

Accounting and internal auditing in the Brazilian public sector: perception of public accountants in the face of convergence for IPSAS/IFAC

Contabilidade e auditoria interna no setor público brasileiro: percepção dos contadores públicos frente à convergência para as IPSAS/IFAC

Luciane Ribas Marques^a, João Eudes Bezerra Filho^a, Olavo Venturim Caldas^a

^a *Fucape Business School - Brazil*

Keywords

Implementation of NBC TSP.
Perception of public accountants.
Internal audit in the public sector.
Convergence IPSAS / IFAC in Brazil

Palavras-chave

*Implantação NBC TSP.
Percepção dos contadores públicos.
Auditoria interna no setor público.
Convergência IPSAS/IFAC no Brasil.*

Article information

Received: September 6th, 2019

Approved: April 17, 2020

Published: May 8th, 2020

Abstract

The aim of this paper was to investigate and analyze the perception of a sample of Brazilian public accountants regarding the adoption of the Brazilian Public Sector Accounting Standards, currently in the process of convergence with the standards of the International Federation of Accountants (International Public Sector Accounting Standards). The literature consulted has focused on quantitative research conducted from accounting information published in accountability to the Federal Courts of Auditors and repositories of the Federal Government, not focusing on analyzing perceptions of accounting professionals involved in the process. Contingency theory has been embraced as conceptual ballast. The study is exploratory and descriptive, and data were collected through an electronic questionnaire, the method of exploratory factor analysis was used. The sample had 168 respondents. The results indicate that there is a need for organizational, structural changes, sensitization of senior management, technical-professional and cultural competence in the accounting and internal audit segments of Brazilian public entities in order to meet the convergence. The findings contribute to the debate and reflection on the maturation process and search for solutions for the adoption of public accounting that meets the information demands of the most diverse stakeholder groups (internal and external).

Resumo

O objetivo do artigo foi investigar e analisar a percepção de uma amostra de contadores públicos brasileiros sobre a adoção das Normas Brasileiras de Contabilidade Aplicada ao Setor Público no Brasil, atualmente em processo de convergência com as normas da Internacional Federation of Accountants (International Public Sector Accounting Standards). A literatura consultada tem se concentrado em pesquisas quantitativas realizadas a partir das informações contábeis publicadas em prestações de contas junto aos Tribunais de Contas e repositórios do Governo Federal, não adentrando em analisar percepções dos profissionais de contabilidade envolvidos no processo. A teoria da contingência foi abarcada como lastro conceitual. O estudo é exploratório e de caráter descritivo, tendo sido coletados dados por meio de questionário eletrônico, utilizando o método de análise fatorial exploratória. A amostra contou com 168 respondentes. Os resultados indicam que há necessidade de mudanças organizacionais, estruturais, sensibilização da alta administração, de competência técnica-profissional e culturais nos segmentos de contabilidade e auditoria interna dos entes públicos brasileiros visando atender à convergência. Os achados contribuem também para o debate e reflexão sobre o processo de amadurecimento e busca de soluções para adoção de uma contabilidade pública que atenda as demandas de informações dos mais diversos grupos de interessados (internos e externos).

Practical implications

OThe results of the research are useful vectors to improve the organizational structure of the accounting segments and to value the competencies and attributions of the accounting professionals, enabling an effective implementation of internationalized accounting practices, resulting in reliable information that drives a greater degree of transparency, intensifies the fight against corruption and, above all, more well-being in society.

Copyright © 2020 FEA-RP/USP. All rights reserved.

Paper presented in XXII Seminários em Administração (SemeAD 2019)

Corresponding author: Tel. +55 (27) 4009-4444

E-mail: luciane.contabil78@gmail.com (L. R. Marques); joao@fucape.br (J. E. Bezerra Filho); olavocaldas@ig.com.br (O. V. Caldas)

Fucape Business School. Av. Fernando Ferrari, 1358 - Boa Vista, Vitória/ES - 29075-505, Brazil.

1 INTRODUCTION

In recent years, Brazil has undergone several transformations related to control and transparency in public spending and in meeting society's demand for better services. Several foreign influences on the concepts of public sector accounting and finance in Latin America are observed. Institutions such as the G20 Group (G20), the International Monetary Fund (IMF), the World Bank, the Inter-American Development Bank (IDB) and international audit firms have put pressure on the decision to converge on IPSAS (Aquino et al., 2020).

In the Brazilian context, the process of convergence of accounting practices began with the Ordinance of the National Treasury Secretariat (STN) no. 184, of 08/25/2008, issued by the Ministry of Finance (2008), encouraging the Federal Accounting Council (CFC) to publish, in 2008, the first Brazilian Public Sector Accounting Standards. With a new accounting model, the need arose to implement a single chart of accounts, the PCASP (Public Sector Accounting Plan), in addition to the remodeling and creation of new financial statements.

The CFC have published 27 Brazilian Public Sector Accounting Standards – NBC TSP converged with the International Public Sector Accounting Standard (IPSAS). Moreover, the National Treasury Secretariat, based on the conceptual framework of these standards, publishes the Brazilian Public Sector Accounting Standards (MCASP), currently in its 8th edition. In short, the converged NBC TSP deal with the theoretical framework of public accounting, and the MCASP, as a manual, deals with accounting routines and guidance from an operational perspective.

Regarding legislation, the substitute of Law No. 4,320/1964 is being processed in the House of Representatives, by means of PLP 295/2016, which aims to establish general rules on planning, budget, funds, accounting, control and evaluation in public administration, whose text positions public accounting in the environment of modernity and convergence with international standards.

When talking about normative convergence in a country, it is important to seek the opinion of the accounting professionals involved, because they are on the “front line”, to provide the driving actors of the project, in the case of the Federal Government and the Federal Accounting Council. We must be aware of possible variables, issues and scenarios that go beyond the pure normative content, under penalty of fruition of the project in the medium and long term.

The national literature has focused on quantitative research usually based on accounting data published in collecting systems of the Courts of Accounts, and/or repositories of the Federal Government, disregarding the perceptions of accounting professionals, as well as organizational, cultural and structural issues involved in the process.

On the other hand, the international academic community has shown great interest in discussions on changes in accounting standards (Nahapiet, 1988). The debate, which was previously focused on normative issues (Hammerschmid & Meyer, 2005), today focuses on understanding the impacts and processes of change at the organizational level (Liguori & Steccolini, 2012; Liguori, 2012). The Contingency Theory has been systematically employed in this environment.

According to Moreno, Borsato, Dal Vesco & Walter (2016), the Contingency Theory guides the search for an optimized organizational structure in the face of internal factors and the external environment.

In this scenario, given the research gap, the objective of our study was to capture the perception of public accountants, so that we can verify if the accounting and internal auditing segments, in the three spheres of government, are structured or modernized to achieve the convergence process, sometimes underway in the country. We also sought to know the profile of accounting professionals working in accounting and internal auditing in the Brazilian public sector. Therefore, we used the Contingency Theory as theoretical support in the treatment of the research question.

The scope of the research is justified by several aspects, mainly by the need to understand the complexity and heterogeneity of the structures, organizations and competencies that operationalize the practices and routines of accounting and internal auditing in Brazilian public institutions. Some researchers recognize that the success of new accounting and systems management depends primarily on the support and implementation capacity of the process (Chenhall, 2003).

The environment, organizational structure, technology and management decision-making have an impact on organizational success and performance (Gordon & Miller, 1976; Gupta, Dirsmith & Fogarty, 1994; Geiger & Ittner, 1996). With the fiscal and financial crises that concern several countries, our study is also relevant to investigate whether institutions have the capacity to organize to react and readjust, in response to shocks and a changing environment (Ligouri & Steccolini, 2014).

2 THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

2.1 Organizational structure

The analysis of the fundamentals of the organizational structure is important due to the possibility of new organizational arrangements in public agencies, aiming to reconcile the structures with the demands arising from the implementation process of NBC TSP converged with IPSAS. Thus, we understood that the circumstances that can cause organizational changes with interferences in the organizational structure are: crises or problems, new opportunities and new internal and external guidelines (Herzog, 1991 as cited in Lima et al., 2015).

With the modernization of public administration and the search for improvement in administrative efficiency and provision of services to society, the analysis of the organizational structure becomes essential for understanding how public entities are structured. New capacities in the management of public administration require improvement in workflows, decision-making processes and communications, as well as an appropriate organizational structure, which will allow a significant change in institutional management capacity. The perception of the organizational structure complexity is fundamental to produce means for organizational change (Lima, Jacobini & Araujo, 2015).

Flamholtz (1996) finds that the organizational structure acts as a control tool, evidencing the expected behaviors of individuals in the performance of their functions, in the same way as the specification of authority and the subordination relationship of the entire set of functions that make up the organizational structure.

2.2 Contingency Theory

Some organizational theories have a probable contribution to assist in understanding the organization of accounting and internal auditing in the public sector, because they possibly have a theoretical framework that can help administrators to elaborate structures, according to the needs of the agency and various changes in reality.

The importance of studying the concepts of Contingency Theory is related to the understanding of the logic of how entities are structured. In the presence of a changing environment, due to convergence to the International Public Sector Accounting Standard (IPSAS), the research on Contingency Theory analyzes the choice of the best structure for the public agency to adapt to the levels of uncertainty of the environment (Chenhall, 2003).

According to the Contingency Theory, no organizational structure is strongly effective for all organizations (Donaldson, 2001 as cited in Marques, 2012, p. 28). According to Marques (2012, p. 28), “contingent factors are the variables that characterize the internal and external environments of organizations and that can influence their structure and performance”. Environmental uncertainty can be considered an external factor. The organizational structure and strategy are considered as an internal factor.

Therefore, we chose the Contingency Theory to achieve our research objective, since it can provide ideas that allow to help the understanding of the adoption and implementation of NBC TSP in Brazilian public entities.

3 METHODOLOGY

The sample was formed by accountants that work in accounting and internal auditing in the Brazilian public sector (Union, States and Municipalities), because they are directly involved with the adoption of new standards and organizational changes. The research did not intend to evaluate the perception of internal and audited auditors, but rather the opinion of public accountants working in these segments.

Data on the perception of professionals were collected through an electronic questionnaire. A pre-test was conducted with a questionnaire of 38 questions, between 08/03/2018 and 25/03/2018 and had the participation of a group of 10 specialists from the public sector, among them, accountants and teachers with notorious knowledge in the professional and academic area of Brazilian public accounting.

The analysis of the answers of the pre-test allowed to evaluate if the questionnaire covered complex questions, if it was short or long, if the questions were repetitive or ambiguous, if people understood the meaning of the terms used, etc. The questionnaire was structured based on citations, questions and reflections raised in articles, dissertations, manuals and legislation (annexed to the supplementary documents of this article). The access link to the questionnaire was available to participants from 04/17/2018 to 06/03/2018, in the social network Facebook. Moreover, about 40 emails were sent to potential respondents. The sample had 181 participants, of which 168 were validated.

The first part of the questionnaire has 38 statements distributed among the process of implementation of NBC TSP, structure of the public agency, structure of internal audit, attributions, competencies and remuneration, outsourcing and political pressures. The second part of the questionnaire deals with the profile of the respondents (professional and sociodemographic characteristics) and has 09 questions.

Since the perception variables were related to the Likert scale of 05 points, the Exploratory Factor Analysis (EFA) method was applied, and relevant statistical criteria and tests were used: theoretical correlation estimation, analysis of the proportion of total variance, Bartlett's sphericity test, Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin test (KMO), communality estimate and Cronbach's Alpha coefficient.

The choice of the five-point scale was due to the study by Dalmoro and Vieira (2014), which aimed to analyze the interference of the number of items on the Likert scale and the impact of the scale layout on the result of a measurement. In addition, it examined the preference of the respondents regarding the speed, ease and accuracy of the response.

The alternative "Does Not Agree or Disagree" was used, known as "Neutral Point". Lucian's research (2016) points out that the academia does not exactly have a clear definition for the neutral point of the Likert scale. For the author, the real function of the neutral point would be to undo the question. Its use may allow the respondent to feel comfortable to express their opinion if there is no attitude towards the corresponding statement.

Regarding factor analysis, the KMO and Bartlett tests indicated the presence of correlations between the indicators, confirming the use of the factorial method. The method showed that the indicators have adequate factor loadings (values higher than 0.50), as directed by Hair et al. (2005).

Assuming that the number of professionals (target population) is unknown, the sample had 181 participants, of which 168 were validated; considering z as the critical value corresponding to the desired confidence level (for 95% confidence level, results with $z = 1.96$); the margin of error of the estimate of unknown interest; and maximum proportion of $p=50\%$ and $q=50\%$. The sample size to estimate the population proportion p , using the following formula, arranged by Triola (2008, p. 529):

$$n = \frac{(z_{\alpha/2})^2 (p \cdot q)}{E^2}$$

Thus, the sample was composed of 168 participants, at a 95% confidence interval, after some simple calculations, the sampling error observed was 7.6%, based on the return of the answers. This is possible when no p estimate is known (Triola, 2008).

The limitation of the method is because some indicators presented the Cronbach's Alpha reliability test below the reference value (0.60) and, therefore, in future research, other indicators should be included in the analysis, to better represent the factor in question.

Regarding the 168 professionals that answered, we verified that our sample is reasonably homogeneous.

4 ANALYSIS OF RESULTS

4.1 Exploratory factor analysis - implementation process of NBC TSP

Table 1 shows that the professionals are aware about the importance of NBC TSP for the public agency and the requirement of adaptation and involvement of people in the process of changing norms. The recognition of the importance of the new standards is related to the complexity of the tasks performed by the Public Administration (Passos, 2012). The adaptation and involvement of personnel in the innovation process related to the standards were emphasized in the study of Liguori and Steccolini (2012).

The findings also show a good knowledge of NBC TSP and MCASP, demonstrating that professionals are attentive to changes in standards. However, one of the lowest averages was related to investment in professional training. The lack of personnel trained in competency regime was one of the main problems pointed out by the survey encompassing several countries, conducted by Pwc (2013).

The cultural adaptation of the organ also had a negative perception, that is, the respondents disagree that the cultural adaptation of the organ to NBC TSP will be rapid, which is similar to the results Callado and Teixeira (2016). The motivation for rebuilding an organizational culture can arise from new accounting practices, including new standards of authority and influence (Dent, 1991).

Table 1. Exploratory factor analysis of opinion indicators on the implementation process of NBC TSP

Variable	Factors				
	Knowledge	Acceptability	Awareness	Adaptation and Training	Communitary
Knowledge of IPSAS	0.650				0.540
Knowledge of MCASP	0.679				0.543
Knowledge of NBC TSP Conceptual Framework	0.833				0.700
Knowledge of the 16 NBCASPs	0.840				0.743
Adaptation and involvement of people in the process of change		0.548			0.401
Importance of NBCASPs to the entity		0.666			0.524
I agree with the adoption of IPSAS/IFAC in Brazil		0.668			0.617
Accounting will be used to improve the quality of information		0.756			0.639
The accounting sector is responsible for the implementation of NBCASPs and MCASP			0.778		0.633
My entity is in the process of deploying NBCASPs and MCASP			0.677		0.664
Rapid cultural adaptation of the public agency in relation to NBCASPs and MCASP				0.747	0.612
Investment in the training of professionals on NBCASPs and MCASP				0.691	0.649
% Variance	20.4%	16.0%	12.1%	12.0%	-
% Cumulative variance	20.4%	36.4%	48.5%	60.5%	-
Cronbach's Alpha	0.770	0.645	0.467	0.445	0.759
Statistics					
Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin (KMO)		0.787			
Bartlett Test Of Sphericity	Q ²	443.11			
	p-value	0.000			

Source: Prepared by the authors

4.2 Exploratory factor analysis - structure of the public body

Na Tabela 2 são demonstradas as percepções dos contadores com relação à estrutura do órgão público em que exercem suas atividades profissionais.

A questão “*A Contabilidade dever estar subordinada ao gestor geral do órgão*” possui uma concordância positiva. A percepção dos contadores está alinhada aos aspectos da Teoria da Contingência, pois os profissionais presumem que um novo desenho estrutural ou uma nova definição de hierarquia talvez possa melhorar a autonomia e desempenho da contabilidade. A importância do estudo dos conceitos da teoria da contingência está relacionada à compreensão da lógica de como as entidades estão estruturadas.

A Teoria da Contingência pode fornecer subsídios para compreensão da opinião dos profissionais. A pesquisa realizada por Chenhall (2003) reconhece que o planejamento do futuro da organização pode ser facilitado pelos arranjos estruturais, que por sua vez interferem na eficiência do trabalho, na motivação dos indivíduos, nos fluxos de informação e sistemas de controle. Em conformidade com a teoria da contingência, a definição da estrutura concentra-se na estrutura harmonizada para se adaptar aos níveis de incerteza no ambiente (Burns & Stalker, 1961; Drazin & Van de Ven, 1985; Galbriath, 1973; Lawrence & Lorsch, 1967 como citado em Chenhall, 2003, p. 145).

Table 2. Exploratory factor analysis of opinion indicators on the structure of the public body

Variable	Factors	
	Opinion on the structure of the Public Body	Communality
Functional independence of the accounting unit	0.834	0.696
Accounting has an influence on decision-making	0.770	0.593
Accounting is directly subordinated to senior management	0.619	0.383
Accounting segment is segregated from the financial and budget sectors	0.608	0.370
The accounts shall be subject to the general manager of the public agency		0.051
% Variance	41.8%	-
% Cumulative variance	41.8%	-
Cronbach's Alpha	0.645	0.645
Statistics		
Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin (KMO)	0.787	
Bartlett Test of Sphericity	Q ²	118.37
	p-value	0.000

Source: Prepared by the authors

4.3 Exploratory factor analysis - internal audit structure

Table 3 shows the perceptions about the structure of the existing internal audit of the public agencies in which they operate. We noticed that among the entities of the federation, the Brazilian municipal agencies are the ones with the least internal audit unit and those that do the least accounting auditing. This result is similar to Costa (2008), in which most Portuguese municipalities do not have an internal audit.

The professionals agree, at least partially, that accounting and internal audit should be at the same hierarchical level subordinated to the maximum head of the body. We emphasize the similarity of this result with the research by Fernandes and Machado (2011), which evaluated the position of accounting in the organizational chart. In the authors' judgment, accounting should be subordinated to the board of directors, because accounting information is essential for evaluating managers' performance, being a mechanism of accountability and corporate governance.

The agreement on accounting is in the same hierarchical position as the internal audit also finds support in a study by Ferlie et al. (1999) evaluated by Lima et al. (2015), whose understanding is that the creation of new organizational designs in the public sector and reconfigurations of power relations are seen as indicators to measure the process of organizational changes.

Some authors recognize the mobilization of power acts as a facilitator in changes in accounting practices. This is the case of the study of Burns (2000) and Burns and Scapens (2000). Changes in accounting can influence organizational behavior.

Since the Contingency Theory studies the elements of change, that is, environmental factors that affect the organizational structure, it can help in understanding this issue. Organizational adaptability is essential, as the environment is a determining factor for organizational practices. (Moreno et al., 2016). The size of the organization and institutional strategies that may interfere with the organizational structure are seen as internal factors that influence the need for change and can be examined by Contingency Theory (Upping & Oliver, 2011).

Table 3. Exploratory factor analysis of opinion indicators on the structure of internal audit

Variable	Factors		Communality
	Relationship and Competence of Professionals	Hierarchical Level of Auditing and Accounting	
Technical competence of professionals to perform accounting audit.	0.845		0.732
Frequent communication between accounting and internal auditing.	0.814		0.670
Regarding the accounting approach, the internal audit fulfills its role well.	0.788		0.624
Integration of accounting with other segments of the institution.	0.662		0.506
The internal audit is subordinated to the maximum officer of the body.		0.805	0.653
Accounting and internal auditing should be at the same hierarchical level.		0.726	0.539
% Variance	40,9%	21.2%	-
% Cumulative variance	40,9%	62.1%	-
Cronbach's Alpha	0,792	0.341	0.653
Statistics			
Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin (kMO)		0.733	
Bartlett Test of Sphericity	Q ²	174.42	
	p-value	0.000	

Source: Prepared by the authors

4.4 Exploratory factor analysis - attributions, competences, and remuneration

Table 4 shows the nine indicators formulated to measure the opinion of accountants on competence, attributions, and remuneration.

The professionals understand that there should be a minimum wage floor and that the remuneration received does not match the responsibilities assumed by them, with a 50% agreement. This percentage is higher than that found in the research by Brandalise et al. (2009), in which professionals also showed dissatisfaction with remuneration. The satisfaction of interests and the establishment of incentives for the actors involved in the change procedures are important factors to succeed in the process (Burns, 2000; Liguori, 2012). Statistics also show that professionals recognize their skills, knowledge and experience with systems.

The statement about the interest of senior management in implementing NBC TSP and MCASP showed a possible lack of interest in the support of senior management in implementing the procedures and controls necessary for the application of the standards. This result is in line with some studies. For example, the study conducted by Oulasvirta (2014), in Finland, in which resistance was found in the adoption of IPSAS, due to the low political interest.

In the case of Costa Rica, a study conducted by IPSASB (2014) emphasizes the importance of the active participation of public managers in the implementation of IPSAS. In the investigation of Cavalluzzo and Ittenre (2004), it was also found that one of the difficulties in the development of performance measures in the USA is the lack of commitment of senior management. Finally, the Lima & Lima (2019) survey also points the lack of support from managers since they do not recognize the relevance in changing government accounting standards.

Table 4. Exploratory factor analysis of opinion indicators on attributions, competences, and remuneration

Variable	Factors		
	Attributions and Competence	Remuneration	Communality
Experience with integrated management systems.	0.799		0.639
Familiarity with accounting system and information subsystems	0.795		0.646
Knowledge of internal control procedures	0.771		0.595
Clear understanding of my role in the implementation of NBCASPs	0.645		0.488
Interest of the public agency's senior management in implementing NBC TSPs and MCASP	0.639		0.418
Autonomy and independence in my work.	0.556		0.319
Self-knowledge regarding the skills and abilities required in my work.	0.510		0.493
Remuneration of professionals is not consistent with their responsibilities.		0.790	0.638
Need for a salary floor of professionals.		0.781	0.620
% Variance	36.5%	17.5%	-
% Cumulative variance	36.5%	54.0%	-
Cronbach's Alpha	0.803	0.514	0.739
Statistics			
Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin (kMO)		0.809	
Bartlett Test of Sphericity	Q ²	397.16	
	p-value	0.000	

Source: Prepared by the authors

4.5 Descriptive analyses

Table 5 shows the opinions on outsourcing and political pressures, which were not the object of exploratory factor analysis, due to the small number of questions. Therefore, we chose to use the very indicator that represents them.

Table 5. Descriptive statistics of the new indicator structure

Opinion	Variable	Mean	Standard Deviation	Minimum	Median	Maximum	n
About the NBC TSP Deployment Process	Knowledge	4.25	0.71	2	4	5	168
	Acceptability	4.62	0.57	2	5	5	168
	Awareness	4.20	0.94	1	4	5	168
	Adaptation and training	1.51	0.51	1	1,5	3	168
	General	4.01	0.61	2	4	5	168
On the structure of the public body		3.49	0.97	1	4	5	168
About the internal audit structure	Relationship and competence of professionals	2.53	0.88	1	3	4	129
	Hierarchical level of auditing and accounting	4.39	0.90	1	5	5	130
	General	3.60	0.86	1	4	5	129
About attributions, competencies, remuneration	Attributions and competence	3.89	0.77	2	4	5	168
	Remuneration	4.61	0.70	2	5	5	168
	General	3.54	0.58	2	4	4	168
On pressures and outsourcing	Outsourcing	4.28	1.08	1	5	5	168
	Political pressures	4.55	0.81	1	5	5	168

Source: Prepared by the authors

Most professionals fully or partially agree that a possible replacement of the accountant, if the professional makes a relevant technical decision other than the guidance of the public manager, would decrease with admission by public tender. The opinion was unanimous in the statement that “political pressures represent an obstacle to organizational changes in the accounting and public auditing environment”.

Regarding the profile of professionals, concerning sociodemographic data, men are predominant, with 63.7%, a percentage similar to that of the research by Costa et al. (2018). Regarding the level of education, 91.7% of the professionals have specialization or master’s degree, a better percentage than that demonstrated in the research by Costa et al. (2018). It seems that there is a great interest of accountants in specializing, which is an important indicative for convergence. The research by Klann and Morás (2018) showed that professional training and education level can be decisive for accountants to realize the relevance of the implementation process of NBC TSPs.

Finally, the frequency distribution for professionals’ characteristics of the accountants allows us to conclude that 90.5% of them have functions inherent to accounting and/or internal control; 92.3% are effective public servants; 83.3% of the professionals are employees that work in Accounting or Internal Audit or technical responsible for Accounting or Internal Audit; and 56.5% have between 05 and 15 years of experience in their area of expertise.

5 FINAL CONSIDERATIONS

The article gathers evidence that there are subjective motivations, not observed in previous quantitative studies in Brazil, which may, or will be, affecting the practical adoption of NBC TSP, in the process of convergence to IPSAS. The 168 public accountants surveyed pointed out relevant issues such as lack of investment in training, cultural resistance, lack of functional independence, organizational structure and hierarchization of the poor accounting segments (not prepared to follow the changes), lack of accounting audit, professional valuation and disproportionate salaries to new responsibilities, lack of interest in senior management in implementing, existence of political pressures and outsourcing of accounting services.

Despite the negative biases, these findings lead the actors involved in the process of accounting convergence to seek alternatives to consolidate a policy or strategy for the adoption of international standards in Brazil.

In fact, the results of the research indicate the existence of information asymmetry, in the logical sense of the process, between the segments that are elaborating and publishing the new standards and those that perform, at the tip, the accounting services.

On the other hand, the research results incorporate the Contingency Theory, based on the conceptual reference in our article, to provide support for understanding the opinion of professionals. This theory can be applied to explain the internal organizational changes, as in the case of the changes necessary to accounting in the public sector due to the new standards, under the condition of flexibility and adaptability of organizations to achieve their objectives.

Our study is also contributory, since it enables the debate and reflection on subjective issues and variables, which had not yet been studied on the subject, paving the way for future research.

Finally, we suggest the construction of a minimum plan for the implementation of NBC TSP, with the performance of the National Treasury Secretariat, Courts of Accounts, Accounting Council, academia, managers, and public accountants, aiming at the execution of contemporary accounting practices in the country, which can, in fact, generate value to society.

REFERENCES

- Aquino, A. C. B., Carpechione, E., Cardoso, R. L., & Steccolini, I. (2020). Influências estrangeiras no desenvolvimento e inovações recentes em contabilidade e finanças do setor público na América Latina. *Revista de Administração Pública*, 54(1), 1-10. DOI: <http://dx.doi.org/10.1590/0034-761220200057x>.
- Brandalise, F., Fella, L. J., & Zamin, L. M. (2009). O Contador no contexto da gestão pública. *Revista de Administração e Ciências Contábeis do IDEAU*, 4(8).
- Burns, J. (2000). The dynamics of accounting change Inter-play between new practices, routines, institutions, power and politics. *Accounting Auditing & Accountability Journal*, 13(5), 566-596. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.1108/09513570010353710>.
- Burns, J., & Scapens, R. W. (2000). Conceptualizing management accounting change: an institutional framework. *Management Accounting Research*, 11, 3-25. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.1006/mare.1999.0119>.
- Callado, J. E. D. S., & Teixeira, A. M. C. (2016). Demonstrações contábeis no setor público brasileiro: a percepção dos profissionais que elaboram as informações. *Contabilidade, Gestão e Governança*, 19(3), 485-503. DOI: http://dx.doi.org/10.21714/1984-3925_2016v19n3a8.
- Câmara dos Deputados. (2016). *Projeto de Lei Complementar nº 295, de 21 de junho de 2016*. Recuperado em 04 abril, 2020, de: <https://www.camara.leg.br/proposicoesWeb/fichadetramitacao?idProposicao=2088990>.
- Cavalluzo, K. S., & Ittner, C. D. (2004). Implementing performance measurement innovations: evidence from government. *Accounting, Organizations and Society*, 29, 243-267. DOI: [https://doi.org/10.1016/S0361-3682\(03\)00013-8](https://doi.org/10.1016/S0361-3682(03)00013-8).
- Chenhall, R. H. (2003). Management Control Systems Design Within its Organizational Context: Findings from Contingency-based Research and Directions for the Future. *Accounting, Organizations and Society*, 28(2/3), 127-168. DOI: [https://doi.org/10.1016/S0361-3682\(01\)00027-7](https://doi.org/10.1016/S0361-3682(01)00027-7).
- Costa, A. M. C. (2008). *A auditoria interna nos municípios portugueses*. Dissertação de Mestrado, Faculdade de Economia - Universidade de Coimbra, Portugal. Recuperado em 04 de novembro, 2018, de <https://estudogeral.sib.uc.pt/handle/10316/17846>.
- Costa, F. B., Souza, F. G., Baihe, M. J. A., & Filho, S. A. S. (2018). Perfil do profissional contábil no setor público: Uma análise das capitais brasileiras e Distrito Federal. *Revista de Contabilidade da UFBA*, 12(1), 74-92. DOI: <http://dx.doi.org/10.9771/rc-ufba.v12i1.23253>.
- Dalmoro, M., & Vieira, K. M. (2014). Dilemas na construção de escalas tipo Likert: O número de itens e a disposição influenciam nos resultados? *Revista Gestão Organizacional*, 6 (Edição Especial). DOI: <http://dx.doi.org/10.22277/rgo.v6i3.1386>.
- Dent, J. F. (1991). Accounting and organizational cultures: a field study of the emergence of a new organizational relity. *Accounting, Organization and Society*, 16(8), 705-732. DOI: [https://doi.org/10.1016/0361-3682\(91\)90021-6](https://doi.org/10.1016/0361-3682(91)90021-6).

- Fernandes, F. C., & Machado, D. G. (2011). Teoria da Agência e Governança Corporativa: Uma Reflexão Acerca da Relação de Subordinação Organizacional da Contabilidade à Administração. (SIMPOI) *Simpósio de Administração da Produção, Logística e Operações Internacionais*, São Paulo, SP, Brasil.
- Flamholtz, E. (1996). Effective Organizational Control: A Framework, Applications, and Implications. *European Management Journal*, 14(6), 596-611. DOI: [https://doi.org/10.1016/S0263-2373\(96\)00056-4](https://doi.org/10.1016/S0263-2373(96)00056-4).
- Geiger, D. R., & Ittner, C. D. (1996). The Influence of Funding Source and Legislative Requirements on Government Cost Accounting Practices. *Accounting, Organizations and Society*, 21(6), 549-67. DOI: [https://doi.org/10.1016/0361-3682\(96\)00008-6](https://doi.org/10.1016/0361-3682(96)00008-6).
- Gordon, L. A., & Miller, D. (1976). A Contingency Framework for the Design of Accounting Information Systems. *Accounting, Organizations and Society*, 1(1), 59-79. DOI: [https://doi.org/10.1016/0361-3682\(76\)90007-6](https://doi.org/10.1016/0361-3682(76)90007-6).
- Gupta, P. P., Dirsmith, M. W., & Fogarty, T. J. (1994). Coordination and Control in a Government Agency: Contingency and Institutional Perspectives on GAO. *Audits, Administrative Science Quarterly*, 39(2), 264-84. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.2307/2393236>.
- Hair, J. F. Jr., Anderson, R. E., Tatham, R. L., & Black, W. C. (2005). *Análise Multivariada de Dados*. (5a ed.). Porto Alegre: Bookman.
- Hammerschmid, G., & Meyer, R. (2005). New public management in Austria: local variation on a global theme? *Public Administration*, 83(3), 709-733. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.0033-3298.2005.00471.x>.
- International Federation of Accountants. (2014). *A Closer Look At: Costa Rica*. USA: IFAC. Recuperado em 22 de maio, 2018, de: <https://www.ifac.org/system/files/uploads/IPSASB/A-Closer-Look-At-Costa-Rica.pdf>.
- Klann, R. C., & Morás, V. R. (2018). Percepção dos contadores públicos do Estado de Santa Catarina em relação às Normas Brasileiras de Contabilidade aplicadas ao setor público. *Revista Contemporânea de Contabilidade*, 15, 49-76. DOI: <http://dx.doi.org/10.5007/2175-8069.2018v15n36p49>.
- Liguori, M. (2012). Radical change, accounting and public sector reforms: a comparison of Italian and Canadian municipalities. *Financial Accountability & Management*, 28(4), 37-63. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1468-0408.2012.00555.x>.
- Liguori, M., & Steccolini, I. (2012). Accounting change: explaining the outcomes, interpreting the process. *Accounting Auditing & Accountability Journal*, 25(1), 27-70. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.1108/09513571211191743>.
- Liguori, M., & Steccolini, I. (2014). Editorial Accounting, innovation and public sector change. Translating reforms into change? *Critical Perspectives on Accounting*, 25, 319-323. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.cpa.2013.05.001>.
- Lima, J. M. C., Jacobini, J. P. R., & Araújo, M. A. D. (2015). Reestruturação organizacional: os principais desafios para o Ministério Público do Rio Grande do Norte. *Revista de Administração Pública*, 49(6), 1507-1530. DOI: <http://dx.doi.org/10.1590/0034-7612134712>.
- Lima, R. L., & Lima, D. V. (2019). Experiência do Brasil na implementação das IPSAS. *Revista de Contemporânea de Contabilidade*, 16(38), 166-184. DOI: <http://dx.doi.org/10.5007/2175-8069.2019v16n38p166>.
- Lucian, R. (2016). Repensando o Uso da Escala de Likert: Tradição ou Escolha Técnica? *Revista Brasileira de Pesquisa de Marketing, Opinião e Mídia*, 18, 13-32.
- Marques, K. C. M. (2012). *Custeio alvo à luz da teoria da contingência e da nova sociologia institucional: estudo de caso sobre sua adoção, implementação e uso*. Dissertação de Mestrado, Programa de Pós-Graduação em Controladoria e Contabilidade, Universidade de São Paulo, Faculdade de Economia, Administração e Contabilidade, São Paulo, SP, Brasil.
- Ministério da Fazenda. (2008). *Portaria nº 184, de 25 de agosto de 2008*. Dispõe sobre as diretrizes a serem observadas no setor público quanto aos procedimentos práticos, elaboração e divulgação das demonstrações contábeis, de forma a torna-las convergentes com as Normas Internacionais de Contabilidade Aplicadas ao Setor Público. Recuperado em 18 fevereiro, 2018, de <http://www.fazenda.gov.br/aceso-a-informacao/institucional/legislacao/portarias-ministerial/2008/portaria184>.
- Moreno, T. C. B., Borsato, J. L. Jr., Dal Vesco, D. G., & Walter, S. A. (2016). Capital Intelectual e o sistema de controles gerenciais das instituições públicas de ensino superior: um ensaio teórico sob a perspectiva da teoria da contingência. *Revista Ibero-Americana de Estratégia*, 15(3). DOI: <http://dx.doi.org/10.5585/riae.v15i3.2319>

- Nahapiet, J. (1988). The rhetoric and reality of an accounting change: a study of resource allocation. *Accounting Organizations and Society*, 13(4), 333-358. DOI: [https://doi.org/10.1016/0361-3682\(88\)90009-8](https://doi.org/10.1016/0361-3682(88)90009-8).
- Oulasvirta, L. (2014). The reluctance of a developed country to choose International Public Sector Accounting Standards of the IFAC. A critical case study. *Critical Perspectives on Accounting*, 25, 272-285. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.cpa.2012.12.001>.
- Passos, L. H. S. (2012). O impacto das normas brasileiras de contabilidade aplicadas ao setor público: cenário atual e perspectivas na administração pública federal. *Revista de Administração de Roraima*, 1(2), 110-135. DOI: <http://dx.doi.org/10.18227/rarr.v2i1.771>.
- PricewaterhouseCoopers. (2013). *PwC Global survey on accounting and financial reporting by central governments. Towards a new era in government accounting and reporting*. Recuperado em 5 de maio, 2018, de: <https://www.pwc.com/gx/en/psrc/publications/assets/pwc-global--ipsas-survey-government-accounting-and-reporting-pdf>.
- Secretaria do Tesouro Nacional. (2018). *Manual de Contabilidade Aplicada ao Setor Público (MCASP)*. (8a ed. - Exercício 2019). Recuperado em 07 abril, 2020, de http://www.tesouro.fazenda.gov.br/documents/10180/695350/CPU_MCASP+8%C2%AA%20ed+-+publica%C3%A7%C3%A3o_com+capa_3vs_Errata1/6bb7de01-39b4-4e79-b909-6b7a8197afc9.
- Triola, M. F. *Introdução à Estatística*. 7. ed. Rio de Janeiro: LTC, 2008.
- Upping, P. e Oliver, J. (2011). Accounting Change Model for the Public Sector: Adapting Luder's Model for Developing Countries. *International Review of Business Research Papers*, 7(1), 364-380.

How to cite this paper

Marques, L. R., Bezerra Filho, J. E., & Caldas, O. V. (2020). Accounting and internal auditing in the Brazilian public sector: perception of public accountants in the face of convergence for IPSAS/IFAC. *Revista de Contabilidade e Organizações*, 14:e161973. DOI: <http://dx.doi.org/10.11606/issn.1982-6486.rco.2020.161973>