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TOWARDS EFFECTIVE INSTITUTIONAL MANAGEMENT: A LITERATURE REVIEW ON EDUCATIONAL ADMINISTRATION MODELS

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Abstract

This study examines contemporary educational administration models that have proven most effective in optimizing institutional management in school settings, through a non-systematic literature review of 28 scientific articles published between 2018 and 2025 in the Scopus and SciELO databases. The research identifies theoretical and practical approaches such as transformational leadership, community participation, technological innovation, and continuous evaluation, all aimed at strengthening school governance. Findings suggest that the alignment between traditional administration and strategic management fosters more equitable, adaptive, and improvement-oriented educational environments. The relevance of integrated models that combine institutional planning, information technologies, collaborative practices, and internal evaluation mechanisms is highlighted. Furthermore, the study concludes that effective institutional management requires ethical leadership, a systemic vision, and the ability to drive organizational transformation. Nevertheless, persistent challenges remain, including bureaucratic rigidity, operational fragmentation, and limited training in school leadership, which constrain institutional innovation. As a response, the study advocates for a shift toward a participatory and digitally innovative management paradigm capable of addressing the current educational challenges with both efficiency and equity.

Keywords: Educational institutional management, Transformational school leadership, Integrated administrative models.

INTRODUCTION

Deficient administrative management in educational institutions has been shown to directly impact the low quality of educational services, especially in contexts where school principals lack training in leadership and school management (UNESCO, 2024). In this regard, UNESCO (2023) warns that in many countries—particularly those with lower levels of institutional development—schools operate under fragile organizational structures with limitations in infrastructure, planning, resource allocation, and pedagogical

supervision. This situation is further exacerbated when school leaders lack managerial skills and a strategic vision focused on achieving educational outcomes (UNESCO, 2022a). According to UNESCO (2020), the absence of effective leadership negatively affects teacher motivation, efficient budget use, and the creation of adequate learning environments.

From this perspective, UNESCO (2024) asserts that the professionalization of educational management is a key strategy to transform schools into effective, resilient, and inclusive spaces. Strengthening principals' competencies in planning, decision-making, instructional leadership, and institutional evaluation represents a critical path to reversing this trend (UNESCO, 2023). According to UNESCO (2022a), it is therefore essential to promote leadership training policies with a strategic and systemic approach that ensures efficient, learning-centered school administration. As a result, developing management capacities in school leaders is an indispensable tool for sustainably improving educational quality (UNESCO, 2020).

UNESCO (2021) reports that, globally, the lack of managerial skills among school principals represents a significant barrier to ensuring quality education. It has been found that at least 35% of school leaders in low- and middle-income countries lack training in institutional administration (UNICEF, 2024). Additionally, the World Bank (2022) notes that 22% of public educational centers operate without a documented annual management plan, limiting operational efficiency. This precariousness is also evident in the physical environment: one in four schools in vulnerable regions has infrastructure conditions that do not meet minimum standards for safety, accessibility, and functionality (UNESCO, 2025).

Along these lines, UNESCO (2021) points out that in Latin America, the absence of strategic vision in educational institution management has had negative effects on school performance and educational equity. Regional data show that 59% of public-school principals did not receive prior training in school management upon assuming their roles (UNICEF, 2024). According to the World Bank (2022), in addition, 48% of rural schools operate with underutilized budgets due to failures in planning and monitoring processes. As a consequence, more than 14 million children and adolescents face fragmented educational trajectories marked by institutional disorganization, teacher demotivation, and limited access to pedagogical services (UNESCO, 2025).

According to the Ministry of Education of Peru (2021), administrative deficiencies in public schools have significantly hindered progress in educational quality in the Peruvian context. Recent reports indicate that 63% of principals lack specialized studies in educational management or institutional leadership (Ministry of Education of Peru, 2025). Furthermore, the Ministry of Education of Peru (2023) warns that approximately 4 out of 10 schools face chronic infrastructure maintenance problems, which negatively impacts student well-being. This lack of technical competencies and long-term vision contributes to the fact that 46% of primary school students fail to reach the expected level of reading comprehension, evidencing how poor administration directly affects learning outcomes (Ministry of Education of Peru, 2021).

This study is justified by the persistent issue of deficient administrative management in educational institutions, particularly in contexts where school principals lack managerial training, strategic vision, and technical capacities to effectively lead school processes. This situation is critical in many countries where schools operate under outdated organizational structures, deteriorated infrastructure, and institutional management characterized by improvisation, inefficient bureaucracy, and a lack of planning. The limited preparation of school leaders directly affects teacher performance, organizational climate, and the quality of learning, resulting in demotivating, uninspired, and poorly inclusive school environments. The lack of competencies to make evidence-based decisions, manage resources efficiently, and lead continuous improvement processes undermines the educational function of the system. Moreover, the absence of a modern and coherent institutional vision hinders the development of school policies aligned with contemporary educational challenges. Therefore, addressing this issue is essential to propose more effective school management models that strengthen instructional leadership, optimize organizational processes, and help ensure equitable, efficient, and high-quality education at all levels of the education system.

Institutional management in education is a strategic pillar for the development of effective, inclusive, and sustainable school systems. However, in many countries—particularly those with limited state capacity and low investment in education—a structural crisis of school governance persists, undermining efforts to ensure quality education. This situation is reflected in the presence of outdated administrative frameworks, inefficient bureaucratic practices, weak instructional leadership, and limited articulation among planning, implementation, and institutional evaluation processes.

Various studies have documented that a significant proportion of school principals assume their roles without specialized training in educational administration or the strategic competencies necessary to lead continuous improvement processes. This lack of preparation results in organizational fragmentation, resource underutilization, and an inability to generate learning environments that are stimulating, resilient, and outcome-oriented. Added to this are inadequate infrastructure, low technological availability, and poor working conditions for teaching staff, which together create a fragile institutional ecosystem highly vulnerable to quality and equity gaps.

The absence of adaptive, ethically guided, and evidence-based management models prevents the consolidation of effective school policies that respond to the educational challenges of the 21st century. This problem not only limits students' academic and personal development opportunities but also perpetuates structural inequalities in the access to and enjoyment of a dignified, relevant, and transformative education. The objective of this literature review is therefore to examine contemporary models of educational administration that, due to their conceptual design and empirical evidence, are most effective in optimizing institutional management in diverse school contexts, identifying their main characteristics, implementation approaches, and contributions to continuous improvement, educational equity, and innovation.

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

Among the theories that have shaped the development of management, the Classical Theory of Administration, advanced by Henri Fayol in the early 20th century, stands out. This theory emerged during a period of industrial expansion and the consolidation of European capitalism (Cropanzano & Lehman, 2023). In this context, Gunasekara (2023) explains that the theory arose in response to the need to rationally organize business structures and improve operational efficiency. Fayol proposed that administration is a universal activity that can be systematized through principles such as division of labor, unity of command, authority, and discipline (Sharma et al., 2024).

Furthermore, Cropanzano and Lehman (2023) explain that this theory views the organization as a hierarchical structure where each level has clearly defined functions, and the role of the manager is to plan, organize, direct, coordinate, and control. Clarity of roles and process predictability are fundamental to achieving order and efficiency (Gunasekara, 2023). According to Sharma et al. (2024), in the educational field, this theory has influenced the structuring of hierarchical institutions and the standardization of administrative functions, although its rigidity may hinder pedagogical innovation and active participation of educational stakeholders.

In contrast to this structural and mechanistic approach, Kasar (2025) asserts that the Human Relations Theory, developed by Elton Mayo in the 1930s, introduced a perspective centered on social and emotional factors within the work environment. This theory emerged from the Hawthorne studies conducted in the United States, during a time of economic crisis and rising labor tensions (Muldoon et al., 2024). In this line, Jensen (2021) explains that Elton Mayo and his colleagues demonstrated that worker performance did not depend exclusively on physical conditions or monetary incentives, but also on recognition, interpersonal communication, and a sense of belonging within the organization.

Thus, Kasar (2025) argues that the theory proposed that healthy human relations, participatory leadership, and emotional satisfaction are key to effective performance. In the university setting, this perspective has gained relevance by promoting collaborative environments, positive institutional climates, and more horizontal models of academic leadership (Muldoon et al., 2024). Based on Jensen (2021), unlike the classical model, this approach acknowledges the importance of the well-being of teaching and administrative staff as a prerequisite for achieving sustainable organizational goals that align with human needs in complex and changing educational contexts.

According to Babbar and Gupta (2021), the management of educational institutions is understood as a set of processes aimed at planning, organizing, directing, and controlling human, financial, and material resources with the purpose of achieving the pedagogical and social objectives of the institution. This task goes beyond operational matters and requires a strategic vision that links institutional goals with educational policies in the broader environment. In this sense, the authors emphasize that this form of management encompasses key dimensions such as institutional planning, administrative structuring, supervision of pedagogical processes, and performance evaluation, and is characterized by technical rationality, hierarchical leadership, normative orientation, and centralized decision-making.

Meanwhile, Kryshtanovych et al. (2022) emphasize that educational administration seeks to ensure the harmonious functioning of the organization by promoting efficient resource use and the quality of educational services delivered to the community. Finally, Antonopoulou et al. (2021) note that depending on the level of autonomy and participation, different types of educational administration can be identified— such as bureaucratic, participatory, or results-based—each with distinct approaches to institutional management and the role of educational actors.

To enrich the understanding of educational administration, various authors have proposed typologies that classify management approaches according to their structural, philosophical, and functional characteristics. According to Antonopoulou et al. (2021), at least three main models can be distinguished: the bureaucratic model, the participatory model, and the results-oriented model.

The bureaucratic model is based on a rigid hierarchical structure, with standardized functions, centralized procedures, and an emphasis on regulatory compliance. This type of administration, influenced by the principles of Fayol's Classical Theory (Cropanzano & Lehman, 2023; Gunasekara, 2023), prioritizes

organizational stability but often limits pedagogical innovation and institutional autonomy (Sharma et al., 2024).

In contrast, the participatory model promotes decentralized decision-making, the inclusion of teachers, students, and the community in school planning, and consensus-based management. This approach aligns with the tenets of Elton Mayo's Human Relations Theory (Kasar, 2025; Jensen, 2021), as it values emotional well-being, collaborative leadership, and the creation of positive institutional climates (Muldoon et al., 2024; Kryshtanovych et al., 2022). It is also related to distributed and transformational leadership models (Kareem et al., 2025; Nadeem, 2024), as it fosters co-responsibility and continuous improvement. Complementarily, the results-oriented model focuses on institutional performance as measured by indicators of efficiency, quality, and educational achievement. This model incorporates tools such as strategic planning, evidence-based evaluation, and institutional monitoring mechanisms (Polyportis & Pahos, 2025; Wulyatiningsih & Mandagi, 2023). Unlike the bureaucratic model, this approach seeks organizational flexibility, although it may fall into an instrumental view of education if not aligned with broader formative goals. According to Polishchuk and Horbatiuk (2023), effective institutional management requires a shift toward hybrid models that integrate operational control with a systemic and adaptive vision. For this reason, Wulyatiningsih and Mandagi (2023) argue that the most effective models are those that balance structure with innovation and promote educational management that is contextualized, ethical, and oriented toward organizational transformation.

Polyportis and Pahos (2025) argue that effective educational administration is a fundamental requirement for achieving adequate standards of quality and equity in school institutions. However, they caution that such administration cannot be reduced to operational or technical functions, but must instead be articulated through a more comprehensive approach—one that incorporates sustained organizational transformation as a strategic axis. In this same line, Polishchuk and Horbatiuk (2023) suggest that administrative processes must go beyond regulatory compliance and become engines of institutional change through a systemic, participatory vision oriented toward continuous improvement. From this perspective, Wulyatiningsih and Mandagi (2023) conceptualize institutional management as a dynamic and inclusive model that transcends resource control or bureaucratic monitoring. It is an organizational process aimed at generating structural, human, and symbolic conditions conducive to pedagogical innovation, educational equity, and meaningful learning. Effective institutional management, in this sense, is based on principles such as distributed leadership, participatory planning, internal and external evaluation, and greater organizational autonomy—all within the framework of national education policies.

Consequently, strong institutional management not only complements but amplifies the impact of educational administration by transforming traditional hierarchical structures into spaces of pedagogical leadership, community engagement, and collective learning (Polyportis & Pahos, 2025). The synergistic interaction between administration and management, according to Polishchuk and Horbatiuk (2023), constitutes an effective pathway toward more democratic, efficient, and student-centered models of school governance. Understanding this articulation, as Wulyatiningsih and Mandagi (2023) once again emphasize, is key to the design of public policies that promote educational quality from the institutional base, ensuring sustainability, relevance, and educational justice.

METHOD

This research corresponds to an integrative literature review, as it allows for the synthesis of theoretical knowledge and empirical findings derived from studies with different methodological approaches (quantitative, qualitative, and mixed), published in various geographical and temporal contexts. The integrative review is appropriate in this case because it does not merely describe existing models, but seeks to identify common patterns, contrast approaches, detect gaps in the literature, and generate proposals for improving institutional educational management. This methodological choice is justified by the need to provide a broad, critical, and contextualized understanding of contemporary models of educational administration, integrating diverse theoretical, practical, and regional perspectives. To this end, a systematic process of search, selection, thematic analysis, and categorization of the included studies was followed. High-impact academic databases were consulted, including Scopus and SciELO, which enabled the identification of a total of 28 relevant publications from the years 2018 to 2025.

The search strategy included the use of keywords such as "educational management," "administrative models," "institutional management," and "educational quality," in both English and Spanish, combined using Boolean operators (AND, OR) to optimize the retrieval of relevant information. Searches were conducted in digital format, prioritizing peer-reviewed articles indexed in scientific journals, published between 2018 and 2025, and available in full text.

To ensure the methodological quality and thematic relevance of the included studies, specific inclusion criteria were established: (a) articles published in indexed scientific journals; (b) studies conducted between

2018 and 2025; (c) research with a qualitative, quantitative, mixed, or systematic review approach focused on educational management or administration; (d) texts published in English or Spanish; and (e) full availability of the content for analysis. Conversely, the following were excluded: (a) documents lacking empirical or theoretical rigor; (b) studies outside the established time frame; and (c) articles not related to educational management models or lacking relevance to institutional improvement.

The selection process was carried out in several stages. Initially, articles were identified in the databases through the search of descriptors. A thorough review of titles and abstracts was then conducted, excluding those that did not meet the defined criteria. Finally, the full texts were read to confirm their relevance and methodological rigor. This phase concluded with the selection of 28 articles that constitute the analytical corpus of this study.

To ensure the methodological rigor of the included studies, a critical quality appraisal was conducted using adapted checklists from the Joanna Briggs Institute (JBI). The evaluation considered key criteria such as clarity of objectives, methodological coherence, sampling strategy, data collection processes, analysis techniques, and the alignment of conclusions with presented evidence. Only studies scoring positively on at least 70% of applicable items were included in the final corpus, guaranteeing the reliability of the review findings.

The data extraction summary—recording variables such as authorship, year, country, database, methodology, objectives, findings, and conclusions—is presented in Tables 1 and 2. This organization enabled comparisons, the identification of common patterns, and the highlighting of innovative approaches across the various educational management models documented. Furthermore, the articles were organized into thematic tables that distinguish their contributions to the development of strategies aimed at improving efficiency, inclusion, and quality in school administration.

FIGURE 1 FILTERING AND ANALYSIS SEQUENCE OF SCIENTIFIC ARTICLES IN THE LITERATURE REVIEW

TPM
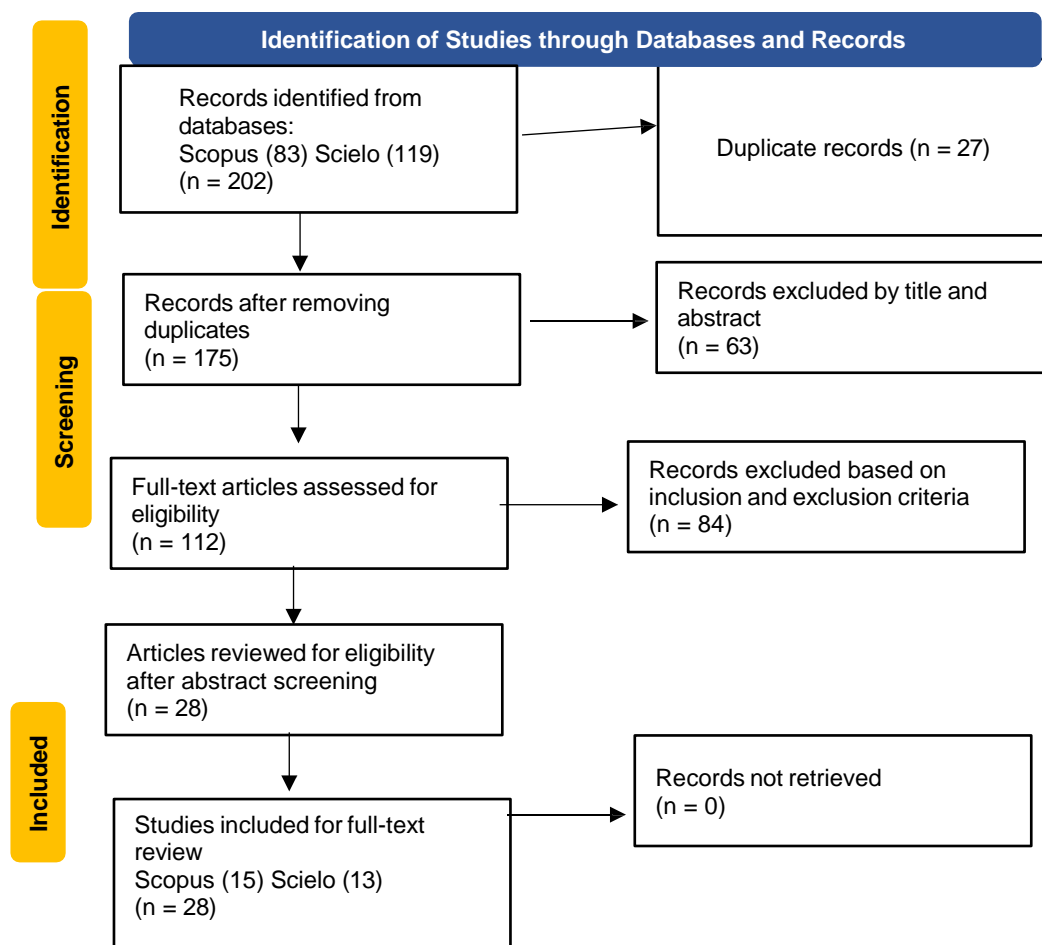
After applying the selection criteria, 28 full-text publications were selected for analysis, as shown in Table 1.

TABLE 1 RELEVANT STUDIES SELECTED IN THE LITERATURE REVIEW

N°	Author	Article Title	Methodology	Country	Year	Database
1	Donkoh et al. (2023)	Exploring the Impact of Quality Education Management on Students' Academic Performance: A Case Study in Basic Schools in Ghana	Quantitative	Ghana	2023	Scopus
2	Nadeem (2024)	Distributed Leadership in Educational Contexts: A Catalyst for School Improvement	Systematic review	Finland	2024	Scopus
3	Ye (2022)	Designing an Educational Management Software Pattern Based on Deep Neural Networks	Quantitative	China	2022	Scopus
4	Granville-Chapman et al. (2024)	Leadership and Flourishing in Difficult Times	Mixed	United Kingdom	2024	Scopus
5	Langkarat (2024)	Development of an Academic Administration Model on a Digital Platform to Improve the Quality of Life and Competitiveness of Disadvantaged Students in the Wat Si Don Chai Municipal Community School, Chiang Mai Province	Mixed	Thailand	2024	Scopus
6	Hojeij (2024)	The Role of Educational Leadership in Fostering Innovation and Entrepreneurship in Education: A Narrative Literature Review	Systematic review	Dubai	2024	Scopus
7	Nowosad & Weissbrot-Koziarska (2024)	Theoretical Foundations and Management Models	Systematic review	Based on international analyses, with emphasis on European models	2021	Scopus
8	Berkat et al. (2025)	The Role of Educational Management in Enhancing Innovation and Problem-Solving Competencies for Students Towards Global Competitiveness: A Literature Review	Literature review	Indonesia	2025	Scopus
9	Shapaka (2026)	The Effects of Management Models and School Leadership on Teachers' Academic Performance	Qualitative	Namibia	2026	Scopus
10	Thomas et al. (2018)	Transformational School Leadership as a Key Factor for Teachers' Job Attitudes During Their First Year in the Profession	Quantitative	Belgium	2018	Scopus
11	Biloshchytskyi et al. (2024)	Structural Models for Building an Integrated System	Quantitative	Kazakhstan	2024	Scopus

11		of Information and Education: "Management of Quality in Higher and Graduate Education"				
12	Sirichaiwattanakul et al. (2024)	Development Model of Educational Management for Special Classrooms in Schools Under the Kalasin Secondary Educational Service Office	Quantitative	Thailand	2024	Scopus
13	Syahrial et al. (2024)	School Management Model Based on Community Participation: The HARMONY Approach to Improving School Quality	Mixed	Indonesia	2024	Scopus
14	Zhang (2024)	Research on the Reform of the Educational Management Model in a Big Data Environment	Quantitative	China	2024	Scopus
15	Kareem et al. (2025)	Exploring the Factors of a Learning Organization in School Education: The Role of Leadership Styles, Personal Commitment, and Organizational Culture	Quantitative	India	2025	Scopus
16	Flores-Flores (2021)	Educational Management: A Discipline with Its Own Characteristics	Systematic review	Mexico	2021	Scielo
17	Juárez-Tamayo et al. (2024)	Current Pedagogical Management Models: A Systematic Review	Systematic review	Peru	2024	Scielo
18	Peralta et al. (2023)	Administrative Management in Educational Management Units: A Literature Review	Systematic review	Peru	2023	Scielo
19	Lule-Uriarte et al. (2023)	Educational Management: A Key Factor in Educational Quality	Systematic review	Peru	2023	Scielo
20	García (2021)	Analysis of the School Management Model in Multigrade Public Educational Institutions in San Ignacio, Peru	Mixed	Peru	2021	Scielo
21	Tenorio & Pérez (2023)	An Approach to the Management of Peruvian Educational Institutions	Mixed	Peru	2023	Scielo
22	Méndez et al. (2024)	Educational Quality Management: A Human Rights-Based Approach	Systematic review	Mexico	2024	Scielo
23	Ovalle-Saldarriaga & Lino-Ovalle (2024)	School Leadership and Learning Quality in Basic Education Students	Qualitative	Venezuela	2024	Scielo

24	Ramírez et al. (2024)	Management Model for the Provision of Administrative Services for the Staff of a Technological Institute in Piura	Quantitative	Peru	2024	Scielo
25	Ruelas (2023)	School Management by Principals in Educational Institutions: A Systematic Review	Systematic review	Peru	2023	Scielo
26	Portocarrero-Sierra et al. (2021)	Educational Management for Academic Sustainability in Colombia	Quantitative	Colombia	2016	Scielo
27	Juárez et al. (2025)	New Challenges for School Leadership in the Americas in the Post-Pandemic Era	Systematic review	Latin America (Mexico, Chile, Argentina, Ecuador, and Peru)	2025	Scielo
28	Santin & Negro (2023)	Disruptions and Continuities in Educational Management: Open Questions About a Model Under Construction	Systematic review	Argentina	2023	Scielo

RESULTS

Contributions of Scientific Articles on Educational Administration Models to Optimize Institutional Management.

TABLE 2 SUMMARIZES THE MAIN EDUCATIONAL MANAGEMENT MODELS IDENTIFIED IN THE REVIEWED STUDIES, HIGHLIGHTING THEIR OBJECTIVES, CONTRIBUTIONS, AND KEY CONCLUSIONS.

Authors	Identified Model/Focus	Key Contribution	Conclusion/Outcome
Donkoh et al. (2023)	Integrative model (planning + discipline + ICT)	Combines management pillars with internet access to improve quality.	Effective management + internet reduce urban–rural educational gaps.
Nadeem (2024)	Distributed leadership	Promotes decentralized, collaborative school governance.	Enhances decision-making and innovation; requires strategies to avoid confusion.
Ye (2022)	Deep-learning-based management system	Uses neural networks for school information and resource recommendation.	Improves data accuracy, efficiency, and institutional outcomes.
Granville-Chapman et al. (2024)	Flourishing-oriented leadership	Connects teacher well-being with positive school leadership.	Empowers teachers; promotes teacher-designed interventions.
Langkarat (2024)	Digital academic administration for disadvantaged students	Develops digital tools to improve student competence and life quality.	Successful implementation; recommends digital skills training for staff.
Hojeij (2024)	Leadership–innovation–entrepreneurship triad	Maps leadership styles linked to educational innovation.	Highlights need for further research on this triad's dynamics.
Nowosad & Weissbrot (2024)	Comparative OECD-based models	Contrasts centralized vs. decentralized governance.	Advocates flexible, accountable, context-sensitive management.
Berkat et al. (2025)	Competency-focused management	Links educational management to innovation and problem-solving skills.	Recommends curricula and projects enhancing global competitiveness.

Shapaka (2026)	Leadership models in Namibia	Analyzes impact of distributed, transformational leadership on teachers.	Leadership affects performance; suggests principal training.
Zhang (2024)	AI-based behavior recognition model	Uses big data and deep learning for real-time classroom analysis.	Recommends for modernizing educational management.
Kareem et al. (2025)	Learning organization model	Emphasizes culture and leadership for organizational learning.	Recommends balancing performance and genuine improvement.
Syahrial et al. (2024)	HARMONY community-based model	Focuses on school–community collaboration in remote areas.	Shows positive results on educational quality.
Flores-Flores (2021)	Strategic educational management	Distinguishes educational management from traditional administration.	Advocates strategic, context-adapted management.
Juárez-Tamayo et al. (2024)	Inclusive pedagogical management	Promotes participatory and flexible models for diverse contexts.	Supports innovative, inclusive policies.
Peralta et al. (2023)	Administrative management in educational units	Highlights planning, organization, and leadership in school units.	Stresses community participation and teacher involvement.
Lule-Uriarte et al. (2023)	Transformational leadership for quality education	Integrates leadership, family, and community to improve outcomes.	Emphasizes principal's role and autonomy.
Méndez et al. (2024)	Rights-based quality management	Connects quality education with the right to education framework.	Highlights leadership and autonomy; calls for legal research.
Ovalle & Lino-Ovalle (2024)	Leadership competencies for learning quality	Shows leadership's effect on outcomes and school climate.	Collaboration essential for quality education.
Ramírez et al. (2024)	Administrative service model in higher education	Adapts business models to improve administrative services.	Highlights need for continuous model adjustment.
Ruelas (2023)	Leadership's role in improving school environments	Positions principals as key agents in governance.	Strengthening leadership improves efficiency and equity.
Portocarrero-Sierra et al. (2021)	New public management in higher education	Analyzes institutional factors affecting management and employability.	Calls for policy reforms for transparency and alignment with labor needs.
Juárez et al. (2025)	Post-pandemic school leadership	Identifies challenges and skills needed for leadership in new normal.	Stresses flexibility, inclusion, and resilience.
Santin & Negro (2023)	Historical perspective on Argentine models	Explores disruptions and continuities in state educational governance.	Provides insights on policy instruments and governance evolution.

An analysis of the 28 selected studies reveals that transformational or distributed leadership models were explicitly applied or examined in 12 articles (42.8%), highlighting the prominence of leadership-focused strategies in contemporary educational administration research. Innovation and digital management models appeared in 9 studies (32.1%), underscoring the growing emphasis on technological integration for institutional improvement. Community participation and collaborative work were central themes in 6 articles (21.4%), reflecting the recognition of stakeholders' engagement as a critical component for sustainable school management. Finally, integrated or hybrid models combining multiple dimensions—leadership, technology, participation, and evaluation—were documented in 8 studies (28.5%), indicating a trend toward comprehensive approaches in optimizing educational institutional management.

DISCUSSION

TRANSFORMATIONAL LEADERSHIP AND POSITIVE ORGANIZATIONAL CULTURE

Recent literature converges on the notion that transformational leadership and a positive organizational culture foster innovative educational environments and promote collective learning (Juárez et al., 2024). Additionally, Lule-Uriarte et al. (2023) argue that participatory leadership encourages joint decision-making, facilitating institutional flexibility and collaboration. Distributed leadership is likewise recognized for promoting shared responsibility and the empowerment of educational stakeholders (Nadeem, 2024). In this regard, Kareem et al. (2025) contend that a participatory organizational culture, reinforced by transformational management, enables schools to adapt more effectively to changing challenges.

Furthermore, Ovalle-Saldarriaga et al. (2024) highlight that transformational leadership is associated with positive school climates and higher-quality learning outcomes. Similarly, school leadership marked by versatility and inclusiveness contributes to democratic and resilient environments (Juárez et al., 2025). Nadeem (2024) also identifies that the interaction between leadership styles and organizational values enhances professional development among teachers. Consequently, Kareem et al. (2025) maintain that distributed leadership drives high-impact collaborative practices.

At the same time, evidence indicates that challenges persist in the collective appropriation of new practices and the overcoming of institutional resistance (Juárez et al., 2024). Likewise, Lule-Uriarte et al. (2023) consider that strengthening the connection between leadership and organizational culture opens opportunities for continuous improvement. Finally, Ovalle-Saldarriaga et al. (2024) emphasize that a critical analysis of these factors is essential for responding to current educational challenges with flexibility and innovation.

To enhance the practical applicability of the reviewed models, it is essential to illustrate how these approaches could be implemented in specific institutional contexts. For example, in rural schools with limited resources, adopting a community participation model such as the HARMONY approach (Syahrial et al., 2024) could involve establishing school–community committees that coordinate infrastructure improvements, organize parental workshops, and collaboratively monitor student attendance. Meanwhile, in urban educational centers with better technological access, implementing digital management systems inspired by Zhang's (2024) model could focus on integrating AI-based student monitoring platforms and digital communication tools to streamline administrative tasks and personalize learning support. These context-sensitive strategies exemplify how leadership, community involvement, and technological innovation can be combined to address diverse educational challenges.

TECHNOLOGICAL INNOVATION AND DIGITAL EDUCATIONAL MANAGEMENT

In recent years, technological integration has transformed educational management models and enhanced institutional efficiency (Ye, 2022). Likewise, Langkarat et al. (2024) argue that artificial intelligence–based systems facilitate personalized responses and improve school administration. In parallel, the digitalization of administrative processes has been shown to increase service quality and streamline access to relevant information (Zhang, 2024). Furthermore, Ramírez et al. (2024) claim that the implementation of digital platforms fosters dynamic interaction among teachers, students, and administrators. In turn, Biloshchytskyi et al. (2024) suggest that the development of integrated educational management systems ensures the security and stability of institutional processes. It is also noted that technological adaptation requires ongoing staff training and flexibility in adopting new tools (Hojeij, 2024). For this reason, Ye (2022) emphasizes that digital models enhance monitoring capacity and support continuous improvement. Accordingly, Langkarat et al. (2024) identify technological innovation as a strategic element for addressing the challenges of contemporary education. Moreover, evidence shows that digital management promotes collaborative work and institutional transparency (Zhang, 2024). In this vein, Ramírez et al. (2024) assert that the integration of advanced technologies contributes to inclusive and effective learning environments. Finally, Biloshchytskyi et al. (2024) affirm that the application of intelligent tools strengthens educational quality and institutional adaptive capacity.

COMMUNITY PARTICIPATION AND COLLABORATIVE SCHOOL WORK

First, evidence shows that community participation strengthens the sense of belonging and commitment to the school (Syahrial et al., 2024). Likewise, collaborative work has been observed to encourage shared decision-making and foster innovative pedagogical practices (Garcia, 2021). Moreover, Juárez et al. (2024) emphasize that community involvement supports the design of contextualized and sustainable educational projects.

Additionally, Shapaka (2026) argues that co-responsibility-based models enhance adaptive capacity in the face of emerging challenges. The literature also reveals that building learning communities contributes to teacher professional development and consolidates inclusive environments (Tenorio et al., 2023). Accordingly, Syahrial et al. (2024) state that the integration of parents and external actors into school processes brings a diversity of perspectives. On the other hand, the review shows that there are structural and cultural barriers that hinder the full participation of all stakeholders (Garcia, 2021). As such, Juárez et al. (2024) argue that establishing mechanisms for dialogue ensures effective community engagement. Finally, Shapaka (2026) considers that strengthening collaboration and participation represents a key strategy for continuous improvement in educational management.

INTEGRATED MODELS OF EDUCATIONAL QUALITY

Recent literature shows that integrated models of educational quality require the articulation of administrative and pedagogical processes to achieve sustainable outcomes (Méndez et al., 2024). Additionally, Donkoh et al. (2023) argue that strategic planning and monitoring are essential for strengthening equity and institutional performance. Moreover, the implementation of integrated information systems is highlighted as a means of ensuring efficient educational quality management (Biloshchytskyi et al., 2024). In this regard, Lule-Uriarte et al. (2023) affirm that institutional leadership and collaborative management foster continuous improvement. Likewise, Ruelas (2023) argues that school management focused on quality creates more favorable and satisfying learning environments for the educational community. Evidence also shows that curricular innovation, together with the participation of all stakeholders, increases the impact of quality models (Berkat et al., 2025). Furthermore, Méndez et al. (2024) indicate that the integration of administrative and pedagogical approaches promotes equity and educational inclusion. Accordingly, Donkoh et al. (2023) state that evaluation and control systems help identify opportunities for institutional improvement. However, the review suggests that challenges remain regarding the adaptation of these models to diverse local contexts (Biloshchytskyi et al., 2024). Thus, Lule-Uriarte et al. (2023) consider that strengthening coordination between internal processes and educational outcomes is key to consolidating quality management. Finally, Ruelas (2023) observes that critically analyzing these models is essential to respond to the changing demands of the educational landscape.

STRATEGIC MANAGEMENT FOR INSTITUTIONAL CHANGE

First, the literature emphasizes that strategic management involves adopting flexible and adaptive approaches to address changes in the educational environment (Flores, 2021). Furthermore, Portocarrero-Sierra et al. (2021) argue that the shift in public management paradigms requires the formulation of strategies that respond to the structural challenges of the educational system. Similarly, Nowosad et al. (2024) assert that transitioning toward decentralized models enables a more effective response to local demands. In the same vein, Santin et al. (2023) contend that understanding breaks and continuities in state management models facilitates the identification of opportunities for institutional innovation. Evidence also reveals that resilience and managerial flexibility are essential for maintaining educational continuity in uncertain contexts (Juárez et al., 2025). Flores (2021) further states that fostering a culture of institutional change is a continuous process requiring the active participation of all stakeholders. Additionally, Portocarrero-Sierra et al. (2021) emphasize that the constant adjustment of strategies ensures the sustainability of improvement processes. On another front, Nowosad et al. (2024) highlight that evidence-based management strengthens informed decision-making. Finally, Santin et al. (2023) argue that the critical analysis of strategic models is indispensable for anticipating and managing institutional change in the education sector.

EVALUATION, MONITORING, AND CONTINUOUS INSTITUTIONAL IMPROVEMENT

First, recent literature confirms that constant evaluation and rigorous monitoring are fundamental pillars for ensuring continuous improvement in educational management (Donkoh et al., 2023). Additionally, García (2021) asserts that the systematic identification of institutional strengths and weaknesses enables timely adjustments to pedagogical and administrative strategies. Thus, it is observed that planning, organizing, directing, and controlling favor the development of effective evaluation processes (Peralta, 2023). Furthermore, Sirichaiwattanakul et al. (2024) highlight that incorporating structured evaluation models enhances both the efficiency and relevance of decision-making processes. Likewise, Juárez et al. (2024) state that the use of digital and technological tools strengthens data collection and analysis for institutional performance monitoring. In this sense, Zhang (2024) argues that the application of big data and machine learning facilitates real-time monitoring and optimizes educational management. Thus,

Donkoh et al. (2023) indicate that supervision and control systems are key to ensuring the achievement of school objectives. Moreover, García (2021) maintains that participatory evaluation encourages the entire educational community's engagement in improvement processes. Nevertheless, evidence reveals persistent challenges related to integrating evaluation into organizational culture (Peralta, 2023). In this regard, Sirichaiwattanakul et al. (2024) consider that strengthening feedback mechanisms contributes to the sustainability of institutional innovations. Finally, Juárez et al. (2024) emphasize that continuous improvement must be understood as a collective and dynamic process aimed at educational excellence.

REGIONAL TRENDS IN EDUCATIONAL ADMINISTRATION MODELS

The comparative analysis of the 28 selected studies reveals differentiated trends according to geographic context, especially when contrasting the experiences of Latin America, Asia, and Europe. In Latin America, the adoption of participatory and hybrid models predominates, responding to institutional contexts marked by educational inequality, structural weakness, and the pressure to strengthen pedagogical leadership in public schools. Studies such as those by Juárez-Tamayo et al. (2024), Lule-Uriarte et al. (2023), and Tenorio & Pérez (2023) show a shift from bureaucratic approaches toward models that promote community inclusion, contextual innovation, and management centered on the right to education. These models tend to combine democratic leadership practices, participatory planning, and institutional improvement based more on social outcomes than purely technical indicators. In contrast, in Asia—particularly in countries such as China, India, Indonesia, and Thailand—a strong orientation toward results-based models and technological innovation is observed, with a focus on academic performance, operational efficiency, and the integration of disruptive technologies into educational processes. Research by Ye (2022), Zhang (2024), and Langkarat (2024) highlights the use of digital platforms, artificial intelligence, and integrated management systems to optimize both learning and school administration. These approaches prioritize the use of big data, automated monitoring, and educational quality control from a quantitative perspective aligned with international competitiveness standards. In Europe, a trend toward decentralization and distributed leadership is evident, with institutional management focused on outcomes but also grounded in principles of democratic governance and school autonomy. Studies such as Nadeem (2024) in Finland and Granville-Chapman et al. (2024) in the United Kingdom emphasize the importance of models centered on teacher flourishing, co-management of decisions, and the creation of resilient organizational cultures. In these contexts, innovation is not only technological but also relational and pedagogical, aimed at the holistic well-being of the educational community. These divergences reflect how structural realities, political frameworks, and social priorities shape different approaches to educational administration. While Latin American models seek to overcome inherited rigid structures, Asia prioritizes efficiency and digitalization, and Europe consolidates distributed and humanistic management. This diversity demonstrates that there is no single ideal model; rather, the effectiveness of institutional management depends on its contextual adequacy, adaptability, and articulation between administrative, pedagogical, and community approaches. A comparative synthesis of regional trends shows distinctive strengths and weaknesses across contexts. In Latin America, participatory and rights-based models effectively address historical inequalities and foster community engagement, yet often struggle with underfunding and political instability. Asian countries demonstrate strong efficiency and technological integration, but risk overemphasizing standardized metrics at the expense of holistic education. European approaches balance distributed leadership and autonomy with democratic governance, although they may face challenges in ensuring uniform equity across diverse regions. Recognizing these patterns enables the identification of transferable lessons, such as combining Latin America's community-centered practices with Asia's technological strengths and Europe's emphasis on democratic school management to design hybrid models adaptable to varied educational environments.

CONTRADICTIONS AND LIMITATIONS IN THE REVIEWED STUDIES

Although the analyzed studies converge in highlighting the benefits of models such as transformational leadership, participatory strategic planning, or the use of digital technologies for institutional management, relevant limitations and tensions also emerge. For example, several authors warn that implementing innovative models in disadvantaged school contexts is constrained by adverse structural conditions, such as lack of connectivity, frequent turnover of school leaders, or limited school autonomy (Langkarat, 2024; Tenorio & Pérez, 2023). Contradictions are also identified between the approaches promoted by centralized education policies and the operational realities of schools, resulting in a disconnection between what is normative and what is feasible (Nowosad & Weiss, 2023; Ramírez, 2024). Some studies question the actual effectiveness of permanent evaluation systems when they are not accompanied by formative processes and institutional strengthening, as they may lead to management focused on control rather than improvement (Ye, 2022; Berkat et al., 2021). These observations show that the mere adoption of "successful" models

does not guarantee their effectiveness across all contexts, and that the sustainability of reforms depends not only on resources, but also on human capital, organizational culture, and context-specific leadership. As a result, a more situated, critical, and adaptive reading of educational administration models is needed—one that acknowledges both their potential and their limitations.

CRITICAL ANALYSIS OF FINDINGS AND GAPS IN THE REVIEWED LITERATURE

Based on the thematic analysis conducted, several contradictions and significant gaps were also identified in the reviewed studies. For instance, while many articles emphasize the benefits of transformational and participatory leadership, others—such as those by Shapaka (2026) and Nowosad & Weissbrot-Koziarska (2024)—warn that these approaches do not always generate sustainable impacts unless accompanied by favorable structural conditions such as institutional autonomy, stable leadership, and adequate funding. Additionally, common limitations in empirical studies include the use of small or non-representative samples, the absence of longitudinal designs to assess the sustained impact of applied models, and weak articulation between qualitative findings and concrete intervention proposals. In terms of thematic and methodological gaps, there is limited research on management models in rural or Indigenous settings, underrepresentation of comparative studies across educational levels (basic, secondary, and higher education), and a lack of multiscale analyses that connect institutional management with national and local public policies. These gaps underscore the need to advance toward more integrative, longitudinal, and context-sensitive research capable of capturing the complexity of educational administration processes across diverse settings.

CONCLUSION

The literature review conducted leads to the conclusion that optimizing institutional management in the educational sphere requires a strategic articulation between transformational leadership, technological innovation, community participation, integrated quality models, change-oriented management, and continuous improvement. Within this framework, transformational leadership, supported by a positive organizational culture, emerges as a key catalyst for institutional resilience by facilitating adaptive processes, stimulating pedagogical innovation, and consolidating sustainable collaborative practices.

Likewise, the digitalization of administrative processes and the incorporation of emerging technologies not only enhance operational efficiency but also strengthen internal monitoring and evaluation systems, which are essential for evidence-based decision-making. The active participation of the educational community and the construction of collaborative networks reinforce institutional belonging and cohesion, contributing to the creation of inclusive, democratic, and student-centered environments.

Integrated management and educational quality models have proven particularly effective in linking administrative and pedagogical processes under strategic leadership capable of responding flexibly to changing contexts and complex social demands. Collectively, the findings suggest that sustainable institutional improvement requires adaptive management, with the capacity for self-regulation and ongoing evaluation, oriented toward innovation, equity, and educational relevance.

However, this review also highlights significant limitations. The heterogeneity of the educational contexts analyzed, the diversity of methodological approaches in the reviewed studies, and the scarcity of longitudinal research make it difficult to generalize results or analyze sustained long-term impacts. These challenges are compounded by structural and cultural barriers that hinder the collective appropriation of technological innovations and collaborative practices, particularly in contexts with low school autonomy, limited connectivity, or insufficient professionalization of school leadership.

The findings of this review allow for the extraction of relevant implications for the formulation and implementation of public policies aimed at strengthening institutional educational management. First, it is essential to design regulatory frameworks and mandatory leadership training programs that develop competencies in pedagogical leadership, strategic management, and collaborative organizational culture, especially in vulnerable or rural school contexts. It is also recommended that ministries of education promote the intelligent decentralization of management functions, granting schools effective autonomy accompanied by evidence-based monitoring and evaluation systems.

Moreover, it is necessary to incorporate, in a cross-cutting manner within educational policy frameworks, the development of institutional capacities for digital management, ensuring technological infrastructure, connectivity, and continuous training for school leaders and teaching staff. It is equally fundamental to promote policies that encourage active participation from the educational community, reinforcing mechanisms of co-management and interinstitutional collaborative networks. Finally, policymakers are urged to formulate adaptive and culturally relevant intervention models that respond to territorial realities and promote education grounded in equity, relevance, and social justice.

In this regard, it is essential to promote research that examines the interplay of key dimensions—leadership, technology, participation, and organizational culture—through multidimensional approaches that combine longitudinal tracking with impact evaluations across different layers of the education system. Future studies should not only assess the long-term effectiveness and adaptability of educational administration models but also compare how these models function across various educational stages, from primary to higher education, to identify unique demands and optimize strategies. Furthermore, it is crucial to direct attention toward Indigenous and rural settings, where educational management must respond to diverse cultural, social, and territorial realities. Advancing the development of adaptive, scalable, and context-sensitive models will ensure that reforms in institutional management are inclusive, sustainable, and aligned with the complexity of local needs.

Finally, from a public policy perspective, the findings suggest the need to formulate national strategies and regulatory frameworks that strengthen pedagogical leadership, promote decentralization through intelligent governance, and prioritize the professional development of school leadership teams. This articulation should enable the implementation of sustainable, culturally relevant institutional improvement plans aimed at ensuring quality education grounded in social justice.

DECLARATION OF CONFLICTS OF INTEREST

The authors declare that there are no conflicts of interest regarding the publication of this article.

DECLARATION OF AI USE

This article was prepared by the authors without the use of generative artificial intelligence tools for the writing of its content. Artificial intelligence was used exclusively for language editing and grammar checking purposes.

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