

**Globalizing Public Administration:  
Today's Research and Tomorrow's Agenda<sup>i</sup>**

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## **Abstract**

What is the relationship between public administration scholarship and the study of Third World administration? This article answers this question by presenting the intellectual history of Third World administrative studies and by examining recent empirical studies of developing country administration. Our results suggest Third World administrative research published in leading international publications has become a small-scale, disparate, descriptive, qualitative and non-comparative sub-field dominated by Western researchers. This empirical finding provides a platform from which a vision for public administration as a global social science is articulated and advanced.

## **Biography**

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# **Globalizing Public Administration: Today's Research and Tomorrow's Agenda**

## **Introduction**

In a 2008 *PA Times* article, the President of the American Society of Public Administration (ASPA) hinted that public administration's future was bound to be a global one as commonplace distinctions between foreign and domestic public administration collapsed under global challenges, communication innovations and cross-national interdependencies (White, 2008). Meanwhile, in his first address to a Joint Session of the U.S. Congress in February 2009, President Barack Obama identified convergences between American and international interests because "we know that America cannot meet the threats of this century alone, [and] the world cannot meet them without America."<sup>ii</sup> To what extent are claims of interdependency such as these actually breaking down barriers between public administration scholarship and the study of Third World public administration?

This article begins by analyzing research on Third World administrative systems<sup>iii</sup> by considering its status within public administration and by reviewing articles published in leading social science journals. Via a content analysis, we identify a number of predicaments facing non-Western administration research. In doing so, we create a platform for articulating and advancing a vision for public administration as a global social science. The first section briefly traces the intellectual evolution of Third World administrative research across comparative public administration, development administration and international public management. Our second section examines articles on Third World administrative systems published in ten leading journals that span these three sub-disciplines. This analysis reveals that administrative studies of the global South have fractured into a small-scale, disparate, non-cumulative, descriptive and

non-comparative field dominated by researchers with Northern institutional affiliations. The third section considers why Third World administration finds itself in this weakened state, arguing its current condition hampers theoretical and methodological development of both Third World, American and international administrative science. From this analysis, we recommend turning public administration into a globally inclusive endeavor in which Third World administrative research can strengthen both American and international public administration. A global public administration can build knowledge cumulatively via collaborative arrangements that collapse geographic, methodological and disciplinary boundaries. It can inform some of the most intractable and disconcerting global challenges that we face today. Ultimately, global public administration flourishes to the benefit of American public administration, Third World administration and the world at large.

### **The scholarship of Third World administration**

The intellectual history of Third World public administration crosses both epochs and disciplines. It begins in the early days of the post-independence era, when fledgling governments in Asia and Africa re-structured newly sovereign administrative environments. Against this backdrop, comparative public administration (CPA) established itself as a sizable, identifiable and complex contemporary movement, a branch of public administration focused upon the comparative analysis of administrative processes and institutions (Guess & Gabriellyan, 2007; Heady, Perlman & Rivera, 2007; Otenyo & Lind, 2006b; Raphaeli, 1967). The establishment of the Comparative Administration Group (CAG) within the American Society for Public Administration (ASPA) in 1960 had as its “overriding interest” the “administrative problems of the ‘developing’ countries” (Riggs, 1970). Financial assistance provided by the

Ford Foundation to CAG further cemented an association between CPA and Third World administration (Jreisat, 2005; Otenyo & Lind, 2006b; Van Wart & Cayer, 1990). In parallel, the other branches of public administration scholarship retained their focus on American problems for which American solutions were sought (Heady, Perlman & Rivera, 2007: 607; Otenyo & Lind, 2006a: 2). In a sense, the late 1960s and early 1970s marked the pinnacle for comparative public administration as the field grew in numbers, funding and academic prestige (Van Wart & Cayer, 1990: 239).

Extending the traditional bureaucratic model of public administration in the United States to other nations became an early purpose of development administration (Hughes, 2003: 225; Turner & Hulme, 1997: 12). Fred W. Riggs offered two early meanings for development administration: (1) the administration *of* development programmes and methods to implement policies and plans to meet development objectives and (2) the development *of* administration as strengthening administrative capabilities (Riggs, 1970). From an early date, development administration was largely an applied offshoot of comparative public administration (Brinkerhoff, 2008). Its objectives moved beyond altruistic development, including revolution and modernization (Guess & Gabriellyan, 2007). In Britain, initial suspicions of development administration as a veiled attack on the colonial record gradually gave way to an applied vision of training overseas administrators through pragmatic, experience-based curricula (Clarke, 1999; Schaffer, 1969). Development administration gradually carved a distinct identity from comparative public administration, for example as a valued subject in British development studies programs and faculties<sup>iv</sup> or a task for applied policy research institutes.

The mediocre economic success of developing states, the failures to analytically predict administrative reform outcomes and the rise of authoritarian regimes in many parts of Africa and

Latin America contributed to a general disillusionment with the study of Third World administration (Hirschmann, 1981; Schaffer, 1969; Van Wart & Cayer, 1990). This poor performance in the Third World was partly to blame for the growing uncertainty around CPA's viability as a sub-discipline from the mid 1970s onwards (Otenyo & Lind, 2006a; Peters, 1994; Sigelman, 1976 ). Other contributing factors included its ambiguous identity as both an applied and academic science (Jreisat, 2005; Otenyo & Lind, 2006a); its predilection for grand abstract theories with little bearing on or relevance in reality (Heady, Perlman & Rivera, 2007); and conceptual fragmentation and dispersion relating to levels, units of analysis and dependent variables (Jreisat, 1991, 2005; Peters, 1994). All of this resulted in the "bubble" of interest in comparative public administration "burst[ing] as rapidly as it had formed" (Van Wart & Cayer, 1990: 239).

Comparative public administration's status as sub-discipline of public administration is an issue of perennial contestation. Since the early 1970s, there has been a separate and autonomous evolution of Third World administration research away from mainstream American public administration towards other social science disciplines like political science, sociology and economics (Jreisat, 2005: 234). Perhaps the most prolific of these disciplinary invasions has come from neo-institutional economics, where formal and informal rules and incentives are examined at the expense of actual micro-level behavior (Clague, 1997; North, 1995). These disciplinary assumptions of bureaucratic life have misunderstood Waldonian assumptions of American public administration or at best, have depoliticized Third World administration by turning it into a shadow of its former self.

Nevertheless, there is a new wave of optimism about the state of comparative public administration, and particularly Third World administrative research. Whether for better or for

worse, this re-emergence is almost certainly tied to the influence of a “new” public management (NPM) agenda within public administration (Hood, 1991; Kaboulian, 1998; Kettl, 1997). NPM has thrown up analytical and inter-disciplinary issues relating to foreign administration by fostering interest in new subjects like governance, outsourcing, contracting, performance management and accountability (Brinkerhoff, 2008; Brinkerhoff & Coston, 1999; Heady, Perlman & Rivera, 2007). Meanwhile, international actors like the World Bank and the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) seek greater analytical clarity on the ways to enhance capabilities of the Third World administrative state (Grindle, 1997; Sahlin-Andersson, 2001; World Bank, 1997).

The influence of public management on Third World administration is also witnessed in a changing vocabulary. The term development administration has been replaced with the label ‘international development management’ or simply ‘development management’.<sup>v</sup> Development management understands the state in the context of its relationships to non-state actors, including the private sector, non-governmental organizations and hybrid organizations like social enterprises (Brinkerhoff, 2008; Guess & Gabriellyan, 2007: 571; Hughes, 2003; Turner & Hulme, 1997). The development management revolution nevertheless stands somewhat separately from the discipline of comparative public administration, perhaps because development management has also found new territories of inquiry, including the study of international aid actors and instruments. Development management is perhaps becoming more of a feature of inter-disciplinary curricula in master’s degree programs in public policy, security studies, international development, and than it is a feature of schools of public administration and public management.

The implications of this migration for the study of Third World administration in particular remain un-investigated. What has been the nature of recent research exploring Third world administrative systems given these shifts and trends? If we believe that public administration scholarship can and should improve the lives of those in poor nations and advance the twin aims of security and peace (Brinkerhoff & Brinkerhoff, forthcoming), there is value in knowing, rather than simply presuming, that a robust and rich science of Third World administration actually exists.

### **Examining Third World Administrative Studies: A Content Analysis**

An exploration of the contemporary status of Third World public administration requires some empirical study of its published outputs. Nevertheless, the evolution of Third World administrative studies described above suggests that any endeavor to understand the state of play in Third World administration must by definition look beyond the sub-field of comparative public administration. As such, we conducted a content analysis of leading social science publications that represent the three sub-disciplines associated with Third World administration (comparative public administration, development administration and public management). A key assumption of this study is that the highest quality research on Third World administration is published in top-rated journals representing these three social science sub-fields. While acknowledging that drawing from leading journals limits the sample to English language publications published mainly in North America and Europe, this also represents Third World administrative research achieving the highest levels of international social science excellence. While we recognize that by drawing the circle tightly we do not include an assessment of many national journals published in languages other than English, where studies of developing country

administrations are likely to feature prominently, surveying these journals would have also been problematic due to access and language difficulties.

We undertake this empirical analysis by modeling our literature review on previous surveys of comparative public administration published in *Public Administration Review* (Sigelman, 1976 ; Van Wart & Cayer, 1990).<sup>vi</sup> Sigelman (1976) undertook a content-analysis of full-length articles appearing in the discontinued *Journal of Comparative Administration* between 1969 and 1974 and concluded that the field of comparative public administration had not benefited from the interaction of theory and data, opting instead for grand abstract deductive theorizing that resulted in a vicious cycle of academic under-development. A subsequent review by Van Wart and Cayer (1990) involved a content analysis covering 20 journals spanning comparative and development administration articles published between 1982 and 1986. Their results also suggested that comparative administration research was a discipline that largely relied on description and avoided theory testing. Interestingly, the findings of both surveys echoed the conclusions of content analysis conducted of public administration more generally (Houston & Delevan, 1990; Lan & Anders, 2000).

In this analysis, ten journals representing key publication outlets for Third World administration were selected. Given existing citation databases do not rank journals on the basis of the sub-disciplinary categories of interest here, and moreover given to the best of our knowledge no similar study of Third World administration has ever been undertaken, the sample of journals was selected in two main ways. First, we drew on the journals used in Van Wart and Cayer (1990) that had high international content and represented comparative and development administration. And secondly, these journals are informally recognized as providing important contemporary outlets for Third World administrative studies in all three sub-disciplines. For the

comparative public administration journals, we chose the journals that Van Wart and Cayer (1990) identified as publishing the highest frequency of comparative public administration research (*International Review of Administrative Sciences*, *Public Administration*, *International Journal of Public Administration*, *Public Administration Review*). In international development, four development journals were selected; two drawn from Van Wart and Cayer's original sample (*Development and Change* and *Journal of Developing Areas*) and two highly reputed outlets for developing country research excluded from their study (*Public Administration and Development* and *World Development*). Finally, we examined only two public management journals (*Governance* and *International Public Management Journal*), limiting our choice to only two because of their reputation and international orientation.

Our non-probabilistic sample of Third World administrative articles was selected from every third volume of the ten journals starting in 1996.<sup>vii</sup> All full-length research articles<sup>viii</sup> journal issues published in 1996, 1999, 2002, 2005 and 2008<sup>ix</sup> were inspected. Unlike the two earlier surveys of comparative public administration, we chose a periodic rather than continuous longitudinal examination of our selected journals in order to capture a time interval exceeding five years. To be chosen, articles had to deal with the empirical realities of administrative systems in a developing country or a set of countries. The term administrative systems was understood as any arena of public sector decision-making, including bureaucracies, legislatures, political parties, public corporations and courts (Riggs, 1970: 21). We then selected articles that substantially focused on an embedded setting of public administration, excluding conceptual and/or commentary-based pieces that lacked such an empirical focus. To qualify as a developing country, the countries examined had to be one of the 142 eligible recipients of World Bank concessional and non-concessional financing.<sup>x</sup>

Using these criteria, our sample included 295 articles concerned with Third World administration from a population of 2049 articles (Table 1). Articles concerning the administrative systems of developing countries thus comprised only 14.0% of the sample, suggesting research on developing country administration remains a relatively small-scale affair in the leading publications of comparative public administration, development administration and public management. Only in *Public Administration and Development (PA & D)* did Third World administration constitute a majority of published articles in the time period examined. If we exclude *PA & D*, just 10.4% of the sample focused on Third World administration. *Public Administration Review (PAR)* has not been a key outlet for empirical research on Third World administration even though it serves as an important outlet for comparative public administration research more generally. While this result may be understood by the fact that *PAR* serves as the flagship journal of the *American Society for Public Administration (ASPA)*, it is also somewhat surprising given the introductory quote by the former President of *ASPA* as well as *PAR*'s commitment to international and comparative public administration.<sup>xi</sup>

Six questions guided the content analysis of our sample. These questions targeted specific dimension of Third World administrative research, as well as paralleled previous surveys of comparative public administration and public administration more generally. The first dimension of interest involved an assessment of the geographic and thematic loci of the articles. Secondly, information on the theoretical/conceptual standard adopted in the sample data was sought. Next, the kinds of methods availed of in the empirical study conducted was subject to examination. We then explored whether these articles adopted a comparative approach to their examination of Third World administration. And finally, we asked whether these studies were engaging researchers located in the Third World to any significant degree. As per the

methods adopted in previous reviews by Lan and Anders (2000), Houston and Delevan (1990), Van Wart and Cayer (1990) and Sigelman (1976), the title, author information, abstract and primary research question of all the articles in the sample were reviewed. Where this still did not reveal sufficient information to answer the questions of interest, the entire article was read. Below we discuss the approaches we took to investigating each dimension and present our findings.

***(1) Is research focused on a small set of geographic locations and topics?***

Sigelman (1976) argued that established fields of study ought to be focused on a small set of common issues. This logic is applicable to geographic and research foci in developing country administrative studies. To assess geographic focus, we coded all articles according to the developing country discussed using the World Bank classification scheme. Out of a possible 142 developing countries, our sample of 295 articles dealt with 90 developing countries. Fifty-two papers were oriented toward regional groups that included a developing country region (e.g. Africa, colonial countries, failed states, Eastern Europe, post-tsunami countries, etc.) This suggests a tremendous dispersion of countries examined. Excluding regional studies, an average of only 2.7 articles concentrated on any given country. While there is some concentration in the emerging markets of Brazil, India, South Africa and China (Table 2), there is a vast geographic area covered within Third World administrative scholarship. With the exception of the ten countries listed in Table 2, there is a relatively small frequency of articles for the remaining 80 developing countries (ie where the article frequency is fewer than 8). This is suggestive of limited concentrated and cumulative knowledge generation of administrative processes in most of the developing world. While a closer reading of the specific articles relating to each

developing country could confirm this claim, this lack of country-based concentration is tentatively indicative of the limited depth to Third World administrative scholarship.

To assess topical research focus in the sub-field of Third World administration, we chose to code articles on the basis of the American Society for Public Administration (ASPA) section categories. The reason for this choice is that the ASPA sections list provides established categories of key subject groupings within public administration beyond the United States and thus provides a high degree of face validity as proxies for major research areas within public administration.<sup>xii</sup> While this coding may suffer from construct validity problems, this is no less the case in previous attempts to code articles by subject areas (For example, see Lan and Anders 2000). If more than one thematic area applied to an article, the dominant theme was coded while if no code seemed applicable, we indicated as much (Table 3).

Our results show that the topics treated by Third World administration research do not neatly fit within standard thematic areas of American public administration scholarship, as 30% of all articles could not be classified using the ASPA section categorizations. Instead, examined topics often dealt with issues specific to Third World problems, for example food policy, post-conflict themes, human rights administration, studies of authoritarian transitions, etc. While we cannot necessarily conclude that Third World administrative research is more or less diverse than public administration at large, we can state that relevant topics and themes for Third World administrative study do seem to be distinct.

Our results also suggest there may be no single prioritized “sector” in Third World administration, with perhaps the exception of environmental and natural resource management (in the area of water resources and forest management especially). In *World Development* and *Journal of Developing Areas* in particular, the state is most often discussed in the context of its

public budgeting and financial management functions. This is natural given those journals orient themselves to economic topics like public expenditure management, liberalization, industrial policy and growth. We also found that public law and administration (in the context of corruption and post-conflict reconstruction) remain recurrent themes. The variety of themes and the lack of topical concentration suggest significant width, but limited depth within Third World administration research. Overall, these results tentatively indicate that the identity of Third World administration is a disparate one, both geographically and thematically.

## ***(2) What kinds of theories are used?***

Many reviews of comparative public administration have pointed out that a shift from ideographic (distinct cases) to nomothetic approaches (studies that seek explicitly to formulate and test propositions) is one vehicle for improving comparativist scholarship (Jreisat, 2005: 237; Riggs, 1991: 473). To determine if a rigorous theoretical-conceptual standard in our sample is utilized, each article was coded as having one of three “styles” as per Van Wart and Cayer (1990). One category included a “descriptive” style of a particular empirical reality. A “thesis assertion” category offered a well-articulated statement or proposition around which data and arguments were structured, while a “hypothesis or model testing” category required hypotheses or relationships to be identified prior to data gathering in order to test theoretical assertions.

Our results in Table 4 indicate that 53.9% of the sample falls within the “descriptive” category with “thesis assertion” not too far behind at 34.9%. Hypothesis testing only comprised 11.2% of all articles. This suggests there is more description and less thesis assertion than in the case of comparative public administration broadly defined two decades earlier (Van Wart & Cayer, 1990). It also parallels the findings of those who claim public administration research is

engaged in little theory testing (Houston & Delevan, 1990). Similarly, it appears Third World administrative studies has not sufficiently developed explanatory theories or even worked towards developing such theories that can account for changing properties and problems in administration. The comparison with comparative public administration, as well as public administration more generally, may be relevant here as the slow scientific development of both fields is attributed to their practical orientations and concerns (Guess & Gabriellyan, 2007; Heady, Perlman & Rivera, 2007; Houston & Delevan, 1990: 679).

### ***(3) What methods are used?***

Following Sigelman (1976) and Van Wart and Cayer (1990), we ask whether our administrative studies relied on systematic modes of analysis. Are the modes of analysis essay-based, including broad theoretical and conceptual pieces? Are they empirical non-quantitative, including narrow empirical studies (mainly case studies) that do not employ quantitative techniques? Or are they empirical quantitative including (a) studies that employed only simple counting or percentizing techniques which Sigelman (1976) identified as “low level” or (b) studies that used more than nominal measurements including tests of significance (designated “more powerful”)?

Our results in Table 5 indicate that 11.5% of articles adopted powerful high-level quantitative methods and 17.0% of the lower-level quantitative techniques. Most articles fell within either broad essay or summary pieces (38.3%) or those using empirical non-quantitative techniques (33.2%). The imbalance between quantitative and qualitative methods is striking. Although this result matches the results of earlier surveys of comparative public administration, it does not parallel the field of public administration more broadly where a more even split

between qualitative and quantitative research methods has been found to exist (Lan and Anders 2000: 150; Houston and Delevan 1990: 670). This is not to claim the superiority of quantitative methods. Rather, there is a danger that with such a low uptake of quantitative methods, Third World administration may suffer from a case of “barefoot empiricism” that precludes its overall scientific development (Jreisat, 2005; Peters, 1994).

#### ***(4) Is an explicitly comparative lens adopted?***

The “dangers” that lurk within the single case study include implicitly assuming each case is “either so particular that no others need be compared, or is so general that all others are like it” (Peters, 1994: 83). Peters argues American researchers tend to assume particularity for other countries and generality for the United States. Comparative analysis can guard against such unsubstantiated assumptions by increasing the likelihood of dependable results, enhancing the evaluation of hypotheses and encouraging stronger verification of conclusions (Dahl, 1947; Jreisat, 2005: 239; Riggs, 1991). Nevertheless, identifying what constitutes comparative research is sometimes tricky. We adopted three categories to assess comparison, inspired by Van Wart and Cayer (1990): (1) single case studies that did not compare; (2) single cases that involved internal comparison, for example if sub-national or cross-sectional comparisons were drawn or if hypothesis-testing used longitudinal data; and (3) multiple country studies that are by definition comparative.

Somewhat “dangerously,” we find that 54.2% of our articles are single case studies with no comparisons attempted (Table 6). Multiple country case studies constitute approximately 26.1% of all articles and single case studies with some internal comparative element comprise 19.7% of our sample. The finding that most published Third World administration research is

non-comparative parallels the finding by Van Wart and Cayer, where two-thirds of all comparative public administration published between 1982 and 1986 were single case studies. This tendency to refrain from comparative analysis, coupled with the dominance of descriptive approaches and essay-based methods as underlined previously, suggests the possibility for generalizability in Third World administration remains constrained.

##### ***(5) Where are authors located?***

Our content analysis also explored whether authors were affiliated with universities and research institutions in the global South. This approach differs from existing surveys of public administration that have concentrated on authors' university faculty, departmental affiliation and level of academic rank (Houston & Delevan, 1990; Lan & Anders, 2000). Nevertheless, in the context of understanding the extent to which Third World scholarship is actually strengthening scholarly knowledge in the Third World, we chose to concentrate on the location of affiliations of the authors. Understanding whether internationally recognized research is being undertaken by researchers located in the developing world or still remains the domain of those trained and financed in the North can help us understand if top-rated administrative science of the developing world is increasingly situated *in* developing countries. This is important as we consider whether cutting edge research on Third World administration is a truly global endeavor that has potential positive externalities and contributions for educational establishments in the global South, or whether the field is still defined and constituted by those trained and/or employed in the North. We chose to use the location of the institutional affiliation of the author rather than an author's nationality given many developing country nationals train and secure academic employment in North America, Europe and the Antipodes. While these academics

may contribute to social science, including Third World administrative science, at the highest levels, they may also inadvertently exacerbate a brain drain from South to North that undermines capacity-building and local knowledge development in national administrative systems.

To examine author affiliation systematically, we developed a coding system in which articles where all authors were affiliated with non-Western institutions at the time of writing received 3 points. Where half or the majority of authors were affiliated with Third World institutions, we allocated 2 points, while if a minority of authors claimed such affiliations, 1 point was awarded. If no author cites institutional affiliations located in the Third World, we allocated no points. For this analysis, we disregarded the 22 articles where institutional affiliations were impossible to discern due to journal formatting.

In our sample, 69.6% of articles do not have a single author affiliated with a developing country institute or universities, indicating that authors located in West are more prolific in leading academic journals. Surprisingly however, in 19.4% of our sample all authors are affiliated with organizations located in the Third World. Interestingly, collaborations between developed and developing country researchers remain extremely rare; only 3.6% of articles have minorities of developing country authors while 7.3% have half or a majority of authors from the developing world.

Overall, this content analysis indicates that Third World administrative study is a small-scale, disparate, descriptive, qualitative/empirical, non-comparative and predominantly Western-centered activity that limits our ability to build a cumulative body of social science research. The study of Third World administration remains in almost all cases a minority of published articles within leading public administration journals, development journals and public management

journals. Most published research across the three fields falls within the descriptive category, with those having well articulated statements and theoretical propositions are a distinct minority of studies. Methods used are largely qualitative and essay-based, with quantitative studies of both the low and high strength variety still limited. Research was infrequently comparative, with most research designs utilizing single case studies. Finally, a growing but nonetheless small minority of articles had authors with institutional affiliations in the global South, suggesting that internationally recognized Third World administrative study largely occurs by researchers located outside the Third World.

### **Why is Third World research in this state?**

Why do the highest levels of scientific knowledge of Third World administration in the contemporary period exhibit the characteristics of a small-scale, descriptive, qualitative/empirical and non-comparative sub-field dominated by researchers with Western affiliations? We offer three possible reasons that may explain these findings.

First, the perennial insecurity of comparative research within the parent discipline of public administration keeps Third World administrative studies as a minor sub-interest within public administration. In the United States, this is partly a consequence of the politics of knowledge within graduate schools of public administration. Comparative and development administration courses remain electives on most US graduate programs if they exist at all, while core courses concentrate on American subjects with little examination of international phenomenon (Farazmand, 1996: 253; Heady, 2001: 393). While the host nation of any education program should rightly be the country of focus for training, American students risk being under-

exposed to international phenomenon when compared to their counterparts located elsewhere in the world (Heady, 2001:393). This may create an assumption among future public administration scholars that the problems of the world are unimportant, are equivalent to those in America, and/or at least reflective of the American experience, without treating any of this as a matter for further investigation. The study of foreign administration thus remains a luxury rather than necessity, an intellectual indulgence or altruistic act (when directed towards the Third World, for example) rather than an intrinsic part of building a more accurate understanding of American public administration. Moreover, until comparative public administration can significantly inform mainstream American public administration, there is a sense that Third World administration will never gain the global and scientific acceptance that it strives for (Riggs, 1991: 475).

Secondly, with comparative public administration relegated to a secondary status within public administration, research of “foreign” administrations have been either kept distant from mainstream public administration or migrated to disciplines more welcoming to their interests (Jreisat, 2005: 234). Multi-disciplinary interest in Third World administration has further fragmented research geographically, conceptually and methodologically. If anything unites Third World administrative studies, it has been its ability to capture the “local realities” of administration in full contextual specificity. With methods of comparison generally absent and little attempt to build coherent and cumulative literatures across topics or geographies, the ability to generalize from this local context to other locations and conditions and/or develop monothetic theories, whether in the developed or developing world, remains unviable.

Lastly, to make sense of the limited presence of Third World administrative content in leading publication outlets, as well as the paucity of authors with affiliations to Third World

institutions, one must ask if such research confronts institutional obstacles. Currently, leading journals are published in English, mainly in the US and UK, and constituted by editorial boards made up of scholars trained in Western academic canons and traditions. Researchers affiliated with institutes in the developing world are less likely to have been educated abroad, and will therefore be less aware of Northern academic protocols, less familiar with Western theories, empirical traditions and the English language and less frequently immersed in key networks of association and influence. Without such kinds of experience and socialization, publishing in highly rated academic journals can be a real challenge. In some part, the obstacle for Third World scholars is a problem of financing as ensuring that new Third World scholars can compete with Western-educated graduates requires investments in local research environments and higher educational establishments. Similarly, the demands of teaching in many developing countries can also severely limit the time available for research. In other instances however, there are real difficulties in changing parochial interests that keep the study of developing country administrations strictly within domestic boundaries, national languages and local journals. Overall then, the challenge of publication for scholars of public administration might therefore be described as systemic, financial and cultural.

### **Towards a global public administration**

In the face of these difficulties and trends, the search for a robust science of contemporary Third World administration continues. As we consider the future of public administration, we guard against what Ferrel Heady described as both the hubris of making “ringing pronouncements about a new paradigm for the field of public administration” and the

pessimism of “conclu[ding] that we have reached a state of decline or decadence requiring revolutionary efforts to rescue us from irrelevance” (Heady, 2001: 392)

This content analysis underlines the need to end the false dichotomy that separates and divides Third World administrative scholarship from other areas of administrative scholarship (Farazmand, 1996, 1999; Heady, 2001; Riggs, 1991). Ending this dichotomy requires mainstreaming the study of developing countries within public administration scholarship at the same time as public administration perspectives are better integrated with other social science disciplines with interests in the developing world. The term “global public administration” captures the need to collapse the disciplinary distinctions that restricts cumulative scientific engagement on Third World administration. The “global” label also highlights that globalization drives the changing character of the modern state in such a way that it requires inclusive international collaboration when examining any administration, Third World or otherwise (Farazmand, 1996, 1999). A “global” designation seems especially relevant today given the non-cumulative, non-collaborative and geographically circumscribed nature of Third World administrative studies.

So what would a global public administration look like? Its foremost aim would be to foster collaborative research organized around geographies, units of analysis, instruments, methodologies or substantive issues transcending vested disciplinary and national interests. This could build a rigorous administrative science that has the potential for generalizing internationally without losing hold of its empirical foundations (Jreisat, 2005: 238; Peters, 1994: 87). Fostering greater collaboration between researchers located in the North and South could be one tangible step in this direction. As in the case of law where case specifics are interpreted through larger principles and frameworks, so too can the administrative sciences only become a

universal science by “going global.” While access to robust data from developing countries may be a continuing challenge, a global public administration will adopt innovative strategies to overcome such challenges. This includes building datasets that permit comparative global analysis, thereby challenging the monopoly (and perhaps even the biases) of the World Bank and other international organizations over Third World administrative data. Global public administration would ultimately become a cumulative and collaborative social science enterprise, linking theory, methods and data in robust and defensible ways.

A global public administration is important to the extent that we strive to ensure security, peace and livelihoods in an increasingly inter-connected world. Potentially relevant topics that could benefit the Third World directly include research on essential public service delivery; exploring the politics-administration nexus in developing countries that impedes good governance; examining the science of state-building in failed and fragile states; considering the administrative backdrop for protecting human rights; or investigating ways administration impedes the trans-national supply of global health and climate change. The list of topics that currently do not feature in public administration but nevertheless exhibits tremendous potential to dramatically improve the lives of millions is a very long one. At the same time, a global public administration can also potentially exploit these new vistas to inform the core concerns of public administration scholarship today, including areas like emergency and crisis management, criminal justice, public performance management, ethics, health and human services administration and science and technology to name but a few.

In conclusion, a global public administration offers opportunities for clearer understandings of the strengths and weaknesses of administrative systems, process and instruments the world over. A more inclusive and robust scholarship can encourage a wider

array of solutions for the administrative challenges that hinder prosperity, security, service provision and human rights in any country. A global public administration is an enterprise from which American public administration, Third World administration and most importantly, the world at large, all stand to benefit.

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Table 1. Frequency of Third World administration articles in sample (1996-2008)

<b>Sub-Discipline</b>	<b>Journal</b>	<b>No. of articles in sample</b>	<b>Total population</b>	<b>% of published articles on Third World administration</b>
<b>Comparative public administration</b>				
	<i>International Review of Administrative Sciences</i>	39	157	24.8%
	<i>International Journal of Public Administration</i>	25	107	23.3%
	<i>Public Administration Review</i>	12	314	3.8%
	<i>Public Administration</i>	1	203	0.5 %
<b>Development administration</b>				
	<i>Public Administration and Development</i>	100	175	57.1%
	<i>Development and Change</i>	28	176	15.9%
	<i>World Development</i>	63	654	9.6%
	<i>Journal of Developing Areas</i>	8	87	9.2%
<b>Public management</b>				
	<i>Governance</i>	14	105	13.3%
	<i>International Public Management Journal</i>	5	71	7.0%
	<b>Total</b>	295	2049	14.0%

Table 2. Frequency of geographic focus in sample

<b>Country</b>	<b>Number of articles</b>
China	31
South Africa	17
India	17
Brazil	13
Tanzania	11
Indonesia	11
Philippines	10
Ghana	9
Malaysia	8
Mexico	8

Table 3. Research areas examined in sample

<b>ASPA Categories</b>	<b>Total number of articles</b>	<b>% of total</b>
N/A	89	30.17
Environmental and natural resources administration	34	11.53
Inter-governmental administration and management	23	7.80
Personnel administration and labor relations	23	7.80
Public budgeting and financial management	23	7.80
Democracy and social justice	19	6.44
Public performance management	16	5.42
Ethics	11	3.73
Science and technology in government	11	3.73
Health and human services administration	10	3.39
Public law and administration	10	3.39
Public Administration Research	8	2.71
Complexity and network studies	6	2.03
Women in public administration	4	1.36
Emergency and crisis management	3	1.02
Criminal justice administration	3	1.02
Transport Policy and Admin	2	0.68
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>295</b>	<b>100.00</b>

\* This section's website defines its research focus as "research on city, county, special district, state and national public administration as well as research on public-private partnerships and third party government."

Table 4. Theoretical approaches in sample

	<b>Number</b>	<b>%</b>
<i>Descriptive</i>	159	53.9
<i>Thesis assertion</i>	103	34.9
<i>Hypothesis/Model testing</i>	33	11.2
<b>Total</b>	295	100.0

Table 5. Methods adopted in sample

	<b>Number</b>	<b>%</b>
<i>Essay-based</i>	113	38.3
<i>Non-quantitative</i>	98	33.2
<i>Quantitative (low)</i>	50	17.0
<i>Quantitative (high)</i>	34	11.5
<b>Total</b>	295	100.0

Table 6. Comparative approaches used in sample

	<b>Number</b>	<b>%</b>
<i>Single case studies: no comparison</i>	160	54.2
<i>Single case studies with internal comparison</i>	58	19.7
<i>Multiple case studies</i>	77	26.1
<b>Total</b>	295	100.0

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<sup>i</sup> Earlier versions of this paper were presented at the Public Management Research Association conference (2009) and the Minnowbrook III Conference (2008).

<sup>ii</sup> [http://www.whitehouse.gov/the\\_press\\_office/remarks-of-president-barack-obama-address-to-joint-session-of-congress/](http://www.whitehouse.gov/the_press_office/remarks-of-president-barack-obama-address-to-joint-session-of-congress/)

<sup>iii</sup> The terms Third World, global South, non-Western world, developing countries are used interchangeably to refer to countries not located in North America and Western Europe. We do not use the label “Third World” of “developing” in any pejorative sense. We include both developing and post-Communist transition countries in this designation.

<sup>iv</sup> For example, Birmingham University’s Development Administration Group was formed in 1968, while Manchester’s Institute for Development Policy and Management was set up in 1958.

<sup>v</sup> It should be acknowledged that for many critical European scholars differences in terminology simply indicates the rise of neo-liberal logics in Third World administration, first with neoclassical economics in the 1980s and new institutional economics in the 1990s (Cooke, 2004; Cooke & Dar, 2008; Hughes, 2003). The debate has ultimately pitted European radical scholars and North American reformist scholars of development management against one another (Gulrajani, forthcoming).

<sup>vi</sup> A number of essay-based articles have also attempted to explore the state of comparative public administration (Farazmand, 1991; Heady, Perlman & Rivera, 2007; Jreisat, 2005; Waldo, 1976).

<sup>vii</sup> Exceptions included the *International Journal of Public Administration* where we were unable to access the 1996 and 1999 volumes and the *International Public Management Journal* that only began publishing in 1997.

<sup>viii</sup> Book reviews, editorial introductions and in memoriam pieces were disregarded.

<sup>ix</sup> We missed three issues due to lack of online and hardcopy access in two university libraries. This included *International Journal of Public Administration* 2008 31(12) and *Journal of Developing Areas* 2002 35(2) and 1999 32(3).

<sup>x</sup> A full list of these countries can be found at:

<http://web.worldbank.org/WBSITE/EXTERNAL/DATASTATISTICS/0,,contentMDK:20421402~pagePK:64133150~piPK:64133175~theSitePK:239419,00.html#IDA>

<sup>xi</sup> For a statement of this commitment, see [http://www.aspanet.org/scriptcontent/index\\_par\\_philosophy.cfm](http://www.aspanet.org/scriptcontent/index_par_philosophy.cfm) (Accessed February 18, 2010)

<sup>xii</sup> We excluded the Section of International and Comparative Administration (SICA) since we are exploring the administrative study of developing countries that have largely dominated SICA’s research agenda. We also excluded the Section on Chinese Administration given it is a geographically circumscribed group; the Conference on Minority Administration given this does not have section-status; the Section on Historical, Artistic and Reflective Expression given it represents a method of studying administration rather than a topic; and the Certified Public Management as it seems to be largely an applied category.