

This study aims to explore the relation between a businesslike approach to government – more commonly referred to as ‘New Public Management’ or NPM – and ethics and integrity.

Based on available publications, this study empirically tests the suggested influences of NPM on integrity. The theoretical assumption that the introduction of New Public Management leads automatically to integrity problems and even corruption has to be nuanced based on the outcomes of this study. Most surprising is the outcome that ‘Performance Measurement’ – as an important characteristic of NPM – contributes in a positive way to the level of integrity in an organization.

The anticipated theoretical relevance of this study is threefold. First, it describes, and makes available for further research, the hitherto virtually uncultivated terrain of the relationship between ethics and a businesslike approach to government. Second, it develops, at least partly, an effective instrument for measuring the level of businesslike approach in a public organization. Third, it empirically tests, for the first time, the relation between NPM and ethics. The study results provide a new approach toward the relationship between a businesslike approach to government and integrity in the public sector. That is, they suggest that paying specific attention to ethical issues when implementing businesslike methods in government may increase chances of success.

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The Research School Safety and Security in Society is a cooperation between the Erasmus University Rotterdam, Leiden University, University Twente, Vrije Universiteit Amsterdam, the Netherlands Institute for the Study of Crime and Law Enforcement, the Scientific Bureau for Research, Expertise and Consultancy on Lifestyle, Addiction and Related Social Developments, the Institute for Safety, Security and Crisis Management, the Research and Documentation Centre and the Netherlands Organization for Applied Scientific Research. The Research School has been officially recognized by the Royal Netherlands Academy of Arts and Sciences.

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ISBN 978-90-5454-905-5



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Empirical Research into the Effects of
Businesslike Government on Ethics and Integrity

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