# RESEARCH ON PUBLIC MANAGEMENT POLICY CHANGE IN THE LATIN AMERICA REGION: A CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK AND METHODOLOGICAL GUIDE

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## ABSTRACT

*This article presents a conceptual framework and methodological guide for researching the process of public management policy change in the Latin America region. It provides an explicit the methodological approach for case study research on this topic. The focus on the Latin America region is due to the sponsorship of the Inter-American Development Bank, which desired an explicit methodological guide for conducting research on public sector management reform. While the article is specifically geared to this purpose, it also exhibits a distinctive general approach to a large class of case study research designs. This class includes instrumental case study research about processes, incorporating variants that are rich in narrative, explicit in their explanatory framework, and comparative. Publishing the article in IMPR is appropriate since a) this class of case study research has not benefited from specialized methodological exposition and b) much public management research fits within this class. Accordingly, the article is addressed to both public management researchers interested in the specific research topic and those engaged in instrumental case-oriented research on processes, more generally.*

## INTRODUCTION

This article provides a practical guide for conducting case-oriented research on the process of public policy-making in the specific domain of public management policies. Public management policy-making is related conceptually to administrative reform and state modernization, but has a narrower definition. Public management policies are government wide[1] institutional rules and routines[2] (Barzelay 2001). These rules and routines relate not only to people, organization, and procedures, but also to planning, execution, auditing, and review of public expenditures. Public management policies fall into the following categories: expenditure planning and financial management, civil service and labor relations, procurement, organization and methods, and audit and evaluation.

The overall aim of the article, reflecting the intentions of its sponsor, is to gain insight into the process of public management policy change. Each case study is meant to provide such insight for a particular country. The common analytical treatment of each case provides a basis for comparison and thereby the formulation of plausible generalizations of an analytic and historical (as distinct from statistical) sort. The main objective of the article is to ensure that the country case studies receive such a common analytic treatment. Some specific techniques for accomplishing this objective are presented and illustrated in detail.

An understanding of the process of public management policy change cannot be attained without the successful execution of a carefully crafted research design. Formulating a satisfactory research design involves making coherent choices with respect to a large array of design issues, including the specification of the research goal (e.g., to understand the process of public management policy change in the Latin America region), selection of the cases to be studied (e.g., reform episodes within Brazil, Mexico, and Peru), the identification of case outcomes (e.g., public management policy choices), and selection of explanatory frameworks to be put into operation in explaining the case outcomes (e.g., the Kingdon [1983] and Baumgartner and Jones [1994] models). A successful case study provides satisfying answers to research questions about the experience studied and insightful statements about types of phenomena of scientific or practical interest. The likelihood that the answers are satisfying depends, in large measure, on how skillfully the researcher puts explanatory frameworks into operation in interpreting rich, appropriately ordered, evidence about the events to which the research questions concerning the experience studied. The likelihood that an understanding of the experience studied provides insight into a type of phenomenon depends, in part, on the conceptual relatedness between the research questions about the experience studied and broader questions of demonstrable interest to scientific and professional communities.

Case study research is admittedly improvised more than performed by formulating and executing a blueprint. In the words of the author of a well-regarded text on case-oriented research (Ragin 1987), this style of work involves a dialogue between ideas and evidence. While case research is always improvised to a degree, we have come to believe that such work can be conducted more efficiently and effectively if improvisation is disciplined by a codified practice. This document codifies several of the most important aspects of the practice of conducting case research on the process of public management policy change, with particular reference to Latin America.

**Figure 1** identifies these aspects and groups them by type of design issue and, notionally, by stage of the research process.

This article is not entirely self-sufficient, in that it calls for applying explanatory frameworks that are known in the political science literature on public policy-making. Researchers would need to read these guidelines in concert with that literature as well as texts on the methodology of case-oriented research - including Ragin (1987).
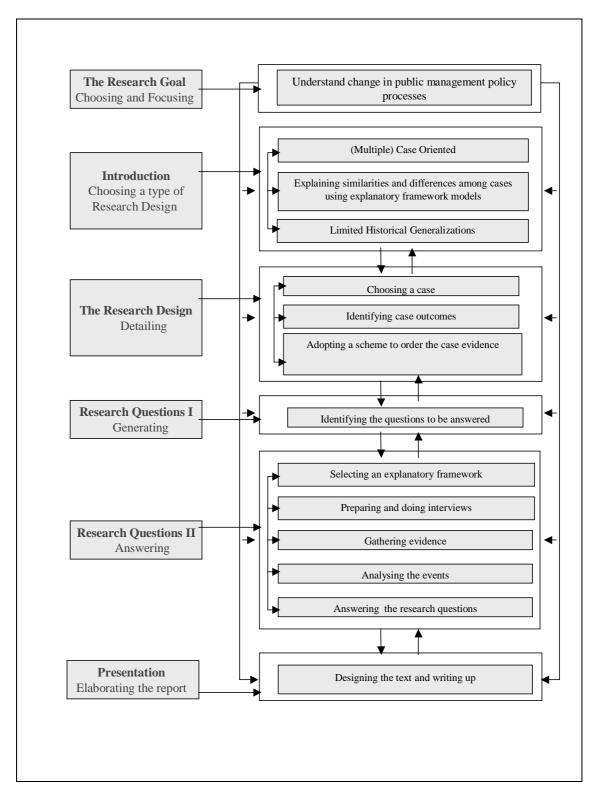
*Figure 1 Comparative Research on Public Management Policy Change Processes.*

# FORMULATING AN OVERALL RESEARCH DESIGN

## Identifying Cases

The case oriented research style (Ragin 1987) is appropriate to the task of creating formal knowledge about public management policy change in Latin America as elsewhere. In the present context, "cases" refer to experiences in which events involve policy making that could lead to changes in public management policies. Normally, a case refers to a network of events (or an episode) within a limited period, such as one defined by a single presidential administration. Cejudo's (2001) recent study of Mexico, for instance, included two cases, so defined. The first case analyzed public management policy-making events during the de la Madrid presidency, while the second analyzed public management policy-making events during the Zedillo presidency. Deliberate attempts of policymaking in various areas of public management policy occurred during both administrations: reforming expenditure planning and financial management, formulating civil service and labor relations policy, and fostering change in administrative methods and procedures. The Cejudo study compares the two cases (bounded by presidential administrations) in order to generalize about the process of public management policy change in Mexico.

When the research goal is to understand a process, such as public management policy change, the cases are usefully conceived as an array of parallel and/or serial events through which policy-making occurs. No matter how a reform episode is divided into events, the events comprising the case must individually and severally relate to the process of changing government-wide rules and routines in some or all of the five categories of public management policy mentioned earlier: expenditure planning and financial management, civil service and labor relations, procurement, organization and methods, and audit and evaluation.

## Identifying Outcomes within Cases

According to Ragin (1987), a critical research design decision is to characterize case outcomes. The concept of *case outcome* is related to the more familiar concept of *dependent variable*: it is that which the analysis needs to explain. Generally speaking, the major research questions of a case oriented investigation are expressed in terms of explaining case outcomes. The researcher is accountable to readers, including academic peers, for providing satisfactory explanations of case outcomes. For this reason, the rationale for choosing a particular way to characterize case outcomes should be well considered and explained. In general, case outcomes need to be specified so that they help solve the co-ordination problem that is endemic to scholarly research. It is only by solving this problem that a research community, as a whole, can produce knowledge about such historically defined phenomena[3], as the process of public management policy change. Following this suggestion, Barzelay (2001) identified *comprehensive* public management policy change as a similarity of the New Public Management benchmark cases.

Given that reform is conceptualized as public management policy-making, a key property of any selected case outcome is that it refers to authoritative choices of government-wide institutional rules and routines within the public management policy

domain (Barzelay 2001 – chapter 3). This definition leaves room for interpretation, but it is meant to be different from other definitions evident in the literature, such as systemic organizational change in particular governmental systems (Aucoin 1995). To reiterate, case outcomes should be instances of authoritative choices made by law-making power centers or central agencies that potentially affect expenditure planning processes, financial management, civil service and labor relations, procurement, organization and methods, and audit and evaluation across a given jurisdiction. Accordingly, administrative policy choices that have specific effect on a singular department cannot be considered a case of public management policy change.

## Ordering Case Evidence

To explain a particular policy choice requires employing an explanatory framework in to formulate a narrative explanation of the process by which the choice occurred. Policy processes are composed of parallel and serial events. To analyze how policy choices occurred, it is extremely helpful to identify and designate such events, and then explain how they began, progressed, and ended. We refer to the construct that defines the system of events constituting the experience studied as the "narrative structure" of the analysis.

The most generic form of a narrative structure is presented in **Figure 2.** The basic element within an experience studied is an *event*. The set of events directly and intimately related to the process of substantive and analytic interest (e.g., public management policy making) constitutes the *episode*. The episode is situated within *surrounding events.* These events include *prior events* and *contemporaneous events*. Prior events occur before the episode, while contemporaneous events occur in the same time frame. Prior and contemporaneous events are locations of causal sources of aspects of the episode. A model of an experience can also include *related events* coincident with the episode but more affected by the episode's events than the other way around. *Later events* are sometimes included in the study frame for purposes of exploring the contemporary relevance of historical episodes.

## Narrative structure

| | Contemporaneous Events | |
| Prior Events | The Episode | Later Events |
| | Related Events | |

t

*Figure 2 Narrative Structure*

An Illustration

In the Mexican study, the *experience studied* was public management policy change in the Mexican Federal Public Administration from 1982 to 2000 (see **Figure 3**). The *periods* coincided with the three presidential administrations: Miguel De la Madrid (1982-1988), Carlos Salinas (1988-1994), and Ernesto Zedillo (1994-2000). Given the fact that during the Salinas period it was not possible to identify events of public management policymaking, only two *episodes* (De la Madrid and Salinas) were analyzed. These episodes were designated as the two *cases.*

PUBLIC MANAGEMENT POLICY
CHANGE IN MEXICO

**Case I**
**De la Madrid administration**
**1982-1988**

**Case II**
**Zedillo administration**
**1994-2000**

Period a    (1982-1985)
Period b    (1985-1988)

Period a    (1994-1997)
Period b    (1997-2000)

Events
E1 (I) Combating corruption

E2 (Ia) Reforming expenditure planning and financial management

E3 (Ia) Formulating civil service/labour relations policy

E4 (Ia) Fostering change in administrative methods and procedures

Events

E2 (III) Reforming expenditure planning and financial management

E3 (III) Formulating civil service/labour relations policy

E4 Fostering change in administrative methods and procedures

*Figure 3: Comparing two cases of public management policy change in Mexico.*

Once the cases are identified, the next step is to enumerate the *events* that take place within each episode. In order to simplify this discussion, we focus exclusively on the first episode (the De la Madrid administration) (see **Figure 4**). The *events* within the episode were:

- Combating corruption – an effort to reduce administrative corruption in the central government,

- Reforming expenditure planning and financial management –an attempt to re-structure the planning and evaluation activities,

- Formulating civil service/labor relations policy –a failed attempt to create a career civil service, and

- Fostering change in administrative methods and procedures –an administrative simplification program.

Each of these events is divided even further into a number of *component events*. For instance, combating corruption included, at least, two component events: i) Developing institutional capacity to combat corruption, and ii) Developing operational capacity to combat corruption.
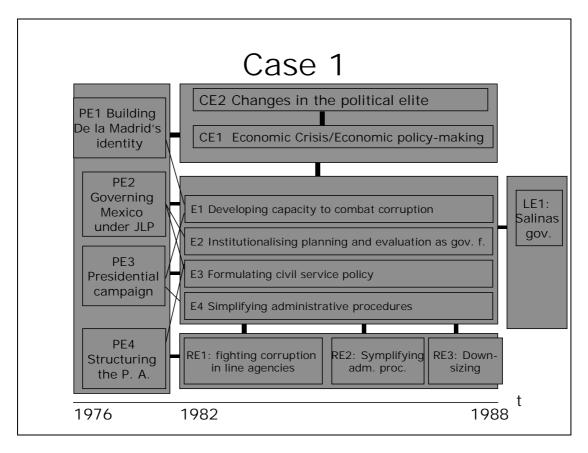
## Case 1



*Figure 4 Narrative Structure of the De La Madrid Case*

Nonetheless, our main interest is in the identification and explanation of the event *outcomes*; that is, we have to identify what is the outcome of the event (for instance, following the same example, the creation of a new institutional venue for the fighting corruption policy), and to provide an explanation for it. To explain event outcomes, we look to other events as sources of change or stability in public management policy. Thus, we look into the *prior events*. They help us to understand the situation at the beginning of the period, including the factors that influence the agenda-setting process within the episode. For the De la Madrid episode, the prior events included i) building of De la Madrid's identity (his career and his political positions), ii) governing of Mexico under López Portillo (both political and economic happenings during this administration), iii) campaigning for the presidency (the De la Madrid's presidential campaign, focusing specially in the issues he raised concerning public management policy), iv) structuring the Federal Public Administration (the situation inherited by the López Portillo government concerning the public sector organization). Accordingly, **Figure 4** defines several prior events within this case.

It is also typically necessary to analyze the concurrent events in the episode. As have been mentioned, *contemporaneous events* refer to events that are interpreted as sources of occurrences within the episode. During the De la Madrid period it is possible to identify two set of events that correspond to this definition: the economic crisis and the economic policy making performed as a response (which affected public management policy making by, for instance, reducing the public budget and, eventually, triggering the decision to downsize the public sector), and the changes in the political elite (as in many other Latin American countries, there was an evident transformation of the ruling

elite, from old-styled politicians to new technocrats; this change produced more changes in the public management policy area). Accordingly, **Figure 4** defines several contemporaneous events within the episode.

## ELABORATING THE RESEARCH DESIGN

### Generating Candidate Research Questions

The formulation of the research questions to be answered is a key step in the design and refinement of any research project. A useful distinction is between type A research questions, related to broader policy debates, and type B research questions, related to specific reform episodes. Type A research questions require a high level of generality in order to capture the attention of the international academic and policy community. For instance: How do the processes of agenda setting and alternative generation work in this domain? What affects the generation and resolution of competition and conflict over institutional and policy choices in this domain? How can policy-makers learn from history in designing and improvising public management policy change? How do accepted doctrines of public management policymaking affect policy formulation? Why does comprehensive public management policy change sometimes occur?

Type B research questions structure inquiry about a particular case. One way of generating Type B research questions is to ask how designated events within the episode began and how their outcome was reached. In generating Type B research questions in this fashion, it is necessary to have completed a working version of the narrative structure. As discussed above, the narrative structure delineates the events that comprise the experience studied.

### Illustration of Research Questions about Public Management Policy Change in the Latin American Region

The best way of understanding how to generate research questions is through a practical example. Therefore this subsection is about generating research questions in another concrete study: Peru. Public management policy making occurred in Peru in the past decade. Reforming the state was a broad policy issue that the government elected in 1990 perceived and tackled during the subsequent years in various ways. This policy-making process produced limited changes in the Peruvian public management policies.

During a first period (1990–95) some change in the public management policies happened, although exclusively focused on specific economy policy agencies that were created or reformed under the influence of the economic stabilization policy the government undertook. However, in a second period (1995-97) governmental authorities became engaged in the implementation of a vast "State Modernization Program." This program aimed to develop a coherent and consistent public management policy change process. Nevertheless, after the program had generated a number of policy proposals and bills, President Fujimori terminated the process in 1997. This decision contributed to the very limited change in public management policies. Figure 5 shows the result of organizing the case evidence applying the proposed scheme.
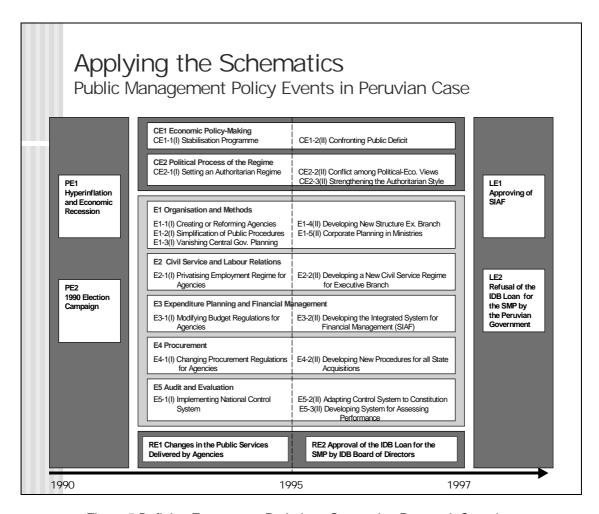
## Applying the Schematics
### Public Management Policy Events in Peruvian Case

**PE1 Hyperinflation and Economic Recession**

**PE2 1990 Election Campaign**

**CE1 Economic Policy-Making**
CE1-1(I) Stabilisation Programme | CE1-2(II) Confronting Public Deficit

**CE2 Political Process of the Regime**
CE2-1(I) Setting an Authoritarian Regime | CE2-2(II) Conflict among Political-Eco. Views
CE2-3(II) Strengthening the Authoritarian Style

**E1 Organisation and Methods**
E1-1(I) Creating or Reforming Agencies | E1-4(II) Developing New Structure Ex. Branch
E1-2(I) Simplification of Public Procedures | E1-5(II) Corporate Planning in Ministries
E1-3(I) Vanishing Central Gov. Planning

**E2 Civil Service and Labour Relations**
E2-1(I) Privatising Employment Regime for Agencies | E2-2(II) Developing a New Civil Service Regime for Executive Branch

**E3 Expenditure Planning and Financial Management**
E3-1(I) Modifying Budget Regulations for Agencies | E3-2(II) Developing the Integrated System for Financial Management (SIAF)

**E4 Procurement**
E4-1(I) Changing Procurement Regulations for Agencies | E4-2(II) Developing New Procedures for all State Acquisitions

**E5 Audit and Evaluation**
E5-1(I) Implementing National Control System | E5-2(II) Adapting Control System to Constitution
E5-3(II) Developing System for Assessing Performance

**RE1 Changes in the Public Services Delivered by Agencies** | **RE2 Approval of the IDB Loan for the SMP by IDB Board of Directors**

**LE1 Approving of SIAF**

**LE2 Refusal of the IDB Loan for the SMP by the Peruvian Government**

1990      1995      1997

*Figure 5 Defining Events as a Prelude to Generating Research Questions*

The resulting scheme is useful for generating relevant research questions related to a) each singular event or sub event within the episode, b) the whole episode, and c) the comparison between different periods. Figure 6 presents an example of the route followed to generate the research questions, focusing on some of the events included in the episode presented in Figure 5. Question 1, "Why were some institutions selected for being modernized?" is directly related to sub event E1-1 (I) "Creating or Reforming Agencies." In a similar way, Questions 2 and 3 are related to "Privatizing Employment Regime for Agencies" (sub-event E2-1 [I]) and "Developing a new Civil Service Regime for Executive Branch" (sub-event E2-2 [II]) respectively. Question 4 does not refer to a particular sub event but rather to all sub events that occurred in Period I, i.e. across the different public management policy areas. In a broader perspective question 5 considered the whole event, comparing the changes occurred in both periods.
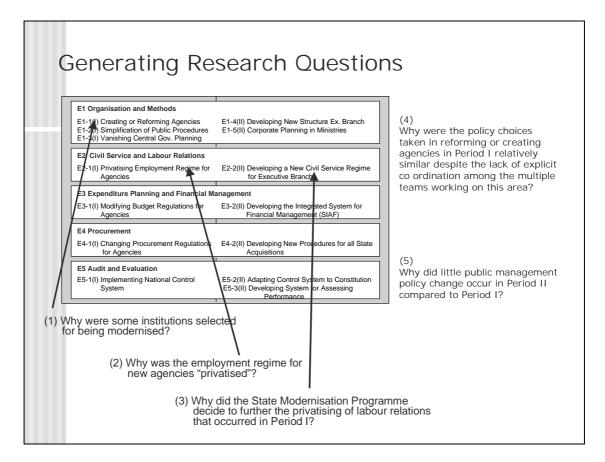
## Generating Research Questions

**E1 Organisation and Methods**

E1-1(I) Creating or Reforming Agencies
E1-2(I) Simplification of Public Procedures
E1-3(I) Vanishing Central Gov. Planning

E1-4(II) Developing New Structure Ex. Branch
E1-5(II) Corporate Planning in Ministries

**E2 Civil Service and Labour Relations**

E2-1(I) Privatising Employment Regime for Agencies

E2-2(II) Developing a New Civil Service Regime for Executive Branch

**E3 Expenditure Planning and Financial Management**

E3-1(I) Modifying Budget Regulations for Agencies

E3-2(II) Developing the Integrated System for Financial Management (SIAF)

**E4 Procurement**

E4-1(I) Changing Procurement Regulations for Agencies

E4-2(II) Developing New Procedures for all State Acquisitions

**E5 Audit and Evaluation**

E5-1(I) Implementing National Control System

E5-2(II) Adapting Control System to Constitution
E5-3(II) Developing System for Assessing Performance

(1) Why were some institutions selected for being modernised?

(2) Why was the employment regime for new agencies "privatised"?

(3) Why did the State Modernisation Programme decide to further the privatising of labour relations that occurred in Period I?

(4) Why were the policy choices taken in reforming or creating agencies in Period I relatively similar despite the lack of explicit co ordination among the multiple teams working on this area?

(5) Why did little public management policy change occur in Period II compared to Period I?

*Figure 6 Generating Research Questions*

Let us now focus in some detail in the process that underlies this route. In the case of Event E2 ("Civil Service and Labor Relations") our aim is to explain why the outcome of this event occurred. Thus, we have to generate questions related to the particular outcomes the policy-making process of sub events in both periods, that is E2-1 (I) and E2-2 (II). In the first one, the outcome was the fact that special labor regulations - similar to the private sector ones - were approved for the new agencies. In the second one, the State Modernization Program furthered the privatization of labor relations, attempting to extend this policy to the entire executive branch through developing a new Civil Service Regime. As shown in **Figure 6**, Questions 2 and 3 are keyed to sub events E2-1 (I) and E2-2 (II) respectively. Since these questions are analytically interesting to understand the dynamics of public management policy making in Peru, they are carried forward to the stages of data gathering and analysis.

Some questions are not keyed to particular events but to multiple events or even the entire episode. For example, Question 4 is keyed to all the events comprising Period I. This research question seeks to understand similarities among events during which policy-making teams worked to reform particular departments and agencies. Specifically, the similarity to be understood is the change in the employment regime in the direction of private, contractual practices. This change characterized each of several department or agency-specific interventions. Question 5 is another example of a research question keyed to multiple events. In this instance, the question asks for an explanation of differences between the outcomes of events in Period I (taken as a whole), on the one hand, an the outcome of events in Period II (taken as a whole), on

the other. Specifically, the difference is conceived as the occurrence of significant public management policy choices in Period I and their absence in Period II.

However, considering event E2 outcomes we must recognize that in the first period important changes in the labor regulations were approved and implemented, while in the second period nothing really changed, as the Civil Service Bill proposed by the State Modernization Program was never approved. Thus, we need a question to pinpoint this difference and call for its explanation. Question 5 tried to do so, considering not only labor relations policies but all the public management policies in which changes occurred in period I.

It is important to take into account that the formulation of the research questions is not a linear process. In fact, we arrived to most of the questions presented trough a large number of different formulations, trying to take into account relevant outcomes and linkages among events. This required, as we will mention later, a continuous dialogue between the concerns that founded the questions and the outline of possible answers.

Following this procedure a vast set of research questions can be generated. Three general phases can be considered in this. The first phase is to identify the central questions that the research has to address. Five questions were identified as the core ones:

a. *Why did policy-making occur in the five areas of public management policies during the two periods?*

b. *Why did the "state reform" issue maintain its presence in the governmental policy agenda between 1990 and 1997?*

c. *Why did little public management policy change occur in Period II compared to Period I? Why were the policy choices taken in reforming or creating agencies in Period I relatively similar despite the lack of explicit co ordination among the multiple teams working on this area?*

e. *Why did the State Modernization Program produce changes in some Public Management Policy areas (Procurement) and not in others (Civil Service, Organization and Methods, etc.)?*

Questions A, B, and C are related to the whole episode presented in Figure 5. Thus, they are focused on the extent of public management changes and the presence of the State Reform issue in governmental agenda trough both periods. Question D, instead, is only referred to the events occurred in Period I, while Question E to those occurred in period II.

The second phase for generating the research questions was to organize all the secondary questions by means of relating them to one or more of the central questions. **Figure 7** shows an example of how a central question (E) served to organize several secondary and specific questions (the Figure shows only three of a large number of secondary questions related to question E). However, this is not a mechanical classification procedure. It required considering the possible answer to the questions and, by doing so, to identify which specific questions should be posed in order to provide relevant analysis for attaining adequate answers to the most important research questions.
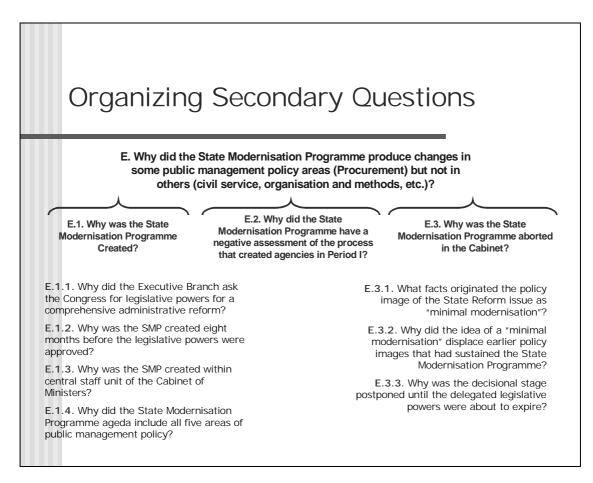
*Figure 7 Organizing Secondary Questions*

In Figure 7, for example, to answer the central question (E) about why the State Modernization Program generated change in one public management area but not in others, requires examination of why the State Modernization Program was ultimately aborted by the President (question E.3). But, for understanding why the program was terminated we must address questions E.3.1, E.3.2 and E.3.3. Thus, generating adequate research questions involved establishing a dialogue between current questions and possible (provisional) answers.

Finally, the procedure reaches the stage of representing a body of questions, shown in Figure 8. It is important to notice that not only the secondary questions are related to the principal ones (as shown in Figure 7) but the central questions are also interrelated. Thus, questions A, B and C –focused on the entire episode - are mutually connected and are also linked to questions D and E - focused on each period.
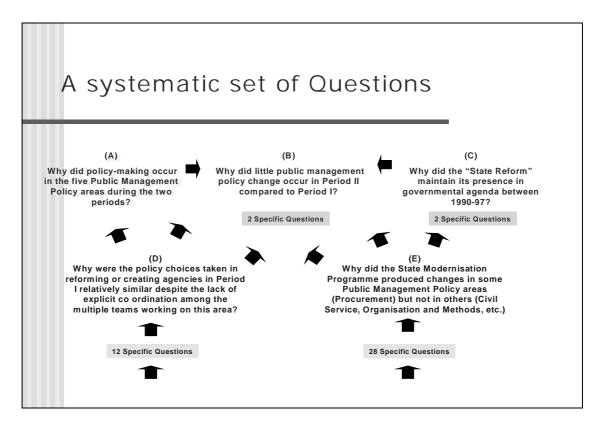
## A systematic set of Questions

**(A)**
Why did policy-making occur in the five Public Management Policy areas during the two periods?

**(B)**
Why did little public management policy change occur in Period II compared to Period I?

2 Specific Questions

**(C)**
Why did the "State Reform" maintain its presence in governmental agenda between 1990-97?

2 Specific Questions

**(D)**
Why were the policy choices taken in reforming or creating agencies in Period I relatively similar despite the lack of explicit co ordination among the multiple teams working on this area?

12 Specific Questions

**(E)**
Why did the State Modernisation Programme produced changes in some Public Management Policy areas (Procurement) but not in others (Civil Service, Organisation and Methods, etc.)

28 Specific Questions

*Figure 8 A systematic set of questions*

Such a connection can be understood considering the process for generating answers to the research questions. In Figure 8 the arrows indicate the direction this process has to follow. For answering question B (comparing the extent of changes between period I and II), for example, we need to understand why did public management policy-making occur and why it affected all these policies (question A). We also require understanding the progressive change of the policy image related to the State Reform issue (question C). But, it is impossible to answer these three broad questions if we do not have previously a detailed account of what happened in Period I and Period II. This requires answering not only questions D and E, but also all the specific questions related to them. Thus a systematic set of research questions as the one proposed above allows the researcher to interrelate the multiple answers he elaborates.

Selecting Explanatory Frameworks to Answer Research Questions

In order to answer research questions, theoretical frameworks for studying the policymaking process need to be applied to properly ordered case evidence. One example of a processual explanatory model of decision-making borrowed from political science is the multiple streams model of agenda setting and alternative specification of Kingdon (1984). See **Figure 9.**
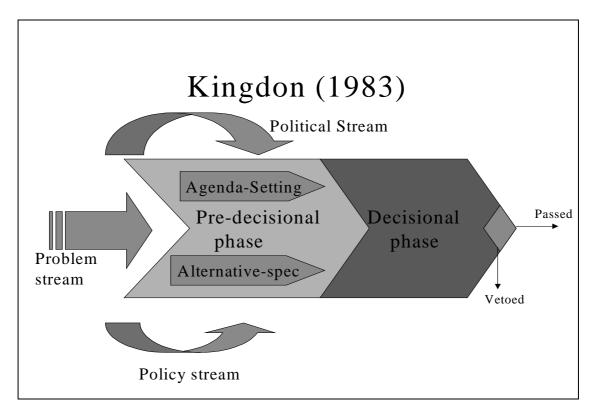
# Kingdon (1983)

Political Stream

Agenda-Setting

Pre-decisional phase

Decisional phase

Passed

Problem stream

Alternative-spec

Vetoed

Policy stream

*Figure 9 Diagram of the theoretical framework developed by Kingdon*

The Kingdon model is useful for several reasons. First, the career of an issue is an emergent phenomenon – a resultant of action – rather than action itself. It is therefore an attribute of the *process* to be understood. Second, an issue career is inherently dynamic, which draws attention to the temporal dimension of the policy-making process. Third, by explaining an issue's career, we can perceive the effects of many diverse influences leading to policy choices. However, Kingdon's model can usefully be complemented by other similar ones, including Baumgartner and Jones (1993).

## GATHERING CASE EVIDENCE

### Identifying Sources

Applied research implies in gathering empirical evidence to support the analysis advanced by the reports. Researchers committed with the proposed methodology will need to make intensive use of interviews:

- Interviews help to get the facts straight, a central concern of an historic method.

- Interviews help to understand the dynamic of a policy process, including sequences of actions, changes in point of views, conflicts, and intermediate transient outcomes that will not be visible at the end of the process.

- Interviews contribute through the record of words to improve analytical descriptions of social phenomena and to fulfill blanks in an investigation. They are sense-making resources that help to provide a coherent account of what happened in the past.

- Interviews allow the researcher to get access to information stored at a personal level. Public management reforms are not usually well-documented experiences. They focus on gray areas of the public sector that do not beneficiate from the public exposure.

- Interviews are particularly suitable to refine descriptions of how and why situations evolved, although it is also useful to capture ideas, values, opinions and impressions of relevant protagonists.

- Interviews are not necessarily oriented to reveal subjective knowledge, in spite of their shortcomings. They can provide objective data as well as to indicate other hidden sources of neglected information.

- Interviews are appropriate to induce protagonists to retrieve past experiences from their memories in the search of discrepancies and holes in previously available descriptions.

Interviewing is especially critical in this research program because the bibliography of public management reforms in Latin America is unstructured, frequently insufficient, laudatory, superficial, and judgmental.

Preparing Interview Protocols

Interview protocols are a requirement for good interviews. The main reason is because they provide a systematized structure of the main questions that interviewers want to address. Putting them in writing is a prudent form of keeping the focus on the relevant research questions in order to avoid a diffuse interview. There are at least five good cautions to be taken into account for elaborating an interview protocol.

- Interview protocols are primarily important to guarantee coherence between the interviewee answers and the research questions.

- Interviews need to be planned in advance. The researcher needs to know before what he is looking for, even if letting some room for the emergence of new questions.

- Interviews need to be managed. They do not flow naturally or if they do so they are not necessarily productive.

- Interview protocols provide guidance but also provide basis for comparability. The same questions addressed to different people facilitate triangulation and comparative deductions.

- Interview protocols minimize the sources of unreliability in the interviewing process: the interviewer, the person interviewed, and the chemistry of the relationship between them.

Interviewees should be selected on the basis of their potential contributions to answer the research questions. By the same token, interview protocols need to contain questions specifically oriented to answer the research questions. Respondents need to be questioned about how and why things turned out the way they did. Respondents need to be interrogated carefully about what accounts for the initiation, dynamics, and termination of key events of the episode. They can also explain the progression of the issue within the event as well as the occurrence of intermediate and final outcomes. In

the absence of a reliable literature, they provide the most important source of evidence available.

Interview protocols can - and should - be modified along the way as part of a continuous dialogue between ideas and evidence. Intermediate findings eventually provoke re-orientations of angles and priorities. Therefore, interview protocols are inherently provisional tools, subject to change even at the moment of the interviews, depending on the dynamic of the meeting.

## ANALYZING CASE EVIDENCE AND PREPARING TO WRITE

### Analyzing the events

The role of theory is to make sense of the process by which the case outcome happened. Explaining what led to an outcome is different from identifying factors *associated* with the outcome. Theory can illuminate the causal process that was at work in a case. Theoretically informed intra and cross event analysis of an experience is the key intermediate input to formulating causal explanations of cases outcomes. Intra-event analysis concentrates on how individual events progressed; cross-event analysis concentrates on analyzing how individual events were influenced by others within the larger experience. Explaining case outcomes within the research program on public management policy change requires a mix of intra-event and cross-event analysis, as previously mentioned.

### Providing an example of event analysis: the Brazilian 1967 episode

In order to demonstrate how to proceed to analyze an event we will check at one example from a Brazilian episode, included in a dissertation in progress (Gaetani). The case selected refers to an episode that occurred between 1964-1967, when important public management policy changes took place. One influential package of public management reforms occurred at the sunset of the first military government of "authoritarian Brazil". It was a very turbulent period as we can observe in **Figure 10.**
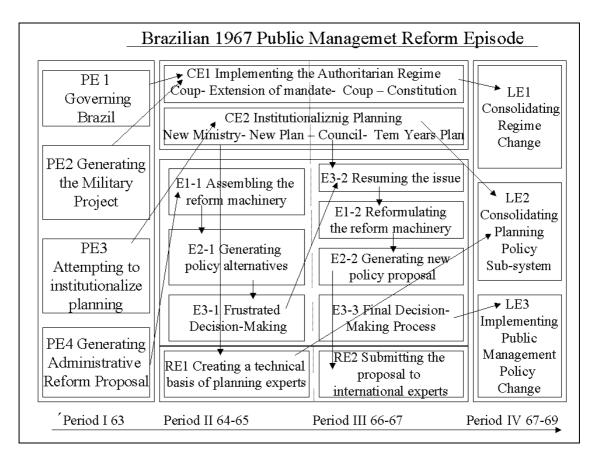
## Brazilian 1967 Public Managemet Reform Episode

| PE 1 Governing Brazil | CE1 Implementing the Authoritarian Regime Coup- Extension of mandate- Coup – Constitution | LE1 Consolidating Regime Change |

CE2 Institutionaliznig Planning
New Ministry- New Plan – Council- Tem Years Plan

PE2 Generating the Military Project

E1-1 Assembling the reform machinery

E3-2 Resuming the issue

LE2 Consolidating Planning Policy Sub-system

E1-2 Reformulating the reform machinery

PE3 Attempting to institutionalize planning

E2-1 Generating policy alternatives

E2-2 Generating new policy proposal

E3-1 Frustrated Decision-Making

E3-3 Final Decision-Making Process

LE3 Implementing Public Management Policy Change

PE4 Generating Administrative Reform Proposal

RE1 Creating a technical basis of planning experts

RE2 Submitting the proposal to international experts

Period I 63      Period II 64-65      Period III 66-67      Period IV 67-69

*Figure 10 Brazilian 1967 episode*

Let us peruse an overview of the events that occurred during the episode beginning with the contemporaneous events. The coup d'etat (CE1-1) occurred at the beginning of 1964 and it was supposed to be a quick intervention in order to preserve democracy. A few months later the mandate of Castelo Branco was extended for one more year (CE1-2), until March 1967. Meanwhile Roberto Campos, the new Minister of Planning, institutionalized planning activities through several initiatives: the creation of the Ministry (CE2-1), the creation of a research governmental institute (RE-1), the launch of macro economic stabilization (CE2-2), the creation of National Council of Planning (CE2-3), and the elaboration of development plans (CE2-4). There was an administrative reform policy proposal available that had been sent to the Congress some months before (PE-4). The new president, who had participated in the previous initiative, decided to give the highest possible status to the treatment of the issue: the creation of a High Level Commission (E1-1) to review the available proposal. The importance the president attributed to the problem could be measured by the selection of participants in this commission (E1-2): the best cadre available at that times, ascendant figures of the new regime, and top governmental officials. It was established that the president of the Commission should be a well-known public administration champion, Beltrao, and the executive secretary, Dias, a technocrat that represented Campos because the Commission was located at the Ministry of Planning. There were not explicit decision mechanisms at the commission because the government expected that decisions through consensus would naturally emerge from the engagement of the selected experts in the field.

The event we will further explain as an example of how to precede to event analysis is the incapacity of this commission (COMESTRA) generating a policy proposal (E3-1), an impasse that took place after Beltrao took over the activities of the commission at the expense of Dias alienation. That event came as a surprise by all means. How did it happen? Why couldn't they achieve a consensus? Why didn't Campos stick with Beltrao's final proposal? What explains the impasse?

Part of the explanation can be found through a cross event analysis, at the previous event: generating policy proposals (E1-2). Beltrao and Dias successfully defeated the idea of resuming the proposal available at the Congress. That proposal was championed by the legendary Simoes Lopes and by the technocrats located at the once powerful central agency located at the presidency (the Department of Administration and Civil Service – DASP). However if they agreed about that common enemy, both did not share the same vision about the problems to be tacked and the way of doing it.

The impasse at E1-3 was derived from a clash of problem definition, in Kingdon's terms. An intra-event analysis revealed that while Beltrao defined the issue of the reform as de-bureaucratization, Dias was more concerned with public management problems. While the former suggested that the reform proposal should be resumed to a group of principles and general objectives, the latter was determined to detail specific measures and instruments related to all public management policies.

COMESTRA did not have decisional mechanisms capable of overcoming a conflict between its leading figures (E1-2). Beltrao was a public champion and an ascendant figure of the new regime. Dias was a key advisor of Campos and an experienced technocrat. When, finally, Beltrao's view prevailed, the Commission was not functional anymore. Dias had distanced himself from the process and the disputes over the control of the commission had undermined its credibility within the government.

Meanwhile, turbulence in the political stream had completely absorbed Castelo Branco and Roberto Campos attention. While the latter was facing the problems derived from a recessive economic policy, the president faced hardliners' reaction against the victory of opposition candidates in two key states at the governors' election of 1965 (CE1-3). The radicalization of the regime marked a compromise between the incumbent cabinet, dominated by the "Sorbonne" group, and the military hardliners. The leadership succession was solved at that moment with the unstoppable choice of Costa e Silva, the Minister of War, to become the successor president, almost fifteen months before the end of the Castelo Branco mandate.

The stabilization of the political stream (CE1-3) allowed Roberto Campos to resume the issue (E3-2) through a subtle solution: the creation of an advisory unit under his jurisdiction: *Assessoria de Estudos Tecnicos para a Reforma Administrativa* (ASESTRA). A new policy venue was created but centralized in only one person: Dias, his advisor E1-1 and E1-2 (period III). Dias had assembled public management policy solutions for areas like planning, civil service, auditing, financial expenditure, control, and procurement. But, moreover, Dias had provided a public management package of solutions consistent with Campos's broader objectives: creating the required conditions for the taking off of the developmental state. Dias proposal was instrumental to Campos's vision in a way that Beltrao's ideas could never be.

In short, to analyze E3-1 we had to dissect the event and its internal dynamics as well as to execute a cross event analysis in order to understand aspects of the problem located at other events "upstream" and "downstream", within the episode or at the level of contemporaneous events.

## CONCLUSION

In the time since it was first written, this methodological guide has been followed in preparing two case study articles – on reform events in Brazil and Peru – as well as a comparative analysis of the two cases (Gaetani 2002, Cortázar Velarde 2002, Barzelay 2002). The articles are posted on the website of the Inter-American Development Bank (www.iadb.org). In addition, this guide has provided the point of departure in preparing articles for a forthcoming symposium issue of the *International Public Management Journal* on public management policy change (IPMJ volume 6.3). The country case studies in preparation examine reform episodes in Germany, Spain, US, Brazil, Peru, Thailand, and Mexico. The symposium issue will include a systematic case comparison, as well.

When circulating in unpublished form, this guide has attracted attention among researchers setting out to conduct case studies about topics related to both policy and management change. Such interest indicates that well-established sources of advice on case study research design may not provide sufficient guidance on how to conduct research on such topics. One source of the problem is that prominent exponents of case study methods, such as Yin (1994), have played down commonalities between instrumental case studies on processes and narrative history. A particular contribution of the approach presented here is to provide *practical* methods for ordering and interpreting case evidence, once the similarities and differences between case studies on types of processes and narrative history are noted. These analytical procedures include developing narrative structures and keying Type B research questions to events within the episode. Process theories, like Kingdon's analysis of policy change, are employed to structure a narrative explanation of the outcomes of analytically significant events within the episodes, lying at the center of the respective cases. The systematic use of process theories ensures that the analysis of case evidence is highly germane to the crafting of limited historical generalizations about types of social processes, like public policy and management change. This article has not examined all important issues of research design for instrumental case studies on types of processes, but does provide a base on which to build.

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## NOTES

[1] Public management policies do not include ministries (departmental) or agency specific change processes.

[2] An example of an institutional rule is one stipulating that an appointing official must choose among three candidates put forward by the personnel department (the so-called "rule of three"). An example of routines is the methods used by auditing bodies to conduct performance audits of program agencies.

[3] Ragin (1987: 31) conceptualized limited historical generalizations as "modest empirical generalizations about historically-defined categories of social phenomena."

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