

Preface

ABOUT THE SUBJECT

The global financial and economic crisis has promoted the discussion on how ethical, transparent and rigorous accountability on public sector institutions is. Therefore, that have been undertaken within the public sector were triggered by the new vision of the State's role which has been designated by the New Public Management (NPM). In the context of these reforms, the topic of accountability has becoming increasingly important. Underpinned in NPM assumptions, it is common sense that these reforms shall be undertaken through a progressive introduction of management tools, performance evaluation, and reporting of financial/non-financial indicators suitable to public sector institutions.

In this way, it is crucial the dissemination of management tools that will allow public institutions improving their accountability. In the same line, it is also crucial the dissemination of tools that will allow managers promoting information on how management is being conducted and goals achieved. Intertwined with the topic of transparency of the public management this would help improving citizens' and other regulatory entities' confidence levels.

On the one hand, this publication intends to gather investigations and empirical researches on these tools that unveil how public institutions implement and carry out the reforms designed by the NPM. On the other hand, the evaluation of the status quo of the reforms and the promotion of good practices in the management of public institutions are also relevant.

The creation of an independent publication with the goal to spread worldwide the findings of theoretical, empirical and experimental studies can be a fruitful tool to promote modernization and transparency in the public administration. Besides, it would help unveil the relationships between regulators and those regulated by them that could foster strengthening civil society confidence in the information disclosed by public institutions.

EXPECTATION

The editors hope that this book will be useful for regulatory authorities and researchers in the field of accounting and public management, and internal control and auditing as well. It also intends to be useful to public managers to become aware and realize how the several tools can be used to ensure the accuracy and transparency of public management acts and to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of public administration. Through the disseminating of the research findings on the rigor and transparency of public institutions this publication will also be helpful to develop and inspire further research studies by students in post-graduate courses with research interests in public accounting and management.

This book aims to achieve the following main objectives:

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- Disseminate methodologies that would allow public institutions to implement practices, consistent with values of ethics, rigor, transparency and accountability to promote accountable public sector managers;
- Document the management and control practices that are being used by public institutions to increase their accountability;
- Review the processes/models of governance that allow promoting accountability and document those that are being used by managers in order to increase the management transparency for citizens and other stakeholders;
- Discuss and disseminate the processes of control management and stress their importance for the reliability of financial reporting;
- Analyze the process of convergence with International Public Sector Accounting Standards;
- Disseminate the successful adoption of information technologies in order to instigate the public sector modernization.

ORGANIZATION OF THE BOOK

This book is organized into 21 chapters. The first six chapters are focused on the contextualization of the reforms resulting from the new public management. In particular, the chapters address topics related to the modernization changes in public sector management, namely, with accountability framework and with accounting standards for public sector. Thus:

- **Chapter 1, “New Public Management Reforms and Modernization Changes in Australia”:** Studies and discusses recent modernization changes in the public sector in Australia and provides insights on implications of NPM style reform for public sector accounting, auditing and accountability systems and practices.
- **Chapter 2, “Modernization and Accountability in Public Sector Administration Turkey Example”:** Makes an examination of how the modernization and accountability in public sector management in Turkey can be evaluated under the following headings: Political Accountability, Public Accountability, Citizenship Accountability.
- **Chapter 3, “Towards the Modernisation of EU Public Sector Accounting Standards: Lessons From the Reconciliation Between National and Governmental Accounting”:** Participates to the growing debate around the EPSAS-project that according to the EU Commission has a political priority.
- **Chapter 4, “A New Useful Tool or a Further Misunderstood Obligation? Perceptions on the LG Consolidated Report”:** Aims to explore the perception of local government (LG) on the users, the uses, and the utility of the consolidated report.
- **Chapter 5, “Internal Control in a Public Hospital: The Case of Financial Services Expenditure Department”:** Intends to analyse existing procedures and controls in the Financial Sector of Public Hospital, in particular the expenditure department, taking into account the human, material and technical resources available to the systematization of effective control practices and the identification of the main vulnerabilities of the internal control system.
- **Chapter 6, “EAGLE_Index: Enhancement of an Accountability Guide for Learning E-Government”:** Presents an index which allows evaluating the accountability maturity of the

websites of several types of public bodies or any type of public institution that works mostly with public capitals or capitals donated by other financiers.

Chapters 7 to 9 provide some knowledge about sustainability and integrated reporting. So:

- **Chapter 7, “Environmental Reporting and Accounting: Sustainability Hybridisation”:** Studies the context in which ‘accounting-sustainability hybrids’ were constructed in anticipation of the Environmental Reporting Act (ERA) passed in 2015 in New Zealand.
- **Chapter 8, “Strategic Responses of Public Sector Entities to GRI Sustainability Reports”:** Has the objective to determine the institutional factors that motivated sustainability disclosure in GRI reports as strategic responses to institutional pressures in the few entities that publish such reports.
- **Chapter 9, “Implications of Accountability Through the Prospect of Integrated Reporting Adoption in the Public Sector”:** Whose main purpose is to analyze the way in which the concept of accountability is addressed in the context of integrated reporting, focusing on the ongoing adoption process in the public sector.

The next six chapters provide reflections on performance and evaluation of the public services. They also provide reflection about management accounting systems as tools which can improve the management of public institutions. In this way:

- **Chapter 10, “Performance Indicators and Accountability in Portuguese Public Universities: Socio-Economic Perspective”:** Aims to evaluate the level of disclosure of performance indicators by the Higher Education Institutions in Portuguese Public Universities, with a special emphasis on the obligatory nature and to evaluate if there are factors that influence the level of disclosure.
- **Chapter 11, “Are Public Administration Institutions Willing to Disclose Their Performance Through Data Portals? The Case of the Portuguese Directorates-General”:** Analyses, in the Portuguese context, the performance information disclosure procedures implemented by the Directorates-Generals and evaluates some features of the performance indicators used.
- **Chapter 12, “Social Media Data Into Performance Measurement Systems: Methodologies, Opportunities, and Risks”:** Aims to explore how social media data can be integrated into a performance measurement system for a public institution, proposing a framework of analysis.
- **Chapter 13, “Governing Patients’ Mobility to Pursue Public Value: A System Dynamic Approach to Improve Healthcare Performance Management”:** Is a study that combines traditional performance management and system dynamics simulation modelling to address patients’ mobility issues and pursue public value.
- **Chapter 14, “Measuring the Quality of Health Services Using SERVQUAL: Evidence From Portugal”:** Discusses the quality of health services in a Portuguese hospital by assessing the level of patient satisfaction, according to several features, using the research instrument SERVQUAL.
- **Chapter 15, “Cost Accounting in Brazil’s Public Sector, Importance, Use, and Level of Deployment”:** Aims to identify the importance, use and level of implementation of cost accounting in Brazil’s public sector and its relationship with the features of user’s professional experience.

The next two chapters focus on dematerialization of public services. Thus:

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- **Chapter 16, “Portal for Employees in the Public Sector: A Tool for Knowledge Management in Human Resources”:** Proposes the creation of the “Portal for Employees in the Public Sector”, as a shared management tool, in order to avoid surplus or shortage of human resources, both in Central and Local Administration.
- **Chapter 17, “Impacts of Electronic Public Procurement in Portugal’s Construction Sector: Several Years after Implementation”:** Evaluates the impacts of electronic public procurement based on information and communication technologies, through a study in Portugal which analyzed data on five companies operating on an international scale.

Chapters 18 and 19 provide some knowledge about tax complexity, and about the impact of accounting information in the Re-Election of Mayors (thus the accounting information account?). Both chapters take into consideration the reality of Portugal and focus on local authorities. Thus:

- **Chapter 18, “The Perception of Tax Complexity Within Local Authorities’ VAT Framework: Evidence From Portugal”:** Analyses the case of the Value Added Tax (VAT), a typical example where the misuse of exemptions and no subsections imply the no payment of taxes by citizens. It studies the levels of tax complexity perceived in local authorities’ administration.
- **Chapter 19, “The Impact of Accounting Information and Socioeconomic Factors in the Re-Election of Portuguese Mayors”:** Evaluates the influence of accounting information and socioeconomic factors on the re-election of mayors, particularly in Portugal.

Finally, the last two chapters address issues on accountability of the Cooperatives and Development Agencies. Thus:

- **Chapter 20, “Reflections on the Accounting Framework of Public Interest Cooperatives in Portugal”:** Aims to determine whether the current accounting standards of cooperatives of public interest in Portugal are adequate, taking into considerations the social object, particularly the pursuit of furthering public interest.
- **Chapter 21, “The Role of Annual Reports in Ensuring Accountability: The Case of Development Agencies in Turkey”:** Carries out a content analysis on disclosure items in the annual reports of some Development Agencies in Turkey and examines their level of accountability to their stakeholders.

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