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Theoretical approaches to measuring governance: public administration

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Chapter 5: Theoretical approaches to measuring governance: Public administration

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Abstract

This chapter reviews several theoretical approaches to measuring governance found in the public administration literature. It outlines the contribution of public administration theory to measuring governance by comparing three established approaches to public administration and management reform, namely the neo-Weberian state (NWS), the new public management (NPM) and the new public governance (NPG). The chapter reviews the theoretical roots and main concepts of each perspective and outlines their main arguments and assumptions. On this basis it distills each model's specific implications for and contribution to governance measuring. By discussing governance measuring in terms of 'why measure', 'what to measure' and 'how to measure' across the three approaches, this chapter addresses the concepts and arguments as well as the measures and tools of governance measuring.

Keywords: Public administration theory; public administration reform; measuring; the Neo-Weberian State; the New Public Management; the New Public Governance

Introduction

This chapter discusses several theoretical approaches to measuring governance found in the public administration (PA) literature. Considering the eclectic and interdisciplinary nature of the field of PA, and the many theories and models that have contributed to it over time (Ongaro & van Thiel, 2018; Peters & Pierre, 2014), the aim of this chapter is not to provide a comprehensive or chronological survey of the field's many theoretical insights on and approaches to measuring governance. Our goal is somewhat less ambitious; yet we prefer to err on the side of omission than on the side of generality. The chapter outlines and compares PA theory's contributions to measuring governance with reference to three established trajectories¹ of public administration and management reform, namely the neo-Weberian state (NWS), the new public management (NPM) and the new public governance (NPG). There are several theoretical reasons why this is a sensible approach and can improve our understanding of measuring governance. First, the NWS, NPM and NPG, while not being the only models available, constitute three relatively established PA reform framings that are frequently used

¹ The public administration and management literature uses different terminology to refer to the NWS, NPM and NPG, such as visions, approaches, models, trajectories, agendas, movements, etc. Throughout this chapter we use such terms interchangeably.

and compared in the PA literature (Bouckaert, 2022; Pollitt & Bouckaert, 2017; Torfing et al., 2020; Torfing & Triantafyllou, 2013). Second, as we shall see in detail in this chapter, they cover a wide theoretical spectrum of PA theory starting with the classical Weberian model, on which the NWS is built, all the way to the theories that fed into NPM and the NPG. In this way, by distilling their theoretical underpinnings, we can cover a relatively broad corpus of PA theory while being guided by and remaining focused on the concepts, assumptions and arguments of these three approaches. Third, as ideal types or visions of PA reform that have developed over time, they have also received considerable interest from PA practitioners who, may not label their reform efforts in any of these three ways, but have turned their ideas into reform practices on the ground. Finally yet importantly, all three models include several key assumptions and arguments about measuring governance. However, the texts that elaborate on the three models do not discuss in detail and delineate clearly the assumptions and arguments that relate specifically to measuring governance. For this reason, we set out to contribute to this theme by outlining each model's main concepts, assumptions and arguments as they relate to governance measuring and discussing their specific contribution to our current understanding of measuring governance.

While there are good reasons to discuss the contribution of PA theory to measuring governance in terms of the NWS, NPM and NPG, we acknowledge the limitations of this approach. Particularly in so doing, we are bound to omit important PA insights on measurement that do not relate to any of the three models. Moreover, they are ideal types and visions of PA reform that exhibit important differences, yet they also share certain similarities resulting from mutual influences that have been developing over time due to processes of reform sedimentation and co-existence (Dan, Špaček, & Læg Reid, 2022; Pollitt & Bouckaert, 2017; Torfing et al., 2020). Furthermore, the NWS, NPM and NPG are too often viewed as static, time-bound chronological trajectories. It is common to refer to developments in PA theory with reference to classical PA (of which the NWS is a current version), temporally leading to the NPM (as a reaction to the classical PA model), and then further on to public governance (of which the NPG is a notable representative). By discussing governance measuring in terms of 'why measure', 'what to measure' and 'how to measure' across the three models, this chapter seeks to address both the values, concepts, assumptions and arguments, on the one hand, and the practices, measures and tools of governance measuring, on the other hand.

The NWS, NPM and NPG: theoretical roots and concepts

The Neo-Weberian state (NWS)

Articulated by Christopher Pollitt and Geert Bouckaert in the second edition of their influential book *Public Management Reform* (Pollitt & Bouckaert, 2004), and further polished in the subsequent two editions of the same book, the NWS is proposed as a synthesis of the best of several worlds – both the old and the new. It builds on the classical Weberian bureaucratic model of the state, but it recognizes its administrative deficiencies and proposes to rejuvenate it for our present times.

The Weberian model of hierarchical and professional bureaucracy (Weber, 1947) represents the core of NWS and, as a result, this approach derives its essence from established theoretical and historical roots. Max Weber's ideal type model of efficient bureaucracy was characterized by (Albrow, 1970, pp. 43-45) as having:

- a clear hierarchy of offices with well-specified functions;
- a clear distinction between the resources of the organization and those of office holders;

- written documents as the basis of the administration which is centered on the *bureau* as the central point of modern organization;
- technical, specialized spheres of competence
- a career structure and promotion based on merit or seniority following evaluation from superiors
- a unified control and disciplinary system applicable across the organization

Observed with respect to PA reform trends in continental and Nordic Europe, the NWS is a commendable effort to preserve ‘a balance between state and society that ensures the legitimacy of administrative arrangements’ (Lynn, 2008, p. 6). Its aim is thus two-fold: to *maintain* and *modernize* the state to increase its capacity, acceptance, legitimacy and sustainability. A key question is how to *maintain and modernize* the state at the same time and, as we shall see later in this chapter, the why, what and how of governance measuring has important implications for this question, not only in the case of the NWS, but also for the other two theoretical approaches considered. In keeping with the classical Weberian model, the NWS aims to modernize the state by making it more professional, but at the same time it aspires to make it more efficient and, importantly, actively outward-focused, responsive and citizen-friendly (Pollitt & Bouckaert, 2017, p. 19). This involves reducing undesirable bureaucracy and lowering the administrative burden (Herd & Moynihan, 2018) by adopting a set of innovative mechanisms and instruments, including, for example, digital technologies for seamless and customized service delivery that would meet citizens where they are so that they become satisfied with the attitude and service delivery of state organizations and public service providers. Pollitt & Bouckaert (2017, p. 19) note that NWS is ‘not a universal model, but one limited to particular kinds of state’. The NWS emphasizes the pivotal role of the state, rather than that of society or private actors, and is thus a *state-centered model* that fits well with the wealthy, welfare-state systems in Western and Nordic Europe where the state plays a comprehensive societal role and public spending is sizable.

Reflecting a state-centered or neo-Weberian theory of the state that cherishes both modernization and preservation of *professional value systems* and the *publicness of governance arrangements*, NWS draws upon the rich scholarship and theoretical developments in institutional theory, particularly the historical institutionalism stream of the new institutionalism (Hall & Taylor, 1996; Lynn, 2008; Pierson, 2004; Thelen, 1999). The main logic of action of historical institutionalism is path dependency, a mechanism that facilitates or constrains the range of policy options and administrative decision-making (Nakrošis, Dan, & Goštautaitė, 2023; Peters, 1999; Van der Wal, Mussagulova, & Chen, 2021), which can be at odds with the modernizing, neo element of NWS, leading to possible contradictions and tensions.

The New Public Management (NPM)

Two of the early influential scholarly treatments of NPM were Hood (1991), who coined the term, and Pollitt (1990, p. 1), who referred to NPM as ‘managerialism’, i.e. the belief that ‘better management will prove an effective solvent for a wide range of economic and social ills.’ Whilst some scholars believe that NPM is only one manifestation of managerialism, both terms point to a similar range of ideas and approaches (Pollitt, 2016). Two main sets of ideas fed into NPM, leading to what Hood (1991, p. 5) called ‘a marriage of opposites’. A first stream (which we can refer to as an extreme version of NPM), stemmed from the new institutional economics and the work of public choice, transactions costs and principal agent theorists, who led assaults on the established Western

bureaucracies for being too large, overly procedural, inner-focused and slow to respond to external requests. A second, and more temperate, stream (soft NPM) consists of what Hood (1991, p. 5) called ‘business-type managerialism in the public sector’ (which is similar to Pollitt’s managerialism). This second stream built on the importance of distinct management expertise, which permeates the public sector and requires managerial discretion ‘to let the managers manage’ to improve organizational performance, public service quality and customer satisfaction (Hood, 1991; Aucoin, 2017).

The emphasis in NPM is on *market dynamics* and cutting back on government spending, in the case of the extreme stream, and on *professional management expertise* and *the role of managers and leaders* in initiating and driving public sector change, in the temperate stream. This theoretical amalgamation created internal inconsistencies within NPM, which had an impact on the types and goals of reform measures that public sector reformers and managers pursued across the globe. This also meant that in practice there was a variety of reform options to choose from, only some of which followed the original precepts of NPM. This led to the observation that almost every reform adopted in the public sector over the past decades was labelled as NPM even without sharing its basic assumptions or sharing only one or a limited number of them, rather than the whole NPM ‘package’. Despite this and the uneven application of NPM across time and space, there has been a tendency within PA scholarship to attribute to NPM much of what presently goes wrong within the public sector. For this reason, it is important to reiterate that Christopher Hood referred to seven different types of reform to denote the contents of NPM (Hood, 1991, p. 4).

The New Public Governance (NPG)

The NPG builds on the substantial cross-disciplinary network governance scholarship that emerged over decades of work on the role of networks as a governance mechanism complementing hierarchies and markets (Kickert, Klijn, & Koppenjan, 1997; Klijn, 2008; Podolny & Page, 1998; Powell, 1990; Provan & Milward, 2001; Rhodes, 1997). Coined by Stephen Osborne (Osborne, 2010), the NPG emerged as a label reflecting a third wave of theoretical thinking on PA reform, as a reaction to NPM, in particular, but also to state-centered Weberian thinking (Pollitt & Bouckaert, 2017). The NPG mirrored a shift from the ‘intra-organizational’ focus of the private sector management of the NPM (Osborne, 2010, p. 4) towards governance processes that have a broader societal focus. The need for a *society-centered model* is justified with reference to the increased complexity of policy problems, which may be addressed by the active involvement of societal actors (public, private and non-profit) into policymaking and service delivery (Sørensen & Torfing, 2008). Osborne articulated the NPG with reference to public service delivery specifically and distinguished between service delivery within the open natural systems theory of the NPG, the open rational systems theory of the NPM and the closed system of the pre-NPM PA. NPG’s open natural system is tied with a ‘plural’ and ‘pluralist state’, which refer to ‘multiple interdependent actors’ contributing to service delivery and ‘multiple processes that inform the policymaking system’ (Osborne, 2010, p. 9). Unlike the NPM and the NWS, the NPG emphasizes *inter-organizational relationships, partnership and network building* and continual *negotiation processes* between the members of the networks and partnerships for *consensus building* (Klijn, 2008; Sørensen & Torfing, 2008; Torfing & Triantafillou, 2013). Because of this, it focuses on the ‘governance of processes’ (Osborne, 2010, p. 9) yet Osborne notes that its aspiration is to move beyond process to capture ‘service effectiveness and outcomes that rely upon the interaction between public service organizations with their environment.’

Theoretically, several theoretical perspectives that have largely a sociological and political science nature have influenced the NPG. They include sociological theories of organizations and institutions, e.g. sociological institutionalism (Podolny & Page, 1998; Powell, 1990; Powell & DiMaggio, 1991) and political science and democratic theories of active citizenship, participation and empowerment (Hall & Taylor, 1996; Torfing & Triantafyllou, 2013). Sørensen & Torfing (2008, p. 17) distinguish between four clusters of governance network theories, i.e. interdependency theory, governmentality theory, governability theory and integration theory. Interdependency theory sees governance networks both as vehicles for and results of interest mediation between interdependent actors who have their own interests, resources and goals, but also have mutual resource dependencies. According to the governability theory, governance networks enable voluntary coordination between independent actors following game-based negotiation processes. Governmentality theory, by contrast, emphasizes the role of the state in facilitating and mobilizing the voluntary participation of societal actors into governance processes, and has a certain affinity with the research on meta-governance (Kooiman, 2003; Meuleman, 2008). Finally, integration theory views governance networks as a somewhat more institutionalized means and platform for voluntary exchange between stakeholders who are joined-up by shared norms and values (Sørensen & Torfing, 2008).

The emphasis in the NPG is on horizontal voluntary cooperation between stakeholders from across the society who come together, for various reasons, or are mobilized for participation and who bring their own information, knowledge and resources to jointly address complex policy problems. Thus, it differs in important ways from the ‘enlightened and professional hierarchies’ of the NWS and the market and management orientation of the NPM (Pollitt & Bouckaert, 2017, p. 23). This, however, does not exclude certain similarities and affinities that exist across the three perspectives (not to mention their practical application and integration in policy practice due to processes of sedimentation, layering and simultaneous co-existence of reform ideas and practices). For example, the need for meta-governance in the NPG resonates with the state-centered model of the NWS. There is a need for professional management expertise, emphasized by NPM, in both the NWS and the NPG (e.g. for managing and measuring networks, performance, service quality, inputs, outputs as well as overall results). Moreover, business actors were elevated within NPM, but they certainly play a role also in the NWS (e.g. in public-private partnerships) and NPG (e.g. for broadening participation to relevant societal actors). Thus, understanding the values, motivations and practices of private actors and the extent to which they differ from the publicness of public sector actors becomes important. By emphasizing certain values and characteristics, each perspective ignores or pays less attention to other valuable elements, creating the need for a more holistic synthesis. Table 5.1 summarizes the logic of action of the NWS, NPM and NPG.

Table 5.1. The NWS, NPM and NPG: main concepts and characteristics

<i>Model</i>	<i>Theoretical roots</i>	<i>Nature of the state</i>	<i>Emphasis</i>	<i>Logic of action</i>	<i>Main values</i>	<i>Roles for civil servants</i>
NWS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Weberian bureaucracy • Institutional theory, especially historical institutionalism • State-centered theories of the state 	Hierarchical and modernist	Policy creation and implementation	Authority exercised through a modernized hierarchy of impartial and professional officials	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Clear accountability lines • Probity • Predictability • Stability • Continuity • Openness to modernization and innovation 	Professional experts who implement laws and politicians' decisions and follow established civil service norms and procedures
NPM	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • New institutional economics, especially public choice, transaction costs and principal-agent theories • Management studies 	Managerial and entrepreneurial/reformist	Management of organizational resources and performance	Quasi market-type mechanisms and/or managerial action	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Customer orientation • Accountability for measurable results • Flexibility • Instability/reforming • Market behavior • Entrepreneurship • Competition 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Managers working in government departments /agencies held to account through performance frameworks and incentives • Private sector

						consultants and entrepreneurs working for the government
NPG	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Network theories • Sociological theories of organizations, especially sociological institutionalism • Political science theories of democracy and stakeholder participation 	Participatory and collaborative	Negotiation of values, meaning and relationships	Networks of interdependent stakeholders who provide information, knowledge and resources	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Multiple accountabilities • Bounded rationality of the state • Openness to broad participation and contribution • Voluntary cooperation • Active citizenship 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Network managers/governors who seek, negotiate, lead partnerships and mobilize participation • Boundary spanners who search for leverage and cross-sectoral synergies

Source: Expanded based on Osborne (2010, p. 10); Pollitt & Bouckaert (2017, pp. 22; 120-127; 173); Torfing & Triantafillou (2013, p. 14)

The NWS, NPM and NPG: arguments, assumptions and implications for governance measuring

The ‘why’ of measuring governance

The question of why measure governance boils down to the nature of accountability envisaged in the three approaches. The measurement of governance processes and outcomes serves as a vehicle for account giving and for proving an organization’s or individual’s worth (Behn, 2001). While measuring governance is closely tied to public sector performance (Bevan & Hood, 2006; Hood, 2006; Ingraham, Joyce, & Donahue, 2003; Van Dooren, Bouckaert, & Halligan, 2015), and influenced by the NPM, it is not limited to either performance alone or to the understanding of performance under NPM. Yet measuring governance has received less emphasis in the NWS and NPG research so far although these models have important implications for changes in the nature of accountability (Bouckaert, 2022; Klijn, 2008; Osborne, 2010; Rhodes, 1997; Sørensen & Torfing, 2008; Torfing & Triantafillou, 2013). If NPM emphasizes *accountability for measurable results*, NWS centers on *procedural accountability* informed by professional standards and norms, while NPG is characterized by ‘multiple forms of accountability based on a variety of standards attuned to organizational learning’ (Torfing & Triantafillou, 2013, p. 14).

The core argument of the NWS is to make government organizations more professional, efficient and responsive to citizens and businesses by modernizing the state apparatus (Pollitt & Bouckaert, 2017). Public sector organizations are to achieve this desideratum by using innovative methods and approaches, some of which may originate in the corporate world but preferably within the public sector itself, while preserving and fostering the publicness of a distinct public sector ethos (Bouckaert, 2022; Osborne, 2010). By contrast, the NPM seeks to make government more economical, efficient and effective by using private sector methods and dynamics and relying on managerial action (Hood, 1991). In the NPG, the core argument centers on making government organizations better informed, less exclusive and more legitimate by mobilizing and using information, knowledge and resources from interdependent stakeholders who may voluntarily engage in governance networks and collaborative arrangements and choose to contribute to policymaking and solving societal problems (Pollitt & Bouckaert, 2017; Sørensen & Torfing, 2008).

Embedded in each model, however, are a set of assumptions about the nature of organizational and human behavior, the drivers of performance and institutional change and the nature, meaning and formation of public value. Within the NWS, the underlying assumption is that it is possible to both maintain and modernize the key features of the classical bureaucratic model. If authority is exercised through a modernized hierarchy of impartial and professional officials, the key question is how to modernize this established hierarchy so that public sector organizations and services become more responsive to societal developments and needs. In other words, what governance measures and tools should be used for modernization, who should use them and how should they be used? *Professional roles and discretion* play a key role in NWS, affecting both the nature and extent of measuring tools which reflect professional standards and norms, yet the extent to which professionals are willing and able to act as both experts and managers efficiently and effectively is subject to interpretation (Alvehus, 2022). The professionalism of the NWS manager is by definition less managerial as management experts feature less prominently in the NWS (or the NPG for that matter) than in the NPM. It can be described as a ‘particularly circumscribed kind of professionalism’ (Pollitt & Bouckaert, 2017, p. 176). This means that it is part of, and influenced by, the structures, processes

and procedures of the bureaucratic model and the direct involvement of politicians. Politicians can add democratic accountability to professional action (Behn, 2001), but they can also intervene in it and politicize it, leading to negative effects on HRM practices, policy effectiveness and public legitimacy (Fuenzalida & Riccucci, 2019; Peters et al., 2022). Fundamental to the state-centered model of the NWS is also the assumption that the state has sufficient resources to fund and sustain a comprehensive role in society. This may be the case in Western and Nordic European welfare states (although demographic and financial prospects raise important financial sustainability questions even in these cases). However, it is difficult for the NWS model to take hold, over the short and medium term at least, in less affluent states that have lower levels of trust in government and insufficient capacity. This context-specificity, which is also a feature of the NPM and NPG, challenges the transferability of ‘ready-made models’ to other contexts that differ in fundamental ways from the places where the models emerged.

Measuring is a key feature of the NPM, which can be credited for drawing attention to the importance of measuring governance. However, there is no shortage of assumptions embedded in the NPM (Aucoin, 2017; Bezes, 2018; Hyndman & Lapsley, 2016). NPM’s emphasis on *rationality and quantitative measures* stems from the nature of the theories that fed into it. This is particularly the case for the ‘hard’ version of NPM that was influenced by new institutional economics, which is at odds with the ‘soft’ stream of management studies that allow for more horizontal, consensual approaches to management and measurement instead of command and control (Hood, 1991; Pollitt & Dan, 2013). Fundamental to the NPM’s view of measuring governance is the assumption that quantifying the inputs, activities, outputs and outcomes of governance is both possible and desirable. It uses a ‘production’, input-output model and applies it particularly to public service delivery (Pollitt & Dan, 2013), and pays specific attention to both minimizing the volume of inputs while at the same time maximizing the volume of outputs. It also assumes that the information gathered through measurement is accurate and reliable enough and, when used, acts as a valuable resource that helps managers and politicians to monitor, evaluate and improve the performance and accountability of public sector organizations. Moreover, while promising flexibility and ‘lean’ management, there is evidence showing an increase in new forms of bureaucratic control (Bezes, 2018; Clarke & Newman, 1997). This is due to NPM’s emphasis on quantitative measurement and its elaborate performance measurement toolkit, especially when used in a command-and-control fashion, emphasizing accountability alone, instead of both accountability and learning (Lewis & Triantafillou, 2012). NPM emphasized measurable outputs instead of broader and more qualitative societal and democratic outcomes (Christensen & Lægreid, 2022; Hood & Dixon, 2015; Pollitt & Dan, 2013). This calls into question the nature and meaning of performance emphasized in NPM, though the overall emphasis on measuring and achieving results is a welcoming feature (if used properly) that can provide decision makers with required performance information.

The NPG challenges both the NWS and the NPM, which are seen as too statist, inflexible and organizationally focused (Osborne, 2010). The assumptions of both these approaches are too narrow and limited for the NPG, giving rise to a new approach that has direct implications for governance measuring. Theory and practice have documented a new set of assumptions embedded in the NPG. This view fundamentally assumes that various actors and organizations from across the different spheres of the society and economy are both willing and able to join forces, collaborate and share resources, often times without a rational, self-interested motivation to address a specific problem.

This also assumes that they have a stake or important reason in getting involved for solving that problem and they are willing to do so even if other stakeholders may fail to do their part (Pollitt & Bouckaert, 2017). For NPG to function in practice in an efficient and effective way (so that something ends up being done), consensus among various players either exists by default or can be cultivated. This, however, may be a difficult assumption to hold in practice, particularly in pluralist and complex societies (which are a feature of the NPG) where there are various and often times, competing and entrenched values and interests (Kapucu & Hu, 2020; Sørensen & Torfing, 2008). A further assumption relates to the roles and skills of governmental actors who, depending on the type of network arrangement, may need to take a network-governing role to seek, negotiate and lead partnerships and act as boundary spanners who search for leverage and cross-sectoral synergies (Pollitt & Bouckaert, 2017, p. 173). New skills, which few civil service systems may possess currently, need to be cultivated to this end. This also implies that government officials are willing to take on these roles and give up, at least in part, on their established legal and official mandates. Moreover, network meta-governors are able to manage the inherent power imbalances of network arrangements (Sørensen & Torfing, 2008; Torfing & Triantafillou, 2013).

The ‘what’ and ‘how’ of measuring governance

The NPG is seeking to redefine the nature of performance that is typically used in NPM, which is seen to be too much concerned with instrumental elements and an overemphasis on measurable results (O’Flynn, 2007). The notion of public value is preferred instead to incorporate a variety of changing public sector values that may include measurable performance (economy, efficiency and effectiveness) but go beyond it to capture broader societal and democratic values (Faulkner & Kaufman, 2017; Moore, 1995; O’Flynn, 2007). In terms of what to measure about governance, the NPG is therefore significantly less concerned with ‘intra-organizational’ change and the performance of individual organizations. By contrast, it notes that governance measures need to capture inter-organizational relations and the effectiveness of networks and partnerships (Osborne, 2010).

NPG thinking thus aspires towards a better understanding of how to design and employ measures that capture the public service system. Coupled with this, there is an interest in NPG on *value creation processes*, which NPG scholarship claims to differ substantially from the performance orientation in NPM and the closed system of the classical public administration (Osborne, 2010, p. 10). From a service-oriented perspective, which is said to differ from both NPM’s production model and co-production theory, value is co-determined and co-created together with the service users (Osborne, Nasi, & Powell, 2021). This approach, however, goes beyond the NPG and is known as the public service logic, combining the publicness of public administration and management theory with the service orientation/service dominant logic of service management and marketing theory (Osborne et al., 2015; Osborne et al., 2022). Interestingly enough, at least part of the theoretical origins of the public service logic come from business and management studies – a useful parallel with NPM. We can take this argument further by observing that this thinking is not completely different from that of NPM. While emphasizing explicit standards and measures of performance, NPM led to the development of customer-user satisfaction surveys and quality improvement schemes, such as the Total Quality Management (TQM), Common Assessment Framework (CAF) and SERVQUAL, that incorporated user feedback and perceptions of service quality (Lapiente & Van de Walle, 2020; Singh & Slack, 2022). These quality schemes were part of the NPM’s arsenal of opening up public service organizations to the dynamics of the market and the views and preferences

of customer-users (Pollitt & Bouckaert, 2004). The customer-user orientation, though criticized for being misplaced (Drechsler, 2005; Diefenbach, 2009), aimed to make, and one may argue successfully so, public service organizations better attuned and responsive to the wishes of the service users (Dan & Pollitt, 2015; Lapuente & Van de Walle, 2020; Singh & Slack, 2022). Although the focus of the NPM has been on an instrumental view of performance, research that looked at reform trends over time has found that the measurement of public management reforms have also included additional themes, such as accountability, strategic growth and change (Johnsson et al., 2021). This questions the widespread view that the emphasis of public management reforms is on measuring costs and efficiency, and inputs and outputs, alone.

Despite theoretical developments in public governance and public value theory, the notion and practice of measuring governance from an NPG perspective are still in their infancy (Pollitt & Bouckaert, 2017). The fluidity and flexibility of NPG arrangements make it difficult for policy makers and network organizers to operationalize and measure governance processes and outcomes (Osborne, 2010). This is coupled with the inherent complexity of the meaning of public value and the various, multi-stakeholder influences that define it (Faulkner & Kaufman, 2017). This also calls into question the feasibility of using such a sophisticated and multi-faceted approach to measuring governance in practice, given data limitations and the resources, skills and meta-governing capacity required to implement and sustain such a measuring program. Assuming that such a system can be put into place, there are questions related to the administrative burden that it would entail to build, run and maintain it. New forms of bureaucracy may develop that run against the very intent of the measuring system, i.e. to promote flexibility, participation, collaboration, accountability and learning (Lewis & Triantafillou, 2012).

The modernizing ambition of the NWS requires measuring citizen satisfaction, service quality, trust in national, regional and local institutions while controlling for escalating costs to pursue savings and efficiency gains through new tools and methods, such as public sector innovations and digital technologies (De Vries et al., 2015). From this perspective, the 'what' of governance measuring resembles to a good extent what is being measured from an NPM approach. While not clearly formulated in the NWS literature, *professional guidelines, norms and quality standards* (Alvehus, 2022; Noordegraaf, 2015) should play a prominent role in the type of indicators used, particularly with regard to highly professional services, such as education, healthcare, employment or social care. The more administrative state services, however, are likely to be less influenced by professional norms and, in the NWS model, are likely to be characterized by a high degree of *formalism and proceduralism*, reflecting Weberian principles.

NPM theory emphasized a more dominant, command-and-control approach to measurement characterised by a detailed specification of performance indicators and targets used for the purpose of accountability. The NWS is still using performance measurement, possibly framed in a broader public value framework to reflect professional standards and norms, but the way in which it is used is expected to be different from the NPM approach (Pollitt & Bouckaert, 2017). The degree of target specification is more general and the purpose should include an emphasis on learning in addition to accountability (though performance measurement in NPM can also be used for learning and in a less top-down manner). Horizontal processes of negotiation and consensus-building between professionals, civil servants and politicians are likely to feed into the type and goals of measurement. A consensual process of negotiation between stakeholders and citizens characterizes public value measuring in NPG, the emphasis being primarily on exchange, experience sharing and learning and to a less extent

on vertical and horizontal accountability. Table 5.2 summarizes the core arguments, assumptions and implications for governance measuring across the three theoretical approaches.

Table 5.2. The NWS, NPM and NPG: argument, assumptions and implications for governance measuring

<i>Model</i>	<i>Argument</i>	<i>Assumptions</i>	<i>Implications for measuring</i>
NWS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To make government more professional, efficient and responsive by modernizing the state apparatus while maintaining a distinct public sector ethos 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Maintain + modernize Circumscribed role for civil servants High levels of trust in government Sizable taxation and public spending levels 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Measures that reflect professional standards, guidelines and norms and/or formal and procedural elements Moderately detailed specification of public value/performance measures/targets Consensual approach to creating and using measures, plus possible top-down, formal approach
NPM	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To make government more economical, efficient and effective by using private sector methods and managerial action 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Operationalization and measurement of performance is possible and desirable Performance information is relevant, accurate, reliable and useful Limited unintended consequences: cheating, gaming, new forms of bureaucracy 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Emphasis on measurable inputs and outputs Focus on organizational change and performance Instrumental nature of performance, plus customer-user orientation and satisfaction

			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Detailed specification of measures/targets • Command and control approach (hard version), possibly with a best-practice, learning orientation (soft version)
NPG	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To make government better informed, less exclusive and more flexible and legitimate by mobilizing and obtaining input from interdependent actors 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Diverse actors are willing and able to share resources, participate and collaborate • Consensus exists or can be reached and sustained efficiently and effectively • Existing government skills, willingness and capacities for new roles: meta-governance, network managers and boundary spanners • Possibility to operationalize, measure and practically use ecosystem/relational public value • Limited negative consequences: process/outcome capture by powerful actors/groups, new forms of 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Broad view of performance, reframed as multi-faceted public value • Co-creation of public value based on multi-stakeholder input • Emphasis on inter-organizational/eco system relations • Public value measures derived from consensus and pluralistic views used for experience sharing and learning

		bureaucracy, cost-efficiency and sustainability	
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Source: Expanded based on Pollitt & Bouckaert (2017, pp. 22; 120-127; 173); Torfing & Triantafillou (2013, p. 14)

The contribution of the NWS, NPM and NPG to governance measuring

The NWS, NPM and NPG view governance measuring with different lenses. While fundamentally different, they share certain common goals, methods and tools considering that none of the three visions represents a unique model (Pollitt & Bouckaert, 2017). Within public administration and management, the NPM, for better or for worse, preeminently elevated measuring like no other approach. Its contribution lies in the specificity and quantification of goals, inputs, implementation process and outputs. It draws attention to the requirement to set up, monitor and evaluate explicit standards and measures of results as a method for improving performance and accountability (Hood, 1991). Though not exclusively, its emphasis is on what can be easily measured, i.e. ‘output controls’ (Hood, 1991, p. 5), as well as on monetary inputs (savings). Efficiency and effectiveness, though important to the NPM, proved to be more difficult to measure and assess accurately (Hood & Dixon, 2015; Pollitt & Dan, 2013). In addition to effectiveness, other outcome measures, especially service quality and user satisfaction featured prominently within NPM (Johnsson et al., 2021; Lapuente & Van de Walle, 2020; Singh & Slack, 2022). Moreover, a strength of NPM has been its focus on unpacking the public policy implementation process (Osborne, 2010, p. 5). It also contributed to documenting and measuring organizational change processes and the outcomes of the policy process, and to opening up the black box of policy implementation (Osborne, 2010, p. 5). Despite its relatively narrow approach to governance measuring, which the PA literature has extensively covered (Bevan & Hood, 2006; Christensen & Lægreid, 2022; Osborne et al., 2015; Pollitt & Bouckaert, 2017), the NPM reoriented organizational behavior and action outwards (instead of inwards as in the classical bureaucratic model) towards the end users of the policy process and service delivery. Though viewed narrowly as customers or service users (instead of citizens more broadly), the NPM promoted the use of generic quality improvement schemes, such as the TQM, that reflected and incorporated user feedback (Pollitt, 2003). This basic reorientation represented an important innovation when it emerged, and is an important contribution of the NPM. It involved (and in some places it still does) a major shift in bureaucratic behavior, and there are reasons to credit NPM for it. Depending on which version of NPM we consider, governance measuring under an NPM regime either followed a command-and-control approach centered on vertical accountability (in the case of the hard version) or a softer approach that aimed to improve organizational learning, in addition to accountability.

In its attempt to modernize the state apparatus, the NWS draws attention to the important role of distinct public service values that include, but go beyond, instrumental measures (Bouckaert, 2022; Lynn, 2008; Pollitt & Bouckaert, 2017). It aspires to both maintain and foster this distinct ethos by listening to the voice of the professions. In an NWS perspective, it is not the public managers who should design and decide on the details of political visions, but professionals who are accustomed to traditional values, norms and standards and operate in culturally appropriate ways. Governance measuring, then, is influenced by this approach and the indicators and measures that are used within it reflect professional guidelines and standards. This, however, does not mean that instrumental

performance measures related to economies and efficiencies have no place within the NWS. Increasingly, as public budgets are under pressure, particularly in turbulent times, it has become evident that there is a need to find an acceptable balance between costs and professional value. Public sector cost-cutting is not an end in itself within NWS, but practice has shown that it is often times required. The approach to cost-cutting in NWS is, however, more consensual than in NPM and must include the voice of the professions who typically oppose it (Pollitt & Bouckaert, 2017). NWS has also contributed to governance measuring by formalizing measures that reflect not only professional standards, but also the features of the classical public administration. This involves procedural aspects and due diligence, which may provide both stability and inflexibility to organizational arrangements and public service delivery. As by definition the NWS approach to measuring is less managerial than in NPM, it is expected, by comparison with NPM, that the governance measures and targets are more moderately specified and detailed in NWS. They are also used in a consensual, bottom-up way, but it does not exclude command and control that may be required if no consensus can be reached, e.g. under conditionality constraints to address fiscal imbalances that jeopardize the state's ability to pay out its debt. Thus, while the NWS is contributing to a professionalization of governance measuring, there is an inherent and persistent tension between expanding the role of the state and ensuring its sustainability.

The NPG provides us with another lens for governance measuring. The focus in NPG is on process and dialogue and less on the results of governance. It values the active engagement of multiple stakeholders: the more actors are engaged the better as the process of participation is assumed to contribute to democratic values and effective policymaking and service delivery. It thus seeks to mobilize private resources and ideas and promote active citizenship to improve the legitimacy and accountability of government action (Torfing & Triantafillou, 2013). On this basis, NPG's contribution to governance measuring is potentially manifold. It broadens the notion of performance and emphasizes a multi-dimensional conception of public value (Faulkner & Kaufman, 2017). Public value is not only professionally-determined, though professions play a role, but based on the active say of citizens and service users who are supposedly co-determining and co-creating it (Osborne, Nasi, & Powell, 2021). Service effectiveness, in particular, relies on the interaction between service providers and their environment (especially the service users) (Osborne, 2010). In these ways, despite the central role that negotiation processes play within NPG, the NPG aspires to move beyond process to contribute to outcome formation. Thus, there is potential for the NPG to contribute to outcome measures that reflect a complex view of public value (although this is inherently more difficult to do in practice compared to NPM and NWS). Performance management takes on new forms to include the evaluation of networks, co-production of public services, and multi-organizational and multi-faceted performance. The emphasis is on *negotiation* and *consensus-seeking* of *shared targets* and *public value standards*. The measures are less detailed and specific, emphasizing steering and collaboration instead of vertical coordination (Pollitt & Bouckaert, 2017). Another contribution to governance measuring stems from NPG's emphasis on *shared problem-solving*, *capacity building* for *active citizenship* and processes of self-regulation and state-citizen partnership. By highlighting democratic accountability, there is a need to develop multiple forms and measures of accountability (Torfing & Triantafillou, 2013) that are useful and relevant, i.e. detailed and specific enough yet inviting and non-controlling (Pollitt & Bouckaert, 2017). There is an inherent tension within NPG between the need to develop multiple forms of accountability and the coordination capacity that is

required to govern these complex and dynamic processes. There is also the risk of over-proceduralism, emanating from the process of building consensus, which may limit the ability of actors to take concrete action and achieve a certain result that goes beyond the process itself. In this sense, the NPG parts ways with the NPM's focus on accountability for results.

Conclusion: the status today and the prospects for PA theory on governance measuring

In view of the interdisciplinary nature of PA theory and its significant interest in governance measuring that goes back to the origins of the discipline (Norris, 2011), a wealth of measuring concepts and approaches have emanated from PA. This chapter has not surveyed all of these ideas, but instead outlined and compared three main approaches to measuring that have been particularly influential in both PA theory and practice, i.e. the NWS, NPM and NPG. As visions of PA that structure reform programs, they are ideal types that find only a partial application in practice (Pollitt & Bouckaert, 2017). Instead of a neat application, they are best thought of as sets of intertwined and/or competing concepts, practices, tools and measures that co-exist and are layered upon each other (Dan, Špaček, & Læg Reid, 2022; Pollitt & Bouckaert, 2017; Torfing et al., 2020). Chronologically, PA has moved from the traditional administration to NPM and NPG yet this trend obscures the sedimentation and simultaneous co-existence of these ideas. The NWS, for example, does not equal the classical Weberian model, but instead was observed as a present-day trajectory of PA reform (Pollitt & Bouckaert, 2017). NPM ideas and practices are also relevant today (Bezes, 2018; Hyndman & Lapsley, 2016; Lapuente & Van de Walle, 2020). Thus, though the NPG and its many concepts and approaches have become increasingly popular in PA theory, it is an overstatement to claim that PA as a discipline currently 'lives and breathes' the NPG (or NPM and NWS). Yet does the approach to measuring that NPG proposes represent the future of governance measuring within PA? It is unlikely to be the only perspective, but the search, layering and co-existence is expected to continue, as it has been in the past. That said, the NPG offers valuable insights into measuring that capitalize on the characteristics of present-day societies and democracies: complexity, pluralism, uncertainty and turbulence, and a search for meaning and value. This leads to an interest in finding new ways of governing that reflect these characteristics which we expect will continue to grow in the future. The key challenge for PA scholars is to make sense of the complexity of governance measuring in a way that advances both the discipline's scholarship and its practical relevance and applicability, given today's constraints of policymaking and service delivery.

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