

Motivation and Innovation Dynamics in Brazilian Subnational Governments: A Comparative Study Between Structures with Different Degrees of Bureaucratization in the City of Caruaru and the State Government of São Paulo, Brasil

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Theorizing Institutionalization of Bureaucracy: Key Constructs and Interpretations

The comparative scrutiny of administrative practices in São Paulo and Caruaru hinges on fundamental concepts. The first one is the bureaucratization process, regarded as an organization's shift toward administration grounded in standardized rules and procedures. This advancement, underscored by a well-defined hierarchy and distinct allocation of responsibilities, seeks to augment operational efficiency by limiting discretionary powers and addressing issues uniformly. Nevertheless, the drawback of a deeply bureaucratized system often includes rigidity, an excessive focus on proceduralism, and a lack of personal touch in service delivery.

Contrastingly, we investigate the paradigm of patrimonial administration. This mode of governance muddles the boundary between the public and private sectors. The state transforms into an extension of the ruling power's private interests, a trait commonly linked with pre-modern states or regimes with weak rule of law. In such a system, practices such as nepotism and corruption may become prevalent due to an unclear divide between state interests and the governing body.

The exploration progresses towards the bureaucratic administration concept, a reaction to the perceived shortcomings of the patrimonial model. This framework advocates a distinct division between public and private spheres, supported by a structured hierarchy and comprehensive rules and regulations. Meritocracy dictates recruitment and promotion in this setup, intending to endorse impartiality and consistency in public service delivery.

Subsequently, we traverse the principles of managerial administration, an innovative approach drawing inspiration from private-sector dynamics. It underscores efficiency, adaptability, and a results-oriented focus, intended to counterbalance the inflexibility often associated with strictly bureaucratic systems. However, this model is not devoid of challenges, particularly in ensuring public accountability and preserving public values in the relentless pursuit of efficiency. Finally, the discussion merges with the concept of administrative evolution. Traditional interpretations see this evolution as a transition from patrimonial to bureaucratic and finally to managerial administration and see administrative change as more or less sequential.

However, this study challenges this linear conceptualization of administrative evolution. It advocates for the possibility of these diverse administrative models cohabiting within a single public context. Instead of a monolithic progression toward managerial administration, it recognizes the potential for various administrative models to amalgamate and interplay over time. As innovative ideas in public administration emerge and find applicability, they coexist and interact with the existing administrative structures.

This stance forms the theoretical basis of our comparative study, providing a critical framework for evaluating the different administrative practices of São Paulo and Caruaru. By incorporating these administrative models' historical, cultural, and institutional dimensions, the objective is to provide new interpretations of their operation within the different local contexts and reflect on their implications for public service motivation.

Exploring the Evolution of Bureaucratization in Governments

Substantial research indicates that professionalization of the civil service yields a range of benefits, such as decreasing corruption levels (Dahlström and Lapuente, 2017; Dahlström, Lapuente and Teorell, 2012), spurring competition and economic growth (Evans and Rauch, 1999; Nistotskaya and Cingolani, 2016), and enhancing the quality of democracy (Kopecký, Meyer-Sahling and Spirova, 2012). Despite these benefits, many developing nations grapple with successfully implementing civil service reforms. Scholars like Acemoglu, Ticchi and Vindigni (2011) assert that the survival of inefficient states can be attributed to the wealthy's strategy to manipulate democratic politics to their advantage, thus curbing income redistribution. However, limited studies aim to comprehend the political circumstances that create incentives for the execution of reforms professionalizing the civil service, rather than investigating the reasons for inefficient states' persistence.

Christian Schuster (2016), a leading researcher in this area, maintains that there isn't a catch-all solution for skewing incentives toward the professionalization of the civil service. This is because the term 'civil service reform' actually encompasses numerous institutional reform components that often necessitate diverse political incentives. In essence, deconstructing the facets of civil service reform reveals that each element uniquely mobilizes various stakeholders, orchestrating distinctive support and veto dynamics around them. Consequently, comprehensive reform strategies integrating various civil service professionalization dimensions are infrequently implemented simultaneously. Schuster substantiates his argument through a range of evidence, including the weak correlation between three primary elements of civil service reform: merit-based recruitment, job stability (tenure), and predictable promotion systems determined by performance and seniority criteria.

Jan P. Vogler (2019) also investigates the differences in bureaucracy organization and performance across nations by focusing on the power dynamics between various stakeholders. Vogler examines the political disputes between three socio-economic groups—the land elites, middle classes, and urban working classes—whose interests in the state apparatus organization were fundamentally divergent during the emergence of modern bureaucracies. According to Vogler, these groups' interaction and relative influence shape the bureaucracies' functioning, particularly in countries with a history of domestic political autonomy. The research carried out by Schuster and Vogler is instrumental in comprehending the transformation of public service from a comparative standpoint. These scholars provide invaluable insights into civil service evolution's multi-dimensional and intricate processes, painting a picture far more complex than conventional linear progression models. Their findings challenge the preconceived notion of a single 'right' way to reform civil services or a universally applicable model for bureaucratization.

Analyzing bureaucracies' development in various countries reveals a convoluted series of progressions, negotiations, and adjustments. Each country's unique socioeconomic and political contexts shape their bureaucracies' nature and trajectory. Contrary to the view of a unidirectional march towards a universally accepted ideal, the evolution of public administration is depicted as a complex tapestry woven from local realities, power dynamics, and historical contexts. This understanding debunks the notion of a singular path to successful reform implementation. The bureaucratic systems that emerge in each locale are not mere transpositions or imitations of successful practices elsewhere; they are shaped by local realities specific to each place and time.

Examining bureaucracies in states with some of the most established administrative systems would be beneficial to discuss this concept further. The historical evolutions and transformations in these places can serve as informative case studies, shedding light on bureaucracy formation and reform's complex and diverse nature. Consequently, this paper will delve into the evolution of merit systems in two nations: the United Kingdom and the United States.

Establishing Meritocracy in the West: The Formation of the British Civil Service

The concept of meritocracy in Western bureaucracy can be traced back to the competitive examinations in 5th century Imperial China, which were used to select the elite, literate officials, also known as Mandarins. These officials advised the monarchy and managed the Chinese State. European traders and authorities noted this system during the Age of Discovery in the 15th century, subsequently influencing European administrative thinking. In the 19th century, this model was formally adapted to the United Kingdom's institutional setting, following the Northcote-Trevelyan report's recommendations. This report, prepared in 1854 by senior British treasury officials, was commissioned by parliament to propose ways to improve the British Empire's management.

The report outlined key recommendations, which included:

- Transforming civil servant selection methods to open and competitive selections led by independent boards - the Civil Service Commission.
- Creating a cadre of permanent and politically neutral senior civil servants.
- Recruiting servants for an extensive civil service organized into cross-cutting careers rather than specific departments.
- Structuring civil servants into a hierarchy that matched the functions' complexity, ranging from routine tasks to providing political advice to ministers.
- Adopting career advancement systems based on performance and seniority rather than patronage arrangements.

These recommendations were put into effect in 1855 when then Prime Minister William E. Gladstone approved the Civil Service Commission's creation. The Commission comprised ten commissioners selected through political agreements between the government and the opposition to ensure its independence. This governance model promoted collective decision-making and consensus-building. Initially, the Commission performed various roles, including advisory, executive, regulatory, investigative, and adjudicative functions. The British civil service governance model has become a cornerstone of the UK's uncodified constitution and political system. It has been exported to various regions of the world under the influence of the British colonial enterprise. Known as the "Westminster Model," the UK political and administrative system is characterized by a supreme parliament and an independent, non-partisan civil service.

However, the 19th-century British parliament represented a political agreement between two social groups: the land elites and the bourgeois middle class. Consequently, civil service reform in the country during its initial years reflects the minimum consensus reached within this political arrangement. According to Vogler (2020), the British aristocracy opposed meritocratic criteria for public positions as they had significant influence over the existing system. Influenced by the Northcote-Trevelyan Report, the middle classes formed the Association for Administrative Reform to lobby for open and competitive public sector competitions.

The Civil Service Commission's introduction in 1855 highlighted the initial ambiguity of British reform. The upper classes maintained a socially selective civil service through recruitment practices favoring Oxford and Cambridge graduates. Furthermore, the landed elites continued to influence more stringent civil service laws and the civil service's design through their ability to elect representatives to the Civil Service Commission. Consequently, several deviations from meritocracy persisted, such as creating agencies and departments not tied to the civil service and allowing politicians to influence the pool of candidates for selection processes.

The Evolving Merit Systems in the United States Civil Service: A Historical Analysis

The formation of the United States of America in 1776 led to the emergence of a new administrative model distinctively different from its European counterparts. The nation's constitution emphasized strict control mechanisms over executive power vertically and horizontally.

As part of its unique design, the president was given considerable authority in appointing middle and lower public servants, augmenting his otherwise restricted powers.

However, by the late 19th century, the U.S. system required significant reform. Adopting the Pendleton Civil Service Reform Act in 1883 marked a turning point. This legislation established a Civil Service Commission, with its meritocratic ethos inspired by the British model. At this time, patronage and party-political dominance deeply affected the political landscape, which led to entrenched clientelism in government. This scenario catalyzed civil service reform, particularly after President James Garfield's assassination in 1881.

While the Pendleton Act enjoyed broad support from the Republican Party, it faced opposition from the Democratic Party, an alliance of northeastern urban workers and southern agrarian elites. This political dichotomy is well analyzed by Vogler (2020), who highlights the urban workers' wariness towards a bureaucracy dominated by impersonal and autonomous expertise.

The professionalization of the public sector was championed by Good Government Organizations, and civil society groups lobbying for reform. This pro-reform movement, represented by associations like the New York Civil Service Reform Association, was pivotal in garnering Congressional support for the Pendleton Act. The passage of the Act marked the beginning of a merit system's expansive journey, lasting over 80 years.

The legislation allowed for open, competitive recruitment for a few public servants, but subsequent presidencies, regardless of party, promoted the expansion of positions regulated by the law. It wasn't until the Lloyd-La Follette Act in 1912 and the Hatch Act in 1939 that protection against politically motivated dismissals was established, and the use of political parties was curtailed respectively.

The transformation of the U.S. Civil Service was unique, balancing meritocratic professionalization and political control over senior appointments deftly. This was quite distinct from the British model, often perceived as elitist and overly focused on education. Instead, the U.S. model welcomed practical experience and implemented an open system for managing public positions.

However, it is crucial to understand that the Pendleton Act's reach and subsequent reforms' reach were initially limited to the federal level. The diffusion of these reforms to states and municipalities occurred gradually over the following decades. The drivers behind this progression were multifaceted, including demographic shifts, socio-economic changes, and evolving political structures. The spread of these reforms was catalyzed by the Intergovernmental Personnel Act (IPA) of 1970, which dedicated over \$500 million to fortify personnel management systems within state and local governments.

The dispersion of civil service reforms across states and municipalities marks a significant facet of this historical evolution. The Pendleton Act and other merit system-strengthening laws were primarily applicable only at the federal level. Thus, for a substantial period, adopting civil service reforms was the prerogative of individual cities and municipalities without explicit encouragement or backing from the U.S. federal administration.

Only the states of New York and Massachusetts embarked on reform journeys concurrent with the passage of the Pendleton Act. It was not until two decades later that comparable reforms began to be legislated in a select few other states. Notable among these were Colorado (1907), New Jersey (1908), California (1913), Ohio (1913), and Maryland (1921). Thus, while reform at the federal level was relatively swift, the propagation of such transformation across the wider nation was a more measured and prolonged process.

This history underscores the complexity and multifaceted nature of administrative reform. It necessitates an understanding that the transformation of public administration is not uniform, involving an array of stakeholders, extensive negotiations, and time. This perspective is critical when examining the bureaucratization process in countries like Brazil and others, urging caution in drawing direct comparisons with the experiences of other nations.

Transposing Insights into the Brazilian Scenario: A Reconceptualization

Upon deconstructing the evolution of bureaucracies in mature administrative systems, we can transpose these insights to the Brazilian context. By scrutinizing public administration development in two distinct Brazilian subnational governments, we can deepen our understanding of the multifaceted dynamics of bureaucratic evolution as they manifest in disparate contexts, inevitably shaped by local realities. This approach enables the acknowledgment of the context-specific nature of public administration and underscores the imperative of tailoring reform strategies to local conditions.

Contrary to a straightforward linear progression, Brazil's public administration trajectory is marked by oscillations between varied governance models. This deviation from conventional academic perspectives offers a layered understanding of Brazil's administrative evolution, illuminating its complexities.

Brazil's administrative history commenced predominantly with a patrimonial model, with the federal Army and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (also known as Itamaraty) being notable outliers. This patrimonial phase, characterized by a blurred boundary between public and private interests and governed by personal ties, sets the scene for understanding ensuing reforms and transitions.

The government of Getúlio Vargas (1930) initiated the shift towards a bureaucratic model, marking a milestone in Brazil's administrative development. The Administrative Department of Public Service (DASP) and its operational arms in state governments (also known as 'daspinhos') became key tools in this transition, driving uniformity and procedural regularity in Brazil's public administration.

Yet, the bureaucratization process was a complex and uneven journey rather than a smooth transition. It progressed intermittently, moving forward in some sectors and regions while stagnating or even backsliding in others, thus painting a picture of differential development marked by varying bureaucratization degrees across different public administration sectors and regions.

The re-democratization in 1988 catalyzed a further transformation in Brazil's political landscape. The new Federal Constitution stipulated minimum operational principles for public administration across all governance levels, emphasizing public competition for staff recruitment and depersonalizing public administration through open and competitive public procurement processes.

The 1990s marked the inception of managerial administration, drawing on private sector principles to instill efficiency, flexibility, and a results-oriented approach into public administration across federal, state, and municipal levels. Noteworthy reforms of this era include the Bresser Reform, a constitutional amendment, and the Master Plan for State Apparatus Reform.

Yet, depicting Brazil's administrative evolution as a seamless transition from patrimonial through bureaucratic to managerial administration would be an oversimplification. The reality is significantly more intricate, with these administrative trends influencing subnational public administrations in diverse ways across Brazil's vast landscape and varying significantly depending on the specific public policy.

A comprehensive understanding of Brazil's public administration necessitates acknowledging the diversity and complexities characterizing its landscape. Recognizing these nuances is fundamental for comprehending the evolution of public administration in Brazil and provides vital context for our comparative study of São Paulo and Caruaru.

The Late Arrival of Democracy: Impact on Brazilian Public Administration

The development of public administration in Brazil was marked by a constant tension between an elite perceived as technocratic, such as the military and other bureaucratic actors, and the traditional, patrimonialist civil government, represented by the principal landowners. Through figures like Getúlio Vargas and during the military dictatorship, these technocratic groups envisioned themselves as modernizing forces challenging the established patrimonial system.

Unlike the United Kingdom and the United States, where the earlier emergence of democracy allowed public administration to evolve as an instrument controlled by politicians elected by the people, Brazil's path diverged significantly. The creation of a broad middle class in the UK and US further reinforced the concept of a functional, bureaucratic public administration in these countries. In these instances, public administration served as a pillar of democratic governance, reflecting societal needs and demands.

However, in Brazil, the late emergence of democracy, coupled with various forms of authoritarianism, meant that bureaucratization and democratization were almost alien phenomena to each other. These two pillars of modern governance were largely incompatible within the Brazilian context until the late 20th century.

It was not until 1988, with the return of democracy, that these elements started to converge. After the military dictatorship and its arbitrary rule, it became clear that establishing a bureaucracy based on criteria and procedures was necessary. This was done to prevent public administration from being manipulated as a tool to project power.

However, this bureaucratic development came at a time when Brazil had little collective understanding of what a democratic society should look like. Consequently, the notion that citizens could change their government if it were not effective had not yet had the chance to take root in the country.

The pressure for better services, particularly in the 1990s, brought to the fore the idea that managerialism could be a potential solution. It suggested that elected politicians could make the bureaucracy more responsive to the policy objectives set by elected officials. In other words, managerialism emerged as a potential bridge between the demands of democracy and the rigidity of a bureaucratic system.

Thus, in Brazil, there has been a historical clash between the political accountability of the bureaucracy for the non-delivery of election promises and the concept of bureaucratic autonomy. The tension between these two factors further complicates the Brazilian administrative landscape.

To conclude, while the UK and the US, with their earlier democratization and the rise of a mass middle class, were able to build bureaucratic systems that balanced political control and professional functionality, Brazil struggled.

The country's late transition to democracy and history of authoritarian rule resulted in a bureaucratic system initially disconnected from the democratic process. However, the late 20th century saw a shift as Brazil attempted to reconcile democratic governance and a functional bureaucracy, with managerialism playing a key role in this process.

Evolving Landscape of Human Resources Management: A Disciplinary and Professional Perspective

The civil service management in Brazil in the early years following the 1988 Constitution was profoundly influenced by traditional bureaucratic principles like hierarchy and seniority, equated to years of service. However, the subsequent decade saw an influx of innovative ideas about governmental administration, courtesy of the New Public Management (NPM) movement. This fresh perspective substantially altered the practices and principles of human resources management in the public sector, echoing advancements from various fields of knowledge that have revolutionized private organizational approaches worldwide.

Human Resource Management (HRM) was initially dictated by legalistic and standardized methodologies, heavily leaning on management theories (Weber and Taylor). However, this field of knowledge has undergone significant evolution due to ethical changes like the redefinition of concepts like diversity, behavioral transformations, and advancements in neuroscience (Thompson, 2011). Consequently, HRM practices that neglect the psychological dimensions of organizational operations are deemed outdated.

This transformative landscape of HRM practice has created a growing tension between the input of psychology and behavioral sciences to HRM improvement and the theory and practice of personnel management in the civil service. This conflict arises when the influence of behavioral psychology, which prioritizes individualized people management practices, clashes with the public sector's legacy of a standardized HRM model aimed at curbing nepotism and political favoritism. Historically, treating everyone uniformly was deemed the pinnacle of organizational justice in public sector people management. However, this paradigm is no longer dominant in HRM, a discipline now heavily influenced by mounting evidence supporting the benefits of individualizing people management practices for organizational performance.

Governments worldwide have begun implementing more flexible people management mechanisms in this evolving context. These include individualized working hours, performance-based remuneration rules, customized recruitment methods centered around competence assessment, individualized development activities like coaching and mentoring programs, and the decentralization of HRM competencies with line manager empowerment, among other emerging trends.

While these innovative HRM practices offer opportunities to modernize governmental operations based on new evidence, they also pose challenges to preserving traditional public service values. The individualization and flexibilization of conditions of employment, remuneration, and development may incentivize high performance. Still, they could also foster contexts where staff performing identical functions are treated differently for arbitrary reasons, undermining meritocracy. The customization and individualization of HRM practices bring about ambivalent impacts on the functioning of the civil service. Therefore, civil service reforms have been implemented amid uncertainty about the anticipated impact of these changes. Despite extensive discussions about the impact of these trends on state reform and modernization, the evidence of their effectiveness in enhancing civil service outcomes is scant and often contradictory (Repucci, 2012). Moreover, the results of civil service reforms conducted in recent years are largely context-specific (Avis, 2015) and tend to generate both intended and unintended positive and negative consequences simultaneously. In essence, the same intervention can yield contradictory outcomes such as improved organizational performance, increased stress, job dissatisfaction, the development of essential competencies for institutional strengthening, and the rise of ethical challenges.

The Emergence of Public Service Motivation in the Wider Context of Human Resources Management

This broadening focus on individual characteristics and their influence on organizational outcomes in public administration culminated in the emergence of Public Service Motivation (PSM) studies. PSM, a concept coined by James L. Perry in 1996, refers to an individual's motivation to serve the public interest and to associate personal beliefs and values with public service.

Perry and Wise (1990) identified four main dimensions of PSM: attraction to public service, civic duty, self-sacrifice, and social justice. PSM studies aimed to unravel the intrinsic motivations of individual civil servants and how they related to their performance and organizational commitment. This line of research provided a nuanced understanding of the unique motivational elements within the public sector.

As the pendulum swung from a one-size-fits-all bureaucratic administration to a more individual-centric managerial approach, questions arose about how this shift would affect public service delivery. Understanding the concept of Public Service Motivation provided a pivotal insight into the complexities of this transformation.

Recognizing that civil servants' motivation was not solely dependent on material rewards, the PSM concept proposed that a significant portion of public servants were intrinsically driven by the desire to contribute to society and public welfare. This perspective provided a compelling counter-narrative to the prevailing New Public Management (NPM) ethos, which often reduced public service motivation to the transactional dynamics of material incentives and penalties.

Thus, the field of public administration began to explore deeper, individual-level determinants of performance. Based on the broader context of human resource management evolution, PSM studies marked an important milestone in acknowledging and incorporating individual motivations and capacities into public sector performance and efficiency models.

Incorporating these insights represented a significant step in understanding public service delivery's complexities. However, the emphasis on individual motivations and capacities also introduced a host of new considerations and challenges.

For example, how can the public sector balance recognizing individual motivations and capabilities and ensuring all citizens are treated equally? Moreover, what mechanisms are needed to translate individual motivations into organizational performance and public value? How does the network of procedural constraints on human resource decision-making introduced by bureaucratization processes (in other words, the traditional merit protection mechanisms introduced by civil service reforms) affect employee motivation? To the extent that, in bureaucratic systems, equal treatment of employees is synonymous with organizational justice, and managerialism requires differential treatment based on financial returns or other market incentives, how might these administrative contexts or traditions affect public service motivation?

Reconsidering the Interplay between Varying Levels of Bureaucratization and Public Service Motivation

The nexus of bureaucratization and public service motivation (PSM) is intricate and multidimensional. It straddles the thin line between creating an environment that encourages transparency, accountability, and efficiency and potentially engendering an atmosphere that could dampen motivation among public servants. To fully appreciate this complex interplay, we must delve into the theoretical underpinnings of bureaucratization and public service motivation.

Bureaucratization as a concept represents the proliferation of standardized procedures and rules in an organization. At the same time, public service motivation refers to an individual's propensity to work in the public sector driven by the desire to serve the public interest. Each concept resides on two ends of a spectrum, and their interaction can lead to varied outcomes in different circumstances.

At one end of the spectrum, a high degree of bureaucratization, characterized by rigid rules and procedures, can inadvertently inhibit public service motivation.

In such an environment, public servants may feel restrained by the rigidity of the bureaucratic system, which could stifle creativity and autonomy, eventually leading to lower motivation levels.

Conversely, at the other end of the spectrum, a low degree of bureaucratization can inspire motivation by fostering a sense of autonomy and empowering public servants. The discretionary power that comes with less bureaucracy allows public servants to take the initiative and exercise creative problem-solving, which could lead to higher motivation levels.

However, a lack of bureaucratic structure could also lead to unfair practices, fostering an environment where decisions are made based on personal relationships or political connections rather than merit. This could demotivate public servants who value fairness and transparency, thus lowering public service motivation. On the other hand, a moderate level of bureaucratization could balance the need for structure and the desire for autonomy, thereby enhancing public service motivation. By providing a certain degree of structure and uniformity, public servants are guided by standardized procedures, thereby promoting fairness and transparency.

Simultaneously, by allowing for some degree of autonomy and discretion, public servants are empowered to take the initiative and make decisions, fostering motivation. Navigating the delicate balance between bureaucratization and public service motivation requires a deep understanding of the potential consequences of varying degrees of bureaucratization on motivation. In this context, several studies provide valuable insights.

The study by Moynihan & Pandey (2007) examined the role of organizational institutions in fostering public service motivation. They found that red tape and length of organizational membership were negatively related to public service motivation, while hierarchical authority and reform efforts had a positive relationship. This suggests that bureaucratic institutionalization, characterized by red tape and long organizational membership, may reduce motivation in public service.

Similarly, Gibbs (2020) explored the relationship between civil service protections, bureaucratic institutionalization, and bureaucratic performance. The study found a non-monotonic and discontinuous relationship, indicating that civil service protections can positively and negatively affect performance. This suggests that the degree of bureaucratic institutionalization may have mixed effects on motivation in public service.

In contrast, Toral (2023) argued that under some circumstances, political appointments, one of the essential features of patrimonialism, can provide connections between bureaucrats and politicians, ensuring access to resources and aligning priorities and incentives. Political appointments can, thus, increase accountability and effectiveness, improving public service delivery.

Battaglio, Jr (2010) delved into the impact of the employment-at-will environment on public employee motivation. The findings suggest that such policies significantly negatively impact motivation in the workplace, particularly for minorities. This illustrates the importance of considering the potential drawbacks of less rigid bureaucratic structures.

In a later study, Battaglio, Jr. & French (2016) examined the influence of employment-at-will as an organizational factor on public service motivation. The study found that municipal employees in employment-at-will environments had higher levels of self-sacrifice than their civil service counterparts, underscoring the potential motivational benefits of less rigid bureaucratic structures.

The complex interplay between bureaucratization and public service motivation underlines the need for a balanced approach. Too much or too little bureaucratization can hinder public service motivation, underscoring the need for policies that balance the need for structure and the desire for autonomy and fairness. In-depth research into this interplay can provide valuable insights to guide policy-making and organizational practices in the public sector.

Reimagining the Bureaucratization Model: The Dynamic Interplay of Merit, Loyalty, and Competence

Public administration's historical progression is frequently simplified as a shift from patrimonial to bureaucratic, then ultimately to managerial administration. However, this linear model may not fully encapsulate the intricate dynamics. This paper aims to challenge this simplification by shedding light on the multifaceted dimensions of bureaucratization that can markedly differ across various regions and contexts.

While countries like Brazil have constitutional frameworks that govern their federations, the practical application of administrative principles can vary widely from state to state and municipality to municipality. These differences are not accidental but result from each region's different historical, socio-political, and developmental contexts. Consequently, the relationship between levels of bureaucratization and public service motivation cannot be reduced to a one-size-fits-all model but should be assessed in light of these unique circumstances.

Regions with less bureaucratic structure may have more latitude in managing and motivating public servants. The absence of rigid bureaucratic processes can allow politicians to adopt a more individualized approach toward public servants, considering their political loyalty and technical skill (Moe, 1985). In this scenario, political loyalty ensures administrative responsiveness, while technical competence guarantees organizational effectiveness.

The delicate balancing act between political loyalty and technical capability is critically important, albeit often tricky. These traits rarely overlap, often leading to conflicts in decision-making. According to Krause, Lewis, and Douglas (2006), high-performing institutions strike this balance effectively by utilizing a mix of discretionary recruitment systems and merit-based strategies, thus boosting their institutional capacity. Their theory is backed by empirical data suggesting that tax authorities in U.S. state governments, which do not strictly adhere to either patronage or meritocratic systems, exhibit superior job management abilities.

Their study offers a valuable theoretical framework suggesting that balancing politicized and autonomous personnel systems at various organizational levels is crucial in enhancing bureaucratic competence. Upon reviewing data from 1987 to 2002 on general revenue fund forecasts in American states, they found that states with a mix of politically appointed executives and merit-selected subordinates generally provide more accurate revenue forecasts than those with fully politicized personnel selection systems. Conversely, states that combine executives appointed by department heads with subordinates chosen through an at-will system (non-merit-based) produce more accurate forecasts than states with fully autonomous personnel selection systems. These findings underscore the benefits of a balanced approach to personnel selection within political organizations.

However, there may be less room for flexibility in regions where bureaucratic systems are more entrenched. A rigid bureaucratic structure could curtail politicians' ability to manage and motivate public servants through varied approaches. While some argue that less bureaucracy is inherently beneficial, this paper underscores the importance of a nuanced understanding of each region's unique conditions. Balancing political loyalty with technical competence should be examined in light of other contextual factors that influence the effectiveness of public administration practices.

Rather than simplistically equating less bureaucracy with successful reforms, this paper calls for a holistic understanding of the complex dynamics involved. While implementing reforms to motivate public servants may be more achievable in less bureaucratically consolidated regions, the feasibility of such propositions should be evaluated within each region's unique socio political and economic contexts.

This understanding offers a richer interpretation of public administration and its evolution and provides a pathway to navigate the complexities of bureaucratization. By moving beyond linear narratives of progress and delving into bureaucratization's multidimensional mechanisms, we can contribute to more effective and tailored public administration practices.

Caruaru Municipality - A less bureaucratic structure

Caruaru is a municipality located in Brazil's poorest region - the Northeast. The municipality covers an area of 920 square kilometers and is home to a population of around 365,000 people. The economy of Caruaru is diverse, with agriculture, industry, and commerce playing significant roles. The main economic activities include agriculture (crops such as corn, beans, and manioc), cattle farming, textile manufacturing, leather goods production, and ceramics. The city is renowned for its weekly open-air market, known as the "Feira de Caruaru," which attracts visitors across Brazil and beyond, showcasing the region's handicrafts, textiles, and local cuisine. However, this relevance is not translated into development or robust public management. When observing the city indicators, it ranks poorly compared to similar cities in size and GDP. According to the Brazilian Institute of Geography and Statistics (IBGE), the illiteracy rate for individuals aged 15 years or older in Caruaru was 10.1% in 2010, slightly higher than the national average of 9.6%. Health indicators, such as infant mortality rates, are also above national indicators.

This scenario depicts the challenges of running a city like Caruaru. The Brazilian Constitution determines that cities are responsible for: Urban Planning and Land Use, Primary Health and Social Assistance, Child and Elementary Education, Public Transportation, and Local Infrastructure, among others. Maintaining a municipality running is challenging, with limited funds for cities, especially in poorer areas. Decisions regarding human resources, allocation, and other practices to improve their quality are usually inexistent. Such activities are made based on the available budget and by those who were always doing that job - meaning they are specialists in their activities and not in managing people.

To aggravate this, job opportunities in the government in poorer cities are usually a way for politicians to pay the support from individuals helping them get elected. Instead of looking for the most apt, they seek loyalty. Not to mention, when those public servants are hired only to get the salary, not even their presence or work is required. The Brazilian Constitution tried to limit this, increasing the number of tenure positions in the government - so politicians cannot fire non-aligned public servants - and creating the necessity for having a selection process for those positions - this created another set of problems, which will be discussed in São Paulo case - and limiting the number of positions that the elected officials can freely appoint. Even though the number of freely appointed positions remains high, governments found other ways to hire their allies. The use of temporary contracts is a way to overcome these limitations. The temporary contracts were a solution created in the 90s to expedite hiring public servants in crisis or natural disasters - those people should be hired in a timed contract. Some governments expanded this understanding and hired people to execute important public policies or ensure their political allies have a funding source. This is especially important where tenured positions are expensive or cannot be managed.

Caruaru has a long tradition of using contracts to hire public servants. In 2016, they accounted for more than 60% of all the personnel in the city hall. Initially created to answer emergencies quickly, they became the backbone of the city's management.

With the election of a new mayor in 2017, Raquel Lyra, the Public Ministry ruled that all temporary contracts must be terminated and tenure positions should be created to replace all the employees. That was impossible for the City Hall finance, so the Caruaru Municipality agreed to include a selection process for every new temporary contract signed. Initially, the city could not run those selection processes. Still, with the help of a Brazilian NGO, Vetor Brasil, the city could bring expertise to hire someone to create a department and run all the selection processes.

This was a significant change in the city. People had to have connections or have worked in the election to have a shot at being hired by the city hall. Now, people can access all the job postings on a website, apply to them online, and be evaluated fairly. The city hall used previous experiences, academic titles, knowledge tests, and, when applicable and authorized, interviews to hire people. This was a significant transformation in how the city could hire people and better allocate them where necessary.

This is an important example of how the city hall took advantage of a less bureaucratic structure to implement changes that were critical to improving the city's management. Even without having a bureaucratic system or having complex and detailed rules to determine how selection processes should be run, the city could focus on the results for the citizens and allow public servants to innovate. The participation of public servants from the department which would welcome the selected professionals was also a relevant part of the process. Understanding how those professionals were essential to each department's challenges and objectives, the HR employees from other departments participated actively, being motivated and ensuring their needs were reflected in the selection process.

This flexibility extended to human resources management in the city as a whole. The selection processes showed how the city could better manage its employees and ensure the teams were better formed and managed. The city lacked rules on selection processes, transfers, absence and medical leaves, and remuneration policies. However, this was the chance to create those procedures and guarantee they were built based on the administration's needs, maintaining its flexibility. The city implemented a modern, agile and results-oriented human resources management policy without building a bureaucratic state - in the terms discussed in this article.

The approach is hailed as modern and agile because it fostered a type of HR management that is relatively uncommon in Brazilian government. Not only is the selection of professionals based on merit and capability in temporary contracts a rarity, but the City of Caruaru also devoted considerable effort to onboarding new employees. Activities such as visiting public buildings, meeting with leaders - occasionally even the Mayor - and receiving specific training were standard practices for those selected through these public selection processes. Additionally, the city implemented an evaluation process that allowed public servants to receive feedback from their superiors and enhance their performance. In case of special assistance needs, employees had access to courses from the team responsible for public servant training. Despite budget constraints, the flexibility of these contracts, coupled with the team's motivation to improve Caruaru's circumstances, made innovation and implementing new programs a reality for the city.

São Paulo State Government - A bureaucratic model in Brazil

São Paulo, the most populated and affluent state in Brazil, encompasses an area of 248,200 square kilometers and hosts approximately 44 million residents. Although the responsibilities of states differ from those of cities in Brazil, they operate under similar government management guidelines. São Paulo's economy, the country's hub, is highly diversified with significant contributions from agriculture, industry, and commerce. With a GDP of R\$ 1.7 trillion, São Paulo boasts the highest GDP in Brazil and serves as headquarters to numerous important companies. It also maintains a significant industrial park comprising airplanes, cars, and agricultural enterprises.

São Paulo is home to the nation's most vital airport, port, and most densely populated cities, marking it as Brazil's economic epicenter. This position reflects superior indicators compared to those found in Caruaru. For instance, as of 2010, the illiteracy rate among individuals aged 15 years or older was 4.3% in São Paulo, substantially lower than the national average of 9.6%. Likewise, health parameters, like infant mortality rates, also fall below national averages.

Despite its robust stature, the state's achievements can be deceiving. Given its economic significance, one might expect São Paulo to deliver superior results. Although the state possesses a per capita budget larger than most, it falls short in leading the nation's social indicators. Its economic weight does not directly translate to superior public services. The state operates a colossal infrastructure to deliver high school education, state universities, police, and complex-level hospitals to its 44 million residents across 645 cities. More than 700,000 public servants, organized into numerous specific careers, form an intricate and rigid human resources management framework.

To handle such a sprawling and complex structure, rigid and intricate rules are somewhat understandable. Nonetheless, São Paulo amplifies this complexity. The state has organized its immense number of public servants into career paths based on their responsibilities, educational levels, and departmental affiliations. An assistant working in the Department of Education performing the same job as an assistant in the Department of Health might belong to different career paths, illustrating the level of complexity.

The Department of Agriculture epitomizes how bureaucracy can hinder change or stall innovation. During Gustavo Junqueira's tenure as Secretary of Agriculture from 2019 to 2021, the department experienced substantial modernization efforts. One of the principal objectives was to develop a more professional and strategic human resources department. In pursuit of this goal, a new director was appointed to diagnose existing issues and propose necessary amendments. It's essential to note that every element of the human resources department is governed by specific legislation. Each public servant is well-versed in the rules regarding vacations, paid leaves, promotions, and compensation. There are also explicit laws guiding the relationship between the Department of Agriculture's Human Resources and the Central Human Resources Department, as well as within various HR sectors of the Department of Agriculture. This regulation establishes a clear hierarchy and decision-making process.

However, this rigid structure does not necessarily result in superior services for public servants or a results-driven management approach. Fundamental information, such as public servants' email addresses, data on the impacts of the Coronavirus, and precise workplace locations, were often inaccessible. Furthermore, acquiring data regarding the total number of employees and their corresponding salaries could require up to two days to produce a finalized report. This highlights the inefficiencies and complications in the current system.

However, any proposed change encountered strong resistance. The prevailing sentiment was that as long as salaries were distributed and legislation complied with, no further action was required. Public servants had grown accustomed to not seeking HR assistance. No developmental initiatives were anticipated, and attempts to introduce such measures were met with surprise by the HR team, who were primed to explain how each project could potentially conflict with existing legislation or fall outside the department's purview. A notable example of this resistance was the development of an automated HR system to manage data from the 3500 employees in the Department of Agriculture. The Central HR Department had issued legislation preventing individual departments from developing their own HR systems, citing plans to create an integrated one for the entire government. However, this policy, which was 12 years old, had not yet culminated in the creation of the promised integrated system.

All these rules fostered an organized structure and a predictable response to every HR situation. However, a state as vast as São Paulo requires room for innovation and the development of new problem-solving strategies. When the pandemic struck, the state spent months trying to determine which employees could transition to remote work. Communication was severely lacking, leaving many professionals to fend for themselves. The government, absorbed in adhering to its regulations, failed to concentrate on delivering superior public services. Any movement towards a more managerial form of administration was swiftly negated by some rule or another. The idea of progressing from the patrimonial state, developing into a bureaucracy and then a managerial state is proven wrong.

Compared to Caruaru, it's crucial to note that increased bureaucracy and rules did not necessarily result in superior services for public servants. Even though all regulations were explicit and accessible, they didn't adequately drive HR management to enhance their performance. Processes such as transfers, leaves, and other benefits didn't take into account the personal needs of the employees but were rather a strict application of rules. Strategies aimed at improving public servants' motivation, such as development, training, and onboarding initiatives, were not implemented, as they fell outside the job descriptions of HR managers. Implementing innovation and new programs was challenging due to constraints from regulations and norms. The assurance of tenure and the lack of a risk of termination, regardless of performance, also served as deterrents to innovation.

The Spectrum of Bureaucratization: Evaluating Differences Between Caruaru and São Paulo's Department of Agriculture

To achieve a more comprehensive understanding of the nuanced relationship between bureaucratization and Public Service Motivation (PSM), let us now delve deeper into the specific contexts of Caruaru and the São Paulo Department of Agriculture. Each of these two cases presents distinct degrees of bureaucratization and offers a unique perspective on their respective implications on PSM.

In the context of Caruaru, the civil service operates with a limited degree of bureaucratization, characterized by broader job descriptions, informal processes, extensive use of temporary contracts, and flexible remuneration. This environment, while providing flexibility and diversity, can also lead to uncertainties that may impede PSM.

For instance, consider a scenario where a public servant with a broad job description is required to carry out a task outside of their expertise. Without explicit guidelines or procedures, the employee might feel overwhelmed and underequipped, potentially leading to decreased motivation. Conversely, the same broad job description can empower a public servant who thrives in an environment that allows for creativity and versatility.

Moreover, the extensive use of temporary contracts while fostering a dynamic work environment can potentially lead to instability. For example, a public servant on a temporary contract may be anxious about job security, and such anxiety could inhibit their motivation to commit to their public service roles fully. However, on the flip side, these contracts may be seen as opportunities for diversity, potentially offering a varied range of experiences and skills, which could increase motivation.

In the case of the São Paulo Department of Agriculture, the civil service is characterized by a high degree of bureaucratization. Here, we find specialized careers, tenure contracts, external contest organization, and thorough regulatory processes. On the surface, these characteristics appear to provide a stable and predictable work environment. For example, an employee with a specialized career in the Department of Agriculture might feel a strong sense of purpose and satisfaction from their role, thereby promoting PSM. Long-term contracts also enhance job security, another crucial factor contributing to PSM.

However, a deeper look reveals potential challenges. Highly specialized careers, while providing a sense of purpose, may also lead to a rigid environment that stifles creativity. For instance, an agronomist in the Department of Agriculture might feel limited by the rigid job description that confines them to specific tasks. Drawing from Gibbs (2020), the rigid structure found in São Paulo's Department of Agriculture, similar to the civil service protections discussed in the study, can potentially have both positive and negative impacts on performance. On one hand, it can ensure fairness, consistency, and predictability. On the other hand, it could stifle creativity and hinder innovation.

Battaglio, Jr's (2010) findings shed light on the potential impact of temporary contracts in Caruaru. The negative impact of employment-at-will policies discussed in his study reflects the potential drawbacks of Caruaru's less rigid bureaucratic structure, where temporary contracts could lead to decreased motivation. Conversely, the potential motivational benefits of less rigid bureaucratic structures discussed in the study by Battaglio, Jr. & French (2016) may also apply to Caruaru. For instance, broader job descriptions might foster higher levels of self-sacrifice, thereby enhancing PSM.

Navigating the intricate nexus of bureaucratization and Public Service Motivation (PSM) unveils a complex landscape laden with variegated facets, as exemplified by contrasting civil services in the Municipality of Caruaru and São Paulo's Department of Agriculture. These unique cases, operating at different degrees of bureaucratization, provide valuable insights into the mechanisms at play, shaping our understanding of the relationship between bureaucratization and PSM.

In the less bureaucratized setting of Caruaru, the organizational elasticity, manifesting through broader job descriptions, informal processes, and liberal use of temporary contracts, potentially fosters a dynamic environment conducive to motivation. Nevertheless, the same lack of bureaucratization might inadvertently sow the seeds of discontent, thereby impeding PSM. Temporary contracts, while encouraging diversity, might induce a sense of insecurity and impermanence, discouraging motivation. Similarly, the lack of a systematic approach to managing leaves and transfers may engender perceptions of injustice, eroding trust and, consequently, motivation. The absence of a robust system for abuse reporting further compromises the nurturing environment needed to bolster PSM.

The São Paulo Department of Agriculture, at the other end of the spectrum, epitomizes a highly bureaucratized civil service. Here, the rigorous structure manifested in specialized careers, long-term contracts, external contest organization, and systematic regulatory processes could stimulate PSM by offering predictability, job security, and fostering a sense of fairness.

Nonetheless, this rigid bureaucratic framework can also curtail PSM. Highly defined roles and stringent regulations can suffocate creative impulses and restrict autonomy, resulting in demotivation. Furthermore, the reliance on external contest organizations could potentially create a detachment from the organization's culture, undermining PSM. The inflexibility in adjusting financial incentives linked to performance could also harm motivation.

Traversing this continuum from Caruaru to São Paulo, we discern a delicate equilibrium where lesser bureaucracy can induce autonomy and creativity, possibly stoking motivation, whereas greater bureaucracy can offer structure, predictability, and security – elements crucial for cultivating PSM. However, an imbalance in either direction could potentially have deleterious effects, quashing PSM.

Examining the intricate dynamics between bureaucratization and PSM equips us with a broader perspective on the forces shaping motivation within public services.

This knowledge, in turn, can be instrumental for policy and decision-making, enabling a harmonious balance that fosters motivation without undermining the benefits of structure and predictability. Continued exploration and more expansive research in this domain remain paramount to unraveling the nuanced relationship between bureaucratization and PSM, ultimately guiding us towards more effective public service frameworks.

Conclusion

In conclusion, this comparative study brings forth significant insights into the delicate balance required to maintain administrative capacity within the state while upholding its democratic character. By examining administrative practices in Brazilian subnational governments, particularly in Caruaru and São Paulo, the study challenges the linear narrative of administrative evolution and highlights the diverse and complex nature of bureaucratization.

The analysis starts by defining and contrasting key administrative paradigms, shedding light on the benefits and drawbacks of each approach. The study rejects the notion of a one-size-fits-all progression towards managerial administration, emphasizing the need to consider historical, cultural, and institutional factors that influence administrative changes.

Drawing upon the historical trajectories of public administration in the United Kingdom and the United States, the study underscores the gradual and multifaceted nature of bureaucratic reforms. It highlights the prolonged diffusion of administrative models, shaped by local realities and political contexts, rather than a swift and uniform transition.

When examining the Brazilian context, the study reveals the oscillations between different governance models, ranging from patrimonial to bureaucratic and managerial administration. It recognizes the unique trajectory of Brazil's public administration, marked by varying degrees of bureaucratization across regions and sectors.

The study also addresses the impact of Brazil's late democratization on administrative development, pointing out the tension between bureaucratic autonomy and political accountability. It emphasizes the importance of finding a balanced approach that reconciles political loyalty and technical competence in effectively managing and motivating public servants.

Moreover, the reconceptualization of the bureaucratization paradigm proposed in this study underscores the significance of understanding the unique contexts of each region when implementing administrative reforms. It cautions against a simplistic approach that equates less bureaucracy with more successful reforms, advocating instead for context-specific strategies that consider the intricacies of each area.

In conclusion, this study provides a comprehensive understanding of the dynamics at play in maintaining administrative capacity while preserving democratic principles within the state apparatus.

By recognizing the complexities of administrative evolution and the interplay between bureaucracy and democracy, this research offers valuable guidance for policymakers striving to strike the right balance between bureaucratic efficiency and democratic accountability. As Brazil and other nations navigate their administrative journeys, this study serves as a vital reference point for fostering effective and context-sensitive public administration practices in diverse local contexts.

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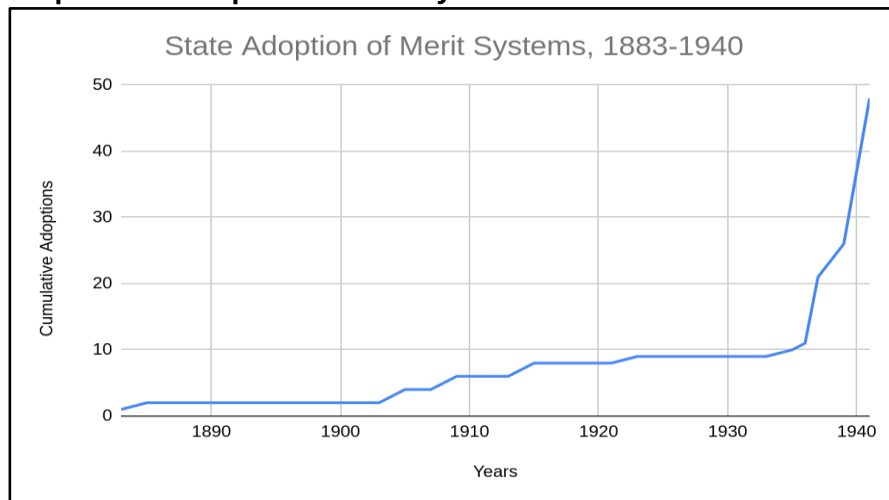
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Tables and graphs

Graph: State Adoption of Merit System from 1883 to 1940 in the United States of America



Source: Ruhil and Camões (2003)

Comparison table in Civil Service Characteristics between Caruaru and São Paulo

Civil Service Characteristics	Municipality of Caruaru (Less Bureaucratic Civil Service)	Department of Agriculture of the State of São Paulo (More Bureaucratic Civil Service)
Career path specialization	Embraces a limited number of specialized careers, most employees associated with temporary contracts.	Hosts a diversity of distinct careers, each with specific regulations, adding up to general people management regulations
Temporary contract use	Widespread use of temporary contracts for permanent tasks, offering administrative convenience	Adopts a restrictive approach to temporary and commissioned positions, ensuring stability
Public selections organization	Contests and selection processes organized internally, foregoing external entities	Prefers contracting external entities for organizing contests and selection processes, favoring specialized expertise
Processes for transfers, licenses, leaves	Unsystematic processes for managing geographic transfers, licenses, and leaves	Detailed regulatory instruments defining terms, rights, and timelines for transfers, geographic mobility, and leaves
Onboarding and development initiative	No norms or rules expected. Managers have the freedom to decide what do - including nothing	There is no provision to implement such actions. If they exist, the rules will dictate what topics should be covered, duration etc
Job reassignment flexibility	Maintains generic job descriptions to facilitate swift personnel distribution	Provides detailed job descriptions, setting clear boundaries against function deviation

Flexible remuneration	Flexibility in altering pay scales, offers bonuses and other forms of personalized compensation	Lacks flexibility in altering direct financial incentives linked to manager-identified performance
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Comparison table in Civil Service Characteristics for Public Service Motivation between Caruaru and São Paulo

Civil Service Characteristics	Positive Effects on PSM	Potential Negative Impact on PSM
Career specialization path	A multitude of specialized careers in São Paulo can foster PSM by enabling personal and professional development, but Caruaru's single career model can offer flexibility and broad skillset utilization	Lack of career specialization in Caruaru may limit professional development and growth. Conversely, São Paulo's specialized careers might restrict flexibility and variety in roles
Temporary contract use	São Paulo's long-term contracts can enhance PSM through job security, yet Caruaru's temporary contracts may inspire motivation by offering varied experiences and roles	The instability of Caruaru's temporary contracts can undermine job security, potentially reducing PSM. São Paulo's restrictive contract use may limit opportunities for diverse experience
Public contest organization	São Paulo's external contest organization can promote PSM by ensuring fairness and meritocracy. However, Caruaru's internal organization may foster a more intimate understanding of the municipal operations and values	Lack of external input in Caruaru may compromise objectivity and fairness in contests. In São Paulo, over-reliance on external bodies may lead to disconnection from internal organizational culture
Processes for transfers, licenses, leaves	São Paulo's systematic processes could augment PSM by providing predictability and fairness, while Caruaru's flexibility may allow for quicker adaptability but risk inconsistency	In Caruaru, informality may lead to inconsistencies and perceived unfairness in handling transfers, licenses, and leaves. São Paulo's detailed regulations may create bureaucracy and limit flexibility
Onboarding and development initiative	Motivation to implement such actions, as lack of norms allows managers to design whatever is best for their new employees	Without actions described in job descriptions, there are no incentives to develop them
Job reassignment flexibility	Clear role definitions in São Paulo can enhance PSM by mitigating ambiguity and conflict, but Caruaru's generic job descriptions could motivate by providing opportunities for diverse task engagement	Generic job descriptions in Caruaru might create role ambiguity and conflict, potentially dampening PSM. São Paulo's rigid job descriptions could limit flexibility and hinder adaptability
Flexible remuneration	Flexible salaries are easier to implement in Caruaru and could boost PSM by recognizing and rewarding performance, but São Paulo's fixed pay may provide a sense of security and fairness.	Caruaru's ability to have more flexibility may introduce competition that could disrupt teamwork. São Paulo's limited flexibility in pay could demotivate employees by failing to recognize outstanding performance.