International Journal of Multidisciplinary Research and Growth Evaluation.

Conceptual Systems Model of Regulatory Risk Propagation and Control in Public Sector Supply Chain Networks

Chinyere Peace Isiekwu [1*], Ajibola Oluwafemi Oyeleye [2]
[1] Tirzah Breed Foundation, Nigeria
[2] W. P. Carey School of Business, Arizona State University, Tempe, Arizona, United States

* Corresponding Author: **Chinyere Peace Isiekwu**

Article Info

ISSN (Online): 2582-7138
Impact Factor (RSIF): 8.04
Volume: 06
Issue: 06
Nov-Dec 2025
Received: 14-10-2025
Accepted: 21-11-2025
Published: 28-12-2025
Page No: 1376-1390

Abstract
Public sector supply chains operate within complex regulatory environments characterized by overlapping mandates, multi-tier governance structures, and high accountability requirements. Regulatory failures within such systems rarely remain localized; instead, they propagate across organizational, contractual, and jurisdictional boundaries, amplifying operational, financial, and reputational risks. This review paper develops a conceptual systems model of regulatory risk propagation and control in public sector supply chain networks, synthesizing insights from regulatory governance, systems theory, risk management, and supply chain resilience literature. The paper examines how regulatory risks emerge, interact, and cascade across interconnected public supply chain actors, including procuring entities, regulators, contractors, and oversight institutions. Emphasis is placed on identifying structural transmission pathways such as compliance dependencies, information asymmetries, enforcement latency, and policy misalignment that enable risk diffusion. The review further evaluates existing regulatory control mechanisms, including compliance audits, digital reporting systems, inter-agency coordination frameworks, and adaptive governance models, assessing their effectiveness in containing systemic risk. Building on these insights, the paper proposes an integrated conceptual framework that maps regulatory risk sources, propagation channels, feedback loops, and control levers across the public sector supply chain lifecycle. The model supports improved regulatory foresight, early warning capabilities, and coordinated risk mitigation strategies. By consolidating fragmented research into a unified systems perspective, this study contributes a structured foundation for policymakers, regulators, and public managers seeking to strengthen regulatory compliance, enhance transparency, and improve resilience in public sector supply chain networks (Oyeleye *et al*., 2024).

DOI: https://doi.org/10.54660/.IJMRGE.2025.6.6.1376-1390

Keywords: Regulatory risk, Public sector supply chains, Risk propagation, Systems modeling, Regulatory governance, Compliance control mechanisms

1. Introduction

1.1. Background and Motivation

Public sector supply chains are increasingly characterized by high structural interdependence, digital intermediation, and regulatory density. Unlike private-sector supply chains, public procurement and distribution networks operate under statutory compliance regimes that impose procedural rigidity, multi-layered approvals, and formal accountability mechanisms. These characteristics create an environment in which regulatory risk is not an isolated compliance issue but a systemic phenomenon capable of propagating across organizational and contractual boundaries. As digital platforms and enterprise systems become

central to public supply chain coordination, regulatory exposure is amplified by technology-enabled interconnectivity, where failures in governance controls or compliance logic can cascade rapidly across agencies and suppliers (Ahmed & Odejobi, 2018; Adesanya *et al*., 2020; Patrick *et al*., 2020; Oshoba *et al*., 2021; Dada *et al*., 2021b). The motivation for this study arises from the persistent gap between regulatory intent and operational outcomes in public sector supply chains. Existing compliance approaches tend to emphasize rule adherence at individual organizational nodes rather than the dynamics of risk transmission across the network as a whole. Conceptual models developed in enterprise digital systems research demonstrate that workflow dependencies, control latency, and information bottlenecks often act as hidden conduits for systemic risk (Ugwu-Oju *et al*., 2018). Translating these insights into the public regulatory context reveals the need for a systems-oriented understanding of how regulatory risks originate, interact, and escalate across interconnected supply chain actors. This review is therefore motivated by the necessity to reconceptualize regulatory risk not as a static compliance failure but as a dynamic, propagating condition embedded within public sector supply chain networks (Kaplan & Norton, 2018; Vial, 2019; Ugwu-Oju *et al*., 2022; Sanusi *et al*., 2023; Ugwu-Oju *et al*., 2023; Dada *et al*., 2024).

1.2. Regulatory Complexity in Public Sector Supply Chains

Regulatory complexity in public sector supply chains arises from the convergence of legal mandates, administrative procedures, financial controls, and sector-specific policy objectives. Public procurement, payroll, logistics, and service delivery functions are governed by overlapping regulations that frequently evolve in response to political, fiscal, and societal pressures. This multiplicity of regulatory layers introduces structural ambiguity, where compliance responsibilities are distributed across agencies and suppliers with varying interpretive authority. Studies on automated compliance systems illustrate how even well-defined regulatory rules can generate unintended risk when embedded within complex operational processes, particularly where algorithmic controls interact with financial reporting and accountability frameworks (Farounbi *et al*., 2018; Kshetri, 2018; Dako *et al*., 2023; Dada *et al*., 2021a).

In supply chain contexts, regulatory complexity is further intensified by multi-tier supplier arrangements and long contractual chains. Strategic procurement research demonstrates that regulatory constraints influence sourcing decisions, contract structuring, and performance monitoring in ways that can unintentionally increase systemic exposure to noncompliance and operational disruption (Okonkwo *et al*., 2018). For example, compliance failures at upstream suppliers may remain undetected due to fragmented oversight mechanisms, yet their effects can propagate downstream, affecting service delivery, financial integrity, and public trust. This interdependence underscores the inadequacy of linear compliance models and highlights the need to analyze regulatory complexity as an emergent property of interconnected public sector supply chain networks rather than a collection of isolated control failures (Odejobi *et al*., 2019; Isiekwu *et al*., 2021) (Oyeleye *et al*., 2023a).

1.3. Research Objectives and Scope

The primary objective of this review paper is to develop a conceptual systems model that explains how regulatory risks emerge, propagate, and are controlled within public sector supply chain networks. The study seeks to synthesize fragmented literature on regulatory governance, compliance management, and supply chain systems into a coherent analytical framework that captures dynamic risk interactions across organizational boundaries. Rather than focusing on sector-specific regulations, the paper adopts a cross-cutting perspective that emphasizes structural and systemic characteristics common to public sector supply chains (Seyi-Lande *et al*., 2019; Bayeroju *et al*., 2022; Sanni *et al*., 2023). The scope of the review encompasses regulatory risks associated with procurement, contracting, information flows, compliance monitoring, and inter-agency coordination. It examines how institutional interdependencies, control delays, and feedback mechanisms shape the transmission of regulatory risk across supply chain tiers. The paper does not aim to provide empirical testing or sector-specific case validation; instead, it prioritizes conceptual clarity and theoretical integration. By articulating a systems-based perspective, the study aims to support policymakers, regulators, and public managers in designing more resilient regulatory control architectures capable of anticipating and mitigating cascading compliance failures within complex public sector supply chains (Cordella & Bonina, 2019; Nwankwo *et al*., 2021; Davidor *et al*., 2022; Bayeroju *et al*., 2023).

1.4. Structure of the Paper

This paper is structured into six main sections to ensure logical progression and analytical coherence. Following the introductory section, the second section establishes the conceptual foundations underpinning regulatory risk and systems thinking in public sector supply chains. It synthesizes relevant theoretical perspectives to frame regulatory risk as a dynamic and networked phenomenon (Nwankwo *et al*., 2020; Bayeroju *et al*., 2022).

The third section examines the sources and pathways through which regulatory risks propagate across public sector supply chain networks, emphasizing institutional interdependencies and structural transmission mechanisms. The fourth section reviews existing regulatory control and mitigation mechanisms, evaluating their effectiveness in managing systemic risk. The fifth section presents the core contribution of the paper: a conceptual systems model that integrates risk sources, propagation channels, feedback loops, and control levers. The final section discusses implications for governance and identifies directions for future research. This structure ensures that conceptual development is grounded in theory, informed by practice, and oriented toward actionable regulatory insights (Okonkwo *et al*., 2019; Pamela *et al*., 2021; Yeboah & Ike, 2023).

2. Conceptual Foundations

2.1. Regulatory Risk Theory and Public Governance

Regulatory risk theory within public governance emphasizes the management of uncertainty arising from rule design, enforcement discretion, and institutional accountability. In public sector supply chains, regulatory risk extends beyond compliance failure to encompass systemic exposure created

by interdependent administrative, technical, and contractual systems. Risk modeling studies in infrastructure and environmental governance demonstrate how weak regulatory signals and delayed oversight can amplify localized failures into sector-wide disruptions (Badmus & Olamide, 2018; Olamide & Badmus, 2018). These insights align with governance theories that conceptualize regulation as a dynamic control system rather than a static set of rules, particularly where public value and service continuity are at stake (OECD, 2014; Mergel, 2019; World Bank, 2020; Isiekwu, 2024) (Asuzu *et al*., 2023).

Public governance structures often rely on layered controls, including audits, approvals, and performance monitoring, which create complex risk interdependencies. Reliability-centered frameworks originally developed for utilities illustrate how governance effectiveness depends on aligning regulatory objectives with operational realities across interconnected assets and actors (Yeboah & Enow, 2018). When applied to public supply chains, such alignment determines whether regulatory interventions stabilize or destabilize network performance. Strategic integration models further show that fragmented regulatory oversight reduces system-level visibility, increasing the likelihood of cascading noncompliance (Seyi-Lande *et al*., 2018; Borgatti *et al*., 2018). These dynamics support a regulatory risk perspective grounded in systems theory, where governance effectiveness is measured by its capacity to anticipate, absorb, and adapt to propagated risk rather than merely enforce compliance thresholds (Chopra & Sodhi, 2014; ISO, 2018; Flynn *et al*., 2018; Badmus & Olamide, 2020; Sanni & Atima, 2021; Seyi-Lande *et al*., 2022).

2.2. Systems Thinking and Networked Supply Chains

Systems thinking provides a foundational lens for understanding public sector supply chains as interconnected networks rather than linear procurement pipelines. Digital workflow and encryption models demonstrate how technical subsystems embed regulatory controls directly into operational processes, creating tightly coupled relationships between compliance, information flow, and performance outcomes (Ugwu-Oju *et al*., 2018a; Ugwu-Oju *et al*., 2018b). In public supply chains, such coupling means that regulatory failures within one system component, such as data access control or approval workflows, can propagate rapidly across agencies and suppliers. Systems theory explains these dynamics through feedback loops and non-linear interactions that characterize complex adaptive networks (Sterman, 2015; Choi *et al*., 2016; Oshoba *et al*., 2019; Olatunde *et al*., 2020; Ezeh *et al*., 2022; Ofoedu *et al*., 2023).

Empirical studies of infrastructure and housing systems further illustrate how contextual variables—economic, environmental, and institutional—shape network behavior and risk exposure (NWAFOR *et al*., 2018a; NWAFOR *et al*., 2018b). When translated to public supply chains, these findings underscore that regulatory performance depends not only on rule design but also on how governance structures interact with external pressures and internal capacity constraints. Network performance evaluation models reinforce this view by showing that scalability and concurrency stresses expose hidden interdependencies that regulators often overlook (Odejobi & Ahmed, 2018; Ivanov *et al*., 2014). A systems-thinking approach thus reframes regulatory control as an exercise in managing network stability and adaptability, where governance effectiveness is determined by the coherence of interactions across supply chain nodes rather than isolated compliance outcomes (Hearnshaw & Wilson, 2016; Barabási, 2016) as seen in Table 1 (Nwafor *et al*., 2019; Obuse *et al*., 2020).

Table 1: Systems Thinking Perspectives on Public Sector Supply Chain Networks

Analytical Dimension	Systems Thinking Interpretation	Implications for Public Sector Supply Chains	Regulatory Risk Considerations
Network Structure	Supply chains are viewed as interconnected and adaptive networks rather than linear procurement sequences, with multiple nodes linked through information, contractual, and operational dependencies.	Actions or failures at one node influence system-wide performance, requiring regulators to consider cross-agency and supplier interactions rather than isolated entities.	Localized regulatory failures can cascade rapidly, increasing systemic exposure when interdependencies are not explicitly managed.
Digital and Technical Coupling	Regulatory controls are embedded within digital workflows, data access systems, and encryption architectures, creating tightly coupled compliance and operational processes.	Digital integration enhances efficiency but reduces tolerance for error, making public supply chains more sensitive to process disruptions and system misconfigurations.	Technical failures or control misalignment can propagate compliance breaches across multiple organizations simultaneously.
Contextual and Environmental Influences	Network behavior is shaped by external pressures such as economic conditions, institutional capacity, and environmental variability that interact with internal governance structures.	Regulatory effectiveness depends on the adaptability of governance frameworks to contextual changes affecting supply chain stability.	Rigid regulatory designs may amplify risk under stress conditions, increasing vulnerability to cascading disruptions.
Feedback Loops and Nonlinearity	System performance is governed by feedback mechanisms and non-linear interactions that influence stability, scalability, and resilience.	Effective governance requires continuous monitoring and adaptive intervention to maintain network equilibrium.	Delayed or poorly coordinated regulatory responses can unintentionally reinforce risk propagation rather than contain it.

2.3. Risk Propagation and Interdependency Dynamics

Risk propagation in public sector supply chains is driven by interdependencies that transmit disturbances across institutional and operational boundaries. Spatial risk modeling research demonstrates how localized failures migrate through interconnected systems when control mechanisms are delayed or misaligned (Badmus & Olamide, 2018; Olamide & Badmus, 2018). In public governance contexts, regulatory approvals, funding authorizations, and compliance certifications often serve as shared control points,

meaning disruption at one node can impair multiple downstream actors. These interdependencies transform regulatory risk into a systemic phenomenon rather than an isolated compliance issue (Tang & Musa, 2014; Li *et al*., 2015; Obuse *et al*., 2020; Ijiga *et al*., 2022).

Maintenance and inventory optimization models further illustrate how operational interdependencies magnify regulatory exposure when governance mechanisms fail to account for network effects (Yeboah & Enow, 2018; Okonkwo *et al*., 2018). For instance, delayed regulatory clearance for a single supplier can reduce asset uptime across an entire public utility network. Analytical integration frameworks show that fragmented data and siloed oversight prevent early detection of such cascading risks (Seyi-Lande *et al*., 2018; Helbing, 2015). From a systems perspective, effective regulatory control requires visibility into these propagation dynamics and the deployment of adaptive feedback mechanisms that can interrupt risk transmission before it escalates into systemic failure (Craighead *et al*., 2017; Aven, 2016; Kyere Yeboah *et al*., 2019; Sanni *et al*., 2020; Kyere Yeboah *et al*., 2021; Olatunde *et al*., 2022; Okonkwo *et al*., 2023).

3. Sources and Pathways of Regulatory Risk Propagation

3.1. Regulatory Design Flaws and Policy Misalignment

Regulatory design flaws represent a primary origin point for systemic risk in public sector supply chains, particularly where policy instruments are developed in isolation from operational realities. Fragmented regulatory mandates often embed conflicting performance expectations across procurement, financial management, and digital operations. Evidence from compliance automation and enterprise systems research shows that regulatory rules frequently lag behind evolving operational architectures, creating misalignment between mandated controls and actual process flows (Farounbi *et al*., 2018; Odejobi & Ahmed, 2018). In public procurement systems, such misalignment can manifest as duplicated reporting requirements, incompatible approval thresholds, or ambiguous accountability for cross-agency decisions (Dako *et al*., 2019; Badmus & Olamide, 2021; Farounbi *et al*., 2021; Ekechi, 2022; Isiekwu, 2022).

Policy misalignment further intensifies when regulatory frameworks fail to account for resource constraints and system scalability. Studies on analytical integration and resource allocation frameworks demonstrate that policy rigidity limits adaptive capacity in complex networks (Ahmed & Odejobi, 2018; Seyi-Lande *et al*., 2018). In public sector supply chains, inflexible procurement or compliance rules can delay supplier onboarding, stall contract execution, and propagate noncompliance across dependent agencies. Governance literature reinforces that poorly coordinated policy instruments increase transaction costs and erode implementation fidelity (Ansell *et al*., 2017; Peters, 2018; Touboulic & Walker, 2018; Yeboah & Ike, 2020; Isiekwu, 2025b).

From a systems perspective, regulatory design flaws function as structural vulnerabilities that amplify downstream risk. Weak digital workflow alignment and unstable protocol governance further exacerbate these vulnerabilities by constraining information exchange and feedback responsiveness (Ugwu-Oju *et al*., 2018a; Ugwu-Oju *et al*., 2018b). When policy objectives, enforcement mechanisms, and operational systems are misaligned, regulatory risk propagates through supply chain tiers as delays, cost overruns, and compliance breaches. This analysis underscores the need for policy design approaches that integrate operational modeling, system scalability, and collaborative governance to prevent systemic regulatory failure (Radin, 2017; Bayeroju *et al*., 2021; Ogunsola & Michael, 2021; Isiekwu, 2025a).

3.2. Institutional Interdependencies and Information Asymmetry

Institutional interdependencies are a defining feature of public sector supply chains, where authority, information, and resources are distributed across multiple autonomous actors. These interdependencies create structural conditions for information asymmetry, particularly when regulatory oversight relies on fragmented data sources and uneven reporting capabilities. Research on spatial risk modeling and data-limited environments illustrates how incomplete information undermines coordinated decision-making in complex systems (Badmus & Olamide, 2018; Olamide & Badmus, 2018). In public supply chains, similar asymmetries arise when procuring entities, regulators, and contractors operate under divergent information regimes (Love *et al*., 2019; Ekechi, 2020; Eboseremen *et al*., 2022).

Information asymmetry is further reinforced by institutional silos and inconsistent digital security practices. Encryption and information protection models highlight how uneven data governance standards restrict information sharing and weaken collective situational awareness (Ugwu-Oju *et al*., 2018). When regulatory bodies lack real-time visibility into supplier performance or compliance status, risk detection becomes reactive rather than preventive. Governance scholarship confirms that such asymmetries distort accountability and enable opportunistic behavior within networked public systems (Moynihan, 2015; Koppenjan & Klijn, 2016; Anichukwueze *et al*., 2019; Ugwu-Oju *et al*., 2021; Filani *et al*., 2022).

Empirical insights from housing and infrastructure studies demonstrate how institutional fragmentation amplifies systemic vulnerability when socioeconomic, technical, and regulatory dimensions are not aligned (NWAFOR *et al*., 2018a; NWAFOR *et al*., 2018b; NWAFOR *et al*., 2018c). In public sector supply chains, regulatory risk propagates as delayed approvals, disputed compliance interpretations, and enforcement gaps across dependent agencies as seen in Table 2. These dynamics underscore the necessity of integrated information architectures and inter-agency coordination mechanisms to reduce asymmetry and contain regulatory risk propagation across supply chain networks (Nwafor *et al*., 2019; Nwafor *et al*., 2020).

Table 2: Institutional Interdependencies and Information Asymmetry in Public Sector Supply Chain Networks

3.3. Cascading Effects Across Supply Chain Tiers

Cascading effects represent the most visible manifestation of regulatory risk propagation in public sector supply chain networks. When compliance failures or regulatory delays occur at upstream nodes, their impact often multiplies as they move across interconnected supply chain tiers. Studies on inventory availability and maintenance frameworks demonstrate how localized disruptions can undermine operational continuity across dependent systems (Okonkwo *et al*., 2018a; Yeboah & Enow, 2018). In public sector contexts, delayed regulatory approvals for procurement or certification can halt production, disrupt logistics schedules,

and compromise service delivery at scale (Christopher, 2016; Ayanbode *et al*., 2019).

Digital infrastructure further accelerates cascading effects when regulatory controls are embedded within interconnected systems. Research on cloud architectures and cybersecurity protection shows that failures in compliance configuration or access control can propagate rapidly across enterprise networks (Ahmed & Odejobi, 2018; Ugwu-Oju *et al*., 2018). In public supply chains, such failures may result in widespread data access restrictions, contract suspension, or system shutdowns affecting multiple agencies and suppliers simultaneously. Supply chain resilience literature characterizes this phenomenon as a "ripple effect," where disruptions amplify as they traverse network structures (Ivanov *et al*., 2014; Craighead *et al*., 2014; Tang *et al*., 2018; Michael & Ogunsola, 2019).

Strategic procurement and energy planning models further illustrate how regulatory risk cascades across planning horizons and operational tiers (Odejobi & Ahmed, 2018; Okonkwo *et al*., 2018b). When regulatory uncertainty affects forecasting assumptions or procurement timelines, downstream actors are forced into reactive adjustments that increase cost, delay delivery, and weaken accountability. These cascading dynamics confirm the central argument of this study: regulatory risk in public sector supply chains must be understood and managed as a system-level phenomenon requiring coordinated controls, early warning mechanisms, and cross-tier governance alignment (Moore, 2018; Oduleye & Medon, 2021).

4. Regulatory Control and Mitigation Mechanisms

4.1. Compliance Monitoring and Enforcement Tools

Compliance monitoring and enforcement tools constitute the first line of defense against regulatory risk propagation in public sector supply chain networks. Traditional compliance instruments such as audits, inspections, and reporting requirements increasingly rely on analytical and automated systems to detect deviations before they escalate across institutional boundaries. Evidence from automated payroll assurance systems demonstrates how algorithmic validation of compliance rules can reduce financial misstatements while simultaneously strengthening regulatory traceability (Farounbi *et al*., 2018). Similar logic applies to inventory and asset management, where monitoring models designed to optimize availability and uptime can be repurposed to flag regulatory nonconformance that might otherwise remain latent until service failure occurs (Okonkwo *et al*., 2018; Love *et al*., 2019; Michael & Ogunsola, 2019; Okojie *et al*., 2023; Oluwo *et al*., 2022).

From a systems perspective, enforcement tools function as regulatory sensors embedded within the supply chain network. Performance evaluation platforms used in high-concurrency digital environments illustrate how continuous monitoring can detect stress points and operational anomalies that correspond to compliance risk thresholds (Odejobi & Ahmed, 2018). When these tools are poorly integrated, however, enforcement actions may lag behind risk emergence, allowing regulatory failures to propagate downstream. Analytical integration frameworks emphasize that fragmented monitoring architectures increase systemic opacity, weakening enforcement effectiveness (Seyi-Lande *et al*., 2018). Analogous to environmental risk modeling, where subsurface contamination pathways are predicted through data-driven frameworks, regulatory compliance monitoring must anticipate risk diffusion rather than merely respond to observed violations (Badmus & Olamide, 2018). Robust enforcement therefore depends on interoperable monitoring systems, standardized protocols, and adaptive thresholds that align technical performance indicators with regulatory mandates (Ugwu-Oju *et al*., 2018; Flynn *et al*., 2017; Olamide & Badmus, 2020; Isiekwu, 2023).

4.2. Digital Governance and Transparency Systems

Digital governance and transparency systems play a pivotal role in shaping how regulatory risk is communicated, interpreted, and controlled across public sector supply chains. Digital platforms enable real-time disclosure of procurement decisions, contract execution data, and compliance records, thereby reducing information asymmetry among stakeholders. Resource allocation models developed for energy-efficient computing infrastructures highlight how optimization logic can be adapted to ensure transparency in digital governance systems by prioritizing compliance-critical processes (Ahmed & Odejobi, 2018). When regulatory data flows are visible and auditable, the likelihood of hidden noncompliance propagating across agencies is significantly reduced (Bamgboye *et al*., 2019; Patrick *et al*., 2019; Ogunsola *et al*., 2021; Oparah *et al*., 2023).

Transparency systems also enhance regulatory resilience by supporting predictive and comparative analytics. Statistical modeling approaches originally designed for environmental and energy planning illustrate how data-driven forecasting can inform regulatory oversight by identifying early indicators of systemic stress (Odejobi & Ahmed, 2018). In public utilities and infrastructure networks, reliability-centered frameworks demonstrate how transparent performance data enables regulators to align maintenance, compliance, and service continuity objectives (Yeboah & Enow, 2018). Broader socioeconomic and environmental modeling studies further reveal that transparency systems must account for contextual variability, as regulatory risks are often shaped by external constraints such as demographic pressure or environmental conditions (NWAFOR *et al*., 2018a; NWAFOR *et al*., 2018b). Secure information protection architectures remain essential to sustaining trust in digital transparency initiatives, as weak encryption or data governance can itself become a vector for regulatory failure (Ugwu-Oju *et al*., 2018; Floridi *et al*., 2018; Heald, 2018; Aifuwa *et al*., 2020; Okojie *et al*., 2023) (Oyeleye *et al*., 2025).

4.3. Inter-Agency Coordination and Adaptive Regulation

Inter-agency coordination is a critical determinant of whether regulatory risks are contained or allowed to propagate across public sector supply chains. Fragmented governance structures often result in duplicated controls, inconsistent enforcement, and delayed regulatory response. Secure enterprise messaging and workflow architectures demonstrate how shared digital infrastructures can support coordinated regulatory action by enabling timely information exchange across agencies (Ahmed & Odejobi, 2018; Ugwu-Oju *et al*., 2018). Without such coordination mechanisms, regulatory signals may dissipate as they traverse institutional boundaries, weakening collective oversight capacity (Wieland & Wallenburg, 2016; Oparah *et al*., 2021; Omolayo *et al*., 2022).

Adaptive regulation further enhances coordination by allowing regulatory frameworks to evolve in response to

observed risk patterns. Strategic procurement optimization models illustrate how adaptive decision rules can be embedded within governance systems to balance compliance rigor with operational efficiency (Okonkwo *et al*., 2018). Analogous to spatial risk modeling in environmental remediation, adaptive regulation requires continuous recalibration of control parameters as risk conditions change across the network (Olamide & Badmus, 2018). Comparative structural analyses also suggest that governance architectures, like physical systems, must be designed for flexibility to accommodate contextual variation and institutional diversity (NWAFOR *et al*., 2018). Cybersecurity coordination reinforces this need, as regulatory risk increasingly spans digital and organizational domains simultaneously (Ugwu-Oju *et al*., 2018). Effective inter-agency collaboration therefore depends on shared standards, interoperable systems, and adaptive regulatory instruments capable of responding to systemic risk propagation in real time (Jordan *et al*., 2015; World Bank, 2019; Ogunsola *et al*., 2021; Olatunde *et al*., 2021; Ike *et al*., 2022) (Eyetsemitan *et al*., 2023).

5. Conceptual Systems Model of Regulatory Risk

5.1. Model Structure and Key Components

The conceptual systems model developed in this study is structured around four interlinked components: regulatory risk sources, transmission channels, control instruments, and system outcomes. Drawing on digital workflow and network stability models, the structure treats public sector supply chains as socio-technical systems in which regulatory risk is embedded within information flows, contractual dependencies, and operational timing constraints (Ugwu-Oju *et al*., 2018; Odejobi & Ahmed, 2018). Risk sources include regulatory ambiguity, enforcement latency, and compliance overload, while transmission channels consist of procurement approvals, data exchanges, and inter-agency dependencies. These components interact dynamically rather than sequentially, reflecting patterns observed in enterprise resource allocation and performance optimization frameworks (Ahmed & Odejobi, 2018; Seyi-Lande *et al*., 2018; Whyte & Hartmann, 2017; Ahmed *et al*., 2019; Okeke *et al*., 2019; Ugwu-Oju *et al*., 2022) (Oyeleye *et al*., 2022).

The model further incorporates feedback structures that link compliance performance to operational outcomes, such as inventory availability and service continuity. Inventory and uptime models illustrate how regulatory delays at one node propagate through dependent entities, amplifying system-wide exposure (Okonkwo *et al*., 2018). Conceptually, this aligns with resilience theory, which emphasizes interconnected risk accumulation in networked systems (Christopher & Peck, 2015; Helbing, 2013). By integrating digital infrastructure behavior with governance functions, the model reframes regulatory risk as a systemic property rather than an isolated compliance failure. Institutional resilience literature supports this structural approach, noting that regulatory systems must be designed as adaptive networks capable of absorbing shocks rather than rigid hierarchies enforcing static rules (Boin & Lodge, 2016; ISO, 2018; Kraljic, 2018; Olamide & Badmus, 2019; Olatunde *et al*., 2022; Sanusi *et al*., 2023) (Eyetsemitan *et al*., 2022).

5.2. Feedback Loops, Control Points, and Resilience Mechanisms

The model identifies regulatory risk feedback loops as the primary drivers of systemic amplification or stabilization within public sector supply chains. Drawing parallels with spatial risk modeling in environmental systems, regulatory failures are shown to migrate across institutional boundaries through delayed responses, misaligned incentives, and cumulative compliance burdens (Badmus & Olamide, 2018; Olamide & Badmus, 2018). For instance, delayed procurement certification can trigger contractual breaches, which in turn increase audit intensity and further delay approvals, forming reinforcing feedback loops. Reliability-centered maintenance frameworks demonstrate how early intervention at control points can interrupt these cycles by restoring system equilibrium before cascading failures emerge (Yeboah & Enow, 2018; Anichukwueze *et al*., 2020; Sanni *et al*., 2020; Badmus & Olamide, 2023).

Control points within the system include regulatory reporting thresholds, audit triggers, and digital validation checkpoints. Socio-technical studies of system sustainability highlight that resilience depends not only on rule enforcement but on adaptive capacity and contextual responsiveness (NWAFOR *et al*., 2018a; NWAFOR *et al*., 2018b). These insights align with system dynamics theory, which emphasizes balancing feedback loops as mechanisms for long-term stability (Sterman, 2014; Forrester, 2013). Governance resilience literature further supports embedding collaborative control mechanisms that allow agencies to jointly interpret and respond to regulatory signals (Ansell & Torfing, 2016). Within the proposed model, resilience mechanisms function as dampening structures that absorb regulatory shocks, enabling public supply chains to maintain continuity under stress while remaining compliant with evolving regulatory demands (OECD, 2015; Walker *et al*., 2014; Ponomarov & Holcomb, 2017; Oshoba *et al*., 2020; Sanusi *et al*., 2023).

5.3. Managerial and Policy Implications

From a managerial perspective, the systems model underscores the necessity of treating regulatory compliance as an operational design variable rather than a post-hoc control function. Digital architecture studies demonstrate that embedding compliance logic into enterprise systems improves predictability and reduces manual intervention risks (Ahmed & Odejobi, 2018; Ugwu-Oju *et al*., 2018a). Automated payroll compliance models further show that rule-based enforcement embedded in transactional systems can significantly reduce error propagation across financial and supply chain processes (Farounbi *et al*., 2018). For supply chain managers, this implies prioritizing system-level integration of regulatory requirements at procurement, contracting, and payment stages to minimize cascading compliance failures (Okonkwo *et al*., 2018; Hood & Dixon, 2015; Okeke *et al*., 2019; Elebe & Imediegwu, 2021).

At the policy level, the findings support a shift toward adaptive and risk-based regulation. Cybersecurity and encryption studies emphasize that regulatory mandates must evolve alongside technological infrastructures to remain effective (Ugwu-Oju *et al*., 2018b). Strategic analytics frameworks further indicate that cross-agency data integration enhances regulatory visibility and coordinated response (Seyi-Lande *et al*., 2018). These insights align with governance scholarship advocating for flexible regulatory regimes that emphasize learning, coordination, and resilience rather than rigid compliance enforcement (Lodge & Wegrich, 2014; Kettl, 2015). International standards on continuity and risk management reinforce the need for institutionalized

resilience mechanisms capable of sustaining public supply chains under regulatory and operational stress (ISO, 2018; World Bank, 2017; Power, 2016; Bharadwaj *et al*., 2013; Ahmed *et al*., 2020; Seyi-Lande *et al*., 2020; Isiekwu *et al*., 2025; Oluwo *et al*., 2024) (Oyeleye *et al*., 2023b).

6. Conclusions and Future Research Directions

6.1. Summary of Key Insights

This study advances a systems-oriented understanding of regulatory risk within public sector supply chain networks by demonstrating that regulatory failures are not discrete compliance events but dynamic phenomena that propagate across institutional, contractual, and technological boundaries. A central insight is that regulatory risk emerges from structural interdependencies embedded in public procurement rules, multi-agency oversight arrangements, and digitally mediated workflows. These interdependencies create transmission pathways through which delays in approvals, ambiguous regulatory interpretations, or enforcement inconsistencies at one node can cascade across the network, affecting suppliers, service delivery timelines, and fiscal accountability simultaneously.

The conceptual systems model developed in this paper highlights the importance of feedback loops and control points in shaping regulatory outcomes. Regulatory risk is shown to be amplified when feedback is delayed, fragmented, or distorted by information asymmetry, while timely monitoring and coordinated intervention can dampen propagation effects. The findings also reveal that control mechanisms function unevenly across the supply chain lifecycle, with stronger controls typically concentrated at procurement initiation and weaker oversight during contract execution and post-award monitoring. By mapping these dynamics, the study provides a coherent explanation for why public sector supply chains often experience recurrent compliance failures despite extensive formal regulation.

6.2. Practical Implications for Public Sector Governance

The findings of this study carry significant implications for public sector governance, particularly in the design and operation of regulatory control systems. Public institutions must move beyondsiloed compliance frameworks toward integrated governance architectures that recognize regulatory risk as a system-level property. This requires aligning procurement regulations, financial controls, and digital governance policies across agencies to reduce structural misalignment that enables risk propagation. For example, synchronizing procurement approval thresholds with real-time financial reporting systems can prevent downstream audit failures and contract suspensions.

Practically, the proposed model supports the deployment of early-warning mechanisms that monitor regulatory stress indicators across the supply chain network rather than within individual agencies. Such indicators may include approval latency, exception frequency, or contract modification density. Public managers can use these signals to trigger coordinated interventions before localized compliance issues escalate into systemic disruptions. The model also underscores the importance of strengthening inter-agency coordination structures, particularly for high-value or mission-critical supply chains such as healthcare, infrastructure, and utilities. Embedding regulatory foresight into governance processes enhances transparency, accountability, and resilience in public sector operations.

6.3. Limitations and Avenues for Future Research

While this study provides a robust conceptual framework, it is subject to several limitations that warrant careful consideration. First, the analysis is primarily theoretical and integrative, relying on synthesized insights rather than empirical validation. As a result, the proposed model does not quantify the magnitude or probability of regulatory risk propagation across different supply chain configurations. Additionally, the framework assumes rational institutional behavior and does not explicitly account for political interference, informal practices, or capacity constraints that may influence regulatory outcomes in practice.

Future research should empirically test the conceptual model using case studies, network simulations, or system dynamics modeling across diverse public sector contexts. Comparative studies examining regulatory risk propagation in centralized versus decentralized governance systems would further refine the model's applicability. There is also scope to integrate advanced analytics, such as graph-based risk modeling or digital twin representations of public supply chains, to operationalize the framework for decision support. By extending the model into empirical and computational domains, future work can enhance its predictive power and practical utility for regulators and public sector leaders (Ibeh *et al*., 2023).

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