

Explaining Mayoral Delegation in Associative Arrangements: Issue Specificity and Institutional Context

Claudia N. Avellaneda*, Ricardo A. Bello-Gomez†

Abstract: Among local governments' collaborative arrangements, associations of municipalities are understudied in the literature of delegation and executive decision making. We explore the role of issue specificity and institutional context in mayors' decisions to engage in collaboration with an association of municipalities by reviewing three survey experiments with Latin American mayors in Honduras, Guatemala and Colombia. Mayors received a scenario in which they decide whether to delegate extra funding for service provision to an association of municipalities (AoM). The experiments manipulate the decision scenario to modify issue specificity. We expect mayors would be less likely to prefer delegating through collaborating with an AoM in more specific issues. Findings suggest that the effect of issue specificity, and overall preferences for delegation, are contingent on national context. We propose that institutional differences in those countries' local governance landscape drive these divergent findings.

Keywords: Delegation, association of municipalities, local executives, institutional context, Latin America

To increase service provision performance, local governments often operate in multilevel governance arrangements that create new spaces for public agencies' networking and collaboration (Hooghe & Marks 2003, Peters & Pierre 2001, Feiock 2014). In doing so, local government executives face decisions regarding the nature and extent of these collaborations. When making these decisions, local executives face a trade-off between keeping the organizations' control and autonomy within their jurisdictional turf and delegating decision making and implementation to achieve policy goals (McGuire & Agranoff 2011, Agranoff and McGuire 2003).

Uncovering the drivers of politicians' delegation becomes central for understanding accountability, policy outcomes, and government performance. Empirical evidence exists showing politicians' delegation varies across political institutions, for instance between parliamentary (Huber and Shipan 2002) and presidential systems (Epstein and O'Halloran 1999). Moreover, studies consistently show politicians delegate more in complex/technical domains (Gilardi 2002, Huber and Shipan 2002) and facing controversial issues to avoid blame (Weaver 1986, Mortensen 2016). Empirical evidence also reveals the role of partisan politics on delegation, as politicians strategically delegate to agencies to protect policies from future opponents (Moe 1989, Bäck, Persson & Johansson 2009) and voters blame politicians less often when unpopular decisions are attributed to independent agencies (Mortensen 2016). Therefore, our research seeks to contribute to the delegation studies by presenting the replication results from experimental delegation studies across three unconsolidated democracies.

In delegating, the degree of specificity in how an issue is framed should influence politicians' preferences for delegation. Specific framing involves emphasizing certain aspects of reality to shape interpretation and response (Entman 1993), and even subtle wording differences can alter choices (Kahneman and Tversky 1979). Scholars distinguish between generic frames, which allow cross-issue comparison, and issue-

* Indiana University

† Rutgers University - Newark

Address correspondence to Ricardo A. Bello-Gomez at r.bello@rutgers.edu.

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specific frames, which provide detailed information (De Vreese, Peter, and Semetko 2001, Strelbel and Bundi 2023). Greater specificity can expose disagreement and constrain flexibility. Non-specific scenarios may lead politicians to overlook relevant experiences or underestimate decision consequences due to a lack of detail. Conversely, detailed and specific scenarios activate stored knowledge, making politicians more aware of potential outcomes and affecting their decision to delegate in a collaborative arrangement.

Among existing collaborative arrangements, associations of municipalities (AoMs hereafter) have gained importance because some local executives have delegated delivery of policy services to these arrangements. Therefore, understanding executive delegation becomes relevant. In this research, we compare the results of three survey experiments with 138 Honduran mayors (Avellaneda 2017), 77 Guatemalan mayors (Bello-Gomez and Avellaneda 2022) and 240 Colombian mayors (Bello-Gomez and Avellaneda 2021). In these experiments, we present mayors with a hypothetical scenario in which they decide whether to delegate extra funding for service provision to an AoM. The survey experiments in Honduras and Colombia manipulate the specificity of the decision by indicating or omitting the issue's policy area. We expect that mayors will be more prone to work with an AoM in a generic scenario while specificity might confront them with the challenges of delegating and collaboration (Bello-Gomez and Avellaneda 2021). The empirical analysis finds partial support for this expectation, contingent on national institutional context and the type of AoM as a potential partner. Beyond the experimental framing, our findings suggest considerable variation in mayoral preference for delegation across the three countries. We leverage national contextual characteristics to propose explanations for these divergent findings. We do so by presenting theoretical propositions that focus on each country's institutional context in terms of local governmental capacity and AoMs' strength. This research contributes (a) to the governance literature by exploring the drivers of interlocal cooperation; (b) to the decision-making scholarship at the local level by focusing on the elected mayor, (c) and to the delegation studies by investigating the role of institutional context and issue salience on local executives' delegation decisions.

Associations of Municipalities (AoMs)

AoMs are collaborative structures established between local governments to address specific policy issues. Hooghe and Marks (2003) designed a typology for multilevel governance arrangements based on four dimensions: task specificity, dispersion of authority among the conforming units, exclusivity or overlap of jurisdictional territories, and flexibility or stability of the jurisdictional arrangement. Based on this typology, AoMs illustrate a "Type II" arrangement for being task-specific and having flexible arrangements, unlike hierarchical and general-purpose governments (e.g., a regional or state government). AoMs, as interlocal collaborations of horizontal relationships, play a fundamental role among municipalities (Bello-Gomez and Cheng 2024). Associativism implies benefits and costs. Among the benefits, scholars highlight its potential for (a) innovation through diffusion of ideas (Piña and Avellaneda 2018); (b) improving service coordination and efficiency through economies of scale, density, and scope (Christenson and Sachs 1980; Dollery and Fleming 2006, Drew, Kortt, and Dollery 2012, Hirsch 1968; Lomax 1952); (c) regional development due to their greater organizational and political capacity to secure grants for investments projects (Vankova and Kocourkova 2018); and (d) greater bargaining power (Kochan and Wheeler 1975). Associativism as collective action also involves costs of compliance, coordination, information gathering, monitoring, conflict resolutions, etc. (Olson 1998, Ostrom 2007). Some also argue for loss of autonomy due to "external decision costs" (Buchanan and Tullock 1962), as collective choices may differ from a mayor's preferred choice. However, in deciding whether to delegate responsibility to an AoM, mayors count on keeping some control and veto power over the AoM's decisions and operation.

Politicians' Decision to Delegate

The literature emphasizes the importance of multi-level governance and cross-sector collaboration for addressing diverse policy challenges (Agranoff and McGuire 2003; Feiock 2014). Within these arrangements, delegation and collaboration occur both vertically—between national and subnational governments—and horizontally—among governments of the same level. Associations of municipalities (AoMs) exemplify horizontal collaboration, enabling flexibility and shared authority among member localities. Unlike vertical delegation, where hierarchy defines relationships, AoMs operate through cooperation, allowing municipalities to delegate responsibilities while retaining influence and oversight. This organizational form fits Hooghe and

Marks's (2003) second type of multi-level governance, which highlights non-hierarchical, network-based coordination.

As intermunicipal collaborations expand, understanding local leaders' delegation preferences within such networks becomes increasingly relevant. Geographic proximity and interconnectivity among partners play key roles in shaping delegation decisions, as closer delegates can offer faster responses, greater accountability, and more fluid information exchange (Avellaneda 2017). Evidence from international and local contexts shows that proximity fosters stronger partnerships and more effective governance (Anderson 2004). For example, donors increasingly channel resources to local rather than national agencies, and regional AoMs enable municipalities to share expertise and resources—enhancing efficiency, inclusion, and responsiveness in local governance (Satterthwaite (2002).

On some occasions, delegation can serve politicians' interests, but it also can threaten their control and authority. For instance, delegating to experts helps politicians manage complex issues (Epstein & O'Halloran 1999) by buying technical competence and improving policy effectiveness (McCubbins et al.1987; Kiewiet & McCubbins 1991, Gailmard & Patty 2013). Delegating also renders flexibility by liberating politicians from rules and giving them time to address other matters and reducing their workload (Voight and Salzberger 2002). Politicians, like anyone else, are utility maximizers who seek to advance their reputation, wealth, and reelection chances (Simon 1995).

Deciding to delegate also depends on the type of policy. For instance, politicians are more likely to delegate when facing technical policies (monetary policy, regulation, environmental standards) but less likely to do so with distributive policies (taxes, welfare, benefits) (Alesina and Tabellini 2004, Dietmar 2006, Fiorina 1985). Likewise, politicians prefer delegating risky and unpopular policies to avoid blame, while retaining responsibility for rewarding policies to claim credit (Weaver 1986). Finally, delegating to independent agencies gives politicians opportunities to demonstrate credible commitment to rules and/or policies by insulating implementation or technical decisions from short-term politics (Cukierman, 1992). That may be one of politicians' logic when deciding to delegate to a collaborative arrangement.

Issue Specificity and Delegation

The specificity of an issue should influence decision making to delegate. The detail and specificity in the framing of a problem, concern, or issue, becomes focal for decision makers (De Vreese et al. 2001). For example, a candidate may express concern for an issue without suggesting specific policy proposals, and this lack of specificity affects voters' image of that candidate (Rudd 1989). The lack of specificity in legislation wording also affects its chances of achieving compromise (VanSickle-Ward 2015). Consequently, the mayoral decision to delegate may also be a function of the detail and specificity of the issue in question. When presented with general or ambiguous matters, mayors may judge them as trivial and downplay their decision's consequences. The lack of detail can impede retrieval of information and past experiences, thus prompting decision makers to delegate. On the contrary, specific framing may allow decision makers to recollect past experiences with the issue at hand. Therefore,

H1: Mayors are less likely to delegate autonomy when facing issue specificity.

Diverging Local Government Contexts in Latin America

We tested these hypotheses with survey experiments in Honduras, Guatemala and Colombia. When comparing the three countries' institutional context for local governments, we identify differences in their levels of local governmental capacity and autonomy. They also differ in the institutional standing of interlocal associativism as a governance tool. Table 1 summarizes our analysis of these three countries' local government capacity and collaborative institutional environment.

Table 1. Institutional features of local governments in Honduras, Guatemala and Colombia

| Feature | Honduras | Guatemala | Colombia |
|--|--|---|--|
| Number of municipalities | 298 | 340 | 1103 |
| Population (2023) | 10,593,800 | 17,602,430 | 52,085,170 |
| Local government capacity | Low | Medium | High |
| Local elections | Mayors are elected in a separate ballot from presidential elections since 1993 and can be reelected. Municipal councils are elected in the same ballot as mayors. Local elections are concurrent with national ones. | Mayors are elected since 1985 and can be reelected. Municipal councils are elected in the same ballot as mayors. Local elections are concurrent with national ones. | Mayors are elected since 1988 and cannot be reelected. Municipal councils are elected in a separate ballot. Local elections are separate from national ones. |
| Municipal spending as % of GDP (2015-2019) | 2.8% | 2.3% | 6.5% |
| Municipal share of public spending (% , 2015-2019) | 12.7% | 17.8% | 22.5% |
| Collaborative institutional environment | High | Low | Low |
| National association of municipalities (AoM) | AMHON Founded in 1962 | ANAM Founded in 1940 | FCM Founded in 1988 |
| National AoM budget (USD) | \$0.34 per capita \$12k per municipality | \$0.13 per capita \$6.6k per municipality | \$0.53 per capita \$25 per municipality |
| Other AoMs | Regional <i>mancomunidades</i> | Regional <i>mancomunidades</i> and Indigenous association | Regional unstable associations |

First, we analyze the degree of capacity and autonomy enjoyed by local governments in these countries by contrasting political and fiscal features. Mayors have been elected in the three countries for a substantial period (since 1988 in Colombia, since 1993 in Honduras¹, and since 1985 in Guatemala). While mayors in Guatemala and Honduras can be reelected, Colombian ones cannot run for immediate reelection

¹ Formally, the Honduran constitution has allowed the election of mayors at least since 1894. However, these elections were completely tied to national election results until electoral reform in 1993 (Avellaneda 2017).

but must skip at least one term. Yet, Colombian mayors often pursue the mayoralty or other political positions after leaving office (Bello-Gomez and Avellaneda 2022a). While Colombian mayors tend to face opposition since mayors and council members are elected in different ballots, Guatemalan and Honduran mayors automatically enjoy a majority in the city council because mayor and local legislators are elected under a single ballot.

Municipal spending illustrates the degree of fiscal decentralization enjoyed by municipalities in each country. While Honduran municipal spending represented 12.7% of the public budget between 2015 and 2019, Guatemalan municipalities spent 17.8%, and their Colombian counterparts represented 22.5% of the country's public spending for the same period. Moreover, municipal spending in Colombia represented about 6.5% of GDP for this period, versus only 2.3% in Guatemala and 2.8% in Honduras². Thus, Colombian municipalities are substantially more endowed in general terms, and vis-à-vis the national government, compared to their Honduran and Guatemalan counterparts.

The institutional environment for municipal associativism also differs between these countries. A long tradition of municipal associativism exists in Central America where AoMs play a larger role as policy actors than in other parts of the Western Hemisphere (Quintero Lopez 2006). AMHON, the Honduran Association of Municipalities, was founded in 1962 and managed a budget of 3.6 million USD in 2023, which corresponds to about 12,200 USD per municipality and 0.34 USD per capita³. Meanwhile, Guatemala's National Association of Municipalities (ANAM) was founded in 1940 and had a budget of only 2.2 million USD in 2023 (about 6,600 USD per municipality and 0.13 USD per capita). In these Central American countries, AoMs have developed a strong role of political interlocution on behalf of municipalities vis-à-vis the national government. Moreover, they provide some degree of technical support to local governments that are characterized by their weak capacity. Finally, the Colombian Federation of Municipalities (FCM) was founded in 1988 and managed a budget of 27.6 million USD in 2023 (about 25,000 USD per municipality and 0.53 USD per capita). Consequently, the Colombian AoM shows a substantially higher endowment than its Honduran and Guatemalan peers. Yet, despite its greater financial resources, the Colombian AoM seems to have a more restricted institutional role in terms of political relevance and policy support for municipalities. This might be related to the larger degree of decentralization, capacity, and autonomy among Colombian municipalities compared to their Central American counterparts.

Regarding subnational AoMs, Honduras and Guatemala count with systems of regional mancomunidades grouping neighboring municipalities. Moreover, given the Guatemalan rich ethnic diversity, an Indigenous association of municipalities also exists. In the Colombian case, regional AoMs tend to lack stability and functioning structures (Rodríguez María 2013). Therefore, associativism seems to be more institutionalized in both Honduras and Guatemala, while the Honduran national AoM enjoys larger resources to exert some policy influence. Comparatively, Colombia exhibits a weaker collaborative environment despite its greater financial resources.

Survey Experiments

We ran between-subjects vignette experiments embedded within in-person surveys with mayors from these three countries. Mayors were approached during their national convention of AoM in their respective country. In each case, we drew convenience samples relying on the attending mayors' willingness and availability to answer our survey experiment. However, the samples are representative of each country's respective population of municipalities. The first survey was conducted in Honduras during the meeting of AMHON in La Ceiba in 2012. One of the authors surveyed 142 mayors of a total of 298 Honduran mayors. Avellaneda (2017) reports the main results of this study. The second survey was conducted in Antigua, Guatemala, with 69 mayors out of a total of 340, during the meeting of ANAM in 2017. Bello-Gomez and Avellaneda (2022) report key insights from this study. Finally, the third survey (Bello-Gomez and Avellaneda 2021) was conducted with 240 out of 1,100 Colombian mayors during the National Congress of Municipalities, organized by FCM in Cartagena in 2019.

² Calculated by the authors from information by the Inter-American Development Bank and the World Bank.

³ Budgetary data retrieved from news broadcasts (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=KUWa9CxsHT0>) and institutional websites (<https://anam.org.gt/> and <https://www.fcm.org.co/presupuesto/>)

We presented mayors with a hypothetical scenario in which they decide whether to delegate extra funding for service provision to an AoM. For robustness, the survey experiment manipulates the decision’s policy area (education vs. infrastructure for public utilities) to assess mayoral willingness to delegate. To test the role of issue specificity, we compare mayors’ preferences to delegate to an AoM in scenarios in which a particular policy area (education or infrastructure) is specified against mayors’ preferences when no policy is specified, which is a generic baseline scenario. This hypothesis was tested for the cases of Honduras and Colombia. Table 2 presents the generic vignette as well as the policy-specific vignette used for the Honduran case. Appendix tables A1 and A2 present the vignettes for the Colombian and Guatemalan cases, respectively.

Table 2. Experimental vignettes used in the Honduras experiment

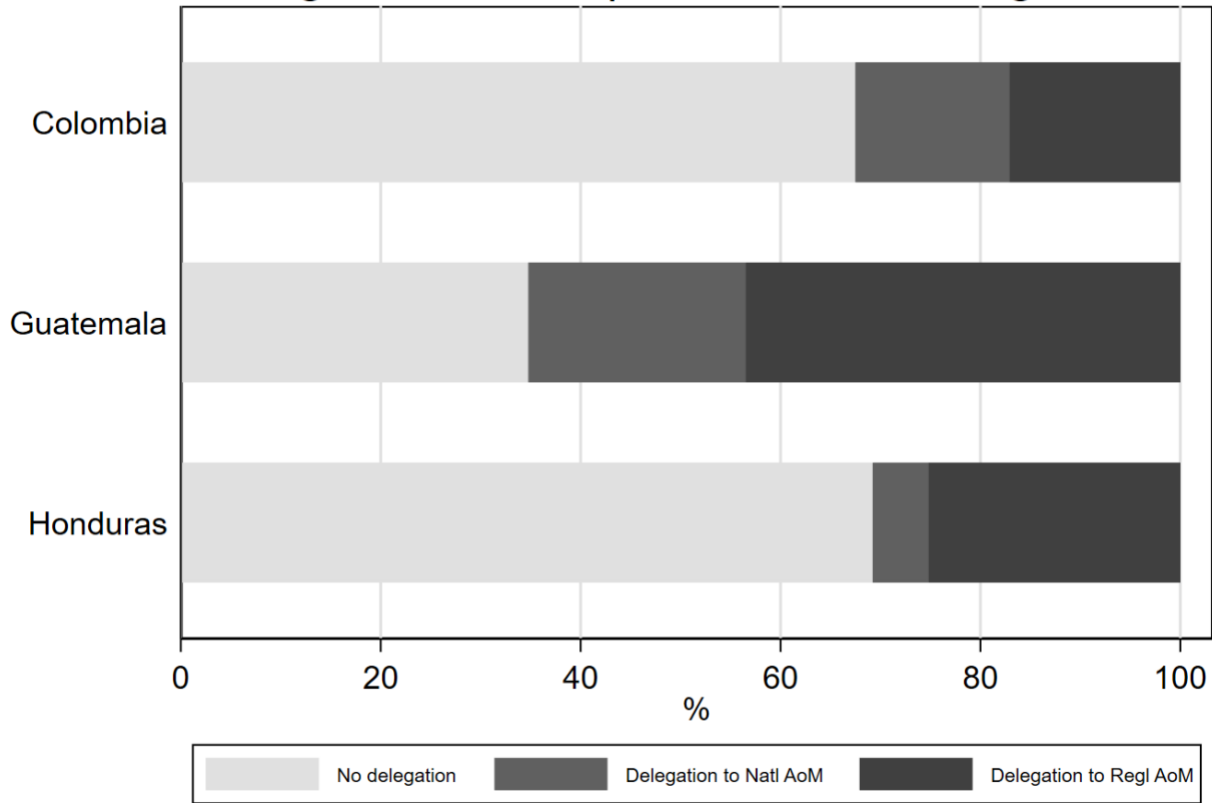
| Policy specific scenarios | Non-specified scenario |
|---|--|
| <p>For the purpose of this project, assume you are the mayor of a municipality, in which 60% of its population has no access to education has access neither to electricity, nor sewage, nor running water. Although the municipality has other needs, education lack of access to basic needs (water, sewage, and electricity) is obviously the vital priority.</p> | |
| <p>Assume you receive 1 million of lempiras (~US\$ 50.000) from an international donor agency to solve the vital priority in your municipality (that is no access to education lack of access to water, sewage, and electricity). However, the international donor agency asks you to choose from the following three alternatives to spend the donating money:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) You will be allowed to spend the money as you wish, meaning you will have full autonomy over these 1 million lempiras to deal with your municipal priority (access to education water, sewage and electricity). 2) You can use 500.000 lempiras as you want, and the other 500.000 lempiras will be delegated to AMHON (Association of Municipalities of Honduras) for it to fix your municipal vital priority (access to education water, sewage and electricity) with the help of its technical assistance 3) You can use 500.000 lempiras as you want and the other 500.000 lempiras will be delegated to the most important regional association of municipalities your municipality belongs to, for it to implement programs and projects targeting your municipal vital priority (access to education water, sewage, and electricity). | <p>Assume you receive 1 million of lempiras (~US\$ 50.000) from an international donor agency. However, the international donor agency asks you to choose from the following three alternatives to spend the donating money:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) You will be allowed to spend the money as you wish, meaning you will have full autonomy over these 1 million lempiras. 2) You can use 500.000 lempiras as you wish, and the other 500.000 lempiras will be delegated to AMHON (Association of Municipalities of Honduras) for it to invest on your municipality with the help of its technical assistance 3) You can use 500.000 lempiras as you wish, and the other 500.000 lempiras will be delegated to the most important regional association of municipalities your municipality belongs to, for it to implement programs and projects in your municipality. |

Findings

As the individual studies’ results have been published elsewhere, we focus on reporting and analyzing these findings from a comparative perspective. As observed in Figure 1, overall mayoral preferences for delegation, regardless of treatment, vary substantially between countries. While 69% of Honduran mayors and 68% of Colombian ones opted not to delegate through collaboration, the opposite is true for Guatemalan mayors with 65% choosing some sort of delegation by collaborating with an AoM. ANOVA reveals that these country differences are statistically significant ($F=10.34, p<0.00001$) and driven by the large share of Guatemalan mayors willing to delegate (pairwise comparisons are significant with $p<0.00001$ after Bonferroni correction). Mayoral preferences for delegation seem unaffected by policy area, as no significant differences

appear between those mayors receiving the education policy scenario and those receiving the infrastructure utilities policy scenario ($F=0.00$, $p=0.9481$; full ANOVA results in Appendix table A3).

Figure 1. Overall preferences for delegation



We use the cases of Colombia and Honduras to test whether issue specificity disincentivizes delegation/collaboration with an AoM. While reported willingness to collaborate is lower among those mayors receiving policy-specific scenarios (see Figure 2), this difference lacks statistical significance (full regression results in Appendix table A4). Yet, we explore further the effect of issue specificity on the explicit partner chosen by mayors. As presented in Figure 3, the likelihood of mayors choosing to delegate to or collaborate with their respective national AoM by issue specificity fails to reach statistical significance. However, issue specificity does reduce mayoral likelihood of delegating to a regional AoM partner, with this reduction becoming statistically significant for the case of Colombia ($p=0.065$ for infrastructure treatment and $p=0.031$ for education treatment). From a practical viewpoint, the effect is sizable as it corresponds to between 11 and 13 percentage points depending on policy area. Full regression results are presented in Appendix table A5. That is, Colombian mayors' preferences to delegate through collaborating with a regional AoM declines when facing scenarios whose policy area is specified (either education or infrastructure).

Figure 2. Willingness to delegate by policy specification

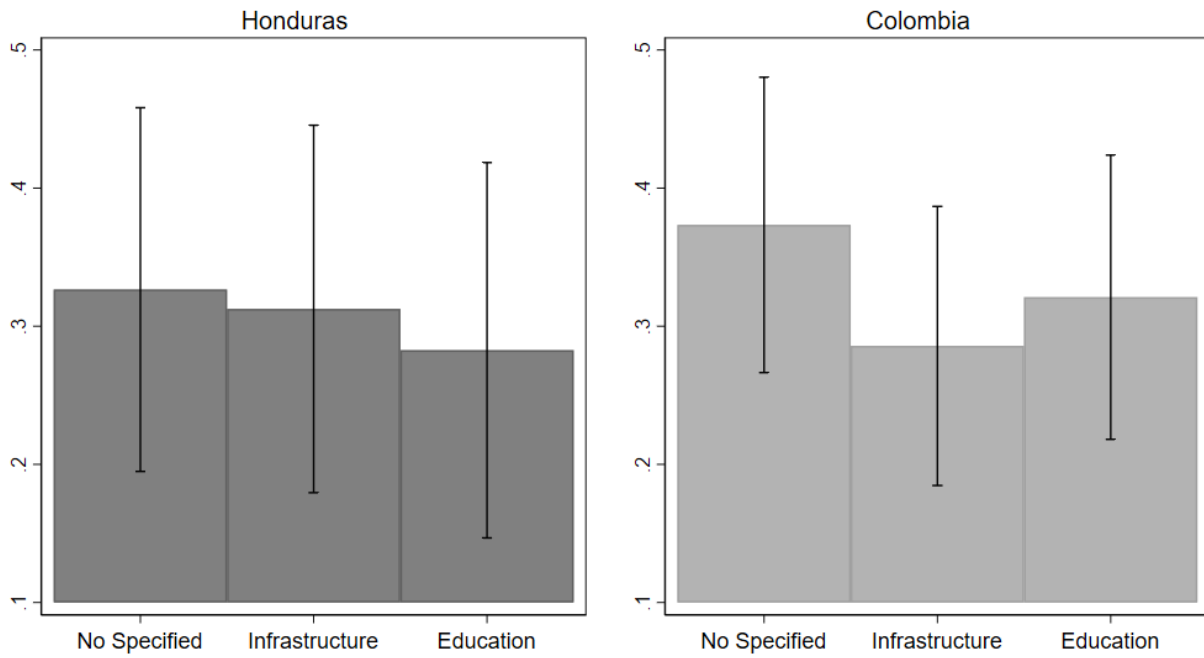
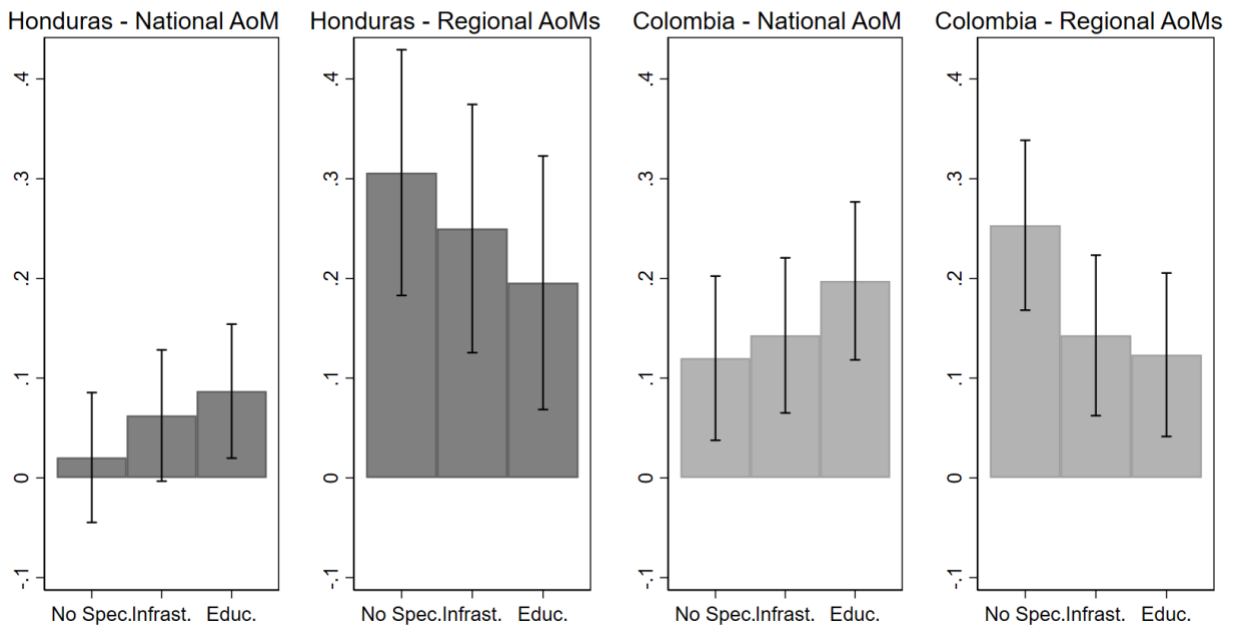


Figure 3. Willingness to delegate by policy specification and collaboration partner



Institutional Context and Mayoral Decision Making

Our findings suggest that overall preferences for delegating to and/or collaborating with an AoM are contingent on a country's context. We leverage national differences in local government capacity levels and the institutional landscape of municipal associativism to present some propositions on the role these institutional features may play in mayoral decision making:

- **Local government capacity:** The degree of local governmental capacity may drive mayors away from delegation, as they opt for declining delegation to claim credit for their own implementation of service delivery. That may explain the findings for the Colombian case. The higher degree of decentralization in Colombia has endowed mayors with greater autonomy. This added to the relatively greater financial capacity that deters mayors from delegating spending to an AoM.
- **Specificity and capacity:** Issue specificity seems to interact with local governmental capacity to influence mayoral decisions to delegate to an AoM. When the issue to delegate is unspecified, mayors face ambiguity and complexity in their decisions because of their difficulty assessing their organizational capacities in handling that unspecified matter. On the contrary, when confronting a specific issue, mayors' decision making becomes clearer, as they know their capacities (human and material) to deal with that policy area.
- **Strength of associativism:** The relative strength or capacity of each country's AoMs also may explain the heterogeneous findings. As Table 1 depicts, the capacity of a country's national AoM varies considerably in terms of financial resources. Therefore, in contexts where local capacity tends to be low, mayors may prefer to strive for autonomy with strong AoMs by avoiding delegating more responsibilities to these associations (Honduras) or by partnering with weak AoMs to complement local capacity (Guatemala).
- **Regional versus national AoMs:** In general, results reveal overall preference for regional AoMs where mayors may have more potential control and veto power over decision making, unlike a national AoM which embodies larger membership.

Concluding Remarks

Issue specificity may shift the decision of mayors to engage in collaborative arrangements with other local governments. However, the extent of these effects and the overall willingness to collaborate seem to be shaped by the institutional context surrounding these local governments. By comparing similar experimental studies with mayors in three distinct Latin American countries, we identify propositions regarding the role of local government capacity, the strength of the collaborative institutional framework, and the scope of the associative arrangements as potential drivers to explain divergent findings in mayors' preferences for collaborative work with associations of municipalities. From a methodological perspective, this study highlights the importance of setting behavioral public administration studies within the respective institutional context and, from a disciplinary perspective it calls attention to the need to engage with the contextual realities of governments in the Global South.

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APPENDIX

Table A1. Sample of the vignettes presented to Colombian mayors

| Sample vignette – Original in Spanish |
|---|
| <p>Suponga que en su municipio el 30% de los jóvenes no tiene acceso a educación secundaria / 20% de la población no tiene acceso a energía eléctrica, acueducto y alcantarillado. Aunque hay otras necesidades, es evidente que la prioridad es aumentar la cobertura en educación secundaria. Una agencia internacional le va a donar 150 millones de pesos para invertir en educación secundaria. Esta agencia le da tres opciones para darle el dinero:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li data-bbox="256 579 1393 638">a. Usted recibe los 150 millones y tiene autonomía en el gasto para ampliar cobertura en educación. <li data-bbox="256 667 1393 760">b. Usted recibe 75 millones con total autonomía en el gasto, y los otros 75 millones se le asignan a la Federación Colombiana de Municipios para que ellos le den asistencia técnica y se encarguen de utilizar el dinero para mejorar la cobertura educativa en su municipio. <li data-bbox="256 789 1393 907">c. Usted recibe 75 millones con total autonomía en el gasto, y los otros 75 millones se le asignan a una Asociación de Municipios regional de su preferencia para que ellos le den asistencia técnica y se encarguen de utilizar el dinero para mejorar la cobertura educativa en su municipio. |
| Sample vignette – English translation |
| <p>Suppose that, in your municipality, 30% of young people do not have access to high school education / 20% of the people do not have access to electric power, water and sewage. Even though there are other needs, it is evident that increasing high school enrollment is a priority. An international agency is going to donate you 150 million pesos to invest in high school education. This agency gives you three options to deliver the money:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li data-bbox="207 1142 1344 1171">a. You receive 150 million and have autonomy for spending to increase education enrollment. <li data-bbox="207 1201 1393 1293">b. You receive 75 million with full spending autonomy, and the other 75 million are assigned to Colombian Federation of Municipalities so that they provide technical assistance and use the money to improve high school enrollment in your municipality. <li data-bbox="207 1323 1393 1415">c. You receive 75 million with full spending autonomy, and the other 75 million are assigned to a regional association of municipalities of your preference so that they provide technical assistance and use the money to improve high school enrollment in your municipality. |

Table A2. Sample of the vignettes presented to Guatemalan mayors

| |
|---|
| <p>Sample vignette – Original in Spanish</p> <p>Asuma que el Instituto de Fomento Municipal (IFM) le va a otorgar un préstamo de 4 millones de Quetzales para invertirlo en un proyecto de desarrollo local diseñado por usted. Sin embargo, el IFM requiere que el proyecto de inversión se realice bajo la asesoría técnica de una organización con experiencia previa en el proyecto seleccionado. ¿Cuál de las siguientes entidades usted preferiría seleccionar para obtener la asesoría técnica?</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> (1) Una organización indígena que cuenta con una larga trayectoria en la región y con amplio conocimiento relacionado con el proyecto. (2) Una agencia del gobierno central que cuenta con una amplia experiencia implementando proyectos similares al seleccionado. (3) Una mancomunidad municipal que ha trabajado con proyectos similares en el pasado. (4) Prefiere negociar con el IFM para que el préstamo no requiera cooperación con otro ente. |
| <p>Sample vignette – English translation</p> <p>Suppose that the Municipal Development Institute (IFM) is going to grant you a loan of 4 million Quetzales to invest in a local development project designed by you. However, the IFM requires that the investment project be carried out under the technical advice of an organization with previous experience in the selected project. Which of the following entities would you prefer to select to obtain technical advice?</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> (1) An indigenous organization that has a long history in the region and extensive knowledge related to the project. (2) A central government agency that has extensive experience implementing projects similar to the one selected. (3) A municipal association that has worked with similar projects in the past. (4) You prefer to negotiate with the IFM so that the loan does not require cooperation with another entity. |

Table A3. Two-Way ANOVA on Decision to Delegate

| Source | Partial SS | df | MS | F | Prob>F |
|-----------|------------|-----|--------|-------|--------|
| Model | 6.7828 | 4 | 1.6957 | 7.69 | 0.0000 |
| Country | 6.7369 | 2 | 3.3684 | 15.28 | 0.0000 |
| Treatment | 0.2478 | 2 | 0.1239 | 0.56 | 0.5703 |
| Residual | 98.5159 | 447 | 0.2204 | | |
| Total | 105.2987 | 451 | 0.2335 | | |

Table A4. OLS Regression for Decision to Delegate by Policy Specification – Baseline: Generic scenario

| | Honduras | Colombia |
|-------------------------|----------------------|----------------------|
| Infrastructure | -0.0140 (0.0947) | -0.0876 (0.0747) |
| Education | -0.0439 (0.0957) | -0.0523 (0.0753) |
| Constant | 0.327*** (0.0666) | 0.373*** (0.0543) |
| Observations | 143 | 240 |
| Adjusted R ² | -0.013 | -0.003 |

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

Table A5. OLS Regression for Decision to Delegate by Policy Specification and Collaboration Partner – Baseline: Generic scenario

| | Honduras - Natl AoM | Colombia - Natl AoM | Honduras - Regional AoM | Colombia - Regional AoM |
|-------------------------|------------------------|------------------------|----------------------------|----------------------------|
| Infrastructure | 0.0421 (0.0468) | 0.0229 (0.0575) | -0.0561 (0.0886) | -0.110* (0.0595) |
| Education | 0.0665 (0.0473) | 0.0775 (0.0580) | -0.110 (0.0896) | -0.130** (0.0600) |
| Constant | 0.0204 (0.0329) | 0.120*** (0.0418) | 0.306*** (0.0623) | 0.253*** (0.0432) |
| Observations | 143 | 240 | 143 | 240 |
| Adjusted R ² | 0.000 | -0.000 | -0.003 | 0.014 |

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