

Toward a Contingency Model of Performance Management in Nonprofit Organizations: Contingency Factors, Performance Management Practices, and Organizational Effectiveness

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Abstract

Performance management is a complex challenge for nonprofit organizations (NPOs), which are characterized by their diverse objectives and stakeholders. This article examines the following question: Through what mechanisms do internal and external contingency factors shape performance management practices and, through them, the organizational effectiveness of nonprofit organizations? Building on previous work by Jazouli and Elhamma (2025), this article proposes a specific conceptual framework that integrates three theoretical perspectives. Contingency theory serves as the primary framework, supplemented by resource dependence theory and the neo-institutional approach. The proposed model distinguishes between two internal factors, centralization and formalization, and three external factors: environmental uncertainty, resource dependence and donor pressures, and institutional pressures. Performance management practices serve as mediators between these factors and organizational effectiveness, as measured by management and program effectiveness. Four hypotheses underpin the proposed model. Their empirical validation will be based on a quantitative survey of Moroccan nonprofit organizations and on structural equation modeling using the PLS-SEM approach.

Keywords: contingency theory; nonprofit organizations; performance management; organizational effectiveness; conceptual model.

Classification JEL: M41

Paper type: Theoretical Research

1. Introduction

Performance measurement and management are playing an increasingly important role in nonprofit organizations (NPOs), which face the need to account for their resources, activities, and the outcomes associated with their mission, even though their performance cannot be reduced exclusively to economic or financial criteria (Sowa et al., 2004; Speckbacher, 2003; Treinta et al., 2020). This multidimensionality calls into question the uniform application of performance systems across organizations with different characteristics and operating environments.

In this regard, contingency theory offers a relevant framework by positing that the design and use of control systems depend on their fit with the characteristics of the context rather than on the existence of a universally superior model (Chenhall, 2003). This logic has been applied to the third sector by Wadongo and Abdel-Kader (2014), who propose a theoretical framework linking contingent variables, performance management, and organizational effectiveness.

In this regard, recent research has also provided important insights into several components of this relationship. Some studies examine the influence of organizational or environmental factors on performance monitoring and measurement systems (Lee, 2021; Oliveira & Callado, 2018, 2019), while others analyze the role of funders and their reporting requirements (Carman, 2009; Thomson, 2010, 2011), while still others focus on the uses of measurement systems and their relationships with various dimensions of performance or effectiveness (Aboramadan et al., 2021; Harrison et al., 2022; Jiao et al., 2023).

The objective of this article is therefore to integrate these various relationships into a coherent and empirically testable conceptual model, rather than assuming that they have never been examined in the literature.

The Moroccan context lends particular empirical significance to this inquiry, given that the 2019 registry compiled by the High Commission for Planning listed 210,000 nonprofit organizations (NPOs), of which approximately 187,834 were estimated to be active; the national survey covered 14,500 units (HCP, 2023).

The same survey indicates that the nonprofit sector mobilized 34.4 billion dirhams in 2019, that 65.9% of NPOs operated on less than 50,000 dirhams per year, and that 1.3% of the organizations accounted for 64.3% of total resources (HCP, 2023).

These disparities in resources and operating conditions make it particularly relevant to examine how performance management practices adapt to organizational and environmental constraints. This article builds upon the work of Jazouli and Elhamma (2025), while developing a distinct conceptual perspective; while that earlier work clarified the general relevance of contingency theory to the study of performance management and the effectiveness of NPOs, this manuscript transforms that framework into a specified architecture, composed of well-defined constructs, testable hypotheses, and a formalized mediation mechanism.

The research question thus becomes: through what mechanisms do internal and external contingency factors shape performance management practices and, through them, the organizational effectiveness of associations? This inquiry calls for examining not only the influence exerted by contextual characteristics but also the way in which their effects are transmitted through the practices adopted by organizations. Makes it possible to understand operating conditions, performance management practices, and organizational outcomes in an integrated manner, while preserving the contingency logic that structures the proposed model. The article first outlines the theoretical and conceptual foundations, then develops the hypotheses, presents the proposed model and compares it with the framework by Wadongo and Abdel-Kader (2014), and finally discusses its contributions, limitations, and empirical validation plan.

2. Theoretical and Conceptual Foundations

2.1. Contingency Theory as the Primary Framework

Our model is primarily grounded in contingency theory, which posits that the effectiveness of control systems depends on their fit with the organizational and environmental context rather than on the existence of a universally optimal system (Chenhall, 2003). This perspective, which has largely shaped research in management control, leads to a joint consideration of the characteristics of the context and the systems used to measure and steer performance.

The contingency approach, however, does not imply that one configuration is inherently superior to others. Rather, it encourages seeking coherence between the conditions facing the organization and the practices it implements.

Ferreira and Otley (2009) propose a broader interpretation of performance management systems, while Speckbacher (2003) emphasizes that transferring concepts from the for-profit sector to nonprofits requires examining the compatibility of their underlying assumptions with the specific characteristics of these organizations. This approach is of particular interest in the nonprofit sector, which is characterized by a diversity of objectives, resources, and stakeholders (Sowa et al., 2004; Speckbacher, 2003).

Wadongo and Abdel-Kader (2014) directly draw on contingency theory to develop a framework linking contingency factors, performance management, and organizational effectiveness in the third sector, thereby constituting the theoretical precedent most closely aligned with the proposed model, which retains this logic of fit as a central explanatory principle.

The work of Treinta et al. (2020) and Moura et al. (2020) similarly confirms the diversity of factors that may influence the design and implementation of performance measurement systems (PMS) in NPOs.

2.2. Resource Dependency Theory and the Neo-Institutional Approach

Contingency theory helps establish the importance of context, but certain external influences require more specific analysis. In this regard, resource dependence theory and the neo-institutional approach are drawn upon. They complement the contingency framework without replacing it.

According to Pfeffer and Salancik (1978), organizations depend on their environment to access the resources necessary for their operation. When these resources are controlled by external actors, this dependence can give them the ability to influence organizational behavior. In nonprofits, this perspective helps shed light on relationships with funders and the obligations that may accompany access to funding. Requirements for accountability, justification of resources, or measurement of results can then help shape performance management practices.

The neo-institutional approach introduces a different logic. It allows us to understand organizational behavior through the expectations of compliance and legitimacy that develop within their institutional environment. DiMaggio and Powell (1983) distinguish three mechanisms of isomorphism in this regard, namely coercive, mimetic, and normative. Coercive pressures result in particular from formal requirements imposed on organizations; mimetic mechanisms encourage imitation in situations of uncertainty, while normative pressures accompany the diffusion of professional standards. The adoption of certain formalized management practices may thus respond to considerations of legitimacy as much as to strictly technical needs.

2.3. Interrelation of the Three Theoretical Frameworks

The three perspectives do not occupy an equivalent position within the chosen theoretical framework. Contingency theory remains the dominant framework, as it provides the general logic linking context to performance management practices. Meanwhile, resource dependence

theory specifies the mechanism by which external actors' control over essential resources can shape organizational behavior (Pfeffer & Salancik, 1978). The neo-institutional approach, for its part, complements this analysis by distinguishing between coercive, mimetic, and normative pressures that may promote the adoption of practices deemed legitimate (DiMaggio & Powell, 1983). In the nonprofit sector, Lee (2021) explicitly combines resource dependence and neo-institutional theory to study the adoption of performance measures, thereby updating the application of these foundational frameworks in a nonprofit context.

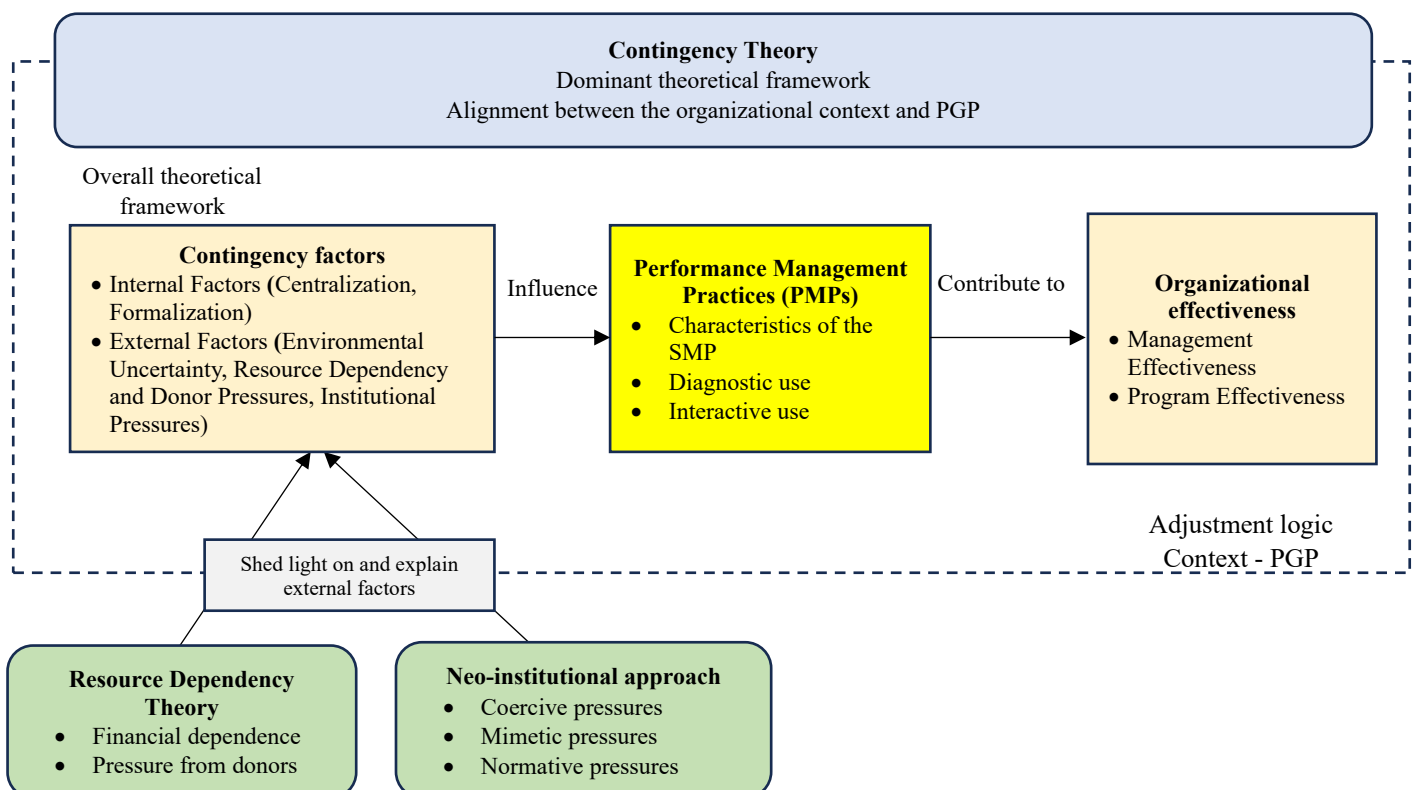
This integration is therefore complementary rather than additive. The contingent framework structures the general explanation, while the other two perspectives delve deeper into certain mechanisms associated with external contingencies. Such a hierarchy avoids juxtaposing three theories as if they provided competing explanations of the same phenomenon.

Table 1. Hierarchy of the theoretical frameworks employed.

Theoretical Framework	Status in the model	Main Mechanism Explained
Contingency theory	Dominant framework	Alignment between context and performance management practices
Resource dependence	Complementary framework	Financial dependence and donor pressures
Neo-institutionalism	Complementary framework	Coercive, mimetic, and normative pressures

Source: Developed by the authors based on the reviewed literature.

Figure 1: Interrelationship of the three theoretical frameworks used in the conceptual model



Source: Developed by the authors

2.4. Internal and External Contingency Factors

The model distinguishes between contingency factors based on whether they are internal or external in origin. This distinction allows for the simultaneous consideration of the organization's specific characteristics and the conditions resulting from its environment.

Internally, two dimensions are considered: centralization and formalization. Centralization refers to the degree to which decision-making authority is concentrated, while formalization concerns the presence and codification of organizational rules and procedures. These characteristics can alter decision-making processes, the flow of information, and the conditions under which management systems are used (Chenhall, 2003). However, they are not considered a priori to be either favorable or unfavorable to effectiveness.

Research conducted directly within NPOs also provides useful insights. Martín Pérez et al. (2008) studied the organizational architecture of Spanish Non-Governmental Development Organizations (NGDOs), focusing in particular on the interactions between the delegation of decision-making authority, incentive systems, and the use of performance metrics. This study confirms the value of examining certain structural characteristics and management mechanisms in NPOs together.

The external contingencies identified correspond to three distinct realities. Environmental uncertainty reflects the difficulty in anticipating changes that may affect the organization's activities. Resource dependence and donor pressures account for constraints related to access to resources controlled by external actors (Pfeffer & Salancik, 1978). Finally, institutional pressures refer to the coercive, mimetic, and normative mechanisms that can shape organizational behavior (DiMaggio & Powell, 1983). This breakdown avoids treating the environment as a homogeneous reality and allows each factor to be linked to the underlying theoretical mechanism.

2.5. Performance Management Practices

Performance management practices (PMPs) are understood as a multidimensional construct. Three dimensions are distinguished: the characteristics of the performance measurement system, its diagnostic use, and its interactive use. This conceptualization allows us to consider both the configuration of the system and the way in which the information produced influences organizational steering.

The first dimension pertains in particular to the clarity of objectives, the scope of the information used, its availability, and its ability to shed light on the relationships between actions and results (Chenhall & Morris, 1986; Ferreira & Otley, 2009). The other two dimensions focus on how the system is used. Diagnostic use emphasizes monitoring objectives, analyzing variances, and taking corrective actions, whereas interactive use places greater emphasis on dialogue, learning, and discussing strategic uncertainties (Simons, 1995).

Guenther and Heinicke (2019) provide conceptual support that closely aligns with this architecture by jointly examining the sophistication of the performance measurement system and its diagnostic and interactive uses. Their study does not, however, focus on nonprofits, but it supports the conceptual structuring of the construct without constituting a direct sector-specific validation of the chosen architecture.

The empirical literature specific to the nonprofit sector, however, provides significant support for the dimensions related to the use of the system. Harrison et al. (2022) studied 271 nonprofit human services organizations in Australia and explicitly distinguished between the diagnostic and interactive uses of performance measurement systems (PMS). Both uses are positively related to client performance. These results confirm, in a nonprofit context, the empirical relevance of distinguishing between the different ways in which PMS are used.

The available evidence thus provides convergent, though not strictly identical, support for the three-dimensional framework adopted. No empirical study in the nonprofit sector was identified

in the literature examined. Therefore, it cannot be asserted that the three dimensions (characteristics or sophistication of the PMS, diagnostic use, and interactive use) have already been jointly validated in a strictly equivalent form. It would therefore be scientifically excessive to present this configuration as a three-dimensional scale that has already been validated in NPOs. Rather, it is considered a conceptual proposal based on converging theoretical and empirical foundations, the validity of which will be specifically examined as part of the doctoral research.

2.6. Organizational Effectiveness

The organizational effectiveness of NPOs does not lend itself to a one-dimensional assessment. Mission fulfillment, program quality, management capabilities, and stakeholder evaluations can lead to different assessments of the same organization. The literature thus encourages viewing effectiveness as a multidimensional construct rather than reducing it to a single financial or operational indicator (Herman & Renz, 2008; Sowa et al., 2004).

The operationalization adopted here is based primarily on the integrated multidimensional model developed by Sowa et al. (2004). Their model explicitly distinguishes between two major dimensions of nonprofit effectiveness, namely *management effectiveness* and *program effectiveness*. This distinction provides the conceptual basis for the two dimensions included in the present model.

Management effectiveness refers to the organization's ability to mobilize and coordinate its resources, as well as to ensure the conditions necessary for its operation, whereas program effectiveness relates more to the quality and outcomes of the actions carried out in light of the objectives pursued and the target populations. These two dimensions are complementary and help prevent an organization from being considered effective solely on the basis of its internal processes or, conversely, its program outcomes.

This conceptualization is reinforced by Herman and Renz (2008). Their review of the literature leads, in particular, to viewing the effectiveness of nonprofits as comparative, multidimensional, and socially constructed, while emphasizing the importance of the type of organization and the level of analysis chosen. Their approach thus complements Sowa et al. (2004). While the latter provide a framework distinguishing between managerial and programmatic effectiveness, Herman and Renz (2008) strengthen the case for a multidimensional understanding of effectiveness.

3. Development of Theoretical Framework and Formulation of Hypotheses

The formulation of hypotheses is based on a targeted review of theoretical and empirical work directly related to the relationships under examination. Priority is given to research focused on nonprofits as well as to foundational contributions from the theoretical perspectives employed. When available knowledge in this sector remains insufficient, studies conducted in other organizational contexts are also taken into consideration, provided that their constructs or relationships exhibit conceptual proximity to those of the model. Their inclusion thus serves as complementary support rather than direct validation within the nonprofit sector. The selection of the literature is thus based on a targeted narrative approach, prioritizing the theoretical and empirical relevance of the studies with respect to the constructs and relationships examined in the model.

3.1. Internal Contingency Factors and Performance Management Practices (PMPs)

Among the factors that can shape control systems are the structural characteristics of the organization. Contingency research views these characteristics in relation to the needs for information, coordination, and control, rather than as determinative that produce identical

effects in all situations (Chenhall, 2003). Two internal dimensions are included in our model, specifically decision-making centralization and the formalization of rules and procedures.

Centralization refers to the concentration of decision-making authority. Depending on how this authority is distributed, the needs for coordination and monitoring may vary; as these needs change, so do the conditions under which performance information is produced and utilized. This is precisely one of the key insights of the contingency approach: organizational structure and control systems must be examined jointly (Chenhall, 2003).

In the nonprofit sector, Martín Pérez et al. (2008) provide a more directly contextualized perspective. Their study of Spanish Non-Governmental Development Organizations (NGDOs) examines the delegation of decision-making authority, incentive systems, and the use of performance evaluation measures within the organizational architecture. This finding supports the existence of a link between decision-making organization and measurement mechanisms; however, it does not allow us to assert that greater centralization systematically leads to a more significant development of PGP.

Another internal characteristic, formalization, reflects the degree to which activities are governed by explicit rules and procedures. Its association with control systems is consistent with the contingent perspective, which considers structure to be one of the contextual dimensions that may be linked to the design of management control systems (Chenhall, 2003). However, formalization alone does not provide insight into how the information produced is actually used. It can structure monitoring processes without automatically determining their diagnostic or interactive nature.

Thus, a theoretically grounded relationship emerges between internal structural characteristics and PGP. Its orientation, however, remains difficult to pin down at the aggregate level: centralization and formalization correspond to two different mechanisms, whose effects depend on their articulation with the control system and the organizational context (Chenhall, 2003). The non-directional formulation thus reflects the contingent logic of the reasoning; it does not mean that the existence of the relationship is left undetermined.

From these elements, the following hypothesis emerges:

H1: *Internal contingency factors influence performance management practices in nonprofit organizations.*

3.2. External Contingency Factors and Performance Management Practices (PMPs)

In addition to the internal structure, there are the conditions under which the organization interacts with its environment. Three external dimensions are identified: environmental uncertainty, resource dependence, and donor pressures, as well as institutional pressures. Grouping them into a single category does not imply that they stem from an identical mechanism.

Environmental uncertainty has long been a focus of contingency research in management control. (Chenhall, 2003) identifies it as one of the contextual variables used to understand the design of control systems and their alignment with organizational needs. In a less predictable environment, information needs may change; the configuration of the control system must then adapt to the conditions the organization faces.

This relationship finds direct empirical support in the nonprofit sector. Lee (2021), drawing on data from 143 California nonprofits, examines the adoption of performance measures in relation to several organizational and environmental factors (Lee, 2021). The results notably link this adoption to environmental uncertainty and external institutional pressures. The scope of this evidence, however, must be limited to what is actually studied; specifically, it concerns the adoption of performance measures, not the validation of all dimensions of PGP included in our model.

This relationship does not, however, appear consistent across research on the nonprofit sector. Oliveira and Callado (2019), in a study of Brazilian NGOs, examine the relationships between several external contingent factors and performance measurement practices. Their results show that the majority of the relationships examined are not statistically significant. This divergence from Lee's (2021) findings thus suggests that the influence of external contingencies depends on the dimensions studied and the organizational context.

Resource dependence introduces a second mechanism. An organization that does not control all the resources necessary for its activities maintains dependent relationships with the actors who hold those resources; these relationships can give those actors the ability to influence certain organizational behaviors (Pfeffer & Salancik, 1978). For an association, funders' requirements regarding monitoring, justification, or accountability can thus help shape the information produced. Such pressure, however, should not automatically be equated with an improvement in PGP, since meeting a funder's expectations and developing a system useful for internal management are not necessarily the same thing.

An institutional logic also comes into play. DiMaggio and Powell (1983) distinguish between coercive, mimetic, and normative pressures to explain the diffusion of structures and practices within organizational fields. In the nonprofits studied by Lee (2021), external institutional pressures are indeed associated with the adoption of performance measures. This finding provides sector-specific empirical support for the proposed mechanism, without assuming that all forms of pressure produce identical effects.

The available research therefore converges on one point, namely that external conditions are likely to shape performance measurement and management practices. On the other hand, imposing a single direction on uncertainty, resource dependence, and institutional pressures would be difficult to reconcile with the diversity of these mechanisms. Contingency theory reinforces this caution, as it seeks above all a fit between the system and the context, rather than a universally superior configuration (Chenhall, 2003).

This line of reasoning leads to the following hypothesis:

H2: *External contingency factors influence performance management practices in nonprofit organizations.*

3.3. Performance Management Practices and Organizational Effectiveness

It remains to be examined what happens when performance management practices (PMPs) are actually implemented. Their potential contribution does not lie solely in the existence of indicators; it also depends on the nature of the available information and how it is used in steering the organization. Our construct specifically brings together these two aspects through the characteristics of the performance management system (PMS) and its diagnostic and interactive uses.

In this regard, data specific to the nonprofit sector are particularly useful. Aboramadan et al. (2021) studied 218 employees working in large Palestinian nonprofits and tested these relationships using structural equation modeling. Their results show that the use of financial and non-financial measures is positively related to organizational effectiveness; the trust of internal stakeholders also acts as a mediator in the relationships studied.

Although this operationalization differs from our three-dimensional construct, it provides direct empirical evidence of the positive association between performance measurement and effectiveness in NPOs.

This initial finding is complemented by that of Harrison et al. (2022). Their study draws on survey and archival data from 271 Australian nonprofit human services organizations. Both the diagnostic and interactive uses of performance management systems are positively associated with client performance. The similarity to our proposed is notable here, as two of its three usage dimensions are directly represented.

These results do not allow us to conclude that all dimensions of PGP exert effects of equal intensity. Nevertheless, they provide more direct empirical evidence than that used for *H1* and *H2* regarding the expected direction of the relationship. The two studies conducted in the context of NPOs highlight positive relationships between certain dimensions of the measurement or use of performance management systems and various organizational outcomes. The multidimensional nature of effectiveness simply suggests that this general trend should not be confused with a uniform effect across all its components.

This precaution is consistent with the chosen conceptual framework. In MIMNOE, Sowa et al. (2004) explicitly distinguish between managerial effectiveness and programmatic effectiveness, with both dimensions being integrated into a broader conception of the organizational effectiveness of NPOs. Our model incorporates this distinction through management effectiveness and program effectiveness.

In light of this empirical convergence, a directional formulation becomes defensible here. It concerns the overall relationship between PGP and organizational effectiveness; it does not presuppose that each dimension separately exerts an identical positive effect.

These elements lead us to formulate the following hypothesis:

H3: Performance management practices positively influence the organizational effectiveness of nonprofit organizations.

3.4. Mediating Role of Performance Management Practices

Taken together, the three preceding relationships reveal a specific architecture. Internal and external contingencies precede PMPs; the latter, in turn, are linked to organizational effectiveness. An indirect mechanism thus emerges between context and effectiveness, with PMPs serving as the intermediate link.

A particularly relevant theoretical precedent can be found in the work of Wadongo and Abdel-Kader (2014), who developed a framework for the nonprofit sector explaining how contingency factors affect performance management and organizational effectiveness; the propositions they formulated are intended for subsequent empirical validation. Their contribution thus supports the general framework of the reasoning, without constituting an empirical validation of the specific indirect effect proposed in our model.

The empirical studies reviewed provide additional insights. On the one hand, the literature on nonprofit organizations presents findings linking certain environmental contingencies to the adoption of performance measures; on the other hand, Aboramadan et al. (2021) and Harrison et al. (2022) establish relationships between different dimensions of these practices and organizational outcomes. Their findings do not directly demonstrate the proposed mediation. Nevertheless, together with the framework of Wadongo and Abdel-Kader (2014), they provide the two necessary steps for its theoretical deduction.

Mediation here should be understood as the existence of an indirect effect. It does not imply that contingencies have no relationship with effectiveness outside of PGP; partial mediation therefore remains compatible with the proposed hypothesis. This distinction will be important during the empirical evaluation of the model, since it avoids confusing the existence of an indirect effect with the requirement of total mediation.

From this chain of reasoning follows the following mediation hypothesis:

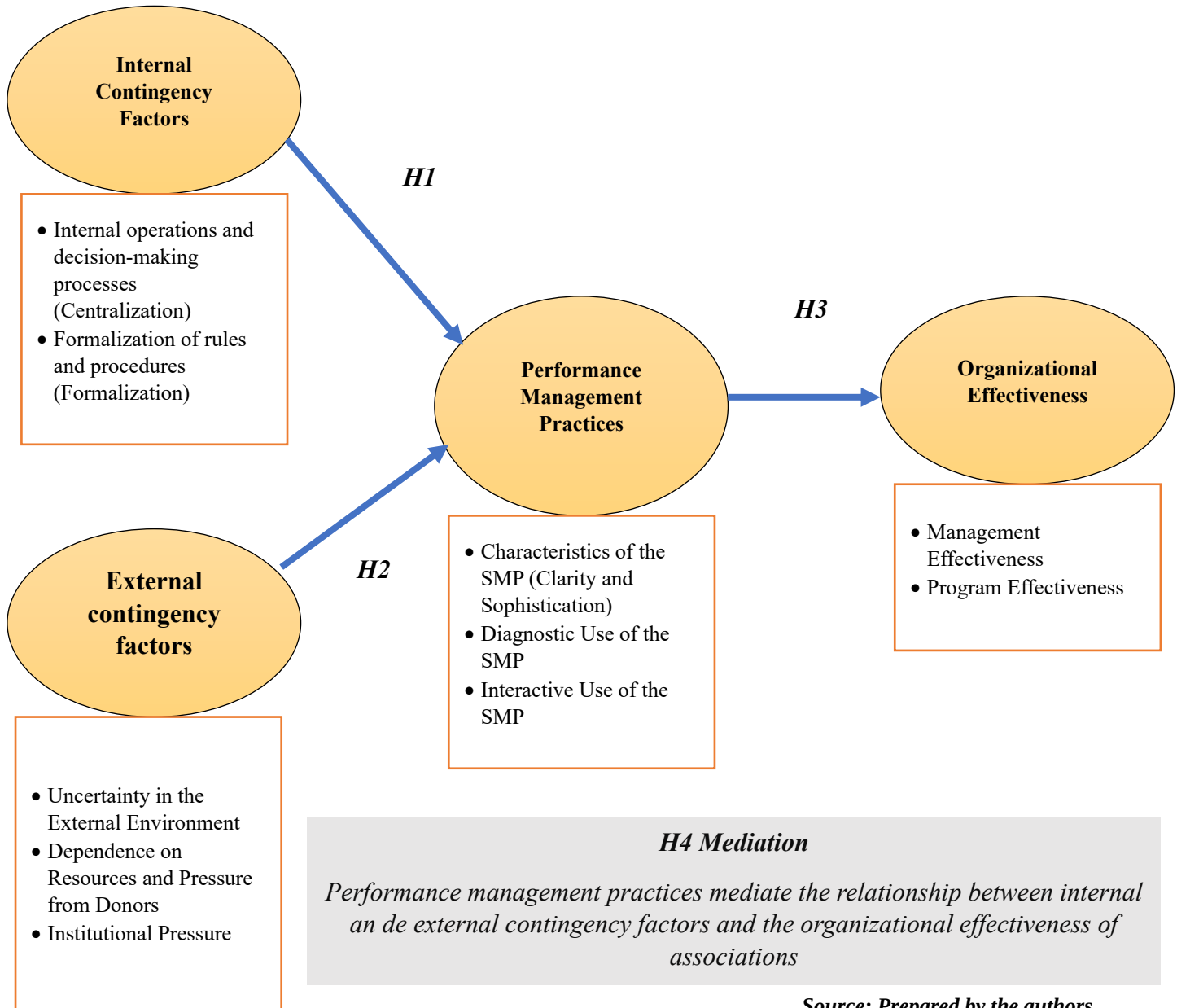
H4: Performance management practices mediate the relationship between internal and external contingency factors and the organizational effectiveness of associations.

4. Proposed Conceptual Model and Discussion

The proposed conceptual model brings together the relationships developed in the previous section and organizes them around a sequence linking contingency factors, performance management practices (PMPs), and organizational effectiveness. This framework is grounded

in a contingency-based logic whereby management practices are not considered in isolation from the internal and external conditions in which the organization operates (Chenhall, 2003; Wadongo & Abdel-Kader, 2014). The model, however, refines this logic by distinguishing several sources of contingency and assigning PMPs an intermediate position in the proposed sequence.

Figure 1: Proposed Conceptual Model



Source: Prepared by the authors.

The figure is read from left to right. At the beginning, two sets of contingency factors are shown. The first corresponds to internal factors and includes the centralization of decision-making processes as well as the formalization of rules and procedures; the second encompasses external factors, represented by environmental uncertainty, resource dependence, and pressures from donors, as well as institutional pressures. This distinction allows for the separation of characteristics related to the organization's operations from the constraints and demands arising from its environment.

At the center of the model are the PGP. Their conceptualization is based on three complementary dimensions: the characteristics of the performance measurement system, its

diagnostic use, and its interactive use. The two arrows pointing toward the PGP represent **H1** and **H2**; they symbolize, respectively, the postulated relationships with internal and external factors. Their representation does not assign them a uniform sign, in accordance with the theoretical rationale developed earlier.

On the right is organizational effectiveness. It is understood through management effectiveness and program effectiveness, two dimensions that correspond to the major components identified in the MIMNOE model by Sowa et al. (2004). The arrow extending from the PGP toward effectiveness represents **H3** and reflects the postulated positive relationship between these two constructs.

Finally, the central position of the PGP has a second significance. It represents the indirect effect formalized by **H4**: internal and external factors are linked to the PGP, which are in turn linked to organizational effectiveness. The mediation depicted in this way does not necessarily imply that all effects associated with contingencies pass through PGP; it theoretically allows for the existence of partial mediation.

➤ ***Positioning the proposed model in relation to the framework of Wadongo and Abdel-Kader (2014)***

A comparison with the framework proposed by Wadongo and Abdel-Kader (2014) helps to better contextualize the approach adopted in this article. Adopting a contingency perspective, the authors propose a theoretical framework linking contingency factors, performance management, and organizational effectiveness in the third sector. To analyze performance management practices, they draw on the *Performance Management and Control Framework* (PMCF) developed by Ferreira and Otley (2009), adapted to the specific characteristics of the third sector. Organizational effectiveness, meanwhile, is examined across four complementary domains. This framework remains conceptual in nature, as the authors' proposals are intended to be subject to subsequent empirical validation.

The proposed model follows this general line of research without replicating its configuration. The differences relate in particular to the selection of contingencies, the conceptualization of PGP, the dimensions of effectiveness selected, and the explicit formalization of mediation. The following table allows for a direct comparison of these choices.

This comparison reveals a theoretical continuity, but also a difference in the level of specification. The framework of Wadongo and Abdel-Kader (2014) offers a general architecture linking contingencies, performance management, and effectiveness in the third sector; the proposed model refines this architecture around specific factors and clarifies the composition of the two constructs placed downstream. The aim, therefore, is not to pit the two models against each other, but to precisely situate the framework developed here in relation to a particularly similar reference framework.

The difference also concerns the theoretical foundations used to interpret external factors. Resource dependence helps us understand the relationships created by control over essential resources (Pfeffer & Salancik, 1978), whereas neo-institutionalism sheds light on the coercive, mimetic, and normative mechanisms that can shape organizational practices (DiMaggio & Powell, 1983). Their integration with the contingency perspective thus enriches the interpretation of the mechanisms depicted on the left side of the model, without calling into question the dominant role assigned to contingency theory.

Table 2: Comparison of the proposed model with the framework by Wadongo and Abdel-Kader (2014)

Dimension Compared	Wadongo and Abdel-kader (2014)	Proposed Model	Specification Provided
Theoretical foundation	Contingency theory	Contingency theory supplemented by resource dependence and the neo-institutional approach	Separate consideration of mechanisms associated with resources and institutional pressures
Contingency Factors	A broad set of organizational and environmental variables	Internal: centralization and formalization. External: environmental uncertainty, resource dependence/donor pressures, and institutional pressures	A narrowed-down selection of five contingencies linked to PGP
Performance management	Performance management approached using a modified PMCF	Characteristics of the SMP, diagnostic use, and interactive use	PGPs organized around three explicitly defined dimensions
Organizational Effectiveness	Four Proposed Areas for the Third Sector	Management effectiveness and program effectiveness	Focus on two areas consistent with the MIMNOE framework
Relational architecture	Contingent variables, performance management, and organizational effectiveness	The influence of internal and external contingency factors on performance management practices, and the contribution of these practices to organizational effectiveness.	Relationships explicitly formalized by H1 , H2 , and H3
Intermediary role of PGP	Intermediary position of performance management within the theoretical framework	Mediation by PGP formalized in H4	Indirect effect explicitly established as a hypothesis

Source: Developed by the authors based on Wadongo and Abdel-Kader (2014), Sowa et al. (2004), and the proposed model.

5. Discussion of the Proposed Model

The value of this framework lies primarily in the distinction it makes between several sources of contingency. Centralization and formalization describe two aspects of internal functioning; environmental uncertainty, resource dependence, and institutional pressures, for their part, refer to different forms of exposure to the environment. Bringing them together within a single framework allows us to study their relationships with PGP without reducing them to a general and undifferentiated notion of “context.”

A second element concerns the way in which PGP are conceptualized. The model does not equate them with the mere presence of indicators or measurement tools. It links the characteristics of the SMP to the ways in which information is utilized, distinguishing between diagnostic use and interactive use. This distinction is particularly important, as research conducted in nonprofit organizations shows that the effects associated with these two uses can vary depending on the organizational outcome under consideration. For example, in the Australian elder care organizations studied by Jiao et al. (2023), the interactive use of the PMS is positively associated with revenue growth, whereas diagnostic use is negatively associated with this same outcome.

The intermediate position of PGP constitutes a third interpretive element. Rather than assuming an immediate translation of contingencies into effectiveness, the model introduces an organizational mechanism between these two levels. PGPs thus become the venue where context-related requirements can be translated into information, monitoring, and procedures for using that information. This architecture remains consistent with the contingency framework of

Wadongo and Abdel-Kader (2014), which links contingency variables, performance management, and effectiveness in the nonprofit sector.

Finally, the effectiveness considered at the end of the model retains its multidimensional nature. Sowa et al. (2004) specifically distinguish between *management effectiveness* and *program effectiveness*, each of which can be examined through the lenses of capacity and outcomes. This distinction prevents associative effectiveness from being reduced to a single financial metric or to the immediate achievement of a programmatic objective. Above all, it allows for a separate examination of the organization's capacity to function and the capacity of its programs to produce the desired outcomes.

These choices, however, entail a delimitation of the model. The model is not intended to incorporate all possible determinants of organizational effectiveness; rather, it focuses on the mechanisms relevant to the theoretical problem under examination. This limitation is important, because a conceptual model gains explanatory power through the coherence of the relationships it specifies, but does not claim to exhaust all sources of heterogeneity among organizations.

➤ *Possible Control Variables and Moderating Effects*

Certain characteristics may accompany the differences observed among associations without belonging to the model's theoretical core. Size, age, field of activity, and funding structure are, in this regard, potential control variables when the corresponding information has actually been collected. The contingency literature, in particular, highlights size as one of the characteristics likely to be associated with the design of control systems, and Wadongo and Abdel-Kader (2014) include it among the organizational variables in their framework.

Its status, however, must remain clearly distinct from that of the main constructs. Introducing a control variable aims to account for a plausible source of heterogeneity; this does not amount to assigning it the same theoretical role as the contingencies explicitly included in **H1** and **H2**. Consequently, their selection during the empirical analysis must be based on theoretical justification and data availability, rather than solely on their ability to produce statistically significant coefficients.

The contingency framework also opens the door to moderating effects. A relationship between context and PGP may, for example, vary depending on certain organizational characteristics; similarly, the consequences of a particular use of the system may depend on the conditions under which it is implemented.

The findings of Jiao et al. (2023) illustrate this possibility in the nonprofit sector. Among 180 Australian elderly care organizations, certain dimensions of organizational culture moderate the relationships between diagnostic and interactive uses of the PMS and revenue growth.

These potential relationships are not incorporated into the assumptions of the current model but represent avenues for future research that could be explored based on appropriate theoretical and empirical foundations. This approach preserves the consistency of the model and hypotheses **H1** through **H4**, while acknowledging that the relationships studied may be embedded in more complex organizational contexts.

6. Conclusion

This article culminates in the formulation of a conceptual model designed to better understand the conditions under which PGP can contribute to the effectiveness of nonprofit organizations. Beyond the relationships considered in isolation, the value of the proposed framework lies in its integration of organizational mechanisms, the interplay of which still needs to be tested against empirical data.

This perspective appears particularly relevant in the nonprofit sector, where effectiveness remains multidimensional and depends on criteria that cannot be reduced to either financial results or universally superior management practices (Herman & Renz, 2008).

The model nevertheless has limitations that define its scope. The factors selected do not cover all the characteristics that may influence the functioning and effectiveness of an organization; this choice is based on the desire to limit the model to theoretically essential relationships while preserving its overall coherence, but it necessarily excludes other potential determinants. Similarly, PGP and organizational effectiveness are analyzed through specific dimensions, whereas other conceptualizations remain possible in the literature. Finally, its grounding in the Moroccan nonprofit context calls for caution regarding any potential application to other types of organizations or different institutional environments. This precaution aligns with research highlighting the importance of the type of nonprofit and the level of analysis in the study of organizational effectiveness (Herman & Renz, 2008).

The next step will be to test the proposed relationships using data collected via a questionnaire administered to Moroccan associations. The analysis will employ structural equation modeling using the partial least squares approach (PLS-SEM), which is suited to the joint evaluation of measurement models and the structural model, as well as to the examination of indirect effects (Hair et al., 2019). This will thus allow for an evaluation of the properties of the constructs before examining the structural relationships and the mediation mechanism formulated in the model. The final sample size will be determined based on usable questionnaires and assessed in light of the model's statistical requirements, rather than based on an arbitrary threshold announced before data processing is complete.

The expected results also have practical significance, provided that the postulated relationships are empirically supported. For nonprofit leaders, these results could provide a better understanding of the conditions under which performance management systems effectively support the steering, coordination, and achievement of organizational objectives. For funders, the challenge would be to better understand how monitoring and accountability requirements align with the internal needs of the funded organizations. Public actors and support organizations, for their part, could gain insights that would allow them to better tailor their support mechanisms to the characteristics of associations, rather than favoring uniform practices. This cautious approach is consistent with Herman and Renz (2008), who challenge the existence of management practices universally applicable to all nonprofits.

Empirical testing thus constitutes less a simple verification of the proposed framework than a step intended to clarify its scope. It will make it possible to identify the relationships actually supported by the data, to assess the role played by PGP in the mechanism under study, and to determine the model's explanatory limits. The scope of the theoretical insights and managerial implications, which can then be formulated with greater precision, will depend on these results.

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