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Administrative management and managerial practices in educational institutions

Gestión administrativa y praxis gerencial en las instituciones educativas

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Dalton Santiago Granda Agila
https://orcid.org/0009-0004-9033-588X
dalton.granda@unl.edu.ec
Universidad Nacional de Loja. Ecuador

Jimmy Vladimir Calderón Espinoza
https://orcid.org/0000-0003-4697-820X
jimmy.calderon@unl.edu.ec
Universidad Nacional de Loja. Ecuador

Abstract

Contemporary educational management faces challenges that demand leadership focused on continuous improvement. Therefore, understanding the relationship between administrative processes and managerial practices is key to optimizing institutional functioning. In this context, the objective of this study was to analyze the correlation between administrative management and managerial practices in educational institutions in Alamor. A deductive-quantitative, descriptive-explanatory, and cross-sectional approach was used, applying a survey to 115 administrators from three institutions. The instrument was developed and validated in four phases with expert review, and the data were processed using SPSS and Microsoft Excel through descriptive-inferential analysis, calculating percentage averages for each variable. The results revealed that most administrators achieve an advanced level in administrative management, applying strategies that strengthen organizational development, while in managerial practices, the use of institutional documents for school management and pedagogical planning stands out. However, the correlation between these two variables is positive but very low. It is concluded that the effectiveness of administrative processes significantly influences the quality of managerial practice, albeit in a limited way, which underscores the need for greater integration to improve institutional performance.

Keywords: educational institution leaders, administrative management, managerial practice.

Resumen

La gestión educativa contemporánea enfrenta desafíos que demandan un liderazgo directivo enfocado en la mejora continua, por lo que comprender la relación entre procesos administrativos y praxis gerencial resulta clave para optimizar el funcionamiento institucional. En este contexto, el objetivo del estudio fue analizar la correlación entre gestión administrativa y praxis gerencial en instituciones educativas de Alamor. Para ello, se empleó un enfoque deductivo-cuantitativo, descriptivo-explicativo y transversal, aplicando una encuesta a 115 directivos de tres instituciones. El instrumento se construyó y validó en cuatro fases con revisión de expertos, y los datos se procesaron en SPSS y Microsoft Excel mediante análisis descriptivo-inferencial, calculando promedios porcentuales por variable. Los resultados revelaron que la mayoría de directivos alcanza un nivel avanzado en gestión administrativa, aplicando estrategias que fortalecen el desarrollo organizacional, mientras que en praxis gerencial destacan el uso de documentos institucionales para la gestión escolar y planificación pedagógica; no obstante, la correlación entre ambas variables es positiva pero muy baja. Se concluye que la eficacia en procesos administrativos influye significativamente en la calidad de la praxis gerencial, aunque de forma limitada, lo que subraya la necesidad de una mayor integración para elevar el desempeño institucional.

Palabras clave: directivos de instituciones educativas, gestión administrativa, praxis gerencial.

Introduction

Administrative management and managerial practices in educational institutions currently face a series of limitations that directly impact educational quality across various contexts in Latin America. In Ecuador, structural weaknesses are evident in the processes of planning, organizing, directing, and controlling institutional resources, along with deficiencies in the pedagogical leadership of administrators. Recent research, such as that of Díaz et al. (2025), highlights the lack of managerial training among educational leaders, which negatively affects administrative efficiency and undermines strategic decision-making. This is reinforced by Aquino (2022), who notes the scarce application of management models oriented toward continuous improvement of organizational development, resulting in vertical, non-participatory structures that limit the capacity of educational institutions to respond adequately to changes and demands in the educational environment.

The present study is warranted by the evident disconnection between administrative processes and managerial practices in many educational institutions, particularly in rural contexts such as the city of Alamor. According to Vásquez (2024), educational institutions tend to merely comply with regulatory provisions without achieving an effective articulation between planning documents and daily administrative practice, which affects institutional efficiency and prevents the achievement of continuous improvement goals. Therefore, analyzing the correlation between administrative management and managerial practices will allow for an understanding of how the dimensions and factors of both variables affect the quality of school leadership, providing a solid foundation for designing contextualized corrective actions tailored to local needs.

Furthermore, this research fully aligns with Goal 4 (SDG 4) of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development: "Ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all." This goal seeks to ensure that all individuals, regardless of their social, economic, or cultural background, have access to quality education that fosters comprehensive development, equality of opportunity, and the construction of a more just and equitable society. In the present investigation, SDG 4 is particularly relevant because it enables the creation of institutional conditions that favor higher-quality, more equitable, and inclusive educational processes; by analyzing the correlation between administrative management and managerial practices, valuable inputs are generated for decision-making that contributes to transformative education, consistent with the principles of sustainable development and the demands of an ever-evolving society.

The educational reality is characterized by multiple structural challenges, including inequity, excessive bureaucracy, and scarce available funding. According to studies such as that of Gairín and Galdames (2023), in countries such as Colombia, Peru, Mexico, and Venezuela, administrative management has often been perceived as a merely operational function, disconnected from pedagogical action, while managerial practice lacks adequate technical support. This situation leads administrators to make decisions without considering relevant data, thereby aggravating institutional problems.

In the Ecuadorian context, the Ministry of Education has promoted reforms in recent years aimed at strengthening school management through key strategies and instruments such as the Institutional Educational Project (PEI), Institutional Improvement Plans (PMI), and quality standards, with the objective of ensuring effectiveness in administrative processes. Nevertheless, various national reports, as noted by Lerma (2024), reveal that many institutions still present deficiencies in operational planning, which hampers data-driven decision-making. Moreover, the evident lack of research on the correlation between administrative management and managerial practice limits the implementation of strategies that guide institutional development, a situation particularly critical in rural areas, where administrators assume multiple functions without the necessary training or support.

Given the above, the study proposes to analyze the correlation between administrative management and managerial practices in educational institutions in the city of Alamor, from which three specific objectives derive: to describe the level of administrative management in the educational institutions of Alamor, to establish the level of managerial practice within the same institutions, and to correlate both levels. In this regard, the research hypotheses are formulated as follows: the alternative hypothesis (Ha) posits that a direct relationship exists between administrative management and managerial practice, while the null hypothesis (H0) indicates that no such direct relationship exists between these variables in the educational institutions of Alamor.

Methodology

Within the framework of this study, the deductive method was implemented with a quantitative approach, descriptive-explanatory scope, and cross-sectional design, focused on analyzing the correlation between administrative management and managerial practices. This approach begins with general theories and principles of management to derive specific conclusions regarding the role of administrators.

The quantitative approach allowed for the examination of the correlation between variables in an objective and structured manner, obtaining verifiable results through statistical methods to interpret the findings. As Román et al. (2025) point out, the importance of this approach lies in its capacity to generate quantifiable data on administrative management and managerial practices in educational institutions, ensuring systematic analysis that contributes to the validity and reliability of the results.

Meanwhile, the non-experimental descriptive-explanatory scope combined the identification and analysis of specific aspects of the phenomenon within a given population, using quantitative tools such as measures of central tendency and dispersion (Vásquez, 2024). Similarly, the cross-sectional design was characterized by its single temporal nature, ideal for assessing the prevalence of specific conditions and establishing associations between variables at a single point in time.

The selected technique was the survey, valued for its capacity to collect precise information from a broad group. The research instrument consisted of an ad hoc structured questionnaire, based on the study by Coloma (2022), with items reviewed and modified to adapt to the context of administrative management and managerial practices, facilitating more precise data collection by leveraging structures from previous research.

Before its application, the instrument underwent a validation process in four phases, according to Montero et al. (2024), to ensure objective, accurate, valid, and reliable measurements: (1) definition and grounding of the theoretical basis; (2) adaptation of the instrument; (3) application of reliability and dependability tests; and (4) expert review in the field.

Initially, the theoretical basis of the instrument was analyzed, evaluating the coherence, order, and relationship among adapted items, based on Coloma (2022), Estrella et al. (2023), and the Ministry of Education of Ecuador (2017). The instrument was thus constructed for two variables —administrative management and managerial practice— broken down into dimensions and items: Educational Quality (8 items), Digital Resource Management (5 items), Human Talent (7 items), Quality Standards in Management (7 items), Contingent Management Processes (6 items), and Complexity of Managerial Practice (7 items). These were assessed on a scale based on DIGCOMP (2022-2025), with levels 3=Advanced, 2=Intermediate, and 1=Basic. Table 1 details this information.

Table 1

Theoretical construct of the research instrument

Research instrument name:	Administrative Management and Managerial Practices in Educational Institutions		
Theoretical foundation of the research:	Administrative management of managerial practice from the new pandemic normality in educational institutions of Zone 7 of Ecuador		
Variables	**Dimensions**	**No. of Items**	**Author**
Administrative Management	Educational Quality	8	Coloma (2022) Estrella et al. (2023) Ministerio de Educación del Ecuador (2017)
	Digital Resource Management	5	
	Human Talent	7	
Managerial Practice	Quality Standards in Management	7	
	Contingent Management Processes	6	
	Complexity of Managerial Practice	7	

Note. Data obtained from the theoretical construct matrix

Once the theoretical basis of the research instrument was analyzed, the model of Lawshe (1975) was applied to evaluate content validity and determine the degree of construct representation. For this purpose, five doctoral-level researcher-educators (fourth academic level) in education were selected, with extensive academic trajectories as well as specialized research and publications in the field, considering them experts for the study (N=5). Initially, 38 items were evaluated, of which 33 were retained for their relevance and representativeness of the construct, as detailed in Table 2 below.

Table 2
Application of the model of Lawshe (1975)

Dimensions	Items	NE	IVC
Educational Quality	1-8	5	Valid item.
		3 (item 5)	Item to eliminate.
Digital Resource Management	9-13	5	Valid item.
		1 (item 10)	Item to eliminate.
Human Talent	14-20	5	Valid item.
		2 (item 16) 1 (item 17)	Item to eliminate.
Quality Standards in Management	21-27	5	Valid item.
		2 (item 23)	Item to eliminate.
Contingent Management Processes	28-33	5	Valid item.
Complexity of Managerial Practice	34-38	5	Valid item.

Note. Data obtained from the theoretical construct matrix

Lawshe (1975) establishes that a sufficient number of experts to guarantee the reliability of evaluations ranges between 5 and 10. To apply this validation, the data must be quantitative, and each expert evaluates the instrument items on a three-option scale: "essential," "useful but not essential," and "not relevant." From this, the Content Validity Index (CVI) is calculated, whose minimum acceptable value is equal to or greater than 0.78 for an item to be considered valid. In this study, only 33 items achieved this required valuation, and the final construct of the instrument was thus prepared.

Subsequently, the external reliability test was performed with the resulting 33 items, calculating Pearson's r reliability coefficient to analyze the relationship between variables. For this purpose, the test-retest method was applied, which evaluates the external consistency of results by administering the instrument on two different occasions to the same group of participants. This analysis yielded a coefficient of 0.89, indicating a "strong correlation." These results are presented in Table3.

Table 3
Instrument reliability test: Administrative management and managerial practices in educational institutions

Pearson's R Reliability Test		
Test	**Re-test**	**Temporal Stability Coefficient**
330 responses collected	Variation of 9 out of 330 responses	0.899

Note. Data collected from the Pearson's R reliability test

Next, the internal consistency of the instrument—or reliability—was evaluated by calculating Cronbach's Alpha coefficient. This was determined by considering the total number of items, the sum of individual variances, and the overall variance of the instrument. The analysis yielded a coefficient of 0.93, interpreted as an "excellent" reliability level, as detailed in Table 4.

Table 4
Cronbach's Alpha of the research instrument

Reliability Test	
Number of items =	33
Sum of Variances =	8.36
Variance of the Sum of Items =	85.04
Cronbach's Alpha =	0,93

Note. Data collected from the Cronbach's Alpha test

Finally, the 5 experts evaluated the questionnaire, assessing general aspects such as theoretical foundation, sufficiency, clarity, coherence, quality, and relevance of the instrument. After the individual results were systematized, the data were tabulated and Fleiss' Kappa statistical method was applied, obtaining a concordance index of Kappa = 1, reflecting an "almost perfect agreement" among evaluators. Table 5 presents a summary of the data obtained.

Table 5
Fleiss' Kappa Coefficient

Evaluation Criteria	Valuation					General Total
	1	2	3	4	5	
Theoretical Foundation	-	-	-	-	5	5
Sufficiency	-	-	-	-	5	5
Clarity	-	-	-	-	5	5
Coherence	-	-	-	-	5	5
Quality	-	-	-	-	5	5
Relevance	-	-	-	-	5	5
Po = 1	**Pe = 1**			**Po-Pe =** 1		
Theoretical Chance Concordance:			1			
KAPPA:			1			
Median:			**Mode:**			
5			5			

Note. Data collected from validation using the Fleiss' Kappa method

The study population consisted of administrators from educational institutions in the city of Alamor: Julio Isaac Espinosa Ochoa Educational Unit, Técnico Puyango Educational Unit, and Fiscomisional Gran Colombia Educational Unit. The sample included 115 administrators from these three institutions.

Finally, the data were processed and analyzed using descriptive and inferential statistical techniques, employing Microsoft Excel and SPSS software as primary tools. These allowed for data tabulation as well as the analysis and interpretation of results.

Results and discussion

Regarding the level of administrative management and managerial practices in educational institutions in the city of Alamor, this section presents the results that fulfill the research objectives. The level of administrative management of administrators in these institutions is first described, followed by the level of managerial practice in the same population. Subsequently, both variables are correlated, and their relationship is analyzed, highlighting the relevance of these elements for school leadership.

To address the fulfillment of the objectives, numerical data were extracted through the online survey applied. Initial findings include detailed sociodemographic information, presented in Table 6 below.

Table 6
Target study population – sociodemographics

Sex:	Male		Female
	44%		56%
Age:	25-40 years	41-56 years	57 years and over
	33%	44%	22%
Professional Training:	Bachelor's Degree	Master's Degree	Doctorate
	41%	52%	7%
Teaching Experience:	1-10 years	11-20 years	21 years and over
	30%	33%	37%

Administrative Experience:	1-10 years	11-20 years	21 years and over
	78%	19%	4%

Note. Survey administered to administrators, adapted from Coloma (2022), Estrella et al. (2023) and Ministerio de Educación del Ecuador (2017)

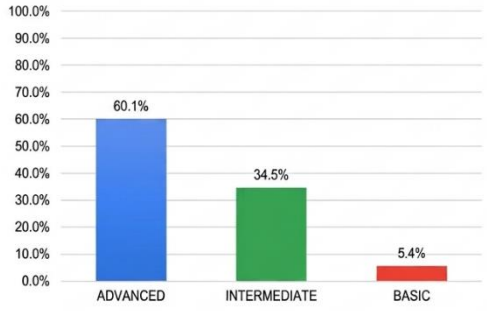
The results of the sample characterization, presented in Table 6, reveal various sociodemographic and professional aspects of administrators in the educational institutions of Alamor. Regarding sex, female participation predominates at 56%, compared to 44% male. Concerning age, 44% are concentrated between 41 and 56 years, followed by 33% between 25 and 40 years, and 22% aged 57 or older.

Regarding professional training, the majority hold a master's degree (52%), followed by a bachelor's degree (41%) and doctorate (7%), reflecting a high academic level. In teaching experience, the distribution is balanced: 30% with 1-10 years, 33% with 11-20 years, and 37% with more than 21 years. Regarding administrative experience, 78% have between 1 and 10 years, 19% between 11 and 20 years, and only 4% exceed 21 years, indicating a predominance of relatively new administrators in their positions.

To determine the level of administrative management in the educational institutions of Alamor, the first variable was exhaustively analyzed, considering its dimensions—Educational Quality, Digital Resource Management, and Human Talent—along with their items, evaluated on the DIGCOMP scale (2022-2025): Advanced (38-49 points), Intermediate (27-37), and Basic (0-26). The number of participants from the three institutions was taken into account. This process generated Figure 1, which organizes the data using specific counters per dimension and level, according to the number of participants.

Figure 1

Level of administrative management in educational institutions in the city of Alamor



Dimension	Items with Maximum Ratings
Educational Quality	Item 2. Considers that administrative management contributes to strengthening organizational development within the educational institution.
Dimensions	**Items with Minimum Ratings**
Educational Quality	Item 5. Integrates the relationship between administrative actions and the continuous improvement of educational quality.
Human Talent	Item 15. Executes professional training activities for administrative, manager and teaching staff based on the diagnosis of institutional needs.

Note. Survey administered to administrators, adapted from Coloma (2022), Estrella et al. (2023), DIGCOMP (2022 - 2025) and Ministerio de Educación del Ecuador (2017)

The results in Figure 1 describe the level of administrative management in the educational institutions of Alamor, where 60.1% of administrators achieve an advanced level by adequately executing administrative processes, 34.5% attain an intermediate level, and only 5.4% reach a basic level. These data indicate that the majority perceive constant and organized administrative management within the institutions.

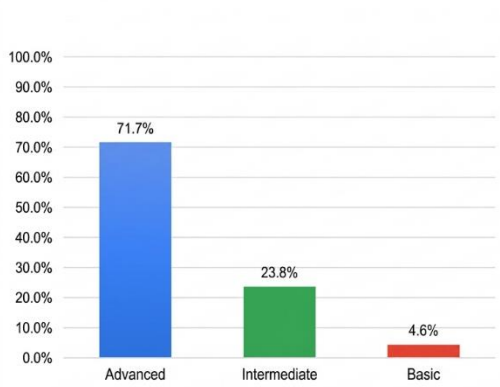
This favorable level supports the assertion of Gairín & Galdames (2023), who maintain that institutional effectiveness depends on administrators' capacity to articulate technical and conceptual functions in organizational

processes. In agreement, Armijos et al. (2025) emphasize that school administrative efficiency lies in the adequate coordination of resources and strategic decision-making oriented toward continuous improvement. Thus, the findings confirm that institutions in Alamor maintain solid administrative structures, although challenges persist in the regularity of procedures.

Regarding the level of managerial practice, the second variable was analyzed considering its dimensions—Quality Standards in Management, Contingent Management Processes, and Complexity of Managerial Practice—along with their items, evaluated on the DIGCOMP scale (2022-2025): Advanced (39-50 points), Intermediate (28-38), and Basic (0-27). The number of participants from the three institutions was incorporated, organizing the information systematically in Figure 2, presented below.

Figure 2

Level of managerial practice in educational institutions in the city of Alamor



Dimension	Items with Maximum Ratings
Contingent Management Processes	Item 26. Utilizes institutional documents as fundamental tools for school management and pedagogical planning.

Dimensions	Items with Minimum Ratings
Complexity of Managerial Praxis	Item 29. Understands the complexity of educational processes in relation to the purposes, functions, and theories of learning.

Note. Survey administered to administrators, adapted from Coloma (2022), Estrella et al. (2023), DIGCOMP (2022 - 2025) and Ministerio de Educación del Ecuador (2017)

The results in Figure 2 indicate that in the educational institutions of Alamor, 71.7% of administrators achieve an advanced level in managerial practice, followed by 23.8% at an intermediate level and 4.6% at a basic level. In summary, an advanced level predominates, evidencing solid leadership and decision-making skills. These findings align with Jurado et al. (2023), who emphasize that effective managerial practice is characterized by the conscious application of administrative knowledge in human talent management and results orientation.

Similarly, López et al. (2024) argue that managerial success depends on authority combined with the capacity to influence work teams and guide them toward educational excellence. Therefore, the data from Alamor confirm a solid managerial practice, supported by the professional experience and academic training of the administrators.

Before establishing the correlation between both variables, the Kolmogorov-Smirnov normality test was performed, given that the sample of 115 participants meets the conditions: $n > 50$ and independent observations without mixing of populations. The results are presented in Table 7, considering the null hypothesis (H_0: the data follow a normal distribution) and the alternative hypothesis (H_1: the data do not follow a normal distribution). The criterion was: if Sig. > 0.05, H_0 is not rejected (normal data); if Sig. ≤ 0.05, H_0 is rejected (non-normal data).

Table 7

Normality tests

Normality tests			
Variables	Kolmogorov-Smirnov		
	Statistic	df	Sig.
Administrative Management	0.159	115	0.000

Managerial Practice	0.181	115	0.000

Note. Survey administered to administrators, adapted from Coloma (2022), Estrella et al. (2023) and Ministerio de Educación del Ecuador (2017)

The data are interpreted as not following a normal distribution, thus classified as non-parametric: the p-value (Sig.) is less than α = 0.05, leading to the rejection of the null hypothesis (H_0) and acceptance of the alternative hypothesis (H_1). Consequently, to determine the correlation between the administrative management and managerial practice variables, Spearman's Rho test was applied, the results of which are presented in Table 8. This test considers the null hypothesis (H_0: no direct relationship exists between the variables) and the alternative hypothesis (H_1: a direct relationship exists between them).

Table 8
Spearman's correlation

Variables		Administrative Management	Managerial Practice
Administrative Management	Correlation Coefficient	1.000	0.155
	Sig. (two-tailed)		0.097
	N	115	115
Managerial Practice	Correlation Coefficient	0.155	1.000
	Sig. (two-tailed)	0.097	
	N	115	115

Note. Survey administered to administrators, adapted from Coloma (2022), Estrella et al. (2023) and Ministerio de Educación del Ecuador (2017)

The correlation between the administrative management and managerial practice variables is interpreted considering that the p-value (Sig.) is greater than 0.05, confirming the existence of a statistically significant relationship. Spearman's Rho test yielded a coefficient of 0.155, indicating a very low positive correlation; therefore, the null hypothesis (H_0: no strong direct relationship exists between the variables) is accepted, and the alternative hypothesis (H_1) is rejected. These data reflect a limited positive association between both variables in the educational institutions of Alamor, without the data being normal—as previously established by Kolmogorov-Smirnov. This result agrees with Torres (2024), who maintains that administrative management acts as a systemic process that strengthens the managerial function, providing direction to institutional actions, although without reaching a determining influence.

Subsequently, a comprehensive analysis was performed that allowed for the precise specification of the existing correlation between administrative management and managerial practice in said institutions, obtaining the detailed results below.

Table 9
Overall analysis results

Procedure	Variable / Test	Result / Level	Statistical Value / Percentage	Interpretation
Descriptive Analysis	Administrative Management	Advanced	60.1%	Item 2. Applies administrative strategies that contribute to strengthening the organizational development of the educational institution.

	Managerial Practice	Advanced	71.7%	Item 26. Employs institutional documents as strategic tools for school management and pedagogical planning.
Normality Verification	Kolmogorov-Smirnov (N=115)	p = 0.000 (Administrative Management)	p = 0.000 (Managerial Practice)	Non-parametric.
Correlational	Spearman's Rho	0.155	0.097	Very low positive correlation.

Note. Taken from the results obtained in the research

Table 9 presents the results of the general objective, showing that administrative management reaches an advanced level (60.1%), while managerial practice also sits at an advanced level (71.7%), with particular emphasis on the use of institutional documents as strategic tools for school management and pedagogical planning. The Kolmogorov-Smirnov test confirmed the non-normality of the data (p = 0.000), so Spearman's non-parametric test was applied, which yielded a correlation coefficient of 0.155. This value indicates a very low positive correlation between both variables, demonstrating that adequate administrative management has a significant, albeit limited, effect on the quality of managerial practice in the educational institutions of Alamor.

Conclusions

It is concluded that the level of administrative management in the educational institutions of the city of Alamor stands at an advanced level, evidencing that the majority of administrators apply effective administrative strategies that strengthen the organizational development of their institutions, optimizing processes of planning, organization, and resource control.

Likewise, it is determined that the level of managerial practice also reaches an advanced degree, highlighting the strategic use of institutional documents as fundamental tools for school management and pedagogical planning, reflecting solid leadership skills and an orientation toward educational outcomes.

The correlation between administrative management and managerial practice, analyzed through Spearman's Rho non-parametric test, reveals a very low positive coefficient (0.155), indicating that effectiveness in administrative processes significantly influences the quality of managerial practice in these institutions, albeit to a limited extent.

Finally, it is confirmed that both variables maintain a complementary interrelationship in the educational sphere: higher efficiency in administrative management corresponds to greater effectiveness in managerial practice, generating a joint positive impact on institutional quality and the fulfillment of established educational objectives.

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