



Regulatory Fragmentation and Managerial Flexibility in Civil Service Governance: Evidence from Surabaya

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Abstract: The splintering of regulation has become a major problem for local government administration, especially where multiple government agencies issue overlapping regulations, reporting formats and administrative standards for the management of civil servants. This paper presents a qualitative case study of Surabaya, Indonesia, that investigates how regulatory fragmentation impacts managerial flexibility in civil service governance. Data were gathered through in-depth interviews with 21 informants, observations and document analysis. The data were analysed using thematic analysis, with NVivo 14 software. These findings suggest that the high compliance costs generated by fragmentation in ministerial regulations necessitate managerial discretion and adaptive responses from public managers. These responses are expressed in compliance, adaptation and innovation. Compliance is understood as adherence to several regulatory requirements, adaptation as harmonization of procedures, intensive coordination mechanisms and recurrent monitoring activities, and innovation as implementation of the E-ABK system to support the processes of job analysis and workload analysis. The study also points out challenges such as competency gaps, reliance on taskforce personnel and institutional sustainability that can affect the long-term effectiveness of adaptive governance practices. Our study contributes to the literature on public administration by showing that regulatory fragmentation not only generates administrative burdens but also transforms managerial discretion and promotes adaptive coordination as a key mechanism of civil service governance. These findings reveal how local governments preserve governance capacity, administrative standardization, and organizational efficiency under complex regulatory circumstances.

Keywords: Flexibility, Public Sector Management, Job Analysis, Workload Analysis, Civil Service Governance, Public Administration, Mechanism of Civil Service Governance

1. Introduction

Public organizations operate in increasingly fragmented regulatory environments with overlapping rules, multiple reporting requirements and competing administrative standards. Regulatory systems are meant to create accountability and standardization, but fragmentation can result in coordination issues, administrative burdens, and inconsistencies in implementation across levels of an organization. Recent studies have found that layered regulatory systems are prone to policy fragmentation, reduced inter-organizational coordination, and increased compliance complexity for public agencies (Arsad *et al.*, 2025). The literature on administrative burden further shows that too many procedural requirements and overlapping compliance mechanisms may hinder organizational efficiency and limit the capacity to implement policy (Aguado-Riveros *et al.*, 2026; Chol *et al.*, 2026). Therefore, public managers are often forced to use their discretion to generate adaptive responses to reconcile competing demands by regulatory bodies, whilst maintaining effective governance and institutional performance (Budi *et al.*, 2026)



The model of government implementation is closely related to the formation of the public administration system (Sunkad, 2024). This model is influenced by the paradigms that emerge during a specific period of time span. Aleksandr and Lana (2023) elaborate that the paradigm of Public Administration has undergone various shifts, starting from Old Public Administration to New Public Management. This shift has a profound impact on the renewal of aspects related to public sector governance. However, in practice, challenges and obstacles are still found that create a negative stigma on the quality of public sector management (Holzer, 2022). Public sector management is often portrayed as an unproductive organization, weak in terms of technical and managerial competencies, with convoluted bureaucratic processes, limited merit systems in the recruitment and promotion of civil service resources, and often faces political interventions that hinder innovation and creativity in governance (Kuoppakangas *et al.*, 2019).

Public sector management plays a crucial role in being innovative, adaptive, responsive, and focused on creating public value (Moore, 2022). This phenomenon necessitates that public administration scholars to develop a new framework of thought (Virtanen & Jalonen, 2024). One of the influential scholars who has addressed this phenomenon is David H. Rosenbloom. Rosenbloom, in his book *Public Administration Understanding Management, Politics, and Law in the Public Sectors* (2015), emphasizes that public sector management plays a crucial role in implementing government administration based on New Public Management principles. However, it should not only focus on management aspects but also consider political and legal aspects. In managerial aspects, public sector management is tasked with managing resources effectively based on the principles of New Public Management (Osborne & Plastrik, 1997), the political aspect through mapping political interests while maintaining accountability (Kettl, 2020), and the legal aspect that must adhere to all applicable regulations (Hashmi & Shuja, 2020). In Indonesia, the role of New Public Management is becoming increasingly crucial to implement in order to realize the reinvention of government. One of its implementations is through the Management of State Civil Apparatus. In practice, the Management of the State Civil Apparatus is based on a merit system realized through job analysis and workload analysis (Guy & Mastracci, 2023).

In Indonesia, the policy of State Civil Apparatus Management is implemented through a merit system. The merit system is an approach to human resource management aimed at evaluates qualifications based on work abilities to ensure the principle of fairness (Hashmi & Shuja, 2020). To support accountability, this policy has been clarified and ratified through Government Regulation Number 17 of 2020, which amends Government Regulation Number 11 of 2017 on the Management of Civil Servants, based on Law Number 20 of 2023 on State Civil Apparatus. Through this regulation, the Central Government emphasizes the necessity of systematically preparing and determining the needs of the State Civil Apparatus. This preparation and determination of needs are manifested through the implementation of job analysis and workload analysis.

Job analysis is an activity that produces information about a job aimed at generating job data or information (Ganesh, *et al.*, 2022). Meanwhile, workload analysis is a systematic technique for managing personnel aimed at obtaining information about the effectiveness and efficiency of work within an organization based on the workload (Abdelzاهر & Kharbeche, 2022). In general, it can be outlined that job analysis and workload analysis are a series of arrangements for bureaucratic resources (Inegbedion *et al.*, 2020). Public sector management plays a crucial role as a main actor, with key sectors including the Ministry of Internal Affairs, the Ministry of State Apparatus Utilization and Bureaucratic Reform, and the State Civil Service Agency. These sectors subsequently carry out government affairs in each region through the Bureau and/or Organizational Section. This research will focus on local-level public sector management, specifically the Organization Division of Surabaya City.

In implementing job analysis and workload analysis, the Organization Division, as a public sector management, refers to the technical guidelines established by the Central Government. However, the study's results reveal gaps in several aspects that affect the overlapping format of the forms. One aspect that has a significant gap is the form's format. This is based on the fact that the job analysis and workload analysis formats in the Regulation of the Ministry of Internal Affairs are divided into two different types, while in the Regulation of the Ministry of State Apparatus Utilization and Bureaucratic Reform and the Regulation of the State Civil Service Agency, the formats have already become a single unit. Furthermore, a significant aspect that highlights this gap is the calculation of employee needs. Permendagri still applies a 25% allowance calculation, which affects the effective working hours calculation, resulting in 72,000 minutes or 1,200 hours. Meanwhile, in the Permenpan RB and Perka BKN, a 30% allowance is



used with an effective working hours calculation of 75,000 minutes or 1,250 hours. The lack of synchronization among aspects in the four guidelines that form the basis for the breakdown and preparation of staff needs indicates a weakness in coordination among the Central Government. This gap phenomenon affects the inefficiency of the Organizational Section's duties, which must prepare forms of four different types.

The implementation of job and workload analysis within the Organizational Division exposes a fundamental policy weakness arising from regulatory fragmentation across central government institutions. Divergent formats and calculation standards—particularly among the Ministry of Home Affairs, the Ministry of Administrative and Bureaucratic Reform, and the National Civil Service Agency undermine administrative coherence and hinder the standardization of personnel planning processes. This inconsistency not only reflects limited inter-agency coordination but also generates operational inefficiencies, as implementing units are required to navigate and reconcile multiple, and at times conflicting, regulatory frameworks. Despite the strategic importance of these instruments in determining staffing requirements, prior studies have predominantly emphasized technical and procedural dimensions, with limited attention to regulatory misalignment and its organizational consequences. Accordingly, this study advances the literature by foregrounding the structural inconsistency of policy instruments and systematically examining its impact on organizational efficiency, thereby offering a more integrative and critical contribution to public sector human resource management scholarship.

This study aims to: (1) analyze how public sector management adapts to the implementation of job analysis and workload analysis policies derived from multiple central government regulations; (2) examine the mechanisms of planning, implementation, and evaluation carried out by the Organizational Division within a complex regulatory environment; (3) identify regulatory inconsistencies and coordination gaps among central government policies and assess their impact on organizational efficiency and administrative practices; (4) explore the flexibility strategies employed by public managers in responding to overlapping regulations and operational constraints; and (5) contribute to the advancement of public sector human resource management by providing a critical perspective on policy fragmentation and its implications for governance and organizational performance.

This study not only identifies regulatory inconsistencies but also examines the impact of regulatory fragmentation on managerial behavior in the governance of the civil service. Fragmented regulations generate not only administrative burdens but also managerial discretion, forcing public managers to develop adaptive practices to reconcile competing regulatory demands (Christensen & Læg Reid, 2025; Peters, 2024). These practices include coordination mechanisms, procedural harmonization, staffing adjustments and digital innovations supporting governance capacity and organizational effectiveness (Lodge & Wegrich, 2012). Hence, this research argues for a causal connection between regulatory fragmentation, managerial discretion, adaptive managerial practices and governance outcomes in local government administration.

2. Literature Review

2.1. Public Sector and Civil Service Management

Good governance and democratic accountability are key to the management of the public sector and the policies and strategic management of civil servants through merit-based systems that are vital to their effective implementation. The job analysis and workload analysis are in this context important tools in human resource planning that help organizations to align staffing requirements with organizational goals and to increase efficiency in performance. These mechanisms facilitate the rational distribution of staff, and strengthen the institutional capacity through clearly defining and proportionate assigning roles and responsibilities. Moreover, the effectiveness of public sector performance is closely related to capacity building activities, particularly through organized training programs that greatly enhance the performance of public servants and public service provision outcomes (Nor, 2025). But the dynamics of leadership influence the performance of organizations. Transformational leadership might have different effects on job performance through organizational commitment (Sudha *et al.*, 2023).

Good governance is important for the effectiveness of civil service systems, in addition to internal management practices. Transparency and fairness are a must in civil service management; merit-based recruitment and competitive pay plans attract qualified young elites to public service or scare them away by corruption probes (Yang & Zhao, 2024). This emphasizes the importance of good institutional integrity for a sustainable effective public



sector workforce. What is more, the increasing demand for administrative modernisation points to the need for public institutions to adapt to technological developments, such as the use of digital systems and artificial intelligence. The changes require the development of effective change management and digital competencies, supported by strong leadership and communication to adopt innovation (Barodi & Lalaoui, 2025). Thus, the challenge for modern public sector management is to find a balance between regulatory compliance, organizational flexibility and innovation in order to effectively meet the changing challenges of governance.

2.2. Regulatory Fragmentation

Regulatory fragmentation occurs when there are several institutions with jurisdiction over the same policy area, producing overlapping rules, varying standards and sometimes conflicting regulatory mandates. These conditions can lead to coordination problems, greater administrative complexity, and less uniformity in the implementation of policies across organizations. Therefore, such fragmented regulatory arrangements may increase administrative costs and impede organizational effectiveness (Kalmenovitz *et al.*, 2025). In the public administration, these challenges are compounded by the fact that government agencies need to comply with diverse procedural standards and reporting systems established by various regulatory bodies. However, regulatory fragmentation does not always have negative effects. In some contexts, fragmented arrangements with effective coordination mechanisms may strengthen accountability, improve oversight and enhance institutional control (Xu, 2024). Thus the effects of fragmentation are largely determined by the extent to which regulatory actors are able to align their objectives, procedures and implementation practices.

The effects of regulatory fragmentation are especially evident in policy fields with high levels of complexity and interdependence. For instance, research on environmental governance has shown that inconsistent regulatory classifications and management approaches across jurisdictions can hinder conservation efforts and reduce the effectiveness of policy in addressing climate change (Camacho & McLachlan, 2021). Similar challenges have been observed in rapidly evolving technological sectors such as artificial intelligence and genome editing, where fragmented regulatory arrangements often generate governance gaps, policy uncertainty and coordination challenges among stakeholders (Li, 2025). These problems are further compounded in many developing countries because of the absence of integrated regulatory frameworks, as policymakers tend to rely on fragmented legal instruments that often do not offer sufficient guidance for emerging policy issues. All of these studies emphasize the importance of regulatory coherence, institutional coordination, and adaptive governance mechanisms in achieving effective policy implementation and sustainable governance outcomes.

2.3. Flexibility in Public Governance

Flexibility has become an important strategic capability in public governance to deal with the complexity and turbulence of the issues faced by modern society. Public managers are increasingly expected to act as “bricoleurs”, creatively recombining elements of different governance paradigms to design adaptive policies, programs, and services that safeguard core public values (Carstensen *et al.*, 2023). This perspective echoes the notion of robust governance which necessitates the combination of flexibility and institutional stability via mechanisms that facilitate experimentation, inclusive deliberation and distributed agency (Ansell *et al.*, 2023). In this sense, flexibility is not just an operational adjustment, but a principle of governance that allows institutions to remain responsive without compromising their structural integrity.

Additionally, flexibility is key to improving governance outcomes in diverse settings. Flexibility in decision-making in crisis situations, with a view to inclusiveness and equity, can enhance institutional legitimacy, but excessive internal adaptation can erode public trust (Lenz, 2024). Flexible evaluation frameworks allow for more robust decision-making and policy evaluation in the face of data limitations, especially when there is limited or uncertain information (Cervantes *et al.*, 2022). Moreover, the ability to be flexible in resource allocation has been shown to enhance the performance of organizations, especially when such flexibility is coupled with governance structures that allow for adequate discretion by executives (Heaton *et al.*, 2023). These insights illuminate how flexibility, when properly managed, is an important mechanism for enhancing adaptability, effectiveness and legitimacy in public sector governance.

There is a growing literature on public sector management, regulatory fragmentation and governance flexibility, but existing studies focus on these themes separately rather than as a joint phenomenon. Previous studies have focused on the technical aspects of job analysis and workload analysis, or the structural implications of fragmented regulations and the role of flexibility in governance separately. Yet, little has been said about the effect of regulatory fragmentation on managerial practices at the implementation level, especially in civil service management. Furthermore, empirical studies examining the strategic use of flexibility by public managers to manage the intricacies of overlapping and inconsistent regulatory frameworks in real administrative settings are scarce. This gap is particularly evident in the context of local government, where the interaction of numerous central regulations creates practical problems that have not been sufficiently studied in the literature. Hence, this study contributes to fill this gap, by providing an integrative analysis of regulatory fragmentation and managerial flexibility in the implementation of job and workload analysis, offering new insights into adaptive governance in the public sector.

2.4. Analytical Framework

This paper conceptualizes regulatory fragmentation as a condition that shapes managerial behavior in civil-service governance, drawing on Rosenbloom *et al.*'s (2022) account of public administration as an interplay among managerial, legal, and political dimensions. Regulatory fragmentation arises when multiple government institutions issue overlapping rules, formats, and procedural requirements with which local governments must comply simultaneously (Christensen & Lægreid, 2025; Peters, 2024). Under these conditions, public managers exercise discretion to reconcile competing administrative requirements through procedural harmonization, coordination mechanisms, staffing adjustments, and digital innovation (Bouckaert *et al.*, 2010; Levi-Faur, 2012). These adaptive responses mediate the relationship between fragmented regulation and organizational outcomes, particularly organizational efficiency, coordination, standardization, and personnel planning (Lodge & Wegrich, 2012). Accordingly, the analytical framework treats regulatory fragmentation as the antecedent condition, managerial flexibility as the mediating response, and governance capacity as the organizational consequence. Because the evidence is qualitative and observational, these links are interpreted as an explanatory process rather than as statistically identified causal effects.

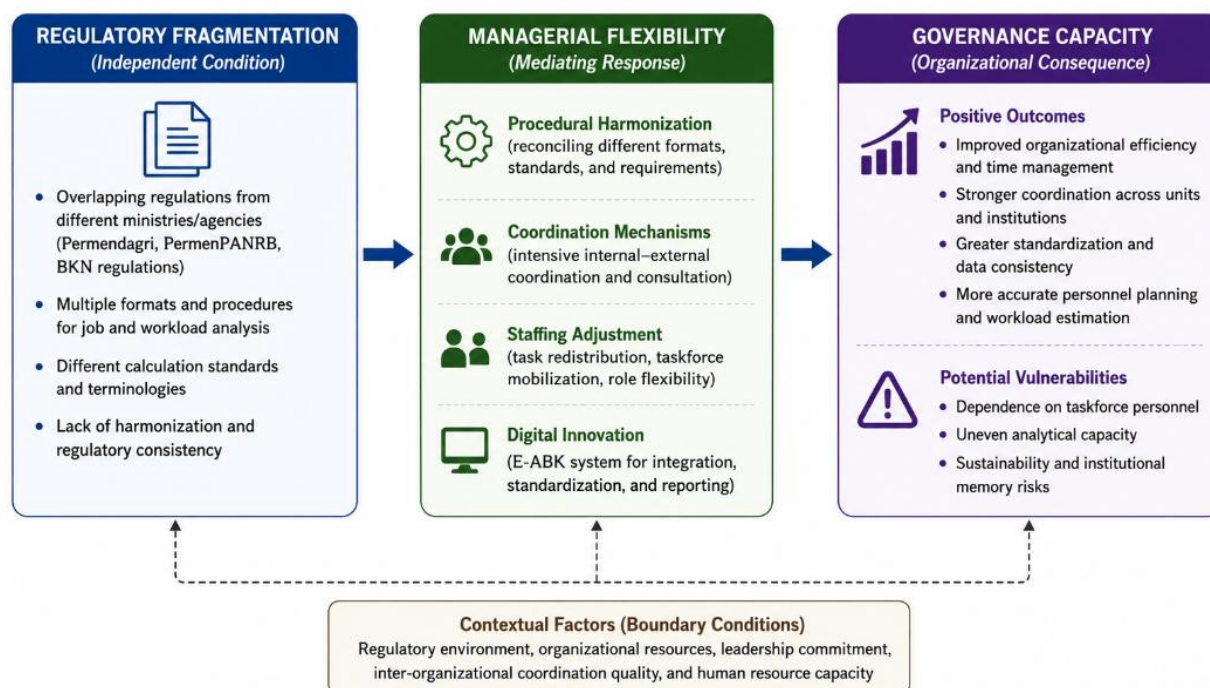


Figure 1. Regulatory Fragmentation and Managerial Flexibility Analytical Framework.

The main argument of the study is illustrated in Figure 1, where fragmented regulatory arrangements create local compliance burdens that, in turn, stimulate adaptive managerial practices. Such practices serve as a device through which local governments secure organizational efficiency, administrative standardization, and governance capacity in the face of fragmented regulatory environments.

3. Materials and Methods

3.1. Design

This qualitative study explored participants' perceptions and experiences of implementing job-analysis and workload-analysis regulations. A case-study design was used to examine public-sector managers' responses to regulatory fragmentation and the managerial flexibility exercised during implementation. Case-study research is appropriate for examining a contemporary phenomenon in its real-life context (Yin, 1996). The analysis was informed by Rosenbloom *et al.*'s (2022) framework of public administration, particularly the interaction of managerial, political, and legal considerations in responses to changing administrative requirements.

3.2. Participants and Recruitment

The research was conducted in Surabaya, East Java, Indonesia, across the Organization Department, the Library and Archives Department, Bhakti Dharma Husada Regional General Hospital, Mohammad Soewandhi Regional General Hospital, and Tegalsari District Office. Surabaya was selected because it is one of Indonesia's largest municipalities and has a complex public-service system in which job analysis and workload analysis are important instruments for personnel planning and workforce allocation.

Beyond its scale of administration, Surabaya is a theoretically instructive case of a high-capacity local government. The city has relatively advanced administrative resources, established personnel management systems and organizational innovations such as E-ABK platform. However, Surabaya still faces the problems of fragmented job and workload analysis regulations issued by several central government agencies despite such institutional advantages. This study can serve as a case of a high-capacity municipality to examine the circumstances under which managerial flexibility can be effective in a positive organizational context and how adaptive governance practices are employed to counteract the negative consequences of regulatory fragmentation. Table 1 summarizes the informant groups.

Table 1. Informant Groups

Informant Group	Institution	Number
Key Informants	Organization Department	3
Main Informants	Regional Government Agencies	4
Supporting Informants	Taskforce Team	14
Total		21

3.3. Data Collection

Participants were selected purposively because they had direct knowledge of and experience with job-analysis and workload-analysis activities. The 21 informants comprised three key informants from the Organization Department who were responsible for policy administration, four principal informants from regional government agencies who were directly involved in implementation, and 14 supporting informants from the taskforce team who assisted with operational activities.

Data were collected using semi-structured interviews, non-participant observation, and document analysis. Interviews were carried out on planning, implementation, coordination, reporting mechanism, preparation of human resource and regulatory compliance. Observations were carried out during job and workload analysis activities. Documentary evidence included regulations, technical guidelines, organizational documents and workload analysis reports.

3.4. Interview Procedures

In total, 21 semi-structured interviews were conducted: three with key informants from the Organization Department, four with principal informants from regional government agencies, and 14 with supporting informants



from the taskforce team. Interviews lasted 30–60 minutes (approximately 45 minutes on average). Most interviews were conducted face to face at participants' workplaces; follow-up clarifications were obtained online when necessary.

All interviews were conducted in Indonesian so that participants could express their experiences and perceptions comfortably and accurately. Before data collection, participants were informed of the study's purpose, the voluntary nature of participation, and the handling of their information.

3.5. Data Analysis and Trustworthiness

All interviews were recorded with participants' permission and transcribed verbatim. The transcripts, field notes, and documentary material were imported into NVivo 14 for analysis. The unit of analysis was meaningful statements, sentences and text segments related to planning activities, implementation processes, financial reporting, human resource development and regulatory compliance in practices of job and workload analysis. The data analysis followed a two-stage coding process. The first stage involved open coding to identify the concepts relevant to the data. In the second stage, related codes were grouped into broader categories and themes that reflected patterns of managerial flexibility in response to regulatory fragmentation.

To enhance credibility and analytic rigor, the authors iteratively debriefed each other on the coding results. All differences in interpretation were discussed until consensus was reached. Triangulation of data was ensured by combining data from interviews, observation findings and documentary evidence.

4. Results

4.1. Participant Information

Most participants were affiliated with the Organization Department, and 16 were women; the remaining five were men. Most were 20–25 years old ($n = 14$); one was 25–30 years old, four were 30–35 years old, and two were 40–45 years old. Fourteen participants held applied bachelor's degrees, five held bachelor's degrees, and two held master's degrees. Their roles included administrators, analysts, data managers, secretariat officers, and taskforce members. All participants were directly involved in implementing job-analysis and workload-analysis activities in the Surabaya City Government, providing both managerial and operational perspectives.

4.2. Theme: Flexibility of Public Sector Management

This theme highlights how public sector management navigated the complexity of implementing four different job analysis and workload analysis regulations issued by the central government. It comprises several categories, namely planning activities, implementing activities, developing human resource capacity, complying with governmental regulations, and managing financial reporting. These aspects will be described through the perspectives of the informants, including staff from the Organization Division, employees from regional government agencies, and members of the taskforce team.

4.3. Planning of Activities

Planning is the initial stage that plays a crucial role in implementing a systematic and comprehensive activity system. Public managers routinely carry out planning activities at the beginning of each fiscal year from 2022 to 2025 in a coordination meeting, which includes preparing the activity timeline and the terms of reference document

Planning is carried out routinely at the beginning of each year through a series of planning activities that outline the entire year's details, including the timeline, targets, agenda, and schedule. (OD-1, 40–45, Female)

Public sector management implements planning that involves various regional apparatus within the City, followed by internal coordination regarding the preparation of position and workload analysis teams, as well as notifying the relevant regional organizations about its implementation. (TF-11, 20–25, Female)



The preparation of the activity timeline will be outlined in the terms of reference document, which includes the activity mechanism, budget, and implementation team. After that, the stage of detailing employee requirements will follow through the system.

Details of requirements using the E-ABK application. For planning job analysis and workload analysis every 5 years, in case of any changes, and for each annual detail, which is 3 months of planning with some valid supporting data, and the rest during implementation. (BO-3, 30–35, Female)

4.4. Implementation of Activities

The organizational unit acts as a commander skilled in organizing apparatus resources and must be ready to face obstacles encountered by Regional Devices as well as stakeholders.

Every month, routine monitoring and evaluation are conducted with the Regional Apparatus in relation to ABK / Business Processes. The monitoring and evaluation consist of reviewing the results of filling out the ABK 2024 application to identify any issues that may arise, allowing for discussions to be conducted together. The monitoring and evaluation are carried out every 10 days. (OD-2, 30–35, Female)

The implementation of activities applies routine monitoring and evaluation to determine the achievement of data calculation values in the E-ABK. This system is applied through 10 days of information notification, 10 days of data entry, and 10 days of monitoring and evaluation.

At the sub-district level, the organizational section acts as a supervisor. Here we coordinate internally with the agency's leadership, the head of the personnel sub-division, and the inspectorate. For data collection and analysis, relevant officials will be involved, and the findings will later be validated by Organizational Section. (RG-2, 30–35, Male)

The implementation of activities using this monitoring and evaluation mechanism is routinely carried out for workload analysis. Job analysis, on the other hand, applies an integrated confirmation system by the Organization Section.

Table 2 shows the demographic and professional characteristics of the 21 participants of this study. The participants came from the Organization Department, regional government agencies, and taskforce teams. Most participants were female ($n = 16$), age 20–25 years ($n = 14$) and held Applied Bachelor's degrees ($n = 14$). The sample consisted of managerial, analytical and operational personnel directly involved in job and workload analysis activities.

The most prominent codes in the dataset, as reported in Table 3, were Workload Analysis and Form Template, emphasizing the prominent role of workload assessment procedures and regulatory format harmonization in the implementation process. Coordination and organizational structure development were mentioned frequently as well, reflecting the importance of inter-unit collaboration and administrative adjustment in response to fragmented regulatory requirements.

Table 2. The characteristics of each participant

Informant	Organization	Age	Education	Position	Gender
OD-1	Organization Department	40–45	Master	Head of the Subdivision	Female
OD-2	Organization Department	30–35	Bachelor	Job Analyst	Female
OD-3	Organization Department	30–35	Master	Data Manager	Female
RG-1	Bhakti Dharma Husada Regional General Hospital	40–45	Master	Human Resource Analyst	Female
RG-2	Tegalsari District	30–35	Bachelor	Secretariat	Male

RG-3	Mohammad Soewandhi Regional General Hospital	25–30	Bachelor	Administrative Officer	Male
RG-4	Library and Archives Department	30–35	Bachelor	Data Manager	Male
TF-1	Organization Department	20–25	Applied Bachelor	Taskforce Team	Male
TF-2	Organization Department	20–25	Applied Bachelor	Taskforce Team	Female
TF-3	Organization Department	20–25	Applied Bachelor	Taskforce Team	Female
TF-4	Organization Department	20–25	Applied Bachelor	Taskforce Team	Female
TF-5	Organization Department	20–25	Applied Bachelor	Taskforce Team	Female
TF-6	Organization Department	20–25	Applied Bachelor	Taskforce Team	Female
TF-7	Organization Department	20–25	Applied Bachelor	Taskforce Team	Male
TF-8	Organization Department	20–25	Applied Bachelor	Taskforce Team	Female
TF-9	Organization Department	20–25	Applied Bachelor	Taskforce Team	Female
TF-10	Organization Department	20–25	Applied Bachelor	Taskforce Team	Female
TF-11	Organization Department	20–25	Applied Bachelor	Taskforce Team	Female
TF-12	Organization Department	20–25	Applied Bachelor	Taskforce Team	Female
TF-13	Organization Department	20–25	Applied Bachelor	Taskforce Team	Female
TF-14	Organization Department	20–25	Applied Bachelor	Taskforce Team	Female

Table 3. The full code, category, and theme

Code	N	Category	Theme
Details of Employee Needs	4	Planning of Activities	Flexibility of Public Managers
Coordination	6	Planning of Activities	Flexibility of Public Managers
Timeline Preparation	3	Planning of Activities	Flexibility of Public Managers
Job Analysis	4	Implementation of Activities	Flexibility of Public Managers
Workload Analysis	14	Implementation of Activities	Flexibility of Public Managers
Agency Treasurer	1	Financial Reporting	Flexibility of Public Managers
Budget Team	2	Financial Reporting	Flexibility of Public Managers
Education and Training	1	Development of Apparatus Resources	Flexibility of Public Managers
Internal Team Job and Workload Analysis	3	Development of Apparatus Resources	Flexibility of Public Managers
Development of Organizational Structure and Governance	6	Development of Apparatus Resources	Flexibility of Public Managers
Form Template	14	Government Regulations	Flexibility of Public Managers

Note: N indicates the frequency of each code derived from the NVivo-based qualitative analysis. These frequencies should be interpreted as the relative prominence of themes within the dataset and not as number of participants. Findings are interpreted on the basis of depth and contextual meaning of the coded data and not by frequency counts.



4.5. Financial Reporting

Financial reporting aims to serve as a form of institutional transparency regarding results and achievements during ongoing activities. In its mechanism, it involves various parties, one of which is the institutional treasurer.

In this case, financial reporting involves the treasurer. Since there is already a treasurer for financial reports, this task is taken care of by them. It's with the treasurer. However, if, for example, there is a disbursement, I am still involved. (OD-1, 40–45, Female)

In addition to involving the treasurer, financial reporting also involves reporting directed to the budget team.

The budget team comprises the regional planning, research, and development agency as the planner of activities, and the regional financial management agency, responsible for budgeting and infrastructure asset planning. There is also an organization for workload analysis. The inspectorate supervisory is definitely part of the legal product. Furthermore, there is a regional revenue agency responsible for the budget, as well as officials in charge of procurement, goods, services, and development administration. This team is comparable to the budget team and is synchronized with activities, comprising a total of 7 people. (OD-2, 30–35, Female)

This financial reporting mechanism is systematized through the treasurer and the budget team, which includes activity reports, implementation documents, and the Workload Analysis decision letter, all of which have been verified and validated.

4.6. Development of Apparatus Resources

Apparatus resources play a crucial role in the implementation process. Therefore, it is necessary to have an apparatus with high professionalism in carrying out their duties. This can be reviewed through the preparation of organizational structure and governance. This preparation process is carried out every five years and is continuous with the preparation of the Regional Medium-Term Development Plan.

The mechanism is determined by the data source, such as regulations, in addition to identifying the position. This is followed by determining the qualifications and competencies of the position, preparing work standards, and then carrying out job relation analysis normatively. Finally, monitoring and evaluation are conducted. (RG-III, 25–30, Male)

To establish an accountable organizational structure and governance, the role of the job and workload analysis team is needed to design the requirements of the personnel.

The job and workload analysis team was formed based on the Regulation of the Minister of Administrative and Bureaucratic Reform No. 1 of 2020, with an odd number of members. As far as I know, it is grouped into internal and external teams. (TF-1, 20–25, Male)

In terms of human resource development, it is already the primary responsibility of the City Government's Personnel and Human Resource Development Agency. Therefore, the relevant division of the organization will send a list of participants who require. (OD-III, 30–35, Female)

4.7. Government Regulations

Public sector management in carrying out tasks and functions must be guided by regulations set by the Government. Public managers utilize regulations in the form of four types of forms established by three Ministries, which include the Ministry of Home Affairs, the Ministry of Administrative and Bureaucratic Reform, and the State Personnel Agency.

The local government must certainly refer to central regulations. Even though there are gaps, that's the fate of local governments. However, we also need to innovate so that the programs can run effectively. When preparing the workload analysis, we explore as many questions and pieces of information as possible from local government units to meet all four formats, allowing us to complete everything at once and cover all aspects. (OD-1, 40–45, Female)

In my opinion, the first thing is definitely a form of compliance with regulations, because the Ministry's regulations also serve as standards that must be implemented by the agencies under it. This is useful later when conducting job analysis or workload analysis, as it ensures everything is done according to regulations and also reduces the risk of violating laws or rules. The second point also relates to standardization, as without it, the analysis results cannot be compared objectively. (RG-I, 40–45, Female)

Because the regulations from these three ministries are more in line with national policies, more accurate, and more consistent. They provide clearer information about the continuously standardized framework for implementing workload analysis that supports it. (TF-2, 20–25, Female)

5. Discussion

This study examined how public-sector managers adapted to job-analysis and workload-analysis regulations issued by three central government institutions. [Rosenbloom et al.'s \(2022\)](#) framework was used to interpret the managerial, legal, and political dimensions of these adaptations. In preparing job analyses and workload analyses, local public managers followed requirements issued by the Ministry of Home Affairs, the Ministry of Administrative and Bureaucratic Reform, and the National Civil Service Agency while developing mechanisms to reconcile differences among those requirements.

The results provide evidence suggesting that regulatory fragmentation not only imposes administrative burdens but also serves as a trigger for managerial discretion. The presence of different regulatory formats and varied calculation standards demanded that public managers interpret, reconcile, and operationalize conflicting administrative requirements. Instead of passively accepting fragmented regulations, managers developed adaptive responses through procedural harmonization, the use of the E-ABK system, intensive coordination mechanisms and flexible staffing arrangements. This finding is in line with recent studies indicating that institutional complexity and fragmented governance arrangements tend to increase managerial discretion and stimulate adaptive coordination practices in public organizations ([Christensen & Lægreid, 2025](#); [Verhoest et al., 2004](#)).

These findings suggest the existence of an explanatory process: regulatory fragmentation produces managerial discretion, which in turn produces adaptive organizational practices, which influence governance capacity. Adaptive practices improved coordination and operational efficiency, but also added potential vulnerabilities, including dependence on taskforce personnel and variable analytical capacity. Therefore, the results of governance depend not only on the presence of managerial flexibility but also on the organizational resources to maintain it, especially administrative capacity, coordination capacity, and institutional support ([Lyrio et al., 2025](#); [Wu et al., 2018](#)).

The findings suggest that managerial flexibility is not a unitary phenomenon. Instead, public managers reacted to regulatory fragmentation in three different manners: compliance, adaptation, and innovation. These responses reflect the increasing importance of adaptive governance in dealing with uncertainty and complexity in contemporary public administration systems ([Ansell et al., 2021](#)).

Compliance responses are actions taken mainly to fulfil obligatory regulatory requirements issued by the Ministry of Home Affairs, the Ministry of Administrative and Bureaucratic Reform and the National Civil Service Agency. As [Lægreid and Rykkja \(2022\)](#) underline, public organizations operating in complex governance environments often emphasize regulatory compliance to maintain accountability and administrative legitimacy. Therefore, compliance-oriented managerial behavior includes filling out various forms and adhering to prescribed procedural standards.

Adaptive responses are managerial changes that reconcile fragmentary and partly inconsistent regulations. It is argued that adaptive governance is a product of institutional complexity that managers cannot control via routine administrative procedures ([Ansell et al., 2023](#)). The harmonization of four regulatory formats, the repeated cycles of monitoring and evaluation, and close coordination among organizational units in this study are examples of how managers adapted administrative processes to guarantee operational continuity in fragmented regulatory conditions.

Innovative responses go beyond compliance and adaptation by developing new organizational solutions. Digital innovation allows public organizations to enhance coordination, reduce administrative burden, and increase



their decision-making capacity (Criado *et al.*, 2021). The implementation of the E-ABK system in this study is an example of a managerial innovation that supports data integration, standardization of reporting, and analysis of workload across government units.

The three dimensions of managerial flexibility in this study are manifested in a variety of organizational mechanisms. Compliance responses are reflected in procedural flexibility; adaptive responses, in coordination flexibility; and innovative responses, in staffing and technological flexibility. This finding corroborates the argument by Branderhorst and Ruijer (2025) that governance capacity increasingly relies on the ability of managers to combine regulatory compliance, organizational adaptation and digital innovation in responding to complex administrative environments.

The findings suggest that managerial flexibility serves multiple functions within fragmented regulatory environments. First, flexibility operates as a problem-solving mechanism that enables public managers to maintain organizational performance despite inconsistencies across regulatory frameworks. Head and Alford (2015) argue that public managers increasingly rely on adaptive problem-solving strategies when operating in complex and uncertain governance environments. In this study, procedural harmonization, intensive coordination, and the implementation of the E-ABK system allowed managers to reduce operational uncertainty and maintain continuity in job and workload analysis activities.

Second, managerial flexibility also functions as a burden-shifting mechanism. Rather than eliminating regulatory complexity, adaptive responses frequently transfer administrative burdens from the regulatory system to local implementing units. Campbell *et al.* (2025) demonstrate that increasing administrative complexity often redistributes compliance costs and implementation burdens to frontline organizations and local administrative actors. The requirement to reconcile multiple formats, conduct recurring monitoring activities, and maintain extensive coordination processes increases the workload of local personnel and creates additional administrative responsibilities that are not explicitly recognized within formal regulations.

Third, flexibility can be interpreted as a form of informal institutional repair. In the absence of regulatory harmonization among central government agencies, local managers developed practical solutions to compensate for institutional inconsistencies. This finding is consistent with Capano and Howlett (2024), who argue that local actors frequently develop adaptive institutional arrangements to address coordination failures and policy fragmentation. The harmonization of four regulatory formats and the development of the E-ABK system illustrate how local actors effectively repaired coordination gaps that originated at higher levels of government.

These findings indicate that managerial flexibility is not merely an organizational capability but also a compensatory mechanism that enables governance systems to function despite fragmented regulatory arrangements. However, the sustainability of such flexibility depends on organizational capacity, staff competencies, and the availability of technological and managerial resources. Similar conclusions have been reported by Wu *et al.* (2018), who argue that governance effectiveness under conditions of complexity depends heavily on policy capacity, administrative capability, and institutional resources.

The results also provide important boundary conditions which may affect the managerial flexibility sustainability. Many of the adaptive activities relied heavily on relatively young personnel as a large proportion of the participants were taskforce team members and in the 20–25 age group. This workforce structure can improve flexibility, responsiveness and technological adaptability, but it can also challenge institutional memory, knowledge retention and long-term organizational sustainability. Additionally, organizational effectiveness and workforce adaptability depend on the retention and transfer of institutional knowledge across generations of public employees (Barbera *et al.*, 2024; Moyson, 2024). The use of taskforce personnel could result in uneven implementation capacity across government agencies, especially if specialist expertise exists within temporary or operational teams. Hence, the success of managerial flexibility should be viewed as contingent on organizational capacity, workforce stability, and knowledge transfer mechanisms in public institutions (Aguero, 2026).

Organizational efficiency in this study is not measured in quantitative productivity terms, but the ability of public managers to complete the job analysis and workload analysis processes, with as little administrative duplication, coordination delay and regulatory inconsistency as possible. The interview data and document review data indicate that efficiency was achieved through the harmonization of multiple regulatory formats, the use of the



E-ABK system for data integration, and the use of repeated monitoring and evaluation mechanisms for problem identification and resolution. Participants mentioned continued efforts to meet differing reporting requirements simultaneously, to reduce the frequency of data collection and entry, and to improve coordination among organizational units. These results are in line with recent work in the field of public management conceptualizing organizational efficiency as the capacity to streamline administrative processes, increase co-ordination and decrease transaction costs in complex governance arrangements (Overman & Schillemans, 2022). As a result, organizational efficiency emerged as a qualitative governance outcome reflected in improved administrative coordination, streamlined procedures and greater consistency in personnel planning processes.

The initial stage, which is planning, is a crucial step that lays the foundation for achieving goals. Cappelletti *et al.* (2023) define planning as a crucial step for organizations to develop strategies for future demands by ensuring the quantity and quality of employees. In this regard, public managers have implemented the planning process annually by preparing activity timelines and terms of reference documents. The second stage involves implementing activities. Public managers apply a workload monitoring and evaluation system every 10 days within a month. However, this activity does not run systematically due to the approval of new nomenclature regulations. This policy change affects the proportionality of job tasks, meaning that the implementation of workload analysis and job analysis is temporarily halted, as it is not in line with organizational efficiency and effectiveness (Malaj & Culani, 2023).

The third stage is financial reporting. Shubina *et al.* (2021) define it as a set of responsibilities based on financial accounting data with the aim of providing a summary of the financial condition for a specific reporting period. Public sector management routinely implements financial reporting involving treasurers and budget teams. The fourth stage is the preparation and development of human resources. Public sector management conducts the preparation of organizational structures and work procedures in collaboration with the job and workload analysis team. Mobolade and Akinade (2021) stated that in building a team, the focus should be on the individual's abilities, skills, and competencies that align with the organization's needs. However, in practice, the job analysis and workload analysis teams still experience gaps in terms of experience and the organization's ideal requirements. The final stage is the use of government regulations in every task implementation. Public sector management, in conducting job analysis and workload analysis, refer to four regulations.

The findings indicate that local governments need stronger coordination mechanisms for dealing with job and workload analysis within fragmented regulatory environments. Effective personnel governance requires strategic deployment of personnel, ongoing capacity building programs and mechanisms for transfer of knowledge to reduce dependence on temporary taskforce personnel. Moreover, digital governance innovations such as the E-ABK system should be better integrated into personnel management processes so that data integration, administrative standardization, reporting efficiency, and inter-agency coordination can be improved with minimal burdens of fragmented regulations.

6. Conclusion

This study shows that regulatory fragmentation in job-analysis and workload-analysis policies prompts public managers to exercise managerial flexibility to maintain governance effectiveness. Managerial flexibility operated through three interrelated responses: compliance with multiple regulatory requirements, adaptation through procedural harmonization and coordination, and innovation through the development and use of the E-ABK system. However, gaps between required qualifications and existing staff competencies still hinder the effectiveness of job and workload analysis. To address this, management can enhance capacity through proportional task distribution, assigning coordinators, recruiting additional staff based on budget availability, collaborating with university internships, and providing technical training or seminars. Organizational structuring refers to the Regional Medium-Term Development Plan, and technical implementation follows regulations from the Ministry of Internal Affairs, the Ministry of PANRB, and the State Civil Service Agency. The study contributes to the public administration literature by explaining how regulatory fragmentation creates managerial discretion and how public managers translate this discretion into adaptive practices that sustain governance capacity in local government administration.



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Ethics Statement

The study was based on interviews with public officials about their professional roles and administrative practices. No sensitive personal information was collected as part of the research, and it was of minimal risk to participants. Under the institutional regulations for social and administrative research, formal ethical approval was not required. The research was conducted according to the ethical principles of voluntary participation, confidentiality and respect to the participants.

Author Contributions

Gading Gamaputra: Conceptualization, Methodology, Investigation, Formal analysis, Writing - Original Draft. Sjamsiar Sjamsuddin: Methodology, Validation, Writing - Review & Editing, Supervision. Sujarwoto: Methodology, Validation, Writing - Review & Editing. Moh. Said: Formal analysis, Validation, Writing - Review & Editing. Sarmini: Writing - Review & Editing, Supervision. Nur Azizah Afianti: Investigation, Writing - Review & Editing. Hari Kusmanto: Formal analysis, Validation, Writing - Review & Editing, Supervision.

Data Availability Statement

The qualitative data supporting this study are available from the corresponding author on reasonable request. They are not publicly available because the interview material may contain information that could compromise participant confidentiality.

Does this article screen for similarity?

Yes

Conflict of Interest

The authors declare no conflicts of interest or financial interests related to this work. The authors also confirm that the manuscript is original and is not under consideration by another publication.

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