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Article

Integration of governance, risk management, and integrity in public administration

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This study investigates the integration of governance, risk management, and integrity in federal public administration through a systematic literature review in Journal Citation Reports. The analysis included articles published from 2000 to 2024 in the Web of Science and Scopus databases, applying the Methodi Ordinatio protocol to select the most relevant studies. The findings indicate that governance is a structuring element, promoting a robust institutional environment to mitigate risks and strengthen public integrity. Risk management fosters an ethical, proactive, and resilient organizational culture, while public integrity, based on ethical values and anti-corruption efforts, reinforces transparency and increases social trust. The analysis highlights the strategic role of digital technologies, organizational innovation, and ethical leadership in preventing corruption and modernizing public management. As its main contribution, the research proposes an integrative theoretical model to support public policies, optimize decisions, and improve administrative practices, strengthening governance and boosting the effectiveness, transparency, and credibility of government institutions.

Keywords: corruption; public integrity; risk management; governance; transparency.

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A integração entre governança, gestão de riscos e integridade na administração pública

Este estudo investiga a integração entre governança, gestão de riscos e integridade na administração pública federal, por meio de uma revisão sistemática da literatura em periódicos do *Journal Citation Reports*. A análise incluiu artigos publicados entre 2000 e 2024 nas bases *Web of Science* e *Scopus*, aplicando o protocolo *Methodi Ordinatio* para selecionar os estudos mais relevantes. Os achados indicam que a governança é um elemento estruturante, que promove um ambiente institucional robusto para mitigar riscos e fortalecer a integridade pública. A gestão de riscos fomenta uma cultura organizacional ética, proativa e resiliente, enquanto a integridade pública, fundamentada em valores éticos e no combate à corrupção, reforça a transparência e amplia a confiança social. A análise destaca o papel estratégico das tecnologias digitais, da inovação organizacional e da liderança ética na prevenção da corrupção e modernização da gestão pública. Como principal contribuição, a pesquisa propõe um modelo teórico integrativo para subsidiar políticas públicas, otimizar decisões e aperfeiçoar práticas administrativas, fortalecendo a governança e impulsionando a efetividade, transparência e credibilidade das instituições governamentais.
Palavras-chave: corrupção; integridade pública; gestão de riscos; governança; transparência.

Integración entre gobernanza, gestión de riesgos e integridad en la administración pública

Este estudio investiga la integración entre la gobernanza, la gestión de riesgos y la integridad en la administración pública federal, a través de una revisión sistemática de la literatura en los periódicos de Journal Citation Reports. El análisis incluye artículos publicados entre 2000 y 2024 en las bases de Web of Science y Scopus, aplicando el protocolo Methodi Ordinatio para seleccionar los estudios más relevantes. Los hallazgos indican que la gobernanza es un elemento estructurante, que promueve un ambiente institucional sólido para mitigar los riesgos y fortalecer la integridad pública. La gestión de riesgos fomenta una cultura organizacional ética, proactiva y resiliente, mientras que la integridad pública, fundamentada en valores éticos y en el combate a la corrupción, refuerza la transparencia y amplía la confianza social. El análisis destaca el papel estratégico de las tecnologías digitales, la innovación organizacional y el liderazgo ético en la prevención de la corrupción y la modernización de la gestión pública. Como principal contribución, la investigación propone un modelo teórico integrador para respaldar políticas públicas, optimizar decisiones e perfeccionar prácticas administrativas, fortaleciendo la gobernanza e impulsando la eficacia, la transparencia y la credibilidad de las instituciones gubernamentales.
Palabras clave: corrupción; integridad pública; gestión de riesgos; gobernanza; transparencia.

1. INTRODUCTION

The rise of new concepts in administration has directly influenced public policies and organizational structures (Cavalcante & Braga, 2024). In Brazil, Decree No. 9,203/2017 (Decreto nº 9.203/2017) introduced public governance, risk management, and integrity as pillars of the federal public administration, recognizing them as interdependent foundations for institutional strengthening (Carr, 2023; Cavalcante & Braga, 2024). Since then, efforts have focused on building an organizational culture centered on integrity, which is essential to reinforcing society's trust in governmental institutions (Vieira & Barreto, 2019).

Although often associated with anti-corruption efforts, the principle of integrity is multifaceted (Carr, 2023). It is a polysemic concept that still requires theoretical and conceptual refinement, particularly within the context of Brazilian public administration (Oliveira et al., 2024). Interest in integrity stems from a global commitment to combat corruption, which the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) identifies as citizens' primary concern – surpassing globalization and migration (OECD, 2017; Tsao & Hsueh, 2023). Corruption encompasses harmful practices beyond bribery and constitutes a significant obstacle to countries' effectiveness and development (Huberts, 2014; Tsao & Hsueh, 2023).

This study adopts the OECD's (2017) definition of public integrity as the prioritization of the public interest, supported by shared ethical values and institutional practices designed to prevent corruption.

It also involves aligning public actors' actions with existing norms and principles to pursue collective interests (Amâncio et al., 2024).

Although public governance, risk management, and integrity are distinct concepts, this study is grounded in the understanding that they must be analyzed in an interdependent and integrated manner, as advocated by the New Public Governance framework (Osborne, 2006, 2010), which serves as the theoretical foundation. This approach enables the exploration of the main theories on integrity and its relationship with corruption (Paine, 1994).

The evolution of public governance is closely linked to the promotion of transparency, social participation, and risk management, as highlighted by Matias-Pereira (2022) and Vieira and Barreto (2019). However, challenges persist in defining ethical conduct and in identifying and addressing risk within the public sector (Carr, 2023; Oliveira & Abib, 2024).

In Brazil, Decree No. 9,203/2017 (Decreto nº 9.203/2017) established public governance and risk management as foundational elements of the federal public administration, with a particular focus on integrity (Carr, 2023; Cavalcante & Braga, 2024). This development underscores the importance of fostering an organizational culture that values integrity, which is essential for strengthening society's trust in governmental institutions (Vieira & Barreto, 2019).

Widely publicized corruption scandals involving unethical behavior by public officials (Nunes et al., 2023; Vaz & Mastrodi, 2021) have driven the creation of legal instruments such as the Anti-Corruption Law and the Law on Criminal Organizations. However, institutional barriers persist, as evidenced by Brazil's loss of ten positions in the 2023 Corruption Perceptions Index (Transparency International, 2024).

In 2024, the Brazilian government launched a comprehensive assessment using the Public Integrity Maturity Model (MMIP) to evaluate 204 federal agencies on their capacity to prevent practices contrary to the public interest (De Lorena & Costa, 2023; Vieira & Barreto, 2019). This model seeks to mitigate corrupt practices and strengthen social trust in institutions. The research examines these elements from the perspective of New Public Governance.

Scholars continue to debate where public managers should invest to improve their organizations, with no consensus on how to stimulate better services (Gomes et al., 2020). To strengthen the culture of integrity, the Office of the Comptroller General (CGU) introduced the Integrity and Anti-Corruption Plan 2025–2027, comprising 260 actions across five strategic pillars (CGU, 2024). Such a culture is essential to ensure the rigorous use of public resources (Nunes et al., 2023; Poppo & Schepker, 2010).

The significance of this study lies in integrating governance (Hood, 1991; Osborne, 2006, 2010; Peters & Pierre, 1998), risk management (Lapsley, 2009), and integrity (De Lorena & Costa, 2023; Huberts, 2014) within the context of the federal public administration. By considering their interrelations and interactions, this work proposes an integrated analysis that contributes to strengthening good governance practices. Without institutionalization that embraces transparency and responsiveness, discussions about ethics and integrity remain incomplete (Oliveira et al., 2024).

Given the growing demand for transparency, efficiency, and effectiveness in public policy, this research seeks to answer the following question: What are the interrelationships and mutual impacts among governance, risk management, and public integrity within Brazil's Federal Executive Branch?

The article begins with an overview of the theoretical framework, briefly discussing the New Public Governance theory and its relationship to risk management and public integrity. It then describes the adopted methodology, emphasizing the rigor applied to the inclusion and exclusion criteria for the selected articles and integrating these elements into the study. The discussion of results follows the methods section, and the article concludes with final considerations and suggestions for future research, which together outline a research agenda.

2. THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

2.1. Public administration reform movements

Public sector governance has evolved considerably over time, progressing through three distinct paradigms: Public Administration (PA), New Public Management (NPM), and New Public Governance (NPG). Traditional PA, dominant until the late 1970s, relied on centralized hierarchies and a focus on legality but drew criticism for its limited adaptability and inefficiency in addressing growing public service demands (Hood, 1991; Osborne, 2006).

During the 1980s and 1990s, the rise of NPM introduced practices inspired by the private sector, such as management contracts, outsourcing, and privatization, emphasizing efficiency and accountability. Although it improved productivity, NPM faced criticism for undermining values like equity and social justice by prioritizing market-oriented goals over broader public interests (Kettl, 2000; Peters, 2010). This critique paved the way for approaches such as New Public Service, which promotes a management focused on citizenship, ethics, and public value creation (Denhardt & Denhardt, 2003), thereby expanding attention to governance effectiveness.

In the early 21st century, NPG emerged as a model that moved beyond PA's centralization and NPM's managerialism. NPG emphasizes collaboration among multiple actors – public, private, and civil society organizations – fostering interorganizational networks that value cooperation and shared meaning-making (Kooiman, 2010; Osborne, 2006).

NPG stands out for its focus on building strategic coalitions and including multiple stakeholders in the formulation and implementation of public policies. In this model, the government's role is redefined as that of a coordinator and facilitator of collective solutions, fostering more horizontal and interactive governance (Osborne & Gaebler, 1992; Peters & Pierre, 1998). In addition, Peters and Pierre (1998) argue that public governance extends beyond normative structures and requires the continuous mediation of interests among multiple actors. This endeavor demands coordination, trust, and legitimacy in decision-making processes.

Although NPG has brought significant progress, it faces challenges, including fragmentation resulting from decentralization and the need for robust accountability systems. The inclusion of multiple actors calls for leadership capable of managing diverse interests and for evaluation systems that ensure policy alignment with intended objectives (Osborne, 2010; Peters, 2010).

The evolution of governance reflects the transition from traditional bureaucracy to practices inspired first by NPM and, more recently, by NPG. Decree No. 9,203/2017 (Decreto nº 9.203/2017) marked a turning point in the formalization of public governance in Brazil, defining it as a set of

mechanisms for leadership, strategy, and control, emphasizing transparency, efficiency, effectiveness, and accountability (Decreto nº 9.203/2017; Matias-Pereira, 2022). Despite federal-level normative advances, significant asymmetries persist among the Union, states, and municipalities regarding institutional capacity, management maturity, and the adoption of governance practices, which undermines the effectiveness of national public policy implementation (Grin & Abrucio, 2021).

The implementation of NPG includes initiatives such as Public-Private Partnerships (PPPs) and interinstitutional collaboration networks. These instruments have fostered innovative and cooperative solutions but also face challenges related to interorganizational coordination and the sustainability of governance networks (Osborne, 2006; Peters & Pierre, 1998).

In summary, NPG represents a milestone in the evolution of public governance, offering a collaborative and inclusive model that responds to contemporary demands for more effective and equitable public services. The application of this paradigm has strengthened government capacity to address complex challenges, promoting integrated solutions that value plurality and interdependence among diverse societal actors (Kettl, 2000; Osborne, 2010).

2.2. Risk management

Risk management in Brazil's public sector has advanced significantly, both quantitatively and qualitatively, through the incorporation of practices developed initially in the private sector (Lapsley, 2009). Although the concept has spread across several areas of public administration, Oliveira and Abib (2024) note that its effective integration remains a work in progress, reflecting the need to adapt it to the unique characteristics of the public sector. In this regard, Lapsley (2009) warns that, while essential, risk management can also serve as managerial rhetoric to legitimize pre-existing decisions, exposing its symbolic and political dimensions in complex public contexts.

Risk management functions as an ongoing, leadership-driven process that identifies, assesses, and manages potential events that may affect organizations, aiming to ensure the achievement of strategic objectives (Decreto nº 9.203/2017). This approach aligns with national efforts to strengthen internal controls, enhance the quality of public services, and rebuild society's trust in public institutions (De Lorena & Costa, 2023).

Risk management practices were implemented at the federal level and later expanded to state governments. This sequence created disparities in maturity levels, as federal organizations generally achieved greater progress than their state counterparts (De Lorena & Costa, 2023).

According to Lapsley (2009), adopting this practice also represents an attempt to protect institutional reputation by emphasizing auditable, well-documented processes. This context partly responds to abuses in the private sector that prompted the public sector to adopt stricter risk management practices. However, as Grin and Abrucio (2021) emphasize, the goal is not to replicate private-sector models but to develop frameworks suited to the asymmetries and political-institutional constraints of the public sphere.

The growing adoption of risk management reflects a broader commitment to more efficient and transparent public governance. As De Lorena and Costa (2023) observe, a practical approach must adapt tools and methodologies to the specificities of public administration, fostering integration that strengthens both decision-making processes and public trust in the State.

Furthermore, Huberts (2014) emphasizes that managing integrity risks extends beyond preventing corruption; it also involves avoiding favoritism, abuse of power, conflicts of interest, and other forms of unethical behavior that harm the public interest. To achieve this, public managers should employ integrated analytical tools grounded in clear standards and consistent ethical values, ensuring that risks are identified and addressed in ways that promote trust and transparency in public administration.

2.3. Public integrity in Brazil

As noted by Oliveira and Pisa (2015), the 1988 Federal Constitution marked a turning point by establishing new rights and promoting active citizenship, enabling Brazilians to demand ethics, integrity, and transparency in public administration. In response, Matias-Pereira (2022) argues that the Brazilian State began a structural reorganization, incorporating corporate governance concepts into the public sector.

Within this context, integrity emerged as a foundational principle, formally highlighted by Decree No. 9,203/2017 (Decreto nº 9.203/2017) and later expanded by Decree No. 11,529/2023 (Decreto nº 11.529/2023), which introduced the Federal Public Administration's System of Integrity, Transparency, and Access to Information (Decreto nº 11.529/2023). In line with this perspective, Denhardt and Denhardt (2003) assert that public administrators should go beyond mere legality, exercising ethical judgment and helping citizens pursue collective interests.

According to Amâncio et al. (2024), public integrity – by aligning public actors' actions with existing norms and principles – serves as a key component of good governance, alongside transparency and accountability. Santos and Serafim (2024) argue that integrity extends beyond compliance and anti-corruption efforts; it is a moral attribute that requires ethical discernment on the part of public officials.

The OECD defines public integrity as the prioritization of the public interest over private interests, grounded in shared ethical values (OECD, 2017). In Brazil, the adoption of this concept has been primarily normative and prescriptive, often lacking deeper conceptual debate about its ambiguities and limitations (Oliveira et al., 2024).

To foster a culture of integrity, Brazilian integrity programs resemble compliance management systems in other countries (Vieira & Barreto, 2019). They are frequently associated with governance, ethics, transparency, accountability, and risk management – domains that overlap yet maintain important distinctions (Amâncio et al., 2024). Although anti-corruption efforts remain an important component, public integrity also involves promoting an ethical culture and institutional values that transcend mere regulatory compliance (Oliveira et al., 2024).

Carr (2023) notes that despite decades of emphasis on public integrity as an anti-corruption tool, the concept still lacks clarity within Brazil's public sector. Although it is often associated with combating corruption and adhering to regulatory frameworks, authors such as Oliveira et al. (2024) emphasize the need to broaden its scope by incorporating wider moral, ethical, and organizational values.

Recent efforts by the OECD and the Office of the Comptroller General (CGU) illustrate the ongoing evolution of public integrity. In 2021, the OECD presented recommendations to strengthen integrity leadership, while its 2022 study highlighted the need for data-driven approaches to managing

integrity risks (OECD, 2022). In 2023, another report underscored the challenges of implementation and the importance of integrating integrity policies across the entire federal public administration, with particular attention to fostering integrity-oriented organizational cultures (OECD, 2023).

Furthermore, the Public Integrity Maturity Model (MMIP), introduced in December 2023, demonstrates Brazil's commitment to strengthening public integrity and aligning with international standards (CGU, 2023). Although many associate public integrity with anti-corruption initiatives, scholars increasingly recognize that its scope goes beyond such initiatives, encompassing ethical dimensions, organizational culture, and governance practices (Oliveira et al., 2024).

3. METHODOLOGY

We adopted a qualitative approach based on a Systematic Literature Review (SLR), a methodology recognized for identifying, evaluating, and synthesizing relevant evidence on a specific topic (Denyer & Tranfield, 2009; Tranfield et al., 2003). The SLR helps minimize researcher bias, promotes a critical examination of existing knowledge, and identifies gaps in the literature (Siddaway et al., 2019).

We conducted the research using the Web of Science and Scopus databases, chosen for their breadth and academic relevance (Pagani et al., 2015, 2017; Pagani et al., 2023). To ensure the quality and timeliness of the references, we analyzed articles published over the past 25 years (2000-2024), reflecting the field's evolution driven by the rise of New Public Governance (Osborne, 2006, 2010) and the growing debate on integrity and risk management within public administration.

Although SLR procedures may vary, Xiao and Watson (2019) suggest that all systematic reviews can follow eight common steps: (1) define the research problem; (2) develop and validate the review protocol; (3) search the literature; (4) screen for inclusion; (5) assess quality; (6) extract data; (7) analyze and synthesize data; and (8) report results. We followed the SLR stages adapted from Denyer and Tranfield (2009), Tranfield et al. (2003), and Xiao and Watson (2019).

When formulating the research question, Xiao and Watson (2019) highlight the importance of establishing clear methods for data extraction and synthesis, as well as assessing the feasibility of conducting either a comprehensive or a focused review. Denyer and Tranfield (2009) emphasize the need to understand the relationships within the investigated context.

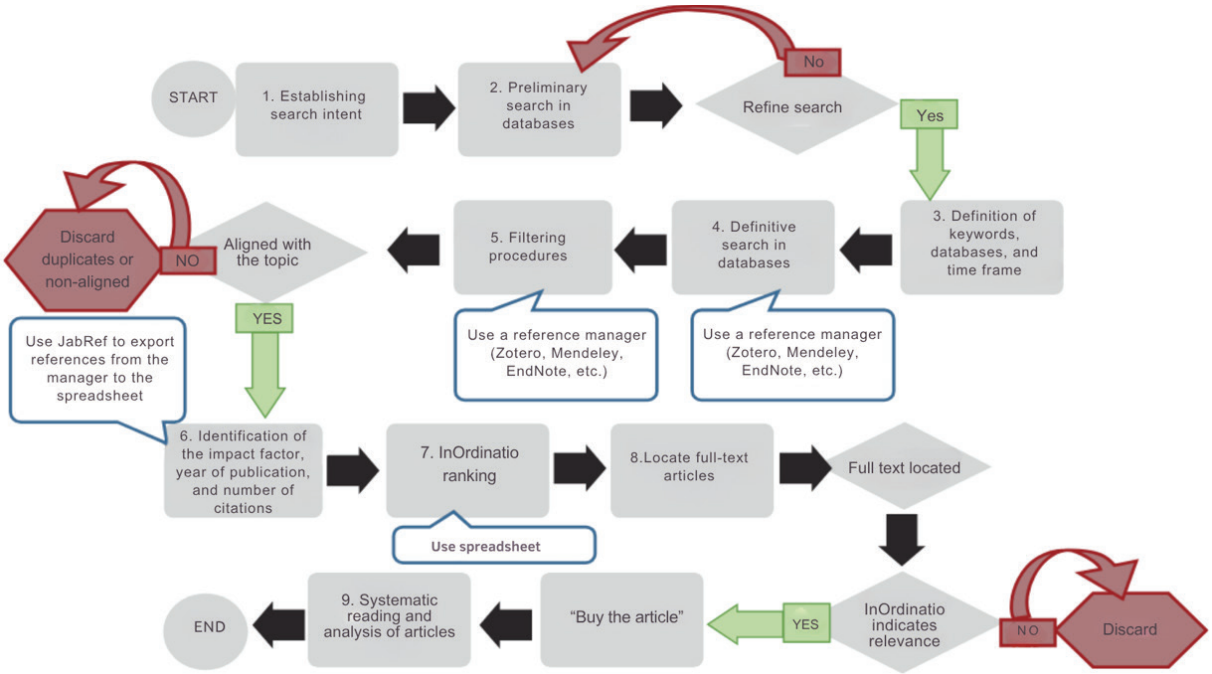
The SLR follows sequential stages to ensure rigor and reproducibility (Tranfield et al., 2003). In stage 2, while developing and validating the review protocol, we defined a plan that specifies the review methods, thereby increasing reliability and enabling replication (Xiao & Watson, 2019). This process combines exploration, discovery, and development – key elements in field reviews (Tranfield et al., 2003).

The quality of the review depends on the use of well-selected sources such as academic databases, backward searches, and direct searches to ensure comprehensiveness (Xiao & Watson, 2019). Keywords must balance breadth and precision, supported by well-defined inclusion and exclusion criteria (stages 3 and 4).

To identify relevant and high-quality studies, we applied inclusion and exclusion criteria (Pagani et al., 2015, 2017). We incorporated the Methodi Ordinatio methodology into the screening and

evaluation process to rank articles according to scientific relevance. Developed by Pagani et al. (2015) and updated by Pagani et al. (2023), this method enhances selection rigor and ensures relevance (stage 5). The Methodi Ordinatio consists of nine stages, as shown in Figure 1.

FIGURE 1 STAGES OF THE METHODI ORDINATIO



Source: Pagani et al. (2015, 2017).

The model applies the multicriteria InOrdinatio method to rank publications based on three factors: the journal's impact factor, the number of citations, and the year of publication (Pagani et al., 2015, 2017; Pagani et al., 2023).

After completing stages 1 and 2 proposed by Pagani et al. (2015, 2017), we defined the keyword combinations (stage 3) for the final article search: ("governance" OR "governance AND public" AND "risk AND management" OR "management AND risk" AND "public AND integrity OR integrity AND public").

In stage 5, we applied language filters (English and Portuguese) and source filters (peer-reviewed journals), yielding 1,053 articles. The analysis of titles, abstracts, and keywords excluded 800 papers unrelated to governance, risk management, or public integrity, narrowing the portfolio to 253 publications (stage 6).

We then calculated the InOrdinatio Index variables, taking citation count, impact factor (JCR), and publication year into account to prioritize either foundational or more recent works (Pagani

et al., 2015). After ranking (stage 7), we excluded 17 articles without a JCR score, 140 with a score below 10.00, and 21 with a negative score. However, we retained four articles with more than 200 citations despite lacking a JCR.

The final portfolio included 78 articles (Oliveira, 2025), selected through transparent and inclusive criteria, all of which we read in full (stage 8). The final reading and systematic analysis (stage 9) followed the guidelines of Tranfield et al. (2003), ensuring analytical rigor. We managed all stages using electronic spreadsheets and organized references with Zotero (Pagani et al., 2015, 2017).

We will present stages six through nine – data extraction (6), analysis and synthesis (7), results reporting (8), and evidence application (9) – in the discussion and final considerations. These sections include descriptive and thematic analyses that highlight limitations, practical recommendations, and directions for future research (Denyer & Tranfield, 2009; Tranfield et al., 2003; Xiao & Watson, 2019).

The approach acknowledges a limitation: it excludes seminal papers and other relevant works that did not appear in indexed journals. Nonetheless, this restriction was necessary to maintain methodological rigor and ensure the reliability of the sources, focusing the review on peer-reviewed studies with recognized editorial quality.

Additionally, we conducted a reference mapping exercise to deepen our understanding of the literature landscape on the topic. We used RStudio with the Bibliometrix and Crossref packages, based on the publications' DOIs. This procedure allowed us to identify the most productive authors, the most represented institutions and countries, the journals with the highest publication frequency, and the internal citation network among the articles in the sample.

4. RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

The selected articles are organized chronologically, from oldest to most recent, enabling an evolutionary analysis of the literature and the identification of emerging trends in governance, risk management, and public integrity.

4.1. Research findings

The analysis shows that the challenge of managing uncertainty and risk has profoundly shaped public governance over the past decades. Power et al. (2009) argue that during the last 50 years, the main organizational challenge has been handling uncertainty, even though approaches differ. This finding aligns with Hansen's (2009) observation that an excessive focus on regulatory compliance, rather than cultural transformation, limits the effectiveness of integrity systems in the public sector. He notes that in public governance, compliance often takes precedence over cultural change in the fight against corruption.

Within this context, institutional leadership plays a central role in embedding ethical values and strengthening integrity practices. Monteduro et al. (2021) link collaborative governance to stakeholder engagement, showing that involving both internal and external actors enhances corruption risk management and increases the legitimacy of decisions. They also highlight technological innovations, such as blockchain applications, as tools that enhance transparency and strengthen anti-corruption measures.

Other studies expand understanding of the internal mechanisms of institutional integrity. Le et al. (2021) examine how internal controls and codes of conduct help mitigate ethical risks and foster more integrity-oriented environments. However, these tools must fit the cultural context and align with broader institutional practices to avoid becoming purely formal mechanisms. Malik and Froese (2022) describe corruption as a form of "perverse innovation," a dynamic that can emerge at the micro, meso, and macro levels.

The strategic allocation of resources and the strengthening of organizational culture are also critical elements. Santhiapillai and Ratnayake (2022) propose risk-based prioritization to ensure the efficient allocation of public resources. This rationalization approach aligns with the analysis by Bockius and Gatzert (2024), who identify key dimensions of organizational culture – such as effective communication, accountability, and ethical leadership – as drivers of sustainable value creation within institutions.

Digital transformation has become a strategic tool for promoting integrity in the public sector. Almheiri et al. (2024) demonstrate how Artificial Intelligence (AI) enhances organizational performance through dynamic capabilities and creativity. Cappelli et al. (2024) examine e-government as a mechanism for transparency and corruption prevention. Based on the theoretical evidence discussed, the three primary constructs of this research (governance, risk management, and public integrity) are in Box 1.

BOX 1 MAIN CONSTRUCTS ACCORDING TO THE SLR

Constructs	Description	Authors
Governance	Corporate anti-corruption refers to a set of governance practices grounded in shared understandings.	Hansen (2009)
	The effectiveness of corporate governance mechanisms depends on their specific context and institutional conditions, such as local regulations.	Azim (2012)
	Disclosing anti-corruption measures can support the sustainability of the governance model and help restore organizational legitimacy after a corruption event.	Cardoni et al. (2020)
	The positive effects of ethical values suggest that effective governance develops primarily within an ethical organizational culture.	Fotaki et al. (2020)
	Good governance serves as a preventive tool against corruption.	Ceschel et al. (2022)
	In recent decades, recurrent corruption scandals have triggered growing demands for greater accountability and transparency in governance.	Schembera et al. (2023)

(Continue)

Constructs	Description	Authors
Risk Management	Risk management has become an essential organizational activity as the business environment and its uncertainties continue to expand.	Becker and Smidt (2016)
	Risk management consists of coordinated activities that guide and control an organization's risk management.	Cagnin et al. (2019)
	Risk management practices play a crucial role in supporting sound decision-making, strategic planning, and resource allocation.	Santhiapillai and Ratnayake (2022)
	The OECD, the United Nations (UN), and the European Union have emphasized the importance of risk management as an effective mechanism for preventing corruption.	Monteduro et al. (2021)
Public Integrity	In countries with systemic corruption, anti-corruption initiatives must project trustworthiness.	Adelopo and Rufai (2020)
	Internal stakeholders care about how public sector organizations prevent integrity violations because corruption directly affects their lives and communities.	Monteduro et al. (2021)
	Robust anti-corruption frameworks are essential to achieving good governance and sustainable development. These frameworks foster a culture of transparency, accountability, and integrity across public and private sectors.	Thommandru et al. (2024)

Source: Elaborated by the authors.

Monteduro et al. (2021) emphasize that governance enables the implementation of ethical and consistent strategies, while Sheedy and Griffin (2018) highlight the role of ethical leadership in consolidating strong practices. Hansen (2009) adds that effective governance structures decision-making processes aligned with the public interest, strengthening society's trust.

Risk management integrates with organizational processes and plays a central role in identifying and responding to risks, threats, and challenges (Kalina et al., 2022). Monteduro et al. (2021) argue that structured risk management systems reinforce integrity by preventing irregularities and promoting responsible decisions. Malik and Froese (2022) observe that digital technologies enhance the efficiency of these systems, while Sheedy and Griffin (2018) warn that risk management must align with organizational culture to be truly effective.

Public integrity emerges from the balance between governance and risk management, fostering ethical and sustainable decision-making. Hansen (2009) notes that integrity legitimizes public actions and strengthens social trust. Le et al. (2021) emphasize the role of codes of conduct in shaping solid organizational values. However, Bergue (2023) warns that their effectiveness depends on public officials critically embracing these values. Likewise, consolidating integrity requires organizations to internalize these normative instruments and connect them with other institutional mechanisms (Bergue, 2022).

Based on the SLR articles and the studied constructs, we identified variables directly related to each construct, as presented in Box 2.

BOX 2 VARIABLES EMERGING FROM THE SLR

Constructs	Variables	Description	Authors
Governance	Accountability	Accountability, together with integrity and transparency, was highlighted in a UN report as a substantive element of public administration worldwide.	Armstrong (2005)
		Accountability—defined as the voluntary act of justifying and explaining one's actions to relevant stakeholders—represents the most important value in public-sector decision-making.	Van der Wal et al. (2008)
		Accountability refers to the duty of individuals or organizations, both internal and external, to account for their activities, accept responsibility for them, and disclose results transparently.	Alam et al. (2019)
	Transparency	Transparency concerns providing information about administrative processes within the executive branch, the integrity of public officials, the implementation of public policies, and the delivery of public services.	Meijer et al. (2018)
		Governments that seek to build public trust must invest in transparent, corruption-free processes while ensuring the quality of services provided.	Van de Walle and Migchelbrink (2022)
		Transparency, defined as the perceived quality of information, is a three-dimensional construct encompassing disclosure, clarity, and accuracy.	Schnackenberg et al. (2021)
		The primary tool to prevent corruption is transparency—it means understanding the reasons, facts, logic, and foundation behind public administrative decisions.	Cappelli et al. (2024)
	Stakeholders	Each organization faces the challenge of identifying its key stakeholder groups and understanding the specific information each one values.	Parris et al. (2016)
		Organizations can improve stakeholder trust by communicating messages that emphasize transparency dimensions.	Schnackenberg et al. (2021)
		Engaging stakeholders in public decision-making functions as a public governance mechanism that reshapes traditional paradigms.	Monteduro et al. (2021)

(Continue)

Constructs	Variables	Description	Authors
Risk Management	Compliance	Compliance involves a multitude of legal norms, each with its own behavioral expectations and evolving dynamic responses.	Wu and Van Rooij (2021)
		In compliance-based approaches, anti-corruption officers often come from legal backgrounds, operate under mandatory requirements, and adhere strictly to the law.	Cardoni et al. (2020)
		Compliance, although not sufficient on its own, works as a complementary mechanism that reinforces the effects of ethical values and creates conditions for instrumental values to support corporate governance.	Fotaki et al. (2020)
	Leadership	"Tone at the top" reflects how senior managers model ethical behavior, promote best practices, value risk management, and show zero tolerance for noncompliance.	Bockius and Gatzert (2024)
		Ethical values require strong leadership commitment, with leaders serving as role models for the entire organization.	Monteduro et al. (2021)
		Ethical leadership becomes critical in multicultural contexts where differing cultural norms shape perceptions of integrity.	Malik and Froese (2022)
		A key lesson lies in the importance of political will and leadership in driving anti-corruption reforms.	Thommandru et al. (2024)
	Culture	Societies need to confront the cultural and cognitive norms that perpetuate corruption.	Adelopo and Rufai (2020)
		The positive influence of ethical values suggests that effective governance primarily develops within an ethical organizational culture.	Fotaki et al. (2020)
		The absence of a strong corporate risk culture impedes effective risk management.	Kalina et al. (2022)
		Organizational risk culture gained greater attention after the 2007–2009 financial crisis, emphasizing the need to promote risk awareness beyond a dedicated risk management department.	Bockius and Gatzert (2024)

(Continue)

Constructs	Variables	Description	Authors
Public Integrity	Ethics	Corporate focus on risk has become intertwined with concerns about making ethical and unethical conduct explicit and visible.	Hansen (2009)
		In organizations with strong ethical values, members take ethical issues seriously.	Fotaki et al. (2020)
		Ethical codes serve as tools to promote honest and ethical behavior and to increase employee motivation.	Vitolla et al. (2021)
	Corruption	Corruption is a multifaceted phenomenon that manifests in many forms, varying across societies and communities.	Andersson (2017)
		Corruption tends to thrive in societies and public administrations with low digitalization, excessive bureaucracy, weak institutional transparency, and poor internal and external communication.	Androniceanu et al. (2022)
		Citizens hold normative expectations of justice, fairness, and the absence of corruption when assessing public institutions.	Van de Walle and Migchelbrink (2022)
		Corruption extends beyond public administration—it reflects a broader cultural attitude within a country, though public institutions are most affected by corrupt behavior.	Cappelli et al. (2024)
		Anti-corruption control should evolve into an intelligent, digital process that uses new technologies to enable continuous monitoring rather than ex-ante approvals.	Cardoni et al. (2020)
	Information Technology	Technology facilitates ongoing supervision, reduces manual intervention through automation, and ensures more secure information repositories, making it harder for illicit activities to remain hidden.	Thommandru et al. (2024)
		Information and Communication Technology (ICT) can strengthen anti-corruption efforts by enhancing transparency through e-governance platforms, improving accountability via digital monitoring systems, and enabling citizen participation through online reporting tools.	Thommandru et al. (2024)

Source: Elaborated by the authors.

The analysis relied exclusively on peer-reviewed articles, which strengthens the quality of the studies but may limit the diversity of methodological approaches represented.

4.2. Integrated analysis

Governance, as the foundation of public integrity, relies on accountability and transparency, which are crucial for building public trust (Armstrong, 2005; Meijer et al., 2018). Accountability, understood as the responsibility to justify actions to stakeholders, remains essential for sound decision-making in the public sector (Van der Wal et al., 2008). Transparency, in turn, functions as an important tool

for preventing corruption by ensuring clarity and accuracy in institutional processes (Schnackenberg et al., 2021).

However, scholars note that transparency alone does not guarantee accountability; it operates only as one of the enabling factors (Filgueiras, 2011). When combined, these dimensions foster collaborative and inclusive governance, though their effectiveness may vary in contexts of limited institutional capacity (Cappelli et al., 2024).

In risk management, ethical leadership acts as a decisive factor in shaping organizational behavior and promoting sustainable practices (Bockius & Gatzert, 2024; Monteduro et al., 2021). The development of a strong risk culture – particularly after financial crises – underscores the importance of clear and well-defined corporate values (Fotaki et al., 2020). Still, part of the literature indicates that such values often remain more normative than genuinely internalized in practice (Lapsley, 2009).

Moreover, while compliance is complementary, it provides a foundation for reinforcing strong ethical practices (Wu & Van Rooij, 2021) but can also become managerial rhetoric with limited symbolic effects. In multicultural settings, ethical leadership becomes even more important to align perceptions and organizational practices (Malik & Froese, 2022). Thus, risk management integrates compliance, leadership, and organizational culture to proactively mitigate risks, though its impact depends heavily on institutional maturity and the level of senior leadership engagement.

Public integrity connects governance and risk management through variables such as ethics and anti-corruption efforts. Hansen (2009) notes that visible organizational practices of ethical conduct strengthen institutional standards, while Vitolla et al. (2021) link the implementation of ethical codes to cultural diversity. However, formal ethical codes adopted solely as normative instruments – without genuine institutional application – can lead to a superficial approach to integrity, with little impact on organizational culture (Oliveira et al., 2024).

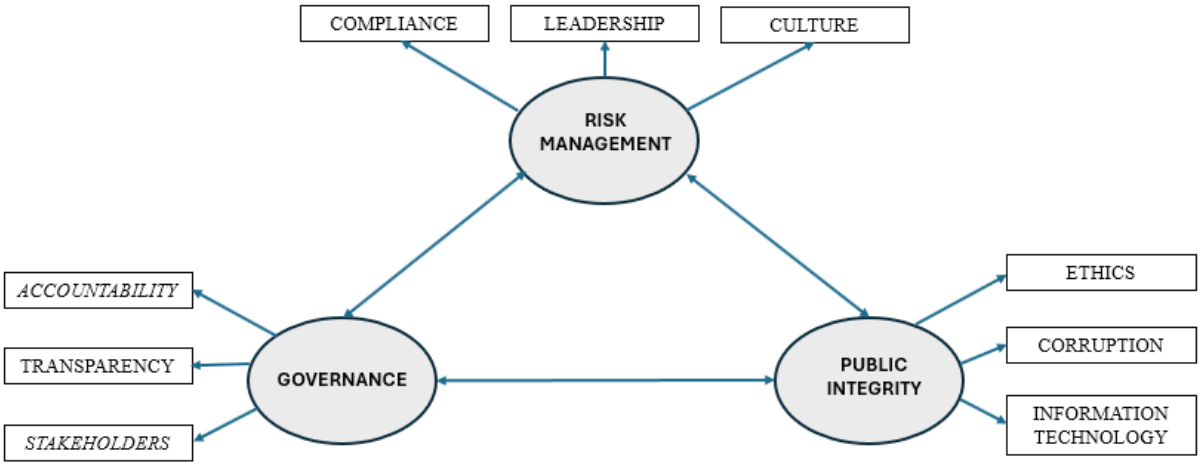
Corruption, described as a social plague (Ceschel et al., 2022), can be mitigated through robust preventive measures and the use of digital technologies (Thommandru et al., 2024), although the literature still questions how effective such solutions are in the face of informal power structures and persistent impunity (Carr, 2023). Combining ethics and technology strengthens public integrity by making illicit practices more difficult and promoting transparency as an institutional value (Androniceanu et al., 2022).

In this sense, governance – supported by accountability, transparency, and stakeholder engagement – enhances public integrity and fosters social trust (Armstrong, 2005; Schnackenberg et al., 2021). In risk management, elements such as compliance, ethical leadership, and a strong organizational culture serve as pillars that align behaviors and prevent corrupt practices (Malik & Froese, 2022; Monteduro et al., 2021).

Ethics, anti-corruption initiatives, and information technologies that hinder irregularities and promote institutional transparency strengthen public integrity (Thommandru et al., 2024; Wu & Van Rooij, 2021), although their effectiveness still hinges on how deeply individuals internalize these values and on institutions' capacity to enforce and oversee them consistently.

Figure 2 illustrates the theoretical framework emerging from the SLR, showing the interactions among governance, risk management, and public integrity, along with their respective variables.

FIGURE 2 THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK



Source: Elaborated by the authors.

The proposed framework provides a robust conceptual foundation for future analyses and administrative practices, connecting governance, risk management, and public integrity, whose implications remain in the final considerations.

4.3. Scientific overview of the mapped studies

To deepen the analysis of the results, we conducted an exploration of the citation network among the 78 articles in the sample, using data obtained through Crossref. The articles were grouped into six thematic clusters using the Infomap algorithm, enabling the identification of consolidated theoretical cores and emerging areas. The network contained 151 internal citations, highlighting central articles that serve as conceptual landmarks in the field (Figure 3).

FIGURE 3 MAPPED CITATION NETWORK



Source: Elaborated by the authors.

The network analysis shows that Group 1 occupies a central position, serving as a bridge between different thematic clusters, with particular emphasis on studies addressing transparency and institutional governance. Group 2, which displays greater cohesion, focuses on classical approaches to corporate governance, revealing strong internal density.

Groups 3 and 4 engage with themes related to public accountability, risk, and sustainability, maintaining relevant connections to the central core. In contrast, Groups 5 and 6 appear on the periphery of the network, representing specific subfields, alternative methodologies, or lower integration with the field's principal theoretical axes.

The visual mapping highlights three central theoretical cores (Groups 1, 2, and 3) characterized by high interconnection and centrality. These clusters shape the academic debate around governance, transparency, and accountability. Peripheral groups (5 and 6) reveal isolated subfields and potential integration opportunities.

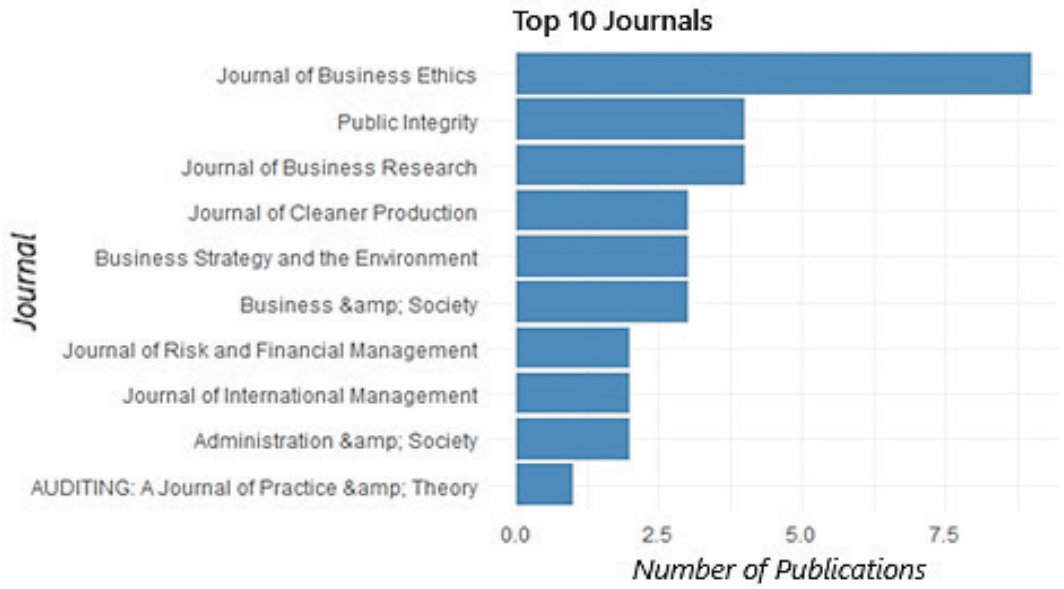
The analysis depicts a plural field, combining consolidated centers with developing branches. Topics such as public auditing, emerging technologies, and regional perspectives appear in less connected clusters. This diversity indicates strong potential for interdisciplinary dialogue and deeper theoretical development.

The articles with the highest in-degree in the internal citation network represent the most frequently referenced studies within the sample. Classic works such as those by Mauro (1995), Meyer and Rowan (1977), and Jensen and Meckling (1979) hold central positions, underscoring their foundational role in structuring the field. These studies serve as conceptual cornerstones that support the discipline's main theoretical strands.

In terms of individual productivity, authors such as Yuehua Xu, Rosa Lombardi, and Ralf Barkemeyer stand out as the most recurrent contributors in the sample. The analysis also revealed a predominance of well-established institutions leading research on ethics, governance, and corruption—such as the University of Leeds, Università degli Studi di Napoli Parthenope, and the University of Zurich—highlighting both institutional and geographic diversity.

The analysis of the first author's country of origin showed an intense concentration of publications from the United Kingdom, China, Italy, and the United States, reaffirming the central role of these countries in the scientific production on ethics, governance, and integrity. Figure 4 displays the journals with the most articles in the sample, illustrating the editorial concentration in specialized outlets.

FIGURE 4 JOURNALS WITH THE HIGHEST NUMBER OF ARTICLES IN THE SLR SAMPLE



Source: Elaborated by the authors.

The Journal of Business Ethics holds a leading position, followed by Public Integrity and the Journal of Business Research, revealing a concentration of scientific output in journals focused on organizational ethics and public governance. This distribution reinforces the sample's thematic orientation and underscores the centrality of debates over integrity, institutional responsibility, and sound management practices.

5. CONCLUSION

This study addressed the research question by showing that integrating governance, risk management, and public integrity strengthens the federal public administration by promoting accountability, transparency, and organizational ethics. The interconnection among these constructs helps reduce vulnerabilities, build social trust, and enhance the efficiency of public service delivery. The analysis

revealed that governance serves as a key pillar for stakeholder inclusion, bringing public organizations closer to society in line with new perspectives on public governance (Gomes et al., 2020).

In addition, risk management emerged as a central element in fostering an ethical and resilient organizational culture, while public integrity – grounded in ethical values and anti-corruption principles – connects these pillars, reinforcing institutional transparency and public trust. Digital technologies and ethical leadership stand out as strategic tools for preventing corruption and consolidating organizational values.

Although regulatory frameworks such as Decree No. 9,203/2017 (Decreto nº 9.203/2017) and Decree No. 11,529/2023 (Decreto nº 11.529/2023) represent major steps forward, significant challenges remain in building a more efficient and transparent federal administration. Initiatives like the MMIP and the CGU's Integrity and Anti-Corruption Plan 2025-2027 demonstrate meaningful progress but remain insufficient to bridge existing gaps.

Despite the inherent limitations of the SLR's keyword selection, which may have excluded certain studies, the review's broad scope ensures robust results. Future research should expand the applicability of these findings across different contexts, exploring new variables and complementary methodologies to deepen understanding of the topic.

Based on the analyses, we identify significant opportunities for advancing public governance theory. While New Public Management is already well established in several countries, Brazil still lacks exploration of how governance, risk management, and public integrity jointly influence organizational practices. This gap highlights the need for deeper insight into how these constructs interact to promote greater efficiency, effectiveness, transparency, and public trust in government institutions.

A promising research agenda should prioritize investigations that deepen the connections among these constructs, employing both quantitative and qualitative methodologies such as multivariate analyses, structural equation modeling, and case studies. Interdisciplinarity also plays a crucial role by integrating fields such as law, information science, and sociology to expand understanding of how cultural, technological, and institutional factors influence the application of these concepts.

Future studies could also examine the practical impact of regulations such as Decree No. 9,203/2017 (Decreto nº 9.203/2017) and Decree No. 11,529/2023 (Decreto nº 11.529/2023) on strengthening governance, risk management, and public integrity practices. International comparative research is valuable in identifying how different countries address similar challenges and implement innovative solutions.

Another emerging field involves the use of disruptive technologies – such as blockchain, AI, and big data – to enhance transparency and combat corruption. Research exploring the relationships among these technologies, governance, risk management, and public integrity could offer new perspectives for modernizing Brazil's public administration.

The findings of this study carry direct implications for the design of public policies aimed at promoting justice, efficiency, effectiveness, and institutional trust. The proposed framework provides both conceptual and practical foundations for public managers to strategically integrate governance, risk management, and public integrity, thereby strengthening administrative practices and meeting social demands.

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DATA AVAILABILITY

This article includes all datasets used to support the study's findings.

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