

LEADING TO TRANSFORM: LEADERSHIP PRACTICES AND MEXICAN HUMANISM IN TECHNOLOGICAL EDUCATION

LIDERAR PARA TRANSFORMAR: PRÁTICAS DIRETIVAS E O HUMANISMO MEXICANO NA EDUCAÇÃO TECNOLÓGICA

LIDERAR PARA TRANSFORMAR: PRÁCTICAS DIRECTIVAS Y EL HUMANISMO MEXICANO EN LA EDUCACIÓN TECNOLÓGICA



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ABSTRACT

The chapter analyzes how leadership practices can guide the transformation of technological education toward Mexican Humanism, considering the National Technological Institute of Mexico (TecNM) as an institutional case study. The objective is to interpret how normative guidelines and the transversal axes of the educational model are translated into operational management criteria, shaping the identity of the leadership body and its capacity to act within complex organizational contexts. The theoretical-analytical approach is interpretive and is grounded in documentary analysis of the TecNM Educational Model, in dialogue with recent literature on educational leadership, public ethics, social justice, and implementation governance. The analytical axes are organized around: (i) leadership practices and the construction of a humanistic leadership identity; (ii) critical thinking as continuous training to understand the determinants of educational service delivery and to support legitimate decision-making; (iii) institutionalized dialogue and collaborative work as organizational technologies for coordination among members of the leadership body, faculty, and administrative staff; and (iv) social responsibility, equity, environmental awareness, and socially relevant innovation as stable management criteria. As a contribution, the chapter proposes an integrative conceptual model of humanistic leadership practices that brings together public values, leadership identity, and organizational mediations. It is argued that this articulation strengthens institutional legitimacy, institutional and collective well-being, and guides coherent, inclusive, and socially relevant processes of educational transformation in Mexican public technological institutions. Although grounded in the TecNM case, the proposed conceptual model seeks to offer an analytical lens transferable to public technological education institutions in other national contexts facing comparable organizational challenges.

Keywords: Educational Management. Leadership Practices. Mexican Humanism. Technological Education. Educational Leadership. Critical Thinking.

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RESUMO

O capítulo analisa como as práticas diretivas podem orientar a transformação da educação tecnológica em direção ao Humanismo Mexicano, considerando o Tecnológico Nacional de México (TecNM) como objeto de estudo institucional. O objetivo é interpretar de que maneira as orientações normativas e os eixos transversalizados do modelo educacional se traduzem em critérios operacionais de gestão, configurando a identidade do corpo diretivo e sua capacidade de condução em contextos organizacionais complexos. O enfoque teórico-analítico é interpretativo e fundamenta-se na análise documental do Modelo Educativo do TecNM, em diálogo com literatura recente sobre liderança educacional, ética pública, justiça social e governança da implementação. Os eixos de análise organizam-se em torno de: (i) práticas diretivas e construção de uma identidade humanista; (ii) pensamento crítico como formação contínua para compreender as determinações do serviço educacional e sustentar decisões com legitimidade; (iii) diálogo institucionalizado e trabalho colaborativo como tecnologia organizacional para a coordenação entre membros do corpo diretivo, docentes e pessoal administrativo; e (iv) responsabilidade social, equidade, consciência ambiental e inovação com pertinência social como critérios estáveis de gestão. Como aporte, o capítulo propõe um modelo conceitual integrador de práticas diretivas humanistas que integra valores públicos, identidade diretiva e mediações organizacionais. Argumenta-se que essa articulação fortalece a legitimidade institucional, o bem-estar institucional e coletivo, e orienta processos de transformação educacional coerentes, inclusivos e socialmente pertinentes em instituições tecnológicas públicas mexicanas. Embora ancorado no caso do TecNM, o modelo conceitual proposto busca oferecer uma lente analítica transferível a instituições de educação tecnológica pública em outros contextos nacionais com desafios organizacionais comparáveis.

Palavras-chave: Gestão Educacional. Práticas Diretivas. Humanismo Mexicano. Educação Tecnológica. Liderança Educacional. Pensamento Crítico.

RESUMEN

El capítulo analiza cómo las prácticas directivas pueden orientar la transformación de la educación tecnológica hacia el Humanismo Mexicano, considerando al Tecnológico Nacional de México (TecNM) como objeto de estudio institucional. El objetivo es interpretar de qué manera las orientaciones normativas y los ejes transversalizados del modelo educativo se traducen en criterios operativos de gestión, configurando la identidad del cuerpo directivo y su capacidad de conducción en contextos organizacionales complejos. El enfoque teórico-analítico es interpretativo y se fundamenta en el análisis documental del Modelo Educativo del TecNM, en diálogo con literatura reciente sobre liderazgo educativo, ética pública, justicia social y gobernanza de la implementación. Los ejes de análisis se organizan en torno a: (i) prácticas directivas y construcción de una identidad directiva humanista; (ii) el pensamiento crítico como formación continua para comprender las determinaciones del servicio educativo y sustentar decisiones con legitimidad; (iii) el diálogo institucionalizado y el trabajo colaborativo como tecnologías organizacionales para la coordinación entre miembros del cuerpo directivo, docentes y personal administrativo; y (iv) la responsabilidad social, la equidad, la conciencia ambiental y la innovación con pertinencia social como criterios estables de gestión. Como aporte, el capítulo propone un modelo conceptual integrador de prácticas directivas humanistas que articula valores públicos, identidad directiva y mediaciones organizacionales. Se argumenta que dicha articulación fortalece la legitimidad institucional, el bienestar institucional y colectivo, y orienta procesos de transformación educativa coherentes, inclusivos y socialmente pertinentes en instituciones tecnológicas públicas mexicanas. Aunque anclado en el caso del TecNM, el modelo conceptual propuesto busca ofrecer una lente analítica transferible a instituciones de educación tecnológica pública en otros contextos nacionales con desafíos organizacionales comparables.



Palabras clave: Gestión Educativa. Prácticas Directivas. Humanismo Mexicano. Educación Tecnológica. Liderazgo Educativo. Pensamiento Crítico.

1 INTRODUCTION

The social, economic and technological transformations of the last decades have profoundly redefined the role of higher education and, in particular, public technological education. The acceleration of technological change, the reorganization of work, the expansion of social and territorial inequalities, as well as the growing demands for sustainability and social justice, have placed educational institutions in front of a structural challenge: to articulate specialized technical training with an ethical, humanistic and socially pertinent orientation. In the Mexican context, this challenge is closely linked to the recognition of higher education as a right and as a public good, whose provision with quality and equity constitutes a non-delegable responsibility of the State and the institutions that make up the national educational system (Cámara de Diputados, 2021).

In this scenario, public technological higher education occupies a strategic place. In addition to their contribution to productive development, these institutions fulfill a central social function by expanding access to higher education for historically excluded sectors and by boosting regional development. However, their role cannot be reduced to an instrumental logic centered on employability or the generation of human capital. On the contrary, technological education is called upon to train professionals with technical skills, critical thinking and social commitment, capable of intervening responsibly in complex and unequal contexts. This tension between productivist approaches and humanist orientations structurally crosses the management and direction of public technological institutions.

The system of technological higher education in Mexico is characterized by its institutional and territorial heterogeneity. In it, several subsystems coexist with different training models, governance schemes and scopes. In this context, the Tecnológico Nacional de México (TecNM) is configured as a case of special analytical relevance. Its national scale, its public character and its high organizational density place it as a central actor in the implementation of educational policies oriented towards equity, inclusion and development with well-being. Added to this is the explicitness, in its Educational Model, of a horizon of transformation based on Mexican Humanism, conceived as the ethical and political foundation of technological education (Tecnológico Nacional de México, 2024). This orientation dialogues with national agendas that prioritize collective well-being, social justice, and equity as axes of public and educational action (Asociación Nacional de Universidades e Instituciones de Educación Superior [ANUIES], 2018; Chamber of Deputies, 2021).

In a convergent way, international debates on leadership and governance in higher education institutions have emphasized the need to align sustainability, social justice, and

organizational transformation, particularly in contexts of high public complexity (Aung & Hallinger, 2022; Elken, 2024a; Sánchez-Carrillo et al., 2021; Viera Trevisan et al., 2024)."

However, the adoption of a humanistic approach in normative documents and educational models does not guarantee, by itself, their materialization in everyday institutional life. The gap between policy design and effective implementation is often explained by a combination of structural and organizational factors: budget constraints, accountability pressures, territorial inequalities, entrenched organizational cultures, and bureaucratic inertia. At this point, institutional direction emerges as a central problem of educational management. Directing public technological institutions implies operating in a field of tensions in which demands for administrative efficiency, regulatory compliance and educational transformation with a social sense converge. These tensions fall directly on the governing bodies, responsible for interpreting, contextualizing, and executing the guidelines of the Educational Model in each Technological Institute or Center (Tecnológico Nacional de México, 2024).

This chapter supports a central thesis: leading to transform implies that directive practices, when guided by the principles of Mexican Humanism and its transversal axes, function as organizational and pedagogical mediation devices capable of enabling —or limiting— the transformation of public technological education. From this perspective, management leadership is not conceived as a merely technical or administrative exercise, but as a situated, ethical and political practice, whose effectiveness depends both on the convictions and capacities of those who lead and on the organizational conditions in which it is exercised. This stance is in line with the international literature that highlights the role of educational leadership oriented towards social justice as a structural component of institutional management in contexts marked by inequality and diversity (Chaaban et al., 2025; Rong & Chen, 2025).

In order to avoid a merely declarative treatment of Mexican Humanism, the chapter approaches it as an operationalized analytical category. Concretely, it is proposed to analyze its institutional translation through five interrelated directive dimensions: public ethics and institutional procedure; equity and inclusion in access to learning and working conditions; dialogue and participation as technologies of organizational coordination; social responsibility and territorial relevance; and environmental awareness and innovation with a social sense (Tecnológico Nacional de México, 2024). These dimensions structure the analytical framework of the chapter and allow us to examine the tensions between the normative horizon of the Educational Model and the practices effectively mobilized in daily management.

From this perspective, it is necessary to clarify three notions that are often used interchangeably. Institutional direction refers to the role of strategic management and decision-making. Educational management refers to the processes through which resources, relationships and conditions for the provision of educational services are organized. Directive practices, in turn, designate the set of recurrent, situated and observable actions through which direction is exercised and management is carried out. Consequently, this chapter focuses analytically on directive practices as the space in which the coherence – or fracture – between the humanistic educational project and the institutional operation becomes visible.

In this context, critical thinking is assumed as a transversal directive competence, indispensable to interpret the complexity of the social, organizational and pedagogical determinations that affect technological education. In a complementary way, dialogue is conceived as an organizational technology that allows the articulation of collaborative work between teachers and administrative staff. International evidence shows that dialogic leadership approaches favor participation, co-responsibility, and organizational learning, especially in institutional change processes that require legitimacy and collective ownership (Khaqan & Redondo-Sama, 2024).

In the same way, educational management can be understood as a form of pedagogical mediation. The pedagogical triangle proposed by Jean Houssaye allows us to understand how organizational decisions affect the relationship between teaching, learning and knowledge. From this perspective, administration and planning become a framework of pedagogical possibilities, which gives the management function a direct responsibility for the quality of training and educational justice, in addition to operational efficiency (Houssaye, 1988).

From these considerations, the general objective of this chapter is to critically analyze the directive practices that contribute to the transformation of technological education from the principles of Mexican Humanism, taking the National Technological of Mexico as an object of study. Specifically, it is proposed to interpret how the transversal axes of the Educational Model configure the identity of the governing body; to examine the role of critical thinking and dialogue in institutional management; and problematize the implications of these practices for equity, social justice, and organizational transformation (Chaaban et al., 2025; Khaqan & Redondo-Sama, 2024; Tecnológico Nacional de México, 2024).

The chapter is organized as follows. First, the institutional context of public technological education in Mexico is presented and TecNM is defined as a case study. Subsequently, the TecNM Educational Model and its implications for directive management are analyzed. Then, an analytical framework is developed that articulates Mexican

Humanism, directive identity, critical thinking and dialogical leadership. Finally, the scopes, tensions, and challenges of directing public technological institutions from a humanistic horizon are discussed, as well as their implications for educational management and social transformation (Cámara de Diputados, 2021; Tecnológico Nacional de México, 2024).

Although the analysis focuses on TecNM, the reflections are formulated as an analytical generalization, and not a statistical one, offering potentially useful interpretative keys for other public technological education institutions with comparable organizational conditions.

2 INSTITUTIONAL CONTEXT AND EDUCATIONAL POLICY

In order to understand the directive practices guided by Mexican Humanism, it is necessary to first situate the institutional and normative context in which public technological higher education operates in Mexico. This section delimits the social role of this subsystem, its main traits of organizational heterogeneity, and the coordination and implementation challenges faced by institutions in highly complex public contexts. In particular, the Tecnológico Nacional de México (TecNM) is presented as an object of study due to its scale, organizational density and centrality in the execution of educational policies with an emphasis on equity, inclusion and social relevance. This contextualization allows us to move on, later, to the analysis of the TecNM Educational Model and the directive function as a mediating instance between institutional guidelines and organizational practices (Asociación Nacional de Universidades e Instituciones de Educación Superior [ANUIES], 2018; Chamber of Deputies, 2021).

2.1 PUBLIC TECHNOLOGICAL EDUCATION IN MEXICO AND ITS SOCIAL ROLE

Public technological higher education in Mexico is a strategic component of the national educational system, both for its contribution to productive development and for its role in expanding access to higher education and meeting differentiated regional and territorial needs. In the current regulatory framework, higher education is recognized as a right and as a public good, which obliges the institutions that are part of it to articulate academic quality objectives with principles of equity, inclusion, and social relevance (Cámara de Diputados, 2021). This definition displaces a merely instrumental conception of training and situates technological education as a central space for the construction of well-being and social justice.

The subsystem of public technological higher education is characterized by a marked institutional heterogeneity. In it, different organizational arrangements coexist – Technological

Institutes, Technological Universities and Polytechnic Universities – with different historical trajectories, training models and governance schemes. Although this diversity expands territorial coverage and access opportunities, it also increases the complexity of system management, by posing challenges of inter-institutional coordination, policy alignment, and coherence with national development objectives (Asociación Nacional de Universidades e Instituciones de Educación Superior [ANUIES], 2018). At this point, the institutional leadership acquires a central role as a mediator between general guidelines, local conditions and concrete organizational practices. These challenges dialogue with international debates on multilevel governance and coordination in higher education systems, in which different arrangements of accountability and autonomy condition institutional collaboration (Elken, 2024a; Wullschleger et al., 2025).

It should be noted that this complexity is intensified by tensions typical of public educational management. First, the relationship between centralization and local autonomy usually generates friction: the general guidelines seek homogeneity and control, while the campuses face disparate territorial realities that demand localized adaptations. Secondly, the tension between institutional uniformity and territorial diversity forces us to decide what should be standardized and what should be made more flexible to ensure equity. Finally, the tension between document compliance and cultural change can lead to a formalistic implementation of reforms, in which one fulfills without transforming practices. These conditions of possibility make institutional management decisive in guiding the transformation towards substantive results (ANUIES, 2018; Chamber of Deputies, 2021).

From a social perspective, public technological education cannot be reduced to its ability to respond to the immediate demands of the labor market. Its function is linked to the integral formation of people, the strengthening of critical capacities and the generation of opportunities for social mobility, especially in regions with high levels of inequality. Nevertheless, structural tensions persist between productivist approaches – centered on efficiency, employability and performance indicators – and humanist orientations that emphasize equity, inclusion and social commitment. These tensions are directly expressed in the day-to-day management and decisions of the governing bodies, which are responsible for balancing priorities in contexts of limited resources.

In this context, the Tecnológico Nacional de México (TecNM) is configured as an object of study of special analytical relevance. Its national scale, its public character and its high organizational density place it as a central actor in the implementation of educational policies oriented to equity and development with well-being (Secretaría de Educación Pública, 2014; Chamber of Deputies, 2021). In addition, TecNM has made explicit an educational project

with a humanist orientation that seeks to reconfigure the meaning of technological education beyond technocratic approaches, which introduces specific requirements for institutional management and direction (Tecnológico Nacional de México, 2024).

2.2 THE EDUCATIONAL MODEL OF THE NATIONAL TECHNOLOGY OF MEXICO

The Educational Model of the National Technology of Mexico is the main normative and conceptual reference that guides institutional action in its Institutes and Centers. Unlike models focused exclusively on technical efficiency or immediate adaptation to the labor market, the Model explicitly assumes Mexican Humanism as an ethical and political foundation, placing the person, the community, and collective well-being at the center of the educational process (Tecnológico Nacional de México, 2024). This orientation is consistent with the legal framework of higher education and with a public policy vision that prioritizes equity, inclusion, and social justice as goals of development (Cámara de Diputados, 2021).

From this perspective, the Educational Model proposes an integral conception of training, in which the development of professional skills is articulated with values, attitudes and social commitments. Mexican Humanism operates as a guiding criterion for institutional decisions that transcend the classroom and focus on the organization of work, the management of resources, and the definition of priorities. However, the implementation of this horizon faces structural tensions typical of a large-scale public institution: pressures for accountability, budgetary constraints, territorial inequalities in organizational capacities, and bureaucratic inertia. As a result, the distance between design and execution converts directive management into a critical space of mediation between the educational project and its effective realization.

A distinctive feature of the TecNM Educational Model is the incorporation of transversal axes that cross the substantive functions of teaching, research, extension and institutional management. Among them, social responsibility, environmental awareness, and innovation stand out, conceived as guiding principles of institutional action and not as isolated components (Tecnológico Nacional de México, 2024). In this reading, innovation is understood as the organizational capacity to generate pertinent and socially responsible solutions in the face of complex problems, avoiding technocentric reductions.

These axes acquire relevance to the extent that they are translated into observable directive practices. Social responsibility is expressed in criteria of territorial prioritization and equitable allocation of resources; environmental awareness, in decisions about the sustainable use and management of resources; and innovation, in the governance of improvement processes with a social sense. In this way, the transversal axes not only guide

the institutional discourse: they function as analytical categories to interpret directive practices and their effects on equity, participation, sustainability, and institutional innovation in the following sections (Tecnológico Nacional de México, 2024).

To close this transition, it is worth emphasizing that the Educational Model redefines institutional management as a strategic practice aimed at creating conditions for integral education and human development. Therefore, the relevant question is not only what the Model establishes, but how it is operationalized in organizational decisions and conduction routines within each Technological Institute or Center.

2.3 THE MANAGEMENT FUNCTION IN TECHNOLOGICAL INSTITUTES AND CENTRES

The management function in the Technological Institutes and Centers of TecNM is configured as a strategic axis for the operation and institutional transformation. Directing these organizations implies conducting complex processes in conditions of finite resources, pressures for indicators and growing social expectations, in which each decision produces effects on real opportunities for teaching, learning and coexistence. In this sense, institutional management is not limited to administration; it is an organizational management practice with ethical, political and pedagogical implications (Secretaría de Educación Pública, 2014; Tecnológico Nacional de México, 2024).

To avoid conceptual ambiguities, it is convenient to differentiate three planes. Management refers to the technical-operational component. Educational management is concerned with the coordination of organizational conditions —resources, relationships, and processes— so that educational service is possible with quality and equity. Institutional management is linked to strategic management: it defines priorities, decision criteria, participation mechanisms and ethical guidance of institutional action. Consequently, directive practices constitute the point at which these dimensions are articulated and at which the coherence – or the fracture – between the humanist horizon and everyday operation becomes observable.

From an organizational perspective, the governing bodies act as mediators between public policies, institutional guidelines and local dynamics. This position requires interpreting general guidelines and translating them into situated decisions on planning, resource allocation, work organization, and coordination of actors. The directive function is thus exercised in a field of tensions in which values, priorities and conceptions about the meaning of technological education are put into play. Seemingly technical decisions – such as budget distribution, the teaching load or the prioritization of infrastructure – can contribute to reducing or reproducing internal inequalities.

The TecNM Educational Model assigns to the governing bodies the responsibility of converting Mexican Humanism and its transversal axes into consistent institutional practices. This implies setting up a directive identity based on public ethics, social responsibility, respect for diversity, and commitment to collective well-being (Tecnológico Nacional de México, 2024). The international literature has shown that this identity is constructed in a relational and contextual way, in interaction with organizational structures, normative expectations, and power dynamics, being decisive for the legitimacy of leadership (Crossley et al., 2024; Lê & Hoang, 2025). In TecNM, this identity is consolidated – or tensioned – as the conduction effectively incorporates the transversal axes as decision criteria, and not only as rhetorical references.

In this context, directing Technological Institutes presupposes exercising a leadership oriented to social justice, particularly relevant in institutions that serve heterogeneous populations in territories with persistent inequalities. Empirical evidence synthesized in systematic reviews indicates that this type of leadership is expressed in conscious decisions about the distribution of resources, the inclusion of traditionally marginalized voices, and the construction of safe and inclusive institutional environments (Chaaban et al., 2025; Rong & Chen, 2025). In a complementary way, dialogue is conceived as a central directive practice to organize collaborative work between teachers and administrative staff. However, dialogue requires institutional architecture: formal spaces for deliberation, clear rules for participation, follow-up mechanisms, and an organizational culture that values collaboration (Khaqan & Redondo-Sama, 2024).

In summary, the institutional and educational policy context of TecNM shows that the transformation of technological education towards horizons of equity and social justice depends, to a large extent, on the ability of the governing bodies to translate a humanistic educational project into consistent organizational practices. The articulation between the system, the Educational Model and the directive function establishes the basis for the development of the analytical framework and the state of the art presented in the following section.

3 ANALYTICAL FRAMEWORK AND STATE OF THE ART

This chapter is part of a field of research that articulates higher education, educational management and institutional leadership from an ethical and social perspective. In particular, it is based on the assumption that the transformation of technological education towards horizons of social justice does not occur exclusively through the design of educational policies or models, but through the organizational translation of these orientations through sustained,

legitimized and verifiable directive practices. This approach dialogues with recent evidence that situates educational leadership as a structural condition to address inequalities, expand participation, and sustain improvement processes with a public sense (Chaaban et al., 2025; Rong & Chen, 2025).

3.1 MEXICAN HUMANISM AND INTEGRAL EDUCATION IN HIGHER EDUCATION

Education with a social sense

Mexican Humanism, within the framework of the TecNM Educational Model, is conceived as an ethical orientation that replaces the person, the community, and collective well-being at the center of the formative process, seeking to overcome technocratic reductions in technological education (Tecnológico Nacional de México, 2024). This orientation is articulated with the conception of higher education as a right and public good, which implies quality institutional obligations associated with equity, inclusion, and social relevance (Cámara de Diputados, 2021).

In the international debate, approaches centered on the social meaning of higher education emphasize the coherence between institutional philosophy, formative attributes — such as social responsibility, ethical sensitivity, and leadership with purpose— and congruent organizational practices. From this perspective, the translation of humanist orientations requires institutional management devices capable of sustaining participation, inclusion, and social relevance as effective decision-making criteria (Tecnológico Nacional de México, 2024; Chaaban et al., 2025; Rong & Chen, 2025).

Social justice, equity and collective well-being

Social justice in higher education has been operationalized as the redistribution of opportunities, recognition of diversity, and meaningful participation. Recent systematic reviews indicate that social justice-oriented leadership is associated with deliberate practices of resource distribution, the protection of inclusive environments, and the strengthening of institutional participation (Chaaban et al., 2025; Rong & Chen, 2025).

3.2 EDUCATIONAL MANAGEMENT AS AN ETHICAL AND ORGANIZATIONAL PRACTICE

Educational leadership and public service

Educational management in public institutions is exercised under conditions of ethical responsibility associated with the use of collective resources, accountability and the guarantee of the right to education. Empirical evidence indicates that ethical leadership is associated with higher levels of organizational trust, legitimacy, and better conditions to sustain improvement processes, particularly in contexts in which accountability systems

influence institutional collaboration (Abdi, 2024; Crossley et al., 2024; Wullschleger et al., 2025).

Educational management and institutional transformation

The literature on governance in higher education emphasizes that institutional transformation depends on the directive capacity to interpret policy instruments, coordinate actors, and translate normative guidelines into sustained practices. In this sense, management is configured as a strategic space for organizational mediation, especially when governance instruments present ambiguity and require situated interpretation to be converted into effective institutional action (Elken, 2024a, 2024b).

3.3 IDENTITY OF THE GOVERNING BODY AND INSTITUTIONAL COMMITMENT

Construction of the directive identity

The identity of the governing body is conceived as a relational and dynamic construct, built in interaction with the institutional context, normative expectations and power relations. Recent literature highlights that this identity influences the legitimacy of leadership and the coherence of organizational decisions, as it structures interpretive frameworks, priorities, and criteria for action (Crossley et al., 2024; Lê & Hoang, 2025).

Values, principles and social responsibility

In institutions with a humanist orientation, the directive identity is articulated with values such as social responsibility, public ethics and commitment to collective well-being. Coherence between stated values and observable practices strengthens institutional trust and the capacity for organizational transformation, by stabilizing decision-making, transparency, and coordination criteria oriented to equity (Tecnológico Nacional de México, 2024; Chaaban et al., 2025).

3.4 CRITICAL THINKING AND DIALOGUE IN EDUCATIONAL MANAGEMENT

Critical thinking as continuous training of the leader

Critical thinking is recognized as a key competence for conducting education in contexts of complexity. Recent research indicates that this ability allows analyzing complex problems, anticipating consequences, and sustaining informed decisions in scenarios of uncertainty, also contributing to the strengthening of communication and collaborative work skills when institutionalized as part of training and professional practice (Golden, 2023; Dias-Oliveira et al., 2024).

Dialogue as a means of organizing collaborative work

Dialogic leadership is associated with higher levels of participation, organizational learning, and collective ownership of change processes. Evidence indicates that dialogue requires clear organizational conditions to operate as an effective practice of coordination, and not just as a symbolic resource, which implies the design of formal spaces, rules of participation, and follow-up mechanisms that make collaboration sustainable (Khaqan & Redondo-Sama, 2024).

3.5 EDUCATIONAL MANAGEMENT AS PEDAGOGICAL MEDIATION

Jean Houssaye's pedagogical triangle

The pedagogical triangle proposed by Houssaye allows us to understand the relationship between teaching, learning and knowledge, highlighting that organizational decisions indirectly affect pedagogical processes. In this context, the institutional direction acts as pedagogical mediation by configuring structural conditions for educational practice, so that management not only administers, but enables—or restricts—possibilities of training and educational justice (Houssaye, 1988).

Management, planning and administration as a framework of possibilities

Planning and administration configure a framework of possibilities that enables or restricts equitable and quality educational practices. The literature on university governance warns that, without a shared meaning and without instruments interpreted and appropriated by institutional actors, management processes tend to be reduced to formal compliance, limiting their transformative potential. In this sense, the directive capacity to translate instruments into sustained practices is decisive to avoid merely procedural implementations (Elken, 2024a, 2024b).

3.6 SYNTHESIS OF THE ANALYTICAL FRAMEWORK AND CATEGORIES OF ANALYSIS

Based on the theoretical analysis developed, the chapter is structured into six central analytical categories: (i) humanist directive identity and public ethics; (ii) architecture of dialogue and collaborative work; (iii) distributive equity and inclusion; (iv) sustainability governance; (v) innovation with social relevance; and (vi) educational management as pedagogical mediation.

These categories are articulated in a conceptual model of directive practices that understands institutional direction as a set of translation mechanisms between the humanist horizon—expressed in Mexican Humanism and the Educational Model—and the daily institutional operation. In this sense, directive practices constitute the level at which values,

principles and normative orientations are interpreted and converted into concrete organizational decisions.

The model guides the analysis of how such decisions configure institutional conditions that affect equity, participation, well-being, sustainability, and innovation with social meaning, offering an analytical lens to understand the coherence —or tensions— between the humanistic educational project and its materialization in institutional life.

4 FOCUS AND ANALYTICAL ROUTE OF THE CHAPTER

This section explains the analytical design that underpins the chapter, outlining the type of contribution proposed, the methodological approach adopted and the interpretative path that guides the analysis. Initially, the type of chapter and the methodological approach that underlie the work are characterized. Then, the documentary corpus and the analysis criteria used are described, as well as the theoretical-critical analysis procedure used for the construction of the analytical categories and the conceptual model of directive practices. Finally, the scope and limitations of the chapter are delimited, explaining the type of inference proposed and the care adopted to ensure consistency and interpretative rigor.

4.1 TYPE OF CHAPTER AND METHODOLOGICAL APPROACH

The present work corresponds to an analytical-interpretative chapter, with a theoretical-critical orientation, whose purpose is to understand and problematize the directive practices that mediate the transformation of public technological education towards Mexican Humanism. In coherence with this objective, an interpretative qualitative approach is adopted, supported by documentary analysis and the critical articulation of the state of the art. Document analysis allows for the systematic examination of normative documents and institutional models, identifying assumptions, principles, analytical categories and relevant organizational tensions (Bowen, 2009).

It should be clarified that the chapter is not configured as an empirical research based on the collection of primary data, but as a conceptual contribution that builds a reasoned interpretation based on institutional sources and specialized academic literature. In this framework, a logic of analytical transferability is assumed, according to which the conclusions are proposed as useful for comparable organizational contexts in terms of complexity, scale, and public condition, without the pretense of statistical generalization (Yin, 2018). Transferability is based on the analytical description of the institutional context of TecNM and on the reader's assessment of comparability with other subsystems of technological higher education.

4.2 DOCUMENTARY CORPUS AND ANALYSIS CRITERIA

The analytical corpus was constituted from three sets of sources, selected according to criteria of relevance, timeliness and pertinence in relation to the central question of the chapter.

First, a delimited set of normative and institutional documents that structure the framework of educational policy and the organizational order of public technological higher education was analyzed. Among the references considered are the general normative framework for higher education (Cámara de Diputados, 2021), programmatic documents for educational policy (Secretaría de Educación Pública, 2014), as well as the Educational Model of the Tecnológico Nacional de México and associated documents that explain principles, transversal axes and directive attributions (Tecnológico Nacional de México, 2024). In addition, policy and prospective references for higher education were incorporated for their contextual and interpretative value (Asociación Nacional de Universidades e Instituciones de Educación Superior [ANUIES], 2018).

Secondly, recent academic literature corresponding to the period 2020–2025 was integrated, with an emphasis on systematic reviews and synthesis articles on educational leadership, social justice, directive identity, dialogic leadership, and directive competencies. The state of the art consisted of an approximate set of thirty academic sources, selected according to thematic relevance and editorial quality, prioritizing peer-reviewed publications in indexed journals, with the exception of canonical theoretical or methodological contributions indispensable to argumentation.

Thirdly, basic theoretical contributions, both classical and contemporary, necessary for their explanatory value to interpret the relationship between organization, management and pedagogy, were considered, with emphasis on Jean Houssaye's pedagogical triangle (Houssaye, 1988).

This chapter develops a state-of-the-art narrative-critical character, strengthened by evidence from systematic reviews, but it does not constitute a formal systematic review. The search was non-exhaustive and was oriented towards conceptual coverage, through keywords and citation tracking, without reporting PRISMA metrics or claiming statistical representativeness.

The analysis criteria applied to the corpus included: (i) coherence between declared values and expected organizational practices; (ii) centrality of equity, social justice and collective well-being; (iii) the role of the directive function as a mediation between politics, organization and pedagogy; and (iv) explanatory potential of theoretical approaches for the comprehension of the

are from contexts of high organizational complexity.

4.3 THEORETICAL-CRITICAL ANALYSIS PROCEDURE

The analytical procedure was developed in four interrelated phases, aimed at ensuring conceptual traceability and interpretative consistency.

The first phase consisted of an analytical reading of the normative and institutional framework, with the objective of identifying values, principles, transversal axes, directive responsibilities and organizational assumptions related to management, dialogue, equity and innovation (Bowen, 2009; Chamber of Deputies, 2021; Tecnológico Nacional de México, 2024). The unit of analysis was defined as normative and programmatic statements that can be translated into operational criteria.

The second phase corresponded to a critical review of the state of the art, with emphasis on systematic reviews, aiming to identify trends, analytical consensuses and gaps relevant to the analysis of public technological education. This stage allowed us to delimit a set of guiding constructs – ethical leadership, social justice, directive identity, dialogical leadership, sustainability, and implementation – and to evaluate their interpretative utility.

The third phase involved a process of analytical categorization of a conceptual nature, oriented to the construction of interpretative categories, and not to the quantification of frequencies. This process was supported by conceptual qualitative coding procedures (Saldaña, 2021), combining content analysis applied to normative and institutional documents (Krippendorff, 2018) with thematic analysis applied to academic literature (Braun & Clarke, 2006).

In the fourth phase, a conceptual model of directive practices was consolidated, expressed in a matrix of categories that articulates analytical dimensions, conceptual definitions, institutional evidence, theoretical support and observable directive practices. The model integrates six dimensions: Mexican Humanism and social sense; social justice and equity; ethical direction and public function; directive identity; critical thinking and dialogue; and management as pedagogical mediation.

4.4 SCOPE AND LIMITATIONS OF THE CHAPTER

The chapter systematically articulates the normative horizon of Mexican Humanism, recent scholarly evidence on educational leadership and social justice, and an organizational reading of the directive function in public technology education. The documentary approach allows the identification of directive responsibilities, equity criteria and institutional

coordination devices, particularly within the framework of the TecNM Educational Model and current normativity (Cámara de Diputados, 2021; Tecnológico Nacional de México, 2024).

To strengthen the rigor of the interpretative analysis, criteria of credibility, dependability, confirmability and transferability were met through theoretical triangulation, explicit analytical procedure, evidence matrix by category and cross-review by consensus among the authors during the construction of the categories and the conceptual model (Shenton, 2004).

Among the limitations, the absence of direct empirical evidence on the situated practices of leaders and the lack of a systematic comparison with other technological subsystems are recognized, which opens up future lines of qualitative and comparative research aimed at analyzing how humanist axes are operationalized under different organizational and territorial arrangements.

5 INTERPRETATIVE FINDINGS: DIRECTIVE PRACTICES TO DRIVE TRANSFORMATION

The articulation between the institutional corpus — with emphasis on the Educational Model of the National Technological of Mexico —, the recent international literature and the analytical framework developed in Sections 3 and 4 allows us to identify interpretative patterns of directive practices that mediate the transformation of technological education towards Mexican Humanism. These findings are organized around previously outlined analytical categories and are formulated as traceable conceptual inferences (and not as generalizable empirical regularities), constructed through documentary analysis and theoretical-critical synthesis (Bowen, 2009; Braun & Clarke, 2006; Shenton, 2004).

In the TecNM Model, educational transformation is structured based on transversal axes — social responsibility, environmental awareness, innovation, and vanguard — and an explicit orientation towards social justice and well-being, which positions institutional management as an instance of translation between the normative horizon and organizational operation (Tecnológico Nacional de México, 2024). International evidence converges in indicating that directive identity, ethical leadership, institutionalized dialogue, distributive criteria of equity, and governance of change constitute relevant mechanisms to sustain institutional transformations in complex public contexts (Abdi, 2024; Chaaban et al., 2025; Elken, 2024a, 2024b; Khaqan & Redondo-Sama, 2024; Rong & Chen, 2025).

5.1 DIRECTIVE PRACTICES AND THE CONFIGURATION OF A HUMANIST IDENTITY

Institutional management with values

The transformation towards Mexican Humanism tends to become operative when the institutional direction configures a humanist directive identity, understood as a relatively stable

framework of values that guides decision-making criteria and management practices. This pattern finds internal anchorage in the TecNM Model, by emphasizing Mexican Humanism and integral education with social meaning as a guiding horizon for institutional management (Tecnológico Nacional de México, 2024).

The literature on leadership identity indicates that this identity is not a fixed individual attribute, but a relational and contextual construct that influences legitimacy, cooperation, and ownership of organizational change (Lê & Hoang, 2025; Nieberle et al., 2023). In this sense, when the directive identity is aligned with humanist values, institutional decisions tend to prioritize institutional well-being — understood as climate, safety, coexistence, and working and learning conditions — to the detriment of merely instrumental or bureaucratic logics.

Among the observable policy practices associated with this pattern are: (a) explicit prioritization criteria with social meaning (permanence, inclusion, safety, accompaniment); (b) coherence between discourse, decision and follow-up; and (c) institutional communication that links decisions to values, principles, and transversal axes (Tecnológico Nacional de México, 2024; Lê & Hoang, 2025). This evaluative orientation acquires greater consistency when it is expressed in rules, procedures and responsibilities proper to the exercise of public function, constituting the basis of the dimension "humanistic directive identity and public ethics" of the integrative model.

Public ethics and social commitment

The humanist identity of the governing body is strengthened when the management function is exercised under principles of public ethics, understood as responsibility in the use of collective resources, decision-making transparency and orientation to the general interest. Recent literature points out that ethical leadership practices are associated with higher levels of trust, institutional commitment, and organizational cohesion, especially in public contexts marked by structural inequalities (Abdi, 2024; Crossley et al., 2024).

In the context of public technological education, this social commitment is expressed in decisions that seek to reduce internal asymmetries, protect vulnerable groups, and align institutional action with objectives of social justice and development with well-being. Thus, the humanist directive identity, articulated with public ethics, constitutes a central mediation between the normative horizon of Mexican Humanism and the organizational decisions of everyday life.

5.2 DIALOGUE AND COLLABORATIVE WORK AS MANAGEMENT STRATEGIES

Relationship between managers, teachers and administrative staff

Under criteria of ethical and public coherence, dialogue becomes a strategic directive practice when it operates as an organizational technology — that is, when it is supported by structures, rules, and monitoring mechanisms — and not only as an interpersonal disposition. This pattern is anchored in the TecNM Model, by emphasizing the organization of collaborative work and institutional co-responsibility to operationalize the educational project (Tecnológico Nacional de México, 2024). The synthesized evidence indicates that dialogic leadership is associated with meaningful participation and organizational learning, as long as there are explicit institutional conditions for deliberation (Khaqan & Redondo-Sama, 2024).

Among the observable directive practices are: (a) formal spaces for inter-area deliberation (academic-administrative); (b) explicit rules of participation (representativeness, times, minutes); (c) monitoring of agreements (responsible, deadlines, evidence); and (d) mediation and conflict management mechanisms (Khaqan & Redondo-Sama, 2024). As these conditions become institutionalized, dialogue enables transversal coordination and sustains agreements that translate into management routines, composing the dimension "architecture of dialogue and collaborative work".

Collective construction of educational management

Collaborative work emerges when management recognizes the interdependence between substantive and administrative functions, avoiding the fragmentation of educational management. This finding converges with studies on governance and implementation, which show that the effective translation of instruments and guidelines depends on coordination, co-design, and shared meaning-making capabilities (Elken, 2024a, 2024b). In the context of TecNM, this collective construction is aligned with the need to operationalize transversal axes through interfunctional agreements, and not only via formal provisions (Tecnológico Nacional de México, 2024).

Among the observable practices are: mixed committees for complex problems (permanence, tutoring, inclusion, security); clarity of roles and responsibilities; common criteria for evaluating progress; and feedback and adjustment cycles as organizational learning (Elken, 2024a, 2024b). When collaboration stabilizes, the directive capacity to sustain distributive and inclusion decisions with legitimacy is expanded, repositioning equity as an operative — and not just normative — criterion of transformation.

5.3 MANAGEMENT LEADERSHIP, EQUITY AND SOCIAL JUSTICE

Equitable distribution of resources

In scenarios of transversal coordination, equity becomes a directive criterion when the allocation of resources, loads and support is oriented towards compensating for internal

inequalities (territorial, infrastructural, population). This pattern is anchored in the TecNM Model by situating social justice and collective well-being as a horizon, suggesting a reading of equity as a differentiated allocation, and not as arithmetic equality (Tecnológico Nacional de México, 2024). The literature on leadership for social justice converges in indicating that distributive decisions constitute a critical mechanism to advance institutional equity (Chaaban et al., 2025; Rong & Chen, 2025).

The associated observable practices include: differentiated allocation criteria according to gaps (need, installed capacity, lag); explicit support for permanence (tutoring, monitoring, aid management); territorial and infrastructure prioritization according to deficits; and monitoring of distributional effects through indicators (permanence, lag, dropout) (Chaaban et al., 2025; Rong & Chen, 2025). By operating with explicit distributive criteria, equity tends to be articulated with inclusion policies and practices that directly affect the climate and institutional conditions.

Inclusion, diversity and institutional well-being

In continuity with distributive equity, social justice is also operationalized through directive practices oriented towards inclusion and institutional coexistence, especially in culturally diverse contexts. This anchoring is articulated with the TecNM Model by emphasizing respect for diversity and the construction of inclusive and safe environments (Tecnológico Nacional de México, 2024). International evidence indicates that leadership for social justice promotes inclusive cultures through clear norms, protection of vulnerable groups, and meaningful participation (Chaaban et al., 2025; Rong & Chen, 2025).

To avoid conceptual ambiguity, a distinction is made between institutional well-being — related to climate, safety, coexistence, and working and learning conditions — and collective well-being, understood as a macro normative horizon of social justice that guides the direction of educational policy. This distinction allows us to understand how situated directive decisions (micro/meso levels) are connected to public ends (macro level) without confusing levels of analysis.

Among the observable practices are: anti-discrimination and conflict response protocols; mechanisms for the participation of diverse groups; periodic measurement of the institutional climate and response to alerts; and safety and coexistence actions (Chaaban et al., 2025; Tecnológico Nacional de México, 2024). The consolidation of inclusion and institutional well-being, in turn, tends to reinforce the legitimacy of sustainability and innovation initiatives, which require organizational trust and inter-area coordination to be maintained over time. These elements compose, in the integrative model, the dimension "distributive equity and inclusion".

5.4 SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY, ENVIRONMENTAL AWARENESS AND INNOVATION

Sustainability-oriented management

In complex public organizations, social responsibility and environmental awareness translate into directive practices when sustainability is incorporated as a cross-cutting criterion for planning, evaluation, and allocation. This pattern is anchored in the TecNM Model, which incorporates environmental awareness as a transversal axis articulated with social responsibility (Tecnológico Nacional de México, 2024). The literature on sustainability in higher education emphasizes that progress depends on institutional coherence, organizational learning, and forms of governance that avoid isolated actions (Aung & Hallinger, 2022; Sánchez-Carrillo et al., 2021; Viera Trevisan et al., 2024).

Observable practices include: environmental criteria in investments and projects (energy, waste, procurement); responsible or committees with goals and monitoring; institutional indicators (consumption, reduction, maintenance); and evaluation of distributive impacts of environmental measures, recognizing that sustainability and equity mutually affect each other (Viera Trevisan et al., 2024). When sustainability is managed as governance — and not as a one-off initiative — a socially pertinent and organizationally sustainable field of innovation opens up, synthesized in the "sustainability governance" dimension.

Innovation with social relevance

Innovation acquires a transformative meaning when oriented to social relevance and public value. Institutional anchoring is observed in the "innovation and vanguard" axis of the TecNM Model, articulated with social responsibility, which allows innovation to be interpreted as organizational, pedagogical, and socially situated, and not as mere technological adoption (Tecnológico Nacional de México, 2024). The literature on governance and implementation warns that innovating in public organizations requires coordination, legitimacy, and structures that allow experimentation without losing institutional coherence (Elken, 2024a, 2024b). In addition, studies on institutional sustainability indicate that transformative innovation tends to depend on organizational learning and responsible scaling (Aung & Hallinger, 2022; Viera Trevisan et al., 2024).

Among the observable practices are: evaluation of projects by social impact (pertinence, inclusion, sustainability); innovation portfolio (prioritization, escalation criteria, continuity); pilot projects with documentation and feedback; and governance mechanisms to sustain innovations (Elken, 2024a; Viera Trevisan et al., 2024). Together, sustainability and innovation are integrated as decision criteria when directive identity, institutionalized dialogue and equity operate as conditions of possibility for change. This articulation is captured, in the integrative model, by the dimension "innovation with social relevance".

5.5 SYNTHESIS OF FINDINGS AND INTEGRATIVE MODEL OF DIRECTIVE PRACTICES

The synthesis of the findings suggests that directive practices operate as interdependent organizational mediations between the transversal axes of the Model, the directive identity and the institutional operation. Consequently, educational transformation is interpreted less as the sum of initiatives and more as systemic coherence between values, decision criteria, and organizational architecture (Tecnológico Nacional de México, 2024; Chaaban et al., 2025; Khaqan & Redondo-Sama, 2024; Rong & Chen, 2025).

The synthesis of the findings makes it possible to organize the analytical dimensions and the corresponding directive practices in an integrative model, in which each component articulates the directive function, observable markers and expected organizational results. Table 1 presents this matrix in a systematic way, bringing together the mediations identified in subsections 5.1 to 5.4.

Table 1

Integrative model of directive practices for educational transformation towards Mexican Humanism

| Model Component | Directive function | Observable policy practices | Expected organizational outcome |
|--|---|--|--|
| Humanist directive identity and public ethics | Institutional legitimacy and normative coherence | Explicit prioritization criteria; accountability; transparency; Justification of decisions | Organizational trust; discourse-practice coherence; legitimacy of the conduction; Orientation to collective well-being |
| Architecture of dialogue and collaborative work | Inter-area coordination and shared sense | Deliberative spaces; rules of participation; monitoring of agreements; Conflict mediation | Effective collaboration; reduction of friction; Organizational Learning |
| Distributive equity and inclusion | Institutional justice and protection of opportunities | Differentiated allocation; support for permanence; inclusion protocols; measurement | Reduction of internal breaches; safe institutional well-being |
| Sustainability governance | Integration of environmental awareness as a cross-cutting criterion | Environmental criteria; responsible/committees; indicators; Impact assessment | Institutional sustainability; Consistency with social responsibility |
| Innovation with social relevance | Creative response to public problems with social value | Evaluation by social impact; portfolio/pilots; documentation and scheduling; Innovation governance | Useful, relevant and sustainable (non-cosmetic) innovation |
| Institutional Transformation Toward Mexican Humanism | Integrating result of previous mediations | Alignment axes–decisions–routines; follow-up; evidence-based adjustments | Social justice and collective well-being; excellence with social relevance |

Note. The table derives from the matrix of categories and the analytical procedures developed in the analytical framework and methodological approach presented in Sections 3 and 4. The components are anchored in the transversal axes of the Educational Model of the Tecnológico Nacional de México (social responsibility,

environmental awareness, innovation and avant-garde) and in state-of-the-art evidence on leadership for social justice, dialogical leadership, directive identity, governance of change and sustainability (Tecnológico Nacional de México, 2024; Chaaban et al., 2025; Elken, 2024a, 2024b; Khaqan & Redondo-Sama, 2024; Rong & Chen, 2025; Viera Trevisan et al., 2024).

As can be seen in Table 1, the model integrates conceptual and operational levels: the components resume the analytical dimensions developed in this chapter, while the proposed practices and results function as interpretative hypotheses on how institutional direction can translate Mexican Humanism into concrete organizational arrangements.

From an interpretative reading, the integrative model allows us to infer that institutional transformation tends to depend on explicit directive criteria that translate values into decisions and monitoring, on institutionalized dialogue with coordination rules, and on the incorporation of equity, sustainability, and innovation as stable governance criteria, rather than as isolated initiatives (Elken, 2024a, 2024b; Rong & Chen, 2025; Viera Trevisan et al., 2024). These inferences are deepened and contrasted in the Discussion (Section 6), where tensions, scopes, and conditions of possibility are analyzed.

6 DISCUSSION

This section discusses the findings in the light of the analytical framework and the state of the art, highlighting the organizational mediations that condition the translation of Mexican Humanism into directive practices. To this end, it is organized into three axes: the contributions of Mexican Humanism to reorient directive management; the tensions and challenges of its implementation in complex public organizations; and the implications for public educational management and for broader processes of social transformation.

6.1 CONTRIBUTIONS OF MEXICAN HUMANISM TO DIRECTIVE MANAGEMENT

The findings of the chapter allow us to affirm that Mexican Humanism offers a normative and ethical framework with transformative potential for directive management in public technological education, as long as it is translated into consistent organizational practices. More than a declarative referent, Mexican Humanism operates as a guiding criterion for directive decisions that reconfigure the meaning of the institutional function, by situating collective well-being, equity, and social responsibility as explicit ends of educational action (Tecnológico Nacional de México, 2024).

In the analytical logic adopted, this horizon is operationalized through categories such as social justice, public ethics, dialogue, directive identity, and pedagogical mediation. For this reason, the international literature on educational leadership oriented to social justice constitutes a pertinent interpretative support for understanding its organizational translation

conditions (Chaaban et al., 2025; Rong & Chen, 2025). The integrative model presented in this chapter contributes to this debate by articulating Mexican Humanism to concrete dimensions of the directive function in a public technological subsystem, offering an analytical framework applicable to comparable organizational contexts.

In this sense, the results dialogue with systematic reviews that highlight the need to articulate public values, directive identity, and institutional management practices to face contexts of structural inequality (Chaaban et al., 2025; Rong & Chen, 2025). Institutional management, understood from this perspective, moves from a rationality focused exclusively on administrative efficiency to a situated ethical and political practice, capable of influencing distributive decisions, the legitimacy of conduct, and the construction of organizational trust (Abdi, 2024; Crossley et al., 2024).

Specifically, the evidence on social justice-oriented leadership emphasizes that equity and inclusion require directive intentionality and explicit decision criteria, beyond formal compliance (Chaaban et al., 2025; Rong & Chen, 2025). The integrative model adds to this field by making explicit observable directive practices and expected organizational outcomes, suggesting markers that can guide both institutional reflection and future empirical analyses.

In addition, Mexican Humanism's emphasis on integral education broadens the understanding of educational management as pedagogical mediation. Decisions about planning, resource allocation and work organization are recognized as conditions that indirectly affect the teaching and learning processes, reinforcing the directive responsibility for training quality and educational justice (Houssaye, 1988). This contribution is particularly relevant in public technological institutions, in which technocratic or productivist approaches have historically predominated, and reinforces the central assumption of the chapter: institutional transformation becomes effective when the humanist horizon is converted into routines, criteria, and organizational management devices that can be described, analyzed, and monitored.

6.2 TENSIONS AND CHALLENGES IN THE MANAGEMENT OF TECHNOLOGICAL INSTITUTIONS

Nevertheless, this reorientation faces structural tensions that condition the materialization of the humanist horizon in directive practice. One of the main ones is between the normative design of educational models and the real conditions of implementation in large-scale public organizations. Budgetary constraints, accountability requirements, pressures for indicators, and territorial inequalities limit the room for maneuver of governing bodies and can favor logics of formal compliance to the detriment of substantive

transformations, as the literature warns about the implementation of governance instruments when milestones are ambiguous or translated heterogeneously into practice (Elken, 2024b).

In public technological education, these tensions tend to intensify due to the heterogeneity of institutional capacities between campuses, territorial dispersion, and the need to simultaneously sustain operation, regional relevance, and continuous improvement. In the case of TecNM, the organizational scale and the diversity of contexts of its Institutes and Centers make especially critical the directive capacity to translate the Educational Model and its transversal axes into situated decisions, preventing the humanist orientation from remaining enclosed in the normative plan (Tecnológico Nacional de México, 2024).

Added to this is the tension between centralization and institutional autonomy: while the general guidelines seek homogeneity and control, the local contexts demand localized adaptations to respond to specific needs, in a framework in which higher education is recognized as a right and public good (Cámara de Diputados, 2021). The directive function is thus exercised in a field of permanent negotiation, in which critical thinking and the capacity for contextual interpretation are fundamental to avoid the mechanical reproduction of guidelines disconnected from institutional reality and to sustain criteria of equity in disparate organizational conditions.

In addition, the impulse to dialogue and collaborative work faces cultural and organizational challenges. Dialogue does not occur spontaneously: it requires institutional architecture, clear rules of participation, and follow-up mechanisms to operate as effective coordination and not as a symbolic resource (Khaqan & Redondo-Sama, 2024). In terms of the proposed integrative model, these tensions directly impact the coherence between humanist values, directive practices, and organizational outcomes, by weakening the translation mechanisms that allow us to move from the normative horizon to everyday transformation—especially in the dimensions of directive identity, architecture of dialogue, and distributive equity.

6.3 IMPLICATIONS FOR PUBLIC EDUCATIONAL MANAGEMENT AND SOCIAL TRANSFORMATION

In terms of public educational management, the results suggest that the effectiveness of policies oriented to equity and well-being does not depend only on their formulation, but on the directive capacity to translate them into coherent organizational practices. In this sense, the directive function emerges as a strategic level of public policy implementation, in which operational priorities are defined, institutional meanings are negotiated, and distributive criteria are established with concrete effects on inclusion, participation, and learning

conditions (Elken, 2024a; Wullschleger et al., 2025). This finding is consistent with the understanding of higher education as a public good, which requires institutional management to articulate quality, equity, and social relevance (Cámara de Diputados, 2021).

In a complementary way, the discussion highlights the need to rethink the training and professional development of the directors of public technological institutions. In addition to administrative skills, analytical, ethical, and dialogical skills are required to lead complex organizations with social meaning, strengthening at least three areas: (i) continuous training in critical thinking and decision-making under criteria of social justice; (ii) design of institutional devices for dialogue and co-responsibility, such as formal spaces, rules of participation and monitoring mechanisms; and (iii) explicit criteria for distributive decisions oriented towards territorial equity and institutional inclusion (Chaaban et al., 2025; Khaqan & Redondo-Sama, 2024; Rong & Chen, 2025). In the field of ethical leadership in public organizations, these capabilities contribute to sustaining trust, legitimacy, and institutional performance under conditions of tension and demand (Abdi, 2024; Crossley et al., 2024).

The proposed integrative model offers, in this sense, a useful framework to guide both management training programs and institutional self-evaluation processes, by converting values and cross-cutting axes into components, functions, practices, and results that can be monitored over time. In educational reform contexts, this matrix can inform institutional development agendas centered on equity, sustainability, and innovation with social pertinence.

Finally, directing public technological institutions from a humanistic horizon can contribute to broader processes of social transformation, insofar as it focuses on reducing inequalities, expanding educational opportunities, and building organizational cultures oriented to collective well-being. In this context, educational management is configured as a privileged space to articulate public policy, institutional ethics, and social justice, especially when the Educational Model becomes stable decision-making criteria and verifiable directive practices in institutional life (Tecnológico Nacional de México, 2024).

With this, the discussion closes the analytical circle of the chapter: the integrative model not only organizes categories, but also allows us to understand how directive mediations enable — or limit — the translation of the humanist horizon into effective organizational conditions. At the same time, it is projected as a basis for future empirical and comparative investigations, aimed at examining the extent to which these practices materialize in different institutional arrangements and territorial contexts.

7 CONCLUSIONS

This section closes the chapter by synthesizing the conclusions derived from the theoretical-interpretative analysis and by delimiting their implications for institutional direction in public technological institutions. Initially, the main conclusions articulated to the integrative model of directive practices are presented (see Table 1); Then, the theoretical contributions and practical orientations are explained, the limitations of the analysis are recognized, and future lines of research and reflection are proposed to contrast and refine the developed framework.

7.1 MAIN CONCLUSIONS OF THE CHAPTER

The objective of this chapter was to analyze the directive practices that mediate the transformation of technological education towards Mexican Humanism, from an analytical-interpretative approach based on the institutional corpus of the National Technological Institute of Mexico and on recent international literature. From this perspective, and without intending empirical generalization, the analysis allows us to infer four main conclusions, articulated with the integrative model of directive practices (see Table 1) (Tecnológico Nacional de México, 2024; Yin, 2018).

First, it is concluded that Mexican Humanism operates as a normative-operative horizon that reconfigures the meaning of institutional direction, by situating it as a mediation between public values — social justice, collective well-being and public responsibility — and concrete organizational decisions. This horizon becomes operative when it translates into stable criteria for governance, planning, and institutional monitoring, and not just as a programmatic statement (Cámara de Diputados, 2021; Tecnológico Nacional de México, 2024).

Secondly, it is inferred that the humanist directive identity, articulated with public ethics, constitutes an organizing nucleus of institutional legitimacy and organizational coherence. Transformation tends to be sustained with greater consistency when values are translated into explicit criteria for prioritization, transparency, and accountability, strengthening trust, legitimacy, and institutional performance (Abdi, 2024; Crossley et al., 2024). This conclusion corresponds, in the integrative model, to the dimension "humanist directive identity and public ethics".

Thirdly, it is concluded that institutionalized dialogue and collaborative work work as an architecture of inter-area coordination that enables the effective implementation of equity and inclusion. Such practices do not emerge spontaneously: they depend on clear rules, formal spaces, follow-up mechanisms, and conflict management devices that prevent

coordination from being reduced to episodic or symbolic efforts (Khaqan & Redondo-Sama, 2024; Chaaban et al., 2025; Rong & Chen, 2025). This conclusion is articulated with the "architecture of dialogue and collaborative work" dimension of the model.

Fourthly, the analysis allows us to infer that the axes of social responsibility, environmental awareness and innovation acquire transformative potential when they operate as stable decision criteria and not as isolated initiatives. Its organizational continuity depends on governance devices, indicators, and institutional learning processes that allow sustainability and innovation with social relevance, especially in complex educational organizations (Aung & Hallinger, 2022; Viera Trevisan et al., 2024; Tecnológico Nacional de México, 2024). In the integrative model, this conclusion is expressed in the dimensions "governance of sustainability" and "innovation with social relevance".

Together, these conclusions summarize that the institutional transformation towards Mexican Humanism is configured as a process of interdependent organizational mediations: directive identity and public ethics that confer legitimacy; dialogue architectures that underpin coordination; distributive and inclusive criteria that guide institutional justice; and governance of sustainability and innovation that enables the continuity of change. The final line of the model — "institutional transformation towards Mexican Humanism" — thus condenses the integrating result of these mediations.

7.2 THEORETICAL AND PRACTICAL IMPLICATIONS FOR THE DIRECTIVE FUNCTION

Theoretical implications

On the theoretical level, the chapter contributes to studies on educational leadership and management by proposing an integrating framework that articulates directive identity, public ethics, and organizational architecture under a horizon of public value. This approach shifts the focus from conceptions centered on leadership styles or individual competencies to the understanding of institutional direction as organizational mediation that translates normative principles into criteria of governance, coordination, and decision-making (Chaaban et al., 2025; Rong & Chen, 2025; Elken, 2024a, 2024b).

In a complementary way, the chapter contributes to the understanding of direction as pedagogical-organizational mediation, by recovering the link between management, planning and administration as landmarks of possibility of educational service. This reading allows us to conceive of the directive function not only as the administration of resources, but as the production of institutional conditions for integral education, inclusion and social relevance (Houssaye, 1988; Tecnológico Nacional de México, 2024). The integrative model, by making explicit observable components, functions and practices, offers an analytical scheme that can

be mobilized in comparative studies and research on the implementation of policies in technological subsystems.

Practical implications

On the practical level, the findings suggest that institutional direction in public technological institutions is strengthened when it operates with explicit and verifiable criteria for decision-making, coordination, and accountability consistent with Mexican Humanism (Tecnológico Nacional de México, 2024). More than adding tasks, this implies reviewing, stabilizing and aligning routines and institutional mechanisms, for example:

- i. Formal instances of dialogue with traceable agreements and follow-up (inter-area committees, working tables with responsible parties and schedules);
- ii. Transparent criteria for distributive decisions oriented towards territorial equity and inclusion (public allocation and prioritization rules); e
- iii. Governance devices for sustainability and innovation (targets and indicators, periodic evaluation, and organizational learning) that avoid fragmentation into isolated initiatives (Khaqan & Redondo-Sama, 2024; Wullschleger et al., 2025; Viera Trevisan et al., 2024).

The proposed integrative model can, in this sense, guide self-assessment and planning processes in Technological Institutes and Centers, by translating values and transversal axes into observable directive practices and expected organizational results, subject to monitoring over time.

7.3 LIMITATIONS OF THE ANALYSIS

This chapter has limitations that delimit the scope of its inferences. First, the analysis is based on a documentary corpus and secondary literature; therefore, it does not incorporate direct empirical evidence on situated practices of managers, professors, and administrative staff. Consequently, the findings should be interpreted as reasoned conceptual inferences, and not as empirical generalizations (Bowen, 2009; Yin, 2018).

Secondly, the dependence on normative and institutional sources can overrepresent the intention of the policy to the detriment of everyday practice, implying the risk of assuming equivalence between documentary prescription and actual operation. Furthermore, the proposed integrative model has not yet been submitted to empirical validation or systematic evaluation by specialists, so its explanatory robustness should be considered an open-ended conceptual proposal, subject to contrast and refinement (Shenton, 2004).

7.4 FUTURE LINES OF RESEARCH AND REFLECTION

From the conclusions and limitations identified, future lines are proposed aimed at empirically validating the integrative model, developing multiple case studies in Technological Institutes and Centers, and comparatively exploring the transferability of the analytical framework to other subsystems of technological higher education. Qualitative studies based on in-depth interviews, organizational observation, and analysis of directive decisions could contrast the extent to which the practices described materialize in different institutional contexts (Yin, 2018; Tecnológico Nacional de México, 2024).

These lines will allow us to deepen the understanding of institutional direction as an organizational mediation for educational transformation with a social sense, strengthening the articulation between public value, directive practices and institutional results. In particular, they will contribute to the development of mechanisms for conducting, coordinating, and governing that explain how processes of change are sustained or weakened in complex public educational organizations, as well as to identifying contextual conditions that favor the translation of Mexican Humanism into social justice, collective well-being, and excellence with social relevance.

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