



Organizational innovation and administrative leadership in a local government of the province of San Ignacio, Peru - 2025

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ABSTRACT

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The main objective of this study was to determine the relationship between organizational innovation and administrative leadership within a local government in the province of San Ignacio during the 2025 period. This research was developed under the framework of the United Nations Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) 8, specifically focusing on Target 8.3, which promotes the adoption of development-oriented policies that support productivity and efficiency in public institutions. At the methodological level, the work was classified as basic research with a quantitative approach. The research design was non-experimental, correlational, and cross-sectional. For the collection of empirical data, a structured and validated questionnaire was administered to a census sample consisting of 105 administrative employees belonging to the municipality of San Ignacio. The results obtained through Spearman's non-parametric statistical correlation analysis revealed a very strong and statistically significant positive relationship between the variables under study, reaching a correlation coefficient of $\rho = 0.872$ with a significance level of $p = 0.003$. In conclusion, it was demonstrated that higher levels of organizational innovation are directly linked to more effective and dynamic administrative leadership. These findings suggest that the systematic implementation of innovative processes in municipal management not only strengthens executive leadership but also optimizes institutional efficiency and fosters sustainable socioeconomic development.

Contribution/Originality: This study innovatively analyzes the relationship between organizational innovation and administrative leadership in the government of San Ignacio, Peru. By integrating the SECI model and transformational leadership, it demonstrates how effective leaders enhance management, optimize administrative processes, and foster an innovative culture, thereby improving public services.

1. INTRODUCTION

Organizational innovation and administrative leadership are two interdependent pillars for strengthening local public management, especially in developing countries undergoing rapid technological, institutional, and social transformations. From a theoretical perspective, leadership acts as a catalyst, facilitating innovation by shaping organizational culture, guiding strategic decision-making, and mobilizing human capital toward adaptive change. In turn, organizational innovation optimizes processes, improves service delivery and institutional performance, creating conditions that foster productivity, quality employment, and sustainable economic growth.

In this context, the present study, conducted in a Peruvian municipality, contributes to the international debate on the modernization of local governments by empirically examining the relationship between organizational innovation and administrative leadership. It also enriches the global discussion on adaptive leadership and innovative organizational cultures, enabling the comparison and transfer of best practices between similar institutional environments (Roque & Arriaga, 2019). Unlike studies that simply associate innovation with performance indicators, this research positions the dynamics of leadership and innovation as a fundamental mechanism for promoting decent work and institutional sustainability in local public administration.

Within the framework of Sustainable Development Goal 8, specifically target 8.3, which emphasizes the promotion of productive activities, decent job creation, entrepreneurship, and institutional strengthening, effective administrative leadership, combined with organizational innovation, plays a central role. Adaptive and transformational leadership foster participatory work environments, continuous learning, and merit-based management, essential components of decent work. Simultaneously, innovation in public organizations improves efficiency, transparency, and service quality, generating positive spillover effects for local economic development and citizen trust. Therefore, the interaction between leadership and innovation functions as a structural driver of sustainable growth at the local level, rather than as an isolated management outcome.

Empirical evidence from Latin America reveals persistent challenges in this domain. In Chile, despite the implementation of municipal innovation strategies since 2018, the absence of coherent management models has resulted in fragmented and unsustainable initiatives (Henríquez & Ramírez-Alujas, 2022). In Mexico, hospitals experience difficulties implementing organizational change due to weak transformational leadership and institutional rigidity, negatively affecting service quality (Hernandez, Carmona, Huerta, & Valencia, 2023). Similarly, in Ecuador, limited conceptual clarity regarding leadership and organizational culture, coupled with non-contextualized management models, leads to low cohesion and workforce demotivation (Yaulilahua-Huacho & Almenaba-Guerrero, 2022). In Costa Rica, traditional organizational structures and insufficient investment in human talent constrain innovation and reduce competitiveness (Chavarria, 2023). Likewise, in Mexico, rigid structures and inadequate leadership training continue to hinder innovation and contribute to competitive stagnation (Escobar, Fernández, & González, 2022).

In Peru, local public management faces comparable limitations. The municipalities of Piura, Lima, and Huaura exhibit deficiencies in strategic planning, leadership effectiveness, and technological integration, resulting in outdated processes, limited citizen participation, and fragile organizational cultures (Espinoza, Ardian, Ramos, Jordan, & Ayala, 2023; Gálvez, 2022; Quintana, 2025). In the municipality of Crucero, the variability of political leadership generates unstable work environments and coordination problems (Hinojosa-Mamani, Mamani-Gamarra, Tintaya-Cari, Gómez-Bailón, & Pancca-Parillo, 2023). Similarly, in the private sector, microenterprises in Moyobamba and businesses in Cajamarca exhibit weak innovation cultures, low technological investment, and insufficient training, which harms productivity and economic sustainability (Monsalve, Ramírez, & Tarrillo, 2021; Quispe, Moreno, & Julca, 2024). Taken together, these findings underscore the urgent need to strengthen leadership capacities and promote organizational innovation as strategic drivers for decent work and sustainable local economic development.

In the municipality of San Ignacio, organizational innovation and administrative leadership face major limitations due to rigid bureaucratic structures, non-transformational leadership styles, and an institutional culture resistant to change. This situation is exacerbated by the lack of strategic focus, low technological investment, and limited staff training. Consequently, processes become slow and inefficient, undermining service quality and weakening public trust. Leadership fails to mobilize teams toward continuous improvement, deteriorating the work climate and hindering the adoption of innovative practices. Altogether, these conditions stagnate local development and restrict institutional competitiveness.

Based on the identified problem, the following general research question was formulated: How is organizational innovation related to administrative leadership in the local government of the province of San Ignacio in 2025?

The study is theoretically justified because it strengthens the conceptual framework on the relationship between organizational innovation and administrative leadership, both essential for optimizing public management. It contributes to the literature by addressing a local context that has been little explored and by providing contextualized evidence. Practically, it offers inputs for designing more efficient and innovative administrative strategies that improve municipal services and procedures. From a social perspective, its relevance lies in promoting a more modern and participatory local government. Overall, the study seeks to generate a positive impact on the district's quality of life.

Based on the issues previously described, the general objective was to determine the relationship between organizational innovation and administrative leadership in the local government of the province of San Ignacio in 2025. The specific objectives were: to analyze the level of organizational innovation in a local government of the province of San Ignacio in 2025; to identify the level of administrative leadership exercised in the management of a local government of the province of San Ignacio in 2025; and to analyze the relationship between the dimensions of organizational innovation and administrative leadership in a local government of the province of San Ignacio in 2025.

Likewise, the following general hypothesis was proposed: H1: There is a relationship between organizational innovation and administrative leadership in the local government of the province of San Ignacio in 2025. Similarly, the null hypothesis was established as: H0: There is no relationship between organizational innovation and administrative leadership in the local government of the province of San Ignacio in 2025.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1. Theories of Organizational Innovation

The SECI model by Nonaka and Takeuchi explains the creation of organizational knowledge through socialization, externalization, combination, and internalization, processes that transform tacit and explicit knowledge in a continuous cycle that drives innovation (Martínez, 2021). This model highlights constant interaction among individuals as key to strengthening institutional adaptation.

Complementarily, the triple helix approach argues that cooperation among universities, industry, and government is essential for fostering innovation and economic development, with each sector contributing research, application, and public policy, respectively (Olmedo, Poveda, Herrera, & Acosta, 2023). Both approaches emphasize knowledge exchange and strategic alliances. Together, they provide a solid theoretical foundation for understanding how innovation is activated within organizations.

In public sector organizations, the SECI model highlights how innovation depends on the institutionalization of knowledge driven by leadership, not solely on technological inputs.

2.2. Definitions of Organizational Innovation

Organizational innovation was defined by Gómez-Álvarez and Núñez-Ramírez (2022) as the way organizations make fundamentally important changes in structures, processes, practices, culture, or management models, thereby improving their performance and adaptation to the environment in which they operate, generating value. This innovation may involve new ways of working, internal reorganization, implementation of new technologies, or development of novel strategies to achieve institutional objectives.

2.3. Dimensions of Organizational Innovation

Gómez-Álvarez and Núñez-Ramírez (2022) analyzed organizational innovation based on three fundamental dimensions that allow for the evaluation of its application within an entity. The first is management innovation, understood as the incorporation of new approaches in the direction, administration, and organization of work, which seek to optimize resources, improve operational efficiency, and strengthen internal leadership. The second dimension corresponds to product or service innovation, as well as the creation, improvement, or adaptation of the goods or

services that the organization offers, seeking to respond to the needs posed by the environment and, at the same time, attempt to provide added value to users or beneficiaries. Finally, process innovation would determine the introduction and implementation of new methods or the improvement of existing ones in internal procedures, trying to make the institution's operations and activities more agile, effective, and sustainable. These dimensions allow us to holistically address the level of innovation within an organization and its capacity to adapt to innovation.

2.4. Theories of Administrative Leadership

The theory of situational leadership, proposed by Hersey and Blanchard, argues that there is no single leadership style that is effective in all circumstances; therefore, leaders must adapt their approach to the maturity and readiness level of their followers. This theory identifies four leadership styles: directive, persuasive, participative, and delegating, each suitable for different stages of team development. The leader's flexibility and diagnostic ability are essential for applying the most effective style, thus promoting an efficient and motivating organizational environment (Rincón, Alamillo, Ojinaga, Briones, & Salazar, 2022).

The transformational leadership theory, proposed by Bernard M. Bass, argues that leaders can inspire employees and transform organizations by creating an environment where a shared vision drives positive change among workers. Transformational leadership is based on four key characteristics: charisma, individualized consideration, intellectual stimulation, and the ability to provide inspirational motivation. These elements foster strong commitment and performance among employees, as well as openness to change and innovation (Quiñones & Espíritu-Álvarez, 2023).

Both leadership approaches are particularly relevant in public administration, where innovation must be achieved under conditions of hierarchy, accountability, and regulatory control.

2.5. Definitions of Administrative Leadership

According to Ramírez, Peña, Vivar, and González (2025), administrative leadership is the ability or capacity of an individual to effectively direct, coordinate, and guide professional competencies, material resources, and technical processes within an organization to achieve its goals. This leadership style is grounded in planning, organization, and control, as well as the ability to make the right decisions to ensure the proper functioning and productivity of the organization.

2.6. Dimensions of Administrative Leadership

According to Ramírez et al. (2025), administrative leadership is analyzed through three fundamental dimensions that help explain its effectiveness within an organization. The first is decision-making, which refers to the leader's ability to assess situations, weigh alternatives, and select the most appropriate actions to achieve institutional goals. This dimension reflects the degree of autonomy, judgment, and responsibility exercised in leadership. The second dimension is organizational communication, encompassing the processes through which the leader transmits information, opens communication channels, and fosters continuous dialogue among team members, as well as cohesion and a sense of belonging. Finally, staff motivation refers to the leader's capacity to reward performance and reinforce commitment, productivity, and the professional development of human capital.

These dimensions are particularly relevant in local governments, where administrative leaders must simultaneously ensure regulatory compliance, motivate public servants, and promote innovation under conditions of limited resources and high social demand.

2.7. Integrative Theoretical Framework of Organizational Innovation and Administrative Leadership in the Public Sector

The theoretical approaches reviewed in this study, the SECI model of knowledge creation, transformational leadership theory, and situational leadership theory, can be integrated into a coherent analytical framework to explain

how organizational innovation develops and is sustained in public sector institutions. The SECI model provides the fundamental explanation of how innovation emerges through the continuous interaction between tacit and explicit knowledge via processes of socialization, externalization, combination, and internalization. However, in public organizations, these knowledge dynamics require leadership mechanisms that actively promote learning, collaboration, and institutional adaptation.

Transformational leadership plays a fundamental role in this process by creating the motivational and cultural conditions necessary for innovation. Through intellectual stimulation, inspirational motivation, and individualized consideration, transformational leaders encourage public servants to share knowledge, challenge traditional practices, and participate in collective problem-solving. These leadership behaviors directly support the outsourcing and combination phases of the SECI cycle, facilitating the transformation of individual expertise into organizational capabilities that enhance innovation in management, processes, and public services.

At the same time, situational leadership complements the transformational approach by emphasizing a leader's ability to adapt their leadership style to the organizational context, staff readiness, and institutional constraints. This adaptability is especially relevant in the public sector, where bureaucratic structures, regulatory frameworks, and political dynamics demand flexible and accountable leadership. By aligning leadership behaviors with the demands of the context, situational leadership ensures that innovation initiatives are operationally viable and institutionally sustainable.

From a holistic perspective, administrative leadership functions as a mediating mechanism between knowledge creation and organizational innovation in local governments. Transformational leadership provides strategic vision and motivation, while situational leadership ensures contextual alignment and effective implementation. Together, these leadership approaches enable the systematic development of organizational innovation across managerial, procedural, and service dimensions, strengthening institutional performance, employee engagement, and the creation of public value. This integrated theoretical framework supports the empirical analysis of the relationship between organizational innovation and administrative leadership, offering a solid conceptual foundation for analyzing the dynamics of innovation in local public administration.

3. MATERIALS AND METHODS

The research was basic in nature because it sought to deepen the theoretical understanding of the variables within a public institution, aiming to expand knowledge without immediate practical application (Villanueva, 2022). Likewise, it employed a quantitative approach, which allowed the collection of measurable data on staff perceptions regarding organizational innovation and administrative leadership and facilitated the statistical verification of the relationship between both variables (Zúñiga, Cedeño, & Palacios, 2023). A non-experimental cross-sectional design was used, as data were gathered at a single point in 2025 without manipulating the natural conditions of the setting, enabling the analysis of the phenomena as they occurred in the institution (Arias & Covinos, 2021). Finally, the study had a descriptive-correlational scope, as it described the characteristics of the variables and identified the degree of association between them without establishing causal relationships (Mehdi, Martel, Huayta, Rojas, & Arias, 2023).

The population consisted of 105 administrative employees from the Municipality of San Ignacio, representing various areas and hierarchical levels relevant to the analysis (Saldaña et al., 2024). The sample was equivalent to the population and was selected through non-probabilistic census sampling based on participants' availability and connection to the study variables (Ruiz & Valenzuela, 2022).

The study employed a structured questionnaire developed by the researchers to measure organizational innovation and administrative leadership. The organizational innovation variable consisted of 18 items distributed across three dimensions: managerial innovation (6 items), service innovation (6 items), and process innovation (6 items). Administrative leadership was measured using 18 items grouped into decision-making (6 items), organizational communication (6 items), and staff motivation (6 items). All items were designed using a five-point

Likert scale and subsequently underwent a normalization process that recategorized responses into three ordinal levels (poor, fair, and good), improving interpretability and supporting the use of nonparametric analysis.

Content validity was established through expert judgment by three specialists in public management and organizational studies. The instruments showed excellent internal consistency in this study, with Cronbach's alpha coefficients of 0.8258 for organizational innovation and 0.8422 for administrative leadership. Given the ordinal nature of the data, the non-experimental cross-sectional design, and the study's objective of identifying associations rather than predictive effects, Spearman's rank correlation coefficient was considered the most appropriate statistical technique, and complementary analyses such as regression were not applied.

Table 1. Descriptive statistics of organizational innovation and its dimensions.

Variable/Dimensions	Mean	Standard deviation
Organizational innovation	1.99	0.814
Management innovation	1.94	0.782
Service innovation	1.89	0.738
Process innovation	1.9	0.861

Note: The original responses were collected using a five-point Likert scale; however, for analytical purposes, the assessments were standardized through a three-level rating scale (poor, fair, good) using a scoring procedure (baremation).

Table 1 presents and analyzes the descriptive statistics to summarize organizational innovation and its dimensions. Although responses were initially obtained using a five-point Likert scale, a standardization procedure was applied to recode the data into three qualitative levels (poor, fair, and good). As shown in Table 1, organizational innovation obtained a mean score of 1.99 (SD = 0.814), corresponding to a fair level of innovation as perceived by administrative employees. In all dimensions, managerial innovation (M = 1.94; SD = 0.782), service innovation (M = 1.89; SD = 0.738), and process innovation (M = 1.90; SD = 0.861) also fell within the fair category, indicating moderately developed innovation practices within the municipality.

Table 2. Descriptive statistics of administrative leadership and its dimensions.

Variable / Dimensions	Mean	Standard deviation
Administrative leadership	1.74	0.877
Decision-making	1.89	0.776
Organizational communication	1.83	0.893
Staff motivation	1.81	0.822

Note: Data were initially collected using a five-point Likert scale. For analytical purposes, responses were subsequently standardized using a normalization procedure on a three-level scale (1 = poor, 2 = fair, 3 = good).

In Table 2, the descriptive statistics are examined to characterize administrative leadership and its dimensions, utilizing the original Likert scale database. As shown in Table 2, administrative leadership had a mean score of 1.74 (SD = 0.877), corresponding to a moderate level of leadership as perceived by administrative employees. Regarding its dimensions, decision-making showed the highest mean (M = 1.89; SD = 0.776), followed by organizational communication (M = 1.83; SD = 0.893) and staff motivation (M = 1.81; SD = 0.822). All dimensions fell within the moderate category, reflecting moderately developed leadership practices within the local government context.

The ethical aspects of the research were governed by the César Vallejo University Code of Ethics, adhering to the principles of informed consent, ensuring that participants understood the purpose of the study and voluntarily agreed to take part. Beneficence and non-maleficence were guaranteed by avoiding any physical, psychological, or moral harm to respondents. Likewise, honesty was maintained in the handling of information, responsibility was upheld throughout each phase of the research process, and transparency was ensured in the presentation of results, while safeguarding participants' confidentiality and anonymity at all times.

4. RESULTS

The results of this research were developed in accordance with the proposed objectives, beginning with the general objective and subsequently addressing each specific objective to ensure a comprehensive and coherent analysis. Based on this structure, the findings obtained during the year 2025 were compiled and presented. The general objective was to determine the relationship between organizational innovation and administrative leadership in the local government of the province of San Ignacio – 2025. For this purpose, the general hypothesis (HG1) proposed that a relationship exists between organizational innovation and administrative leadership, while the null hypothesis (HG0) stated that no such relationship exists. The corresponding decision criterion was also applied, whereby if $p < 0.05$, the alternative hypothesis (H1) is accepted, and if $p > 0.05$, the null hypothesis (H0) is rejected.

Table 3. Spearman correlation of the variables.

			V2. Administrative Leadership
Spearman's Rho	V1. Organizational Innovation	Correlation coefficient	0.872
		Sig. (two-tailed)	0.003
		N	105

Note: Results from the survey administered to workers of a local government.

Table 3 presents the Spearman correlation analysis showing a coefficient of 0.872, indicating a very strong and positive relationship between organizational innovation and administrative leadership. This result suggests that higher levels of innovation are associated with stronger leadership practices. The significance value of 0.003, below the 0.05 threshold, allowed the rejection of the null hypothesis, confirming the statistical relevance of the correlation. These findings highlight the importance of integrating innovation into managerial practices. Consequently, this relationship should guide strategies aimed at strengthening local public management.

Similarly, the first specific objective was to analyze the level of organizational innovation in the local government of the province of San Ignacio – 2025.

Table 4. Level of the organizational innovation variable.

Level	Scales	Frequency	Percentage
Poor	18-41	35	33.3
Fair	42-65	36	34.3
Good	66-90	34	32.4
Total		105	100.0

Note: Results from the survey administered to workers of a local government.

Table 4 shows the distribution of organizational innovation levels based on workers' perceptions. A total of 34.3% rated it as regular, indicating inconsistent or unsustained innovation efforts; 33.3% rated it as poor, reflecting limited initiatives and resistance to change; and 32.4% evaluated it as good, suggesting the presence of some innovative practices. The balanced distribution, with a slight predominance of the regular level, reveals that innovation was uneven across the institution. Therefore, more comprehensive strategies are needed to strengthen organizational innovation.

Table 5. Level of the dimensions of V1.

	Poor			Fair			Good		
	B	F	%	B	F	%	B	F	%
D1. Management Innovation	6-13	35	33.3	14-21	41	39	22-30	29	27.6
D2. Service Innovation	6-13	35	33.3	14-21	47	44.8	22-30	23	21.9
D3. Process Innovation	6-13	44	41.9	14-21	27	25.7	22-30	34	32.4

Note: Results from the survey administered to workers of a local government.

Table 5 reports the levels obtained in the dimensions of organizational innovation. In management innovation, 39% of participants rated it as regular, indicating moderate administrative improvements, while service innovation also showed a predominance of the regular level (44.8%), reflecting changes with limited impact. In contrast, process innovation recorded a mainly poor level (41.9%), revealing deficiencies in procedural modernization, with only 32.4% perceiving it as good. Overall, the results highlight a predominance of regular levels and critical weaknesses in process innovation. This underscores the need for more balanced and comprehensive strategies across all dimensions.

The second specific objective was also addressed, which was to identify the level of administrative leadership exercised in managing a local government in the province of San Ignacio – 2025.

Table 6. Level of the administrative leadership variable.

Level	Scales	Frequency	Percentage
Poor	18-41	57	54.3
Fair	42-65	18	17.1
Good	66-90	30	28.6
Total		105	100.0

Note: Results from the survey administered to workers of a local government.

Table 6 presents the levels of administrative leadership, showing that 54.3% rated it as poor, indicating weak management with limited ability to guide, motivate, or make effective decisions. Meanwhile, 17.1% evaluated it as regular, reflecting an intermediate perception with both strengths and notable weaknesses. Only 28.6% rated leadership as good, suggesting that a portion of staff perceived competent, results-oriented direction. Overall, most respondents expressed a negative assessment, revealing a critical leadership deficit. This underscores the urgent need to strengthen managerial competencies.

Table 7. Level of the dimensions of the V2.

	Poor			Fair			Good		
	B	F	%	B	F	%	B	F	%
D1. Decision-making	6-13	38	36.2	14-21	41	39	22-30	26	24.8
D2. Organizational communication	6-13	52	49.5	14-21	19	18.1	22-30	34	32.4
D3. Staff motivation	6-13	47	44.8	14-21	31	29.5	22-30	27	25.7

Note: Results from the survey administered to workers of a local government.

Table 7 presents the levels reached in the dimensions of administrative leadership. In decision-making, 39% rated the level as regular, indicating moderate but insufficient effectiveness. Organizational communication showed the weakest performance, with 49.5% rating it as poor, revealing serious internal information gaps. Likewise, staff motivation was perceived negatively, with 44.8% reporting a poor level, reflecting limited incentives and recognition. Overall, the results highlight a generalized weakness in leadership practices, underscoring the need to strengthen communication, motivation, and decision-making to improve management performance.

Finally, the third specific objective is to analyze the relationship between the dimensions of organizational innovation and administrative leadership in the local government of the province of San Ignacio in 2025.

Table 8 presents the Spearman correlation results between the organizational innovation dimensions and administrative leadership. Management innovation showed a very strong and significant correlation ($\rho = 0.838$; $p = 0.003$). Service innovation also demonstrated a strong and significant relationship ($\rho = 0.734$; $p = 0.007$). Likewise, process innovation registered a strong correlation ($\rho = 0.755$; $p = 0.005$). Overall, the findings indicate that administrative leadership is closely linked to the organization's innovative practices.

Table 8. Correlation of the dimensions of V1 and V2.

			V2. Administrative leadership
Spearman's Rho	D1. Management Innovation	Correlation coefficient	0.838
		Sig. (two-tailed)	0.003
		N	105
	D2. Service Innovation	Correlation coefficient	0.734
		Sig. (two-tailed)	0.007
		N	105
	D3. Process Innovation	Correlation coefficient	0.755
		Sig. (two-tailed)	0.005
		N	105

Note: Results from the survey administered to workers of a local government.

Table 9. Correlation between dimensions of V1 and V2.

			D1. Decision-making	D2. Organizational communication	D3. Staff motivation
Spearman's Rho	D1. Management Innovation	Correlation coefficient	0.711	0.817	0.798
		Sig. (two-tailed)	0.003	0.001	0.003
		N	105	105	105
	D2. Service Innovation	Correlation coefficient	0.737	0.729	0.822
		Sig. (two-tailed)	0.001	0.000	0.001
		N	105	105	105
	D3. Process Innovation	Correlation coefficient	0.806	0.828	0.801
		Sig. (two-tailed)	0.002	0.004	0.002
		N	105	105	105

Note: Results from the survey administered to workers of a local government.

Table 9 showed a strong positive correlation between the dimensions of organizational innovation (V1) and administrative leadership (V2) in a local government. All Spearman coefficients exceeded 0.70, indicating significant links between innovation in management, services, and processes with decision-making, communication, and staff motivation. Process innovation showed the highest correlation with organizational communication ($\rho = 0.828$), suggesting that clearer communication strongly supports process improvement. Likewise, personnel motivation was closely related to service innovation ($\rho = 0.822$), implying that a motivated workforce enhances innovative capacity. With all p-values below 0.01, the results confirm that effective organizational leadership is essential for fostering innovation in the public sector.

5. DISCUSSION OF THE RESULTS

The study aimed to determine the relationship between organizational innovation and administrative leadership in the local government of San Ignacio – 2025. Spearman correlation revealed a very strong positive relationship ($\rho = 0.872$; $p = 0.003$), indicating that higher innovation levels are associated with more effective and proactive leadership. The SECI model by Nonaka and Takeuchi (Martínez, 2021) explains how knowledge flows through socialization, externalization, combination, and internalization, fostering continuous innovation within a participatory organizational culture. Findings align with Ramírez et al. (2025) and Hernandez et al. (2023), showing that innovation-focused leadership improves processes, reduces resistance to change, and strengthens work climate. The results highlight that innovation enhances both institutional processes and leadership effectiveness. Leaders who promote innovative practices are perceived as more strategic, participatory, and results-oriented. This suggests that institutional environments respond positively when innovation drives leadership. Therefore, fostering a culture of innovation is essential to strengthen administrative leadership and promoting sustainable public management. The

first specific objective was to analyze the level of organizational innovation in the local government of San Ignacio during 2025. Results show an almost balanced distribution: 34.3% of employees rated innovation as regular, indicating isolated initiatives with limited impact; 33.3% rated it as poor, reflecting resistance to change, low motivation, and a weak improvement culture; and 32.4% rated it as good, showing some effective innovations. The triple helix model by Etzkowitz and Leydesdorff (2000) and Olmedo et al. (2023) highlights that innovation emerges from collaboration among government, industry, and universities, suggesting that strategic partnerships are key to overcoming internal limitations. Conceptually, organizational innovation involves substantial changes in structures, processes, or management models to generate value (Gómez-Álvarez & Núñez-Ramírez, 2022). The local government remains in an early transformation stage, with efforts lacking systemic integration, and technology is underutilized as a tool for continuous improvement (González-Marin, Canós-Darós, & Arias Vargas, 2022). These findings indicate that institutional weaknesses, low planning, and resistance to change limit the development of a strong innovation culture. Overall, the study underscores the need for structured strategies, leadership, and continuous training to advance organizational innovation effectively.

The second specific objective was to identify the level of administrative leadership in the local government of San Ignacio during 2025. Results show that 54.3% of respondents rated leadership as poor, reflecting weak management, unclear direction, and limited motivational capacity; 17.1% rated it as regular, while 28.6% perceived it as good, indicating isolated cases of effective leadership. The situational leadership theory (Hersey & Blanchard, cited by Rincón et al. (2022) emphasizes adapting leadership style to team maturity, yet the predominance of negative perceptions suggests insufficient flexibility and diagnostic capacity. According to Ramírez et al. (2025), administrative leadership involves guiding, coordinating, and decision-making to achieve institutional goals, but current practice in San Ignacio reveals a disconnect from this ideal. Studies also show that transformational leadership and a strong organizational culture enhance performance and commitment (Mosqueira, Herrera, & Villanueva, 2025; Vásquez, Inostroza, & Acosta, 2021). The findings indicate that weak leadership and the absence of a supportive culture limit institutional effectiveness. Therefore, strengthening administrative competencies, fostering a culture of accountability, and applying flexible leadership styles are urgent priorities.

The third specific objective was to analyze the relationship between the dimensions of organizational innovation and administrative leadership in the local government of San Ignacio – 2025. Spearman correlation results revealed a strong and significant relationship: management innovation showed a very strong correlation ($r = 0.838$), while process and service innovation had coefficients of 0.755 and 0.734, respectively, all statistically significant. These findings indicate that higher-quality leadership promotes greater implementation of innovative practices, positioning administrative leadership as a key driver of institutional transformation. Transformational leadership theory (Bass, cited by Quiñones and Espíritu-Álvarez (2023) explains that effective leaders inspire, motivate, and stimulate teams through a shared vision, fostering commitment, creativity, and continuous improvement, essential for organizational innovation. The study confirms that leadership facilitates the adoption of new management and service practices. Correlations across management, services, and process innovation demonstrate that strong leadership activates improvement processes (Bejarano-Auqui, Peña, Subia, & Lozano, 2025; Gómez-Álvarez & Núñez-Ramírez, 2022; González-Marin et al., 2022). Overall, a flexible, motivating, and strategic leadership approach significantly enhances innovation and institutional effectiveness.

6. CONCLUSIONS

From a theoretical perspective, this study contributes to the literature by empirically integrating organizational innovation and administrative leadership within the context of local public administration, a linkage that has been insufficiently theorized in prior research. The findings provide evidence that leadership functions not merely as a managerial capability but as a central enabling mechanism through which organizational knowledge is mobilized, shared, and institutionalized, in line with the SECI model.

Moreover, the strong associations observed across innovation dimensions reinforce transformational and situational leadership theories by demonstrating that adaptive leadership styles facilitate learning, motivate personnel, and sustain innovation in bureaucratic settings. By situating this relationship within a municipal government, the study extends innovation leadership theory beyond private and generic organizational contexts, offering a public-sector-specific understanding of how leadership-driven innovation can enhance institutional effectiveness and support conditions conducive to decent work and sustainable economic growth, as envisioned in SDG 8.

7. SUGGESTIONS

From a practical and policy-oriented perspective, the findings offer clear implications for municipal administrators. Strengthening administrative leadership through continuous training in decision-making, communication, and staff motivation can serve as a strategic lever to drive organizational innovation in local governments.

Municipal authorities should prioritize leadership development programs, promote collaborative work environments, and institutionalize innovation practices through formal procedures and digital transformation initiatives.

Furthermore, aligning leadership strategies with innovation-oriented management models can improve efficiency in service delivery, foster employee engagement, and generate more productive and decent working conditions, thereby contributing to sustainable local economic growth and the objectives of SDG Target 8.3. These actions provide a practical roadmap for municipal administrators seeking to modernize public administration and strengthen institutional performance.

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