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RAP
BRAZILIAN JOURNAL OF PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION

Editorial

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RAP's last issue of 2019 gathers ten articles approaching a variety of themes such as corruption, participatory budgeting, intergovernmental relations, regulatory agencies, competencies of city councils' budget and finance committees, and project management offices. The issue counts on the contribution of authors from different countries, reflecting the success of RAP's internationalization strategy.

Three articles that help to understand better the phenomenon of corruption deserve special attention. They point out the effects of corruption on the social fabric, the failure of the traditional justice system, and the role of new players, such as the Internet, in reducing levels of government corruption.

The author Cecilia Güemes, based at the Universidad Autónoma de Madrid, explores the citizens' and managers' trust levels toward the public administration in various Latin American countries. She compares countries such as Brazil and Chile, which count on bureaucratic institutions characterized by a certain degree of maturity, with countries that present a lower degree of bureaucratic development. In her article **"'Wish you were here' trust in public administration in Latin America",** the author indicates that the trust citizens demonstrate toward the public administration is similarly low and always negative, regardless of the differences among countries in terms of development, state effectiveness, quality and scope of public services. The issue of inequality marks the relationship between citizens and public administration, and corruption stands out as one of the main elements affecting citizens' low trust. In other words, distrust would be a widespread response to an atmosphere of tearing social inequality and pervasive corruption that depends not as much on the performance of the public administration as it does on the sense of unequal treatment.

In the article "**The federal justice act in combating corruption in Southern Brazil**", Lígia Mori Madeira and Leonardo Geliski corroborate the conclusions of the article mentioned above regarding the influence of corruption in society. The authors point out that although the 'grand corruption' prevails in the media and people's imagination in Brazil, it is the 'petty corruption' that dominates the day to day of federal justice in the court responsible for the cases in the South region of the country. The analysis of the Federal Regional Court's (TRF4) performance in combating crimes of corruption shows that there are only a few cases of grand corruption, representing sophisticated crimes of more significant financial sums and involving medium and high-level bureaucrats.

Cecilia Güemes assumes that, in endemic cases, corruption erodes people's faith in democratic values, by substantially reducing trust in political leadership and generating disappointment and passivity among citizens when it comes to participatory and competitive democratic processes. João Carlos do Nascimento, Marcelo Alvaro da Silva Macedo, José Ricardo Maia de Siqueira, and Alexandre Rabêlo Neto share the same understanding and examine the influence of the Internet access diffusion in the levels of government corruption. The authors analyzed 117 countries from 2000 to 2014, finding evidence of direct and indirect relations between Internet diffusion and corruption, researching the relationships among Internet diffusion, voice and accountability, culture, government

DOI: http://dx.doi.org/10.1590/0034-761252019x

corruption, and government efficiency. Their article "**Government corruption and Internet access diffusion: global evidence",** reinforces the understanding that the Internet is a valuable tool to fight corruption. Also, it highlights the moderating role of culture in the relationship between voice and accountability and government corruption, and, above all, it incorporates government efficiency into the theoretical model.

Hopefully, these works will contribute to a greater theoretical and practical understanding of corruption, helping to fight this practice and restore the population's trust in public and democratic institutions.

I wish you all a pleasant read!

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