



Research on Government Audit Quality Control Based on the PDCA Cycle

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Abstract: The enhancement of government audit quality is crucial for promoting transparency, efficiency, and accountability in government governance. Introducing the PDCA (Plan-Do-Check-Act) cycle quality management model can establish a scientific and standardized control system, thereby enhancing audit professionalism and work efficiency. This article explores the application of the PDCA cycle in government audit quality control, providing a reference for constructing an efficient and standardized audit quality control system.

Keywords: PDCA cycle; government audit; audit quality; quality control

1. Introduction

As the "immune system" of national governance, the core function of government auditing is to ensure the safety of public funds, enhance the efficiency of policy implementation, and prevent systemic risks through independent and objective supervision activities. However, traditional auditing models suffer from issues such as "emphasizing results over processes" and "emphasizing compliance over performance", making it difficult to meet the refined and dynamic demands of modern public management for audit supervision. [1]Therefore, introducing scientific quality management methods has become crucial for enhancing audit efficiency. The PDCA cycle, as a management paradigm for continuous improvement, highly aligns with the quality control objectives of government auditing.

2. PDCA cycle theory and government audit quality

2.1 Overview of PDCA cycle theory

The PDCA cycle consists of four stages: Plan, Do, Check, and Act. It achieves spiral improvement in management effectiveness and work quality through periodic iteration. The specific steps include: Plan, identifying problems or goals, analyzing the current situation, proposing measures or methods to achieve the goals, and developing a detailed implementation plan and schedule. Do, translating the plan into practical action, allocating resources to ensure implementation and monitoring progress, and solving problems in a timely manner. Check, comparing actual results with preset plans, collecting data to evaluate effectiveness, identifying problems and optimization spaces. Act, adjusting methods and strategies, consolidating successful experiences, reviewing lessons learned from failures, and developing improvement measures.[2]

2.2 Applicability of the PDCA cycle in government audit quality control

2.2.1 Continuous improvement philosophy

The PDCA cycle, with continuous improvement as its core, is highly compatible with the continuous and dynamic characteristics of government auditing. Government auditing leverages the closed-loop process of planning, execution, inspection, and improvement to promptly identify issues, adjust strategies, and dynamically optimize each link, ensuring that audit quality steadily improves through continuous cycles.

2.2.2 Comprehensively covering the audit process

The PDCA cycle permeates the entire lifecycle of government auditing, establishing a comprehensive management chain. Government audit quality control emphasizes rigorous supervision throughout the entire process, and this cycle provides a systematic framework to facilitate refined control and standardized operation of the audit process.

2.2.3 Accurate positioning and problem solving

The "Check" phase of audit is crucial. In the PDCA cycle, it can accurately identify and analyze problems, providing a basis for improvement. Audit institutions should deeply analyze the root causes of problems, formulate feasible strategies, promote continuous improvement in audit quality, and ensure standardized and effective work.

2.2.4 Cyclic Iterative Optimization

The PDCA cycle is a dynamic process of continuous iterative improvement, with each round leading to the initiation

of a new one. Government audit institutions conduct multiple rounds of operations based on business needs, calibrate and refine the quality control system, optimize processes, enhance efficiency, and strengthen the supervisory and safeguarding efficacy in public governance.

3. Analysis of the difficulties and urgency faced by government audit quality control

3.1 The dilemma faced by government audit quality

The current government audit faces numerous challenges: the regulatory system is imperfect, there is no unified standard, and cognitive differences among regional departments lead to institutional loopholes and regulatory vacuums, affecting quality, authority, and efficiency; in the era of big data, traditional audit techniques and tools lag behind, lacking advanced analytical techniques, making it difficult to adapt to massive data, limiting efficiency and the quality of results; as the volume of information increases, "data silos" make data acquisition and analysis challenging, and traditional tools struggle to delve deeply into data, testing the resource management capabilities of audit institutions; the coordination of audit rectification is poor, with member units having loose connections and inefficient collaboration, and a lack of supervision and coordination platforms, affecting the effectiveness of rectification; audit institutions lack independence and are easily subject to external interference; some auditors have poor literacy, weakening the scientific nature and authority of auditing.[3]

3.2 Analysis of the Demand and Urgency for Government Audit Quality Control

3.2.1 Core values of public financial management

In the national governance system, government auditing is a crucial component of public financial management, pertaining to the legality and compliance of fiscal revenue and expenditure, transparency of information, and efficiency of resource allocation. High-level government auditing ensures the legal operation of fiscal funds, maintains the stability of public financial order, and promotes sustainable socio-economic development and social fairness and justice.

3.2.2 The urgent reality of risk prevention and control

With the rapid economic and social development in China, government departments are facing complex internal and external risks. A sound government audit quality control system serves as an important line of defense for risk identification and prevention. Systematic audit supervision can promptly identify potential risks, providing support for safeguarding national fiscal security and maintaining social stability.

3.2.3 Internal requirements for enhancing governance effectiveness

Government auditing serves both supervisory and service functions. High-quality audits can reveal issues, analyze causes, and provide recommendations, thereby promoting the optimization of governance, improvement of management, and enhancement of services by government departments. The transparency of audit results can enhance the credibility of the government, facilitate interaction between the government and society, and contribute to the modernization of national governance.

3.2.4 Adaptation needs for reform and development

In the context of comprehensively promoting the modernization of national governance, strengthening the quality control of government auditing is a crucial aspect of deepening government governance reforms. Establishing a scientific, standardized, and efficient audit quality control system can promote the standardization, normalization, and informatization of audit work, meeting the needs of reform and development in the new era.

3.2.5 Strategic considerations for drawing on international experience

Under the backdrop of economic globalization and audit internationalization, drawing on international advanced experience can improve China's government audit system and enhance audit technology and management levels. Strengthening international exchanges and cooperation can enhance China's international discourse power in government auditing, promote the integration of the audit industry with international standards, and enhance international competitiveness.

4. Construction of a government audit quality control model based on the PDCA cycle

4.1 Design of the application framework of the PDCA cycle in government audit quality control

4.1.1 Plan

Based on the audit objective planning scheme, clarify the audit scope, timeline, and resource allocation, and list core tasks and key nodes. Leverage risk assessment to identify major risk areas, scientifically set objectives, and delineate priorities. Combine objectives, tasks, and the characteristics of the audited entity to reasonably plan audit procedures and

select appropriate methods.

4.1.2 Do

We will strictly follow the plan to advance the audit process, comprehensively collect evidence, truthfully record issues, and adhere to operational norms. We will maintain close interaction with the audited entity to grasp its operational status. The audit team will strengthen internal communication to ensure timely and accurate information transmission and enhance overall efficiency.

4.1.3 Check

Comprehensively and meticulously review audit evidence and working papers, ensuring that records accurately reflect the audit process and results through cross-comparison and other methods. Conduct an in-depth analysis of issues, maintain an objective and impartial stance, apply systematic methods, and consider from multiple perspectives to draw credible audit conclusions.

4.1.4 Act

Review the entire project process, identify experiences and shortcomings, and extract replicable strategies and methods. Based on the actual situation of the audited entity, develop actionable improvement plans for identified issues. Incorporate remaining issues, new challenges, and requirements into the next cycle, dynamically adjust strategies, and continuously enhance audit quality.

4.2 Implementation path of government audit quality control model based on PDCA cycle

4.2.1 Plan: scientifically plan audit objectives and resources

The planning stage serves as the foundation of audit work, necessitating scientific planning of audit objectives and resources. Centered around national strategies and public management needs, the "risk-oriented" principle is employed to identify audit priorities. This involves analyzing fiscal funds, policy implementation, and social hot-button issues, and formulating audit objectives that align with national governance requirements. For complex tasks, cross-departmental teams are assembled, technology is introduced, and a phased timetable is established. Detailed plans are also formulated to clarify scope, methods, and other aspects, thereby reducing human bias.

4.2.2 Do: standardize audit implementation and process monitoring

The execution phase requires standardizing audit implementation and strengthening process monitoring. Strictly follow the "National Audit Standards" and implement measures such as the "audit evidence checklist system" to maintain the objectivity of audit conclusions. Establish a project supervision mechanism, develop an audit project management platform, and update audit information in real time. Develop emergency plans for potential risks and collaborate with relevant departments to prevent and control risks.

4.2.3 Check : Multi-dimensional evaluation of audit results

The inspection stage necessitates a multi-dimensional evaluation of audit results. An internal review system should be established, employing a three-tiered review mechanism to assess audit quality. Introduce external evaluations of audit outcomes from third parties or stakeholders, and incorporate these scores into performance assessments. Utilize statistical methods to quantitatively analyze results, construct an evaluation model to monitor effectiveness, and provide data support for plan adjustments.

4.2.4 Act: Empowering government auditing with standardization and long-term mechanisms to enhance its effectiveness

Focus on standardization improvement and knowledge management. Incorporate effective practices into the institutional system, compile operational guidelines to solidify experience. Develop a rectification checklist for problems and track implementation, establish a long-term mechanism with relevant departments. Strengthen the accumulation and sharing of audit knowledge, establish "three repositories", develop a "smart audit platform" to promote experience inheritance and innovation, and enhance audit level.

5. Conclusion and Outlook

5.1 Research Conclusion

The government audit quality control model based on the PDCA cycle demonstrates significant advantages in enhancing audit quality. By establishing a scientific quality control system, it achieves standardization, professionalization, and modernization of audit work. Through a cyclic iterative optimization mechanism, it promotes continuous improvement in audit quality. By utilizing data-driven decision-making and a closed-loop management mechanism, it ensures the objectivity and effectiveness of audit work. This model holds significant importance for improving the public governance system and

enhancing the effectiveness of government governance.

5.2 Research Outlook

Future research can further expand and deepen in the following aspects: First, strengthen the depth of empirical research by verifying the effectiveness and applicability of models through field surveys and case analyses; second, introduce multiple theoretical frameworks such as Six Sigma and lean management to construct a multi-dimensional audit quality control and analysis system; third, accelerate the promotion of audit informatization to enhance data collection, intelligent analysis, and application capabilities in the big data environment; fourth, actively carry out international exchanges and cooperation, learn from international advanced experience, and promote the alignment of China's government audit quality control system with international standards.

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