

"THERE'S THE RULE, IT SHOULD BE EASY"
FROM POLICY INTENTION TO IMPLEMENTATION:
ANALYSIS OF PUBLIC MANAGEMENT EXECUTION IN COLOMBIA

by

ALEJANDRA RODAS GAITER

(Under the Direction of Katherine G. Willoughby)

ABSTRACT

The effective implementation of public management policies and reforms is influenced not only by their design but also by the organizational and individual characteristics that shape compliance efforts. This dissertation examines how these factors interact within Colombia's centralized and bureaucratic administrative system, which is rooted in Napoleonic traditions and represents a blend of different types of public management reforms. This study explores public sector compliance through three essays from organizational and individual perspectives.

The first essay analyzes how structural and resource-based attributes of government organizations influence their ability to comply with one type of public management policy: transparency regulations. Using administrative data from 2016 to 2022, it assesses the role of workforce size, budget allocation, and institutional capacity in regulatory adherence. The second essay shifts the focus to public employees, investigating the motivational drivers—calculated, normative, and social—that shape compliance behavior. Drawing on survey data from the Colombian Employee Viewpoint Survey and administrative records, it applies May and Winter's

compliance model to assess the role of incentives, values, and peer influence in rule adherence. The third essay employs a qualitative approach, analyzing interviews with national government managers to explore their perspectives on compliance, managerial discretion, and reform constraints.

Findings reveal a hybrid administrative system where bureaucratic rigidity coexists with managerial reforms, creating tensions between formal compliance and practical implementation. While well-resourced agencies show higher compliance rates, institutional inertia and political constraints often hinder reform effectiveness. Normative and social motives strongly influence employees' commitment to compliance, particularly when regulations align with professional values. Despite regulatory burdens and resource limitations, public managers employ adaptive strategies to balance control with flexibility.

By integrating organizational and individual perspectives, this research provides insights into the execution of public management policies within complex governance settings. It contributes to discussions on bureaucratic control, policy implementation, and managerial discretion across Latin America, emphasizing the necessity for institutional flexibility, enhanced managerial capacity, and strategic resource allocation to improve governance effectiveness.

INDEX WORDS: Public management, implementation, compliance, public management reform, bureaucracy, managerial discretion, public employees perspective, resources, transparency, and institutional capacity.

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DEDICATION

To my parents and my sister

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Writing this dissertation while pursuing a Ph.D. and migrating to another country during a pandemic would not have been possible without my safety net—the incredible people who kept me grounded, reminded me of my goals, and believed in me even when I doubted myself.

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CHAPTER 1

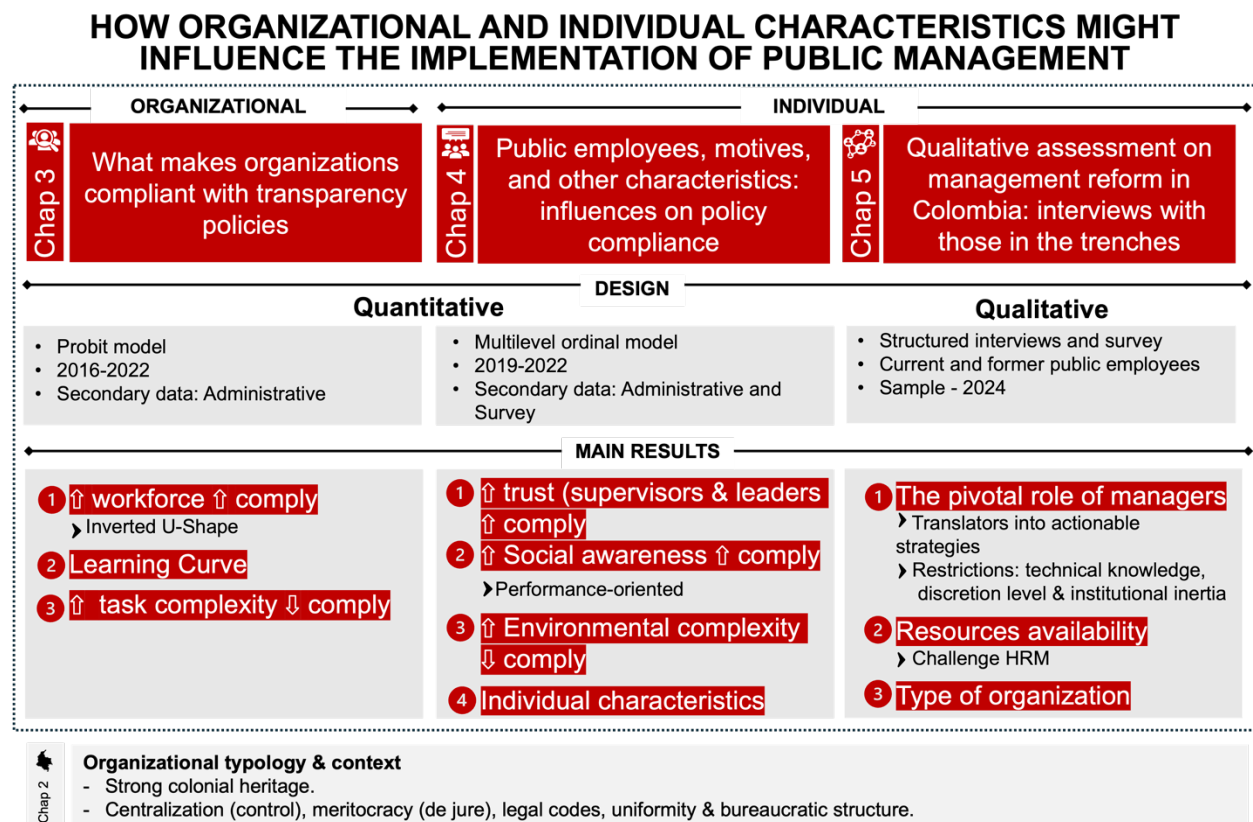
INTRODUCTION

Public administration plays a critical role in shaping and implementing policies that address complex societal needs. A long-standing question in the field concerns how organizational and individual characteristics influence the effectiveness of public policy implementation. This dissertation investigates these dynamics in the Colombian context, analyzing how bureaucratic structures, institutional environments, and individual behaviors shape the outcomes of public management reforms. Colombia offers a particularly relevant case for this inquiry: it features a centralized, hierarchical administrative tradition influenced by Napoleonic roots, while also adopting various modern public management reforms in recent decades. The study explores how this hybrid governance system mediates reform implementation across a diverse set of public organizations and bureaucratic actors.

The research is grounded in core debates and theoretical frameworks from public administration and public management, emphasizing both structural and human dimensions of policy implementation. Key concepts include bureaucratic discretion, institutional capacity, and managerial autonomy, as well as normative and motivational drivers of compliance. Principal-agent theory, institutionalism, and street-level bureaucracy provide useful lenses to examine how organizational goals, resources, and environments shape administrative behavior and reform outcomes. A growing body of literature also highlights that public organizations differ in their “degree of publicness”—the extent to which they are subject to political authority and operate in complex, permeable, and high-stakes environments (Bozeman & Bretschneider, 1994; Boyne,

2002; Pollitt & Bouckaert, 2011). These variations, in turn, influence their ability to internalize and execute public management policies.

Equally important is the role of individual actors in the bureaucracy—public managers and employees—who interpret, negotiate, and implement policy on the ground. Drawing from classic and contemporary frameworks, including the Friedrich vs. Finer debate and May and Winter’s compliance model, this dissertation examines how employee discretion, professional norms, and motivational factors (calculated, normative, and social) shape policy compliance (May & Winter, 1999; Brewer, 2019). These individual-level dynamics interact with organizational environments to produce varied implementation patterns across the Colombian public sector.



Source: created by author

Figure 1.1 Overview of Dissertation Design and Main Findings: How Organizational and Individual Characteristics Influence the Implementation of Public Management

This dissertation addresses the central question: *How do organizational and individual characteristics shape the implementation of public management policies in Colombia?* The research is structured around two levels of analysis—organizational and individual—and uses a mixed-methods approach to examine how these characteristics shape the implementation of public management policies in Colombia. To explore this, the study adopts a three-essay design, as summarized in Figure 1.1. Each essay applies a distinct methodological approach to capture different dimensions of the implementation process. The first essay (Chapter 3) analyzes administrative data from 2016 to 2022 using a probit model to examine how organizational features such as workforce size, budget, and task complexity influence compliance with transparency mandates. The second essay (Chapter 4) employs a multilevel ordinal model applied to survey and administrative data to assess how employees’ motivations—calculated, normative, and social—affect their compliance behavior. The third essay (Chapter 5) draws on qualitative interviews with public managers to explore how they interpret policy expectations, navigate institutional constraints, and exercise discretion within a bureaucratic system.

Figure 1.1 also highlights the main results that emerge from the three essays and the overarching patterns that connect them. At the organizational level, the first essay finds that both workforce size and task complexity significantly shape compliance with public management policies. Specifically, there is an inverted U-shaped relationship between workforce size and compliance, suggesting that while a larger staff can enhance capacity, there is a threshold beyond which complexity or inefficiency may reduce compliance. In addition, agencies with more complex tasks tend to exhibit lower levels of compliance, likely due to competing demands and limited administrative bandwidth. The second essay, situated at the individual level, shows that public employees’ motivations—especially normative and social drivers like professional values,

trust in leadership, and peer influence—are strong predictors of rule adherence. These results underscore the importance of not only incentives but also shared values and organizational culture in shaping employee behavior. The third essay reveals how public managers exercise discretion in navigating policy expectations and institutional constraints. While formal rules and rigid hierarchies often limit flexibility, managers adopt adaptive strategies to reconcile performance demands with contextual limitations, particularly in resource-constrained settings.

Taken together, the findings emphasize that implementation is neither linear nor uniform. Instead, it reflects the dynamic interplay between institutional environments, organizational structures, and the values and choices of individuals. Factors such as organizational typology, resource availability, managerial autonomy, and bureaucratic culture consistently emerge as critical conditions that explain the heterogeneity in implementation outcomes across Colombia's public sector. These insights suggest that public management policies cannot follow a one-size-fits-all logic. Instead, they must allow for contextual adaptation by public organizations. Granting agencies the flexibility and discretion to tailor implementation to their specific missions, challenges, and capacities is essential for ensuring policy effectiveness. By integrating these findings, the dissertation contributes to a deeper understanding of how public management policies are interpreted, negotiated, and enacted within a hybrid and evolving administrative system, and how they might be designed and supported more effectively moving forward.

The dissertation is structured in five chapters. Chapter 2 lays the conceptual foundation by introducing key theoretical perspectives on public organizations and implementation and develops a typology of Colombian national agencies based on their degree of publicness and resource availability. This typology offers a framework to better understand organizational heterogeneity and its relevance for reform implementation. The third chapter presents the first

empirical essay, analyzing how structural features—such as budget size, workforce, and administrative autonomy—influence organizational compliance with public management policies using administrative data. Chapter 4 shifts to the individual level, using survey data to examine how public employees’ motivations—calculated, normative, and social—affect their compliance with reform mandates. Chapter 5 adopts a qualitative approach, drawing on interviews with national public managers to explore how discretion, leadership, and contextual constraints shape their role in implementing reforms. Finally, Chapter 6 synthesizes the findings across the three essays, discusses their theoretical and practical implications, and offers recommendations for improving reform implementation in Colombia and in similarly hybrid administrative systems.

By bringing together organizational theory, behavioral insights, and empirical evidence from Colombia, this dissertation contributes to the broader literature on public management implementation. It underscores the need to account for both institutional context and individual behavior in understanding why reforms succeed or fail, and it offers practical insights for policymakers and reformers aiming to strengthen state capacity and administrative performance in Latin America and beyond. Colombia’s hybrid administrative system—shaped by legalistic traditions, centralization, and evolving reform agendas—offers a compelling example of how public management operates in environments where historical inertia and modern expectations collide. Rather than serving as an outlier, the Colombian case reflects a broader category of states where implementation challenges arise from the frictions between layered administrative logics, cultural norms, and capacity gaps, thereby offering valuable lessons for both theory and practice in comparative public administration.

CHAPTER 2

ORGANIZATIONAL TYPOLOGY: THE COLOMBIAN CONTEXT

In the public administration discipline, a significant turning point occurred when scholars began questioning whether there were any fundamental differences between public and private organizations. Before this, organizational theories such as those proposed by Weber (1922), Taylor (1912), and McGregor (1960) viewed organizations from a broad perspective, considering variables such as size, task, and technology.

Since the mid-20th century, there has been a shift towards untangling the differences between public and private organizations to enhance organizational management. Prominent scholars, including Dahl and Lindblom (1953), Wamsley and Zald (1973), Bozeman (1987), and Perry and Rainey (1988), proposed various perspectives on how to distinguish between the two sectors. However, their findings acknowledge the challenge of making a clear-cut distinction, and many of them refer to a "continuity" between the private and public sectors.

Moreover, it has become increasingly understood in recent decades that the issue extends beyond the simple separation of the private and public sectors. When the focus shifts from analyzing entire sectors to examining individual organizations, the internal heterogeneity within each sector becomes evident. The distinction between the two sectors is not just blurred; each sector has diverse characteristics and dynamics. As Bozeman and Bretschneider noted, "Some government organizations are more public than others." (1994, p. 112)

I. Literature Review

Publicness definition: What makes an organization “public”?

In the quest to understand what defines public organizations and how they differ from the private sector, Bozeman introduced a dimensional model of publicness. This model focuses on organizational resource processes and other fundamental activities such as goal setting, structuring, and design (Bozeman, 1984; Bozeman, 1987; Bozeman & Bretschneider, 1994; Bozeman & Moulton, 2011). According to this dimensional model, "few, if any, complex organizations are purely public or purely private." (Bozeman & Bretschneider, 1994, p. 202). Most organizations are influenced by a mix of public and private authority. This model introduced the term "publicness," an organizational characteristic that "reflects the extent to which the organization is influenced by political authority" (Bozeman & Bretschneider, 1994, p. 197). Thus, using Bozeman's dimensional approach, organizations exist on a continuum between the private and public sectors and can be characterized by their degree of publicness.

Boyne conducted one of the first meta-analyses of various empirical studies to explore these hypotheses about differences. I will utilize three of the four categories he identified as the main theoretical effects of publicness: organizational environments, goals, and structures (Boyne, 2002, p. 99). The fourth category, the values of managers, will be excluded due to its close relationship with individuals rather than the organization as a unit.

The first theoretical effect is the organizational environment. The concept of publicness is characterized by its complexity, permeability, instability, and lack of competitive pressure (Boyne, 2002). Public organizations operate within open systems subject to external influences, functioning within networks of organizations that pursue similar goals (Metcalf, 1993). These organizations typically have no rivals and follow political cycles that pressure them to achieve

quick results (Bozeman, 1987). Therefore, the degree of publicness varies depending on how much organizations are exposed to these characteristics. The necessity to work within a network is essential not only for achieving their goals but also due to the influence of political forces and cycles (Bozeman, 1987), as well as the dynamics imposed by various stakeholders.

The second category regarding the nature of publicness is organizational goals. As Boyne (2002) explained, the public sector has distinctive goals like equity and accountability. This idea has evolved in recent years, particularly regarding the nature of public values and their relationship with organizational missions. Specific goals or outcomes in public services provide normative consensus on citizens' rights, benefits, prerogatives, their obligations to society, and the principles governing policies and administration (Bozeman, 2007; Brewer, 2013). In this regard, the purpose of some organizations is unique to the public sector, but their goals are often ambiguous and difficult to measure (Brewer, 2013). Consequently, organizations with political, supervisory, and regulatory functions have distinct characteristics (Antonsen & Jørgensen, 1997; Chun & Rainey, 2005) that make them "more public" than others.

The third theoretical category that influences the degree of publicness of organizations is their structure. Higher levels of publicness are associated with increased bureaucracy, red tape, and reduced managerial autonomy. These types of organizations are characterized by more formal and less flexible decision-making procedures and a greater aversion to risk compared to the private sector (Bozeman & Kingsley, 1998). They face demands for accountability from various actors, including citizens and oversight bodies, which can lead to the creation of unnecessary and counterproductive rules—commonly referred to as red tape—and result in public managers having less freedom to respond effectively.

In summary, organizations with higher degrees of publicness are distinctly characterized by their organizational environment, goals, and structure. These organizations operate in complex, permeable, and unstable environments with minimal competitive pressure, functioning within open systems influenced by external factors and political cycles. They collaborate within networks of similar goal-oriented entities, driven by the necessity to navigate political forces and diverse stakeholder dynamics. Public sector goals such as equity and accountability, which are often unique and challenging to measure, underscore their missions focused on citizens' rights, benefits, and societal obligations. Structurally, these organizations are marked by increased bureaucracy, red tape, and reduced managerial autonomy, with formal and inflexible decision-making processes and a heightened aversion to risk. The demands for accountability from various actors further contribute to the creation of counterproductive rules, limiting the ability of public managers to respond effectively. Thus, the interplay of these characteristics delineates the degree of publicness, distinguishing these organizations from their private sector counterparts.

Evolution of the publicness concept and the understanding of government

Despite the evolution of the concepts of publicness and various empirical studies validating the relationships mentioned above, as mentioned by Bozeman and Bretschneider (1994), not all public organizations possess the same degree of publicness. Consequently, the image of a continuum of organizations with different characteristics, structures, and processes is more realistic than models with specific categories.

Until the 1950s, the understanding of organizations did not account for distinctions in their publicness, and changes in management processes and structures were viewed primarily as technical or legal matters (Pollitt & Bouckaert, 2011). These were considered national or sectoral issues, devoid of political or economic discussions, and were not part of the public agenda

(Pollitt & Bouckaert, 2011). However, this situation changed due to factors such as economic conditions, the evolving understanding of governmental roles post-World War II, and the establishment of international organizations aiming to identify best practices.

Public management reforms are defined as "deliberate changes to the structures and processes of public sector organizations with the objective of getting them (in some sense) to run better" (Pollitt & Bouckaert, 2011, p. 2). This reference to structures and processes aligns with Berzelay's identification of public management policy, which is understood as the sum of institutional rules that guide, constrain, and motivate public service (2002). In the latter half of the twentieth century, the study of organizations began differentiating between sectors, focusing on how these organizations were managed. It also examined smaller elements within the unit of analysis—the organizations themselves—recognizing them as the focus of public management studies.

The inclusion of these new elements and the public's attention to governmental management created new points of disagreement. As Pollitt and Bouckaert (2011) mentioned, the definition of public management reforms is sufficiently vague to encompass crucial elements of the debate. For instance, the concept of running better public organizations holds different meanings and public values. Reforms and modernization require compromises, trade-offs, and difficult decisions to achieve the overarching goal. Within these definitions, one can identify "waves" in the development of public management.

Following Pollitt and Bouckaert (2011), it is possible to identify three main waves in the understanding of public management reforms. The first wave, spanning the 1960s and 1970s, was dominated by a belief in science and expertise as the pathways to progress (Pollitt & Bouckaert, 2011). This period emphasized finding the best ways to manage public organizations

through rational and hierarchical planning processes and cost-benefit analysis (Pollitt & Bouckaert, 2011). Notable scholars such as McGregor (1960) provided frameworks for understanding large organizations through a set of rules.

The second wave, driven by weak economies and low public perception of bureaucracies, emerged between the late 1970s and the 1990s (Barzelay, 2001; Pollitt & Bouckaert, 2011). This era marked the rise of New Public Management (NPM), which offered new perspectives on "running better" public organizations. This approach was fueled by the rhetoric of 'econocrats' and 'consultocrats' (Barzelay, 2001) and advocated for using business techniques to enhance efficiency (Pollitt & Bouckaert, 2011). According to NPM proponents, adopting private-sector management practices was the solution to a wide array of public-sector issues.

Governments worldwide adopted NPM, incorporating private sector practices into public administration, downsizing operations, and emphasizing production control (Barzelay, 2001; Hood, 1991). In essence, NPM reforms prioritized performance, mainly through measuring outputs (Pollitt & Bouckaert, 2011). They favored lean, flat, small, and specialized organizational forms over large, multifunctional ones (Pollitt & Bouckaert, 2011). Contracts increasingly replaced hierarchical relations as the primary coordinating mechanism, and market-type mechanisms such as competitive tendering, public sector league tables, and performance-related pay were widely implemented (Pollitt & Bouckaert, 2011). Additionally, there was a focus on treating citizens as 'customers' and applying quality improvement techniques (Pollitt & Bouckaert, 2011). This approach blurred the distinction between government and the private sector, further reducing the degree of publicness previously mentioned.

Rosenberg Hansen and Ferlie (2016) developed a model to understand the incorporation of NPM practices in government. They created a continuum based on administrative autonomy,

performance-based budgets, and market-like conditions to understand the adoption of NPM policies in government agencies. The first dimension, administrative autonomy, measures the degree of freedom organizations have in accomplishing their missions without political intervention. The second dimension includes performance measurement and funding allocation of organizations based on their ability to achieve their goals. Finally, the third dimension categorizes organizations based on the degree of competition with other organizations in achieving their mission. These three dimensions create a spectrum of organizations with two extremes, traditional public organizations, and NPM-oriented organizations, which help explain policy change adoption process.

The third wave, between the 1990s and the 2010s, is characterized by the absence of a dominant model but is influenced by key concepts such as governance, networks, partnerships, transparency, and trust (Pollitt & Bouckaert, 2011). Reforms to the structures and processes of public organizations were shaped by including a wide range of actors at all stages of the policy process, from design to implementation. Governments became part of a larger arrangement of stakeholders and organizations, forming governance networks that facilitate better information flow, flexibility, and inclusion (Ansell & Gash, 2008; Koski et al., 2018; Lewis, 2011; O'Toole Jr., 2015; Pollitt & Bouckaert, 2011). These arrangements, marked by open data, transparency, the use of technologies, and active citizen participation, aim to enhance government legitimacy and responsiveness.

Resources shaping the type of organizations

Until now, I have discussed the structures and processes of organizations and how there are varying degrees of publicness, which can also depend on societal perceptions of what constitutes better governance. However, an additional element that influences organizational

change is the availability of resources. Inadequate resource provision can lead to weak implementation efforts, high levels of interpersonal stress, and neglect of core organizational activities and functions (Fernandez & Rainey, 2017, p. 172). This perspective aligns with the resource-based view (RBV), which posits that certain resources are crucial assets.

The value of resources lies in their potential to enhance an organization's competitive advantage and overall performance (Lee & Whitford, 2012). Moreover, resources such as the size of the organization and its budget influence its capacity to implement public management reforms (Arellano-Gault & Lepore, 2011) and can provide information about its independence and reporting lines. Additionally, these resources can measure the scope of responsibilities (Blau, 1972), influence the organization's nature and capacity to react, determine path dependence, and affect public scrutiny.

One way to understand organizational size is by the number of employees (Blau, 1972; Chun & Rainey, 2005; Price, 1997). The number of tasks and functions sets the amount of people required to achieve objectives (Blau, 1972). However, contrary to conventional wisdom, larger organizations have fewer staff responsible for administrative activities (Rainey et al., 2021). This is due to economies of scale, meaning that the time spent on administrative tasks is not proportional to the organization's size (Blau, 1972; Peters, 2018). Nonetheless, following the RBV, when organizations have the required resources (i.e., human resources and budget) to perform their duties, they have a better capacity to solve tasks, such as transparency procedures, and to absorb or recall more information (Lee & Whitford, 2012). Consequently, we expect that larger organizations have a lower relative weight of administrative burdens and higher exposure.

On the other hand, larger governmental organizations with bigger budgets are more susceptible to public scrutiny and oversight activities since they manage more taxpayer money

(Arellano-Gault & Lepore, 2011). Their performance would be more noticeable than that of smaller organizations. Therefore, oversight agencies and organized citizen groups would focus on organizations with more resources to fulfill policy-related activities and optimize their efforts to protect public resources (Arellano-Gault & Lepore, 2011).

II. A Two-Dimension Typology of Public Organizations

This theoretical exercise in developing an organizational typology aims to understand the nature of these organizations and identify different triggers relevant to implementing specific public management reforms. Consequently, it evaluates the various theoretical concepts identified in the previous section using organizational variables, as presented in Table 2.1 and described in this section. It is important to acknowledge that the typology categories do not have sharp boundaries but rather span a continuum.

Table 2.1. Organizational typology: theoretical background and variables

Theoretical categories	Definition	Dimension	Aspect	Variable
Organizational Environment	- Type of environments (complexity, permeability, and stability). - Level of competitive pressure. - Degree of influence of external factors and political cycles.		Administrative autonomy	Chairperson of the Organizational Board.
				President's representative in the organizational board.
				Composition of the organizational board.
				Budget Approval
Organizational Goals	- Type of goals and their relationship with public values. - Level of ambiguity. - Degree of measurability using performance indicators.	1. Degree of publicness	Market-like management	Type Mission
			Administrative autonomy	Level
Organizational Structure	- Levels of bureaucracy (hierarchy, formalization, red tape). - Level of managerial autonomy. - Type of decision-making process - Degree of demands for accountability.		Administrative autonomy	Maximum organizational authority.
			Market-like management	Legal regime
Organizational Resources	- Workforce - Budget	2. Resources	Size	Budget Approval
			Workforce	Workforce

The proposed typology's first dimension, illustrated in Figure 2.1, presents a continuum ranging from traditional public organizations with a high degree of publicness to organizations

that follow New Public Management guidelines (lower degree of publicness). Traditional public organizations offer low levels of administrative autonomy, have little independence from political actors, and provide public goods and services. These organizations tend to have a vertical hierarchy and solid bureaucratic systems. In contrast, New Public Management organizations have high levels of administrative autonomy and incorporate private sector practices. They are more like private enterprises and tend to compete with private firms in delivering goods and services.

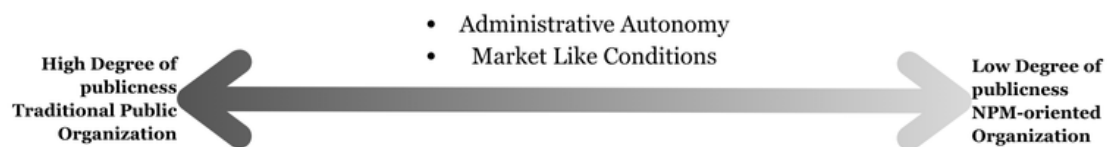


Figure 2.1 First Dimension of the Typology: Degree of Publicness

The second dimension includes the perspective of the relevance of organizational resources in policy change (see Figure 2.2). It is possible to measure an organization's type of resources using different variables such as budget, workforce, know-how, hardware, software, etc. However, some specificities of organizational goals make their comparison easier. In this regard, budget and workforce are transversal to all types of organizations and are the traditional way to measure resources.



Figure 2.2 Second Dimension of the Typology: Organizational Resources

An essential aspect of this typology is the interconnectedness between the two dimensions. Each public organization has components that fall under both dimensions, thus

creating a two-dimensional typology (as described in Figure 2.3). There are specific theoretical correlations between the various categories, which enables us to distinguish four quadrants.

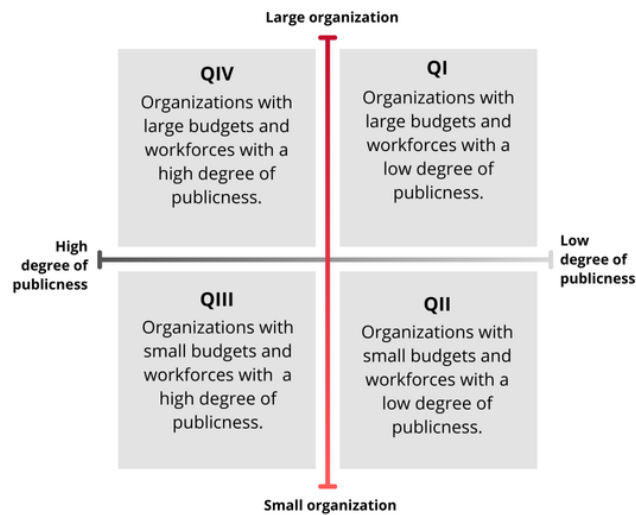


Figure 2.3 Graphic representation of the typology model.

III. Typology Application in the Colombian National Government

When applying a typology of public organizations, it is essential to consider the context in which they exist. Colombia is one of several countries that have undergone multiple reforms in their government structures and management approaches. These reforms were primarily influenced by external factors (González & Tanco Cruz, 2019), including measures associated with the New Public Management (NPM) approach (García, 2008; Leyva, 2023; Sanabria-Pulido, 2023), as well as the Washington Consensus led by the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and the World Bank (Martínez Rangel & Reyes Garmendia, 2012). As demonstrated by García (2008) and Ramírez Brouchoud (2009), some of the public management policies were successfully implemented, such as simplifying governmental structures, focusing on procurement, decentralization, and performance indicators. However, there is also evidence of the implementation problems and the juxtaposition of reforms (Sanabria-Pulido & Leyva, 2023b)

(see Appendix I - Colombian Context for more information about the administrative reforms in Colombia).

González and Tanco Cruz (2019) made one of the first attempts to categorize Colombian national agencies based on their functions, including tasks such as regulation, scrutiny, inspection, policy formulation, provision of public services, exercise of public authority, and commercial and industrial services. They also classified these agencies according to their policy sectors, such as social welfare and social policy, economic policy, and other sectors. However, their classification excluded Ministries, Administrative Departments, Universities, and Public Hospitals, as well as agencies operating under private law, encompassing state-owned enterprises and public foundations (González & Tanco Cruz, 2019, p. 119). While their research provided valuable insights into the evolution of Colombian agencies since the 1991 Constitution, it primarily focused on a specific subset of agencies resulting from the New Public Management paradigm, neglecting the broader spectrum of the executive branch with its diverse administrative configurations.

Exploring the Colombian case: Degree of Publicness

I will examine various organizational characteristics to evaluate the first dimension of the typology: the degree of publicness. First, it is relevant to explore Colombian organizations' degree of administrative autonomy. One concept to consider when using the national legal framework is order within the executive branch's legal division determines the organization's hierarchical structure. Colombian organizations fall into two categories: centralized and decentralized. Centralized agencies, such as the primary entities in the presidential cabinet, are primarily tasked with policy design (Brito Ruiz, 2020). In contrast, decentralized agencies enjoy legal autonomy and are equipped with independent budgets that allow them to achieve their

objectives. These agencies have some discretion in budget allocation for procurement and bear legal responsibility for their actions (Brito Ruiz, 2020).

The Legal Structure of organizations also offers insights into their autonomy and potential political influence. Several factors, such as organizational design and leadership reporting lines, are critical to understanding these dynamics. Specifically, I will consider whether an agency reports directly to the president, a cabinet member, or a governing board. Further, I will analyze the organizational council or board structure, which determines whether an agency functions under a council or a board as its highest authority or whether it reports directly to the president. The Chairperson of the Organizational Board plays a pivotal role in guiding and supervising the agency's activities. At the same time, the presence of a President's Representative indicates direct presidential input within board deliberations. Additionally, I will explore the Composition of the Board, noting whether it consists solely of government officials or includes representatives from stakeholder groups. Including diverse perspectives within boards helps ensure more comprehensive and balanced decision-making processes.

Finally, the Budget Approval Processes highlight how Colombian public organizations within the national executive branch manage their financial resources. Depending on their nature and responsibilities, agencies use one of three main methods to approve annual budgets. Some organizations are included in the national public budget presented to Congress by the Ministry of Finance. Others have their budgets approved directly by the Ministry of Finance. A third group receives budget approval from their respective board of directors or governing bodies, reflecting their operational independence.

Measuring the degree of publicness - the first dimension of the typology - is also relevant exploring the concept of market-like management, which outlines how public agencies are

categorized based on their organizational missions and regulatory frameworks. In Colombia, these organizations are classified into two primary groups based on the nature of their responsibilities. The first group, referred to as Policy Sector Head and Attached organizations, focuses on administrative functions or the delivery of public services. The second group, known as Associated organizations, engages in productive, industrial, or commercial activities, often selling goods and services.

Another critical variable is the Legal Regime, which determines whether national agencies operate under private or public sector legal frameworks. This classification is essential to understanding these organizations' rules, responsibilities, and operational structures.

Table 2.2 Classification of Mission Categories and Scoring Framework

<i>Mission categories</i>	<i>Political Function</i>	<i>Supervisory function</i>	<i>Regulatory function</i>	<i>Provision of Public Good</i>	<i>Non-Competition</i>	<i>Mission score</i>
<i>Administration of public assets.</i>	no	no	no	yes	no	4
<i>Management of public resources.</i>	no	no	no	yes	no	4
<i>Advisory services to entities.</i>	yes	no	no	no	no	4
<i>Coordination of entities.</i>	yes	no	no	no	yes	3
<i>Development of teaching, scientific, and research activities.</i>	no	no	no	yes	no	4
<i>Design and dissemination of policies.</i>	yes	yes	no	yes	yes	1
<i>Policy implementation.</i>	yes	no	no	yes	yes	2
<i>Monopoly exploitation.</i>	no	no	no	yes	no	4
<i>Provision of goods and services.</i>	no	no	no	no	no	5
<i>Provision of financial services, pensions, or similar services.</i>	no	no	no	no	no	5
<i>Promotion of the economic sector.</i>	yes	no	no	no	yes	3
<i>Protection of citizens' assets.</i>	yes	no	yes	yes	yes	1
<i>Concession projects</i>	no	yes	no	yes	no	3
<i>Regulation</i>	yes	yes	yes	yes	yes	0
<i>Surveillance and Control</i>	yes	yes	yes	yes	yes	0

The analysis of an organization's Mission is also central to its classification. Table 2.2 presents the type of mission by each category and their score. To achieve this, the missions of all

agencies were identified and subsequently categorized into 13 distinct groups. Each category was evaluated and scored based on its alignment with government functions, following the typology of public organizations proposed by Antonsen and Jørgensen (1997). The Political Function includes core government departments tasked with designing and communicating public policies. These agencies primarily fulfill political and supervisory roles. Agencies categorized under the Supervisory Function are responsible for overseeing the implementation of public policies and ensuring compliance with regulatory standards. The Regulatory Function, on the other hand, involves agencies that create regulations for public and private stakeholders. Chun and Rainey (2005) noted that these agencies often face political complexities and higher levels of evaluative ambiguity during their operations.

Another critical category in defining the type of organizational mission is the Provision of Public Goods, which identifies agencies tasked with delivering essential goods and services to society. Finally, agencies operating in non-competition markets—those without direct competition from other public or private entities—are also evaluated. These organizations often encounter more ambiguous goals and performance indicators due to the absence of economic markets for their outputs, which influences their objectives, incentives, and performance metrics (Chun & Rainey, 2005; Dahl & Lindblom, 1953; Rainey, 1993).

Exploring the Colombian case: Organizational Resources

The second dimension of the organizational typology, Organizational Resources, focuses on the size and workforce of public agencies, as these elements are crucial in determining their capacity to implement public management policies. The Size of an organization is assessed based on its allocated budget. For this study, I will use the budget allocated to each organization in 2020 as a classification criterion. The choice of this year is guided by data availability. The

Transparency Law does not require all public agencies to disclose their annual budgets in Colombia. Agencies included in the national budget or those with budgets approved by the Ministry of Finance typically make their most recent budgets publicly accessible. However, for other agencies, budgetary information is obtained from oversight entities such as the Contaduría Pública, which publishes reports with a delay of two to three years.

Another critical factor is the Workforce, measured by the number of public employees reported by the national government in 2020. The combination of budget and workforce data enables a comprehensive evaluation of an agency's organizational resources. Organizations are categorized into four groups to facilitate meaningful comparisons and integrate these two variables into a single dimension. These groups correspond to percentiles of organizational size and workforce: (a) agencies within the 1st to 25th percentile, (b) agencies within the 25th to 50th percentile, (c) agencies within the 50th to 75th percentile, and (d) agencies from the 75th percentile to the maximum value.

Exploring the Colombian case: Typology results

To compare and distinguish the various national agencies in Colombia, I employed a system of assigning points to each agency based on specific criteria. Appendix 2.2 provides a detailed explanation of the number of points assigned to each characteristic. Considering their extremes, the points were allocated arbitrarily to organize the public agencies into two dimensions.

Table 2.3 presents the first approximation of this typology using data from 173 Colombian national agencies (82.0 percent of the national organizations census). It shows the organization's distribution by each of the quadrants and the differences between them. The first quadrant - representing large organizations with NPM characteristics - comprises 34.0 percent of

the sample. These agencies demonstrate higher scores in both dimensions. Among them, 60.0 percent were established before the 1991 Constitution, and 32.0 percent operate within the Defense sector. Nearly 76 percent function as decentralized agencies, with 86.0 percent adopting a board as their highest hierarchy level. Approximately 45.0 percent of these agencies are associated with and involved in productive, industrial, or commercial activities, offering goods and services for sale. Furthermore, close to 54.0 percent manage their own budget and are not included in the annual national budget approved by Congress. Notable organizations in this quadrant include the Ministry of Commerce, the Postal Service, and Satena, the public airline company.

The second quadrant, which constitutes 28.0 percent of the analyzed agencies, exhibits lower levels of political influence. Within this quadrant, 93.7 percent of agencies are decentralized, and 56.2 percent manage their own budget. Additionally, 98.0 percent of these agencies have a board, and 27.3 percent operate under the private legal regime instead of the public legal framework. On average, they manage an annual budget of \$4.8 million and employ nearly 70 civil servants. Examples of agencies in this quadrant include Artesanías de Colombia, a cultural sector agency responsible for promoting artisans and exploring market opportunities for Colombian handicrafts, Teveandina, a public television channel, and scientific research institutes such as the Amazonia Institute.

The third quadrant, representing small agencies adhering to traditional standards of public organizations, accounts for 14.0 percent of the sample. All the resources of these agencies are allocated within the national budget approved by Congress, with the percentage of agencies governed by a board decreasing to 64.0 percent. Additionally, all agencies within this quadrant hold positions at the head of their respective policy sectors or are attached entities, with 20.0

percent operating within the Finance sector. Examples include the Energy and Gas Regulatory Commission, the Planning Unit for Transport and Infrastructure, and the Superintendence of Surveillance and Private Security. These agencies primarily perform regulatory, planning, and surveillance functions.

Table 2.3 Colombia Organizational Characteristics and Performance Metrics Across Quartiles

		Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4
Administrative autonomy	Level: decentralized	75.9%	93.7%	76.0%	54.8%
	Board: Yes	86.5%	97.9%	64.0%	35.7%
	Chair: Member of the cabinet	67.6%	77.3%	56.0%	33.3%
	Corporate Governance	20.6%	40.9%	40.0%	26.2%
	Type of members: Mixed	44.1%	77.3%	16.0%	11.9%
	Resources' source: no part of the national budget	46.5%	43.7%	0.0%	0.0%
Market-like management	Type: Associated	44.8%	39.6%	0.0%	0.0%
	Legal Code: Private sector	28.0%	27.3%	8.0%	0.0%
	Mission: Between 3-5 points	74.5%	73.5%	4.0%	14.0%
Resources	Workforce	AV. 1,689 (120 – 11,857)	AV. 67 (2 - 120)	AV. 106 (19 - 255)	AV. 9,621 (100 – 332,843)
	Budget (US dollars)	AV \$1,180 Mill (\$9.4 Mill - \$17,500 Mill)	AV \$4.8 Mill (\$0.4 Mill - \$13.7 Mill)	AV \$9.2 Mill (\$0.2 Mill - \$35.9 Mill)	AV \$1,060 Mill (\$11,40 Mill - \$10,800 Mill)
Examples		° Ministerio de Comercio (Ministry of Commerce). ° Servicios Postales (like USPS). ° Satena (public airline company).	° Artesanías de Colombia (public firm to support Colombian artisans). ° Teveandina (tv channel). ° Instituto Amazonico de investigaciones científicas (Research institute to the Amazon rainforest).	° Comisión de Regulación de Energía y Gas (Energy and Gas Regulatory Commission). ° Unidad de planeación de Infraestructura de Transporte (Transport Infrastructure Planning Unit). ° Superintendencia de Vigilancia y Seguridad Privada (Superintendence of Surveillance and Private Security).	° Agencia para la Reincorporación y la Normalización (Agency for Reincorporation and Normalization) . ° Ministerio de Justicia (Ministry of Justice). ° Superintendencia de Transporte (Superintendence of Transportation).
Policy Sectors (Top 3)		32.0% Defense 13.8% Mines & Energy 10.3% Finance	12.5% Technology 12.5% Health 12.5% Education	20.0% Finance 12.0% Mines & Energy 12.0% Agriculture	11.9% Transportation 9.5% Mines & energy 9.5% Agriculture
Year: before 1991 Constitution		60.0%	61.3%	32.0%	48.8%
N		58 (34.0%)	48 (28.0%)	25 (14.0%)	42 (24.0%)

Lastly, the fourth quadrant accounts for 24.0 percent of the agencies and comprises bureaucratic and traditionally large public entities. All agencies within this quadrant have their budgets approved by Congress as part of the annual public budget. None operate under special legal regimes; only 36.0 percent have a board as their maximum authority. Examples include the Agency for Reincorporation and Normalization, which supports the reintegration of former combatants from illegal armed groups into civilian life and promotes their societal reintegration. Additionally, notable agencies in this quadrant include the Ministry of Justice and the Superintendence of Transportation.

With the description of the quadrants, we can identify variations across the Colombian national government, highlighting its diversity in critical aspects such as the degree of publicness and the resources available to its agencies. For instance, as shown in Figure 2.4, the agencies in the statistics and strategic intelligence policy sectors were expected to fall within quadrant one. These agencies primarily serve a public function by offering specialized information often associated with monopolies, necessitating significant expertise and resources and defining the sector policy. In sectors such as agriculture, civil service, justice, planning, transportation, and planning, a higher proportion of agencies exhibit a high degree of publicness.

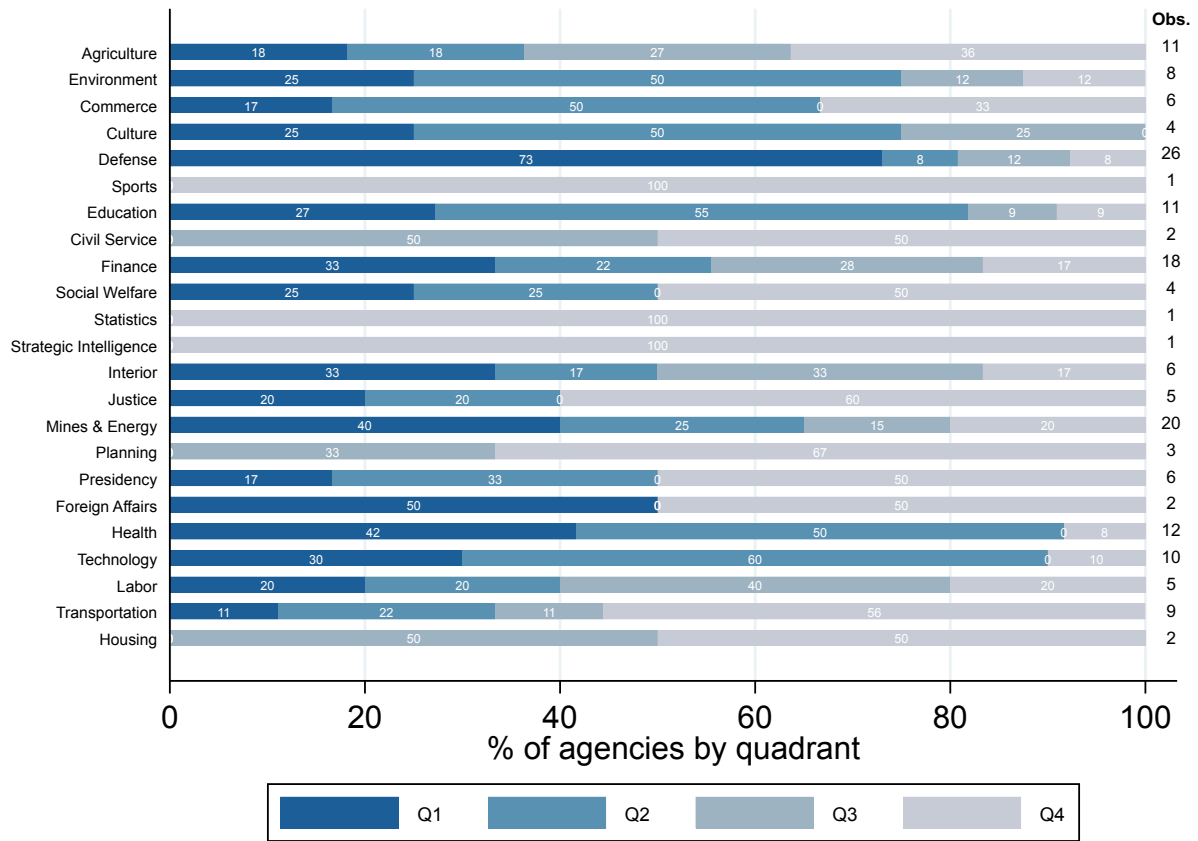


Figure 2.4 Proportion of agencies by quadrants in the policy sector.

On the contrary, given the nature of health and education service provision in Colombia, which permits the participation of private, hybrid, and public organizations, it is unsurprising to discover that over 80.0 percent of organizations fall within quadrants one and two. Similarly, in line with the characteristics of the technology and commerce sectors and their high level of competition and innovation, it is logical that 60.0 percent of agencies are situated in quadrant two. Thus, it can be observed that sectors characterized by intense competition and demand for innovation exhibit a greater prevalence of quadrants one and two.

On the other hand, Figure 2.5 shows interesting elements of the evolution of the public sector in Colombia. The vertical lines in the figure represent milestones in the country's political context: a crucial referendum in 1957, the enactment of the new Political Constitution, the

beginning of the process of being part of the OECD countries, and the signature of the peace process with the biggest guerrilla group—las FARC EP (see Annex 1 for more details). These crucial moments are followed by the establishment of different agencies, but they do not represent a shift in their nature.

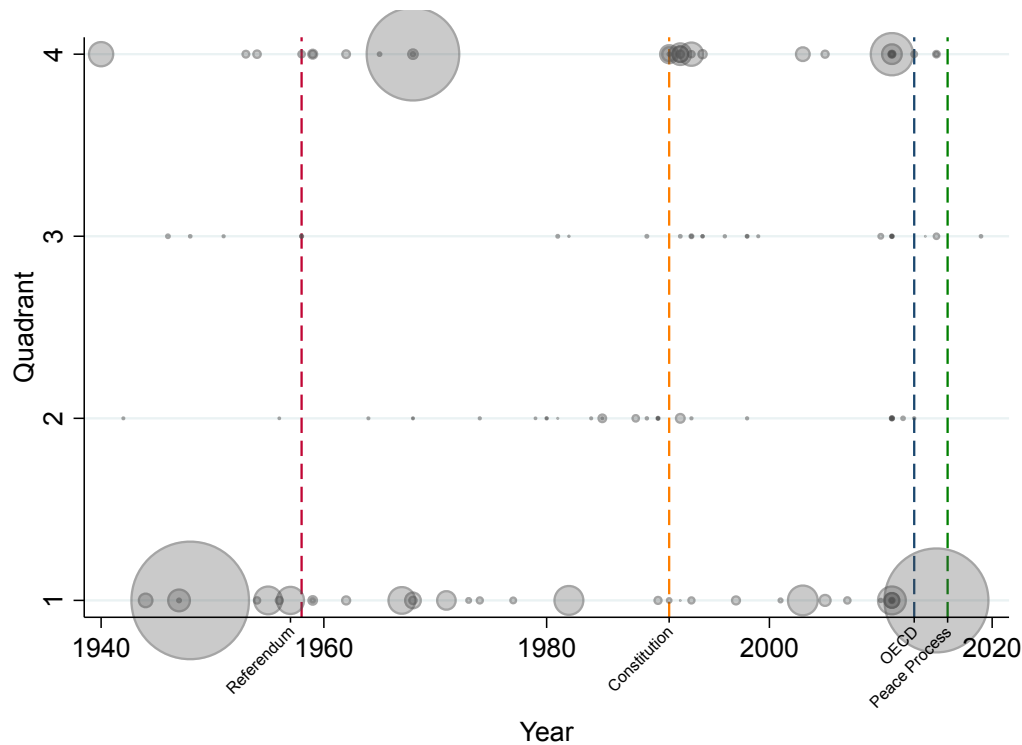


Figure 2.5 Establishment year of agencies by quadrant.

One element to consider in this figure is the size of the circles. They represent the size of the agencies' budget. The three biggest represent Ecopetrol – the public oil and gas company responsible for the exploration, production, refining, transportation, and marketing of hydrocarbons and their byproducts – funded in 1948; the Ministry of Education, funded in 1968, and the Administrative Department of the Public Service (ADRES), responsible for managing and overseeing the resources allocated to the General System of Social Security in Health (SGSSS).

The emergence of a cluster of agencies post the 1991 Constitution is worth noting, which aligns with quadrant four. Adding to Sanabria-Pulido and Leyva's research on the interplay of reform waves - Neo-Weberian, New Public Management, and New Public Governance – in Colombia (Sanabria-Pulido & Leyva, 2023a), it becomes evident that despite the constitutional and subsequent normative frameworks' NPM foundations in public service and management, the formation of new agencies predominantly featured organizations with traditional resource allocations and structures characteristic of public entities.

IV. Data Limitation

Some disclosures about the data of the Colombian national government are essential to mention in this initial attempt to implement a typology of this nature across all national organizations. Despite significant progress in data availability, challenges still need to be addressed in consolidating comprehensive information about public agencies in Colombia. Notably, the Colombian government ranks first in the Americas and the Caribbean on the OECD index, surpassing the OECD average (OECD, 2016). However, issues persist, particularly in consolidating data from the national census of public agencies within the national executive branch. A primary limitation was the inconsistency in datasets obtained from the Civil Service (Función Pública in Spanish), responsible for providing this information. The datasets did not consistently include data from the same number of agencies in 2020. This problem was further complicated by the recent creation and elimination of agencies, making it challenging to maintain a stable dataset. Integrating information from other sources, such as the Ministry of Finance, increased complexity. Data from the 2024 agency census provided by the Civil Service was used to address this issue. Agencies created in 2024 were excluded, and information from

eliminated or modified agencies was supplemented using alternative sources from 2020. This process allowed for the identification of 210 agencies.

Another issue was the availability of partial information for crucial variables. After determining the number of agencies, data were available for only 173 of the 210 organizations. To resolve this, the initial version of the typology was developed using this subsample, covering over 80.0 percent of the total agencies. For workforce information, data from 2023 were used for 44 agencies (23.0 percent) if there had been no major structural reforms between 2020 and 2023.

Table 2.4 Distribution of available data.

Dimension	Aspect	Variable	Total		Q1		Q2		Q3		Q4	
Degree of Publicness	Administrative Autonomy	Level	173	100%	58	100%	48	100%	25	100%	42	100%
		The organization has a board or council as the maximum authority.	135	78%	37	64%	31	65%	25	100%	42	100%
		The chair of the board is selected by the board.	123	71%	34	59%	22	46%	25	100%	42	100%
		There are not delegates from the president.	123	71%	34	59%	22	46%	25	100%	42	100%
		There are members from the interest groups and stakeholders.	123	71%	34	59%	22	46%	25	100%	42	100%
		Score Administrative Autonomy.	123	71%	34	59%	22	46%	25	100%	42	100%
		Budget approval	173	100%	58	100%	48	100%	25	100%	42	100%
	Market-like management	Type	173	100%	58	100%	48	100%	25	100%	42	100%
		Legal Code	114	66%	25	43%	22	46%	25	100%	42	100%
		Mission	148	86%	47	81%	34	71%	25	100%	42	100%
	Score Publicness		100	58%	20	34%	13	27%	25	100%	42	100%
Resources	Size	Budget	172	99%	57	98%	48	100%	25	100%	42	100%
	Workforce	Workforce	173	100%	57	98%	48	100%	25	100%	42	100%
	Score Resources		172	99%	58	100%	48	100%	25	100%	42	100%

A further challenge was obtaining data for all variables, particularly for the degree of publicness. Information about the nature of organizational boards and the use of particular legal regimes was often unavailable. This led to an underrepresentation of agencies in quadrants one

and two of the framework. As indicated in Table 2.4, these are the only quadrants with missing information. To address this, the analysis proceeded with the available data, adding points to the scoring system for agencies with incomplete information (see Appendix 2.2). This adjustment ensured that these agencies maintained their positions in their respective quadrants despite data gaps.

Data reliability presented another significant challenge related to the availability of information. Although Colombia's open data policy requires each organization to submit data, the reliability of this information has improved over time due to the policy's implementation process and the associated learning curve. However, inconsistencies were observed, particularly in workforce data. In cases where agencies without major organizational reforms showed workforce variations exceeding 75.0 percent between 2020 and 2023, the last available reliable data were used instead. This approach was applied to 48 agencies, accounting for 25.0 percent of the organizations.

Another limitation in Colombia's public employment context is the coexistence of different labor modalities. The workforce data utilized in this study only account for public employees within the national civil service. It excludes employees working for the Colombian government through other contractual arrangements, such as private contracting. As a result, the workforce data only approximate the total number of public workers, specifically those officially employed under civil service regulations and responsible for policy implementation.

CHAPTER 3

WHAT MAKES A PUBLIC ORGANIZATION COMPLIANT WITH TRANSPARENCY POLICIES IN A CONTEXT OF BUREAUCRATIC CONTROL

Organizational compliance in governments is essential to advance public trust and adhere to expectations that the implemented rules will lead to desirable public program and service outcomes. From the public administration perspective, there are different approaches to understanding the determinants of the implementation processes of administrative rules, which can help predict the degree of compliance. One of the first approaches is understanding the organizational structure. Using concepts such as transaction costs, agency theory, and the degree of bureaucratic control, governments have created multiple structures and monitoring systems to enhance the implementation of management policies. These schemes attempt to reduce public officers' moral hazard and increase political principals' capacity to control and supervise the administration in detail. In recent years, there have been new elements to consider, such as the relevance of the rules' attributes, as vital elements to understanding the degree of compliance with them. This paper uses transparency as a case study to examine whether differences in compliance can be explained by organizational resources. Specifically, this study seeks to understand how organizational characteristics - workforce and budget – affect compliance with transparency rules as measured by timeliness and completeness of the information. For this purpose, I explore the case of the Colombian national government, which enacted a transparency law in 2015, introducing new procedures in the procurement process that public officers must observe. Examining administrative data generated between 2016 and 2022, the probit model

findings show that the size of the organizations' workforce influences the probability of compliance with transparency procedures. This paper provides an understanding of rule compliance in the context of the bureaucratic control models and with an administrative tradition of the Napoleonic Model.

Introduction

As part of the evolution in the field of public administration and in the study of governments, one of the crucial questions is how to guarantee compliance. One key debate regarding this topic is the control and discretion of the bureaucrats. In this regard, the scope of the government's responsibilities, immense size, and complexity introduce new elements to study the concepts of hierarchy and expertise (Krause, 1999; Miller & Whitford, 2016). On one side, following the traditional understanding of the separation of politics and administration, some scholars advocate for reducing public officers' discretion and eliminating their moral hazard (Jackson, 2009). On the other side, a more revisionist one recognizes the inability of the principals to control all the public employees and instead promotes a system where the employees are accountable for their professional knowledge and merit (Jackson, 2009).

In this debate, the concept of authority plays a crucial role. As Simon (1997) explained, authority is a two-way concept where the employees must accept the organizational plan as part of a coordination process. Therefore, it is relevant to explore the organizational structure and consider the nature of the rules. In this regard, DeHart-Davis (2009) introduced the concept of Green Tape, where it is possible to observe compliance and positive results from rules following some attributes. Then, to understand organizational compliance, it is essential to observe rules that have these elements. In this paper, I will use transparency reforms as a set of rules whose purpose is clear for society and follow, in most cases, formalization processes.

One usual approach to increasing transparency in government is to establish new mechanisms and formalize processes and procedures to standardize the behavior of public employees vis-à-vis public programs and service recipients and the public generally. This communication process between governments and citizens improves decision-making, reduces formal accountability mechanisms, and aligns the different stakeholders' expectations by providing information (Bertot et al., 2010; Conradie & Choenni, 2014; Dawes, 2010a, 2010b; Heald, 2012; Heide & Villeneuve, 2020; Meijer, 2013). Additionally, there is a consensus about the positive consequences of transparency models among governments that are working to improve information accessibility, transparency, and access to a diversity of audiences (Astudillo-Rodas, 2022; Meijer, 2013; Pasquier & Villeneuve, 2007).

This research paper is focused on identifying organizational characteristics, such as workforce and budget, that can impact transparency compliance. Transparency compliance is measured by the timeliness and completeness of the information. It is important to understand the factors that influence compliance with policies in order to comprehend the heterogeneity in the implementation of certain rules and to determine if organizational characteristics influence the likelihood of implementation. By understanding what may impact compliance with transparency laws, we can gather evidence to improve post-implementation control mechanisms to increase government transparency. Additionally, when considering transparency in public procurement processes, it is relevant to the control of government tax revenues. In the context of Colombia, this means supervising more than \$44 billion per year.

The following section provides a literature review of transparency and its relationship with bureaucratic control, organizational factors, and compliance in government. It then delves into the background and characteristics of the Colombian government, as well as the recently

enacted transparency law. Subsequently, it describes the data, variables, and their principal characteristics. The methodological approach is then discussed, followed by a description of the results. Finally, there is a discussion of the results, highlighting the main contributions of this study and the implications of the results for countries like Colombia.

I. Literature Review

The eternal debate: bureaucratic control or autonomy

One of the essential research questions in public administration is whether politicians control bureaucracy or whether the bureaucracy has the authority from democratic institutions over governance (Krause, 1999). This debate focuses on the role of workers in government and the extent of their discretion. In one of the first attempts to clarify the role of workers and their discretionary scope, Weber (1922) introduced the concept of bureaucracy and its principal characteristics, where the employees were portrayed as rule-accepters. Under the bureaucratic understanding of organizational workforces, authority, hierarchy, and rules significantly define bureaucratic autonomy and control. Additionally, under this model, officers' expertise is critical, making the employees' functional skills and qualities crucial in their selection and career progress. However, instead of ending the debate mentioned above, the Weberian bureaucracy introduced a new element to understand bureaucratic discretion and political control: authority and hierarchy on one side and professionalization and merit on the other.

Despite the effort from public management to identify the characteristics and scope of bureaucrats' decision-making process, the immense size of governments and their complexity introduce different elements in applying Weberian-inspired approaches (Krause, 1999). During the first part of the 20th century, governments began to increase the extent of influence of and involvement with societies worldwide. Governments took on new responsibilities to solve public

problems such as economic crises, post-war recovery programs, and new social claims. This was when the concepts of hierarchy and expertise became more pressing in the study of governments (Miller & Whitford, 2016), with new ideas shifting the debate.

Understanding administrative discretion and democratic accountability was a motivation for one of the most well-known debates in public administration: the Friedrich vs. Finer debate. These two well-known scholars had opposing views and understanding of Weber's bureaucracy. Finer demonstrates a more traditional role, advocating for oversight and control to reduce bureaucratic moral hazard risk (Plant, 2011). He feared the possibility of public employees taking opportunistic actions that fail to benefit society (Jackson, 2009; Miller & Whitford, 2016; Plant, 2011). On the other hand, Friedrich has a revisionist view of the model and its implications on a more complex understanding of governments (Plant, 2011). For him, absolute control of each employee is impossible, and governments must trust the employee's professional knowledge and adherence to internal accountability.

The relevance of the Finer and Friedrich debate and its origin in the Weberian bureaucracy relies on the fact that it is the starting point of two different views of accountability and control. Despite an academic consensus about this dichotomy, disagreements exist about the optimum position between the extremes (Krause, 1999). On the one hand, some theories advocate for bureaucratic autonomy, given the engagement of professional expertise. These approaches are aligned with Friedrich's understanding of civil servants' responsibility based on their adherence to ethical and professional standards (Peters, 2018). Moreover, such public servants use their technical expertise and professional standing to voice strong opinions and remain "above politics," (Miller & Whitford, 2016) even if they disagree with the current government's political positions.

Political control theories

Aside from a bureaucratic autonomy model, some scholars advocate for political control theories, following Finer's position, and assume that some external forces must be employed to enforce responsible behavior (Peters, 2018). These theories derive from the necessity of politicians' actions—such as direct orders, political appointments, and deck-stacking administrative procedures—to get public employees to respond to electoral (societal) desires (Meier & O'Toole, 2006). This situation can be understood from three perspectives: i) public administration, ii) bureaucratic politics, and iii) organizational theory. The debate mentioned above by Friedrich and Finer is the basis of the first approach. From public administration, different authors studied how democracy could be limited to control every movement of bureaucracy given bounded rationality, time restrictions, and a mutual understanding of authority (Meier & O'Toole, 2006; Simon, 1997). In these cases, governments must look for inner checks by employees, such as democratic values or representative democracy (Meier & O'Toole, 2006).

The second approach, bureaucratic politics, understands the ability of public agencies to take independent actions as a function of resources and autonomy (Meier & O'Toole, 2006). Under this approach, political support, expertise, organizational cohesion, and leadership explain differences in how bureaucracies behave. Nonetheless, as Meier and O'Toole (2006) state, the research about this approach stems mostly from single cases or multiple similar organizations.

Organizational theory, the third approach of political control theories, stems from the evolution of the neoclassical economic understanding of organizations as black boxes. Moe's (1984) magistral paper about the New Economics of Organization (NEO) focused on increasing public employees' accountability under the principal-agent model. With this theory, bureaucracies are understood as goal-oriented collectives with multiple goals and the capacity to

respond one at a time (Meier & O'Toole, 2006). The two critical elements of NEO are transaction costs and agency theory, and they have three main assumptions: i) government organizations are monopolies, ii) public organizations have little incentives in responding to society, and iii) governments are strategic games' arenas where is possible to have high levels of isolation (Arellano-Gault & Lepore, 2011).

Under this model, principals (political actors) and agents (bureaucrats) are self-interested, opportunistic, and have goal conflicts (Arellano-Gault & Lepore, 2011). Therefore, principals use multiple incentive structures, monitoring systems, and performance reports (Brown, 2010; Miller, 2005; Miller & Whitford, 2016) to reign in bureaucratic discretion. However, these strategies have limitations, such as being time-consuming and the impossibility of ultimately reducing information asymmetry and moral hazard (Kaufman, 1981; Rainey et al., 2021).

Despite the above-mentioned difficulties and the debate about control, organizational compliance with rules plays a vital role in public administration dynamics because it guarantees that public employees are using the resources to achieve public interests (Borry et al., 2018). Specifically, compliance allows for the assurance of the inculcation of public values such as fairness, transparency, and accountability among bureaucrats in their work (Borry et al., 2018; DeHart-Davis et al., 2013). Following the rules also promotes effective management of organizational functions through coordination, legitimacy, socialization, and knowledge storage and transfer (Borry et al., 2018; DeHart-Davis et al., 2013; Rainey et al., 2021). In conclusion, compliance with rules in public administration places a fundamental value on both the means and the ends of governments. However, while compliance is necessary to guarantee public values, it is not sufficient.

Transparency as a key example of understanding organizational compliance.

One way to understand public organization compliance is through the theory of rule effectiveness. DeHart-Davis (2009), in her study about the green tape and the theory of effective organizational rules, explains the different conditions that rules must follow to bolster compliance. She empirically demonstrated that there are attributes that make rules technically capable and acceptable to stakeholders. For her, compliance is explained not only from the organizational point of view; it needs to consider the characteristics of the rules themselves. The rule attributes are related to the purpose, valid means-ends relationships, written requirements, and application and control.

One example of rules that accomplish these attributes are transparency and anti-corruption frameworks. On one hand, there is an almost consensus regarding their purposes and the relationship between the control measures and increasing the transparency levels. Furthermore, they are usually written requirements with precise application procedures and monitoring methods, making them a model for analyzing the execution and adherence of organizations.

In recent years, there has been an in-depth study of transparency and its implications for governments. This concept means opening the internal organizational processes and their decisions to third parties (Ben-Aaron et al., 2017; Pasquier & Villeneuve, 2007). Moreover, transparency refers to how public organizations make their information available and how they communicate that information to other actors (Astudillo-Rodas, 2022; Etzioni, 2018; Fenster, 2015; Meijer, 2013; Pasquier & Villeneuve, 2007; Piña & Avellaneda, 2019). As Piña and Avellaneda (2018) mention, an interest of governments worldwide is to increase their

transparency levels by granting and expanding access to information about their operations, activities, procedures, decision-making processes, and performance.

The popularity of new transparency actions by governments is partly because of consensus regarding its positive consequences for societies. Transparency is said to improve decision-making, reduce the need for formal accountability mechanisms, and align the different stakeholders' expectations by providing information (Bertot et al., 2010; Conradie & Choenni, 2014; Dawes, 2010a, 2010b; Heald, 2012; Heide & Villeneuve, 2020; Meijer, 2013). Additionally, transparency allows the public access to information about government performance, generally, as well as the efficiency and effectiveness of specific operations, programs, and projects (Fenster, 2015), improving the relationship between public officers and citizens (Astudillo-Rodas, 2022; Pasquier & Villeneuve, 2007). Consequently, it is possible to affirm that transparency benefits democracy (Dawes, 2010b), though recent research findings claim some negative consequences can occur (Liston-Heyes & Juillet, 2020).

One way in which governments have tried to homogenize access to public information is through rules and policies. Laws and official standards and procedures enforce transparency through the mandatory disclosure of government information to citizens (Fenster, 2015). Five years ago, over a hundred countries had laws to make government information a public right, and in some cases, countries are implementing a second generation of transparency legislation (Piña & Avellaneda, 2018). Such laws aim to reduce bureaucratic discretion and allow citizens free and equal access to public agency information. The nature of the transparency frameworks following the NEO's principles leads to the conclusion that formalization implies the written requirements of DeHart's green-tape theory.

Despite transparency's popularity, positive benefits, and its development as a formal process, its implementation can be confusing and challenging. It is possible to find heterogeneity in implementing transparency measures in public organizations (Arellano-Gault & Lepore, 2011; Astudillo-Rodas, 2022; Fenster, 2015; Michener, 2019; Peled, 2011). Consequently, some public organizations are more strategically opaque than others (Ruijter et al., 2020), and it makes it imperative to understand how the information is disclosed beyond the number of documents released (Heald, 2012; Piotrowski et al., 2019).

There is evidence that the political environment, organizational characteristics, horizontal and vertical stakeholders' influence, and economic conditions determine how governments introduce transparency in their routines (Grimmelikhuijsen & Feeney, 2017; Piña & Avellaneda, 2019). Also, organizations may release the information strategically, choosing the time and the documents to be released (Fenster, 2015). Therefore, organizational compliance with transparency laws and rules could be a symptom of other administrative aspects that are different from wrongdoings.

Understanding the differences in the implementation process of transparency measures is relevant to recognizing whether these enhance communication acts or if they are no more than simple organizational procedures. Public organizations constantly produce information due to bureaucratic dynamics (Fenster, 2015). They must decide what information is relevant for the citizens and if it is possible to have open access. Therefore, organizations can and might control the release of information and its allocation. In this sense, public employees have considerable discretion and handle multiple sources of ambiguity, deciding when, where, and how to release information (Ben-Aaron et al., 2017). For this reason, it is possible to observe different degrees

of transparency across public organizations subject to the decision on the kind of information available, how much of it is open access, and how often it is published.

Even with transparency laws, some public organizations are reluctant to divulge information for multiple reasons (Fenster, 2015; Pasquier & Villeneuve, 2007). Pasquier and Villeneuve (2017) identify different types or degrees of organizational transparency depending on their willingness to publish information and have an open conversation with citizens. In some instances, public bodies, consciously or not, need to be more transparent with their data. They justify this organizational behavior of “strained transparency” with a lack of resources or competency to justify information limitations as restrictions and delays (Pasquier & Villeneuve, 2007).

Nevertheless, there are reasons inherent to public organizations that may explain why they continue having problems complying with the established guidelines despite recognizing the benefits of transparency for governments. Fenster (2015) states that despite government information publication being essential in democratic countries, it seems impossible to fully require successful programmatic transparency. The government's complexity, sprawl, and bureaucratic dynamics make transparency laws imperfect (Fenster, 2015). Government information and documents result from internal processes where organizational boundaries, rivalries, and disputes can lead to ambiguous and partial records (Fenster, 2015). Also, the bureaucratic culture of organizations makes public agencies hierarchically introverted and risk-averse (Fenster, 2015; Pasquier & Villeneuve, 2007).

For this reason, some organizations are unwilling to disclose their information to protect their resources, avoid admitting their mistakes, and keep their comparative advantage (Pasquier & Villeneuve, 2007). Moreover, transparency laws do not consider public organizations

unequipped to implement their mandates since they are not used to communicating and maintaining normal relations with the public (Pasquier & Villeneuve, 2007). In conclusion, it is crucial to recognize that the structure and culture of the public sector may result in the fact that the processes of implementing transparency policies do not occur in the same way and are not always successful.

Political control, organizational resources, and transparency compliance

So far, I've discussed how political control theories have been used to limit the discretion of bureaucracy. Public organizations typically have strict hierarchies and formal rules, especially when it comes to areas that are closely monitored by supervisory bodies, such as personnel, purchasing, procurement, budgeting, and accounting (Rainey, Fernandez, and Malatesta, 2021). In organizational theory, "structure" refers to the way hierarchical levels, specialized units, and positions are arranged, as well as the formal rules that govern them (Rainey, Fernandez, and Malatesta, 2021, p. 207). From this perspective, Arellano-Gault and Lepore (2011) argue that most transparency reforms are based on the principles of the New Economics of the Organization.

Usually, government transparency efforts have used political economy to understand public employee incentives, transaction costs, and agency theory (Arellano-Gault & Lepore, 2011). Nonetheless, this rationality could explain the lack of internalization of transparency reforms (Arellano-Gault & Lepore, 2011). The NEO rationality, which is based on distrust, overlooks organizational and behavioral factors that interact in adopting institutional rules. According to Arellano-Gault and Lepore (2011), factors such as the size, available resources, nature, and level of public exposure of an organization can trigger the implementation of

transparency reforms. These elements, along with the concept of internalization, can be understood through Simon's two-way authority logic.

Taking a different angle, the resource-based view (RBV) emphasizes the significance of resources in shaping an organization's success. Lee and Whitford (2012) assert that specific resources hold the potential to bolster an organization's competitiveness and overall performance. Consequently, the variety of resources at an organization's disposal can influence its capacity to meet its responsibilities and adapt to evolving needs.

Organizational size is an important structural characteristic that influences where the members of the organization interact (Walker et al., 2024). It refers to the scope of an organization and its responsibilities (Blau, 1972) (Blau, 1972). It can be understood as the scope of responsibilities of an organization, and it could be measured as the number of employees, budget, and number of clients (Blau, 1972; Walker et al., 2024). In this regard, the number of tasks and functions sets the number of people required to achieve the objectives (Blau, 1972). However, contrary to conventional wisdom, larger organizations have fewer staff responsible for administrative activities (Rainey, Fernandez, and Malatesta, 2021). This is due to economies of scale, meaning that the time spent on administrative tasks is not proportional to their volume (Blau, 1972; Peters, 2018). Nonetheless, following the RBV, when organizations have the required resources (i.e., human resources) to perform their duties, they have a better capacity to solve tasks, such as transparency procedures, and absorb or recall more information (Lee & Whitford, 2012). Consequently, if larger organizations have a lower relative weight of administrative burdens and the highest exposure, we may expect their compliance rates are higher.

In their meta-analysis of organizational size and its relationship with performance, Walker et al. (2023) described various elements to consider. For example, large organizations may offer better opportunities for professional development, which can attract more talented employees. However, there is also evidence that large bureaucracies could be perceived by citizens as more remote and less interested in public concerns. Therefore, medium-sized organizations may be less likely to suffer from dysfunctions of large or small size (Walker et al., 2023). This conclusion, referred to as the "too-much-of-a-good-thing" effect by Pierce and Aguinis (2013), also applies when conceptualizing organizational size in terms of financial resources.

In this sense, the first hypothesis is

H1: The number of full-time employees influences the organizational probability of complying with transparency policies.

It is also essential to consider the organizational budgets. In one sense and following the RBV logic, the organizations better funded are more likely to have the capacity to have teams working in transparency with better quantity and quality of personnel and technological resources (Arellano-Gault & Lepore, 2011; Lee & Whitford, 2012). Therefore, it is expected,

H2a: The size of the organizational budget influences the organizational probability of complying with transparency policies.

On the other hand, larger governmental organizations are more suitable for public scrutiny and oversight activities since they spend more taxpayer money (Arellano-Gault & Lepore, 2011). In this regard, their non-compliance would be more notorious than that of smaller organizations. For this reason, oversight agencies and organized citizens' groups would focus on organizations with more resources to fulfill their policy-related activities and optimize their

efforts to protect public resources (Arellano-Gault & Lepore, 2011). Complying with the guidelines outlined in the law can reduce the risk of being investigated or subjected to procedures by this type of organization. Therefore, if organizations with the most significant budgets are more likely to reduce their oversight risks, we may expect

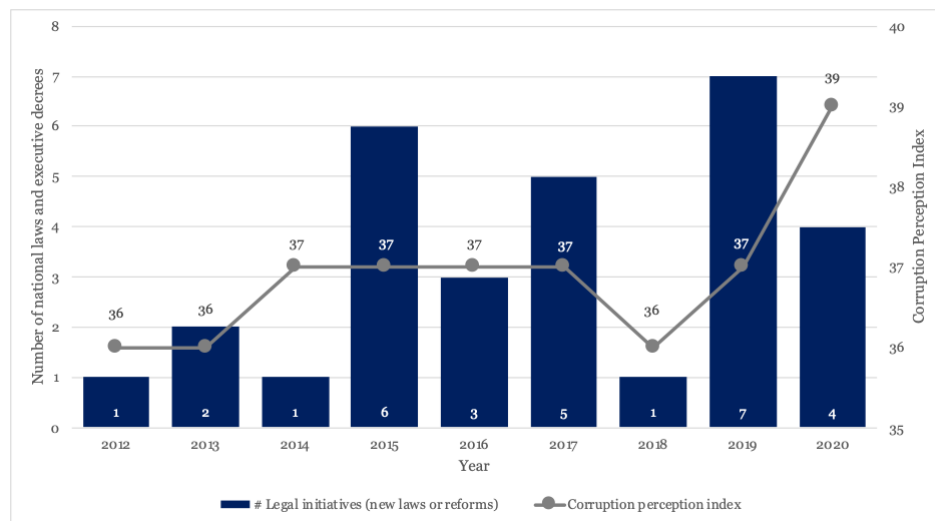
H2b: The available resources to invest in policies related to their mission (general and as a ratio of the organizational budget) influence the organizational likelihood to comply with transparency policies.

The objective of this research is to explore the potential impact of organizational resources, such as workforce size, budget, and policy orientation, on compliance with the NEO framework. This study aims to provide valuable insights into transparency reforms and the ability of organizations to adapt to new requirements. Additionally, it seeks to prompt discussion about the effectiveness of political efforts that may have symbolic or political significance but do not necessarily enhance administrative capacity. Ultimately, this research seeks to examine whether compliance heterogeneity can be explained by organizational resources, using the transparency framework as an illustration of green tape theory due to its formalization processes and the link between outcomes and objectives.

II. Colombian Context: Transparency policies evolution

Since 1991, with the enactment of the national Constitution, Colombia has been a unitary republic and decentralized country. Its government has three distinct branches: executive, legislative, and judicial. As the head of the executive branch, the president is the central public policy agenda-setter (Mejía-Guinand, 2020). In addition, the Constitution also establishes that one of the primary purposes of the State is to promote the citizens' participation in all public

decisions that affect them in their economic, political, administrative, and cultural life (Political Constitution of Colombia, 1991).



Source: Author's calculation using information from Sanabria & Avellaneda, 2021 and Transparency International, 2021

Figure 3.1 Anticorruption legal framework and evolution of the corruption perception index (CPI).

Colombia's anti-corruption and transparency legal framework resulted from more than 36 national laws and executive decrees in the last decade (Sanabria-Pulido & Avellaneda, 2021). The most recent reforms to the legal framework make significant legal changes (*de jure*) and, although hard to prove, resulted from salient corruption scandals and high levels of perceived corruption (Sanabria-Pulido & Avellaneda, 2021). Figure 3.1 shows, on the one hand, the number of national formal laws or decrees related to transparency and anti-corruption schemes. Additionally, the figure shows the country's corruption perception index, which is measured annually by International Transparency. An interesting result from Figure 1 is the increase in two points of the corruption perception index after the most active year of enacting laws related to transparency.

The Colombian government's approach to public administration is heavily influenced by its unique characteristics and international agreements. To combat corruption, a procurement

statute was introduced in 1993, outlining the principles of transparency, economy, and accountability that should guide all public procurement activities. This legislation has become the foundation for all subsequent policies and legal decisions, with the government prioritizing responsible public resource management. In 2021, over 8,000 public organizations registered nearly one million purchasing processes, totaling approximately USD 44 billion (165.84 billion Colombian pesos) in value (Colombia Compra Eficiente, 2021).

Table 3.1 Legal Framework Annual Procurement Plan

<i>Law/Decree</i>	<i>Topic/Goal</i>	<i>Relation with the Annual procurement plans</i>
Law 80/1993	National statutes for public administration procurement processes.	This law defines the general guidelines and the organizations that must follow this legal framework. This law doesn't include the procurement plans.
Law 1474/2011	Strengthen the mechanisms for preventing, investigating, and sanctioning acts of corruption and the effectiveness of public management control.	It includes the General Organizational Action Plan (objectives, strategies, projects, goals, persons in charge, <u>general purchasing plans</u> and budget distribution). The action plans must be published before January 31 on each organization's official website.
Law 1712/2014	Transparency and Right to Access Information Law.	Continues with the General Organizational Action Plan which included the general purchasing plans.
Decree 1081/2015	<i>Preseidential decree</i>	Annual Procurement Plan: agencies must publish the Annual Procurement Plan on their websites and in SECOP (national procurement process repository platform) following the above legal framework.

To uphold transparency and prevent corruption, the anti-corruption Law (1474/2011) mandates measures to investigate, prevent, and penalize corrupt activities, as well as enhance the effectiveness of public management. An essential provision of the law is the requirement that organizations disclose their Annual Procurement Plans (APP), which must meet minimum standards defined in both the law and forthcoming regulations (see Table 3.1). Every January 31, a month after the start of the Colombian fiscal year, agencies must post their APP on both their own website and the government's procurement site. These plans aim to offer timely and

valuable insights to suppliers while also aligning public procurement with organizations' budgeting and planning procedures at the outset of the year.

The legal guidelines for APPs provide a baseline, but organizations can choose to exceed these requirements. Different organizations may choose to include additional promotional features, make the document easily accessible, or publish it in various formats. These differences reflect two of the three dimensions of open government defined by Grimmelikhuijsen & Feeney (2016, pg. 580). In compliance with Colombian law, transparency is mandated to provide public information on websites. However, accessibility is also an important consideration to ensure that all stakeholders can effectively utilize the information and participate in the process. To achieve this, strategies must be implemented to make information easily accessible and usable for everyone, taking into account online literacy, access, and available tools. For example, in March 2022, the Health Ministry's 2021 APP was published in PDF format, which took six clicks to locate. Meanwhile, the Presidency's equivalent document was found in just three clicks and was available in PDF, Excel, and linked to the national procurement website.

Identifying the causes of discrepancies between organizations can be a complex task. One possible contributing factor may be the unique nature of each organization's policy sector, as their varied responsibilities can greatly differ. Another potential factor could be attributed to the organization's structure and hierarchy. For instance, a specialized agency may face distinct pressures compared to a ministry operating at a higher level within the presidential cabinet.

III. Data and Empirical Strategy

To test the hypotheses regarding the organizational resources and their relationship with transparency procedures compliance, I use quantitative data from agencies in the executive branch of the Colombian national government between 2016 and 2022. The census of public

organizations during the study is 211 agencies (DAFP). Nonetheless, the available information varies over time. As Figure 3.2 shows, in 2016, complete data was available from 105 agencies, and it was not possible to observe the dependent variable of 73 agencies, representing 73.5 percent of the total. In contrast, for the remaining years, data is available for more than 90.0 percent of the organizational census.

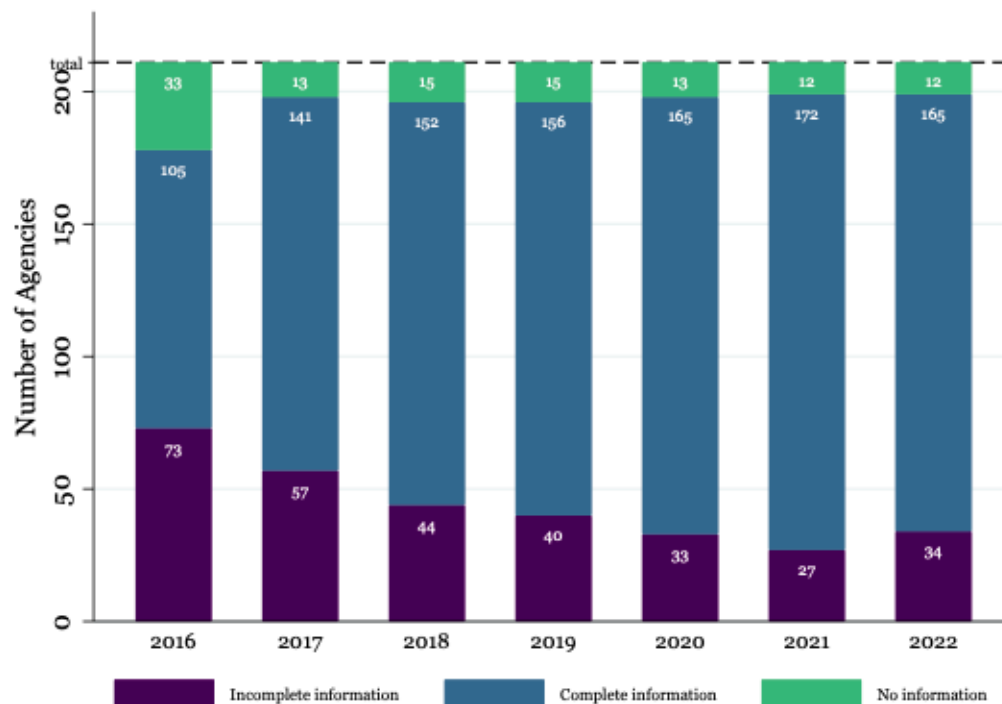


Figure 3.2 Information availability by year.

To address the research question at hand, I compiled a comprehensive database that contains information on procurement processes and the organizational characteristics of each national agency from 2016 to 2022. The database was carefully constructed by sourcing data from multiple reliable sources, including the national census of public organizations and Colombia's government procurement agency, known as *Colombia Compra Eficiente*. Below is an overview of the data and its origins.

The *census of public organizations* at the national level provides essential information about the nature of organizations, policy sectors, and human resource management. This database serves as a foundational resource for understanding the organizational landscape of Colombian agencies. *Budgetary data*, on the other hand, was obtained from the Colombian Ministry of Finance. If an agency's budget is part of the National Budget, the source of this information is the annual Budget Law approved by Congress. For agencies not covered under this law, a government-issued decree that compiles relevant budgetary data serves as the source.

Procurement process information was gathered from two main sources that adhere to the requirements of Decree 1081/2015 (Article 2.2.22.3.14). This decree mandates that organizations publish their procurement plans on SECOP (an electronic procurement system) and their official websites by January 31st each year, with provisions to update the documents as necessary to reflect new or modified procurement processes.

First, SECOP, developed by the Colombian government in 2007, is an e-procurement platform where agencies are required to upload all procurement-related documents. The platform facilitates electronic communication at all stages of the procurement cycle, functioning as a centralized repository for procurement information, as noted by the OECD (2016). Second, organizations' official websites, governed by the Ministry of Information and Communication Technologies under Decree 1081/2015, are also critical sources of procurement data. These websites are required to include a "Transparency and Access to Public Information" section that complies with government standards. This section hosts transparency policies and APP-related documents, promoting accountability and openness in public procurement processes.

Using these sources of information, a dataset with information regarding each organization's legal nature, policy sector, location, and hierarchical status was possible to

consolidate. The dataset includes the annual public procurement report and each organization's APP publication between 2016 and 2022. This made it possible to complement the information of public organizations that did not report to the national repository.

To measure compliance with the transparency policies, I divided the concept into two main features determined by law in Colombia: the date of publication of the APPs (timeliness) and the information they contain (completeness). The Colombian legal framework that regulates the APPs determines who is subject to release this information (Decree 1081 of 2015), where they must publish it (Law 1474 of 2011 and Decree 1081 of 2015), the deadlines (Law 1474 of 2011), and the information they must include (Decree 1510 of 2013 and Law 1712 of 2014). Using this legal framework, it was possible to create two dependent variables with input from the National Repository of Public Procurement Processes (SECOP) and each organization's website.

Public organizations strategically publish public information considering two i) whether an organization published the first version of the APP before January 31 (timeliness), and ii) if the APPs fulfill the legal requirements (completeness). The “timeliness” is coded as a binary variable: 1 if an organization is compliant, and 0 if not, and sixty-seven percent of the APPs were published on time, implying a left-skewed distribution, as shown in Table 2.2.

To ensure a thorough evaluation of compliance, it was necessary to analyze every published APP. After establishing the legal framework, Colombia Compra Eficiente, the national organization responsible for procurement policy, specified the necessary format and minimum information to be included by each organization in their APPs. The documents must include a description of the necessity, estimated date to open the process, estimated contract duration, selection modality, resources origin, budget, and contact information. Based on the review, 66.1

percent of the APPs comply (see Figure 2.3 for detailed information by year). This variable is defined in the same way as the other dependent variable.

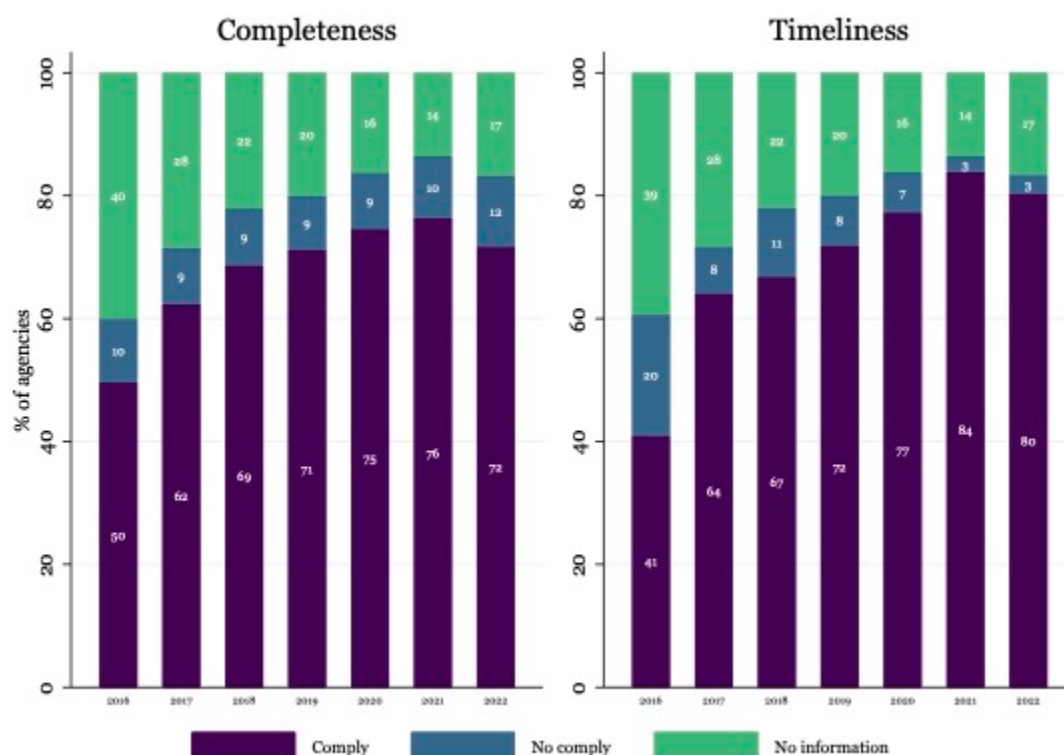


Figure 3.3 Evolution over time of the dependent variables.

Figure 3.3 shows the evolution of the dependent variable. The main takeaway from this figure is the increasing compliance by organizations. Since enacting the latest rule regulating APPs in 2015, Colombian national-level organizations have steadily increased their compliance. Since 2017, it is possible to observe that compliance in publication times is higher than in the available data. However, it is worth highlighting a reduction of about 55.0 percent in the observations that did not publish their APPs from 2016 to 2022 (40.0 percent vs. 17.0 percent, respectively). This result could be the consequence of different elements, such as an organizational learning process and possible sanctions.

In total, 308 observations (22.6 percent) have missing information regarding the level of compliance. It is worth noting that these missing data refer to organizations that did not disclose

their annual procurement plans on their websites or in the national repository, which is a violation of transparency standards. Nonetheless, it is unclear whether this information was communicated to citizens or other levels of government through alternative means such as email, meetings, or social media. As a result, I use a subsample of organizations that were observed during the six-year period. This could potentially cause issues if the selection process were non-random, leading to a truncated sample and a reduction in the variance of the distribution.

The lack of information on the APPs limits the availability of pertinent procurement information, such as contract duration and type. This information plays a vital role in comprehending the complexity of each purchase, including the number of steps involved, the organizational information required, and the technical proficiency necessary for employees. Moreover, in Colombia, services or goods that surpass the fiscal year require authorization from the Ministry of Finance and the National Planning Department, adding to the intricacy of procurement. Consequently, this paper only considers APPs that provide comprehensive information, as the type of procurement process cannot be determined without it. Results that consider organizations without procurement process information are included in Appendix 3.5.

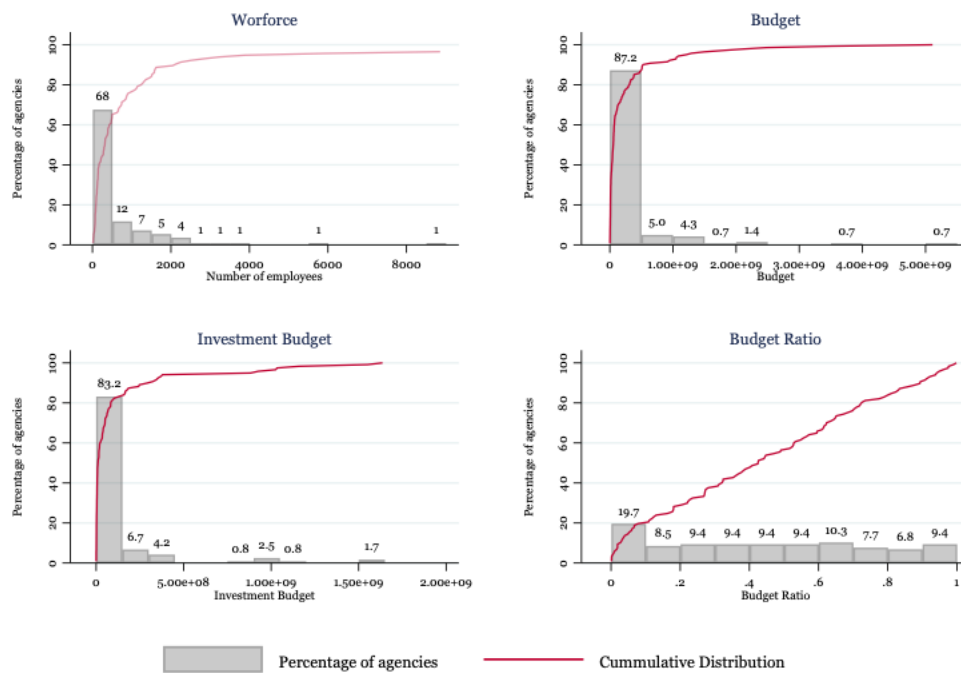
Interest variables: organizational resources

Table 3.2 describes dependent and independent variables by year. The workforce variable (*Workforce*) measures the number of full-time employees of national organizations and seeks to test H1. On average, agencies have 3,834 employees, but there is a wide range of variation. The lowest reported value is just two employees, while the highest is 332,843. As it is possible to observe in Figure in 2021, 68.0 percent of the agencies had less than 500 employees

Table 3.2 Variables descriptive statistics.

Variable	Description	Type		General	y2016	y2017	y2018	y2019	y2020	y2021	y2022
Independent variables											
Completeness	Organizations follow the guidelines or use the format.	Ordinal categorical	Yes	98.5%	98.3%	99.0%	98.4%	98.5%	98.6%	98.0%	98.4%
			SD	0.12	0.13	0.10	0.12	0.12	0.12	0.14	0.12
			N	840	59	103	127	133	145	147	126
Timeliness	Organizations publish the information by January 31.	Ordinal categorical	Yes	88.3%	44.1%	87.4%	85.8%	90.2%	91.7%	97.3%	96.0%
			SD	0.32	0.50	0.33	0.35	0.30	0.28	0.16	0.20
			N	840	59	103	127	133	145	147	126
Dependent variables											
Workforce	Number of employees.	Numerical	Mean	3834	7944	4706	1110	3749	3492	4026	4296
			SD	29,900	45,246	336,998	2,979	29,934	28,903	31,076	32,960
			N	741	54	96	117	124	133	115	102
Organizational budget (ln)	Natural logarithm of the annual organization's budget.	Numerical (ln)	Mean	25.83	25.87	25.75	25.63	25.69	25.74	26.12	26.18
			SD	2.13	2.33	2.24	2.25	2.10	2.12	1.85	1.99
			N	856	57	100	124	131	147	141	123
			Min	19.93	19.93	20.12	21.09	21.17	20.55	22.21	20.09
			Max	31.34	31.08	31.20	30.78	30.97	31.28	30.67	31.34
Investment Budget (ln)	Natural logarithm of the annual organization's investment budget.	Numerical (ln)	Mean	24.57	24.82	24.34	24.27	24.42	24.40	24.83	24.99
			SD	2.19	2.29	2.33	2.27	2.15	2.10	2.13	2.14
			N	694	50	82	106	113	118	119	106
			Min	19.07	19.98	19.98	19.52	19.81	19.07	19.52	20.65
			Max	30.20	28.82	28.83	29.38	29.41	29.00	29.53	30.20
Budget ratio	The ratio of the investment budget to the organizational budget.	Ratio	Mean	0.42	0.42	0.39	0.38	0.40	0.41	0.44	0.45
			SD	0.32	0.31	0.33	0.32	0.32	0.31	0.31	0.31
			N	689	50	82	106	112	117	117	105
			Min	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
			Max	1.57	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.57	1.02	1.00	1.00

One of the drawbacks of public employment in the Colombian context is the mixture of different labor modalities. In this case, the data about the workforce consider only public employees in the national civil service and at-will appointees. This study does not include employees working for the Colombian government through other labor modalities (e.g., private contracting). Therefore, it is only an approximation of the information regarding public workers who are responsible for the implementation in civil service. It's important to note that this variable is based on self-reported information from each organization to the national government agency responsible for personnel management and that this is a common limitation across all organizations.



Year=2021

Figure 3.4 Independent variables distribution (year 2021).

To examine hypothesis H2a, the second variable involved evaluating the budget allocated by the Colombian Congress on an annual basis (*Organizational budget*). It includes administrative expenses, policy-oriented activities, and monetary transfers to other organizations,

including territorial ones. As the Budget National Law (Law 38 of 1989) described, organizational budgets include operating expenses, public debt service, and investment expenditures. During the years 2016-2022, the budget on average is US 308 million, with a minimum value of US\$ 110 thousand and a maximum of US\$ 9.9 billion¹. In 2021, 87.2 percent of the national agencies had a budget of around US\$ 120 thousand, as it is possible to observe in Figure 3.4.

I employ two different model specifications to evaluate the relationship between policy-oriented budgets and the probability of compliance (H2b). First, I use the organization's total Investment Budget. These are the agencies' resources to increase the capacity of the government to create social infrastructure (Ayala & Perotti, 2000). In other words, according to the country's public budget regulations, these public resources are used to comply with the agencies' mission and exclude the resources oriented to the operating expenses such as the payroll and the public debt service. The decision of how to distribute these resources is a decision of the head of each organization following the guidelines of the National Planning Department, and it is part of its functions to use them to achieve its mission functions. This variable has a mean of approximately US\$ 98.02 million, a minimum of US\$ 46,756, and a maximum value of US\$ 3.18 billion. 83.2 percent of the national agencies have an annual investment budget of US\$ 36,583.

To check the robustness of the model that tests H2b, I estimated the effect of the ratio between the investment budget (natural logarithm) and the organization's overall budget (natural logarithm). With this variable (*Budget ratio*), I aim to explore if the proportion of the investment budget over the organizational budget transferred by the national government influences the

² The currency exchange rate is \$4,100.28 Colombian pesos per US dollar as of November 17, 2023.

compliance probability. In this scenario, a higher ratio indicates that the public organization must allocate a larger portion of resources toward complying with national planning guidelines and the agencies' mission. Additionally, it suggests that the head of the organization has more autonomy in determining how the resources will be utilized while adhering to the legal framework. On average, the ratio is 0.4, meaning that 42.0 percent of the agencies' budget is allocated for inversion.

Control variables: organizational characteristics

Finally, to answer the research question it is crucial to include control variables that influence the ability of organizations to comply with these policies. Appendices 3.1 and 3.2 show the descriptive statistics of these organizational characteristics. The variables regarding the type of workforce describe the employees' average age and educational background. On average, 26.6 percent of the agencies' workforce is between 30 and 49 years old, and less than ten percent is under 30. On the other hand, 48.5 percent of public employees have at least one graduate studies degree. Also, on average, 32.4 percent of the workforce have an undergraduate studies degree.

As I discussed earlier, I have carefully considered the intricacies of procurement processes. As a result, I have incorporated variables that are relevant to the contract's implementation timeline and the type of procurement process. It's worth noting that the length of the contract can significantly impact the complexity of the procurement process. This may entail additional steps during the planning phase, which are necessary in about 4.4 percent of processes. Moreover, the selection modality employed can also affect the technical and administrative complexity of the processes. A direct purchase, which is the simplest modality, is utilized in approximately 41.9 percent of processes. By contrast, a bidding process, which demands greater organizational capacity, is employed in only 1.8 percent of processes.

Finally, to capture the nature of the public agencies, I included the typology considering their degree of publicness and their resources. Appendix 3.3 shows the main variables of each dimension and their theoretical background. This typology divides the agencies into four quadrants: 1. organizations with large budgets and workforces with a low degree of publicness, 2. organizations with small budgets and workforces with a low degree of publicness, 3. organizations with small budgets and workforces with a high degree of publicness, and 4. organizations with small budgets and workforces with a high degree of publicness. Figure 3.5 presents the distribution of the agencies by typology. It is interesting to mention that quadrant 4 was over-represented in 2016, which is expected with the high degree of non-observable data that year.

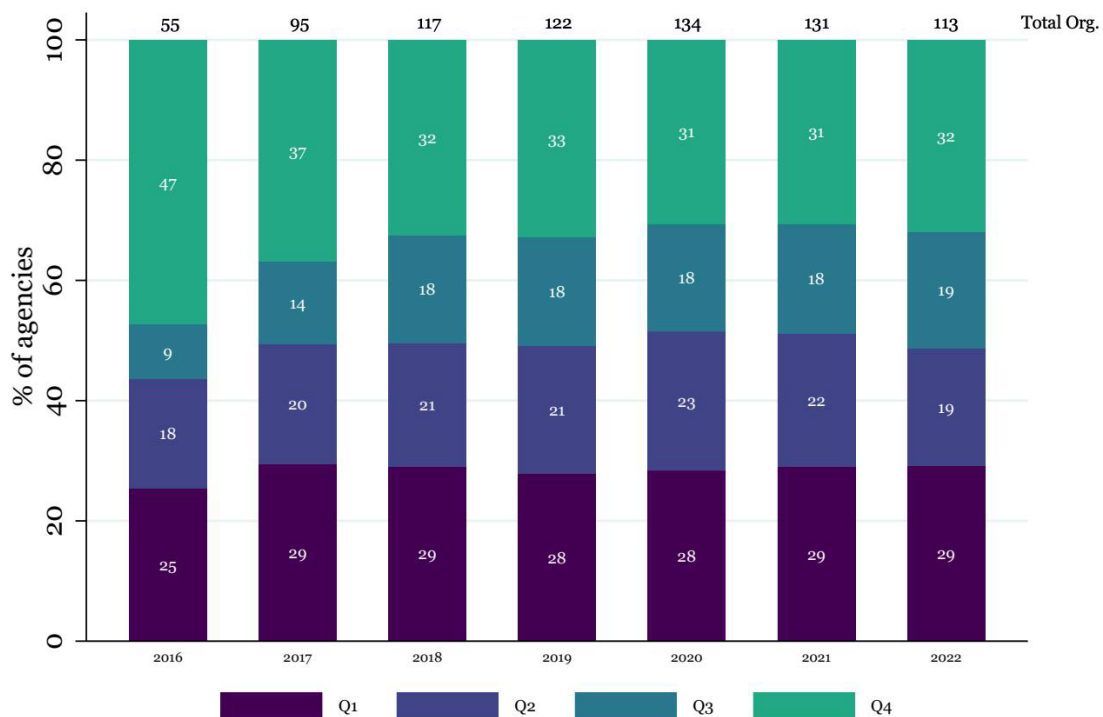


Figure 3.5 Organizations distribution by typology (degree of publicness and resources) over years.

Model definition

The estimated effects on the dependent variables (timeliness and completeness) are dispersed, reflecting considerable variation in behavior. For instance, the average compliance by sector with publication deadlines (timeliness) in 2016 ranged from 0 percent of organizations in one sector to 100 percent in another, averaging close to 44. This type of distribution could imply unobserved variables' effects on the cluster (clustering effects) and the correlation between the errors with this information. Figure 3.6 presents each policy sector's extreme and median values of the dependent variables by year. Refrain from considering that these variations between agencies could lead to erroneous results; therefore, I included fixed effects by policy sector and year in the model specification for these reasons. Introducing fixed effects in the model removes unobserved effects before estimation (Wooldridge, 2003). They are the parameters that do not vary between observations.

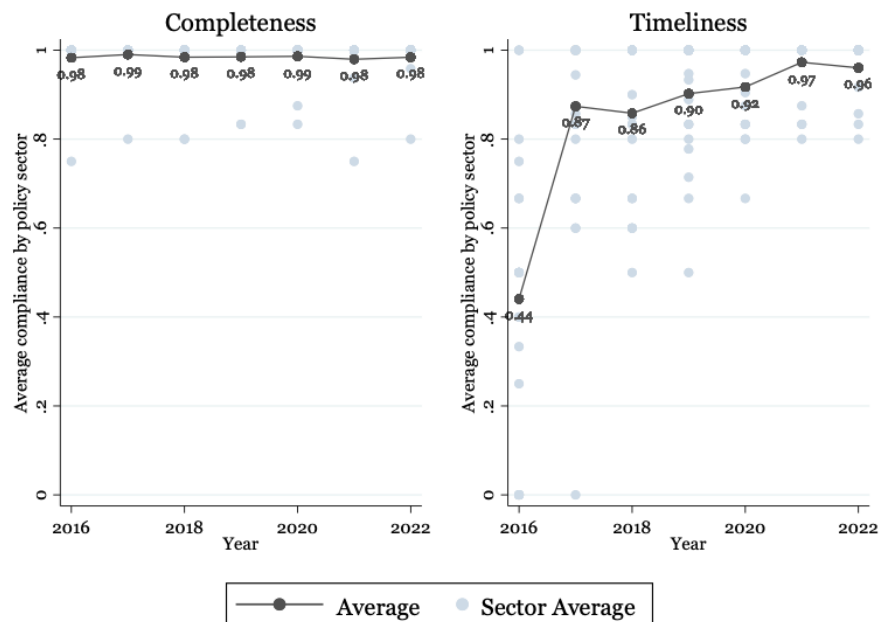


Figure 3.6 Level of compliance by year.

As I mentioned before in the dependent variables' definition, both measures of procedure compliance are related, and the probability of having a strong correlation between their explaining factors is strong. For this reason, it is reasonable to use a bivariate probit model. One of the limitations of using this type of model is its restriction on knowing the magnitude of the effect. For this reason, after comparing the results in magnitude, significance, and sign and concluding they are similar, I chose to analyze the result of two independent probit models (described in the next section). Additionally, the correlation between the two variables (completeness and timeliness) is 18.0 percent. Nonetheless, the results of the bivariate probit model are provided in appendix 3.6.

Finally, it is important to consider the nonlinear relationship between the organizational size and its performance. Research has concluded that the relationship between the optimal organizational size, measured as budget, workforce, or number of clients, and the benefit has an inverted U-shape (Walker et al. 2023; Pierce & Aguinis, 2013). Therefore, the model specifications include the variables for organizational size, except for the budget ratio, in their quadratic form.

IV. Results

I used two model specifications to test this study's three hypotheses (H1, H2a, and H2b) (see Appendix 3.4). The first model tests the relationship between organizational resources (workforce, organizational budget, and investment budget) with compliance measured in timeliness and completeness. The second model includes the variable budget ratio to evaluate the H2b hypothesis. Both models include the control variables of the type of workforce, procurement processes, agencies, and years.

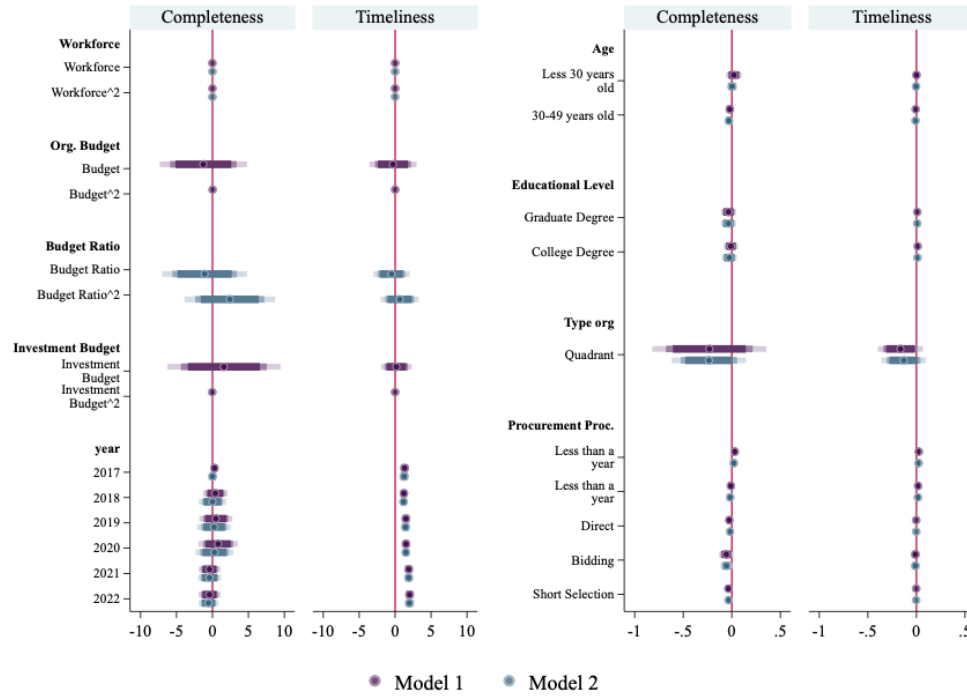


Figure 3.7 Probit Models Results.

Figure and Table 3.3 show the results of the probit models (significance, sign, and magnitude). Only in the case of compliance measured as timeliness does the workforce have a statistically significant result. The workforce is positively related to the probability of complying with a magnitude of 0.025 percent. In other words, the probability of compliance (uploading the document on time) increases by 2.5 percent when the agency has a hundred more employees, confirming the first hypothesis. It is also interesting to confirm, in this case, the quadratic relationship of this variable with the dependent variable. Specifically, the negative sign confirms the concave curve (inverted U-shape) mentioned by Walker et al (2023) and Pierce & Aguiní (2011).

Table 3.3 Probit results

VARIABLES	Completeness		Timeliness	
	Model 1	Model 2	Model 1	Model 2
Organizational resources				
Workforce	-0.00 (0.01)	-0.00 (0.01)	0.00 (0.00)	0.00*** (0.00)
Workforce^2	0.00 (0.00)	0.00 (0.00)	-0.00 (0.00)	-0.00** (0.00)
Organizational Budget (ln)	-1.26 (2.36)		-0.30 (1.27)	
Organizational Budget (ln)^2	0.02 (0.05)		0.01 (0.02)	
Investment Budget (ln)	1.59 (3.05)		0.17 (0.83)	
Investment Budget (ln)^2	-0.02 (0.07)		-0.00 (0.02)	
Budget Ratio		-1.09 (2.29)		-0.52 (0.98)
Budget Ratio^2		2.41 (2.45)		0.64 (1.03)
Quadrant	-0.23 (0.23)	-0.23 (0.15)	-0.16* (0.09)	-0.13 (0.09)
Organization workforce				
Workforce under 30 years	0.02 (0.03)	0.00 (0.02)	0.00 (0.01)	-0.00 (0.01)
Workforce between 30-49 years	-0.02 (0.02)	-0.03** (0.01)	-0.01 (0.01)	-0.01 (0.01)
Workforce graduate degree	-0.03 (0.03)	-0.03 (0.03)	0.01 (0.01)	0.01 (0.00)
Workforce college degree	-0.01 (0.03)	-0.02 (0.03)	0.01* (0.01)	0.01 (0.01)
Procurement processes characteristics				
Length: Less than a fiscal year	0.03*** (0.01)	0.02* (0.01)	0.02*** (0.01)	0.02*** (0.01)
Length: More than a fiscal year	-0.01 (0.01)	-0.02 (0.01)	0.02* (0.01)	0.02 (0.01)
Direct purchase	-0.03* (0.01)	-0.02** (0.01)	-0.00 (0.00)	-0.00 (0.00)
Bidding	-0.06** (0.03)	-0.05** (0.02)	-0.01 (0.02)	-0.01 (0.01)
Comp. Process	-0.03*** (0.01)	-0.03*** (0.01)	-0.00 (0.00)	-0.00 (0.00)
Year				
2017	0.28 (0.22)	0.02 (0.23)	1.32*** (0.25)	1.25*** (0.26)
2018	0.40 (0.66)	0.01 (0.73)	1.22*** (0.22)	1.17*** (0.21)
2019	0.47 (0.89)	0.23 (0.91)	1.50*** (0.24)	1.45*** (0.24)
2020	0.79 (1.06)	0.28 (1.02)	1.51*** (0.23)	1.49*** (0.22)
2021	-0.41 (0.58)	-0.40 (0.63)	1.89*** (0.24)	1.88*** (0.24)
2022	-0.41 (0.59)	-0.55 (0.53)	2.02*** (0.25)	1.99*** (0.26)
Observations	641	641	641	641

Nonetheless, the findings reveal insights into the organizational procurement process. The percentage of procurement processes of less than a year is positive and significant in all model specifications. In other words, avoiding an extra approval process increases the probability of compliance. Finally, the type of procurement process also influences the likelihood of compliance. The procurements that require a bidding or competitive process are less likely to publish complete information. It is also interesting that in the case of compliance measured as timeliness, the positive gradient results suggest a learning process—the likelihood of publishing the APP on time increases over the years.

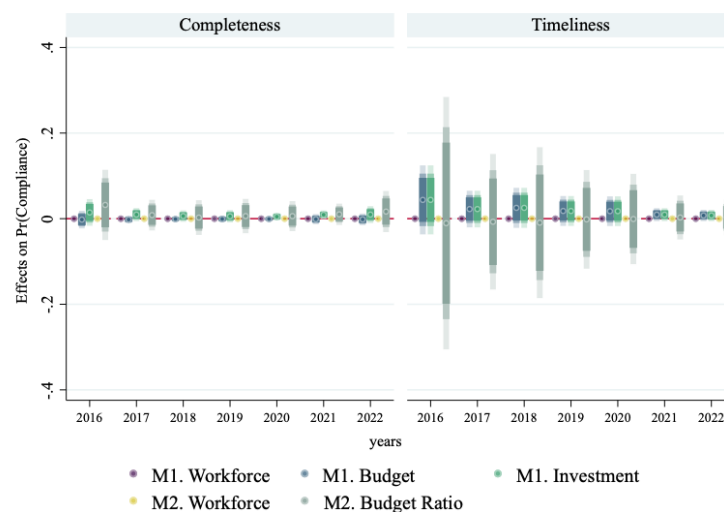


Figure 3.8 Average Marginal Effects by year (Models 1 and 2)

Understanding the marginal changes in the variables and their implications on compliance with transparency-related procedures is relevant. These estimations are the change in the probability of the outcome for a change in the selected independent variable, holding other variables at specific values, in this case, at means (Long & Mustillo, 2021). Specifically, I considered the discrete change (first difference) for a discrete change in the workforce and budget variables. Therefore, I estimated the marginal effects of both models. These estimations

are the change in the probability of the outcome for a change in the selected independent variable, holding other variables at specific values, in this case, at average (Long & Mustillo, 2021).

Figure shows the results of the average marginal effects by year for each measure of compliance and each covariate of both models (Appendix 3.7 presents the table with the results). It is possible to infer that the effect of the covariates - is not statistically significant (organizational budget and budget ratio) or close to zero (workforce). In the case of compliance measured as completeness, the investment budget's marginal effect is statistically different than zero. Therefore, with the change in one percent of this type of budget, the probability of completeness increases by 0.1 percent in 2021.

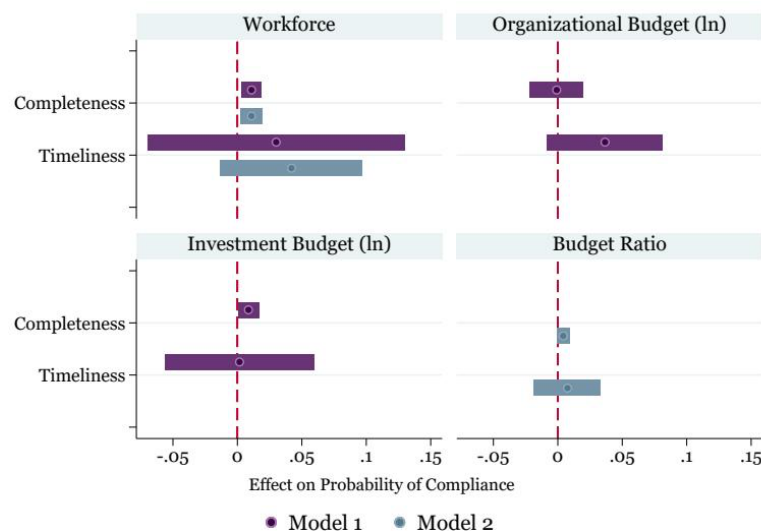


Figure 3.9 Marginal effects by standard deviation (Independent Variables).

To further explore these variables on the probability of compliance, I examined the shift by standard deviation. Figure 3.9 presents the results of the dependent variable change (completeness and timeliness) for one unit and one standard deviation for the independent variables (organizational resources). The main result of observing the marginal effects by their

standard deviations is H2a when we measure by the workforce. This variable is statistically different than zero when we use completeness to measure compliance. In this case, an increase of one standard deviation increases the likelihood of compliance by 1.1 percent. There is also some evidence to consider about H2b. In this case, the marginal effects of the budget ratio when it changes in one standard deviation increases by 0.04 percent the likelihood of completeness.

Figure 3.10 presents the results of the control variables related to the quadrant, the type of workforce, and the procurement processes. Appendix 3.8 has the results for all the variables. Regarding the type of workforce, the level of education of the workforce positively influences the probability of timeliness in both models. On the other hand, the characteristics of the procurement processes also influence the likelihood of compliance with the transparency requirements. When the organizations have a higher percentage of processes with a duration of less than a year, they are positively related to the likelihood of completeness and timeliness (model 2).

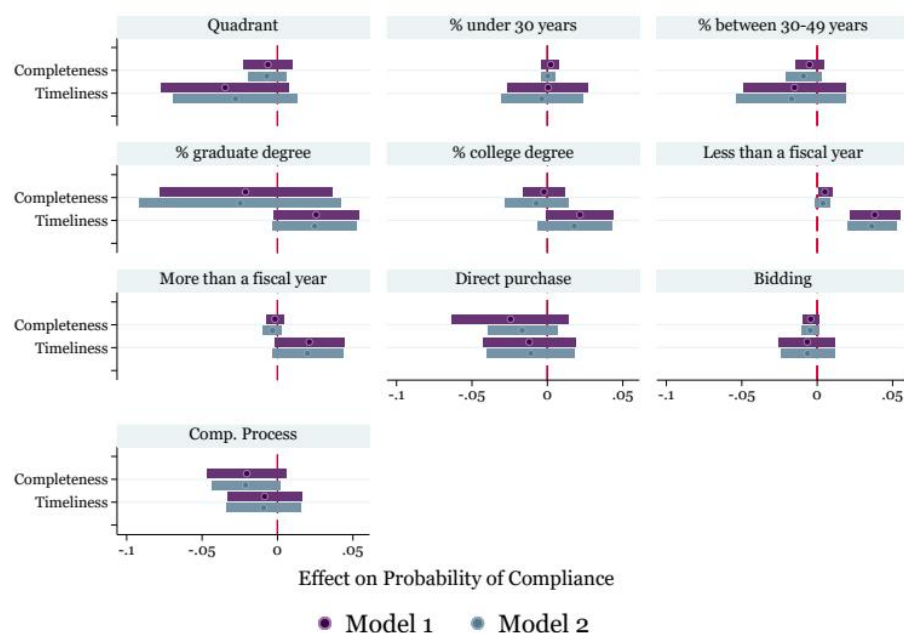


Figure 3.10 Marginal effects by standard deviation (Control Variables).

Finally, it is important to mention the significance of the years in the likelihood of compliance. As in the first models, these marginal effects by standard deviation show a gradient result with a positive effect on timeliness. In other words, when the Transparency Law has more years in implementation, it is more likely to be complied which shows evidence of a learning curve.

V. Discussion

In recent years, transparency practices have gained global recognition and have been the subject of numerous empirical studies exploring their impact on citizen relationships. However, simply acknowledging the importance of transparency and establishing standards alongside other procedures does not guarantee their successful implementation. Despite a shared understanding of the purpose of transparency frameworks and a high level of formality, there may be organizational factors that contribute to variations in the implementation process. This paper seeks to explore the link between organizational resources and transparency practices compliance.

Individual and organizational factors inherent to the public sector led to less than full compliance with transparency requirements (Ben-Aaron et al., 2017; Fenster, 2015; Pasquier & Villeneuve, 2007). Moreover, as Cucciniello et al. (2017) mentioned in their review of 25 years of transparency research, further investigation is necessary to understand how we can improve transparency. In the Colombian context, the annual procurement volume is more than 44 billion dollars, and it follows a centralized, uniform, and well-defined legal framework. Hence, it is essential to understand why, despite the efforts of formalization and the studies about the positive consequences of transparency, it is possible to observe differences in the organizational implementation process.

This study aims to understand whether organizational workforce and budget affect transparency as these aspects relate to compliance with legal requirements. Based on an analysis of data generated between 2016 and 2022 through annual procurement plans by national organizations in Colombia, the study's probit models find that organizations with bigger workforces are more likely to comply with transparency standards. However, the probit models confirmed, for the case of timeliness, that this variable has an inverted U-shape curve. This result confirms the too-much-of-a-good-thing effect mentioned by Pierce & Aguinis (2011). Therefore, we can conclude that scale economies help agencies to comply with the transparency requirement. However, at some point, the magnitude of the effect decreases.

There are no statistically significant results regarding the first specification of the second hypothesis (H2a), the organizational budget. We can conclude that, in this case, the general budget does not influence the probability of compliance with the transparency requirements. Regarding the amount of investment resources, the second specification of the second hypothesis (H2b) is that only the budget ratio increases the probability of completeness by 0.4 percent when it increases by one standard deviation (0.3). This result implies that a large change in the proportion, more than 30.0 percent, increases only the probability at less than half a percentual point.

The results provide insights into the primary factors involved in implementing public management policies. Regarding the Transparency Law, the availability of human resources has a significant impact on compliance with the legal framework. The number of employees and their qualifications influence the likelihood of organizations to comply. In this case, a higher proportion of highly educated workforce members increases the likelihood of compliance, especially in terms of timeliness. This finding further corroborates the importance of human

resources as a key factor affecting the implementation of various policies, as it has been a focus of implementation studies since Pressman and Wildavsky (1984). However, in a country like Colombia, where the civil service combines a merit-based career system with elements of patronage dynamics (Sanabria-Pulido & Avellaneda, 2021), it is crucial to consider how this dimension impacts other public management reforms.

The results also show a learning curve in the implementation of this type of management reform. There is a positive trend in compliance across the years, which indicates that organizations are consistently incorporating their procurement plans into annual reports and publishing them on schedule each year. However, the result does not show statistical significance for completeness, suggesting that time does not influence this measure of compliance. When it comes to compliance measured as the timeliness of publication of the Annual Performance Plans (APPs), it was clear that organizations needed time to adapt their processes, understand the requirements, and incorporate them into their regular procedures. Therefore, it is essential to allow some time for the new management reforms to take effect and see if they are successful while taking into account the learning curve. In a country like Colombia, where there can be more than seven reforms to the transparency legal framework in a single year, this result is significant.

The likelihood of compliance is influenced by the type of tasks and the complexity of processes. When an organization has a higher percentage of procurement processes taking more than a year to execute, it is less likely to be compliant. This could be due to the need for more time between the approval of the annual executive budget and the publication of the APPs. More complex procurement processes require additional time to consider various factors. Typically, public purchases that last more than a year involve complex projects with multiple stakeholders

and large budgets, such as large construction projects or public-private partnerships. Therefore, it could be interesting to explore if this type of information requirement in the logic of the Transparency reforms could take into account these differences and provide different dates, forms, or technological tools that better adapt to the reality of the organizations.

There is some worth mention limitations in this study. Due to the legal requirements, this paper uses the information posted on the organization's website and the national repository. However, it is beyond this paper if the agencies published their documents using other resources, such as social media or in-person meetings. Future work in this area could explore whether organizations use other resources to increase transparency. For example, they may publish the procurement processes on their social media or make procurement fairs where they invite their main stakeholders. These types of activities may overcome technological literacy and difficulties, especially in some regions outside Bogotá.

Future research agendas using this paper's findings might include understanding organizational leaders' individual characteristics. Leadership styles and commitment to transparency may influence compliance with procedures. One of the relevant elements of the green tape theory and the internalization of the transparency reforms is the understanding of authority as a two-way concept (Arellano-Gault & Lepore, 2011; DeHart-Davis, 2009). Therefore, future research projects on the employees' perception may explore how public employees perceive their managers and how it interacts with the rule's compliance. Additionally, following the managers' side, it could be interesting to understand if their educational and professional backgrounds and leadership styles influence organizational compliance with administrative rules.

Additionally, it would be relevant to understand the implications of oversight of organizations with high budgets and their greater likelihood of complying with the rules. This information would be possible to know whether being subject to greater investigations and controls leads to greater control of the rules. Finally, another variable that could be included in these studies is to include the number of employees directly related to public procurement and their characteristics. It may be that having this information, and not that of the entire organization, would be more indicative of Hypothesis 1.

CHAPTER 4

PUBLIC EMPLOYEES, MOTIVES, AND OTHER CHARACTERISTICS: INFLUENCES ON POLICY COMPLIANCE

The implementation of policies is not solely dependent on their design but is influenced by various intricate factors. These include causal theories, relationships, resources, and processes that often remain unseen to the public's view. Central to this execution are the individuals charged with the responsibility. This paper explores the intricate motives underpinning public employees' compliance. The study adopts May and Winter's compliance model, scrutinizing calculated, normative, and social motives, especially in settings characterized by high centralization, control, and robust legal frameworks. It underscores the crucial roles of comprehension and capability in fostering compliance. Relying on the Colombian Employee Viewpoint Survey and administrative datasets from 2019 to 2022, the research endeavors to discern: "Which attributes of public employees in the Colombian national government bolster their compliance efforts?" This paper offers dual contributions. First, it sheds light on the factors that drive or hinder public employees' compliance with their roles and responsibilities, providing insights into the persistence of non-compliance even within bureaucratic models featuring civil service systems. In addition, it explores how environmental complexity may influence the employee's willingness to comply with their jobs. Consequently, this paper seeks to identify critical considerations that help refine the implementation of public management policies.

Introduction

Policy implementation is a multifaceted process shaped by various factors, including policy design, resource allocation, stakeholder relationships, and underlying causal theories (Mazmanian & Sabatier, 1989). The intricate nature of this process, often referred to as a “black box,” involves numerous steps, decision-making points, and the dynamic interplay of multiple stakeholders. This complexity underscores the necessity of a comprehensive understanding of how policies are effectively translated from intent to action. Despite the extensive body of literature on policy implementation, there remains a significant gap in research focusing on regulations or programs aimed explicitly at transforming government entities. Addressing this gap requires a deeper exploration of compliance with public management policies within governmental bodies.

Institutional arrangements are critical in translating broad policy intentions into specific actions (O'Toole, 2012). These arrangements depend heavily on officials' commitment to rules, proficient leadership, and effective cooperation among various actors. Establishing solid and reciprocal relationships is essential for implementing and sustaining policies over time. Consequently, public employees' compliance with their designated roles becomes a crucial element in understanding the successful implementation of public policies.

The dynamics of compliance within public management are closely tied to the characteristics of both individuals and organizations tasked with policy implementation. Winter and May's (2001) compliance model, which examines individual motives (calculated, normative, and social) alongside capacities, offers valuable insights into these dynamics. According to this model, public employees are more likely to comply with their responsibilities when they are

motivated by clear rules, aligned with organizational goals, and provided with the necessary resources.

This paper addresses the research question within the context of the Colombian national government: "Which characteristics of public employees increase their likelihood of compliance with job responsibilities?" The study utilizes data from the Colombian Employee Viewpoint Survey, organizational archives, and administrative datasets from 2019, 2021, and 2022 to explore this question.

In examining the Colombian national government, the research reveals that specific characteristics of public employees enhance their likelihood of complying with job responsibilities. Data from the Colombian Employee Viewpoint Survey, coupled with organizational archives and administrative datasets, indicate that employees with high levels of normative and social motives are more inclined to adhere to their responsibilities. Factors such as rule awareness and available resources significantly influence employee compliance. The findings also highlight the relevance of environmental complexity and hierarchical levels. These results emphasize the importance of fostering a work environment that supports these motivations to improve the effectiveness of public management policies.

This paper makes two significant contributions to the field. First, it attempts to elucidate the factors driving or hindering public employees' compliance with their roles and responsibilities. Second, it examines which characteristics of public employees within the Colombian national government increase the likelihood of compliance with job responsibilities. The research provides valuable insights into enhancing the effectiveness of public management policies, promoting transparency, and fostering greater accountability within government entities.

The document's first section offers a thorough literature review, exploring key theories and past research on policy implementation, public management reforms, and compliance in public administration. The second section introduces the theoretical framework, focusing on applying May and Winter's compliance model within the context of Colombian public administration. The third section details the research methodology, outlining the data sources, sampling methods, and analytical techniques employed in the study. The subsequent section presents the empirical findings, utilizing data from surveys, organizational archives, and administrative records to analyze the factors influencing compliance among Colombian public employees. Finally, the document concludes with a discussion of these findings concerning the theoretical framework and broader public administration literature, providing insights into their implications for policy and practice.

I. Literature Review

While it is widely acknowledged that well-designed policies are crucial to successful implementation, they alone are insufficient to ensure the likelihood of desired outcomes (May, 1991). Various factors influence successful policy execution, from policy design to the delivery process, including causal theories, resources, extant protocols, and relationships (Mazmanian & Sabatier, 1989). These elements often remain opaque to the general public. Pioneers in policy implementation studies, like Mazmanian and Sabatier (1989) and Pressman and Wildavsky (1984), highlighted its complex nature. They pointed out the numerous steps, decision-making points, stakeholders, relationships, and resources involved. These intricate components, sometimes called the 'black box' (Sandfort & Moulton, 2015), can either hinder or propel the execution of a policy.

One of the critical elements in the policy implementation process is the organizations and individuals who are responsible for the process. Adequate institutional arrangements are essential for translating “a general policy intent into an array of rules, routines, and social processes that can convert policy into action” (O'Toole, 2012, p. 234). The commitment of officials to these rules and the presence of proficient leadership are vital (Mazmanian & Sabatier, 1989). Furthermore, cooperation among involved actors is indispensable and achievable through authority, shared interests, and reciprocal exchanges (O'Toole, 2012). In this context, the dynamics of public officers' interactions become crucial for a comprehensive understanding of policy implementation.

While there is extensive literature on policy implementation, which started over three decades ago, its primary emphasis remains on policies directed at citizens, including areas like social programs (see Meier and O'Toole (2003)), infrastructure projects, and regulation (see May and Winter (1999); May (2005)). This scholarship offers insights into different cases to see how governments must improve their processes and identify critical elements to increase the probability of success. Nonetheless, there is limited research when it comes to understanding what happens with regulations or programs oriented toward changing the government itself. While some research highlights key elements of specific types of public management trends, such as intragovernmental regulation (see Durant et al. (1986) Konisky and Teodoro (2016)), public values (see (Brewer, 2013)), and street-level bureaucrats (see Hupe and Hill (2007) Riccucci (2005)), it is imperative to delve deeper. This entails exploring not only the “black box” from the government to society programs but also what determines the compliance of public management policies within the government.

Evolution and Complexity in Public Management Reforms

Public management has undergone significant transformations, marked by distinct waves of reform that reflect evolving social values and administrative priorities. Pollitt and Bouckaert (2011) identify three primary waves of reform thinking since the mid-1960s. Initially, public management was dominated by rational, hierarchical planning and cost-benefit analysis, grounded in the belief that scientific expertise could drive societal progress. This approach shifted in the late 1970s with the advent of New Public Management (NPM), which introduced market-oriented practices and business techniques aimed at enhancing efficiency and effectiveness in public service delivery. NPM posited that better management practices could address a wide range of social challenges.

Most recently, in the 21st century, no single dominant model prevails, but several key paradigms have emerged, including governance, networks, partnerships, transparency, and trust (Pollitt & Bouckaert, 2011, p. 11). These paradigms reflect a broader and more nuanced understanding of public management, emphasizing the importance of collaboration, accountability, and the complexity of public sector operations. This evolution in the understanding of how government must be managed and the relationship of different actors, such as the private sector and citizens, shaped the reforms of governments in recent decades.

Pollitt and Bouckaert (2011) also delineate four central models of public management that exhibit global convergence in their adoption across various countries. The first, New Public Management, employs business-like methods to render government operations more efficient and responsive to citizens. The second model, the Neo-Weberian State, seeks to modernize traditional government roles, enhancing professionalism, efficiency, and citizen responsiveness while maintaining the state as a distinct actor with its unique rules, methods, and culture. The

final two models, governance and networks, introduce a paradigm shift in government structure, emphasizing flexibility, representation, and the interconnectedness of public administration.

However, while these models are theoretically distinct, their practical implementation often must catch up to the intended outcomes. Governments frequently need to be more responsive to provide detailed accounts of reform progress, and the complexities of implementation present significant challenges to research. Circumstantial evidence suggests that various factors influence the success or failure of these innovations, yet comprehensive evidence on the implementation processes remains limited (Pollitt, 2011).

Despite observable long-term reform patterns across different types of countries, the trajectories of these reforms are marked by diversity and discontinuity. Reforms are often partial or interrupted, influenced by the politico-administrative regimes within which they are enacted. Reformers may find themselves either rewarded or constrained by procedural rules, institutional structures, or cultural norms (Pollitt & Bouckaert, 2011, pp. 153–158). Consequently, implementing these reforms can be incomplete, leading to a juxtaposition of different elements and adding an additional layer of complexity to government operations.

Christensen and Lægreid (2011), also confirmed this perspective, stating that since the 1980s, public sector governance has become increasingly hybridized due to the different waves of public sector reforms. This characteristic is the result of the way continual reform waves, as the wants we mentioned before, resulted in a public sector permeated by mixtures of several prominent governance logics (Nielsen & Andersen, 2024). This situation forces organizations and their employees to choose different routes to handle more than one governance logic. In some cases, one logic might be privileged at the expense of another, and in others, they can amalgamate into new hybrids (Nielsen & Andersen, 2024).

The Dynamics of Compliance and Discretion Among Public Employees.

Reformers often encounter significant challenges when dealing with public employees, who ultimately interpret and implement reforms. As Sandford and Moulton (2015, p. 40) highlight, successful policy implementation depends not only on institutional structures but also on the individuals responsible for carrying out policies. This perspective aligns with Lipsky's (1980) seminal work on street-level bureaucracy, which underscores the critical role of frontline agents' discretion in implementing public programs. Lipsky emphasizes that empowering these agents is essential for creating the conditions necessary for successful outcomes.

Meier and O'Toole's studies on the governance of school districts further demonstrate the importance of various actors, their incentives, and the alignment of their roles in policy implementation. Their multilevel framework emphasizes the interconnectedness of different governance levels, where the higher-level actions influence those at the operational level (Sandfort & Moulton, 2015). Scholars such as Hill and Hupe (2003) argue that while the operational governance level is crucial for implementation, it is nested within other levels that also impact outcomes (Sandfort & Moulton, 2015). Thus, understanding the relationships and actions of various organizational actors is vital for analyzing implementation processes.

Thus, public administrators are strategic actors who must navigate political and institutional arrangements to effectively deliver public goods and services (Brewer, 2019). Political control theories support the idea that external forces are necessary to ensure responsible behavior in public administration (Peters, 2018). These theories argue that political actions, such as direct orders, appointments, and administrative procedures, are essential for aligning public employees' actions with societal expectations (Meier & O'Toole, 2006). Additionally, as discussed by Moe (1984), the principal-agent model emphasizes the need to enhance

accountability within bureaucracies, which are seen as goal-oriented entities capable of addressing multiple objectives.

However, empirical evidence suggests that public employees exercise considerable discretion, influenced by their values and preferences. Brewer (2019) identifies several factors that shape public administrators' behavior, including professionalism, ethical standards, and public service motivation. Differentiating between types of public employees is crucial for understanding their incentives and the institutional frameworks within which they operate.

In managerial roles, public managers have the authority to interpret and enforce rules and standards, fulfilling legislative or administrative objectives (Lynn Jr et al., 2000). Within the governance framework, these public managers may optimize outcomes following a short-run view emphasizing the quotidian, repetitive aspects of managerial roles and the features of the psychology, tactics, and political intercourse aspects of management. In contrast, they can also play a proactive role in the coalition as representatives of elective executives or as goal-seeking actors (Lynn Jr et al., 2000).

Unelected public managers, such as those in civil service, can potentially threaten implementation due to their executive administrative discretion, which could threaten governance arrangements. However, there are other explanations that help to understand the behavior of public officers and their willingness to comply with their jobs.

One such explanation is Nielsen and Andersen's (2024) concept of "ignoring by complying," which describes how public employees navigate the complexity of the public sector by minimally complying with demands. This strategy allows them to "fly under the radar" and focus on what they consider most important while coping with bureaucratic pressures (Nielsen &

Andersen, 2024). In this context, compliance serves as a means of managing complex environments and avoiding blame.

Finally, avoiding blame is a critical concern for public employees at all levels. (Hood, 2010) notes that employees seek to minimize risk, whether it involves potential damage to their careers, reputations, or legal standing. Government reforms often include measures to reduce these risks, such as red tape, enhanced checking processes, and additional regulatory burdens aimed at mitigating the potential for misconduct. Studies on street-level bureaucracy, including those by Lipsky (1980) and Hupe and Hill (2007), reveal that the routines and devices invented by officials are strategies for coping with uncertainty and work pressures. By adhering to standard protocols and group decision-making processes, employees can protect themselves from the negative consequences of errors (Hood, 2010).

Understanding Compliance in Public Management: Employees Motives, Capacity, and Institutional Dynamics.

As mentioned before, measuring crucial elements is challenging when studying the implementation of public management reforms. One of them is the degree of compliance of public officers. However, to understand compliance with environmental regulation in the Danish context, Peter J. May and Søren Winter published a set of papers identifying enforcement's role. They created a compliance model (May & Winter, 1999; May, 2005; Winter & May, 2001) that included different types of elements to comply but also considered the agents' ability to do it. Despite this framework being created to understand a specific context and type of policy, some elements of public administration allow the transfer of its categories to understand the individual motivators to comply with public management regulations.

The first component of the compliance model is '*calculated*' motives. Under this framework, various actors are perceived as rational agents aiming to maximize their utility. Drawing from political economics, individuals weigh the costs and benefits of compliance to inform their decisions about adhering to regulations. Furthermore, these rational agents also consider the likelihood of detection in the event of non-compliance and the resultant consequences. This rationale, initially posited by Becker (1968), supports political control theories. Within the public administration discipline, this translates to heightened accountability among public employees, aligned with the dynamics of the principal-agent model. One example of this component is the new economics of organization, where principals (political actors) and agents (bureaucrats) are self-interested, opportunistic, and have goal conflicts (Moe, 1984). Therefore, it is necessary to use incentives in an effort to increase agents' calculated motivation to comply.

The next element focuses on '*normative*' motives, defined as the "combined sense of moral duty and agreement with the importance of a given regulation" (Winter & May 2001, p. 677). This component aligns with the hierarchical nature of the bureaucratic model. The presence of unambiguous mandates, alignment of goals, metrics for performance, and organizational capabilities foster a conducive environment for implementation. Within this setup, information effectively flows through the bureaucratic hierarchy (Cline, 2003; McDonnell & Elmore, 1987; O'Toole, 1989; O'Toole & Montjoy, 1984; Raadschelders & Lee, 2011). Consequently, by amplifying the authority of central bodies and ensuring they have clear oversight over agents, the chances of non-compliance diminish, ensuring regulations are executed as intended.

The significance of normative motivation comes to the fore when examining the discretionary power vested in individual public employees within the bureaucratic framework.

One of the critical elements of the Weberian bureaucracy is the notion of individuals as ruler acceptant. Under this perspective, the authority, hierarchy, and established regulations are pivotal in shaping bureaucratic autonomy and control (Weber, 1922). Additionally, the expertise and proficiency of public officials are predominant. Their technical competencies and inherent attributes govern their recruitment and advancement within the system. In this context, the Weberian model introduces new elements to understanding the bureaucracy's discretion and political control: authority and hierarchy from one side and professionalization and merit on the other. In this context, the Winter and May compliance model's civic duty sense parallels the bureaucratic model's rule acceptance and professionalism.

Finally, a pivotal aspect of normative motives is the concept of authority. From Simon's (1997) viewpoint, this notion is crucial for getting participants' endorsement and alignment with the organizational strategy. Contrary to the conventional interpretation of the bureaucratic model, it is essential for employees to recognize and embrace authority. The communication system gains prominence in this framework, evolving as a mechanism to guarantee adherence and compliance. In this sense, individuals can make their own evaluation of the appropriateness of the regulation or guidelines.

The last type of motive in the Winter & May model is *social*. Here, individuals comply in order to earn the approval and respect of a group of people with whom they interact (Winter & May 2001). This approval comes from their peers and could be linked to specific conceptualizations of public values. If we view public values as innovative methods of providing public services that translate to specific goals and outcomes appreciated by the public (Brewer, 2013), these practices can be associated with public performance. As such, public values begin to serve as the compass directing the conduct of public officials. They establish performance

benchmarks regarding transparency, due process, accountability, and efficacy, among others.

Thus, as a multidimensional construct, public service performance includes this sense of public value and the urge of public officers to get the respect and approval of society.

Based on these components, the first hypothesis of this study is:

H1: Public employees exhibiting elevated calculated, normative, and social motives are more likely to perform their job responsibilities.

In the final steps of the compliance model, Winter and May recognize that individuals need to know the rules and be able to follow them. The first element, awareness of rules, echoes the public management literature about green tape and formalization. There are certain features that make rules easy to understand and agreeable to those involved (DeHart-Davis, 2009, 2017). Hence, it becomes imperative to account for the intrinsic characteristics of these rules. Key considerations include their alignment with the overarching objective, the establishment of valid means-ends relationships, comprehensive written stipulations, and the mechanisms for their application and oversight (DeHart-Davis, 2009, 2017). By having a holistic understanding of the guidelines, we can increase the likelihood of compliance.

In Winter and May's model, the final puzzle piece is the capacity to comply. This capability can be compared to possessing the requisite tools for a specific undertaking. Distinct resources, when appropriately employed, can give organizations a considerable advantage, optimizing their overall performance in the competitive landscape (Lee & Whitford, 2012). Organizations have coordination problems due to their multiple programs and priorities constantly competing for limited resources, such as time and financial assets (Sandfort & Moulton, 2015). The Resource-Based View (RBV) emerges as a salient perspective within this

context. In alignment with this perspective, it can be inferred that when organizations have the necessary resources, they are better at executing their responsibilities.

Thus, the second set of hypotheses of this study are:

H2a: Public employees who are aware of the guidelines and have a greater understanding of them to fulfill the policy are more likely to perform their job responsibilities.

H2b: Public employees who perceive they have sufficient resources to perform their jobs are more likely to perform their job responsibilities.

II. Colombian Context: heterogeneity in the degrees and types of public management reforms

In the context of administrative traditions, (Peters, 2021) identifies a group of countries that adhere to the Napoleonic tradition. Predominantly located in Latin America, these countries retain a robust colonial heritage despite gaining independence in the 19th century. Characterized by high levels of centralization and control, these nations emphasize meritocracy—at least nominally—and operate under robust legal codes. Their governmental structures align with the Weberian model of bureaucracy. From the 20th century onward, their administrative policies have been shaped significantly by international diplomacy and programs, often driven by aspirations for stability and economic prosperity (Peters, 2021). A prime example of a country rooted in the Napoleonic Administrative Tradition is Colombia.

Colombia operates under a centralized government, which often results in the implementation of one-size-fits-all rules (Villegas & Julve, 2014). While its civil service is still developing, it integrates a mix of distinct public administration models (Rodas-Gaiter &

Sanabria-Pulido, 2020; Sanabria-Pulido et al., 2020) (Rodas-Gaiter & Sanabria-Pulido, 2020; Sanabria-Pulido et al., 2020). Similar to several Latin American nations, the Colombian public employment structure showcases a complex overlap of patronage, bureaucratic, and post-bureaucratic systems (Ramió Matas, 2001; Ramírez & Isaza, 2020; Sanabria-Pulido et al., 2020). This inherent complexity, rooted in the structural and historical aspects of the national civil service, has made the enactment of administrative reforms challenging (Ramirez & Isaza, 2020). Consequently, a notable discord exists between the formulated policies and their actual implementation.

The Colombian administrative tradition resembles “a patchwork quilt that combines political patronage, New Public Management, New-Weberianism, and New Public Governance” (Sanabria-Pulido & Leyva, 2023b, p. 1927). This arrangement of different public administration elements results from reforms with incomplete implementation processes (Sanabria-Pulido, 2023; Sanabria-Pulido & Leyva, 2023b). Following Peters' understanding of administrative traditions, the modern Colombian government's starting point is the colonial arrangements. As part of the Spanish Empire, the administrative model was characterized by hierarchy and centralization, which focused on extracting rents rather than developing state capacity (Sanabria-Pulido, 2023). High patronage levels led to public employment resulting from market transactions, granting social status and nobility titles (Kalmanovitz, 2019; Sanabria-Pulido, 2023), shaping citizens' and public officers' understanding and perspectives of their role.

Colombia has faced several threats to its institutionality, especially toward the end of the 20th century. Narcotrafficking, guerrilla warfare, paramilitarism, criminal gangs, and urban insecurity displaced other policy goals (Sanabria-Pulido & Leyva, 2023b). Consequently, the country devoted a significant portion of its institutional capacity and resources to resolving these

issues, resulting in highly unsuccessful Weberian-like reform implementations (Ramírez & Isaza, 2020; Sanabria-Pulido & Leyva, 2023a, 2023b). This lack of implementation, coupled with highly politicized discourse questioning government legitimacy, created a conducive environment for implementing NPM reforms, even in a country without the type of government these reforms targeted.

The 1991 Colombian constitution marked a milestone where different population groups had significant representation, shaping new institutions based on ideas of New Public Management, fiscal federalism, market reforms, decentralization, and efficiency (Sanabria-Pulido & Leyva, 2023b). The constitution initiated the oversight scheme, creating various checks and balance mechanisms within branches (Sanabria-Pulido & Leyva, 2023b). Additionally, civil service plays a fundamental role in emphasizing professionalization and public ethos. However, the implementation process of this new government configuration over the last 30 years has shown different stages.

In this sense, Colombia's reform agenda has been devoted to creating a more active and capable state (Sanabria-Pulido & Leyva, 2023b). Hence, during the last decades, the country aimed to build a new set of institutions “to tune up its public administration to the aspirations of the 1991 constitution” (Sanabria-Pulido & Leyva, 2023b, p. 1929). However, as Sanabria and Leyva demonstrated, these reforms were based on different understandings of the government, having a long wave of NPM, Neo-Weberian, and, more recently, New Public Governance Reforms (Sanabria-Pulido & Leyva, 2023b). More recently, two milestones in the country's political context – the peace process with one of the oldest and most potent guerrilla groups and the inclusion in the OECD – influenced the role of government and its administrative capacity.

The different sets of reforms and stages of implementation have resulted in Colombia exhibiting contrasting elements. It features one of the five most developed civil services in Latin America (Cortázar Velarde et al., 2014) and is recognized for having one of the most open governments among OECD countries (OECD, 2018). However, despite these advancements, the goal of achieving a professional, independent bureaucracy remains unfulfilled, with political patrons retaining significant influence in the politico-administrative realm (Sanabria-Pulido & Leyva, 2023b). Colombia still faces significant challenges in implementing critical aspects of reforms, grappling with issues such as corruption, state capture, clientelism, and entrenched political practices.

As highlighted by Sanabria and Leyva, Colombia presents an intriguing case study in public administration due to its heterogeneity in the degrees and types of reform, shedding light on both the potential benefits and pitfalls of reforming public management (2023b). Furthermore, this heterogeneity offers a unique opportunity to examine differences within a centralized government. It allows for exploring variations between policy sectors, technical capacities, and types of public organizations. Consequently, one can analyze whether political, regional, or economic influences have differential impacts across sectors and assess the role of technical capacity and knowledge in shaping the degree of compliance with reforms.

III. Data and Empirical Strategy

One of the main challenges of this paper is translating broad theoretical concepts into specific questions that can be applied to a significant number of individuals over time. Some empirical studies measure this variable within particular organizations and utilize qualitative methods. This paper represents one of the first attempts to use a cross-sectional national survey

involving more than fifteen thousand individuals each year. To test the hypotheses regarding motives, capacity, organizational compliance, and their relationship with public employees' adherence to their responsibilities, the study analyzes quantitative data from agencies within the executive branch of the Colombian national government for the years 2019, 2021, and 2022. The database integrates various sources of information about public employees' perceptions and the organizations in which they work to effectively capture the abovementioned concepts. Consequently, the study incorporates two distinct levels of information.

The first database is the Colombian Employee Viewpoint Survey (EVS) conducted by the Department of National Statistics. This survey measures public servants' perceptions of various topics in organizations at the national level. The survey is a random stratified sample performed in two layers: the organizations and their hierarchical positions. It uses data from 2019, 2021, and 2022, consisting of more than 15 thousand public servants (unit of analysis) from 110 organizations from the executive branch at the national level per year. Table 4.1 has the survey questions and their answer options for the dependent and independent variables.

This paper's hypotheses relate to public employees' efforts to comply with their job responsibilities. Thus, the dependent variable (*effort compliance*) is an ordinal variable that answers whether public employees “give their best effort to comply with their job.” This variable takes values between 1 and 5, averaging 4.65, representing a left-skewed distribution. This variable serves as a resource to measure public employees' self-evaluation regarding their effort levels. However, the amount of effort required and the ease with which a public employee can perform their duties may vary based on their job responsibilities and characteristics. Therefore, to isolate the motives' effect, the model incorporates variables related to the individual and their job type.

Table 4.1 Dependent and independent variables: Employee Viewpoint Survey questions

Variable	Applicable EPV Question	Type	Response
Effort to Comply [Employees effort to comply]	I give my best effort to fulfill my job, regardless of the existing difficulties.	Categorical	Strongly agree, agree, neither, disagree, and strongly disagree.
Calculated Motives [Mission alignment understanding]	Thinking about what you do in your organization, how much do you agree or disagree with the following statement: - I clearly understand the mission and objectives of my organization. - I clearly understand how my work contributes to the mission and objectives of my organization.	Categorical	3 – They understand the organizational mission and how their job contributes to it. 2- They understand the organizational mission but are unclear on how their job contributes to it. Or they do not understand the organizational mission but are aware of how their job contributes to it. 1- They neither understand the organizational mission nor how their job contributes to it.
Normative Motives [Employees' trust and activities alignment]	Thinking about your immediate boss/ organization executives, how much do you agree or disagree with the following statement: - I have confidence in the decisions they make. Thinking about the activities you perform in your job; how much do you agree or disagree with the following statements? - They corresponded to the duties of my position. - They contributed to my personal growth. - They stimulated my capacity for innovation. - I am satisfied with the workload assigned to me. - I have the necessary competencies to effectively carry out my job.	Index	Scores range from 0-5 (higher score indicating better alignment and trust).
Social Motives [Organizational compliance perception]	In the last twelve months, - The organization met its main established goals. - The products and services of the organization were characterized by their quality. - Did your organization have formal communication channels to internally inform about its strategies and updates?	Categorical	3- the organization did not meet goals or deliver goods and services of quality (0,0). 2 - the organization met goals but did not deliver goods and services of quality (1,0), or the organization did not meet goals but delivered goods and services of quality (0,1), 1 - the organization met goals and delivered goods and services of quality (1,1).
Awareness [Organizational guidelines perception]	During the last twelve months, in general, the guidelines generated in your organization - Were easy to interpret. - Were consistent with each other. - Were easy to implement. - Facilitated the fulfillment of the institutional mission.	Index	Scores range from 0-5 (higher score indicating better guidelines).
Capacity [Organizational resources]	During the last twelve months, - Your organization had the necessary information for me to perform my job. - The supply of work tools was sufficient to fulfill the assigned tasks. - The information and communication technologies of your organization were suitable for the assigned tasks. - My team members have the necessary competencies to fulfill their functions. - The workforce was sufficient to carry out the scheduled tasks. - The budget was sufficient to comply with the planned activities.	Index	Scores range from 0-5 (higher scores indicate better guidelines).

Independent variables: characteristics, resources, and organizational compliance.

To answer the first hypothesis related to the effort to comply, the study uses three variables resulting from different questions in the same survey. The conceptualization of these theoretical resources presents one of the challenges this work aims to address. The theoretical concepts regarding individual motives for compliance involve deep constructs that encompass a set of social and personal values, which can even be interrelated. Therefore, this is the first attempt to utilize the public employees' view of them. Table 4.2 describes the questions behind each variable.

First, the calculated behavior (*calculated*) captures the rational agents and underscores the pivotal role of the employees, as rational agents, in maximizing their utility. This study uses two questions to measure employees' comprehension of the organizational mission and how their work aligns with it. When the employees understand how their job contributes to the organizational mission, they can balance how their effort serves the organizational purpose. In other words, their job has a significant contribution, and it is a good use of time. The first question determines whether the employee understands the mission and objectives, and the second evaluates how each employee's role contributes to achieving them.

Based on the provided information, the variable has three types of answers. The first option (1) represents employees who understand the organizational mission and how their job contributes to it. The second option (2) represents employees who understand the organizational mission but are unclear on how their job contributes to it and employees who do not understand the organizational mission but are aware of how their job contributes to it. The third (3) and final option represents employees who neither understand the organizational mission nor how their job contributes to it. As it is possible to see in Table 3.2, this variable takes values between 1 and 3,

where the average value is 1.03, representing a left-skewed distribution with a high proportion of the employees understanding the organizational mission and how their job contributes to it.

Table 4.2 Dependent and independent variables descriptive statistics

Variable	Description	Type		General	y2019	y2021	y2022
Effort to Comply [Employees effort to comply]	Asses if the public employees give their best effort to comply with their job.	Categorical	Mean	4.65	4.60	4.69	4.67
			SD	0.54	0.60	0.51	0.51
			N	48,115	17,105	15,464	15,546
			Min	1	1	1	1
			Max	5	5	5	5
Calculated Motives [Mission alignment understanding]	Assess about the employees' comprehension of the organizational mission and how their work aligns with it.	Categorical	Mean	1.03	1.08	1.01	1.01
			SD	0.23	0.36	0.10	0.11
			N	47,532	16,975	15,252	15,305
			Min	1	1	1	1
			Max	3	3	3	3
Normative Motives [Employees' trust and activities alignment]	Measures public employees' trust in their bosses and the decisions made by organizational executives. Also, includes their agreement on how well their job aligns with their position's functions and personal goals. It includes different elements such as their position's functions, their personal growth, workload, their skills, and the training they received.	Index	Mean	3.86	4.00	4.17	3.39
			SD	0.74	0.79	0.64	0.52
			N	48,148	17,123	15,469	15,555
			Min	0	1	1	1
			Max	5	5	5	5
Social Motives [Organizational compliance perception]	To measure this element, employees' perception of organizational compliance is gauged. It is the combination of two questions that measure if the organization achieved its goals last year and if they delivered products and services of quality.	Categorical	Mean	1.16	1.26	1.09	1.11
			SD	0.49	0.59	0.37	0.42
			N	34074	13228	10362	10484
			Min	1	1	1	1
			Max	3	3	3	3
Awareness [Organizational guidelines perception]	Measures the effectiveness of organizational guidelines by assessing whether they are communicated in a timely manner, are easy to interpret and implement, are consistent, and align with the institutional mission.	Categorical	Mean	3.89	3.83	3.95	3.90
			SD	0.82	0.88	0.76	0.80
			N	47842	17022	15385	15435
			Min	1	1	1	1
			Max	5	5	5	5
Capacity [Organizational resources]	Measures employees' perception of resource availability, including information, tools, tech, staff, and budget.	Index	Mean	3.67	3.59	3.73	3.71
			SD	0.79	0.81	0.77	0.78
			N	48110	17109	15461	15540
			Min	1	1	1	1
			Max	5	5	5	5

Second, the normative motive is measured using variables that assess moral duty and the perceived importance of the job. This includes factors that determine whether employees believe they have clear mandates and aligned goals. Specifically, the study evaluates employees' trust in their boss's and organizational executives' decisions and their alignment with both professional and personal attributes. Key elements considered are job functions, opportunities for personal growth, workload, skills, and training. This index ranges from 1 to 5, with a score of 5 indicating perfect alignment. The variable has an average score of 3.86 and its Cronbach's alpha is 0.81.

The last dimension of the first hypothesis is social motives (*social*). In this case, employees make decisions considering the approval and respect of the groups they interact with. Therefore, it is crucial to understand if the employees perceive their organizations achieves their goals and if their lack of performance could jeopardize the organizational performance. This variable combines two questions measuring whether the organization achieved its goals last year and delivered quality products and services. The variable has three options: 1) the organization met goals and delivered goods and services of quality, 2) the organization met goals but did not deliver goods and services of quality, or the organization did not meet goals but delivered goods and services of quality, and 3) the organization did not meet goals or deliver goods and services of quality. This variable takes values between 1 and 3, averaging 1.16.

The second hypothesis relates to the availability of resources and the capacity to comply. The first variable is the organizational guidelines index, which measures the effectiveness of organizational guidelines by assessing whether they are communicated in a timely manner, easy to interpret and implement, consistent, and aligned with the institutional mission. The index will be between 0 and 5, with a higher score indicating better guidelines. The index has a Cronbach alpha of 0.93, and its mean is 3.89.

The second variable related to compliance availability is the organization's resources index (*resources*). The variable measures employees' perception of resource availability, including information, tools, tech, staff, and budget. The index scores range from 0 to 5 (higher scores indicate better guidelines), have an average of 3.67, and a Cronbach alpha of 0.75.

Control variables: individual and organizational characteristics

Table 4.3 Control variables: Employee Viewpoint Survey questions

Variable	Applicable EPV Question	Type	Response
Changes index [Employees' changes]	Over the last twelve months, have you experienced changes in - The structure of your entity, area, or department. - Your immediate boss. - Your functions and/or responsibilities. - The members of your work team. - Work schedules. - The technology used to work. - The competencies or skills required by the entity.	Index	Scores range from 0-5 (higher scores indicate less changes).
Satisfaction with compensation	I am satisfied with my remuneration.	Categorical	Strongly agree, agree, neutral, disagree, and strongly disagree.
Transparency Law [Employees' perception]	What do you consider to be the main benefit of the Law on Transparency and Access to Public Information?	Dichotomic	1 if the employee considers the Transparency Law strengthens the democracy, enhance the citizens participation, prevent corruption, improve public management. 0 otherwise.
Patronized system [Employees' perception]	Thinking about the future development of your career in the public sector, how important do you think the following criteria will be to advance to a better position: - Support from family, friends, and other personal contacts within the public sector. - Support from a politician or someone with political connections.	Categorical	1 if the respondents confirm the existence of either type of influence, or a value of 0 if they believe these statements to be unimportant.
Policy Sector	Colombian national government is divided in 24 policy sectors. To capture the type of policy and interaction with citizens, they are divided on three categories.	Categorical	1 social welfare, 2 economic policy, 3 other.

As it was mentioned before, the independent variables use the perception of employees on key aspects related with their motives to perform their duties. However, it is important to use

other variables to capture their personal characteristics, their type of job, and the organizational performance on some key management policies such as transparency and gender equality. Table 4.3 provides the EVS questions used as control variables. To begin with, I utilize variables about employees' job perceptions and activities. These include a change index, satisfaction with their economic compensation, the relevance of the government Transparency Law, and their perception of a patronage system. These variables capture the complexities of the public sector.

Table 4.4 presents the descriptives of these variables to provide more details. In summary, around 93.0 percent of the employees experienced some form of change the previous year. Approximately 70.0 percent are dissatisfied with their economic compensation, 97.6 percent recognize the benefits of the National Transparency Law, and 54.7 percent of the employees believe they need external influence, such as from friends, family, and politicians, to advance in their professional careers.

Table 4.4 Control variables descriptive statistics

Variable	Description	Type		General	y2019	y2021	y2022
Changes index	This variable regards changes from last year that may affect public employees' ability to comply.	Index	Mean	1.56	1.56	1.55	1.56
			SD	0.30	0.30	0.30	0.30
			N	48,207	17,165	15,478	15,564
			Min	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00
			Max	2.00	2.00	2.00	2.00
Satisfaction with compensation	Employees' satisfaction with their economic compensation.	Categorical	Mean	2.43	3.11	2.00	2.09
			SD	1.34	1.31	1.17	1.24
			N	46,500	16,878	14,808	14,814
			Min	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00
			Max	5.00	5.00	5.00	5.00
Transparency Law	This question directly asks employees' opinion on the benefit of the National Transparency Law as a public management tool.	Dichotomic	Mean	0.98	0.97	0.98	0.98
			SD	0.15	0.18	0.14	0.14
			N	46,568	16,321	15,083	15,164
			Min	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
			Max	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00
Patronized system	This variable regards the perception of public employees of the political environment.	Dichotomic	Mean	0.55	0.25	0.73	0.72
			SD	0.50	0.43	0.44	0.45
			N	40,397	15,114	12,512	12,771
			Min	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
			Max	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00
Job position	Employee's job position.	Categorical	Manager	6.02%	5.94%	5.87%	6.24%
			Advisor	8.73%	8.67%	8.77%	8.76%
			Professional	53.29%	51.41%	53.64%	55.01%
			Technician	16.06%	16.74%	16.20%	15.18%
			Support staff	15.90%	17.24%	15.51%	14.81%
Tenure	Employee's years on their job position.	Categorical	6M-2Y	16.06%	21.21%	12.20%	14.24%
			3-6Y	27.61%	25.80%	28.71%	28.50%
			7-11Y	23.26%	20.74%	25.06%	24.25%
			12-16Y	9.19%	6.71%	10.00%	11.13%
			>16Y	23.87%	25.54%	24.03%	21.88%
Sex	Employee's biological sex.	Dichotomic	Male	43.75%	44.26%	43.17%	43.75%
			Female	56.25%	55.74%	56.83%	56.25%
			NA	0.00%	0.01%	0.00%	0.00%
Education	Employee's education level.	Categorical	None	0.02%	0.00%	0.05%	0.01%
			Early Childhood	0.07%	0.00%	0.13%	0.10%
			Primary	1.15%	1.63%	0.87%	0.89%
			Secondary	6.37%	3.31%	4.04%	12.05%
			Associate	18.06%	14.31%	14.96%	25.28%
			Bachelor	33.58%	21.77%	19.26%	60.85%
			Graduate	40.76%	58.97%	60.71%	0.84%
Age	Employee's age	Numerical	Mean	44.30	43.97	44.52	44.43
			SD	10.51	10.43	10.54	10.56
			N	48207	17165	15478	15564
			Min	19.00	19.00	19.00	19.00
			Max	80.00	73.00	75.00	80.00
Policy Sector	Organization policy sector: social welfare, economic policy, other.	Categorical	Social Welfare	29.72%	30.13%	29.47%	29.52%
			Economy policy	19.74%	19.61%	19.41%	20.20%
			Other	50.55%	50.27%	51.12%	50.28%

The study also includes demographic variables such as job position, tenure, gender, educational level, and age. The sample represents different types of public employees, with professionals making up more than half of the sample (53.3 percent). Around a third of the employees (27.6 percent) have been in their role for three to six years, and the average age is 44. Women comprise 56.2 percent of the employees, and 40.8 percent have a graduate-level degree.

It is also crucial to consider the type of job of the employees in the Colombian national government. The government is structured into 24 policy sectors, each leading and implementing policies in different areas. Following Gonzalez and Tanco-Cruz (2019) division by the type of activity, the organizations are further divided into three groups based on their responsibilities: social welfare, economic policy, and other. While it is possible for employees in each sector to share activities, such as budget and planning, the final outcome and their relationship with citizens and stakeholders varies. This variation directly impacts the amount of effort required to fulfill their roles.

Finally, to capture the nature of the public agencies, the study includes the typology considering their degree of publicness and their available resources – budget, and workforce. This typology divides the agencies into four quadrants: 1. organizations with large budgets and workforces with a low degree of publicness, 2. organizations with small budgets and workforces with a low degree of publicness, 3. organizations with small budgets and workforces with a high degree of publicness, and 4. organizations with small budgets and workforces with a high degree of publicness.

Model definition

Given the characteristics of the dataset, the study uses a multilevel ordinal regression model to address the research question. This approach is particularly well-suited for analyzing

data structured within hierarchical levels, allowing for the exploration of how variables measured at one level of an administrative hierarchy interact with those at another level (Lynn et al., 2000). The dependent variable, which consists of five ordinal categories, is not suitable for linear regression due to the risk of producing biased estimators. Furthermore, because individual compliance is influenced by both organizational context and capacity, the data are inherently nested. Ignoring this nested structure could lead to underestimated standard errors, biased parameter estimates, and ultimately flawed inferences. Multilevel modeling accounts for this by appropriately partitioning variance across levels, thereby providing more accurate and reliable results. I will use the following model:

$$\begin{aligned}
 \textit{Effort_comply}_t &= \beta_0 + \beta_1 \textit{calculated}_i + \beta_2 \textit{Normative}_i + \beta_3 \textit{Social}_i + \beta_4 \textit{awareness}_i \\
 &+ \beta_5 \textit{capacity}_i + \beta_6 \textit{Organizational_Effect}_j \\
 &+ \textit{individual control variables} + \textit{organizational control variables} + \varepsilon_i
 \end{aligned}$$

Nonetheless, the next section shows the results for the ordinal logit and the multilevel ordinal model, which are consistent. As the equation shows, the multilevel model considers the organizational level of the individual effort to comply.

IV. Results

Figure 3.1 summarizes the results of the multi-level ordinal logit model. Regarding the motives of public employees (H1), trust, the activities index, and social characteristics have a positive and statistically significant impact. Specifically, this hypothesis is confirmed in two out of three cases, with the calculated motive being the only factor that does not affect the probability of compliance.

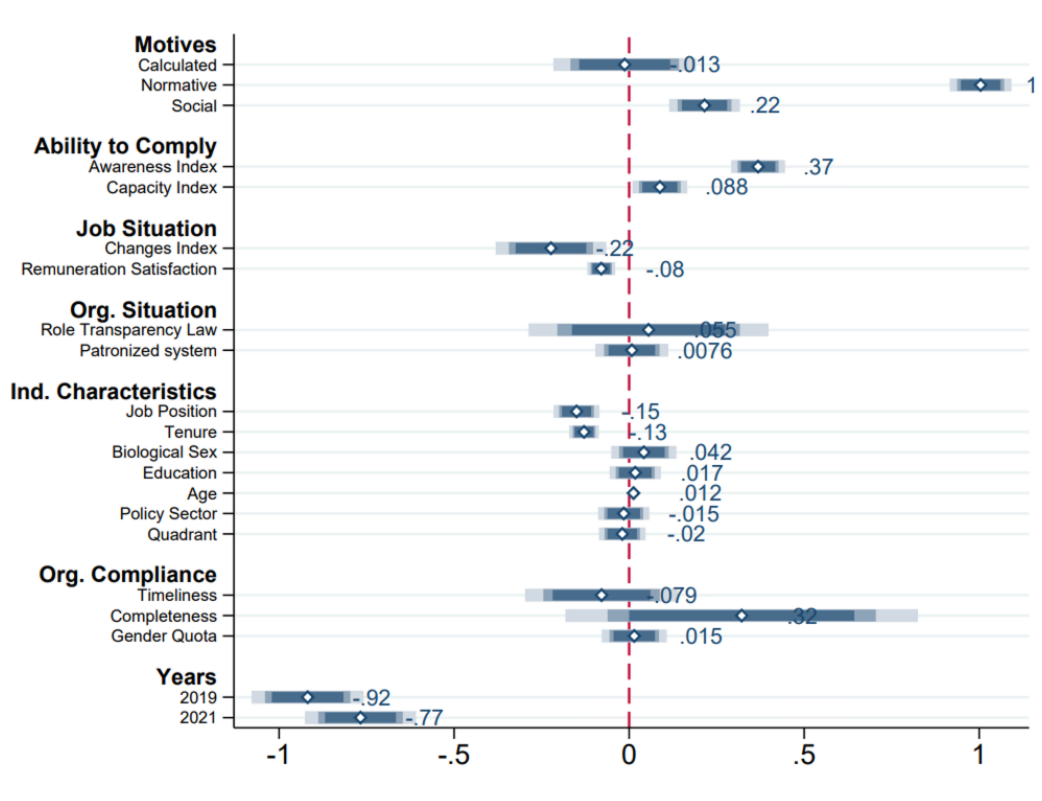


Figure 4.1 Multi-Level Ordinal Logit model results.

Figure 4.1 and Table 4.5 show that calculated behavior influences employees' compliance efforts. Regarding the first hypothesis, the different individual motives, we can confirm the hypothesis for the normative and social motives. Normative motives, such as trust and activities alignment, positively influence the employee's effort to comply by 100 percent. Along the same lines, the social motives are also positive and statistically significant. In this case, increasing social motives increases the probability of compliance by 21.0 percent. These two motives partially confirm the first hypothesis, but the calculated motives are not statistically significant.

Table 4.5. Model results.

VARIABLES	(1) Ordinal logit	(2) Multi-level ordinal logit
Calculated Motives	-0.01 (0.10)	-0.01 (0.08)
Normative Motives	1.00*** (0.04)	1.00*** (0.03)
Social Motives	0.20*** (0.05)	0.21*** (0.04)
Awareness: Organizational guidelines index.	0.37*** (0.03)	0.37*** (0.03)
Capacity: Organizational resources index.	0.08** (0.03)	0.09*** (0.03)
Changes index	-0.21*** (0.05)	-0.22*** (0.06)
Satisfaction with compensation	-0.07*** (0.02)	-0.08*** (0.01)
Transparency Law	0.06 (0.13)	0.05 (0.13)
Patronized system	0.01 (0.04)	0.01 (0.04)
Job position	-0.14*** (0.03)	-0.15*** (0.02)
Tenure	-0.12*** (0.02)	-0.13*** (0.02)
Sex	0.04 (0.05)	0.04 (0.04)
Education	0.02 (0.03)	0.02 (0.03)
Age	0.01*** (0.00)	0.01*** (0.00)
Policy Sector	-0.01 (0.03)	-0.01 (0.03)
Organizational Quadrant	-0.01 (0.02)	-0.02 (0.03)
Compliance: timeliness	-0.07 (0.08)	-0.08 (0.08)
Compliance: completeness	0.29*** (0.09)	0.32* (0.19)
Compliance Female employees' quota.	0.04 (0.03)	0.01 (0.04)
2019	-0.92*** (0.06)	-0.92*** (0.06)
2020	0.76*** (0.06)	0.77*** (0.06)
Organizational effect		0.03*** (0.01)
Observations	17,782	17,782
Number of groups		101

Robust standard errors in parentheses
*** p<0.01, ** p<0.05, * p<0.1

Regarding the second hypothesis, the capacity to comply, as measured by both awareness and available resources, demonstrates positive and statistically significant effects. A one-unit increase in the awareness index raises the probability of employees' effort to comply by nearly 37.0 percent. Similarly, the availability of resources positively impacts compliance likelihood, although its magnitude is smaller, increasing compliance probability by nine percent. These findings confirm the second hypothesis, with awareness having a stronger effect than resource availability.

When examining the influence of environmental complexity, both the changes index and remuneration exhibit significant negative effects. A one-unit increase in the changes index decreases the probability of employee compliance by 22.0 percent. While remuneration also negatively affects compliance, its impact is smaller, reducing the likelihood by eight percent.

Additionally, sociodemographic factors play a crucial role in influencing employees' willingness to comply. Higher hierarchical positions and longer tenures in these positions are associated with reduced compliance probabilities. In contrast, older public employees demonstrate a higher likelihood of making the effort to comply with their responsibilities.

These results about individual characteristics and how complex environments and changes in age or job position are relevant to confirm that individual motives also influence individual efforts and the position regarding job activities. Nonetheless, it is also essential to consider the type of job. The Colombia EVS does not include variables regarding the type of job or responsibilities of the employees. However, it consists of the policy sector of the organization where they perform their duties. The model was run for each type of responsibility in the policy sector to capture this effect. The results are in Figure 4.2.

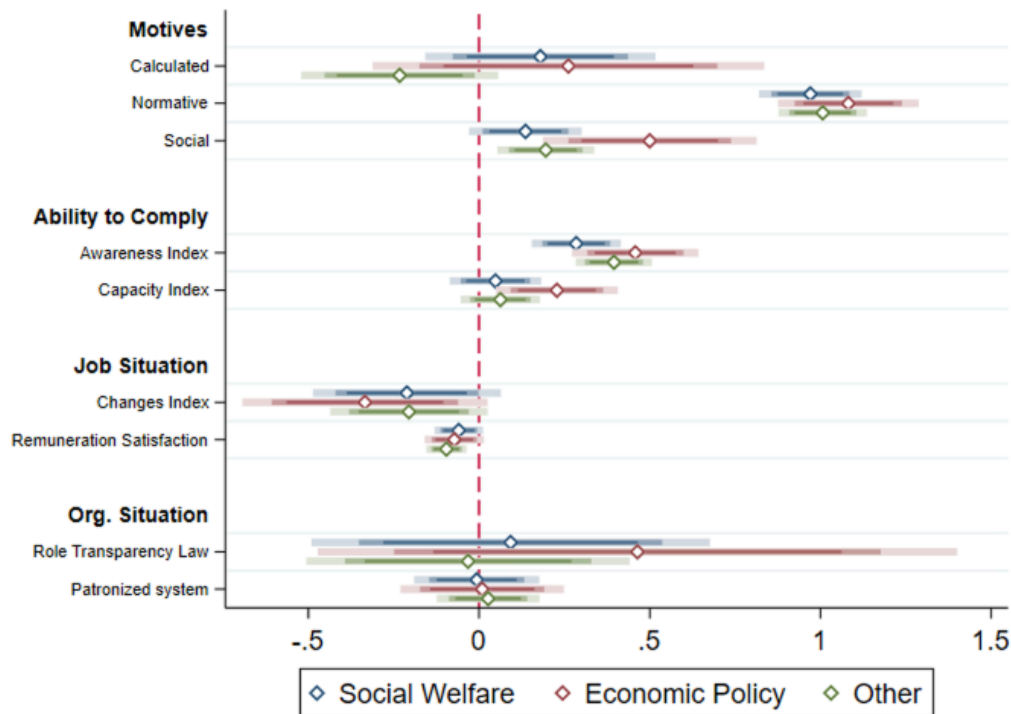


Figure 4.2 Multi-Level Ordinal Logit model results by type of policy sector.

In this case, it is possible to observe similar results for each variable. Observing social motives, it is possible to see that social motives have a more considerable effect on employees in organizations responsible for economic policy than the rest. The same happens with the capacity index. However, the most interesting result occurred with the calculated motives. When we consider variables that allow employees to make rational decisions to spend their time and effort, public employees have a negative relationship if we exclude organizations oriented to social welfare and economic policy.

V. Discussion

This study's findings support both hypotheses within the context of a hybrid government characterized by varying stages of public management reforms. This context, influenced by a Napoleonic System with a robust de jure legal framework, high levels of centralization, and significant international influence, offers a unique perspective on public employee compliance.

First, the results highlight the significance of normative motives, which measure the combined sense of moral duty and agreement with the importance of regulations. When public employees trust their supervisors and organizational leaders, they are more likely to recall their moral obligation to comply with their job responsibilities. Additionally, clear mandates and goals that align with employees' duties increase their likelihood of compliance. These findings resonate with the Weberian bureaucratic model, which emphasizes the mutual responsibility of those issuing guidelines and those following them. Rather than merely seeing public officers as passive rule-followers, this perspective recognizes both parties as active participants in compliance.

With these results, governments operating in complex environments could consider strategies to enhance public officers' and supervisors' relationships. For example, promoting and strengthening public management systems could be beneficial. In Colombia, a meritocratic system for selecting and evaluating public managers is legally established but optional for organizations. Consequently, there may be a need for more trust in the technical capacity and skills of the executive level, particularly among civil servants who have undergone a meritocratic selection process. Enhancing communication mechanisms between employees, supervisors, and executives could foster trust and improve the clarity of guidelines, thereby increasing the likelihood of compliance.

The second motive examined is social awareness among public officers, which reflects their recognition of organizational goals, the quality of goods and services delivered, and their responsibility to comply with their job activities. This study found a positive and statistically significant relationship between social awareness and compliance, suggesting that when public employees perceive a performance-oriented environment, they feel pressure to comply. Governments could leverage this finding by publicly disclosing organizational goals, results, and

progress, enhancing employees' sense of belonging, and emphasizing each individual's contribution to the organization's achievements.

The results from the Colombian national government also confirm the second hypothesis. In this case, awareness of guidelines has a stronger effect on compliance efforts. This outcome could be interpreted in multiple ways. On the one hand, employees may believe that available resources are likely to stay the same, leading them to adjust their expectations and work within existing constraints. On the other hand, employees may have sufficient resources but feel that communicating guidelines and rules could be more precise. Improving communication about tasks and organizational needs could, therefore, significantly impact employee compliance.

Finally, this study's findings contribute to a broader understanding of public employees' roles and willingness to comply with their job responsibilities. Environmental complexity appears to negatively impact employees' ability to adhere, particularly in contexts marked by frequent changes, such as during public sector reforms or in response to major disruptions like the COVID-19 pandemic. These changes can hinder employees' ability to meet their obligations, highlighting the need for careful consideration and planning when implementing reforms.

An interesting aspect of the results is the finding that employees in lower hierarchical positions are more likely to comply. However, the dataset used in this study needs more detailed information about employees' specific roles within their organizations, making it difficult to determine whether they are street-level employees or working in back-office functions. Nevertheless, the relationship between hierarchical position and compliance suggests that employees with more autonomy may feel less compelled to comply with their responsibilities fully. This finding could be explained by the greater responsibilities of higher-level employees, which may make them feel overwhelmed and less able to comply. Alternatively, theories such as

"flying under the radar" and blame avoidance suggest that employees with less hierarchical power may be more likely to comply, especially in complex environments. Further research could explore these dynamics more thoroughly, considering the type of work employees perform and potential mediating factors like social responsibility.

The type of duty also plays a significant role in the public sector. Although detailed information about the specific activities of each public employee is unavailable, the results provide some insights into this important aspect. For instance, variations in calculated motives between different policy sectors or job positions hint at the influence of job type. This analysis represents a preliminary attempt using the available data and lays the groundwork for understanding differences in compliance across administrative roles and street-level bureaucrats.

One limitation of this study is the potential for social desirability bias, particularly when examining the dependent variable. Employees may have overreported their willingness to comply with their job responsibilities. Future research could benefit from accessing employee performance assessments to verify these self-reported measures. However, due to the anonymity of the survey used in this study, such data are unavailable.

Additionally, given that the Colombian EVS is part of the global Survey of Public Servants project led by Stanford University, University College London, and the University of Nottingham, it would be interesting to compare these results with those from countries with similar administrative traditions, such as Chile, as well as with countries that have contrasting cultural, social, and political characteristics.

Finally, it is important to emphasize that this study represents an effort to operationalize and measure abstract and broad concepts using a cross-sectional database. It contributes to the debate on how to incorporate key elements of these concepts without excluding essential

components of the constructs, while ensuring the replicability of such inquiries. Despite existing differences and opportunities for improvement, this discussion is crucial for advancing methods to measure these constructs and replicating their study across various types of democracies.

CHAPTER 5

QUALITATIVE ASSESSMENT OF MANAGEMENT REFORM IN COLOMBIA: INTERVIEWS WITH THOSE IN THE TRENCHES

Public management reforms in Colombia aim to modernize governance, enhance efficiency, and improve transparency. However, implementation remains complicated due to bureaucratic rigidity, political influence, and institutional inertia. This study investigates the role of public managers in executing management policies, with an emphasis on their discretion, challenges, and strategies. It utilizes a qualitative research design and analyzes 25 interviews with managers from the Colombian national government.

Findings reveal a hybrid administrative system where bureaucratic traditions coexist with managerial reforms. Public managers face constraints such as limited autonomy, regulatory burdens, short political cycles, and resource shortages. Despite these challenges, they employ leadership, coordination, and adaptive strategies to ensure compliance and effectiveness. Additionally, organizational type, budgetary autonomy, and oversight structures significantly influence reform outcomes.

By centering managers' perspectives, this study contributes to debates on bureaucratic control and policy implementation in Latin America. It underscores the need for institutional flexibility, enhanced managerial capacity, and strategic resource allocation to improve public sector performance. These insights inform policymakers and practitioners seeking to strengthen public management reforms in complex governance environments.

Introduction

A fundamental problem in Colombia is that you propose an idea, and reality surpasses it.

[Participant #4]

Public management reforms have been central to governance modernization efforts worldwide, with countries adopting various strategies to enhance efficiency, accountability, and transparency in public administration. Colombia is no exception, having pursued significant reform initiatives, particularly following the enactment of the 1991 National Constitution. These reforms have aimed to improve budgetary processes, public employment policies, digital governance, and mechanisms for transparency and anti-corruption. However, despite these efforts, the implementation of public management policies remains a complex and often fragmented process (Pollitt & Bouckaert, 2011). The coexistence of bureaucratic traditions with managerial reforms has created a hybrid administrative system characterized by regulatory constraints, political influence, and institutional inertia (Sanabria-Pulido & Leyva, 2023).

While the success of public management policy implementation depends on various institutional and contextual factors, a crucial yet often overlooked dimension is the role of public managers. As intermediaries between policymakers and frontline administrators, public managers translate policy directives into operational strategies, ensuring their effective execution within the constraints of legal and institutional frameworks (Rainey et al., 2021). Their leadership, discretion, and ability to navigate bureaucratic systems significantly influence the success or failure of reform efforts. However, these managers also face considerable challenges, including rigid regulatory frameworks, short political cycles, resource limitations, and conflicting institutional priorities. Understanding their perspectives and experiences is essential

for assessing the effectiveness of Colombia's public management reforms and identifying potential avenues for improvement.

This study employs a qualitative research design to examine the role of public managers in the implementation of management reforms in Colombia. By conducting interviews with 25 managers from national government organizations, this research provides an in-depth analysis of the challenges, strategies, and institutional constraints shaping public administration in the country. The findings highlight key issues such as bureaucratic red tape, managerial discretion, resource allocation, and organizational structures, offering valuable insights into the dynamics of reform implementation. Additionally, the study explores how managerial leadership and institutional culture influence compliance and innovation within public organizations.

The study begins with a theoretical framework that explores key concepts in public administration, including public management reforms, bureaucratic control, managerial discretion, and policy implementation challenges. It then situates Colombia's public management policies within historical and institutional contexts, examining how governance traditions and administrative structures have shaped reform trajectories. The research design and methods section outlines the qualitative approach used in this study, detailing the data collection process, sample characteristics, and coding methodology. The analysis and results section presents key findings from 25 interviews with national government managers, highlighting themes such as bureaucratic constraints, leadership roles, resource allocation, and organizational variations in policy implementation. Finally, the conclusion summarizes key insights, contextualizes these findings within broader debates in public administration, compares Colombia's experiences with international trends, acknowledges study limitations, and offers policy recommendations for strengthening public management reforms.

I. Literature Review

The study of public management reforms has long been a central concern in public administration. Scholars have examined the factors that influence these reforms' adoption, implementation, and sustainability, particularly their impact on governance structures, accountability, and organizational efficiency. However, public management reforms are rarely straightforward. They unfold in institutional environments shaped by political influences, entrenched bureaucratic traditions, and resource constraints, which together create significant challenges for successful implementation.

Frederickson (1999) underscored the role of public administration in navigating turbulent governance environments, emphasizing that while geographic boundaries and competing interests shape political decision-making, public administration is increasingly tasked with fostering coherent governance structures across fragmented institutional landscapes. This perspective aligns with broader discussions on governance complexity and the unpredictability of administrative environments. In this context, chaos theory suggests that while public executives cannot fully control complex environments, they can identify emerging patterns and anticipate disruptions, thereby positioning organizations to adapt more effectively (Brewer et al., 2006). Leadership under these conditions extends beyond direct problem-solving; it requires articulating core values, fostering organizational resilience, and leveraging influence, as direct interventions in chaotic systems may yield unintended consequences.

Publicness and Institutional Constraints

The complexity of governance is further amplified when considering the concept of publicness. Bozeman and Bretschneider (1994) conceptualize organizations along a continuum,

where public entities exhibit higher exposure to political influence, regulatory oversight, and external scrutiny. Unlike private sector organizations that prioritize efficiency and profitability, public organizations operate within environments characterized by political cycles, competing stakeholder demands, and a heightened emphasis on accountability. Boyne (2002) argues that public organizations are fundamentally distinct in their objectives, prioritizing public service delivery, equity, and transparency over financial performance. However, these objectives often lack clear and measurable benchmarks, making performance evaluation inherently more complex.

In addition to goal ambiguity, public organizations are structured through formalized decision-making hierarchies and bureaucratic procedures. While such mechanisms promote transparency and institutional accountability, they simultaneously limit managerial discretion and adaptability. Bozeman and Bretschneider (1994) highlight those bureaucratic constraints—while essential for oversight—can hinder reform implementation when rigid structures prevent necessary flexibility in decision-making.

Bureaucratic Compliance and Control Mechanisms

The longstanding debate over bureaucratic control and autonomy remains central to public administration research. The principal-agent model suggests that bureaucratic compliance is influenced by external oversight mechanisms, such as legal mandates, performance evaluations, and political supervision (Meier & O'Toole, 2006; Moe, 1984). However, compliance is not merely a function of external control; internal organizational behavior plays an equally significant role. Research suggests that compliance can be driven by a combination of professional ethics, internal accountability, and organizational culture (DeHart-Davis, 2009).

DeHart-Davis's theory of green tape differentiates between effective and ineffective bureaucratic structures (DeHart-Davis, 2009, 2017). According to this framework, well-designed rules—those that are clear, necessary, and consistently applied—are more likely to be followed and accepted by bureaucrats. In contrast, when rules are perceived as excessive, overly complex, or disconnected from implementation realities, they contribute to red tape, fostering inefficiencies and resistance (Rosenfeld, 1984). This distinction underscores that bureaucratic structures are not inherently restrictive; their effectiveness depends on how rules are designed and perceived within an organization.

Public Sector Performance and Public Management Implementation

A major challenge in managing for results is the persistent difficulty in defining and measuring public sector performance (Brewer, 2003). Determining what constitutes “good performance” and how it should be evaluated remains an ongoing debate within public administration. Governments have long prioritized improving administrative efficiency, particularly following the emergence of New Public Management (NPM) reforms in the late 1970s (Brewer, 2003; Pollitt & Bouckaert, 2011). These reforms introduced performance-based management, cost-efficiency measures, and results-oriented evaluation into public organizations.

However, while administrative reforms have intensified over the past several decades, their effectiveness remains contested. Governments have aggressively pursued reform strategies to enhance public sector productivity, yet these efforts have often sparked debate regarding their long-term impacts and unintended consequences (Matheson & Kwon, 2003). Reforms emphasizing performance-based accountability must also consider the complexity of public

sector operations, ensuring that efficiency measures do not undermine essential governance functions, equity, or long-term institutional stability.

The Role of Managers in Public Management Implementation

Managers are pivotal in implementing public management policies, serving as the critical link between policymakers and frontline employees. Mid-level and senior managers act as intermediaries, translating policy directives into operational strategies while ensuring alignment with organizational objectives (Lynn Jr et al., 2000). Their leadership style, strategic vision, and ability to navigate bureaucratic constraints significantly influence their capacity to drive organizational change. Effective managerial engagement is essential not only for the execution of reforms but also for fostering institutional commitment and adaptability to evolving governance demands.

As Pollitt and Bouckaert (2011) argue, public management reforms frequently fail due to a lack of strategic leadership, insufficient managerial adaptability, and inadequate institutional capacity. These scholars emphasize that reforms are not merely technical adjustments but involve political negotiations, shifts in organizational culture, and the reallocation of institutional resources. Managers, therefore, must act as facilitators of change, navigating institutional constraints while building internal support for reform initiatives. Their capacity to bridge the gap between policy formulation and on-the-ground implementation is crucial in ensuring that reforms do not remain symbolic but lead to substantive organizational improvements.

Beyond overseeing policy execution, managers also shape the success of public management reforms through their ability to allocate resources, refine internal procedures, and build coalitions both within and beyond their organizations. According to Rainey et al. (2021),

managerial strategies that emphasize performance management and results-oriented accountability can enhance the effectiveness of reform efforts. However, managers must also contend with institutional inertia, political pressures, and conflicting stakeholder interests, all of which can hinder the reform process. Bozeman and Bretschneider (1994) highlight that regulatory frameworks often constrain managerial autonomy, which limits decision-making flexibility. Nonetheless, managers who adopt adaptive leadership, foster stakeholder collaboration, and engage in continuous performance evaluation are more likely to sustain reform initiatives over time.

Ultimately, the implementation of public management reforms is shaped by a complex interplay of organizational characteristics, compliance mechanisms, political influences, managerial leadership, and employee behavior. Recognizing these interdependencies is essential for developing governance strategies that balance accountability, efficiency, and responsiveness in public administration. A deeper understanding of the managerial role in reform implementation can provide valuable insights into improving policy execution and fostering sustainable administrative change.

II. Public Management Reforms in Colombia

Colombia's trajectory in public management reforms is deeply rooted in its administrative traditions, political struggles, and external influences. Following the 1991 Constitutional reform, the country embarked on an administrative modernization process shaped by the principles of decentralization, efficiency, and citizen participation. This transformative period sought to strengthen the state's ability to manage public affairs while fostering greater public engagement in political, economic, and cultural decision-making. However, the implementation of these reforms

has been uneven, revealing persistent challenges in harmonizing institutional changes with Colombia's historical and structural realities.

A defining characteristic of Colombia's public administration is its adherence to the Napoleonic administrative tradition, which reflects a legacy of centralization and bureaucratic control inherited from its colonial past. Peters (2021) highlights that many Latin American countries, including Colombia, continue to exhibit strong colonial influences in their administrative structures. As a result, Colombia's public sector is marked by a complex governance model that blends meritocratic principles with elements of political patronage (Ramírez & Isaza, 2020; Sanabria-Pulido et al., 2020). This hybridity has complicated the full adoption of modern governance approaches, leading to an administrative system that fluctuates between rigid bureaucratic structures and the flexibility required for post-bureaucratic governance (Sanabria-Pulido & Leyva, 2023).

Historical Context and Reform Waves

International influences have played a crucial role in shaping Colombia's administrative evolution. In the 1950s, early reform efforts were guided by World Bank and United Nations missions, which provided a framework for consolidating the civil service and establishing more structured governance models (Leyva, 2023). However, during the latter half of the 20th century, the country's political instability—exacerbated by narcotrafficking, guerrilla insurgencies, and paramilitary conflicts—diverted attention from administrative reforms, resulting in poorly implemented Weberian bureaucratic transformations (Sanabria-Pulido & Leyva, 2023).

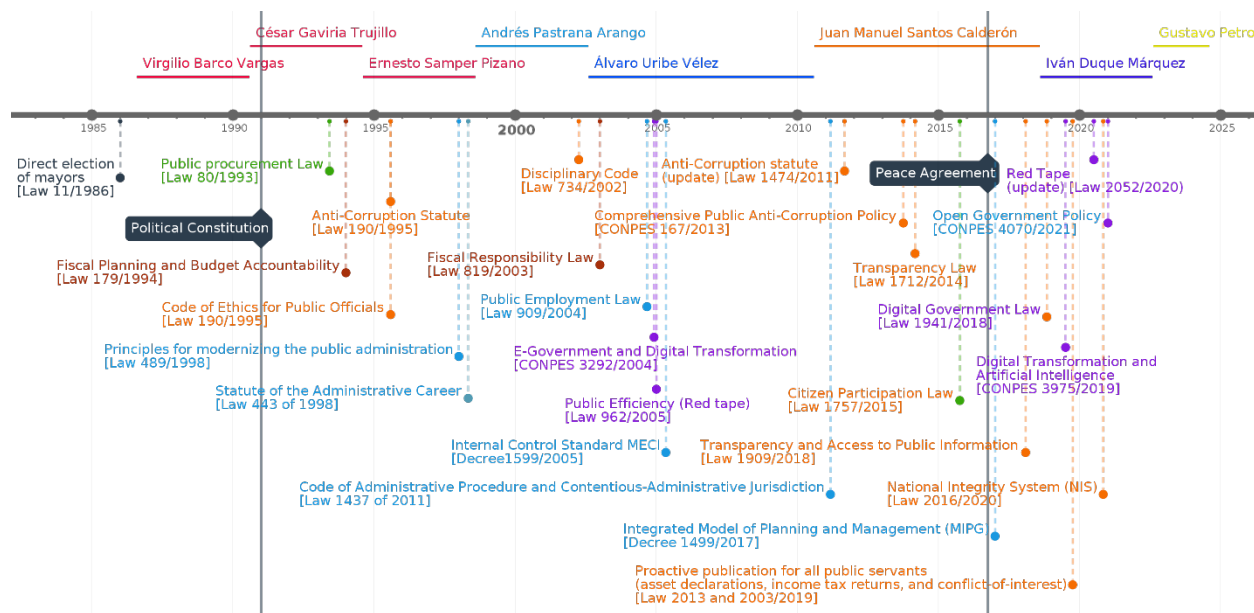
The introduction of New Public Management (NPM) reforms in the 1990s marked a significant shift in Colombia's governance model, aligning with broader neoliberal

trends emphasizing efficiency, decentralization, and market-driven public administration (Sanabria-Pulido & Leyva, 2023). The 1991 Constitution institutionalized these changes by embedding merit, transparency, and accountability principles into public sector governance, setting the foundation for subsequent reform initiatives.

The Santos administration (2010-2018) further advanced these governance principles by promoting “good governance”—a model that blended NPM and New Public Governance (NPG) (Sanabria-Pulido, 2023). Under this framework, reforms aimed to enhance competitiveness, social equity, and citizen engagement, introducing key initiatives such as procurement modernization, transparency mechanisms, and collaborative governance structures (Sanabria-Pulido, 2023).

Major Public Management Reforms (1986-2024)

Figure 4.1 provides an overview of the past eight Colombian presidents since 1986, highlighting the evolution of public management reforms. The first three presidents, affiliated with the Liberal Party, are marked in red, while the Conservative Party administration is shown in light blue. Since Álvaro Uribe Vélez (2002-2010), Colombia has transitioned to electing presidents from social movements or newly formed political parties. The 2015 constitutional amendment eliminated presidential reelection, reinforcing institutional stability while limiting long-term policy continuity.



Source: created by author

Figure 5.1 Public management reforms in Colombia 1986-2024.

Figure 5.1 also categorizes Colombia's major public management reforms into six thematic areas: political reforms (gray), anticorruption and transparency (orange), budget and fiscal planning (red), procurement (green), red tape reduction and digital government (purple), and public employment and internal control (blue). These reforms—driven by legislative acts, CONPES policy documents, and executive mandates—apply to both national and subnational levels of government.

Following the enactment of the 1991 Constitution, reform efforts initially focused on budgetary processes and anticorruption frameworks. During Álvaro Uribe's presidency (2002-2010), the government reinforced meritocracy and efficiency while launching early digital governance initiatives. This period also introduced an internal planning and management model, which was replaced in 2017 by the Integrated Planning and Management Model (MIPG in Spanish). Under Juan Manuel Santos (2010-2018), governance reforms emphasized citizen

participation, transparency, and alignment with OECD standards. Meanwhile, during Iván Duque's presidency (2018-2022), the focus shifted toward open government policies, digital transformation, and procedural simplification to enhance public sector efficiency.

Challenges in Reform Implementation

Despite these advancements, the implementation of public management reforms in Colombia has faced significant institutional and political barriers. One of the most persistent challenges is political patronage, which continues to shape bureaucratic appointments and administrative practices (Sanabria-Pulido & Leyva, 2023). Clientelistic networks remain deeply embedded in the country's governance structures, undermining merit-based recruitment and fostering inefficiencies in public administration.

Furthermore, the legacy of corruption remains a major obstacle to reform success. Over the past decade, Colombia has enacted more than 36 laws aimed at strengthening anticorruption and transparency measures procurement (Sanabria-Pulido & Avellaneda, 2021). Key legal frameworks, including the 1993 Public Procurement Statute and the 2011 Anti-Corruption Law (1474/2011), have sought to enhance accountability in public resource management. However, gaps between legal mandates and practical enforcement continue to hinder reform outcomes, as corruption remains pervasive in public procurement and administrative decision-making.

Colombia's public management reforms reflect both progress and persistent institutional challenges. While the country has made notable strides toward transparency, decentralization, and efficiency, entrenched political practices and systemic corruption continue to pose obstacles. The evolution of Colombia's administrative reforms underscores the tension between institutional aspirations and governance realities, highlighting the ongoing struggle to reconcile

modernization efforts with historical legacies. As Colombia continues refining its governance frameworks—particularly under international scrutiny from the OECD and within the context of ongoing peace processes—its reform trajectory will likely remain dynamic, shaped by both internal political forces and external global influences.

III. Research Design and Methods

Understanding the complexities of public management reforms requires a methodological approach that captures the intricate social, institutional, and behavioral dynamics influencing policy implementation. While well-designed policies are crucial to successful implementation, they do not guarantee desired outcomes (May, 1991). Various factors, including causal theories, institutional constraints, resource availability, and inter-organizational relationships, shape policy execution (Mazmanian & Sabatier, 1989). These elements remain mainly opaque to the general public, as policy implementation is not a linear process but rather a complex system of interactions and adaptations (Pressman & Wildavsky, 1984). Scholars such as Sandfort and Moulton (2015) have referred to this as a 'black box,' where multiple decision-making points, stakeholders, and contextual influences can either facilitate or hinder implementation.

To address these complexities and shed light on the implementation black box, this study employs a qualitative research design that prioritizes the perspectives of public managers engaged in policy execution. Qualitative methods allow for an in-depth exploration of how public managers interpret, navigate, and respond to institutional reforms, offering insights beyond what standardized surveys and statistical analyses can capture (Ospina et al., 2018). This approach is particularly relevant in public administration, where lived experiences, organizational cultures, and administrative processes shape reform outcomes in ways that cannot be fully quantified.

Evered and Louis (1981) argued that qualitative inquiry provides a deeper, more contextualized understanding of administrative processes, complementing traditional positivist approaches. To understand complex governance phenomena, it is essential to engage directly with the key actors in the implementation process (Riccucci, 2010). In alignment with this perspective, this study prioritizes the voices of public managers, offering insights into the decision-making processes, institutional challenges, and adaptive strategies that shape reform implementation.

Furthermore, this research highlights the importance of direct engagement with public officials to understand how reforms are implemented and how they are experienced and interpreted in practice. This approach enhances the capacity to consider alternative outcomes beyond those captured in quantitative studies (Althaus & O'Faircheallaigh, 2022). By capturing the perspectives of those responsible for executing public management reforms, this study advances theoretical and practical discussions on improving governance effectiveness in highly institutionalized administrative settings.

Data Collection

This study is conducted through an online open survey and follow-up semi-structured interviews with 25 public managers from national government organizations in Colombia. The interviewees hold executive at-will positions designated by the president (first level) or the organization's director (second level). Data collection occurred between May and September 2024, following IRB approval in May 2024. The selection of participants ensures diversity across policy sectors, experience levels, and institutional affiliations, enabling a comprehensive examination of reform implementation across various administrative contexts. The interviews

focus on key themes such as bureaucratic constraints, managerial discretion, leadership challenges, and the impact of political environments on policy execution. Open-ended questions foster in-depth discussions, allowing participants to share their experiences, challenges, and strategies for managing reforms within their organizations.

The collection process followed a two-step approach. First, I conducted an online survey (see questionnaire in Appendix 5.1) with a sample of managers from Colombian national executive agencies. The survey included questions regarding participants' perspectives and experiences in implementing public management policies. Next, I conducted brief follow-up Zoom and phone interviews with 68.0 percent of the participants to further explore their earlier responses (see questionnaire in appendix 5.2). These interviews were voluntary and had an average length of 35 minutes. These 17 interviews enhanced my understanding of their answers and provided additional information about implementing public management policies.

Sample description

The sample consists of 25 current or former public managers from national government organizations in Colombia. Table 5.1 presents the main characteristics of the study participants. Of these, 52.0 percent are male, and all participants have pursued advanced education beyond their undergraduate studies. Specifically, 76.0 percent hold a master's degree, while 12.0 percent have earned a Ph.D. Additionally, 30.0 percent of the sample possesses a law degree, and another 30.0 percent completed their undergraduate studies in economics. Regarding professional experience, 36.0 percent have between 20 and 25 years of service, while 28.0 percent have over 30 years of experience in public administration.

The national government is organized into 24 policy sectors, each of which is responsible for leading and implementing policies in specific areas. The interviewees have experience in 17

of these 24 sectors, with a greater representation from the planning (28.0 percent) and agriculture (24.0 percent) sectors. To further categorize the organizations, this study uses the classification proposed by González and Tanco Cruz (2019), which divides government agencies into three groups based on their responsibilities: social welfare, economic policy, and other sectors.

Although public servants across various sectors engage in similar administrative tasks such as budgeting and planning, the nature of their final outputs, as well as their interactions with citizens and stakeholders, varies. Regarding representation within this classification, 32.3 percent of the interviewees worked in social welfare organizations, 13.9 percent in economic policy institutions, and 53.8 percent in other public entities.

Table 5.1 Participants descriptives

Participant	Gender	Academic background			Professional background				Experience	National Government Experience - Policy Sector				Number of administrations
		Undergrad	Undergrad	Max Level	National Gov	Subnational Gov.	Private Sector	Academia		Sector 1	Sector 2	Sector 3	Sector 4	
P01	Female	Economics	Political Science	Master	x		x		15-20 years	Planning				1
P02	Male	Economics	Political Science	Master	x	x	x		20-25 years	Security and Defense	Health and social protection			2
P03	Female	Law		Master	x	x	x		10-15 years	Trade, industry, and tourism	Culture	Environment and sustainable development		2
P04	Male	Economics		Master	x		x	x	30-35 years	Agriculture	Local Development	Social inclusion and reconciliation		1
P05	Female	Government		Master	x			x	10-15 years	Public Management	Information and communication technologies			2
P06	Male	Economics		Master	x		x		30-35 years	Planning	Local Development	Finance and public credit		3
P07	Female	Law		Master	x		x		15-20 years	Information and communication technologies				2
P08	Male	Civil Eng.		Master	x	x			20-25 years	Infraestructura	Transportation			2
P09	Male	Civil Eng.		Master	x	x		x	30-35 years	Public Management	Planning			5
P10	Male	Economics	History	Ph.D	x		x	x	15-20 years	Agriculture	Local Development	Trade, industry, and tourism		2
P11	Female	Law		Ph.D	x		x	x	20-25 years	Information and communication technologies				1
P12	Male	Law		Master	x	x			35-40 years	Agriculture	Mines and energy			1
P13	Male	Finance		Executive	x		x		25-20 years	Finance and public credit	Social inclusion and reconciliation			2
P14	Female	Law		Master	x		x		15-20 years	Information and communication technologies	Presidency			2
P15	Male	Economics		Master	x		x	x	30-35 years	Housing, city, and territory				3
P16	Female	Law		Executive	x	x	x	x	55 years	Public Management				5
P17	Female	Law		Master	x				20-25 years	Agriculture	Presidency	Planning	Information and communication technologies	3
P18	Male	Economics		Master	x		x		30-35 years	Planning	Social inclusion and reconciliation			4
P19	Female	Law		Master	x		x		20-25 years	Mines and energy	Presidency	Finance and public credit		2
P20	Female	Law		Master	x		x		20-25 years	Agriculture	Information and communication technologies			1
P21	Female	Business		Executive	x	x	x		20-25 years	Finance and public credit				2
P22	Male	Civil Eng.		Master	x	x	x		20-25 years	Infraestructura	Transportation			1
P23	Male	Economics	Business	Master	x		x		10-15 years	Information and communication technologies	Agriculture	Labor	Social inclusion and reconciliation	3
P24	Female	Economics		Ph.D	x		x	x	20-25 years	Education				1
P25	Male	Literatura	Political Science	Master	x	x	x		15-20 years	Education				2

Understanding the professional backgrounds of the interviewees is crucial for contextualizing their perspectives on public management reforms. A significant portion of the sample has worked across multiple government administrations. Specifically, 72.0 percent of respondents have served under at least two presidential administrations, while 44.0 percent have worked for two administrations. Within this sample, 37.0 percent served under President Juan Manuel Santos (2010-2018), a period notable for the signing of the peace agreements and Colombia's accession to the OECD. Meanwhile, 17.0 percent of participants worked under President Iván Duque (2018-2022), a term characterized by the challenges posed by the COVID-19 pandemic and the social protests of 2021. Finally, ten percent of respondents are currently working or have worked for the administration of President Gustavo Petro, the first left-leaning president in Colombia's history.

This sample composition offers valuable insight into how senior government officials have experienced and executed public management reforms across various sectors and political administrations. Their diverse backgrounds, policy expertise, and service across different presidential administrations provide a nuanced perspective on the challenges and opportunities related to reform implementation in Colombia.

IV. Analysis and Results

A thematic coding process was necessary to analyze the information collected from the previously described sample. It was conducted using the software NVIVO15. The codebook outlined in Table 5.2 was developed based on the aforementioned theoretical framework. These structured processes help identify relevant contextual aspects for public managers when implementing public management policies. The codebook has five main categories. The first theme the study wants to deepen is the organizational perspective, understanding how different

characteristics and the degree of publicness of the organizations influence the experience of public managers implementing public management policies. In this regard, the coding process considered the organizational goals, the level of complexity, the type of organization, and red tape and bureaucratic constraints.

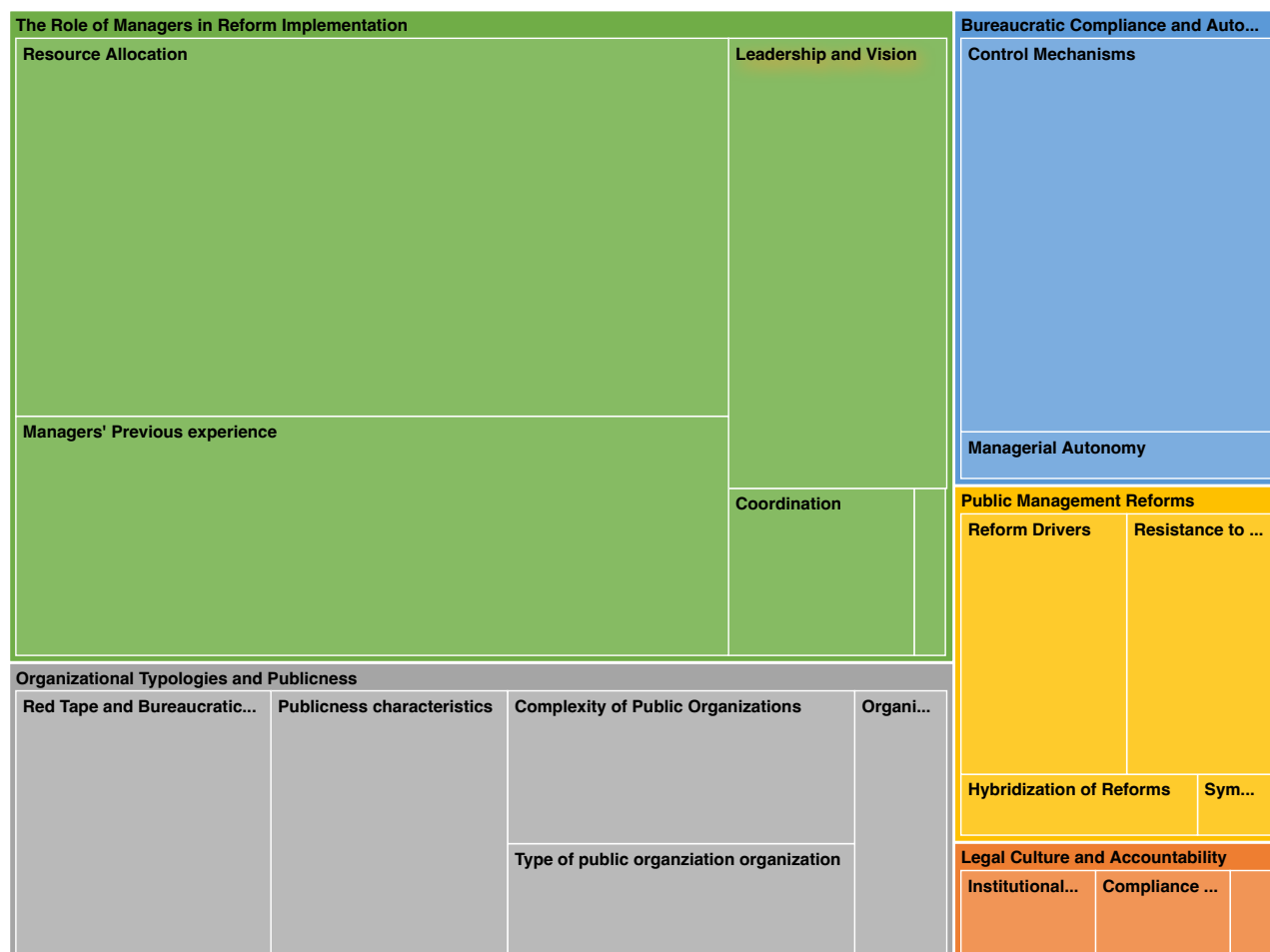
Table 5.2 Thematic Codebook

<i>Main Category</i>	<i>Subcategory</i>	<i>Description</i>
<i>Organizational Characteristics and Publicness</i>	Publicness Characteristics	How public managers perceive their organization's level of 'publicness' influences implementation.
	Organizational Goals	References to public service values, equity, or accountability vs efficiency.
	Complexity of Public Organizations	Discussions about instability, political cycles, and external pressures.
	Type of Public Organization	Differences between organizations and their implications in implementation processes.
	Red Tape and Bureaucratic Constraints	References to excessive rules, procedures, or inefficiencies.
<i>Legal Culture and Accountability</i>	Compliance with Laws	Discussion of compliance with mandatory disclosure laws.
	Institutional Culture	How organizational culture fosters (or discourages) implementation.
<i>Bureaucratic Compliance and Autonomy</i>	Control Mechanisms	References to legal mandates, oversight, or political supervision.
	Managerial Autonomy	Perceptions of managerial decision-making autonomy under reforms.
<i>Implementation of Public Management Policies</i>	Reform Drivers	Reasons given for reform adoption (political pressure, inefficiencies).
	Resistance to Change	Mentions of employee reluctance, union dynamics, or institutional inertia.
	Hybridization of Reforms	Mentions of multiple policies waves coexisting in the public sector.
<i>The Role of Managers in Public Management Policies Implementation</i>	Leadership and Vision	Mentions of leadership styles that influence implementation success.
	Managers' Previous experience	How previous experience influences their way to manage.
	Resource Allocation	Concerns about financial, human, or technological resources.

The second theme focused on legal culture and accountability. This set of codes aimed to identify elements of employee and organizational culture related to compliance with the legal framework. The following codes seek to capture bureaucratic compliance and autonomy. The coding process sought control mechanisms such as legal mandates, oversight systems, political supervision, and managerial autonomy. The following themes are related directly to implementing public management policies, including reform drivers, resistance to change, and hybridization of reforms.

The final set of codes examines individual characteristics, how managers perceive their leadership roles, and their prior experiences with implementing public management programs. Resource allocation was the final code that captured information about available resources—financial, human, and technological—that influence their ability to lead organizations and comply with public management mandates.

Additionally, a second coding round was conducted to uncover overarching themes, distinct concepts, and categories that emerged from the narratives provided in the online surveys and interviews. The two main topics were the qualification of human resources and the role of training and knowledge in implementing management policies. Moreover, the need for coordination between different levels of government and within organizations also influenced the implementation process for managers. Figure 2 provides a visual classification of the initial coding round.



Source: created by author

Figure 5.2 Coding results treemap.

As shown in Figure 5.2, public managers prominently highlighted their role, particularly when discussing resource allocation. In this regard, most interviewees placed a high value on leadership and vision, with 76.0 percent mentioning them. The references to the managers' role emphasize their importance in facilitating the execution of activities, along with the more mechanical and less appealing aspects of public administration. The following two fragments illustrate this understanding.

“The role of strategic direction is responsible for driving the operation of any organization, department, or public entity in accordance with the existing regulatory framework. However, a management that lacks strategic vision and is unaware of procedures will be much more

inefficient and ineffective than one that clearly understands the procedures and can provide its team with strategic guidance on how to operate” [Participant 3]

“For senior management to be effective and truly enable the execution of activities that lead to results, I do believe there is a second, slightly more tedious side to the equation—one that involves monitoring, holding committees, and having indicators. That’s the part people often don’t see, the part that doesn’t get shared on social media” [Participant 5]

Another group of public managers shared a more pessimistic view of management's role in implementing public management policies. They noted a lack of knowledge and experience, as illustrated by the following sentence:

“Public managers, in general, are unaware of the policies that support decision-making. Their lack of knowledge leads to obstacles in management that cannot be explained through the logic of public administration, at least from a technical perspective” [Participant 6].

In this context, a question arises about managers' prior experience. In response, 48.0 percent of the sample reported having a high level of knowledge, 28.0 percent indicated a mid-level of expertise, and 12.0 percent—comprising all male managers—acknowledged that they had a limited understanding of public management policies when they began their managerial roles. Thirty-six percent mentioned that their coping mechanism for managing their lack of knowledge and experience was to rely on a high-level, trusted team to delegate management policies.

“From a theoretical perspective, I am very familiar with the field—I teach university courses on organization, administration, and public management. However, as I tell my students, every organization is unique, and its dynamics and even its structure are rarely what is outlined in regulations or general frameworks of the State. Therefore, one must approach with humility, get to know the human and technical team, and from there, build the future of the institution” [Participant 11].

“I knew nothing. I learned along the way and continue to learn. And sometimes, you end up delegating. In my experience, I have had to focus much more—far more—on the core mission, in this case, pushing (...) projects forward. But beyond that, there is, of course, an enormous responsibility in administrative and financial matters, in everything related to oversight bodies, and in political management itself. So, many of these tasks end up being delegated, often without

full knowledge of the policies discussed in public administration and public management. It's a process of learning as you go" [Participant 8].

Related to this topic, one of the key elements to understand in this study was the resources allocation and whether the managers considered they had enough resources, following the literature in this regard. Forty-four percent of the responses mentioned they lacked resources, 58.3 percent being the male managers. Nonetheless, it was surprising that 60.0 percent of the interviewers talked about human resources (61.5 percent female and 58.3 percent male managers). The following quote reflects the level of relevance of this resource for some of the managers:

"I believe that personnel administration is key because, in the end, it is the people who guarantee citizens' rights, which is the core mission of public institutions. Having competent human talent enables all other management functions to take place since financial management and other administrative processes are ultimately tied to personnel administration." [Participant 25].

In some instances, public managers noted issues with human resource management in Colombia, along with structural challenges such as compensation, the presence of a patronage system, and the coexistence of a civil service system alongside another category of public officers (service contracts).

"Regarding public employment policies, the main challenges are attracting talent despite low salary levels and the difficulty of working with career civil servants" [Participant 21].

"I believe there is no worse system for acquiring talent than political appointments. Politicians want to bring in people who are loyal to them, who can secure votes for them, rather than people who are actually qualified for the job." [Participant 2].

"There is a gap between permanent staff and OPS (service contracts), which in reality reflects the permeability of the public sector" [Participant 9].

About the prior experiences of the interviewers, 90.0 percent of public managers knowledgeable in subnational governments emphasized the importance of human resources in

carrying out public management policies. Meanwhile, 71.4 percent of managers with academic experience also noted the significance of personnel. Regarding resource availability, only 30.0 percent of managers experienced in subnational government felt they lacked sufficient resources, compared to 50.0 percent of those with private sector experience who held the same view, and 57.1 percent of managers with academic expertise expressed similar concerns perspective.

Ultimately, one of the topics that arose during the coding process was the importance of coordination in implementing this type of policy. 30.8 percent of female interviewers referenced this, compared to 16.7 percent of male interviewers. Additionally, managers with subnational experience (40.0 percent) were noted more often than those with experience in academia (33.0 percent) and the private sector (23.8 percent). Some of the quotes mentioning coordination refer to it as a resource to achieve results due to the lack of resources, as can be observed in the following quotes:

“In my experience, it is a combination of factors: Given the scarcity of resources, it is essential to have a coordination policy with strategic partners, build a strong team, plan with clear goals—step by step—assign responsibilities, and maintain a results-oriented focus. Additionally, prioritizing the most strategic actions to optimize resources is crucial. Finally, conducting periodic follow-ups is necessary.” [Participant 14].

“(i) Interinstitutional coordination: Challenges include the prioritization of interventions, a lack of clarity in roles and responsibilities, and reluctance to share information.” [Participant 21].

The second most coded category pertains to organizational characteristics, highlighting red tape, bureaucratic constraints, and publicness traits. Both topics were most frequently mentioned by female managers (61.5 percent). Regarding red tape and bureaucratic constraints, there were some examples about the difficulty of navigating the public sector, delays, and the confrontation between political appointees and the bureaucracy. Some examples of these elements are:

“The biggest challenges include delays in approval processes due to reliance on other entities that slow down procedures, as well as the need to properly justify the necessity of implementing these policies” [Participant 7].

“Regarding bureaucracy—it’s never directly confronted, but officials have their own ways of doing things. They don’t outright oppose you, but navigating the system can be tricky, and you can end up in trouble. You have to persuade them, but that takes time. One person lasted six years and was able to make changes, but in government, things often get sidetracked. Some officials use budget timelines and procurement processes as excuses, when in reality, other factors are at play—like those who tried to keep the interest earned on unspent funds.” [Participant 4].

However, some managers spoke directly about the relationship between red tape and public management policies. When a manager explained that *“The greatest difficulties lie in the execution of public funds within fiscal periods and the limitations that agencies face in their planning processes,”* he referred directly to the inflexibilities of certain budget and anti-corruption policies in the Colombian context. Another group of managers discussed this topic to overcome difficulties and emphasized the role of managers in implementing management policies in an innovative manner way.

“I have to fill out forms—it’s the first thing people think of. I feel that the role of leaders is to ensure that this doesn’t become the only focus, creating an environment where there is still room for innovation and new ideas. These two aspects shouldn’t be in conflict, but sometimes they are. When that happens, management policies turn into mere checkboxes—people just fill out forms and comply with requirements without adding real value” [Participant 5].

“The biggest challenges in implementing management policies are resistance to change, bureaucracy, and a lack of resources. These challenges vary by policy area: in public procurement, transparency; in public employment, bureaucracy; in innovation, resource constraints; and in financial management, the efficient allocation of resources. Overcoming these obstacles requires communication, training, and committed leadership” [Participant 23].

Several public managers also referred to certain elements inherent in public organizations. They noted limitations that characterize these organizations. Some pointed to the political cycles and public managers' timeframe to implement their policies and guidelines. Additionally, others highlighted the state’s size as a key factor to consider, comparing the scale

of responsibilities with the allocated resources. Finally, another group of managers discussed management features in the public sector. One of these features is the availability of time. The following quotes exemplify managers' perceptions about the nature of public organizations.

“I think a year and a half, maybe two years—so, in reality, one cannot assume that strategic direction and public policies in Colombia have a long-term periodicity. Very few ministers have remained in office for four or eight years. The same happens with department secretaries in territorial entities” [Participant 3].

“The size of the state, not only in Colombia but in general, will always be insufficient. And I’m not just referring to the number of personnel needed to carry out functions. The lack of technological resources, for instance, has become a critical issue for implementing policies, plans, programs, and projects. Additionally, the shortage of financial resources remains a major constraint. Governments repeatedly find themselves forced to cut or freeze funds that were originally budgeted for execution” [Participant 12].

“The problem is that managers often don’t realize that the higher they climb, the less control they have over their own schedule. I believe the literature refers to this as “time thieves”—when you reach a leadership position, your time is no longer your own” [Participant 6].

Forty-four percent of the interviewees noted the organizations' public nature and highlighted their complexity. They discussed corruption, the politicization of public organizations, the oversight system, the multiple pressures, and the inability to address the numerous social problems. These remarks from public managers differed from the previous ones as they pointed to issues that extend beyond the public nature of organizations. Despite the close relationship between politics and the public sector, public officials in Colombia—regardless of their position or type of employment—cannot participate in electoral processes. Therefore, the following sentences highlight a perverse behavior and how it influences the public organizations.

“Secondly, as in everything, there are people who benefit from disorder. Generally, organizations with some level of corrupt activity find it useful to maintain existing standards as they are” [Participant 3].

“However, if management arrives with other intentions—such as using the position as a political springboard—the organization will lack a clear direction, execution will be minimal, and the impact of results will be practically nonexistent” [Participant 20].

On the other hand, it is relevant to mention the expressions of public managers concerning the complexities of public organizations related to the side effects of public management policies. Eighteen interviewees discussed innovation, while thirteen addressed the oversight system and the lack of independence as managers. The following quotes exemplify these two aspects of trends.

“The biggest challenge is finding a balance between effectively implementing management policies, meeting the requirements of oversight bodies, and addressing the urgent demands of a ministry. Often, day-to-day emergencies overshadow what is truly important” [Participant 14].

“Beyond bureaucratic scaling, innovation processes—which are essential for validating policy proposals—are practically prohibited due to fear of “patrimonial detriment” (mismanagement of public resources). As a result, there is a stark contrast in public policy execution between great ideas and very limited implementation” [Participant 13].

Another element evident during the interviews was the normative framework. One of the managers interviewed connected this concept to the nature of public organizations, as well as the role of oversight bodies and public scrutiny, which leads to the lack of innovation:

“Moreover, the tangle of laws, decrees, and directives—so overwhelmingly abundant—often hinders public management. The procedures required to comply with regulations have led to the creation of anti-red tape laws to speed up project implementation. However, despite the willingness of public officials to act with honesty and integrity, they often work under constant fear of oversight bodies and public scandals. Even when investigations result in case dismissals or exonerations due to a lack of actual wrongdoing, the prevailing belief remains that being a public servant is a high-risk profession.” [Participant 12].

The relationship between the normative system and managers' ability to implement public management reforms is a key element of this study. Therefore, the first question (see Annex 1) asks about the regulatory system and the control mechanism. None of the 25 interviews indicated that Colombia has low legal control. Fifty percent of male managers viewed the regulatory framework as highly restrictive. Interestingly, managers recognize both the inflexibility and the necessity of this condition.

“In practice, public management tasks such as procurement and human resources lack flexibility, and they must be that way—there need to be sufficient rules in place. However, this rigidity often leads to low execution rates (...) The processes for modifying projects are extremely lengthy. While oversight is necessary since public resources are at stake, the procedures take too long” [Participant 9].

“For various reasons, Colombia has developed a regulatory framework that I perceive as restrictive. This is largely due to repeated efforts to curb widespread corruption observed across different sectors of the country. However, despite these strict regulations, corruption itself has become more sophisticated, continuously finding ways to appropriate public funds” [Participant 12].

The rest of the managers who viewed the regulatory framework as a midpoint between restrictive and permissive referred to a significant number of laws and regulations. Despite this, they highlighted the ability of organizations and individuals to understand and apply these standards. In the first set of public managers, we can find elements such as:

“While we have a regulatory framework that addresses almost every possible situation in public management and provides guidelines on how to proceed, the way laws are interpreted is what, in my opinion, places it somewhere in the middle. The interpretation of the law by public managers and administrators ultimately determines its flexibility or restrictiveness” [Participant 3].

“I consider that Colombia’s regulatory framework for organizational management can be seen as somewhat intermediate. While strict laws and decrees are designed to ensure transparency, accountability, and compliance, there are also directives and policies that allow for some flexibility and adaptability in management.” [Participant 23].

However, some managers consider the regulatory level not to be excessive because of the lack of implementation. Therefore, elements of the cultural background and compliance were highlighted as an explanation of some degree of freedom and managerial flexibility:

“In Colombia, we create perfect laws but don’t apply them. Everyone interprets the law differently—there is always someone who disagrees. (..) Every four years, organizations change their management policies based on the criteria of the new government. Although Colombia has good laws, their application depends on two factors: interpretation and the immediate need for execution” [Participant 13].

Finally, there were essential elements concerning the drivers for implementing and complying with public management policies. Eight interviewers referred to differences between

organizations. While some mentioned the distinctions between subnational and national governments, which are outside the scope of this study, others discussed the differences in how their budgets are approved and the legal frameworks that allow for the implementation of specific public management policies.

“This means it does not depend on the national budget—it generates its own resources. Because of this, it had the ability to predict its revenue and allocate specific budgetary funds for various projects related to human talent, innovation, competitions, development initiatives, and similar programs” [Participant 24].

“ In some organizations—especially those focused on transparency—it is easier to implement and monitor policies, and these organizations tend to be more robust in their compliance. However, in others, the system is much more porous and complex, making it significantly more difficult to guarantee the same level of transparency and implementation” [Participant 22].

Another set of eight interviews mentioned the role of path dependence and how cultural characteristics influence the implementation of public management policies. One interesting element is that they consider civil servants and stakeholders.

“I believe that the first and most important issue, despite being frequently emphasized, is what change management truly entails. Entities tend to resist change, and when I talk about entities, I mean the entire institutional apparatus of the State, along with the stakeholders surrounding it.” [Participant 22].

“There is a natural aversion to change. In many institutions, public officials are accustomed to doing things the way they have always done them, and they perceive any modification as a potential disruption to established procedures.” [Participant 3].

V. Discussion

Colombia has undergone continuous public management reforms. Since the enactment of the 1991 National Constitution, the country has implemented successive changes aimed at improving various aspects of governance, including budgeting, transparency and anti-corruption measures, digital government, public employment, and quality standards. Over the past 35 years,

these reforms have reflected elements of the public management waves identified by Pollitt and Bouckaert (2011), ultimately shaping what Sanabria-Pulido and Leyva (2023) describe as a patchwork of public management systems.

This study's qualitative analysis of 25 interviews highlights how these reforms have led to both progress and persistent challenges in public administration. While modernization efforts have enhanced institutional capacities and promoted efficiency, inconsistencies in implementation have resulted in fragmented governance structures. The coexistence of traditional bureaucratic practices with more recent managerial approaches demonstrates the hybrid nature of Colombia's public administration, revealing tensions between historical administrative legacies and contemporary reform agendas.

One of the key findings of this study is the pivotal role of public managers in the successful implementation of policies. Rainey et al. (2021) highlight that public managers employ strategic approaches centered on performance management and results-oriented accountability. However, beyond these technical functions, a crucial aspect of their role is acting as intermediaries and translators of policy directives into actionable strategies. In this regard, chaos theory provides a valuable lens for understanding the challenges public executives face in unpredictable and dynamic environments. Brewer et al. (2006) argue that while public managers cannot fully control chaotic systems, they can identify emergent patterns and prepare for sudden disruptions. Effective leadership in such contexts requires more than direct problem-solving; it involves articulating core values, fostering resilience, and leveraging influence to guide organizational responses. Given the unpredictability of complex governance systems, direct interventions may produce unintended consequences, reinforcing the need for adaptive leadership and strategic foresight in public administration.

Leadership and vision emerged as highly valued attributes, with 76.0 percent of interviewees emphasizing their importance. Their responses underscore the dual nature of managerial responsibilities: not only must public managers oversee the execution of tasks efficiently, but they must also navigate the less visible, often bureaucratic, aspects of public administration that are essential for effective governance. However, managers also highlighted several limitations to their roles, including a lack of technical knowledge, restricted managerial discretion due to regulatory frameworks, oversight mechanisms, and political influence, as well as institutional inertia. Regarding technical expertise, 48.0 percent of the sample reported having a high level of knowledge, 28.0 percent indicated a moderate level, and 12.0 percent—all male managers—acknowledged having a limited understanding of public management policies when they assumed their positions.

To address these gaps, more than a third of the sample relied on their teams to provide expertise, helping to prevent operational disruptions and ensuring the continuity of their organizations' missions. However, this reliance also introduced challenges, as it could lead to misalignment between management policies and strategic or mission-driven planning. Additionally, managers reported having little control over key policies such as human resource management and transparency. As a result, management policies were often deprioritized, particularly in a governmental context where time is a scarce resource and managerial positions typically last an average of two years. Under these constraints, management policies became more about regulatory compliance than strategic governance, limiting their transformative potential and reinforcing a short-term, compliance-driven approach to public administration.

Another critical challenge identified by the interviewed managers, which aligns with existing theoretical frameworks, is the limited managerial discretion they experience. Many

participants highlighted bureaucratic red tape, regulatory hurdles, and the complexities of navigating the public sector as significant constraints on their ability to lead effectively. They provided examples of administrative delays, rigid procedures, and the persistent tensions between political appointees and career bureaucrats, all of which hinder timely and strategic decision-making. Moreover, political cycles further complicate the managerial landscape. Several interviewees emphasized that the short timeframes available to implement policies and strategic initiatives force public managers to prioritize immediate compliance over long-term institutional change. In this context, innovation becomes particularly challenging, as managers struggle to introduce new practices within rigid structures. Eighteen interviewees specifically addressed the difficulties of fostering innovation under these constraints, while thirteen highlighted the restrictive oversight system and the lack of managerial independence as critical obstacles to effective governance.

These findings resonate with theoretical perspectives on public sector organizations, which emphasize their complexity, permeability, and susceptibility to political cycles that shape strategic priorities and decision-making processes. Boyne (2002) argued that public organizations differ from their private-sector counterparts in that their objectives prioritize accountability, equity, and public service rather than profit maximization. In Colombia, these challenges are further exacerbated by the country's deep-rooted administrative traditions.

A distinctive feature of Colombia's public administration is its adherence to the Napoleonic administrative model, which has resulted in high levels of centralization and bureaucratic control—an institutional legacy inherited from its colonial past. As Peters (2021) noted, many Latin American countries, including Colombia, continue to uphold this strong colonial administrative heritage despite their long-standing independence. Consequently,

Colombia's public management structure is characterized by a formal commitment to meritocracy, strict legal codes, and an overarching emphasis on centralized governance. However, the complexities of Colombia's civil service arise from its hybrid nature, which combines elements of political patronage with bureaucratic and post-bureaucratic systems (Ramírez & Isaza, 2020; Sanabria-Pulido et al., 2020). This blend of administrative traditions creates ongoing challenges for public managers, requiring them to navigate a system that is both rule-driven and subject to political influence. Ultimately, the intersection of political cycles, bureaucratic rigidity, and administrative tradition limits managerial autonomy and constrains public managers' ability to implement meaningful reforms. While Colombia's public sector maintains strong legal and institutional frameworks, these very structures often reinforce a compliance-driven culture that prioritizes procedural adherence over strategic governance and innovation.

Another critical factor influencing organizational change is the availability of resources. Insufficient resources can weaken implementation efforts, increase interpersonal stress, and lead to the neglect of core organizational activities and functions (Fernandez & Rainey, 2017, p. 172). This perspective aligns with the resource-based view (RBV), which emphasizes that access to key resources is essential for organizational effectiveness and long-term success (Lee & Whitford, 2012).

In this study, resource allocation was a central concern, particularly in relation to whether public managers believed they had sufficient resources to fulfill their responsibilities. According to the interview data, 44.0 percent of respondents reported a lack of resources, with male managers representing 58.3 percent of this group. Notably, a significant proportion of

interviewees—60.0 percent—discussed human resources as a critical issue, with similar levels of concern among both female (61.5 percent) and male (58.3 percent) managers.

Public managers identified multiple challenges related to human resource management in Colombia, including structural constraints such as inadequate compensation, the persistence of a patronage system, and the coexistence of a formal civil service system with a parallel system of public officers hired through service contracts. These complexities, which reflect a broader institutional challenge, are deeply rooted in Colombia's administrative framework. The hybrid nature of the country's civil service—combining elements of political patronage with bureaucratic and post-bureaucratic systems (Ramírez & Isaza, 2020; Sanabria-Pulido et al., 2020)—has made it difficult to implement comprehensive reforms. As a result, managers must navigate an environment where human resource constraints, political influence, and administrative fragmentation continue to undermine efforts to strengthen institutional capacity and governance effectiveness.

The type of organization significantly influences the implementation of public management policies, as differences in budgetary autonomy and legal frameworks shape institutional capacity. Eight interviewees highlighted these variations, noting that agencies with independent revenue streams can strategically allocate resources for innovation and human talent, while those dependent on national budgets face greater constraints. Additionally, legal mandates affect compliance, with transparency-focused organizations exhibiting stronger oversight, whereas others struggle with enforcement. These findings suggest that while public management reforms set broad directives, their success depends on organizational structure and financial flexibility.

While this study provides valuable insights into the implementation of public management reforms in Colombia, several limitations must be acknowledged. First, the reliance on a qualitative research design, though well-suited for exploring complex administrative processes, inherently limits the generalizability of the findings. The study captures the perspectives of 25 public managers, offering in-depth narratives and contextualized understandings of policy implementation. However, these experiences may not fully represent the broader public sector or the diversity of administrative experiences across different governmental levels and regional contexts. Future research could benefit from complementary quantitative analyses or larger sample sizes to enhance the external validity of the findings.

Second, the data collection process, which involved an online survey followed in some cases by semi-structured interviews, presents potential limitations related to self-reporting and recall bias. Public managers may have selectively emphasized certain challenges or successes based on their subjective experiences, personal interests, or organizational constraints. Additionally, the study relies on retrospective accounts of policy implementation, which may be influenced by memory distortions or the evolving political and institutional context. While follow-up interviews helped to clarify responses, they did not entirely eliminate these concerns. A longitudinal design tracking managers over time could provide a more dynamic understanding of how reform implementation unfolds.

Lastly, the study is limited by its focus on national government agencies, potentially overlooking the unique challenges faced by local and regional public managers who operate under different institutional constraints and resource environments. Colombia's decentralized governance structure means that subnational governments often have distinct implementation challenges that may not be fully captured in this research. Future studies could expand the scope

by including local and departmental administrators to provide a more comprehensive picture of public management reforms across different governance levels. Despite these limitations, this study contributes valuable empirical evidence on the role of public managers in policy implementation, offering theoretical and practical insights into the complexities of administrative reform in Colombia.

CONCLUSION

BETWEEN RULES AND REALITY: PUBLIC MANAGEMENT IMPLEMENTATION, COMPLIANCE, AND REFORM IN COLOMBIA

Public management has long focused on enhancing the state's capacity to deliver goods and services efficiently. Historically, "administration" referred to governance processes (Karl, 1987), with early approaches emphasizing a universal method for managing public enterprises. Over time, the field has expanded to incorporate strategic management principles, accountability mechanisms, and performance-oriented governance (Lynn, 1996; Perry & Kraemer, 1983; Rainey, 1997). While management and implementation research remain distinct areas of study, they are deeply interconnected (Sowa & Lu, 2017). Well-designed policies alone do not guarantee successful outcomes (May, 1991). Their effectiveness depends on institutional dynamics, resource availability, and the causal mechanisms guiding their execution (Mazmanian & Sabatier, 1989). Ultimately, public service delivery hinges on how managers and officials leverage administrative frameworks to implement policies and optimize government performance.

Consequently, public management reforms are closely tied to the imperative of optimizing resources and achieving societal outcomes. Factors unique to the public sector—including public values, motivation for service, and bureaucratic oversight—play a crucial role in the effectiveness of public organizations (Brewer, 2013). Given this context, it is essential to

understand how government organizations adopt public management strategies and the factors shaping their implementation, particularly in terms of their impact on public employees.

This study explores the intricacies of public management policy implementation within government structures, drawing from the traditions of public management and policy implementation. It examines how various organizational and individual characteristics influence the implementation of administrative policies. Furthermore, it proposes a typology of organizations that should be considered in policy design to facilitate smoother implementation. This typology encompasses workforce attributes, the capacity of organizations and individuals to adhere to policy, the nature of the organization, and key elements of the proposed management approach. This study identifies how different organizational forms shape policy implementation and compliance by analyzing structural and functional attributes.

The third chapter assesses compliance with transparency policies, emphasizing the role of bureaucratic control and resource availability. Using administrative data spanning 2016 to 2022, a probit regression model evaluates the impact of workforce size and budget allocation on public management policy compliance levels. The findings indicate that agencies with greater financial and human resources are more likely to adhere to legal transparency requirements, underscoring the role of institutional capacity in regulatory compliance.

The fourth chapter, shifting the focus to public employees, investigates how individual characteristics shape compliance with administrative reforms. Leveraging survey data from the Colombian Employee Viewpoint Survey, the study applies May and Winter's compliance model (2001) to examine the influence of calculated, normative, and social motives on policy adherence. The analysis reveals that employees with stronger normative and social commitments

exhibit higher levels of compliance, particularly when policies align with their professional values and ethical responsibilities.

Building on the findings of Chapters 3 and 4, the fifth chapter employs a qualitative approach. It conducts 25 semi-structured interviews with national government managers to explore the challenges of implementing public management reforms. The findings highlight the constraints imposed by regulatory rigidity, political influence, and resource limitations. Despite these barriers, public managers employ adaptive strategies to navigate institutional constraints and enhance policy execution, demonstrating the dynamic interplay between governance structures and managerial discretion.

This research integrates these findings to provide a comprehensive understanding of public administration in Colombia. The insights contribute to discussions on organizational compliance, managerial discretion, and policy implementation by illustrating how institutional structures, resources, employee motivations, and managerial adaptations collectively shape governance effectiveness. Recognizing these dynamics is essential for designing policies that balance accountability with operational flexibility, ultimately strengthening public sector performance.

The Colombian case offers a unique and insightful contribution to the study of public management policy implementation due to its complex administrative tradition, historical influences, and evolving governance structures. Rooted in the Napoleonic administrative model, as in other Latin American countries, Colombia has long operated under a centralized system characterized by rigid bureaucratic structures, legal formalism, and hierarchical control (Peters, 2021). However, successive waves of public management reforms, shaped by both domestic and international pressures, have introduced elements of New Public Management (NPM), Neo-

Weberianism, and New Public Governance, resulting in an administrative system that combines various governance models (Sanabria-Pulido & Leyva, 2023). This mix has created a fragmented implementation landscape where formalized rules often conflict with rooted political practices, such as clientelism and bureaucratic inertia (Ramírez & Isaza, 2020; Sanabria-Pulido & Leyva, 2023). Despite efforts to modernize and professionalize public management—especially after the 1991 Constitution—the country continues to face structural constraints that hinder the effective execution of policy reforms. These dynamics make Colombia an important case study for understanding how governance traditions and institutional legacies shape the implementation of public management policies.

Moreover, Colombia's experience highlights the challenges of implementing reforms in a context marked by competing priorities and political volatility. Governance modernization efforts and broader socio-political challenges, including armed conflict, corruption, and economic instability, have shaped the country's reform trajectory (Sanabria-Pulido & Leyva, 2023). For instance, implementing transparency measures and administrative efficiency programs has often been hindered by embedded political interests and weak enforcement mechanisms (Sanabria-Pulido & Avellaneda, 2021). At the same time, international influences, such as Colombia's accession to the OECD and its adoption of open government initiatives, have pushed the country toward higher compliance standards (OECD, 2018). These overlapping pressures illustrate the difficulties of balancing accountability, efficiency, and institutional resilience in public management reforms. Colombia's case, therefore, serves as an essential reference for scholars and practitioners seeking to understand the interplay between administrative reforms and real-world governance challenges, providing valuable lessons on

policy adaptability, institutional learning, and the enduring impact of historical administrative traditions.

What makes Colombia particularly valuable for the field of public administration is not only its hybrid administrative character but also the way it exposes the tensions between formal institutional design and actual governance practices. As a system shaped by legalistic traditions, centralization, and evolving reform agendas, Colombia offers a compelling example of how public management operates in environments where historical inertia and modern expectations collide. Rather than serving as an outlier, Colombia reflects a broader category of states where implementation challenges stem not from an absence of reform, but from the frictions between layered administrative logics, cultural norms, and capacity gaps. Studying this case allows scholars to better understand how states with similar bureaucratic legacies and reform trajectories can strengthen implementation by focusing on adaptive capacity, managerial discretion, and organizational diversity. In this way, the Colombian case moves beyond national relevance and contributes to refining theories of public administration by grounding them in complex, real-world institutional settings.

By tracing how organizational and individual characteristics influence the implementation of public management policies within this context, the dissertation contributes to the comparative study of administrative systems. The findings reinforce that effective policy implementation is shaped not only by structural design but also by the capacity of organizations and individuals to adapt policies to their local realities. The Colombian case challenges overly technocratic or one-size-fits-all approaches to public sector reform and highlights the need for institutional flexibility, contextual understanding, and sensitivity to local administrative traditions. Granting public organizations the leverage to adapt policies to their specific missions,

difficulties, and resources is essential for increasing implementation effectiveness. In doing so, the study advances theoretical and empirical discussions in public administration by showing how global reform ideas are mediated by national bureaucratic cultures—offering a valuable lens for scholars and practitioners working in other countries that share similar administrative foundations.

From an organizational perspective, the study's findings highlight the critical role of resources—specifically workforce size and budget—in ensuring compliance with public management policies. While larger organizations are generally more likely to comply, this effect diminishes beyond a certain threshold due to inefficiencies. From a managerial standpoint, resource constraints present significant challenges, particularly in human resource management. Many public managers report difficulties related to inadequate compensation structures, persistent patronage-based hiring, and the coexistence of a formal civil service alongside a parallel system of contract employees. These challenges, deeply embedded in Colombia's Napoleonic administrative tradition, reinforce bureaucratic rigidity and limit managerial autonomy, complicating efforts to enhance governance effectiveness.

Over time, organizations have demonstrated a learning curve, progressively improving their adherence to mandates. However, the complexity of organizational tasks and the specific processes required for implementation significantly impact an organization's capacity to comply, highlighting the need for tailored policy execution strategies that account for structural and operational differences. This finding also aligns with variations in reform implementation across different organizational types. Agencies with independent revenue streams exhibit greater resource allocation and innovation flexibility, whereas those reliant on national budgets face stricter constraints.

From an individual perspective, understanding what drives employees to comply with their duties is essential, as policy implementation ultimately depends on those responsible for execution. The study emphasizes the significance of normative and social motives in public employee compliance within a hybrid governance system. Employees who trust their supervisors and perceive clear mandates aligned with their responsibilities are more likely to comply, supporting the idea of mutual responsibility between policymakers and implementers. Social awareness also plays a crucial role, as employees who recognize organizational goals and feel accountable exhibit higher compliance rates. Additionally, the study finds that awareness of guidelines has a stronger influence on compliance than resource availability, suggesting that employees adapt to resource constraints but may struggle with ambiguous directives, reinforcing DeHart-Davis's green tape theory (2017; 2013). Lower-ranking employees tend to demonstrate higher compliance levels, potentially due to fewer responsibilities or efforts to avoid scrutiny, whereas higher-ranking officials, burdened with complex decision-making, may encounter more significant challenges in adhering to regulations.

Public managers play a critical role in navigating these complexities, acting as intermediaries between policy directives and their practical implementation. However, they face significant constraints, including regulatory rigidity, limited managerial discretion, and political influence, which often shift management policies from strategic governance tools to compliance-driven exercises. The study highlights that while leadership and vision are highly valued managerial attributes, many managers lack technical expertise and must rely on their teams, sometimes leading to misalignment between management policies and institutional missions. Additionally, bureaucratic red tape and short political cycles force managers to prioritize immediate regulatory compliance over long-term innovation, restricting their capacity to drive

meaningful reform. Addressing these structural and managerial challenges requires balancing compliance mechanisms and greater managerial flexibility, ensuring that public management reforms translate into substantive improvements rather than procedural formalities.

To enhance the effectiveness of public management reforms, policymakers should consider tailoring future initiatives to account for sectoral differences, procurement complexities, and the time organizations need to adapt. Rather than applying uniform compliance standards across all agencies, a more flexible approach that acknowledges operational realities could improve adherence to management regulations and administrative mandates. By designing policies that reflect the distinct challenges faced by different institutions, reforms can become more practical and sustainable over time.

Strengthening public management systems through improved communication strategies could also help reinforce employees' sense of purpose and accountability. Governments may benefit from developing more precise and consistent channels for assigning policy goals and compliance expectations, particularly in environments with frequent administrative changes or crises. Ensuring that employees and managers have access to well-defined guidelines could reduce uncertainty and enhance their ability to implement policies effectively.

Another key area for improvement lies in striking a balance between regulatory compliance and managerial flexibility. Policymakers could explore ways to design oversight mechanisms that ensure accountability while allowing managers the discretion to navigate complex administrative environments. Overly rigid regulations may restrain innovation and create inefficiencies, whereas a more adaptive framework could enable public managers to respond proactively to implementation challenges.

One of the main theoretical contributions of this dissertation is the development of a bridge between public management theories and implementation scholarship. In a context where new approaches to governing and managing the public sector emerge constantly, it is essential to reflect on these reforms and their implementation critically. This work highlights the importance of recognizing the differences between organizations and individuals, and the limitations of one-size-fits-all solutions. It also underscores how complexity and change shape the likelihood of compliance and the significance of organizational learning curves. Furthermore, it stresses the need to consider the degree of publicness in organizations, as it has meaningful implications for how they are managed. Together, these insights contribute to a more nuanced understanding of public management implementation, offering theoretical tools that are better suited to the realities of diverse organizational and policy contexts.

While this study provides valuable insights into implementing public management reforms in Colombia, several limitations must be acknowledged. One of the primary constraints stems from the study's comprehensive yet varied methodological approach, which integrates qualitative and quantitative methods to analyze organizational and individual compliance. While this mixed-methods design strengthens the study's analytical depth, it also presents challenges regarding generalizability and consistency across different datasets. Based on 25 semi-structured interviews with public managers, the qualitative component offers rich narratives that contextualize policy implementation challenges but may not fully capture the diversity of experiences across different government levels and administrative contexts. Meanwhile, the quantitative analyses, drawing from administrative reports and employee survey data, provide broader trends but are constrained by the limitations of self-reported measures and publicly available information. Future research could enhance the external validity of these findings by

expanding sample sizes, incorporating additional administrative datasets, and utilizing longitudinal designs to track implementation outcomes over time.

The reliance on self-reported data presents another limitation, particularly in examining compliance behaviors at both the organizational and individual levels. In the analysis of public employees, there is a risk of social desirability bias, as respondents may have overstated their commitment to compliance due to institutional expectations. This challenge is further complicated by the anonymity of the survey, which, while protecting respondent confidentiality, limits the ability to cross-validate compliance behaviors using objective performance assessments. Similarly, in the administrative data, the analysis is restricted to information published in official organizational repositories, excluding alternative disclosure mechanisms such as social media engagement or direct interactions with stakeholders. Future studies could address these gaps by incorporating external audits, observational methods, or case studies that examine real-world compliance beyond self-reported adherence to regulations.

A further limitation relates to the study's focus on national government agencies, which may not fully reflect the complexities faced by local and regional public managers. Colombia's decentralized governance structure means that municipalities and departmental governments operate under different constraints, including varying levels of institutional capacity, resource availability, and political influence. These subnational dynamics could significantly affect how public management policies are implemented and experienced across different regions. Furthermore, Colombia is a centralized country where public management policies are usually enacted at the national level and implemented by more than a thousand local governments without considering the heterogeneity. Future research should consider broadening the scope of

analysis to include local governments, which often face distinct challenges in balancing regulatory compliance with the realities of service delivery in diverse administrative settings.

Additionally, this study's cross-sectional design captures a snapshot of policy implementation but does not account for the evolving nature of administrative reforms over time. Public management reforms often require periods of institutional adaptation, learning curves, and shifts in political priorities, all of which influence long-term compliance outcomes. While the study highlights trends in transparency, managerial discretion, and employee compliance, a longitudinal approach would provide deeper insights into how these dynamics change over time and how reforms sustain or lose momentum under different governance conditions.

Despite these limitations, this study significantly contributes to understanding public management implementation by integrating multiple methodological perspectives and examining organizational and individual-level compliance. The findings underscore the importance of balancing regulatory oversight with managerial flexibility, refining communication strategies to align institutional objectives with employee incentives, and recognizing public managers' constraints in highly regulated environments. Future research could build on these insights by incorporating comparative analyses with countries with similar administrative traditions, such as Chile and Perú, or exploring contrasting governance models to understand better the interplay between institutional design, political influence, and public sector performance.

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APPENDICES

APPENDIX 2.1 COLOMBIAN CONTEXT

One crucial element to consider is the type of government in Colombia. Since 1991, with the enactment of the national Constitution, Colombia has been a unitary republic and decentralized country. Its government consists of three distinct branches: executive, legislative, and judicial. As the head of the executive branch, the president is the main public policy agenda-setter (Mejía-Guinand, 2020). Additionally, the Constitution establishes that one of the primary purposes of the State is to promote citizens' participation in all public decisions affecting them in their economic, political, administrative, and cultural life (Political Constitution of Colombia, 1991).

However, an important consideration is the type of administrative tradition. Peters (2021) identifies a group of countries adhering to the Napoleonic tradition, predominantly in Latin America. Despite gaining independence in the 19th century, these countries retained a robust colonial heritage characterized by high levels of centralization and control. They emphasize meritocracy, at least nominally, and operate under robust legal codes, aligning with the Weberian model of bureaucracy. From the 20th century onward, their administrative policies have been significantly shaped by international diplomacy and programs, often driven by aspirations for stability and economic prosperity (Peters, 2021). A prime example of a country rooted in the Napoleonic Administrative Tradition is Colombia.

Colombia operates under a centralized government, often resulting in the implementation of one-size-fits-all rules (Villegas & Julve, 2014). While its civil service is still developing, it integrates a mix of distinct public administration models (Ramírez & Isaza, 2020; Rodas-Gaiter

& Sanabria-Pulido, 2020; Sanabria-Pulido & Leyva, 2023b; Sanabria-Pulido et al., 2020).

Similar to several Latin American nations, the Colombian public employment structure showcases a convoluted overlap of patronage, bureaucratic, and post-bureaucratic systems (Ramió Matas, 2001; Ramírez & Isaza, 2020; Sanabria-Pulido et al., 2020). This inherent complexity, rooted in the structural and historical aspects of the national civil service, has made the enactment of administrative reforms challenging (Ramírez & Isaza, 2020). Consequently, a notable discord exists between formulated policies and their actual implementation.

The Colombian administrative tradition resembles “a patchwork quilt that combines political patronage, New Public Management, New-Weberianism, and New Public Governance” (Sanabria-Pulido & Leyva, 2023b, p. 1927). This arrangement of different public administration elements results from reforms with incomplete implementation processes (Sanabria-Pulido, 2023; Sanabria-Pulido & Leyva, 2023b). Following Peters' understanding of administrative traditions, the modern Colombian government's starting point is the colonial arrangements. As part of the Spanish Empire, the administrative model was characterized by hierarchy and centralization, which focused on extracting rents rather than developing state capacity (Sanabria-Pulido, 2023). High patronage levels led to public employment resulting from market transactions, granting social status and nobility titles (Kalmanovitz, 2019; Sanabria-Pulido, 2023), shaping citizens' and public officers' understanding and perspectives of their role.

Exploring more recent Colombian history, it is possible to observe the external influence of different governments and organizations shaping administrative reforms. For example, in the 1950s, two important international missions recommended how the government should be organized. In 1952, as part of a credit for the government, the World Bank provided guidelines on government organization (Leyva, 2023). A few years later, the United Nations financed a

second mission focusing exclusively on public administration, highlighting the civil service's relevance and the executive branch's role (Leyva, 2023). These missions shaped subsequent reforms, marking the first attempts to consolidate the civil service and a group of public organizations responsible for the state's capacity.

Nonetheless, Colombia has faced several threats to its institutionality, especially toward the end of the 20th century. Narcotrafficking, guerrilla warfare, paramilitarism, criminal gangs, and urban insecurity displaced other policy goals (Sanabria-Pulido & Leyva, 2023b). Consequently, the country devoted a significant portion of its institutional capacity and resources to resolving these issues, resulting in highly unsuccessful Weberian-like reform implementations (Ramírez & Isaza, 2020; Sanabria-Pulido & Leyva, 2023a, 2023b). This lack of implementation, coupled with highly politicized discourse questioning government legitimacy, created a conducive environment for implementing NPM reforms, even in a country without the type of government these reforms targeted.

The 1991 Colombian constitution marked a milestone where different population groups had significant representation, shaping new institutions based on ideas of New Public Management, fiscal federalism, market reforms, decentralization, and efficiency (Sanabria-Pulido & Leyva, 2023b). The Constitution initiated the oversight scheme, creating various checks and balance mechanisms within branches (Sanabria-Pulido & Leyva, 2023b). Additionally, civil service plays a fundamental role in emphasizing professionalization and public ethos. However, the implementation process of this new government configuration over the last 30 years has shown different stages.

In this sense, Colombia's reform agenda has been devoted to creating a more active and capable state (Sanabria-Pulido & Leyva, 2023b). Hence, during the last decades, the country

aimed to build a new set of institutions “to tune up its public administration to the aspirations of the 1991 constitution” (Sanabria-Pulido & Leyva, 2023b, p. 1929). However, as Sanabria and Leyva demonstrated, these reforms were based on different understandings of the government, having a long wave of NPM, Neo-Weberian, and, more recently, New Public Governance Reforms (Sanabria-Pulido & Leyva, 2023b). More recently, two milestones in the country's political context – the peace process with one of the oldest and most potent guerrilla groups and the inclusion in the OECD – influenced the role of government and its administrative capacity.

During the presidency of Juan Manuel Santos (2010-2014 and 2014-2018), the notion of "good governance" embodied a blend of principles from both new public management and new public governance paradigms. On the one hand, the administration prioritized efficiency, effectiveness, austerity, competitiveness, meritocracy, measurement capability, and clearly defined responsibilities. On the other hand, it emphasized social prosperity, zero tolerance for corruption, equity, pluralism, and community service (Sanabria-Pulido, 2023). Consequently, modernizing the legal framework became imperative to streamline coordination across various levels of government and enhance the state's capacity to address societal challenges (Sanabria-Pulido, 2023). This administration led the majority of public administration reforms in recent decades with a focus on promoting open government, transparency, collaborative governance, leveraging technology, modernizing procurement schemes, establishing a Presidential delivery office, and other initiatives (Sanabria, 2023).

The different sets of reforms and stages of implementation have resulted in Colombia exhibiting contrasting elements. It features one of the five most developed civil services in Latin America (Cortázar Velarde et al., 2014) and is recognized for having one of the most open governments among OECD countries (OECD, 2018). However, despite these advancements, the

goal of achieving a professional, independent bureaucracy remains unfulfilled, with political patrons retaining significant influence in the politico-administrative realm (Sanabria-Pulido & Leyva, 2023b). Colombia still faces significant challenges in implementing critical aspects of reforms, grappling with issues such as corruption, state capture, clientelism, and entrenched political practices.

As highlighted by Sanabria and Leyva, Colombia presents an intriguing case study in public administration due to its heterogeneity in the degrees and types of reform, shedding light on both the potential benefits and pitfalls of reforming public management (2023b). Furthermore, this heterogeneity offers a unique opportunity to examine differences within a centralized government. It allows for an exploration of variations between policy sectors, technical capacities, and types of public organizations. Consequently, one can analyze whether political, regional, or economic influences have differential impacts across sectors and also assess the role of technical capacity and knowledge in shaping the degree of compliance with reform

APPENDIX 2.2. SCORING SYSTEM

Dim.	Aspect	Variable	Classification	Points	Total
Degree of Publicness	Administrative Autonomy	Level	Centralized	0	1
			Decentralized	1	
		Maximum organizational authority	The manager the maximum authority in the organization.	0	4
			The organization has a board or council as the maximum authority.	1	
		Chairperson of the Organizational Board	The chair of the board is the head of the policy sector/other member of the Presidential cabinet.	0	
			The chair of the board is selected by the Board.	1	
		President's representative in the organizational Board.	The President has delegates in the Board.	0	
			There are not delegates from the president.	1	
		Composition of the organizational Board.	The members of the board are part of the government.	0	
			There are members from the interest groups and stakeholders.	1	
		Budget approval	Part of the National Government budget approved by the Congress.	0	2
			Part of the Budget approved by the Minister of Finance.	1	
			Organizational Budget	2	
	Market-like management	Type	Head and attached	0	2
			Associated	1	
		Legal regime	Public	0	
			Private	1	
		Mission	Analysis organizational missions and their responsibilities.	0-5	5
Resources	Size	Budget ²	The budget is between the minimum and 25th percentiles.	3	0-3
			The budget is greater than the 25th percentile but less than or equal to the 50th percentile.	2	
			The budget is greater than the 50th percentile but less than or equal to the 75th percentile.	1	
			The budget is greater than the 75th percentile but less than or equal to the maximum.	0	
	Workforce	Workforce census ³	The workforce is between the minimum and 25th percentiles.	3	0-3
			The workforce is greater than the 25th percentile but less than or equal to the 50th percentile.	2	
			The workforce is greater than the 50th percentile but less than or equal to the 75th percentile.	1	
			The workforce is greater than the 75th percentile but less than or equal to the maximum.	0	

² The natural logarithm of the budget.

³ The natural logarithm of the workforce.

APPENDIX 2.3. DESCRIPTIVE STATISTICS

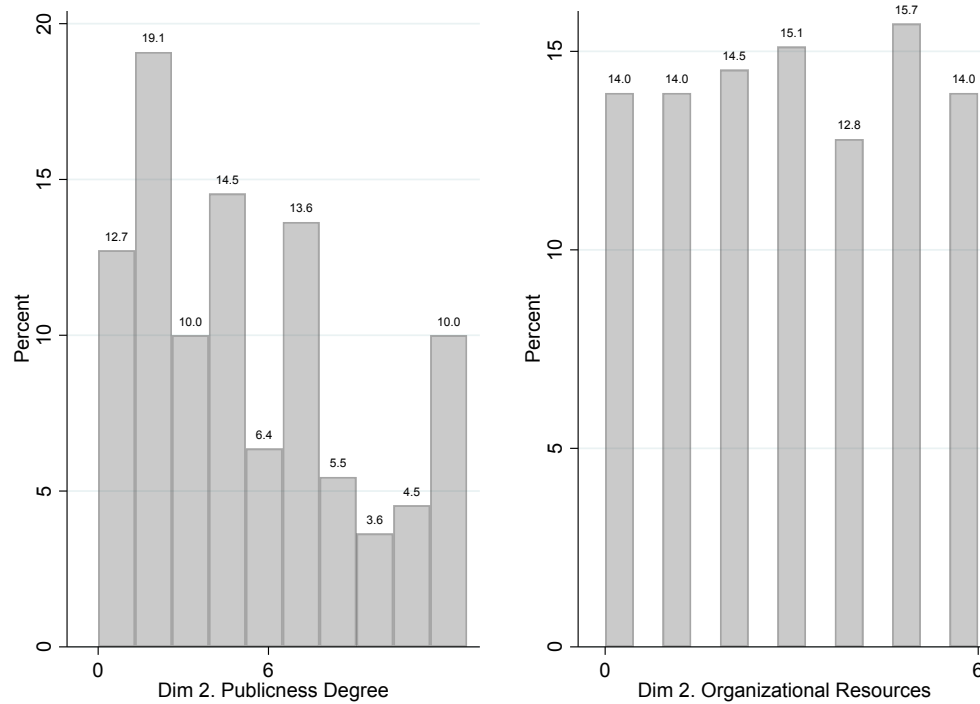


Figure 2.6 Distribution of National Agency by each dimension.

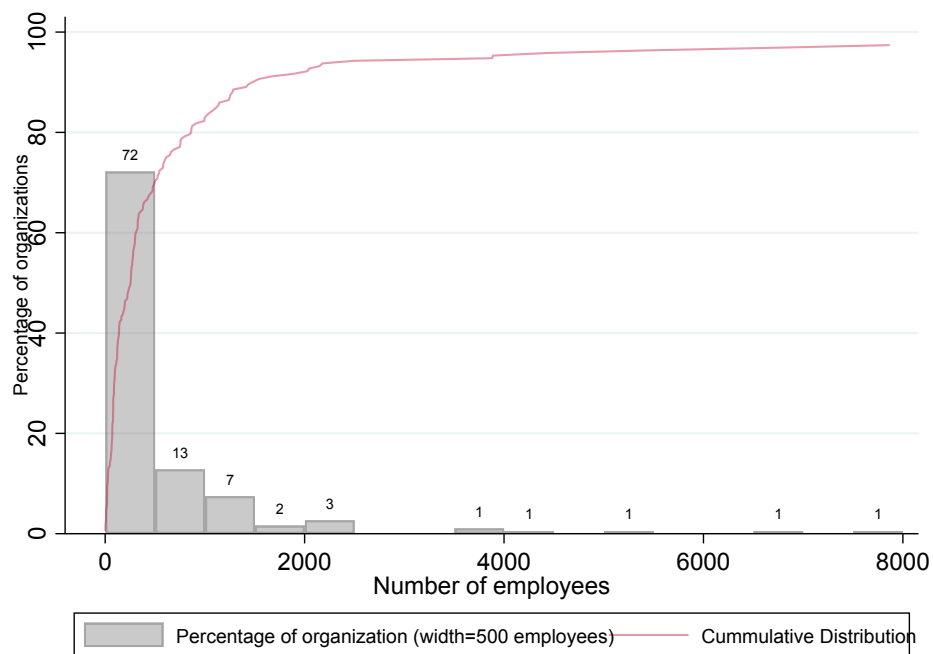


Figure 2.7 Distribution of the National agencies by number of public employees.

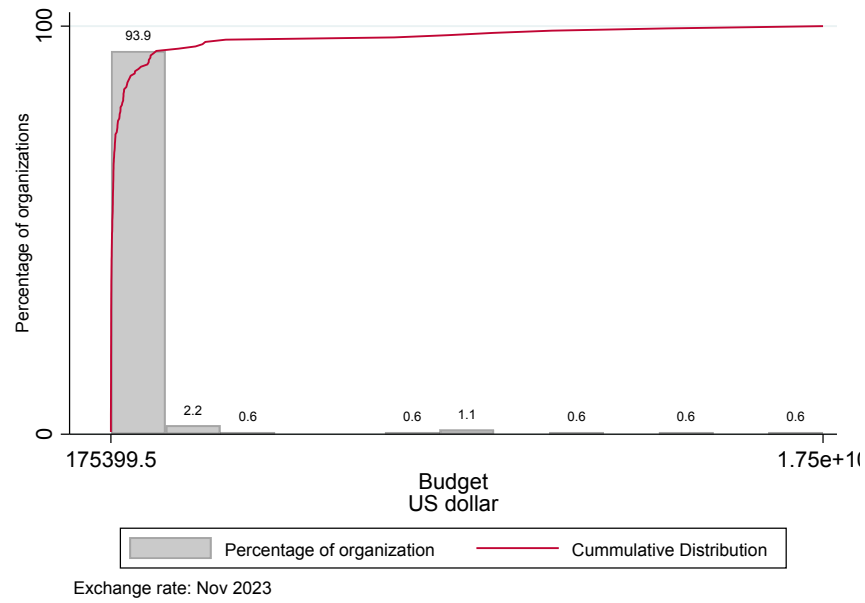


Figure 2.8 Distribution of the National agencies by the annual budget.

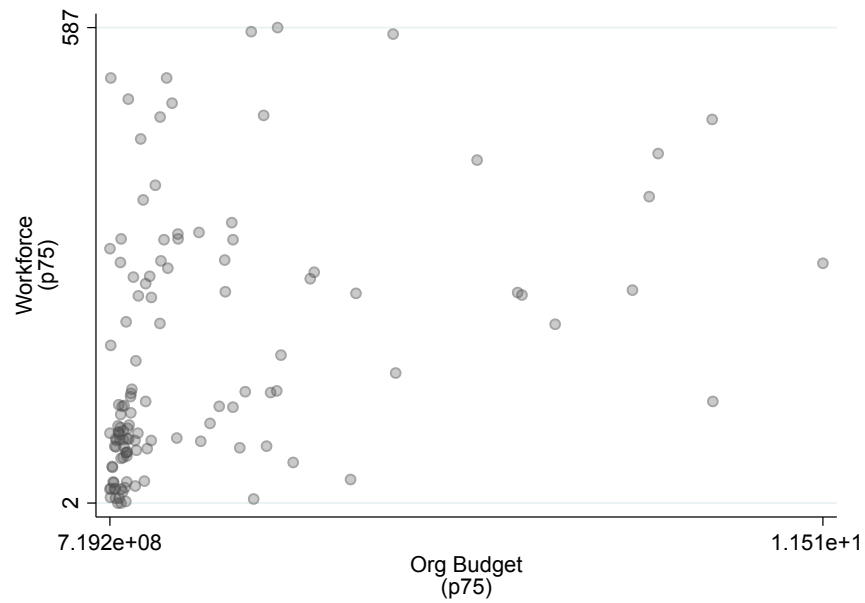


Figure 2.9 Correlation between the size of the workforce and the budget allocation (p (75))

APPENDIX 3.1 CONTROL VARIABLES DESCRIPTIVES.

Variable	Description	Type		General	y2016	y2017	y2018	y2019	y2020	y2021	y2022
Workforce under 30 years	Percentage of the workforce under 30 years.	Numerical	Mean	6.22	8.60	7.57	6.83	5.70	5.04	5.65	5.81
			SD	5.91	6.79	6.22	5.88	5.52	5.55	5.64	5.87
			N	741	54	96	117	124	133	115	102
			Min	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
			Max	40.91	40.91	40.91	37.50	40.00	40.00	40.00	40.00
Workforce between 30 and 49 years.	Percentage of the workforce between 30 and 49 years.	Numerical	Mean	26.56	30.14	28.78	27.52	26.63	24.15	25.59	25.62
			SD	13.03	12.97	15.34	12.39	14.16	13.06	11.27	11.17
			N	741	54	96	117	124	133	115	102
			Min	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
			Max	100.00	60.07	100.00	61.04	100.00	57.81	57.81	57.81
Workforce with a graduate degree.	Percentage of workforce with a graduate degree.	Numerical	Mean	48.55	46.65	45.65	46.94	49.09	52.14	48.20	49.17
			SD	22.77	20.50	23.89	22.81	23.50	24.17	21.36	21.54
			N	741	54	96	117	124	133	115	102
			Min	-	3.75	-	-	-	-	-	-
			Max	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00	83.98	83.98
Workforce with a college degree.	Percentage of workforce with an undergraduate degree.	Numerical	Mean	32.42	33.04	33.80	33.60	32.47	30.63	32.31	31.86
			SD	13.82	10.47	14.91	14.24	14.84	15.47	11.98	12.22
			N	741	54	96	117	124	133	115	102
			Min	-	-	-	-	-	-	4.17	4.17
			Max	100.00	52.38	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00
Length: Less than a fiscal year.	Percentage of purchases with a duration of one fiscal year or less.	Percent	Mean	93.77	91.17	96.16	94.24	94.12	91.42	93.35	95.37
			SD	13.74	20.76	9.44	11.72	11.35	19.25	13.85	7.23
			N	838	59	103	127	133	144	147	125
			Min	-	-	32.51	-	3.03	-	-	58.27
			Max	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00
Length: More than a fiscal year	Percentage of purchases with a duration greater than one fiscal year.	Percent	Mean	4.38	3.28	2.02	4.08	3.98	5.89	5.83	4.10
			SD	10.21	6.02	3.67	9.80	6.86	15.37	13.01	6.76
			N	838	59	103	127	133	144	147	125
			Min	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
			Max	100.00	27.09	21.76	96.05	45.28	100.00	100.00	41.73
Direct purchase	Percentage of purchases made directly and professional services.	Percent	Mean	41.86	49.57	44.95	41.55	39.06	37.10	40.92	45.56
			SD	31.31	28.43	27.81	29.81	30.84	32.49	33.23	32.91
			N	838	59	103	127	133	144	147	125
			Min	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
			Max	100.00	99.04	100.00	100.00	96.67	95.36	95.95	98.43
Bidding	Percentage of purchases made through bidding processes.	Percent	Mean	1.76	3.36	2.40	2.16	1.84	1.54	1.03	1.11
			SD	3.66	7.28	4.40	3.62	3.60	3.08	2.12	1.92
			N	838	59	103	127	133	144	147	125

Variable	Description	Type		General	y2016	y2017	y2018	y2019	y2020	y2021	y2022
Comp. Process	Percentage of purchases made through short selection, merit-based competition, minimum amount process.	Percent	Min	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
			Max	52.96	52.96	25.00	20.59	28.13	22.50	16.52	10.34
			Mean	15.12	23.54	21.15	16.30	15.23	12.82	11.91	11.28
			SD	18.60	20.56	22.22	18.45	18.22	17.66	17.60	14.48
			N	838	59	103	127	133	144	147	125
			Min	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
			Max	95.05	79.03	85.37	90.29	85.54	90.64	95.05	94.59
			Mean	9.12	2.50	4.64	9.64	8.49	10.69	13.09	9.60
			SD	25.43	8.24	17.62	27.51	25.48	27.66	29.81	25.06
			N	838	59	103	127	133	144	147	125
Special regime	Percentage of purchases made using special regime.	Percent	Min	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
			Max	100.00	46.00	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00

APPENDIX 3.2 CATEGORICAL CONTROL VARIABLES (percentage per year).

	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	Total
Policy Sector								
Agriculture, fishing, and rural development	2.99	2.86	4.62	4.41	4.76	6.04	5.88	4.74
Environment and sustainable development	2.99	4.76	3.85	4.41	4.08	4.03	3.92	4.06
Science, technology, and innovation	1.49	0.95	0.77	0.74	0.68	0.67	0.65	0.79
Trade, industry, and tourism	5.97	4.76	4.62	4.41	4.76	4.7	4.58	4.74
Culture	1.49	2.86	3.08	2.94	2.72	2.68	2.61	2.71
Defense	10.45	17.14	16.15	15.44	14.97	14.77	13.73	14.88
Sports, recreation, physical activity, and leisure time development	1.49	0.95	0.77	0.74	0.68	0.67	0.65	0.79
Education	4.48	2.86	4.62	5.15	6.12	6.71	6.54	5.41
Statistics	4.48	2.86	2.31	2.21	2.04	2.01	1.96	2.37
Civil service	0	0.95	1.54	1.47	1.36	1.34	1.31	1.24
Finance and public credit	11.94	10.48	9.23	10.29	10.88	10.74	10.46	10.48
Social inclusion and reconciliation	4.48	2.86	3.08	2.21	2.04	2.68	2.61	2.71
Strategic intelligence and counterintelligence	1.49	0.95	0.77	0.74	0.68	0.67	0.65	0.79
Interior	2.99	4.76	4.62	3.68	3.4	3.36	3.27	3.72
Justice and Law	5.97	4.76	3.85	3.68	3.4	3.36	3.27	3.83
Mines and energy	4.48	4.76	5.38	5.15	6.12	5.37	7.19	5.64
Planning	4.48	3.81	3.08	2.94	2.72	2.68	2.61	3.04
Presidency of the republic	4.48	3.81	3.85	4.41	4.08	4.03	3.92	4.06
Foreign affairs	4.48	2.86	2.31	2.21	2.04	2.01	1.96	2.37
Health and social protection	2.99	5.71	6.92	7.35	6.8	6.71	7.19	6.54
Information and communication technologies	4.48	5.71	4.62	5.15	4.76	4.7	5.23	4.96
Labor	4.48	2.86	3.08	3.68	4.08	3.36	3.27	3.49
Transportation	5.97	3.81	4.62	4.41	4.08	4.7	4.58	4.51
Housing, city, and territory	1.49	1.9	2.31	2.21	2.72	2.01	1.96	2.14

APPENDIX 3.3 ORGANIZATIONAL TYPOLOGY

Theoretical categories	Definition	Dimension	Aspect	Variable
Organizational Environment	• Type of environments (complexity, permeability, and stability). • Level of competitive pressure. • Degree of influence of external factors and political cycles.	1. Degree of publicness	Administrative autonomy	Chairperson of the Organizational Board
Organizational Goals	• Type of goals and their relationship with public values. • Level of ambiguity. • Degree of measurability using performance indicators.			President's representative in the organizational board
				Composition of the organizational board
				Budget Approval
			Market-like management	Type
Organizational Structure	• Levels of bureaucracy (hierarchy, formalization, red tape). • Level of managerial autonomy. • Type of decision-making process • Degree of demands for accountability.		Administrative autonomy	Mission
			Administrative autonomy	Level
				Maximum organizational authority
		Market-like management		Legal regime
Organizational Resources	• Workforce • Budget	2. Resources	Size	Budget Approval
			Workforce	Workforce

APPENDIX 3.4 MODEL SPECIFICATIONS

Model 1:

$$\begin{aligned}
 Compliance_i = & \beta_0 + \beta_1 workforce_i + \beta_2 org_budget_i + \beta_3 proc_budget_i + \beta_4 org_level_i \\
 & + \beta_5 org_type_i + \beta_6 workforce29_i + \beta_7 workforce3049_i + \beta_8 workforce50_i \\
 & + \beta_9 workforcegrad_i + \beta_{10} workforcecoll_i \\
 & + \beta_{11} durless1y_i + \beta_{12} durmore1y_i + \beta_{13} procdir_i + \beta_{14} procbid_i + \beta_{15} procint_i \\
 & + \beta_{16} quadrant_i + \beta_{17} 2017_i + \beta_{18} 2018_i + \beta_{19} 2019_i + \beta_{20} 2020_i + \beta_{21} 2021_i \\
 & + \beta_{22} 2022_i + \varepsilon_i
 \end{aligned}$$

Model 2:

$$\begin{aligned}
 Compliance_i = & \beta_0 + \beta_1 workforce_i + \beta_2 budget_ratio_i + \beta_3 org_level_i + \beta_4 org_type_i \\
 & + \beta_5 workforce29_i + \beta_6 workforce3049_i + \beta_7 workforce50_i \\
 & + \beta_8 workforcegrad_i + \beta_9 workforcecoll_i \\
 & + \beta_{10} durless1y_i + \beta_{11} durmore1y_i + \beta_{12} procdir_i + \beta_{13} procbid_i + \beta_{14} procint_i \\
 & + \beta_{15} quadrant_i + \beta_{16} 2017_i + \beta_{17} 2018_i + \beta_{18} 2019_i + \beta_{19} 2020_i + \beta_{20} 2021_i \\
 & + \beta_{21} 2022_i + \varepsilon_i
 \end{aligned}$$

APPENDIX 3.5 RESULTS MODELS WITHOUT PROCUREMENT PROCESS DETAILS

(TRUNCATION CHECK)

VARIABLES	Completeness		Timeliness	
	Model 1	Model 2	Model 1	Model 2
Organizational resources				
Workforce	-7.51e-07 (0.000239)	0.000200 (0.000290)	1.35e-05 (2.33e-05)	3.69e-05 (2.35e-05)
Workforce^2	5.42e-09 (1.28e-08)	-5.73e-10 (8.69e-10)	-5.85e-11 (6.79e-11)	-1.21e-10* (7.00e-11)
Organizational Budget (ln)	1.478 (1.307)		-0.134 (0.810)	
Organizational Budget (ln)^2	-0.0297 (0.0256)		0.00422 (0.0160)	
Investment Budget (ln)	-1.830 (1.578)		-0.434 (0.614)	
Investment Budget (ln)^2	0.0436 (0.0336)		0.00910 (0.0131)	
Budget Ratio		-1.185 (1.898)		-0.838 (1.050)
Budget Ratio^2		2.127 (1.893)		0.998 (1.034)
Quadrant	-0.243* (0.130)	-0.123 (0.116)	-0.156** (0.0606)	-0.132* (0.0697)
Organization workforce				
Workforce under 30 years	-0.0161 (0.0190)	-0.0196 (0.0183)	-0.0165 (0.0136)	-0.0184 (0.0133)
Workforce between 30-49 years	0.00409 (0.0158)	0.00309 (0.0185)	-0.00352 (0.00821)	-0.00277 (0.00827)
Workforce graduate degree	-0.0158 (0.0124)	-0.0143 (0.0112)	0.00322 (0.00459)	0.00303 (0.00507)
Workforce college degree	0.00358 (0.0186)	0.00177 (0.0197)	0.0154** (0.00718)	0.0135 (0.00848)
Year				
2017	0.274 (0.240)	0.187 (0.238)	0.809*** (0.212)	0.980*** (0.228)
2018	0.526 (0.323)	0.432 (0.330)	0.627*** (0.135)	0.872*** (0.162)
2019	0.319 (0.383)	0.265 (0.350)	0.849*** (0.195)	1.108*** (0.218)
2020	0.384 (0.410)	0.307 (0.365)	0.907*** (0.165)	1.196*** (0.147)
2021	0.426 (0.323)	0.472 (0.313)	1.236*** (0.221)	1.531*** (0.223)
2022	0.0762 (0.384)	0.0789 (0.355)	1.386*** (0.238)	1.667*** (0.239)
Observations	703	703	762	709

Standard errors in parentheses
 *** p<0.01, ** p<0.05, * p<0.1

APPENDIX 3.6 BIPROBIT RESULTS

VARIABLES	Model 1		Model 2	
	Completeness	Timeliness	Completeness	Timeliness
Organizational resources				
Workforce	-0.00344 (0.00358)	9.36e-05 (9.95e-05)	-0.00211 (0.00280)	0.000249*** (9.64e-05)
Workforce^2	5.86e-06 (5.05e-06)	-3.74e-09 (4.73e-09)	4.01e-06 (2.95e-06)	-1.06e-08** (4.71e-09)
Organizational Budget (ln)	-1.529 (2.392)	-0.294 (1.278)		
Organizational Budget (ln)^2	0.0294 (0.0511)	0.00811 (0.0252)		
Investment Budget (ln)	1.736 (3.034)	0.163 (0.831)		
Investment Budget (ln)^2	-0.0286 (0.0658)	-0.00317 (0.0177)		
Budget Ratio			-0.960 (2.119)	-0.527 (0.980)
Budget Ratio^2			2.251 (2.201)	0.645 (1.031)
Quadrant	-0.231 (0.227)	-0.165* (0.0898)	-0.234 (0.145)	-0.132 (0.0888)
Organization workforce				
Workforce under 30 years	0.0232 (0.0333)	0.000448 (0.0147)	0.00405 (0.0227)	-0.00400 (0.0142)
Workforce between 30-49 years	-0.0202 (0.0168)	-0.00786 (0.00890)	-0.0299** (0.0147)	-0.00867 (0.00932)
Workforce graduate degree	-0.0315 (0.0256)	0.00862* (0.00524)	-0.0323 (0.0253)	0.00815 (0.00504)
Workforce college degree	-0.00902 (0.0255)	0.0129* (0.00711)	-0.0242 (0.0272)	0.0104 (0.00751)
Procurement processes characteristics				
Length: Less than a fiscal year	0.0307*** (0.0111)	0.0244*** (0.00597)	0.0193* (0.0105)	0.0226*** (0.00564)
Length: More than a fiscal year	-0.00863 (0.0171)	0.0169* (0.0100)	-0.0169 (0.0138)	0.0156 (0.0100)
Direct purchase	-0.0244* (0.0142)	-0.00249 (0.00320)	-0.0174** (0.00841)	-0.00224 (0.00301)
Bidding	-0.0538* (0.0294)	-0.0110 (0.0163)	-0.0531** (0.0227)	-0.0105 (0.0152)
Comp. Process	-0.0332*** (0.0108)	-0.00274 (0.00401)	-0.0317*** (0.00733)	-0.00291 (0.00394)
2017	0.248 (0.187)	1.320*** (0.247)	0.00640 (0.223)	1.255*** (0.262)
2018	0.433 (0.721)	1.220*** (0.224)	0.0431 (0.780)	1.172*** (0.209)
2019	0.452 (0.890)	1.495*** (0.243)	0.218 (0.898)	1.446*** (0.240)
2020	0.757 (1.063)	1.513*** (0.233)	0.265 (1.024)	1.492*** (0.217)
2021	-0.437 (0.563)	1.894*** (0.245)	-0.419 (0.608)	1.883*** (0.240)
2022	-0.406 (0.605)	2.017*** (0.251)	-0.529 (0.571)	1.995*** (0.258)
Constant	-0.170 (14.43)	-2.495 (14.74)	6.538*** (1.961)	-2.349** (0.974)
Observations	641	641	641	641

Standard errors in parentheses
 *** p<0.01, ** p<0.05, * p<0.1

APPENDIX 3.7 MARGINAL EFFECTS BY YEAR RESULTS.

Model 1

VARIABLES	Completeness			Timeliness		
	Workforce	Budget	Investment Budget	Workforce	Budget	Investment Budget
2016	-2.39e-05 (6.40e-05)	-0.00212 (0.00797)	0.0146 (0.0121)	2.77e-05 (2.86e-05)	0.0439 (0.0313)	0.0439 (0.0313)
2017	-9.93e-06 (3.00e-05)	-0.00197 (0.00322)	0.00953 (0.00587)	1.68e-05 (1.69e-05)	0.0224 (0.0166)	0.0224 (0.0166)
2018	-3.67e-06 (1.44e-05)	-0.000949 (0.00237)	0.00615 (0.00512)	1.87e-05 (2.08e-05)	0.0253 (0.0181)	0.0253 (0.0181)
2019	-6.84e-07 (1.15e-05)	-0.000713 (0.00288)	0.00565 (0.00551)	1.37e-05 (1.38e-05)	0.0180 (0.0135)	0.0180 (0.0135)
2020	-1.83e-06 (9.09e-06)	-0.000629 (0.00219)	0.00472 (0.00346)	1.33e-05 (1.42e-05)	0.0175 (0.0134)	0.0175 (0.0134)
2021	-1.92e-05 (3.71e-05)	-0.00113 (0.00452)	0.00917** (0.00380)	6.94e-06 (7.98e-06)	0.00939 (0.00583)	0.00939 (0.00583)
2022	-1.80e-05 (2.30e-05)	-0.00153 (0.00520)	0.00958 (0.00761)	5.64e-06 (5.86e-06)	0.00750 (0.00512)	0.00750 (0.00512)
Observations	641	641	641	641	641	641

Standard errors in parentheses
 *** p<0.01, ** p<0.05, * p<0.1

Model 2

VARIABLES	Completeness		Timeliness	
	Workforce	Budget Ratio	Workforce	Budget Ratio
2016	5.50e-06 (4.69e-05)	0.0321 (0.0318)	7.33e-05** (2.86e-05)	-0.0105 (0.114)
2017	-2.40e-06 (2.70e-05)	0.00831 (0.0139)	4.59e-05** (1.86e-05)	-0.00719 (0.0614)
2018	-1.21e-06 (1.92e-05)	0.00261 (0.0157)	5.10e-05** (2.20e-05)	-0.00936 (0.0684)
2019	-1.75e-06 (2.05e-05)	0.00611 (0.0155)	3.72e-05*** (1.28e-05)	-0.00160 (0.0447)
2020	-3.46e-07 (1.28e-05)	0.00601 (0.0136)	3.47e-05*** (1.28e-05)	-0.000780 (0.0409)
2021	-6.76e-07 (2.52e-05)	0.0102 (0.00964)	1.84e-05* (1.02e-05)	0.00279 (0.0199)
2022	-5.98e-06 (2.78e-05)	0.0166 (0.0186)	1.53e-05** (7.75e-06)	0.00305 (0.0160)
Observations	641	641	641	641

Standard errors in parentheses
 *** p<0.01, ** p<0.05, * p<0.1

APPENDIX 3.8 MARGINAL EFFECTS BY STANDARD DEVIATION.

VARIABLES	Completeness		Timeliness	
	Model 1	Model 2	Model 1	Model 2
Organizational resources				
Workforce	0.011*** (0.004)	0.011** (0.004)	0.030 -0.051	0.042 (0.028)
Organizational Budget (ln)	-0.001 (0.011)		0.037 -0.023	
Investment Budget (ln)	0.009** (0.004)		0.002 -0.03	
Budget Ratio		0.004* (0.003)		0.007 (0.013)
Quadrant	-0.006 (0.008)	-0.007 (0.006)	-0.035 -0.022	-0.028 (0.021)
Organization workforce				
Workforce under 30 years	0.002 (0.003)	0.000 (0.002)	0.001 -0.014	-0.004 (0.014)
Workforce between 30-49 years	-0.005 (0.005)	-0.009 (0.006)	-0.015 -0.017	-0.017 (0.019)
Workforce graduate degree	-0.021 (0.029)	-0.025 (0.034)	0.026* -0.014	0.025* (0.014)
Workforce college degree	-0.002 (0.007)	-0.007 (0.011)	0.022* -0.011	0.018 (0.013)
Procurement processes characteristics				
Length: Less than a fiscal year	0.005** (0.002)	-0.003 (0.003)	0.038*** -0.008	0.036*** (0.008)
Length: More than a fiscal year	-0.002 (0.003)	0.004 (0.002)	0.021* -0.012	0.020* (0.012)
Direct purchase	-0.024 (0.020)	-0.017 (0.012)	-0.012 -0.016	-0.011 (0.015)
Bidding	-0.004 (0.003)	-0.005 (0.003)	-0.007 -0.01	-0.006 (0.009)
Comp. Process	-0.020 (0.013)	-0.021* (0.012)	-0.009 -0.013	-0.009 (0.013)
Year				
2017	0.002 (0.001)	0.000 (0.001)	0.053*** -0.009	0.052*** (0.009)
	0.002 (0.004)	0.000 (0.005)	0.055*** -0.009	0.054*** (0.009)
2018	0.003 (0.005)	0.002 (0.006)	0.065*** -0.01	0.064*** (0.010)
	0.004 (0.005)	0.002 (0.006)	0.066*** -0.009	0.066*** (0.010)
2019	-0.003 (0.005)	-0.003 (0.006)	0.077*** -0.009	0.077*** (0.009)
	-0.003 (0.005)	-0.004 (0.005)	0.077*** -0.009	0.078*** (0.009)
2020	-0.003 (0.005)	-0.004 (0.005)	0.077*** -0.009	0.078*** (0.009)
	-0.003 (0.005)	-0.004 (0.005)	0.077*** -0.009	0.078*** (0.009)
2021	-0.003 (0.005)	-0.004 (0.005)	0.077*** -0.009	0.078*** (0.009)
	-0.003 (0.005)	-0.004 (0.005)	0.077*** -0.009	0.078*** (0.009)
2022	-0.003 (0.005)	-0.004 (0.005)	0.077*** -0.009	0.078*** (0.009)
	-0.003 (0.005)	-0.004 (0.005)	0.077*** -0.009	0.078*** (0.009)
Observations	641	641	641	641

Standard errors in parentheses
 *** p<0.01, ** p<0.05, * p<0.1

APPENDIX 5.1 ONLINE SURVEY

PROJECT00009408 - PUBLIC AGENCY MANAGERS AND PUBLIC MANAGEMENT POLICY IMPLEMENTATION IN COLOMBIA.

- Based on your experience, do you consider Colombia's regulatory framework (understood as the group of laws, decrees, and guidelines) for managing agencies highly restricted, exceptionally permissive, or somewhere in between? Explain your response.
- How does management of an agency influence its program and service results? Please elaborate on your response.
- Given your experience working in a national agency, which management policy or policies were most important for you to be able to complete your job? For example, policies related to personnel, financial resources, training, etc.
- Did you have or do you have the necessary resources to comply with management policies (personnel, financial resources, training)? If not, which resources were most consequential for you in being able to comply with management policies?
- Is it important for agency leaders to promote management policies for these policies to be effective? Why or why not?
- When you began managing the agency, how familiar were you with its management policies—completely familiar, somewhat familiar, not familiar at all? What did you do to become familiar with these policies?
- What are the biggest challenges when implementing management policies within your agency? Are challenges different for different policies, for example, public procurement, public employment/reduction of red tape, innovation, and financial management? Please elaborate.

Final questions

- Are you willing to participate in a follow-up interview with me on Zoom or by phone of 20-25 minutes to discuss your perspective about management policy implementation in Colombia? Yes/No

APPENDIX 5.2 ZOOM/ PHONE INTERVIEW

PROJECT00009408 - PUBLIC AGENCY MANAGERS AND MANAGEMENT POLICY IMPLEMENTATION IN COLOMBIA.

The second step of this research study is optional, and it seeks to clarify and expand on participant responses to the online survey. Due to the time limit of 20-25 minutes, it will have a maximum of three questions.

- On the question [question number], you mentioned [fragment of the answer referring to a specific concept]. Can you clarify what you meant when you used this expression/concept/word?
- On the question [question number], you mentioned [fragment of the answer referring to a specific situation]. Can you elaborate on the relevant context and how it relates to the implementation of public management policies?
- In your experience, are there any additional elements you consider relevant to understanding the implementation process of public management policies in the Colombian context?