

1. **Mauro, S. G., Cinquini, L., Pianezzi, D. (2021). "New Public Management between reality and illusion: Analysing the validity of performance-based budgeting". *The British Accounting Review*, Volume 53, Issue 6, 2021, 100825.**

In this article Mauro et al. (2021) aims to uncover the challenges that organizational actors face when implementing performance-based budgeting. Through the analysis of interviews, policy documents, and governmental reports, the paper investigates the challenges encountered in implementing performance-based budgeting in the context of an Italian ministry. The analysis reveals that integrating goals, values, and communication among actors, as well as performing an illusory analysis of real possibilities, pose significant challenges in implementing performance-based budgeting reform. These factors result in the formation of two distinct types of illusions in the overall understanding of what "performance" is, as well as officials' attempts to abuse the system by creating a misleading apparatus under the pretext of conformity and fairness. This work contributes to understanding necessary conditions for the implementation of performance-based budgeting and adds a broader perspective to discussions on the effectiveness of New Performance Management by providing empirical evidence on the constraints that prevent private sector reforms from being used in the public sector.

2. **Leblang, D, Smith, M. D., Wesselbaum, D. (2022). "The effect of trust on economic performance and financial access". *Economics Letters*, Volume 220, 2022, 110884.**

In this paper, Leblang et al. (2022) explores the effects of institutional trust on individual-level outcomes. Using data that was gathered through face-to-face and telephone interviewing by Gallup World Poll, researchers examine whether the effects of trust are linked with the economic development of the country, the optimal level of trust and its connection with performance, as well as the relationship between individual-level trust and access to financial services. It was proven that economic development increases financial access and that institutional trust is linked with income; high-income countries had higher institutional trust. The findings suggest that there is an optimal level of trust where income and financial access are greatest. The study is valuable as it highlights the importance of an often overlooked factor—institutional trust—on economic performance and can be considered useful on an individual level for improving financial access, especially in low-income countries.

3. **Cook, W. (2021). "Does funding targeted at improving the management of schools increase school performance over the long term?". *Economics Letters*, Volume 204, 2021, 109871.**

In this article Cook (2021) examines the impact of a policy in England that ran from 2003 to 2006 and provided additional funding to low-performing schools with the goal of improving the school's middle and senior management capabilities. According to the findings of this study, the funding did improve school performance, implying that targeted, time-limited funding to improve school management can improve school performance in the long run. However, regression discontinuity estimates were only applicable to schools in economically depressed areas, precluding a cost-benefit analysis of the policy as a whole. Another implication was that policy required more time to produce positive results. This paper is useful in considering the role of budgeting in low-performing schools and improvements in school management funding that led to improved performance.