

Aspects of the Strategy for the Development of Public Organizations

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Abstract

The development of public organizations is important in the context of globalization and rapid economic and social changes, which impose the need for increased adaptation and efficiency in the public sector. In this article, we address the major challenges of public administration, such as digitalization, decentralization, and leadership, highlighting the importance of responsible governance. The main purpose is to research, based on a bibliometric analysis from two databases, Scopus and Web of Science, the trends and solutions proposed for the modernization of the public sector; trends revealed in the following articles published on this topic - public development strategies. With this article we contribute to academic discussions on the modernization of public organizations, providing useful insights for policymakers and researchers.

Key words: reform, governance, public administration

J.E.L. classification: H11, H83, O21

1. Introduction

In the contemporary context of globalization and rapid changes in the socio-economic environment, public organizations are facing unprecedented challenges, such as the need for efficiency, transparency, digitalization, and adaptability to communities' needs. Public sector reforms have become a topic in academic research, highlighting the need to modernize organizational structures through effective leadership, decentralization, and the implementation of innovative technologies.

Romania, along with other countries with emerging economies, is experiencing a complex transition from traditional structures to governance models based on principles of responsibility and sustainability. However, the success of reforms depends directly on the leadership capacity of public sector representatives and the implementation of collaborative strategies.

Recent studies indicate that leadership plays an essential role in facilitating these transitions, influencing both the performance of public organizations and citizens' perceptions of the quality of services offered. Also, the digitization of processes, through e-government initiatives, was identified as an important indicator for increasing transparency and improving administrative efficiency.

With this paper we aim to analyse the key strategies for modernizing public organizations by examining the roles of leadership, decentralization, and digitalization, using a bibliometric analysis of academic literature from Scopus and Web of Science.

2. Theoretical background

The governance of public organizations is a central concept for ensuring efficiency, transparency, and accountability in the provision of public services. Rhodes (1997) defines governance as an interaction between governments, and the private and non-governmental sectors, which facilitates coordination and collaboration in the public domain.

Leadership is seen as an important factor for the success of public organizations, and Burns (1978) emphasizes the importance of transformational leadership, which initiates significant changes, compared to transactional, task-oriented leadership. In the public sector, leaders must balance organizational efficiency and the public interest (Van Wart, 2003).

Reforms based on new public management (Hood, 1991) introduced principles such as efficiency and the use of market mechanisms, but also generated controversy, drawing attention to the risks of excessive privatization (Dunleavy et al., 2006). At the same time, digitalization through initiatives such as e-government can improve accessibility but requires strong governance (Heeks, 2006).

In addition to leadership and governance, fostering innovation within public organizations is essential for adapting to the dynamic needs of modern societies. Public sector leaders must not only implement reforms but also cultivate an organizational culture that encourages creativity and proactive problem-solving.

Moreover, the integration of advanced technologies requires a strategic approach to ensure alignment with organizational goals while maintaining the trust and engagement of both employees and citizens. These interconnected elements underscore the complexity of public sector management and the necessity for a balanced and forward-thinking approach.

The development strategy of public organizations is a critical component of their ability to effectively serve the public, remain adaptable, and meet the demands of a rapidly changing world. Unlike private sector organizations that primarily focus on profitability and market competitiveness, public organizations operate within a unique framework where success is measured by social impact, public service quality, and accountability to a wide array of stakeholders, including government bodies, citizens, and various community groups. Consequently, the formulation and implementation of development strategies in public organizations require a nuanced approach that balances efficiency, transparency, and responsiveness with ethical obligations and long-term societal goals.

Public organizations aiming to build resilient and effective development strategies must adopt a holistic approach, integrating these insights to drive sustainable progress and meet the evolving needs of society. As public expectations and global challenges continue to shift, the ability of public organizations to innovate, adapt, and uphold transparency will remain vital in achieving their missions and maintaining public trust.

3. Research methodology

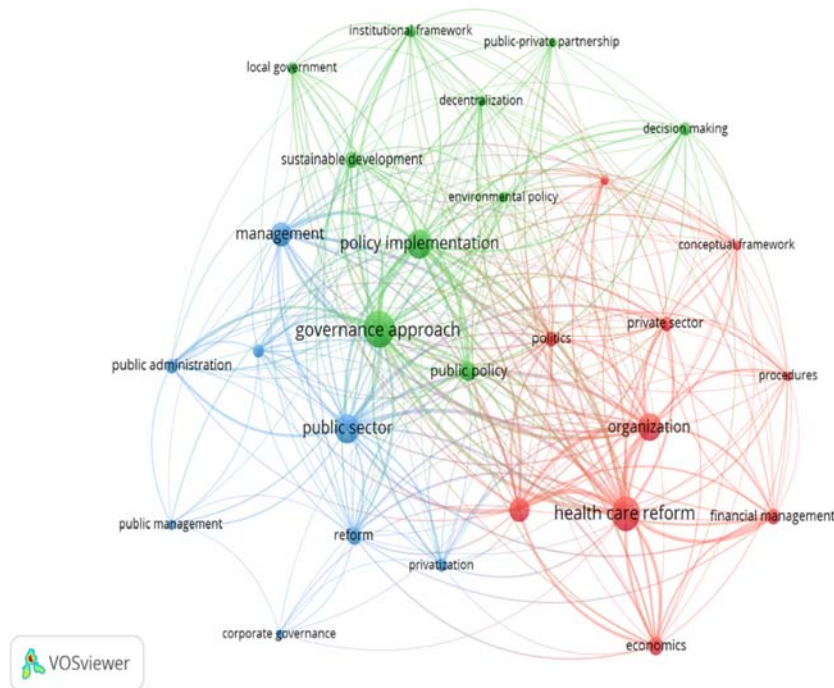
The charts were generated using the VOS viewer software to analyze the relationships between the relevant keywords. We used data from 2 databases, namely Scopus and Web of Science. The keywords selected for the search were "governance", "policy", "public", "management", "reform" and "public sector". Following the search in Scopus, 357 relevant articles were identified, and in Web of Science we identified 648 articles.

4. Findings and discussions

Our analysis of the articles in Scopus and Web of Science indicates a focus on the topics of governance, public management and reforms in the public sector. In particular, there is an upward trend in the importance of digitalisation and participatory governance in public reforms.

Figure 1 shows the literature review based on data from Scopus, and Figure 2 illustrates the results obtained from Web of Science. Both images highlight significant connections and clusters between keywords.

Figure no. 1 Bibliometric analysis of data from Scopus



Source: Own processing using Vosviewer

Our cluster analysis highlights that public sector reform and governance remain central themes in the literature. In both databases (Scopus and Web of Science), terms such as *reform*, *governance* and *public administration* have appeared frequently. The literature also emphasizes the role of decentralization as an essential strategy in the modernization of public administration, allowing for better adaptation to local needs (Haque, 2020; Luo et al., 2020). Through decentralization, regional administrations gain greater autonomy, which supports the implementation of reforms adapted to the local context.

Also, articles such as those by Zhang and Yu (2021) highlight the importance of policy transfer and international collaboration in the implementation of public reforms. These results reflect a global convergence in prioritizing effective governance and sustainable strategies in the public sector.

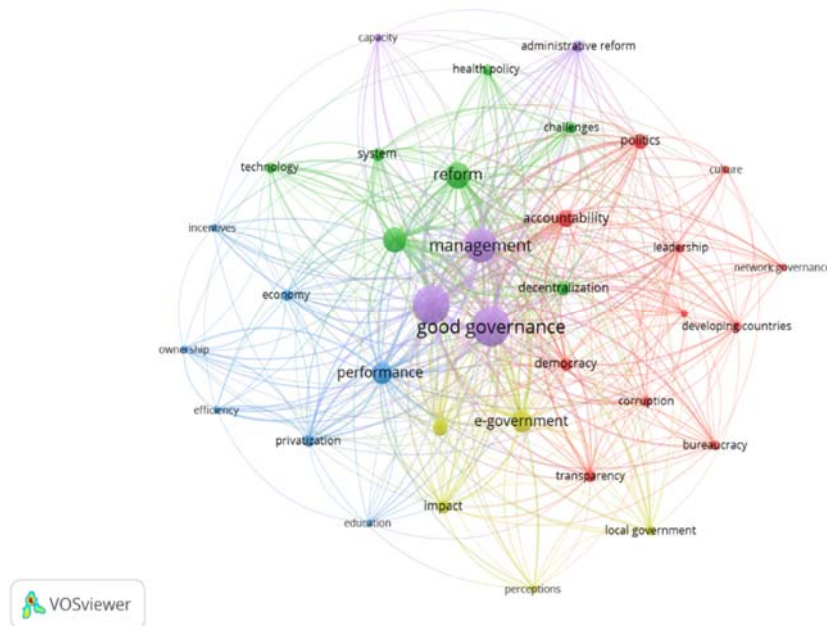
We believe that digitalization is a key component for the modernization of public organizations, but its success depends on the acceptance and understanding by citizens and employees.

The leadership cluster identified in Figure 2 highlights the importance of this concept in the process of reforming public organizations, especially in developing countries, such as Romania. Leadership is associated with terms such as network governance and collaborative management (Haque, 2020; Meuleman, 2021). These associations suggest that effective leadership plays a critical role in implementing reforms and improving governance in complex and decentralized environments.

Thus, we conclude that leadership is an important factor for the success of reforms and effective governance, especially in complex or decentralized environments.

The yellow cluster in Figure 2 underlines the importance of digitalization and e-government technologies in the modernization of public organizations. Terms such as perceptions and performance, frequently present in the analyzed articles (Citro et al., 2021; Cowell et al., 2020), suggest that citizens' perceptions significantly influence the success of the implementation of these technologies. In contrast, Figure 1 does not include this topic as a separate cluster, but refers to technology in the context of economic reforms.

Figure no. 2 Bibliometric analysis of data from Web of Science



Source: Own processing using VosViewer

The purple cluster in Figure 2 emphasizes principles such as good governance, accountability and transparency, highlighting the concern for integrity and responsibility (Teye & Nikoi, 2023; Masum & Parker, 2024). At the same time, the green cluster in Figure 1 explores governance approaches oriented towards environmental policies and sustainable development. Both databases suggest that implementing sustainable policies and promoting transparency principles are key to the success of modern public organizations.

In both databases analysed (Scopus and Web of Science), the themes of reform and decentralization are repeated, indicating an academic consensus on the need to adapt organizational structures to the requirements. The green cluster in Figure 1 and the one in Figure 2 emphasize the role of decentralization in administrative efficiency and in promoting local participation. According to the research of Lankina (2020) and Mungiu-Pippidi (2023), decentralization is considered an important tool for the modernization of public administration, allowing greater flexibility of public structures and supporting regional development initiatives.

Moreover, decentralization is directly proportional to increasing the accountability of local authorities and adapting more effectively to the specific needs of the community, as evidenced by the work of Hill et al. (2022). These reforms simplify local decision-making and contribute to a fairer distribution of resources, thus supporting long-term regional development.

5. Conclusions

We can conclude from this analysis that the development strategies of public organizations are based on four main pillars: reform, decentralization, leadership and digitalization. Reform and decentralisation allow for flexibility, accountability and adaptation to local needs, supporting regional development. Effective leadership plays an important role in managing change and implementing reforms, while digitalization, through initiatives such as e-government, increases efficiency and transparency. The success of modern public organizations depends on integrating these elements into a governance based on the principles of sustainability, transparency and accountability, in order to meet the needs of citizens and global challenges.

The analysis is based only on the articles available in Scopus and Web of Science, which may limit the diversity of sources. Second, the use of keywords may not always capture the thematic nuances of each article, and the relationships identified between terms do not necessarily reflect the

causality or depth of the topic. The analysis is also based on articles in English, and this aspect limits our research.

Despite these limitations, the findings provide valuable insights into the key components required for the modernization of public organizations, offering a foundation for future research and practical applications in policy-making and organizational development.

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