspects, and the social impact of research (Homero Junior, 2017; Santos et al., 2020; Fedato et al., 2023). However, it is equally relevant to understand the profile of the researchers who develop investigations in this field, as the attributes of these individuals shape this scientific area.

Characteristics such as intellectual humility can reveal aspects of the individuals who constitute the scientific field of accounting. Understanding humility involves self-knowledge, a greater capacity for cooperation, and the absence of rigid beliefs, essential factors in a social context increasingly marked by conflict and the dissemination of misinformation (Davis et al., 2016). Highlighted as a successful counterpoint to intellectual arrogance (Porter et al., 2022; Bland, 2024; Huynh & Gonzalez, 2024), intellectual humility emphasizes the way knowledge is constructed and applied, characterized by an openness to the opinions of others and less rigidity in one's own beliefs. Manifesting humility involves recognizing that knowledge is limited and imperfect, being aware of what one knows and what remains to be discovered. Intellectual humility can be shaped by the collective environment in which individuals are embedded (Krumrei-Manuso & Rouse, 2016; Leary et al., 2017; Dunning, 2023).

Intellectually humble people are more curious, better leaders, make more comprehensive decisions, and are inclined to accept criticism and cooperate with those who hold different opinions. Intellectual humility also represents a challenge, as it can generate conflict with one's own beliefs (Porter et al., 2022; Green et al., 2023). For Bowes and Tasimi (2023), intellectual humility can foster better researchers, professionals, and individuals in general, given that they are more creative, willing to cooperate, and open to criticism. Therefore, intellectual humility is important among researchers, since research is built through a dialogical and constantly evolving process. Accepting that opinions may be mistaken or that other arguments are also valid is fundamental for scientific advancement.

The incipency of discussions on intellectual humility in Brazil draws attention to the understanding of how it manifests in those who constitute the country's accounting scientific field. There are indications in the literature that personality traits, such as Machiavellianism, affect humility (Chen et al., 2022) and are associated with inappropriate behaviors during research (Tijdkink et al., 2016).

Other characteristics have already been shown to be associated with humility, such as age (Bernabé-Valero et al., 2018; Danovitch et al., 2019) and gender (Cannon et al., 2020; Mukhtar et al., 2023; Siber et al., 2023). In

the professional sphere, experience (Gudeliausk, 2020; Kurniawati et al., 2020; Karabegovic & Mercier, 2023) and professional success (Ratu et al., 2021; Chughtai & Arifeen, 2023) stand out; and, in behavioral terms, information consumption (Koetke et al., 2022; Gorichanaz, 2022; Li, 2023). However, there is a gap regarding the investigation of humility in the academic environment. Although international literature has advanced in the understanding of intellectual humility, there is a lack of studies that investigate, in a contextualized manner, the characteristics that differentiate it among accounting researchers in emerging countries such as Brazil, which reinforces the originality of this study.

In this environment, the manifestation of humility reduces interpersonal conflicts and helps create a more harmonious atmosphere in the university setting (Mukhtar et al., 2023). This represents an opportunity for study in the accounting area, as it is a relatively recent field compared to other sciences and requires cohesion to promote scientific advancement. To address these scientific gaps, this study seeks to answer the following research question: Which characteristics differentiate the intellectual humility of accounting researchers in Brazil? Thus, the objective of the study is to identify characteristics that differentiate the intellectual humility of accounting researchers in Brazil.

This research is important for the scientific advancement of the accounting area, as academics with intellectual humility tend to be more collaborative, careful in their research, and prone to accepting distinct worldviews (Karabegovic & Mercier, 2023). Popper (2004) emphasizes that scientific progress is grounded in falsifiability, which presupposes the abandonment of ideas and theories that are not supported by empirical tests. Due to the characteristics already presented, intellectual humility is a factor that tends to facilitate this abandonment of ideas and theories, as per Popper's (2004) proposition. Furthermore, the discussion regarding intellectual humility presents inconclusive definitions, but it continues to be explored in research.

It is worth noting that this study advances by relating intellectual humility to personal and professional variables, as well as the trait of Machiavellianism, moving beyond the traditional emphasis placed on research production or impact. The findings signal a promising agenda for investigations into scientific integrity and academic environment dynamics. In this way, investigating the different characteristics that differentiate intellectual humility among researchers can assist in understanding how and by whom research is being developed in the accounting area, revealing the researchers' characteristics implicit in the process of scientific construction.

2 Literature Review

2.1 Intellectual Humility

For Porter et al. (2022), general humility refers to the way individuals recognize and evaluate their limitations and strengths across various aspects of their lives; intellectual humility, conversely, focuses on epistemic limitations, the subject's relationship to knowledge, with roots in the philosophical tradition of epistemology.

It is important to note that there is no consensus regarding the definition of intellectual humility. According to Krumrei-Mancuso and Rouse (2016), the focus of intellectual humility involves understanding the processes of knowledge construction and application, which is recognized as limited, thereby favoring tolerance for different ideas and collaboration. In turn, Leary et al. (2017) indicate that intellectual humility consists of recognizing that one's beliefs may be wrong, critically considering the limitations of the evidence supporting them, and admitting one's own limitations when seeking and evaluating information. According to Porter et al. (2022), the essence of intellectual humility lies in acknowledging that there are flaws in knowledge and that current knowledge may be incomplete, fallible, or provisional.

Recent studies (Dunning, 2023; Bland, 2024) have argued that intellectual humility, while being an individual responsibility, is intimately linked to the social environment in which the person is embedded. For Dunning (2023), intellectual humility is encouraged through the analysis of specific social groups, such as professional communities, which implement norms and practices designed to reduce intellectual arrogance and promote a more balanced humility. According to Bland (2024), intellectual humility is a collective virtue that develops within epistemic environments through interactions among group members and the structure and culture of that group.

Although the challenge is vast in an era permeated by ideological conflicts and clashing worldviews, intellectual humility must be cultivated to contribute to the analysis of complex social and epistemological issues; this may even be an important field for social researchers to delve into (Green et al., 2023). Intellectual humility has been associated with the reduction of social polarization and biases linked to intellectual arrogance. Interest in this theme has grown within scientific research in the areas of leadership and organizational behavior, decision-making, cognitive psychology, and education (Cannon et al., 2020; Porter et al., 2022).

Popper (2004) argues that the fundamental criterion for scientific investigation is the ability of theories to withstand

rigorous testing, rather than being verified as definitive truths. In this context, abandoning theories that fail in the face of evidence is an essential attitude for scientific progress. Such a stance is directly associated with intellectual humility, understood as the recognition of the limitations of one's own hypotheses and the willingness to revise or reject them in the face of new data. Thus, intellectual humility constitutes a central methodological principle, as it stimulates criticism, openness to the new, and the continuous overcoming of errors in the development of science.

2.2 Construction of research hypotheses

Research has explored personal characteristics, such as age and gender, in studies of intellectual humility (Bernabé-Valero et al., 2018; Zmigrod et al., 2019; Cannon et al., 2020; Mukhtar et al., 2023), although these findings are not entirely convergent. While Danovitch et al. (2019) suggest that intellectual humility can be observed from an early age, indicating a certain stability throughout development, other studies emphasize its dynamic nature. In this line, Hong et al. (2023) point to age and gender as relevant predictors, whereas Bernabé-Valero et al. (2018) identify an increase in humility with age, even associating it with the adoption of technologies. However, such evidence is not consensual regarding whether this increase stems from aging.

Regarding gender, the results are also varied. Cannon et al. (2020) indicate lower intellectual humility among male students, mediated by personality traits, while Siber et al. (2023) observe that female managers are perceived as more humble and transformational. Conversely, Mukhtar et al. (2023) pointed to the prevalence of a higher level of intellectual humility among male Pakistani university professors. Therefore, the study of gender differences indicates paths but still presents itself as an open field. Thus, the following hypotheses are proposed:

H1: Older individuals possess higher levels of intellectual humility.

H2: Individuals who identify with the female gender possess higher levels of intellectual humility.

In the educational context, there is a relative consensus regarding the benefits of intellectual humility, although with different emphases. Gudeliauskė (2020) highlights that intellectual humility allows teachers to listen to contrary evidence and adjust their convictions, promoting an open and reflective approach. According to Kurniawati et al. (2022), teachers with higher levels of intellectual humility are more creative and favor a dynamic school environment that

encourages students to develop both intellectual humility and creativity.

In this line, Ying et al. (2022) emphasize that humility is a complex but important moral concept for teachers, favoring learning and contributing to the teacher-student relationship. Complementarily, Harrison et al. (2023) highlight the importance of humility, noting that teachers in local and international schools consider it fundamental for learning. For the authors, teachers with experience in international schools see humility as an openness to new ideas, behaviors, and cultures, being essential for both them and the students in the teaching-learning process. In this sense, teaching experience, especially in diverse environments, can function as a mechanism that intensifies the awareness of one's own limitations and favors continuous learning. Based on these considerations, the following hypothesis is proposed:

H3: Individuals with more teaching experience present higher levels of intellectual humility.

In contemporaneity, online information consumption introduces an ambivalent dimension to the debate. The literature points out that facilitated access to knowledge can distort the perception of one's own cognitive abilities (Fisher et al., 2015). However, in the context of intellectual humility, although discussions are incipient, studies indicate beneficial implications. According to Koetke et al. (2022), individuals with a higher level of intellectual humility tend to adopt a more investigative posture, verifying, for example, information across multiple internet sources. In this same direction, Gorichanaz (2022) highlights that individuals demonstrate a greater willingness to seek and deepen information. Correspondingly, Braasch (2023) evidences a bidirectional relationship, in which intellectual humility facilitates the acquisition of knowledge, while this acquisition also contributes to its strengthening.

Expanding this perspective, Marie and Petersen (2024) suggest that intellectual humility may even reduce the propensity of individuals to believe and share false political information in the online environment. Thus, information consumption not only shapes intellectual humility but can also enhance it, as it exposes individuals to a diversity of perspectives and specialized knowledge. This process favors the recognition of one's own cognitive limitations and promotes a continuous openness to new ideas. Based on these considerations, the following hypothesis is proposed:

H4: Individuals who consume more information present higher levels of intellectual humility.

Intellectual humility can drive professional success. It contributes to a solid reputation, being associated with better decisions and fewer conflicts, and those who demonstrate this virtue are generally more valued, positively impacting their careers (Leary, 2022; Karabegovic & Mercier, 2023). Furthermore, Chughtai and Arifeen (2023) observe that leaders with intellectual humility not only strengthen their own trajectories but also drive the success of their teams.

In the academic context, this humility has been identified as relevant to success, although it is not an isolated factor. According to Ratu et al. (2021), humility reinforces emotional intelligence, playing an important role in the trajectory of successful academics. The concept of success in academia, however, is multifaceted and not restricted to scientific production, although this is frequently used as the primary indicator. According to Van Dijk et al. (2014), scientific publications are associated with academic success, but this association may simplify dimensions such as teaching, social impact, and innovation. Consistently, Pinheiro et al. (2014) highlight that production and collaboration in publications during graduate school are relevant predictors of future productivity. This understanding has encouraged researchers to explore motivations, challenges, and publication strategies among graduate students and experienced scientists (Napiah et al., 2022; Jalongo, 2024).

In this context, intellectual humility, by fostering a collaborative posture and receptiveness to feedback, can contribute to the success of researchers. It facilitates the formation of partnerships and collaboration networks, enhances scientific production, and, consequently, increases academic productivity and professional recognition. Therefore, the number of scientific publications can be seen as a proxy for academic success. Thus, the following hypothesis is formulated:

H5: Academic success is related to higher levels of intellectual humility.

Studies have also focused on examining how personality traits influence intellectual humility, starting from the concern that certain dispositions may lead individuals to reject external opinions and overestimate their own convictions. Cannon et al. (2020), for example, investigated the relationship between the dark triad and intellectual humility in English students and identified a negative association, suggesting a greater propensity for intellectual arrogance. Lee et al. (2022) also found that religiosity profiles and dark triad traits influence intellectual humility, but they emphasize the complexity and lack of consistent conclusions, indicating that such relationships are not linear.

However, other personality traits within the context of the dark triad, such as Machiavellianism, have not been observed in relation to intellectual humility, leaving an interesting research gap to be explored. Machiavellian individuals tend to focus on achieving goals, potentially adopting strategic decisions and instrumentalized behaviors, often associated with cynicism (Dahling et al., 2009; Jones & Mueller, 2021). In the literature, there are brief insinuations that jointly discuss Machiavellianism and intellectual humility (e.g., Chen et al., 2022), showing that a leader's humility has the capacity to affect the behavior of their followers, triggering a sense of power.

In the environment of academic research, Machiavellianism can also foster potentially serious problems for the formation of scientific knowledge. It has been proven that individuals in academia who cultivate Machiavellian attitudes tend to exhibit poor behavior in the conduct of scientific research (Tijdkink et al., 2016) and to hide knowledge and sabotage their colleagues (Serenko & Choo, 2020). Moreover, Machiavellianism negatively influences the productivity of group research (Chughtai et al., 2022). Machiavellianism can impact the progress of science, leading researchers to manipulate data to serve their own interests, appropriate others' ideas, and form alliances aimed at increasing productivity. Given this context, the sixth research hypothesis states that:

H6: Individuals with high levels of Machiavellianism present lower levels of intellectual humility.

Therefore, it is believed that the plurality of aspects characterizing researchers in the accounting area, whether they are sociodemographic, professional, behavioral, or dispositional traits, can condition intellectual humility.

3 Methodological approach

The data were collected through an online questionnaire administered to accounting researchers in Brazil affiliated with Graduate Programs (PPG) in Accounting, Accounting Sciences, or Controllershship.

Contact with the researchers was made via email. The electronic addresses were obtained from both the Sucupira platform and the institutional websites of each PPG. According to 2024 CAPES data, there were 32 PPGs dedicated to accounting research in the country, encompassing 1,401 enrolled graduate students and 537 active faculty members. The data collection period spanned from December 2024 to January 2025, resulting in 303 responses, of which 226 were considered valid after the exclusion of incomplete questionnaires and outliers. The research was approved by the Research

Ethics Committee in Human and Social Sciences under number 84542124.7.0000.0214 and approved with Opinion number 7,259,942 issued on 11/30/2024.

To measure intellectual humility, the Comprehensive Intellectual Humility Scale (CIHS), developed and validated by Krumrei-Mancuso and Rouse (2016), was utilized. The CIHS is a 5-point Likert-type scale ranging from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree), consisting of 22 items. The authors divide the scale into 4 factors: (1) independence of intellect and ego; (2) openness to revising one's own point of view; (3) respect for others' points of view; and (4) lack of intellectual overconfidence. For application in the Brazilian context, the CIHS was translated into Portuguese and submitted for content validation. The validation was conducted by a group of experts composed of three doctoral professors and two doctoral students in Accounting, who analyzed the adequacy of the translation and suggested adjustments to ensure contextual equivalence.

To evaluate the Machiavellianism trait in the respondents, the Machiavellianism dimension of the Short Dark Triad (SD3) instrument was used, which was developed and validated by Jones and Paulhus (2014) and adapted into Portuguese by D'Souza (2016). The SD3 contains 27 assertions, with 9 items dedicated to each personality trait (narcissism, Machiavellianism, and psychopathy). For this study, only the 9 assertions related to Machiavellianism were used.

Gender, age, and years of teaching experience comprised the first open-ended questions regarding the respondents' profile. Regarding information consumption, researchers were asked whether they constantly sought to read or watch news to stay informed, as well as which sources were most frequently used to obtain information. Furthermore, they were questioned about the number of articles published in scientific events and journals over the last five years. Questions regarding the use of artificial intelligence, including whether they use it and for what purposes, were also included.

Table 1 presents the variables used to test the study hypotheses and the measurement methods adopted for use in the statistical stage.

Table 1
Study Variables

Variable	Hypothesis	Measurement	Authors
Age	H1	Age in years grouped into quartiles.	Bernabé-Valero et al. (2018).
Gender Identity	H2	1 – Male; 0 – Female. No other categorizations were mentioned.	Cannon et al. (2020); Mukhtar et al. (2023).

Teaching Experience	H3	Teaching experience in years grouped into quartiles.	Ying et al. (2022); Harrison et al. (2023).
Information Consumption	H4	1 – Reads or watches news daily to stay informed about current events; 0 – Otherwise.	Gorichanaz (2022); Marie and Petersen (2024).
Academic Success	H5	Number of articles published in events and journals over the last 5 years grouped into quartiles.	Van Dijk et al. (2014); Ratu et al. (2021); Jalongo (2024).
Machiavellianism	H6	Sum of the scale score grouped into quartiles.	Cannon et al. (2020); Chen et al. (2022); Lee et al. (2022).

Source: Prepared by the authors.

The option to group continuous variables into quartiles was adopted with the aim of enabling the application of non-parametric tests for differences between groups, as well as allowing for the comparison between

relative levels of the analyzed characteristics. Categorization into quartiles enables the identification of non-linear patterns and differences between the extremes of the distribution, which is a recurring strategy in studies involving behavioral variables. Furthermore, such a procedure reduces the influence of extreme values and facilitates the substantive interpretation of the results.

With a focus on identifying the dimensions of the constructs and, when necessary, reducing the data dimension through the creation of factors, Exploratory Factor Analysis (EFA) and Confirmatory Factor Analysis (CFA) were utilized (Fávero & Belfiore, 2017). To analyze the research hypotheses, tests for differences between groups were performed. The Kruskal-Wallis test was used, and the post-hoc analysis was conducted using the Mann-Whitney test for the groupings that indicated significant differences.

4 Results

4.1 Profile of the respondents

Table 2 presents the profile of the respondents.

Table 2

Characterization of respondents

Gender	Freq.	%	Age*	Freq.	%	Education	Freq.	%
Male	111	49,12%	1st Quartile 22 to 31	63	27,88%	Undergraduate	11	4,87%
			2nd Quartile 32 to 36	51	22,57%	Specialization (Lato Sensu/MBA)	28	12,39%
Female	115	50,88%	3rd Quartile 37 to 45	59	26,11%	Master's degree	113	50,00%
			4th Quartile 46 to 83	53	23,45%	Doctorate degree	62	27,43%
						Post-doctorate	12	5,31%
Teaching experience	Fr.	%	Atua em PPGs	Fr.	%	Anos experiência docente*	Fr.	%
	Freq.	%	Affiliated with PPGs	Freq.	%	Years of teaching experience*	Fr.	%
Yes	155	68,58%	Yes	102	45,13%	2° Quartil 3 a 6	34	21,94%
No	71	31,42%	No	124	54,87%	3° Quartil 7 a 14	37	23,87%
						4° Quartil 15 a 50	37	23,87%

Note. *grouping defined by the inclusive quartile.

Source: Prepared by the authors.

Of the 226 respondents in the study, 50.88% identified as female and 49.12% as male. Regarding age, the 1st Quartile (22 to 31 years old) concentrates 27.88% of the researchers, while the 3rd quartile (37 to 45 years old) represents 26.11%. These groups reflect distinct stages of the academic career; while the 1st quartile includes younger researchers at the beginning of their trajectories, the 3rd quartile encompasses more experienced researchers in the accounting field within the Brazilian context. Regarding education, 50.00% hold a master's degree and 27.43% a

doctorate, which shows that researchers in the accounting academy possess prior scientific training. In terms of professional experience, 68.58% have teaching experience, with 31.32% having between 1 and 2 years of experience. Furthermore, 45.13% also operate in Graduate Programs (PPGs), demonstrating that a considerable percentage of the respondents are directly linked to accounting research.

Table 3 presents the details of information consumption and a synthesis of the participants' publications.

Table 3

Information consumption and publications

Reads or watches news daily	Freq.	%	Uses AI	Freq.	%	Articles in events in the last 5 years*		Freq.	%
Yes	197	87,17%	Yes	187	82,74%	1st Quartile	1 to 2	66	29,20%
						2nd Quartile	3 to 4	48	21,24%
						3rd Quartile	5 to 10	68	30,09%
No	29	12,83%	No	39	17,26%	4th Quartile	12 to 80	44	19,47%
Main information sources	Freq.	%	Purpose of AI use	Freq.	%	Articles in journals in the last 5 years*		Freq.	%
News websites	199	88,05%	Translating articles	109	58,29%	1st Quartile	1 to 2	44	26,19%
Social media	152	67,26%	Seeking research insights	105	56,15%	2nd Quartile	3 to 5	47	27,98%
Newspapers	127	56,19%	Reviewing articles	91	48,66%	3rd Quartile	6 to 11	36	21,43%
Podcasts	79	34,96%	Data analysis	71	37,97%	4th Quartile	12 to 64	41	24,40%
Scientific articles and books	16	7,08%	Text editing and production	18	9,63%				
Social interactions	5	2,21%	Academic and professional tasks	15	8,02%				
Videos	3	1,33%	Teaching and learning support	13	6,95%				
Scientific events	2	0,88%	Literature and information search	8	4,28%				
Radio	1	0,44%							

Note. *grouping defined by the inclusive quartile. Source: Prepared by the authors.

Approximately 87.17% of the respondents claim to consume news daily to stay updated. The main sources of information used by the researchers include news websites (88.32%), social media (68.02%), printed and digital newspapers (61.41%), and podcasts (37.56%). Regarding the use of artificial intelligence tools, 82.74% of the participants reported using AI, with emphasis on the translation of scientific articles (58.29%), seeking research insights (56.15%), reviewing manuscripts (48.66%), and data analysis (38.50%).

In relation to the number of publications, it is observed that the largest proportion of researchers (30.09%) is in the third quartile, with between 5 and 10 articles published in the last five years. Although the division into quartiles distributes the data into groups with proportions

close to 25%, this slight deviation may suggest a mild concentration within this interval. On the other hand, 19.47% of the researchers are in the fourth quartile, indicating that a smaller portion of the sample reaches higher volumes of publication. In the case of journal publications, the distribution among quartiles is more balanced: the first quartile (1 to 2 articles) accounts for 26.19% of the researchers, and the fourth quartile (12 to 64 articles), 24.40%. Thus, although there is still a slight predominance of researchers with lower production, the difference between the extremes is less pronounced compared to the data from scientific events.

Table 4 presents the descriptive statistics of the assertions from the Comprehensive Intellectual Humility Scale (CIHS) instrument.

Table 4

Comprehensive Intellectual Humility Scale (CIHS) – Descriptive Statistics

Assertion	Mean	Mode	Median	Standard Deviation
Q1. When someone contradicts my most important beliefs, it feels like a personal attack.	4,04	5	4	1,05
Q2. When someone disagrees with ideas that are important to me, it feels as though I am being attacked.	4,05	5	4	1,02
Q3. I tend to feel threatened when other people disagree with me on subjects that are important to me.	4,08	5	4	1,05
Q4. When someone disagrees with ideas that are important to me, it makes me feel insignificant.	4,25	5	5	1,06
Q5. I feel small when others disagree with me on topics that are very important to me.	4,17	5	5	1,08
Q6. I am willing to change my mind on important topics in response to good reasons.	4,28	5	4	0,83
Q7. I am willing to change my position on an important issue when someone shows me that I am wrong.	4,39	5	5	0,76
Q8. I am open to revising my important beliefs in the face of new information.	4,29	5	5	0,91
Q9. I am willing to change my opinions on the basis of compelling reasons.	4,32	5	5	0,85
Q10. I am willing to change my mind after I have made up my mind about an important topic.	3,97	4	4	0,98
Q11. I respect that there are ways of making important decisions that are different from the way I make decisions.	4,59	5	5	0,65
Q12. I welcome different ways of thinking about important topics.	4,37	5	5	0,77
Q13. I respect others even when we disagree on important topics.	4,59	5	5	0,70
Q14. Even when I disagree with others, I can recognize that they have valid points.	4,34	5	4	0,76
Q15. I can respect others even if I disagree with them on important issues.	4,56	5	5	0,70
Q16. I am willing to listen to others even if I disagree with them.	4,41	5	5	0,81
Q17. My ideas are usually better than other people's ideas.	2,51	3	3	1,03
Q18. Most of the time, others have more to learn from me than I have to learn from them.	3,87	4	4	0,97
Q19. When I am really confident in a belief, there is very little chance that the belief is wrong.	3,50	3	3	1,09
Q20. I'd rather rely on my own knowledge about most topics than turn to others for expertise.	4,00	5	4	1,04
Q21. On important topics, I am not easily swayed by the opinions of others.	2,89	3	3	1,08
Q22. Listening to other people's perspectives rarely changes my important opinions.	3,40	3	3	1,00

Source: Prepared by the authors.

As can be observed, assertions Q17 and Q21 present the lowest mean values (2.51; 2.89) and medians (3; 3). The results show that researchers do not tend to see themselves as superior and are open to external influences, which evidences traits of intellectual humility. However, Q18 presents a high mean (3.87) and median (4), indicating a slight tendency to believe that they have more knowledge to transmit than to absorb. On the other hand, assertions Q11, Q13, and Q15 presented the highest means (4.59; 4.59; 4.56) and medians (5; 5; 5), indicating that respondents respect decisions different from their own and respect people even if they do not agree with their opinions. In contrast, questions related to the superiority of ideas and beliefs, as well as resistance to external influence, presented lower modes (3). In this context, the results suggest an inclination

toward intellectual humility among researchers in the accounting field.

4.2 Exploratory Factor Analysis (EFA) and Confirmatory Factor Analysis (CFA)

To identify the factors of the Comprehensive Intellectual Humility Scale (CIHS), EFA was applied. This methodological path was adopted because some adjustment indicators were not met using CFA. The results support the factor structure found by Krumrei-Mancuso and Rouse (2016), indicating that all assertions remained in their respective factors (Hair et al., 2009).

The statistical indicators for the EFA are presented in Table 5.

Table 5

Exploratory Factor Analysis (EFA)

Assertions	Factor 1: Independence of Intellect and Ego	Factor 2: Openness to Revising One's Viewpoint	Factor 3: Respect for Others' Viewpoints	Factor 4: Lack of Intellectual Overconfidence	Communalities
Q13	0,850				0,740
Q15	0,810				0,678
Q12	0,694				0,562
Q11	0,679				0,570
Q16	0,666				0,490
Q14	0,653				0,464
Q5		0,854			0,747
Q3		0,844			0,744
Q1		0,811			0,721
Q4		0,811			0,676
Q2		0,698			0,594
Q9			0,872		0,778
Q7			0,829		0,739
Q8			0,808		0,666
Q10			0,665		0,502
Q6			0,592		0,469
Q18				0,759	0,601
Q20				0,679	0,478
Q17				0,679	0,486
Q21				0,629	0,415
Q19				0,618	0,399
Q22				0,606	0,397
%variance	24,517%	14,877%	10,978%	8,336%	
Consistency Tests					
KMO 0,823	Bartlett's Test Sig 0,000	Factor Loadings > 0,500		Factor Retention 4 Factors	

Source: Prepared by the authors.

The communalities of the variables presented values within the acceptable range (above 0.40), with the exception of items Q19 and Q22, which were kept in the analysis due to their proximity to the established criterion. The exclusion of both variables did not result in an improvement in the other indicators and could have led to a loss of the scale's informational power.

The Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin (KMO) index reached a satisfactory value of 0.823, exceeding the recommended 0.700, which indicates the adequacy of the observations for factor extraction (Fávero & Belfiore, 2017). Furthermore, Bartlett's test of sphericity proved to be significant, confirming the existence of statistically significant correlations between the variables (Hair et al., 2009).

Finally, the explained variance in the factor retention was 58.708%, a value considered adequate according to the parameters in the literature (Marôco, 2014), indicating that these factors explain more than 50% of the variation in the intellectual humility assertions of the sample members. After confirming the adequacy of the factor structure, the scores for each factor were saved per observation, generating four new variables representative of the dimensions of intellectual humility, which were used

in the analysis of differences between groups.

Subsequently, for the Machiavellianism dimension of the Short Dark Triad (SD3), CFA was employed, which indicated satisfactory factor loadings ranging from 0.501 to 0.922, with the exception of assertion Q1 (< 0.500). However, considering that all other assumptions were met and that the model demonstrated a robust fit, the decision was made to keep the indicator. The fit indices proved to be satisfactory and presented: p-value: > 0.050; CFI: > 1.000; TLI: > 1.003; NFI: 0.953; IFI: 1.002; GFI: 0.988; SRMR: 0.052; RMSEA 90% CI: 0.000 [0.000 - 0.049] (Hair et al., 2009; Marôco, 2014). Finally, the scores of the SD3 assertions were summed for each observation in the sample, generating the variable used in the tests for differences between groups.

4.3 Differences between groups

This section presents the results obtained from the Kruskal-Wallis test, highlighting, in the post-hoc analysis, the groupings that indicated significant differences in the Mann-Whitney test. Table 6 highlights the results of the tests conducted for Hypothesis 1 (H1).

Table 6

Relationship between intellectual humility and age (H1)

Groupings	Respect for others' viewpoints	Independence of intellect and ego	Openness to revising one's viewpoint	Lack of intellectual overconfidence
	Median	Median	Median	Median
1 – 22 to 31 years old	0,001	-0,109	0,216	0,130
2 – 33 to 36 years old	0,225	0,097	-0,108	-0,173
3 – 37 to 45 years old	0,245	0,290	0,231	-0,263
4 – 46 to 83 years old	0,533	0,688	0,330	0,132
Kruskal-Wallis Test	H(3)=2.817; p-value > 0.05	H(3)=17.461; p-value < 0.05	H(3)=4.203; p-value > 0.05	H(3)=5.981; p-value > 0.05
Mann-Whitney Test with Bonferroni correction - TC = 6				
Independence of intellect and ego				
1 – 4	U = -50.575; p-value < 0.008			

Legend: TC = Total possible comparisons between groups.
Source: Prepared by the authors

The hypothesis that older individuals possess higher levels of intellectual humility was only partially corroborated, as the statistically significant difference is restricted to the dimension of independence of intellect and ego. In this specific dimension, group 4, composed of more experienced researchers, presented superior levels of intellectual humility. This result is aligned with the literature, which points to a tendency for this characteristic to increase with age (Bernabé-Valero et al., 2018; Danovitch et al., 2019), although such convergence does not extend consistently to the other dimensions analyzed.

convictions, recognizing cognitive limitations, and revising positions. However, this interpretation should be considered with caution, since the observed effect is not generalized. In contrast, younger researchers tend to present relatively lower levels of intellectual humility, possibly associated with demands for affirmation and the search for legitimacy in the scientific field. While this stance may drive productivity and academic insertion, it can also hinder critical and collaborative dialogue, in addition to potentially restricting more consistent advances in accounting research.

The findings suggest that as researchers mature, there is a greater propensity for openness to questioning

Table 7 presents the statistical results for Hypothesis 2 (H2).

Table 7

Relationship between intellectual humility and gender (H2)

Groupings	Respect for others' viewpoints	Independence of intellect and ego	Openness to revising one's viewpoint	Lack of intellectual overconfidence
	Median	Median	Median	Median
0 – Female	0,423	0,067	0,071	0,132
1 – Male	0,212	0,340	0,340	-0,146
Kruskal-Wallis Test	H(1)=3.433; p-value > 0.05	H(1)=1.037; p-value > 0.05	H(1)=2.370; p-value > 0.05	H(1)=2.549; p-value > 0.05

Source: Prepared by the authors.

Previous research indicates that individual characteristics, such as gender, may influence levels of intellectual humility (Cannon et al., 2020; Mukhtar et al., 2023; Siber et al., 2023). However, the hypothesis that the female gender presents higher levels of this characteristic was rejected, since no statistically significant difference was observed between genders in any of the dimensions analyzed. This result contrasts with findings from other cultural contexts, such as the United Kingdom (Cannon et al., 2020) and Pakistan (Mukhtar et al., 2023), suggesting that the influence of gender may be conditioned by specific contextual factors.

a distinctive factor for intellectual humility. This evidence invites a more cautious interpretation of generalizations present in the literature and points to the need to investigate contextual and institutional variables that may mediate this relationship. Furthermore, the importance of promoting the development of intellectual humility among all researchers is reinforced, not as an attribute associated with a specific group, but as an essential competence for building a more critical and collaborative scientific environment that is prone to the advancement of knowledge.

Thus, the data indicate that gender does not constitute

Table 8 highlights the comparison between intellectual humility and teaching experience related to Hypothesis 3.

Table 8

Relationship between intellectual humility and teaching experience (H3)

Groupings	Respect for others' viewpoints	Independence of intellect and ego	Openness to revising one's viewpoint	Lack of intellectual overconfidence
	Respect for others' viewpoints	Independence of intellect and ego	Openness to revising one's viewpoint	Lack of intellectual overconfidence
1 – 1 to 2 years	0,140	-0,023	0,067	-0,026
2 – 3 to 6 years	0,570	0,008	0,053	-0,304
3 – 7 to 14 years	0,339	0,637	0,231	-0,022
4 – 15 to 50 years	0,495	0,691	0,500	0,232
Kruskal-Wallis Test	H(3)=3,706; p-value>0,05	H(3)=19,429; p-value<0,05	H(3)=2,805; p-value>0,05	H(3)=6,710; p-value>0,05
Mann-Whitney Test with Bonferroni correction - TC = 6				
	Independence of intellect and ego			
1 – 3	U = -37,206; p-value < 0,008			
1 – 4	U = -44.449; p-value < 0.008			

Legend: TC = Total possible comparisons between groups.

Source: Prepared by the authors.

The hypothesis that individuals with greater teaching experience present higher levels of intellectual humility was only partially corroborated, with a statistically significant difference restricted to the dimension of independence of intellect and ego. These differences manifest in the comparison between groups 1, 3, and 4, indicating a non-linear pattern that warrants careful interpretation. Although previous studies point out that teachers with high levels of intellectual humility tend to adjust their convictions (Gudeliuske, 2020), promote more dynamic educational environments (Kurniawati et al., 2022), strengthen the teacher-student relationship (Ying et al., 2022), and deal with challenges in a more open and reflective manner (Harrison et al., 2023), the results do not fully support this association across all dimensions.

In this sense, the findings offer partial support to the literature by suggesting that teaching experience may be associated with higher levels of intellectual humility, albeit in a specific and non-generalized way. Teaching practice, by involving continuous interaction with different perspectives, tends to favor the revision of ideas and the reconfiguration of positions. However, it is important to consider that this relationship may be influenced by other factors. Thus, while teaching experience contributes to intellectual humility, its effects seem to depend on contextual conditions, which relativizes its direct influence on the advancement of knowledge and research in the accounting field.

Table 9 presents the results of the comparison between humility and information consumption linked to Hypothesis 4.

Table 9

Relationship between intellectual humility and information consumption (H4)

Groupings	Respect for others' viewpoints	Independence of intellect and ego	Openness to revising one's viewpoint	Lack of intellectual overconfidence
	Median	Median	Median	Median
0 – Does not seek to stay informed.	0,082	0,021	0,035	0,002
1 – Reads or watches news daily to stay informed about current events.	0,231	0,320	0,216	-0,033
Kruskal-Wallis Test	H(1)=1,594; p-value>0,05	H(1)=0,578; p-value>0,05	H(1)=0,489; p-value>0,05	H(1)=0,154; p-value>0,05

Source: Prepared by the authors.

Technological advances and the expansion of access to information have contributed to individuals being increasingly exposed to global events, which, in theory, could favor the production of knowledge and stimulate openness to new perspectives, strengthening intellectual humility (Fisher et al., 2015; Koetke et al., 2022; Braasch, 2023). However, the fourth hypothesis was rejected.

Although recent studies (Braasch, 2023; Marie & Petersen, 2024) suggest that an internet presence is associated with higher levels of intellectual humility,

the findings indicate that the simple consumption of information by researchers in the accounting field does not translate into significant differences in this characteristic. This result brings some important nuances. Being attentive to the news, in itself, does not seem sufficient to promote intellectual humility, as an individual may consume more information but show no willingness to revise or alter their beliefs.

Table 10 presents the results between intellectual humility and academic success linked to Hypothesis 5.

Table 10

Relationship between intellectual humility and academic success (H5)

Grouping	Respect for others' viewpoints	Independence of intellect and ego	Openness to revising one's viewpoint	Lack of intellectual overconfidence
	Median	Median	Median	Median
1 – 1 to 2 conference papers in the last 5 years	0,173	0,256	0,413	-0,031
2 – 3 to 4 conference papers in the last 5 years	0,265	0,016	-0,040	-0,012
3 – 5 to 10 conference papers in the last 5 years	0,359	0,089	0,301	-0,016
4 – 12 to 80 conference papers in the last 5 years	0,359	0,644	0,145	-0,060
Kruskal-Wallis Test	H(3)=1,911; p-value>0,05	H(3)=5,409; p-value>0,05	H(3)=0,413; p-value>0,05	H(3)=0,413; p-value>0,05
Grouping	Respect for others' viewpoints	Independence of intellect and ego	Openness to revising one's viewpoint	Lack of intellectual overconfidence
	Median	Median	Median	Median
1 – 1 to 2 journal articles in the last 5 years	0,242	-0,004	0,197	0,164
2 – 3 to 5 journal articles in the last 5 years	0,252	0,105	0,176	-0,193
3 – 6 to 11 journal articles in the last 5 years	0,331	0,129	0,316	-0,187
4 – 12 to 64 journal articles in the last 5 years	0,407	0,664	0,143	0,128
Kruskal-Wallis Test	H(3)=1,304; p-value>0,05	H(3)=10,559; p-value<0,05	H(3)=0,381; p-value>0,05	H(3)=10,275; p-value<0,05
Mann-Whitney Test with Bonferroni correction - TC = 6				
Independence of intellect and ego		Lack of intellectual overconfidence		
1 – 4	U = -38,886; p-value > 0,008	2 – 4	U = -30,716; p-value > 0,008	

Legend: TC = Total possible comparisons between groups.

Intellectual humility can drive academic success through various pathways. Researchers who cultivate this virtue tend to demonstrate greater openness to dialogue, a willingness to collaborate, and receptivity to new ideas, which may favor the establishment of partnerships, enhance emotional intelligence, and stimulate more qualified discussions, potentially contributing to increased scientific production and knowledge dissemination (Ratu et al., 2021; Napiah et al., 2022; Jalongo, 2024). In an academic context where publications play a central role, intellectual humility is a relevant resource (Van Dijk et al., 2014; Pinheiro et al., 2014). However, the

hypothesis that academic success is associated with higher levels of intellectual humility was rejected. The findings indicate that other factors, such as productivity and academic networking, may exert a more direct influence on academic success than the development of a posture grounded in intellectual humility. This evidence critically suggests the possible predominance of an academic logic that is more competitive than collaborative, in which the willingness to recognize limitations, learn from peers, or welcome constructive criticism does not necessarily translate into concrete advantage. Table 11 presents the results concerning Hypothesis 6.

Table 11

Relationship between intellectual humility and Machiavellianism (H6)

Groupings	Respect for others' viewpoints	Independence of intellect and ego	Openness to revising one's viewpoint	Lack of intellectual overconfidence
	Median	Median	Median	Median
1 – 9 to 19 points	0,468	0,683	0,022	0,339
2 – 20 to 24 points	0,278	0,340	0,176	-0,172
3 – 25 to 28 points	0,331	-0,002	0,071	-0,258
4 – 29 to 44 points	-0,263	-0,086	0,342	-0,117
Kruskal-Wallis Test	H(3)=8,672; p-value<0,05	H(3)=20,758; p-value<0,05	H(3)=5,832; p-value>0,05	H(3)=12,101; p-value<0,05
Agrupamentos	Respeito pelos pontos de vista dos outros	Independência do intelecto e do ego	Abertura para revisão do próprio ponto de vista	Falta de autoconfiança intelectual
Mann-Whitney Test with Bonferroni correction - TC = 6				
Respect for others' viewpoints		Independence of intellect and ego		Lack of intellectual overconfidence
4 – 1	U = 35,984; p-value > 0,008	4 – 1	U = 55,472; p-value < 0,008	2 – 1 U = 32,825; p-value > 0,008

Legend: TC = Total possible comparisons between groups.
Source: Prepared by the authors.

Some studies highlight that personality traits can affect levels of intellectual humility, as such characteristics may hinder openness to new ideas (Cannon et al., 2020; Lee et al., 2022). In this context, Machiavellianism stands out, as individuals with this trait tend to adopt postures marked by coldness and cynicism, often associated with intellectual arrogance (Dahling et al., 2009; Jones & Mueller, 2021; Chen et al., 2022). The findings partially corroborate this perspective, since the hypothesis that individuals with high levels of Machiavellianism present lower levels of intellectual humility was only partially accepted, with a significant difference restricted to the dimension of independence of intellect and ego.

Researchers with high levels of Machiavellianism may compromise the integrity of scientific production by adopting behaviors such as data manipulation, distortion of results, and unfair attitudes toward peers (Serenko & Choo, 2020; Chughtai et al., 2022). In this sense, the findings reinforce the importance of promoting academic environments that value virtues such as intellectual humility, not only as a normative ideal but as a relevant element for preserving the quality of the knowledge produced. At the same time, they evidence that personality traits can constitute concrete obstacles, which demands a more critical and realistic approach regarding the limits of developing this virtue within the academic context.

5 Final considerations

In the scientific literature, there are still important gaps to be explored, especially regarding the characteristics of researchers in the accounting field. In this context, intellectual humility proves to be relevant, as it favors a posture open to discussions, cooperation, and the revision of knowledge, being identified in the literature as associated with scientific advancement (Hoekstra & Vazire, 2021; Karabegovic & Mercier, 2023).

The study revealed that age and teaching experience differentiate higher levels of intellectual humility among researchers in the accounting academy. These findings suggest that age and teaching experience are associated with a greater openness to revising beliefs and accepting limitations, attitudes that can contribute to the construction of a more dialogical and epistemic scientific environment. On the other hand, gender, information consumption, and academic success did not prove capable of differentiating intellectual humility.

The research also indicates that higher levels of Machiavellianism condition lower levels of intellectual humility, bringing about sensitive discussions that

may represent potential challenges for the scientific environment of the field. The research highlights the relevance of discussing intellectual humility as a possible formative value among researchers, focusing on the valorization of dialogue, the critical revision of ideas, and the collaborative construction of knowledge, which can contribute to reflections on the consolidation of accounting research on the national stage.

Thus, the study contributes to the accounting literature by discussing a strategic theme, such as intellectual humility, and further seeks to understand factors that shape the attitudes of researchers. Understanding how these characteristics influence scientific practice can contribute to discussions on the quality of accounting research. It is emphasized that, since this is a cross-sectional study based on self-reports, the results should be interpreted with caution. Additionally, the use of self-reported measures may be subject to the perception biases of the respondents.

Future research could explore intellectual humility in new discussions within the accounting academy, relating it to other characteristics of researchers, using other methodologies and, like this study, contribute to the understanding of by whom accounting research is being conducted in Brazil.

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