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Evolution of change management in Latin American companies: A systematic review

Evolución de la gestión del cambio en las empresas latinoamericanas: una revisión sistemática

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Abstract

This study presents a systematic review focused on the evolution of change management in Latin American companies between 2020 and 2024, using the PRISMA 2020 protocol as a methodological guide. To this end, the Scopus, SciELO, and Latindex 2.0 databases were consulted, selecting a total of 23 scientific articles that met inclusion criteria related to thematic relevance, methodological rigor, and contextual relevance. The research question guided the analysis toward identifying the factors that influence the effectiveness of change management. Among the main findings, the role of digital transformation, strategic human talent management, ethical leadership, organizational culture, and technological innovation stand out as determining factors in organizational change processes. Likewise, diverse approaches that combine qualitative and quantitative perspectives are evident, as well as a growing tendency to prioritize adaptive models in the face of uncertainty. This review leads to the conclusion that, although companies in Latin America face structural and contextual challenges, there has been significant progress in the adoption of change strategies aimed at sustainability, efficiency, and organizational resilience. The results obtained provide useful scientific evidence for decision-making in the business and academic spheres.

Keywords: change management, organizational adaptability, transformational leadership.

Resumen

Este estudio presenta una revisión sistemática centrada en la evolución de la gestión del cambio en empresas latinoamericanas entre 2020 y 2024, utilizando como guía metodológica el protocolo PRISMA 2020. Para ello, se consultaron las bases de datos Scopus, SciELO y Latindex 2.0, seleccionándose un total de 23 artículos científicos que cumplían con criterios de inclusión vinculados a la pertinencia temática, la rigurosidad metodológica y la relevancia contextual. La pregunta de investigación orientó el análisis hacia la identificación de los factores que influyen en la efectividad de la gestión del cambio. Entre los principales hallazgos, se destaca el papel de la transformación digital, la gestión estratégica del talento humano, el liderazgo ético, la cultura organizacional y la innovación tecnológica como elementos determinantes en los procesos de cambio organizacional. Asimismo, se evidencian enfoques diversos que combinan perspectivas cualitativas y cuantitativas, así como una tendencia creciente a priorizar modelos adaptativos frente a escenarios de incertidumbre. Esta revisión permite concluir que, si bien las empresas en América Latina enfrentan desafíos estructurales y contextuales, existen avances significativos en la adopción de estrategias de cambio orientadas a la sostenibilidad, la eficiencia y la resiliencia organizacional. Los resultados obtenidos aportan evidencia científica útil para la toma de decisiones en los ámbitos empresarial y académico.

Palabras clave: gestión del cambio, adaptabilidad organizacional, liderazgo transformacional.

Introduction

Change management has become a key process for companies seeking to remain competitive in a constantly evolving business environment, particularly in Latin America, where organizations face unique challenges arising from economic, social, and cultural factors that impact their adaptation processes. Previous research has demonstrated that transformational leadership and an open organizational culture are critical factors for successful change management.

In this context, Coto and Molina (2023) argue that, in Latin America, business performance must align with effective links in the trajectory of its operations. This entails appropriately applying mechanisms that ensure coherence between the mission, vision, and objectives of the productive sector in their efforts to achieve favorable outcomes. Similarly, Da Costa and Goicochea (2022), based on a study conducted in Ecuador, assert that the influence of organizational management must be grounded in the transparency of results and the application of innovative approaches that promote balance and continuous improvement in companies.

Fierro-Moreno (2021) highlights that, in Mexico, business effectiveness is linked to a readiness for change that allows for greater operational flexibility. In this context, organizational continuity should be associated with strategies that respond to the competitive environment through alternatives that optimize results. In Colombia, Duque et al. (2021) contend that companies must orient their operations toward constant improvement, based on strategic analyses that enable comparative projections for organizational strengthening.

In Chile, Morales-Parada and Jarne-Jarne (2022) emphasize that companies should achieve their potential through sustainable development, focusing on information transparency and results-oriented productive management. Rincón et al. (2023), from Venezuela, underscore the importance of strengthening internal management criteria as a means to establish effective decisions aimed at organizational well-being.

In Ecuador, Pomaquero et al. (2023) demonstrate that participation and transparency in innovation processes are fundamental for optimizing results and ensuring business stability. Rodríguez (2022) argues that the effectiveness of Latin American companies also depends on their connection to the international sphere, as this directly influences their projections and improvements in results, particularly in the face of emerging challenges.

Vásquez et al. (2021) propose that, in Ecuador, administrative management is key to business competitiveness and must establish a solid link between workers and strategic planning, based on knowledge applicable to the productive environment. Gutiérrez et al. (2022) argue that, in Peru, effective communication is a key element for business development, facilitating organizational structures committed to performance and continuous improvement.

Dargent and Rousseau (2021) observed that, during the pandemic, the socioeconomic context in Peru led to a significant decrease in business growth, necessitating the implementation of measures aimed at stabilizing productivity. Complementarily, Cabana et al. (2022) in Chile indicate that improvement in business operations should be based on collaborative leadership and job performance focused on competitiveness.

Olis et al. (2021), in Colombia, warn that organizational decisions often do not adequately address structural deficiencies, making it essential to analyze business positioning based on its responsiveness and efficiency. In line with this, Sumba et al. (2022), in Ecuador, point out that activity control must be accompanied by strategic criteria to address a lack of initiative and enhance operational balance.

Arroyo (2022) suggests that operational development in Latin American companies requires consecutive improvement processes, supported by sound decisions from leaders and their coordination with workers, in order to strengthen sustainability and competitiveness. Temple et al. (2022) emphasize that human resources are fundamental for organizational growth, with continuous training serving as a means to improve performance and generate efficiency.

Furthermore, García-Briones et al. (2022) highlight that business profitability is strengthened when operational management integrates planning and quality, leading to increased revenues. Finally, Hidalgo et al. (2023) argue that administrative effectiveness is key to aligning management with organizational objectives through contextual analysis that enables sustainable projections over time.

Based on this preliminary review, the following research question is proposed: How has change management evolved in Latin American companies in recent years, and what factors influence its effectiveness?

The main objective is to determine the evolution of change management in Latin American companies, identifying the factors that influence its effectiveness during the period 2020-2024 through a systematic review of the literature.

Methodology

To ensure a rigorous and traceable systematic review, this research adopted the PRISMA 2020 protocol, widely recognized for providing a clear methodological framework that facilitates comprehensive data collection and systematic analysis of relevant scientific literature. As Morales (2022) notes, this approach allows for a transparent understanding of the objectives and arguments presented in the selected studies, favoring evidence-based decision-making.

The information search was conducted in three widely recognized and highly reliable academic databases: Scopus, Latindex 2.0, and SciELO, which allowed for the identification of a representative set of research focused on the evolution of change management in Latin American companies during the period 2020-2024. According to

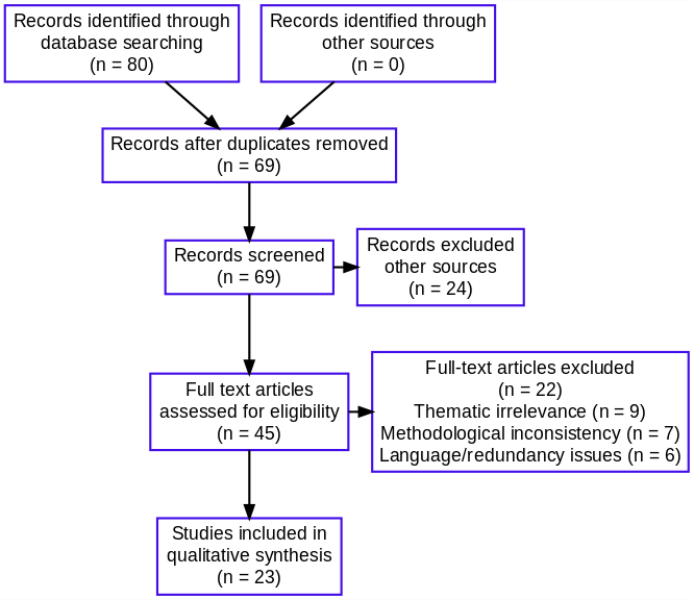
the methodological perspective proposed by Hidalgo (2024), a systematic review must formulate a specific research question, apply rigorous filters, and employ standardized procedures for the selection, critical evaluation, and synthesis of studies. In this regard, the guiding question of this study was: How has change management evolved in Latin American companies in recent years, and what factors influence its effectiveness?

To address this question, combinations of key terms such as "change management," "business management," "organizational adaptability," and "management in Latin America" were used in the search engines of the selected platforms. Parameters were established that included publications from 2020 to 2026, written in Spanish or English, and with open access to full text.

The selection process was structured through predefined inclusion and exclusion criteria. As González et al. (2021) argue, the inclusion criteria must ensure the relevance of the studies concerning the investigated phenomenon, prioritizing those that contribute knowledge about organizational capabilities, adaptation processes, and business transformation. Conversely, the exclusion criteria—as established by Muñoz et al. (2020)—allowed for the dismissal of documents that did not directly address the topic of interest, presented methodological deficiencies, or were duplicated in translated versions. These filters enabled a coherent selection aimed at maximizing the validity of the analysis.

Figure 1

Data selection process



Note: The above diagram summarizes the representation of how to apply the PRISMA methodology.

Results

Characteristics of the studies

Table 1 presents the general characteristics of the studies included in the review. It details the authorship, year of publication, source database, type of research, and country of origin for each analyzed study.

Following the systematic review, it was identified that 50% of the articles originate from Dialnet, 28% from SciELO, and the remaining 22% from Scopus. This distribution evidences a balanced representation among highly reliable academic sources, thus supporting the validity of the documentary selection made.

Table 1
Selected articles from the systematic review

Authors	Year of Study	Database	Type of Study	Country
Maricahua	2026	Scielo	Systematic Review	Peru
Macías-Saquipay & Jaramillo-Calle	2025	Latindex 2.0	Qualitative	Ecuador
Dávila et al.	2024	Scopus	Qualitative	Peru
Granda & Hidalgo	2025	Latindex 2.0	Quantitative	Ecuador
López-Solís et al.	2025	Latindex 2.0	Qualitative	Ecuador
Abellán-Sevilla et al.	2024	Scopus	Qualitative	Spain
Temple et al.	2022	Scopus	Qualitative	Peru
Hidalgo et al.	2023	Scopus	Qualitative	Ecuador
Coto & Molina	2023	Dialnet	Qualitative	Costa Rica
Pomaquero et al.	2023	Dialnet	Qualitative	Ecuador
Da Costa & Goicochea	2022	Dialnet	Qualitative	Ecuador
Sumba et al.	2022	Dialnet	Qualitative	Ecuador
Cabana et al.	2022	Scielo	Quantitative	Chile
Arroyo	2022	Scopus	Qualitative	Ecuador
Dargent & Rousseau	2021	Scielo	Qualitative	Peru
Duque et al.	2021	Dialnet	Qualitative	Colombia
Fierro-Moreno	2021	Scielo	Quantitative	Mexico
García-Briones et al.	2022	Scopus	Quantitative	Ecuador
Gutiérrez et al.	2022	Scielo	Quantitative	Peru
Morales-Parada & Jarne-Jarne	2022	Scielo	Quantitative	Chile
Olis et al.	2021	Dialnet	Quantitative	Colombia
Rincón et al.	2023	Dialnet	Qualitative	Venezuela
Rodríguez	2022	Dialnet	Qualitative	Latin America
Vasquez et al.	2021	Dialnet	Qualitative	Ecuador

Dimensions of the study variable

Table 2 presents the identified dimensions related to the variable of change management; whose evolution directly influences the performance of Latin American companies. For this analysis, eight of the eighteen authors considered in the review were selected based on the clarity and relevance of the proposed dimensions.

Among the most relevant dimensions are: inclusion of strategies, proposal of objectives, performance and labor capacity, decision-making, and internal analysis. These categories help to understand how change management influences the development and sustainability of companies, adding value to the theoretical framework of this research.

Table 2
Dimensions of change management evolution

Author	Dimensions of change management evolution
Temple et al. (2022)	Internal performance, Efficiency analysis, Labor capacity, Productivity.
Hidalgo et al. (2023)	Administrative implementation, Optimization tools, Results collection.
Coto & Molina (2023)	Objective disposition, Operational sustainability, Inclusion of strategies.

Pomaquero et al. (2023)	Participatory innovation, Technological development, Administrative solutions, Competitive challenges.
Da Costa & Goicochea (2022)	Opportunity utilization, Initiative increase, Development capacity.
Sumba et al. (2022)	Organizational climate, Training performance, Results compliance.
Cabana et al. (2022)	Decision-making, Integration ethics, Motivation and performance.

Analysis of significant contributions

Table 3 presents the most relevant results in terms of theoretical and practical contributions from the analyzed studies. In this regard, five of the eighteen reviewed authors provide a significant level of connection between the findings obtained and the conceptual construction of change management. These studies stand out for their ability to link strategic factors with observable outcomes, thereby reinforcing the robustness of the systematic analysis.

Table 3

Conclusions from the studies

Author	Title	Results
Cabana et al. (2022)	*Influence of Leadership and Other Critical Variables on the Competitiveness of Chilean SMEs*	The evolution of management has a significant impact on the operational area, where leadership is a key factor.
Fierro-Moreno (2021)	*Change Management, Virtual Collaboration, and Organizational Strategic Agility of Mexican Companies Amid COVID-19 Impacts*	Management is relevant and significant, highlighting strategies that promote organizational development adapted to the productive reality.
Gutiérrez et al. (2022)	*Digital Economy and Its Impact on Business Development in Peru*	Management evolution drives commercial development, optimizing resources and strengthening efficient decision-making.
Olis et al. (2021)	*Business Crisis, Influencing Factors, and Alterations in Management of Companies in Colombia*	Management requires a prior organizational diagnosis to apply effective improvement proposals.
Vasquez et al. (2021)	*Administrative Process: A Determining Factor in the Organizational Development of SMEs*	Management is an influential factor that allows for structuring alternatives to balance results from an administrative approach.

Evolution of change management in Latin American companies

The evolution of management in Latin American companies reflects a dynamic process, oriented toward operational efficiency, sustainability, and competitiveness. Fierro-Moreno (2021) argues that activities developed in this context prioritize the articulation of strategic objectives that enhance organizational productivity. In this regard, Granda and Hidalgo (2025) highlight the integration of artificial intelligence tools as support for decision-making in small businesses, enabling more efficient management of available resources.

This perspective is complemented by Olis et al. (2021), who warn that change management requires solid internal controls to ensure goal compliance and transform challenges into opportunities for institutional improvement. From a people-centered approach, López-Solís et al. (2025) argue that digital transformation has directly impacted human talent management, promoting an organizational culture based on digital competencies and adaptability.

Pomaquero et al. (2023) and Abellán-Sevilla et al. (2024) insist that management must be operationally evaluated, prioritizing the efficiency of results and the optimization of key processes. Similarly, Vásquez et al. (2021) emphasize that administrative and financial dimensions must be addressed comprehensively to achieve sustained development, articulating strategic planning with structural modernization.

Rincón et al. (2023) emphasize the need to strengthen organizational ethics, both in the public and private sectors, as a pillar for achieving a sustainable institutional balance capable of responding to social challenges through innovative leadership. Complementarily, Cabana et al. (2022) highlight that factors such as motivation, decision-making, and ethical integration are crucial for strengthening business management.

In this same framework, Dávila et al. (2024) reaffirm that digital transformation strategies in traditional companies should be built on a foundation of proactive management, considering technological adaptation as a

real and sustainable competitive advantage. Finally, Sumba et al. (2022) recognize the importance of organizational climate and employee participation as essential drivers for achieving management consistent with institutional objectives.

Gutiérrez et al. (2022), in the Peruvian context, indicate that the evolution of management must be accompanied by continuous improvement processes that allow for addressing risks and responding to changes in the environment. This perspective aligns with what Temple et al. (2022) propose, who consider that prior organizational diagnosis is essential for establishing effective action plans. In line with this, Maricahua (2026) reaffirms that appropriate human talent management, supported by scientific evidence, is a key factor in the digital transformation processes that drive institutional effectiveness in Latin America.

Conclusions

It is concluded that the evolution of change management in Latin American companies is significant for the development of new opportunities, as these organizations have progressively adapted through the implementation of sustainability-oriented strategies. This process entails a commitment to continuous improvement and an agile capacity for adaptation, demonstrating organizational conditions that allow for incorporating change management as a key tool for anticipating expectations within a given timeframe.

The studies analyzed in this research highlight the influence of change management on organizational development by proposing mechanisms that enhance business efficiency and provide a better response to environmental demands. In this sense, a deeper understanding of the internal factors that must be managed strategically to achieve competitive performance and higher-quality service to consumers is promoted.

Moreover, it is acknowledged that change management must be integrated with key areas such as operations and finance, which represent alternatives for facing the challenges of the productive environment. This requires establishing processes for planning, control, and profitability analysis, accompanied by effective leadership based on training, initiative-taking, and accountability by collaborators.

In summary, the findings obtained through this systematic review affirm that there is a significant relationship between the evolution of change management and business performance in Latin America. The identified factors are fundamental for optimizing results, fostering internal integration, and increasing organizational effectiveness.

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