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Effectiveness of management instruments in the institutional performance of public administration: a systematic review

Efectividad de los instrumentos de gestión en el desempeño institucional de la administración pública: una revisión sistemática

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Abstract

The systematic review conducted had the general objective of analyzing the effectiveness of management tools on the institutional performance of public administration through a systematic literature review. The PRISMA approach was selected as the methodology, allowing for the auditing of 21 scientific articles indexed in Scopus, Web of Science, and SciELO, considered high-impact in the evaluation of scientific information. The systematic review concluded that management tools constitute strategic elements for strengthening institutional performance in public administration, as they facilitate the planning, organization, monitoring, and evaluation of institutional processes. The analyzed scientific evidence demonstrates that tools such as strategic planning, internal control, results-based management, process management, and performance measurement systems contribute significantly to improving administrative efficiency, transparency, the quality of public services, and the achievement of institutional objectives.

Keywords: public administration, management, financial resources.

Resumen

La revisión sistemática realizada tuvo como objetivo general: analizar la efectividad de los instrumentos de gestión en el desempeño institucional de la administración pública mediante una revisión sistemática de la literatura. Como metodología se seleccionó el enfoque PRISMA, lo que permitió auditar 21 artículos científicos, indexados en Scopus, Web of Science y SciELO, considerados de alto impacto en la evaluación de información científica. La revisión sistemática permitió concluir que los instrumentos de gestión constituyen elementos estratégicos para fortalecer el desempeño institucional en la administración pública, debido a que favorecen la planificación la organización el seguimiento y la evaluación de los procesos institucionales, señalando que la evidencia científica analizada demuestra que herramientas como la planificación estratégica, el control interno, la gestión por resultados, la gestión por procesos y los sistemas de medición del desempeño contribuyen significativamente a mejorar la eficiencia administrativa la transparencia la calidad de los servicios públicos y el cumplimiento de los objetivos institucionales.

Palabras clave: administración pública, gestión, recursos financieros.

Introduction

Across Europe, governments face considerable challenges in improving the effectiveness of their management instruments, driven by the growing complexity of public policy, the pace of digital transformation, and the need to respond more quickly to social demands. Several countries have met these challenges by strengthening their performance management systems through collaborative governance models, results-oriented evaluations, and institutional indicators (Acciai & Capano, 2021). Significant differences nonetheless persist across nations in terms of administrative capacity and implementation quality. The Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) notes that countries with higher levels of government effectiveness achieve better outcomes in the quality of public services, policy execution, and citizen trust (Arena et al., 2025).

A number of systematic reviews stress the need to consolidate integrated frameworks for applying management instruments. Along these lines, recent research shows that modern performance management systems increase institutional efficiency when they are linked to participatory governance models and digital processes (Domínguez-Montalvo et al., 2026). In a similar vein, studies on modernization and governance indicate that strengthening these instruments fosters institutional development, provided there is organizational leadership, an evaluation culture, and a digital transformation strategy (Morales, 2025).

In the Peruvian context, however, public administration still faces constraints that keep these instruments from effectively shaping institutional performance. Outdated management documents and weak articulation between strategic planning and budget execution continue to limit their impact (Matos & Chauca, 2023), with negative consequences for administrative efficiency, the quality of public services, and the fulfillment of institutional objectives, particularly among regional and local governments (Mamani, 2023). Recent reviews on institutional performance, internal control, governance, and modernization point to the strengthening of administrative instruments as a key factor in improving organizational efficiency, transparency, and the creation of public value within Peruvian state entities (Sáenz et al., 2023). Against this backdrop, the central research question emerges: How has the effectiveness of management instruments in the institutional performance of public administration been portrayed in the literature?

This study carries social relevance, as it sheds light on how the effectiveness of management instruments shapes institutional performance (Vizcaíno et al., 2023). It also has practical value, since its findings help identify the factors that either favor or constrain such effectiveness within public institutions (Rodríguez et al., 2021). Methodologically, the systematic review contributes to the scientific community by applying rigorous procedures for identifying, selecting, evaluating, and analyzing the evidence on management instruments and institutional performance (Paragua et al., 2022). Finally, it offers a solid theoretical rationale by critically integrating and examining the main conceptual approaches related to these themes within the field of public administration (Medina et al., 2023).

Theoretical Framework

Institutional Theory provides a key foundation for understanding the effectiveness of management instruments in public administration. It holds that organizational behavior is shaped by norms, values, formal and informal rules, and pressures from the institutional environment. From this standpoint, public entities do not base their decisions solely on efficiency criteria: they also seek legitimacy and must respond to the expectations of multiple stakeholders. Accordingly, the successful implementation of management instruments hinges on how well they align with the prevailing institutional framework; where institutional coherence exists, these instruments strengthen management capacity and improve performance (Hattke & Vogel, 2023).

Results-Based Management Theory contributes a further conceptual pillar. It holds that the activities of a public entity should be geared toward measurable, verifiable results that generate public value. Under this approach, planning, resource allocation, execution, and performance evaluation come together to achieve strategic objectives and effectively meet citizens' needs. Management instruments are therefore essential for organizing processes, supporting evidence-based decision-making, and promoting continuous improvement, which in turn reinforces their role in meeting institutional objectives and advancing efficiency and transparency (Modell, 2022).

Organizational Performance Theory complements these perspectives by explaining that institutional effectiveness depends on an organization's capacity to convert human, financial, technological, and organizational resources into sustainable outcomes. Performance, under this approach, is not confined to meeting targets; it also encompasses process optimization, the efficient use of resources, and the creation of value for stakeholders. In public administration, the sound implementation of management instruments improves institutional coordination and decision-making, thereby fostering the efficiency, effectiveness, and sustainability of organizational performance (Bartens, 2026).

Taken together, these three theories provide a robust theoretical framework: Institutional Theory accounts for the conditions of legitimacy and coherence; Results-Based Management points toward measurement and goal attainment; and Organizational Performance Theory links the efficient use of resources to sustainable outcomes. Together, they make it possible to examine how, and under what conditions, management instruments contribute to strengthening public management.

Conceptual Definitions

The effectiveness of management instruments is defined as their capacity to generate improvements in the institutional performance of public administration. The mere existence of normative documents or plans is not enough; their effectiveness hinges on proper implementation and on their capacity to steer planning, organization,

and execution toward the fulfillment of an entity's strategic objectives. When they function properly, these instruments strengthen inter-institutional coordination, optimize the use of resources, and raise the quality of services provided to citizens. They also facilitate the monitoring and evaluation of results, promote evidence-based decision-making, and support the continuous improvement of management, thereby contributing to institutional efficiency, effectiveness, and transparency (Sáenz-Pascual et al., 2026).

From another angle, effectiveness can also be understood as the capacity of these instruments to guide public institutions toward measurable, verifiable outcomes: strategic and operational plans must translate into concrete targets with social impact (Huiman, 2022). It has likewise been conceptualized as the extent to which these instruments drive administrative modernization through the adoption of standardized processes, control systems, and institutional monitoring tools (Aguilar et al., 2022).

Building on the foregoing, this study's general objective is to analyze the effectiveness of management instruments in the institutional performance of public administration through a systematic literature review. Its specific objectives are: 1) to identify the importance of management instruments for institutional performance in public administration; and 2) to describe the theories that explain the role of management instruments in that performance.

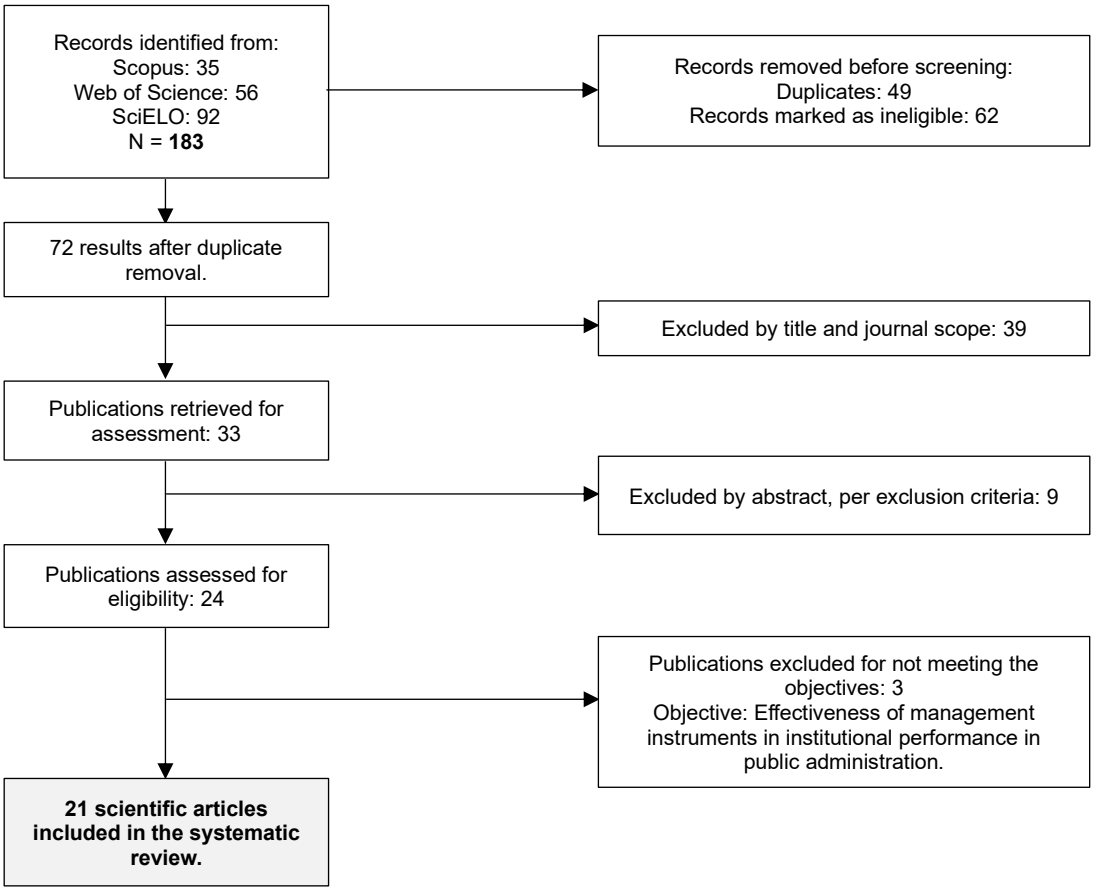
Methodology

This study is framed as basic research, aimed at generating theoretical knowledge and understanding fundamental phenomena rather than pursuing an immediate application; in this sense, it helps expand the existing conceptual framework and advance theory in the field of public management (Hernández & Mendoza, 2023). To examine the effectiveness of management instruments in depth, a qualitative approach was adopted, which makes it possible to interpret social reality through the perceptions, experiences, and meanings of the actors involved and supports a contextualized analysis of institutional cases and processes (Polanía et al., 2020). Methodologically, the study was carried out as a systematic review, understood as a rigorous, structured procedure for gathering, analyzing, and synthesizing the scientific evidence available on a given topic while ensuring transparency and reproducibility (Ruiz & Valenzuela, 2022).

Building on this strategy, inclusion and exclusion criteria were defined to ensure the relevance and quality of the evidence: priority was given to articles indexed in recognized databases (Scopus, Web of Science, and SciELO), published within the last five years, and written in Spanish or English; studies with a clearly described methodological design, whether qualitative or quantitative, were also considered, while duplicate, incomplete, or methodologically weak studies were excluded. The literature search was carried out using combinations of keywords related to “management instruments,” “institutional performance,” and “public administration,” applying Boolean operators to optimize the precision of the results.

The instrument used to select and appraise the articles was a verification checklist, which made it possible to confirm the relevance of the findings and detect possible errors, inconsistencies, or biases in the sources consulted (Romero-Carazas et al., 2024). The selection process is summarized in Figure 1: of the 183 articles initially identified in the databases mentioned above, 111 were excluded for not providing information relevant to the review's objectives, leaving 72. After applying homogeneity criteria and checking these against the study's objective, 21 articles were ultimately selected for detailed analysis.

Figure 1
Document selection procedure



Results and Discussion

The results presented below offer a comprehensive view of the current state of the scientific evidence and provide a solid basis for understanding the contribution of management instruments to strengthening institutional performance within public administration entities.

In order to address the general objective of analyzing the effectiveness of management instruments in the institutional performance of public administration, the scientific evidence from the studies included in the systematic review was synthesized and integrated; this analysis made it possible to identify the main management instruments used by public entities, as well as the effects they generate on institutional performance across different contexts and methodological approaches.

Table 1
Result for the general objective

No.	Year and author	Management instruments
1	Sáenz-Pascual et al. (2026)	The review found that the internal control system is one of the management instruments with the greatest bearing on institutional performance, as it strengthens transparency, improves financial management, optimizes administrative efficiency, and contributes to meeting institutional objectives.

2	Valdivia et al. (2023)	The study found that strengthening internal control in public procurement processes improves administrative efficiency, reduces the risk of corruption, and fosters transparent management of public resources.
3	Nureña-Hidalgo (2026)	The evidence showed that results-based management, technological innovation, and process re-engineering improve the quality of public services, while weaknesses in managerial competencies and digital transformation limit institutional performance.
4	Morales (2025)	The review found that ethical leadership, digital transformation, organizational culture, and results-based management are decisive factors in strengthening institutional development and administrative efficiency across Latin America.
5	Vásquez (2022)	Concludes that managerial competencies strengthen public management by improving decision-making, planning, and the achievement of institutional objectives.
6	Rosales (2026)	The review found that municipal management improves when it incorporates strategic planning, participatory budgeting, open government, and ongoing evaluation mechanisms geared toward generating public value.
7	Driouich & Youssoufi (2025)	The authors concluded that management control strengthens the performance of public organizations, as it increases efficiency, improves transparency, and facilitates the monitoring of institutional objectives through management indicators.
8	Huiman (2022)	The study concluded that internal control improves institutional performance because it strengthens institutional planning, increases administrative efficiency, promotes the proper use of public resources, and consolidates transparency across state entities.
9	Corrêa & Bueno (2024)	The bibliometric review concludes that strategic management is used chiefly by local governments for performance management and measurement; its strength lies in thematic consolidation, though gaps remain regarding comparative effectiveness and how it differs from use in for-profit organizations.
10	Castelo & Gomes (2023)	Monitoring plans emerge as instruments that mediate organizational change: measurement has a direct bearing on performance, while performance management plays an indirect leadership role.
11	Spatariu (2024)	Internal *benchmarking* supported by internal administration makes it possible to compare homogeneous units, detect inefficiencies, and identify good resource-management practices, and its strength lies in comparative precision, although it centers on relative efficiency rather than on the broader dimensions of public value.

The results of this systematic review point to a consensus in the literature: the effectiveness of management instruments is a decisive factor in strengthening institutional performance in public administration. When properly implemented, these instruments support the achievement of strategic objectives, optimize administrative efficiency, increase transparency, and improve the quality of public services. These findings align with the conclusions of recent studies examining specific instruments and their impact on institutional performance.

Sáenz-Pascual et al. (2026), in particular, note that the internal control system is one of the instruments with the greatest influence on institutional performance. Their systematic review, conducted using the PRISMA methodology in the Peruvian context, indicates that sound internal control strengthens financial management, improves oversight mechanisms, increases transparency, and contributes to the achievement of organizational objectives. Along the same lines, Huiman (2022) concludes that internal control optimizes the administration of public resources and consolidates continuous improvement processes within state entities, reinforcing its role as a key instrument for raising institutional performance.

Other studies complement this view by focusing on different instruments. Díaz (2025), for instance, in a systematic review of strategic planning in the Loreto region of Peru, concludes that strategic planning improves institutional performance provided it is accompanied by technical leadership, administrative continuity, inter-

institutional coordination, and ongoing monitoring. These factors (leadership, continuity, coordination, and monitoring) consistently emerge as necessary conditions for management instruments to translate their intentions into effective outcomes.

Taken together, the evidence suggests that designing management instruments is not sufficient on its own: their impact depends as much on their technical quality as on the organizational and contextual conditions that facilitate their implementation. Internal control, strategic planning, and other instruments prove effective when integrated into broader frameworks of governance, accountability, and institutional capacity.

Table 2
Result for specific objective 1

No.	Year and author	Importance of management instruments
1	Sáenz et al. (2023)	Concluded that internal control strengthens institutional management through sound risk administration, while also improving administrative processes and consolidating an organizational culture oriented toward the achievement of results.
2	Díaz (2025)	The systematic review found that strategic planning strengthens institutional performance when there is technical leadership, administrative continuity, participation by institutional actors, and ongoing monitoring mechanisms.
3	Rivas (2026)	Determined that budgetary efficiency depends on the integration of strategic planning, transparency, governance, and management capacity.
4	Bartens (2026)	The scientific evidence showed that organizational management strengthens institutional performance when there is alignment among planning, leadership, inter-institutional coordination, and ongoing evaluation.
5	Chiara et al. (2022)	The review found that performance measurement systems in the public sector present ambiguities stemming from multiple institutional objectives; it nonetheless concluded that the use of clear indicators improves strategic management, accountability, and decision-making.

To analyze the importance of management instruments for institutional performance in public administration, the scientific evidence from the studies selected for the systematic review was synthesized. The analysis focused on identifying the main contributions of these instruments to strengthening institutional management, paying particular attention to their role in planning, control, resource administration, leadership, and performance evaluation.

The results point to a clear consensus in the literature: management instruments are essential for strengthening institutional performance when properly implemented. Far from being mere normative documents, they function as tools that guide planning, steer execution, facilitate monitoring, and enable the evaluation of institutional activities. Their effective application supports the achievement of strategic objectives, improves administrative efficiency, increases transparency, and contributes to higher-quality public services.

Table 3
Result for specific objective 2

No.	Year and author	Theories of management instruments
1	Hattke & Vogel (2023)	Institutional Theory explains how institutional norms and structures underpin the implementation of management instruments.
2	Rho et al. (2025)	The O'Toole-Meier model explains the relationship between public management and organizational performance.

3	Arena et al. (2024)	Performance Measurement Theory underpins performance evaluation through institutional indicators.
4	Netra et al. (2022)	Public Management Theory links managerial competencies to institutional performance.
5	Carrillo et al. (2021)	Results-Based Management Theory holds that results-oriented management improves institutional performance through the systematic use of indicators for public decision-making.

To identify the main theories underpinning the effectiveness of management instruments in institutional performance, the theoretical evidence presented in the studies included in the systematic review was examined. This analysis made it possible to recognize the conceptual approaches that explain the relationship between management instruments and organizational performance, as well as to understand the foundations that justify their implementation within public entities.

The results show that the effectiveness of these instruments rests on solid theoretical support across various strands of public administration. Taken together, the theories reviewed indicate that institutional performance does not depend solely on the existence of norms or management documents, but also on how these instruments are implemented, coordinated, and evaluated within organizations. The literature thus underscores that the true contribution of management instruments emerges when they are coherently integrated into organizational processes, supported by leadership and institutional capacity, and subjected to monitoring and evaluation mechanisms that enable continuous improvement.

Conclusions and recommendations

This systematic review led to the conclusion that management instruments are strategic elements for strengthening institutional performance in public administration, as they guide the planning, organization, monitoring, and evaluation of institutional processes. The evidence analyzed shows that tools such as strategic planning, internal control, results-based management, process management, and performance measurement systems contribute significantly to improving administrative efficiency, transparency, the quality of public services, and the fulfillment of institutional objectives.

Their importance lies in these instruments' capacity to steer the functioning of public entities toward measurable outcomes: through sound planning, coordination, control, and evaluation, they facilitate decision-making, optimize the use of resources, increase accountability, and strengthen institutional transparency. In this sense, these instruments cease to be mere normative documents and become operational mechanisms that guide public action and allow its impact to be assessed.

The effectiveness of these instruments is backed by theoretical support from various strands of public administration, including Institutional Theory, Systems Theory, Principal-Agent Theory, Collaborative Governance, Results-Based Management, and Goal-Setting Theory, which converge in indicating that institutional performance does not depend exclusively on the existence of norms, but also on the implementation, coordination, evaluation, and adaptation of instruments to organizational needs and capacities. Their impact is therefore shaped by organizational, technological, and governance factors.

These findings point to several practical recommendations: public entities should strengthen the implementation of management instruments through ongoing processes of updating, monitoring, and evaluation to ensure that they respond to strategic objectives and foster continuous improvement. It is advisable to promote coordination among strategic planning, process management, internal control, and results-based management in order to achieve more efficient, transparent administration oriented toward the generation of public value.

It is also advisable to invest in building the capacities of managers and public servants through ongoing training programs and technical assistance in the design, application, and evaluation of management instruments. These competencies are key to optimizing decision-making, improving the allocation and use of resources, and strengthening accountability.

Finally, it is suggested that the institutions responsible for policy formulation and administrative modernization establish systematic mechanisms for periodically evaluating the effectiveness of management instruments (performance indicators, monitoring systems, and continuous improvement processes), and that future researchers undertake comparative and longitudinal empirical studies examining the influence of different

instruments across government levels and sectors. This will make it possible to identify the factors that shape their effectiveness and to expand the evidence base for proposals that strengthen results-based public management.

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