

The copyright of this thesis vests in the author. No quotation from it or information derived from it is to be published without full acknowledgement of the source. The thesis is to be used for private study or non-commercial research purposes only.

Published by the University of Cape Town (UCT) in terms of the non-exclusive license granted to UCT by the author.

**“Reviewing the Nature and Quality of Doctoral
Research in Public Administration: *a literature review*”**

By

Blessing Sandile Ndimba (NDMBLE001)

Masters Mini-Dissertation

Submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Masters of Social Sciences
(**MSocSc**) in Public Affairs and Administration under the Department of Political Studies,
University of Cape Town

Supervisor: Professor Robert Cameron

University of Cape Town

Faculty of Humanities

Department of Political Studies

2009

List of Acronyms

AIDS	Acquired immune deficiency syndrome
APF	Africa Partners Forum
AU	African Union
CAP	Country Assistance Plan
CDC	Centers for Disease Control and Prevention
CSO	Civil Society Organisation
DAC	Development Assistance Committee
DAC	
DFID	Department for International Development
EC	European Commission
ECA	Economic Commission for Africa
EU	European Union
FCO	Foreign and Commonwealth Office
G8	Group of Eight
GFATM	Global Fund to Fight AIDS, TB and Malaria
GNI	Gross National Income
HIV	Human immunodeficiency virus
HLSP	Health consultancy
IACDI	Independent Advisory Committee on Development Impact
ICPD	International Conference on Population and Development
IFF	International Finance Facility
LIC	Lower Income Country
MDG	Millennium Development Goals
MIC	Middle Income Country
MSP	Multi-sectoral Support Programme
NAO	National Audit Office
NEPAD	New Partnership for Africa's Development
NGO	Non-Governmental Organisation
OA	Official Aid
ODA	Official Development Assistance
ODA	Overseas Development Agency
OECD	Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development
PSA	Public Service Agreement
SA	South Africa
SCS	Senior Civil Service
SSA	Sub-Saharan Africa
UK	United Kingdom
UN	United Nations
UNAIDS	Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNFPA	United Nations Population Fund
UNGASS	United Nations General Assembly Special Session
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund

GRADUATE SCHOOL IN HUMANITIES

MEMORANDUM

FROM : Rosalie Richfield
Ext 2693

TO : Carolyn Coombe
Acquisitions, Jagger Library, Upper Campus

DATE : 01 June 2009.

DISSERTATION

Please find enclosed two copies of the dissertation of the student whose details appear below:

Candidate: Ndimba, BS (NDMBLE001)
Degree: MSocSc in Public Affairs & Administration
Title: "Reviewing the nature and quality of doctoral research in public administration: a literature review"
Supervisors: Professor R Cameron

He is due to graduate in June 2009.

Faculty of Faculty of Humanities



UNIVERSITY
OF CAPE TOWN

Department of Political Studies

Course Code: POL5010X
Course Description: Minor Dissertation
Date: 11 February 2009

Topic "Reviewing the Nature and Quality of Doctoral Research in Public Administration: a literature review"

Student name: Blessing Sandile Ndimma
Student No: NDMBLE001
Supervisor: Prof. Robert Cameron
(University of Cape Town)

Plagiarism Declaration Statement

1. I know that plagiarism is wrong. Plagiarism is to use another's work and pretend that it is one's own.
2. I have used the Harvard Method convention for citation and referencing. Each contribution to, and quotation in, this project from the work(s) of other people has been attributed, and has been cited and referenced.
3. This project is my own work.
4. I have not allowed, and will not allow, anyone to copy my work with the intention of passing it off as his or her own work.
5. I acknowledge that copying someone else's assignment or essay, or part of it, is wrong, and declare that this is my own work.

Signature

Signed by candidate

Date: _____

This dissertation is dedicated to the memory of Stella Clark, for teaching me how to write like a true scholar should.

To Lucia Thesin and Peter Anderson – I take a bow

To my supervisor, Professor Robert Cameron, you are an inspirational academic and faithful son of the discipline. Thank you for your support and mentorship during this journey.

This research was made possible with the financial support of the NRF

University of Cape Town

Contents Page

Contents	Page no:
Abstract	v
Chapter I: Introduction	1
1.1 Chapter Purpose	2
1.2 Research Problem	2
1.3 Objectives	8
1.4 Significance of study	9
1.5 Concept Clarification	11
1.6 Methodology	12
1.7 Limitations	13
1.8 Chapter summary	14
1.9 Summary of chapters	14
 Chapter II: The state of research in Public Administration: a broad literature overview	
 2 Chapter purpose	 15
Part One	
2.1 Background: international history on Public Administration as a study discipline	16
2.1.1 Phase 1: The separation of politics and administration (1900-1926) – First generation	19
2.1.2 Phase 2: The scientific management phase (1927-1937) – Second generation.	21
2.1.3 Phase 3: The identity crisis phase (1938-1970) – Third generation	22
2.1.4 Phase 4: Synthesis phase (1970s-1990s):	26
2.1.5 Phase 5: 20 th century and beyond (Public Management) (1990s-till present)	27
2.1.6 Drawn implications on the state of Public Administration research in the U.S.	28
2.2 South African history of Public Administration as a study discipline	32
2.2.1 Phase 1: The Generic Administrative Processes (1967-1989)	33
2.2.2 Phase 2: Public Management to New Public Management (NPM): (1990-2003)	36
2.2.3 Phase 3: Criticism of Public Management, the New Public Management and a search for a new approach (2003-till present)	39
2.2.4 Drawn implications for South African Public Administration research	40
Part Two	
2.3 Significance of research in Public Administration	41
2.4 The State of Public Administration Research in the U.S.	43
2.5 The state of South African Public Administration research	48
2.6 Chapter Summary	51

Chapter III: The quality and nature of Doctoral Research in Public Administration

3 Chapter purpose	52
3.1 The investigation on doctoral research in Public Administration	53
3.2 Response debates on the nature and quality of doctoral research in Public Administration	57
3.3 Doctoral research in South Africa	59
3.4 Chapter summary	61

Chapter IV: Types of doctoral programmes and theses in Public Administration that are offered at South African universities

4 Chapter purpose	62
4.1 South African Higher Education system	63
4.2 South African institutions offering Public Administration	63
4.3 Types of theses awarded by institutions offering Public Administration in South Africa	66
4.4 Institutional location and designation of Public Administration Departments	67
4.4.1 What are Public Administration departments called?	68
4.4.2 Location of Public Administration departments within faculties	70
4.4.3 The size of Public Administration departments	71
4.5 Doctoral programmes: a tool to enhance quality research	74
4.6 Types of PhD programmes offered at South African universities	78
4.7 Chapter summary	83

Chapter V: Conclusion

5 Chapter purpose	85
5.1 The study objectives were	85
5.2 The main findings of the study	86
5.3 Major implications drawn in this study	88
5.4 Suggestions and areas for future research	89
5.5 Final remarks	90
Reference list	92

Tables

Table 1: The academic development of Public Administration in the United States	18
Table 2: Research on published research journal articles in Public Administration	43
Table 3: South African Institutions in higher education offering master's and doctoral programmes in Public Administration	64
Table 4: Types of Public Administration theses offered at South African Universities	65

Table 5 Faculty locations and names of Public Administration departments at South African Universities:	70
Table 6: Faculties housing Public Administration Departments	71
Table 7: Types of PhD programmes and theses in Public Administration offered at South African Universities and department sizes	73

Appendixes

Appendix 1: A list of Universities in South Africa	99-100
Appendix 2: Center for Science Development classifications of South African universities prior 2001	101
Appendix 3: University of Pretoria's PhD Programme	102-106

Abstract

This study is an overview on the quality of doctoral research in Public Administration. The aim is to conduct an analysis on the body of literature that has developed over the past few decades which examines the debates on the quality and nature of doctoral research in the field. The study examines the international literature, predominantly from the United States (U.S.) because of the rich literature and of number of studies conducted on this issue; some European literature although limited; as well as some of the recently developing South African literature on this issue. The study uses the secondary research method of conducting a literature review. The type of literature review used is an integrative review. An 'integrative review' approach according to Neuman (1994) review presents the current state of knowledge and pulls together disparate research reports in a fast growing area of knowledge. The findings in this study have indicated that the South African Public Administration as an academic discipline shows scholarly activity to develop a solid research base. The quality of research in the discipline is in crisis, reflecting the state of the field's historical identity problems and the failure to agree on ways to improve the quality of its research. Literature has shown that part of the failure in the field's research is related to the stage of an academic career when students in the discipline are first trained in the research process which is not happening in a systematic way because of a lack of doctoral programmes. The suggestion made is that doctoral programmes need to be developed and recognised by all faculties in institutions offering Public Administration in South Africa. This is because most tertiary institutions in South Africa do not have doctoral programmes, thus failing to adequately train doctoral students develop research standards to be able to make significant contributions to the field of study. Therefore, that doctoral programmes must be a prerequisite putting emphasis on research methodology and design before students can be allowed to undertake their thesis, if inquiry in Public Administration is to progress.

CHAPTER I:

Introduction

1.1 Chapter Purpose

The aim of this chapter is to introduce the reader to the research problem, the significance of study, study objectives, clarify concepts, and introduce the methodology. An overview of literature on the problem with the quality of doctoral research in Public Administration that this study has identified as important to Public Administration¹ as a discipline or field of study is undertaken. This chapter aims to show the significance of and the need to conduct such a study as well as to motivate for the use of literature review as a method of study. While the focus of this research is not on the study of Public Administration and its history; however, the role such history played, helps in understanding the research crisis the discipline is facing at present and is thus investigated briefly.

This study is an overview on the quality of doctoral research in Public Administration. The aim is to conduct an analysis on the body of literature that has developed for almost 29 years which examines the debates on the quality and nature of doctoral research in the field. The study examines the international literature, predominantly from the United States (U.S.) because of the rich literature and of number of studies conducted on this issue; some European literature although limited; as well as some of the recently developing South African literature on this issue. It must be noted that although there is very limited South African literature on the state of Public Administration research, the debate is developing at a fast pace. Therefore, this chapter outlines the research problem, the research objectives, the significance of study, conceptualisation clarification, the research methodology, and finally gives a summary of the chapter and of the chapter that follows.

¹ To distinguish the difference, lower case "public administration" will refer to the public sector (the object of study) and upper case will refer to "Public Administration" as a field devoted to the study of the public sector (Pauw, 1999: 10). Waldo used a similar distinction which was also adopted by Raadschelders (1999).

1.2 Research Problem

Mosher described the significance of research as “...one of the marks of a profession that its members consciously work toward the advancement of knowledge in their field” (1956: 169). That is what is understood also as the purpose of doctoral research in Public Administration: to develop and disseminate knowledge that will advance the discipline. Doctoral research (or producing a dissertation) provides an opportunity for the development of the building blocks necessary to advance the field, as well as a testing ground for research standards (McCurdy and Cleary, 1984). This is because a dissertation (or thesis as it is often referred to in the South African context), according to Chang and Hsieh (1997), may be viewed as reflecting an academic and intellectual culture of the discipline. A doctoral dissertation reflects on the capabilities of the candidate, the training received, the technical skills and the analytical and writing abilities developed (Isaac, Quinlan & Walker, 1992). Perhaps even more importantly, it is to “identify the student as a potential future contributor to the field, since the research problem initiated in a dissertation usually constitutes the foundation of research projects subsequently conducted by the student/author after his graduation” (Chang and Hsieh, 1997: 119). The dissertation can therefore be seen as an end and a beginning: it ends an academic training process and begins an academic career of research, publication, and teaching (Carr, Cheney and Mann, 1986).

That only happens when students are involved in doctoral programmes aimed at preparing them for their doctoral research. Other scholars (i.e. McCurdy and Cleary, 1984; Douglas, 1996) have blamed the poor quality on doctoral dissertational research to doctoral programmes. In order to reveal how well the programme trains its students to become productive scholars one needs to measure the productivity of graduate students. While there is no existing literature in the South African context which has measured the productivity of doctoral graduates, inferences can be drawn on studies conducted in the United States (U.S). This paper aims to give a descriptive picture to show whether South African universities have such doctoral programmes or not. One key indicator of a quality doctoral programme is whether refereed academic journals do publish articles based on research conducted by graduates of that programme (White, Adams & Forrester, 1996).

The study by White (1986b) indicated that only about a quarter of the Public Administration doctorate recipients published anything subsequent to their dissertations. It is a matter of concern that Douglas's (1996) study yielded similar findings. The results indicated that the set of distinctly research-oriented university environments in the field of Public Administration, at least as measured by output in the listed journals, is relatively small and concentrated (Douglas, 1996). This was shown by the findings indicating that both the number of scholars producing more than two articles and the number of graduate student publications in the listed journals were quite low.

According to Douglas (1996), his finding seems to support the conclusions of previous studies (i.e. White, 1986b; and McCurdy and Cleary, 1984); and indeed in that Public Administration programmes are doing a relatively poor job of training students to carry out scholarly research. White et al. (1996) concluded that doctoral education and research is only making a minimal contribution to knowledge and theory development in the field. It seems then that the quality, effectiveness and reputation of doctoral programmes in the discipline appears to be failing its students. It seems safe to therefore conclude that the state of Public Administration programmes raises serious questions about whether doctoral programmes are in essence adequately preparing students to conduct scholarly research.

While the purpose of doctoral research may seem obvious from the above statements, research indicates otherwise with respect to the contribution of research conducted by doctoral students in Public Administration in the U.S. Over the past few decades, the state of doctoral research has sparked a serious debate amongst the U.S. scholars of the discipline. A pessimist will say that a spirit of gloom pervades the discipline today. In the U.S., the debate is over the content and quality of doctoral research in Public Administration. This debate dates back to McCurdy and Cleary's (1984) article '*Why can't we resolve the research issue in Public Administration?*' and was followed by White's (1986b) study titled '*Dissertations and publications in Public Administration*' where they argued that doctoral education and research in the American Public Administration was of poor quality. Various studies followed thereafter, making their contributions into the debate on the American Public Administration research that has

now lasted for more than three decades (see McCurdy and Cleary, 1984; Perry & Kraemer, 1986; Stallings & Ferris, 1988; Kraemer & Perry, 1989; Houston & Delevan, 1990; Box, 1992; Adams & White, 1994; White, Adams & Forrester, 1996). The studies conducted (whether looking at published journal articles or doctoral dissertations) have generally concluded that research in Public Administration has failed to contribute towards the growth of the body of knowledge and theory development in the advancement of the field (White et al., 1996).

In the U.S. debates, attention has focused on the role of research, in particular the function, type, and quality of research by doctoral students (Stallings, 1986). The scholarly criticism about the nature and quality of doctoral research in which both methodological rigor and theoretical development of Public Administration research is questioned includes scholars such as McCurdy and Cleary (1984); Perry & Kraemer (1986); Cleary (1992 & 2000); Adams & White (1994); and White et al. (1996). According to these studies in which the content and quality of doctoral dissertations has been assessed, it is argued that the dissertations are of poor quality with regard to knowledge development and theory testing (Box, 1992). These studies also question the contribution of doctoral research towards advancing knowledge development in Public Administration. For example, according to White et al., there is evidence indicating that, "indeed the [P]ublic [A]dministration doctorate appears to advance knowledge and theory development in the field only to a rather limited degree" (1996: 441). As a result White et al. (1996) have found the problems to have serious implications in the development of Public Administration as an independent field or discipline. Raadschelders (1999) identified academic and existential crises (these will be discussed in the next chapter) which can be regarded as contributing factors to problems regarding the content and quality of doctoral research in the field.

Most debates over the content and quality of Public Administration research seem to emphasise that research suffers from methodological deficiency and the lack of development of a cumulative and meaningful knowledge base in the discipline as there has been in the other social sciences (Perry and Kraemer, 1986). Hence, doctoral dissertations in Public Administration have been characterised as applied, lacking

theoretically, and lacking in empirical rigor, thus making little impact on knowledge advancement in the field. The research findings also indicated that Public Administration research focuses on discussion of problems or issues relating to professional practice rather than on developing or testing theoretical propositions. McCurdy and Cleary (1984); Cleary (1992 & 2000); White et al (1996); and Adams & White (1994) have all criticised the focus of rather a large number of doctoral dissertations that are practice-oriented, while very few studies focus on theory-testing. Also, according to Streib Slotkin & Rivera (2001), as a discipline, Public Administration is accused of clinging to a practitioner focus to justify its existence in higher education. The same notion was identified by Ventriss (1999):

The identity of the field, to a considerable extent, has been inexorably linked to a search for an educational focus in public administration and public affairs in general. The ambiguity that besets public administration as a mishmash of different theoretical and methodological approaches is also reflected in the confusion concerning the kind of education students need for careers in the public service. (Ventriss, 1999: 4)

Thus Houston and Delevan (1990) argued that this behavior has hindered the field's intellectual development. They have given an explanation that "in part, the historical character of the field with its focus on professional practice may well contribute to a lack of theoretical research" (1990: 679). As a result Houston and Delevan (1990) have diagnosed the problem to be that Public Administration scholars may be lacking the basic theoretical frameworks for guiding the systematic identification of significant research questions, to say nothing of the selection of appropriate hypotheses and research tools to answer the questions put fourth. They argued that this situation has contributed to a lack of theory building, as well as to the non-cumulative nature of the research that characterizes Public Administration literature (Houston and Delevan, 1990: 679). Hence the proposed solutions to the research problem have generally endorsed a more academically-oriented research agenda (Streib et al., 2001).

For example, Stallings proposed that doctoral research needs to rise above the "individual and problems of day-to-day practical administration" (1986: 239). Felbinger, Holzer and White (1999) strongly support that doctoral research should be a source for new knowledge and have suggested that doctoral education in Public Administration must be enhanced (this is discussed in more detail in chapter IV). Therefore the critiques in the

international literature seem to suggest that the content of doctoral dissertations conducted by students is not contributing towards knowledge development to advance the field's status as a discipline due to their focus on research issues oriented towards professional practice.

However, Streib et al. (2001) says that these comments raise a serious concern, given that practice is, in many ways, the very soul of the field. According to Bendor (1994) it is not hidden knowledge that the field of Public Administration originated in practical research. The study of Public Administration is described as an applied science and its research is applied in nature (Thornhill, 2008; Bendor, 1994). Bendor validates his description of the discipline as an applied science in that it is "often situated, quite appropriately, in professional schools, which by design are oriented toward solving practical problems" (1994: 28). An example of this is its good, long-standing history within Political Science until after World War II (Bendor, 1994).

Houston and Delevan (1990) argued that research problems are a consequence of the discipline's consciously favouring practice because the discipline is traditionally perceived to be a training ground for the public service. Hence, their statement hereunder explains doctoral students' orientation to engage in practice-oriented research in the field. They argue that:

The field traditionally has been viewed as a training ground for the public service and has focused on the importance of practice as separate from academic inquiry (...). This has led [P]ublic [A]dministration program[me]s to adopt multiple missions that require not only academic research of [P]ublic [A]dministration faculty but professional service as well (...). In this respect public administration has "clung self-consciously" to an emphasis on practice, thereby hindering its intellectual development (...). (Houston and Delevan, 1990: 679).

Despite Bendor's (1994) and Streib et al.'s (2001) argument, it is clear that the critiques are advocating for a more basic research in the discipline. Some have even called boldly for a complete separation with practice in the discipline (e.g. Stallings & Ferris, 1988). What can be deduced so far is that most studies conducted in the United States (U.S.) literature have focused on the following three issues: (1) the quality of doctoral research and programmes in Public Administration as measured by the quality of research produced from them; (2) the appropriate methodology for Public Administration

research; and (3) the proper research questions for Public Administration as a discipline (Bailey, 1992).

Having identified the crisis with scholarly research in the U.S. Public Administration, the question to be asked then is: do the same research issues identified in the U.S exist in South African Public Administration research? In South Africa, so far, there is only one study conducted (although it combined masters' dissertation and doctoral theses) with a focus on doctoral research while most studies have focused on published journal articles. Wessels' (2008) recent study on the trends in masters and doctoral research in Public Administration may have paved way for the series of studies to be conducted. However, his study still does not tell much about the standard of doctoral research in the field, except by providing a profile on research output and research issues by topic. While there is little critical research conducted with a sole focus on doctoral theses in South Africa (with the exception of the Wessels (2008) study), some scholars have claimed the same problem identified in the U.S. exists in the field here (Cameron, 2005; Cameron and McLaverty 2008; Wessels, 2008) based on the studies conducted on published journals. Cameron (2005 & 2008) argued that South African Public Administration suffers from very little theory testing and there has not been a development of a cumulative and meaningful knowledge advancement. Cameron (2008), Cameron and McLaverty (2008) argued that Public Administration in South Africa, as in the United States, has been sucked into functional activities at the expense of academic research and theory development in the field. As a result, Cameron and McLaverty have strongly argued that "there has not been the same development of a cumulative and meaningful knowledge base in the discipline as there has been in the other social sciences." (2008: 71).

Wessels' (1999) reflections on the scientific face of Public Administration research has shown a concern about the quality of research in the field and issued a plea for adequate training on research methodology for the enrichment of the subject's field of knowledge. Cameron (2005) proposed that research be undertaken on the state Public Administration in South Africa to test his proposition whether it is indeed suffering from the dearth of intellectual development. In their research article, Cameron and McLaverty (2008: 71) argued that "theory development in the field is weak" and this was supported by the

findings in their research on journal articles. It is clear therefore that there is an outcry about the state of research in the field, at both international and local realms of academia. Are these scholars the prophets of doom in the discipline or are they ringing a warning alarm? As Millar would say, “[p]rophets of doom are almost always newsworthy, but their claims and forecasts ordinarily require close scrutiny.” (1976: 60) With that in mind, the researcher undertakes an integrative review of these debates. Thus, the researcher aims to review the ongoing debates over the state of Public Administration doctoral research both internationally and in South Africa through examining the literature written on the subject matter and piecing together these various contributions.

1.3 Objectives

The main objective of the study is to undertake an overview of the literature on the content and quality of doctoral research in South African Public Administration. As a result this has generated the following objectives:

- 1 To examine the state of Public Administration research, looking at both international and South African literature.
- 2 To provide an overview of the body of literature that examines the debates on the quality of doctoral research in Public Administration. This will entail
 - 2a) Reviewing the state of doctoral research in Public Administration: examining both the international and South African literature.
 - 2b) Analysing critically the various types of PhD programmes and theses in Public Administration that are offered at South African universities

1.4 Significance of study

This research is a literature review of the debates over the quality of doctoral research as well as to present findings on its current state. There are few contributions to the discourse on the quality of Public Administration research in South Africa (e.g. Wessels, 1999; Cameron, 2005, 2008). Even the few studies conducted in South Africa have followed the same trend as the U.S. of focusing on the published journal articles in Public Administration (e.g. Hubbell, 1992; Wessels, 2004; Cameron and McLaverty, 2008). Even those that write on research have not engaged with the debate at hand but on related issues such as on research designs, according to Wessels (2008). For example, Wessels' (2008) observation of a recent issue of the (South African) *Journal of Public Administration* (volume 41, number 3.1), found that ten articles were published on research related topics and most of these ten articles focussed on research design-related issues. As a result Wessels (2008) argued that they are failing to contribute to the debate on the quality of Public Administration doctoral research in South Africa. This implies that there is a large vacuum in studies examining the state of doctoral research in South African Public Administration. How will the status of the discipline grow if that which makes it – the contribution made by doctoral research – receives little attention or is neglected altogether? In addition, there is neglect of the relationship between South Africa and international literature from which much can be learnt in order to improve the state of research in South African Public Administration. Hence, the study at hand aims to bring to the forefront that discourse of the discipline as an analysis of the literature that examines the debates on the quality of research, with specific emphasis on doctoral research and its role in advancing knowledge of the field.

This is a review of literature which will contribute to the knowledge base by showing what is known so far about the state of doctoral research and whether it is contributing towards the development of the field's status as a discipline. Also, the review should serve as a knowledge base for empirical studies to be conducted on the quality of doctoral programmes (teaching and research) by Public Administration institutes in the country. It is hoped therefore that the report should be of value to future doctoral students (even masters students), Public Administration departments responsible for directing doctoral

programmes, and academics concerned with the advancement of the field as an independent discipline. Hence the significance for such a review to be undertaken cannot be ignored as White statement below emphasises:

The issues surrounding the quality of dissertation research need to be publicized. It is uncertain how many Public Administration educators are aware of the poor quality of much of the research and of how little of it contributes to knowledge in the field. Then specific issues need to be addressed. At the forefront are concerns about practitioner dissertations, the lack of basic research, and the imbalance between mainstream and non mainstream research. Initially, these issues will not disappear by merely discussing them, but communicating a concern for them to the wider body of Public Administration educators may get them thinking about where they stand with regard to the issues. It may even get them to change the way they advise students, signoff on proposals, and ultimately approve the research. White (1986b: 232).

Again, it is with anticipation that it will spark more debates and research in to the question whether problem-solving research is a basis for the lack of knowledge advancement in the field. This is necessary because there has been much criticism claiming that there has been too much focus on professional practice-oriented research and less focus on theory development and knowledge-based research, as argued by Cameron (2005 & 2008) and Cameron and McLaverty (2007 & 2008).

Lastly, if it is argued that research in Public Administration should advance the field's status through the development of knowledge, according to Cameron (2005 & 2008), clearly then it is in crisis. Clearly, Public Administration intellectual problems are still not resolved, and thus the enquiry into these key issues and the weapons that advance the status of the discipline through research (i.e. doctoral research) is very important. It is this researcher's strong belief that what doctoral students are doing through their research is important in advancing the status of Public Administration as an independent discipline. This researcher again believes that what doctoral students are doing in their research plays a significant role in shaping the field's identity as it (as Ventriss (1991) analyses) continues to search for an educational focus. Thus, the research doctoral students engage in must show where the educational focus falls and as a result warrant the identity of Public Administration as an independent field of study. Indeed the doctoral research will determine the future of the discipline. Hence, reviewing the ongoing scholarly debates and research about doctoral research is vital so that accumulated knowledge on the status of doctoral research will be known.

1.5 Concept Clarification

Public Administration: the term as used here refers to the study of public administration. The study has opted to use the convention of capital letters in *Public Administration* to denote the subject and the use of lower case for *public administration* to denote that which is investigated by the subject (Pauw, 1999). This convention is taken from Professor J. C Pauw (1999: 10) of Public Administration at the University of South Africa in his chapter '*The concept of Public Administration*'.² Dwight Waldo (1948) first used the convention, which was later adopted by Rhodes (1996), Stillman (1997) and Raadschelders (1999) to mention just a few. The reason for adopting this convention in this study is to help distinguish the difference between public administration as referring to practice and Public Administration as referring to theory. As Pauw puts it " [t]he terminological distinction between 'Public Administration' and 'public administration' enables us to keep the differences between the two crafts or trade...also to help us distinguish between Theory of public administration and Theory of Public Administration..." (1999: 10).

Again, the debate whether as an academic field of study³, Public Administration can be regarded to be science or an art, is an aspect that is still ongoing and is not yet fully resolved. There is a lot of literature though that suggests it is science according to Wilson (cited in Shafritz, Hyde, & Parkes, 2004) or can be changed into science (see Waldo, 1955 cited in Hanekom, 1988). For example, White (1956 in Shafritz et al., 2004) assumed the study of Public Administration to be an art but attaching importance to the

² See chapter 1 in Wessels, J. S & Pauw, J. C. (eds). 1999 cited in *Reflective Public Administration: views from the South* – for full reference see the reference list

³ "This paper does not address any of these questions, it does not offer a framework for resolving all these issues, it does not even attempt to map the concept 'public administration' as a universal starting point for rigorous theory development" as stated by Franklin and Ebdon (2005: 629) and an adopted stance of this study.

significant tendency to transform it into a science. On the other end, Waldo once jestingly referred to Public Administration as a subject-matter in search of a discipline' (cited in Hood, 2001: 5) and Wilson provided a rationale for Public Administration to be an academic discipline (Shafritz et al, 2004). While there are various meanings and locus debates regarding what Public Administration is – a discipline or vocation, this is not the focus of this research and neither will it attempt to engage in the endless scholarly debate even though the researcher acknowledges that the discussion at hand does flirt on that borderline. As a result, the terms “discipline” and “field” have been used interchangeably to refer to Public Administration.

Dissertation/Thesis: The two terms – dissertation and thesis defining a qualification attained in higher educational levels, differ in how they are used internationally and in South Africa. In the United States of America, the term “dissertation” is used to describe a doctorate research paper (i.e. PhD) however in South Africa and maybe elsewhere (e.g. Australia), the word “dissertation” is used to describe a Masters research, while the word “thesis” is used to describe doctoral research. The word “dissertation” is used here to refer words to that effect to international doctorate qualifications and “thesis” to refer to a report emanating a South African doctorate.

1.6 Methodology

The study will largely use the secondary research method of conducting a literature review. A literature review is defined as, “the selection of available documents (both published and unpublished) on the topic, which contain information, ideas, data and evidence written from a particular stand point to fulfil certain aims or express certain views on the nature of the topic and how it is to be investigated, and the effective evaluation of these documents in relation to the research being proposed” (Hart, 1998 as cited in David and Sutton, 2004: 7). According to Neuman (1994), a literature review helps one to learn and build on what others have done. Since the aim is to conduct a literature analysis on the nature and quality of doctoral research in Public Administration, conducting a literature review will help with future research to make known the argued

and what is currently known about the quality of doctoral research in Public Administration. The type of literature review to be used is an integrative review. Hence the study will adopt an 'integrative review' approach because according to Neuman (1994) this type of literature review presents the current state of knowledge and pulls together disparate research reports in a fast growing area of knowledge. Also the review may serve as an article to provide a service to other researchers (Neuman, 1994).

Secondary research articles from the *PAR* debate series on the quality of research and doctoral dissertations research in Public Administration will be used. These are mostly published in the *Public Administration Review (PAR)* which is easily accessible on JSTOR database from the University of Cape Town library. The University of Cape Town library subscribes to JSTOR and various other journal databases which serve as digital archives for published journal articles for easy access to community members (academics, students, and visiting researchers) of the institution. "The JSTOR Archive is a trusted digital repository providing for long-term preservation and access to leading academic journals and scholarly literature from around the world. The JSTOR Archive is supported by libraries, scholarly societies, publishers, and foundations." (<http://www.jstor.org>). Other relevant published journals, published and unpublished studies and books will also be used. For further specific information to enhance available South African literature (i.e. institutions offering doctoral programmes, research outputs, etc) the National Research Foundation (NRF) Nexus database will be used. Additional data will be drawn from institutions' websites (e.g. information on where Public Administration department are housed). Therefore, the focus is on articles written on research in Public Administration, especially on doctoral research as well as any other relevant literature for the purpose of this study.

1.7 Limitations

One limitation identified, is the lack of South African literature on this issue. There are very few studies that are available on research in the South African Public Administration context, even less on doctoral research. Hence the study will rely heavily on the

international literature which limits any conclusions that can be drawn, as well as conclusive findings on the status of Public Administration in South Africa.

1.8 Chapter summary

Since the proliferation of Public Administration as an independent study separate from other disciplines, the discipline has experienced an identity crisis noted across continental borders. This chapter was an introductory chapter whereby the reader is introduced to the research topic. It gave an overview of the study which led to the research problem for this research project, which is a review of the body of literature that examines and debates the quality and nature of doctoral research in Public Administration.

The significance of this project was discussed that a review of such literature will help to make known what is written so far about the problems facing doctoral research in the discipline, most importantly to enhance future research and more scholarly debates. An integrative literature review has been motivated as a suitable method in undertaking an analysis of the literature on the debates and research articles relevant to the study. Last, the scarcity of the South African literature on the research topic was identified as a limitation of the study.

1.9 Summary of chapters

In a nutshell, Chapter 1 presented the nature of the study. Chapter 2, which is the next chapter, is an overall review of the state of research in Public Administration in general (what is thought of the status of research in Public Administration). Chapter 3 is a review on doctoral research whereas Chapter 4 conducts a preliminary overview of what is happening in the South African higher education institutions which offers Public Administration field. Chapter 4 in particular aims to conduct a critical description of the different types of Public Administration doctoral programmes and theses offered by South African institutions. Chapter 5 will conclude by summarising the discussion and provide some recommendations for future research on the topic.

Chapter II:

The state of research in Public Administration: a broad literature overview

2. Chapter purpose

Over the past few decades, there has been an outcry amongst American, European and South African Public Administration scholars about the poor quality of research in the discipline. Some scholars have declared Public Administration as an academic field to be in intellectual crisis (McCurdy and Cleary, 1984) and in the *PAR* series debates, scholars have argued also that research in the field as compared to other disciplines seems to be lacking in the rigorous characteristics required of mainstream research (Cleary, 1992; Houston and Delevan, 1990; Kraemer and Perry, 1989; Stallings and Ferris, 1988; Perry and Kraemer, 1986; White, 1986b; McCurdy and Cleary, 1984). Clearly, the criticisms have sparked a strong debate because it has not been left unchallenged by some scholars who have defended the state of research in the field, arguing that there is nothing to be alarmed about (i.e. Bailey, 1992); also that the *PAR* series debates have produced an unduly pessimistic view of research in the field (i.e. Box, 1992). This chapter examines these debates.

This chapter's aim is to give a general overview on the state of research in Public Administration. However, before any engagement with these debates can take place, the history of the discipline itself is fundamental because it sheds light to the fact that the present research crisis is a consequence and/or an offspring of the discipline's early developmental "identity crisis". Hence the chapter is divided into two parts. Part one provides the historical development of the study of Public Administration, discussing both the international (predominantly U.S.) and South African context. Part two is an analysis of the body of literature that has developed over the past few decades which examines and debates the quality and nature of research in the discipline. What will be seen in this chapter is a heavy reliance on the international literature because of the number of studies conducted on this issue, compared to very few in the recently developing South African literature. Although there is very limited South African

literature on the state of Public Administration research, it can be said that the debate has been developing over the past few years and is picking up some pace.

Part One

2.1 Background: international history on Public Administration as a study discipline

Public Administration from its very beginning was a brainchild of Political Science; a division or branch of the field of Political Science (Martin, 1952; Henry, 1975; Kettl, 1993). It was perceived by the political scientist scholars of the time to be a crucial link between the abstract study of politics and the process of improving the way the political system worked (Kettl, 1993). According to Kettl, Public Administration “was one of the critical foundations of [P]olitical [S]cience, and [P]olitical [S]cience was the natural home of [P]ublic [A]dministration” (1993: 409). Early on in the 1950s, Martin called the discipline a “strange and unruly child” (1952: 660) of Political Science. So it seems that since its birth until the divorce from its intellectual home, Public Administration has been experiencing crises. Hence the discipline’s crises are not a new phenomenon as its history will show in the discussion to follow.

This chapter takes as its point of departure the belief that the history of any discipline is as important as its future. This belief maintains that the preset poor state of research, which has caused such an outcry and concern over the future of Public Administration as a study, is very much a product of the discipline’s history. Of course, when a discipline has been met with many developmental crises since its beginning, of which some were left unresolved, such crises are bound to have an impact in its near future. It also needs to be acknowledged that no history is complete without those who shaped or contributed towards its conception as a discipline on its own right. In reference to those scholars who played a role in debating the discipline’s way forward and shaping its identity. It could be said that they, at best, attempted to build Public Administration “as an area of study with its own body of knowledge that was at least attempting to develop its own theories.” (Thornhill, 2008: 2). It is also acknowledged that there are many debates amongst

scholars of the discipline, but the focus is not on which scholar was correct but on how their contribution is worth mentioning as part of the discipline's history.

When reviewing the international history of Public Administration as an academic discipline, certainly Woodrow Wilson's 1887 publication "*The Study of Public Administration*" comes up in most academic discourses (e.g. see Cox, Buck & Morgan, 1994; Shafritz et al., 2004). In the South African context, that of JJN Cloete 1967 and 1981 is sure to be mentioned, and he is recognised as a founding father of Public Administration in South Africa (Cameron, 2008). Table 1 represents literature on the development of the study of Public Administration. It must be noted that different authors have different views on the discipline's historical phases. For example, Henry (1975) perceived the phases of the development of Public Administration as an academic discipline to have been a succession of four overlapping paradigms (see Table 1 below), each phase characterised according to whether it has "locus" or "focus". By "locus" Henry (1975) meant the "institutional where" of the field and "focus" is the specialised "what" of the field. An example of the locus of Public Administration has been, (though it has often been blurred) the government bureaucracy. The focus on the other hand has been (though it too has altered with the changing paradigms of the discipline) the study of certain "principles of administration" (Henry, 1975: 378).

On the other end, Hanekom (1988) has described the development of Public Administration as an academic discipline in the U.S. to have occurred in four phases and only tracking the South Africa's history from the fourth phase onward when compared to international trends of the discipline. However, South African history will be discussed separately from the U.S. history. Hanekom's (1988) phases are similar to Thornhill's (2006) three generations although Thornhill has categorised this development into four generations (pre-generation and three actual generations).

Therefore this study will adopt the categories used by Hanekom (1988) and Thornhill (2006) for the international history of the field because they not only capture the field's international trends but the South African history as well. Moreover Thornhill (2006) traces the history of the development beyond the 1990s. For the South African history, Cameron's (2005, 2008) categories will be used. Although the scholars represented on

Table 1 below mostly capture the field's history until the early 1990s, it should be stated however that there has been other developments in the field, such as the Public Management approach and the rise of the New Public Management (NPM) approach.

Table 1: The academic development of Public Administration				
The academic development phases of Public Administration in the United States				
D. Kettl (1993) Stages	1887-1915: administration plays a central role in government	1915-1940: era of scientific management; and administrative principles	1940-1969: critical self-examination period	1969-1990s: a generation of centrifugal forces
Nicholas Henry (1975) Paradigms	1900-1926: paradigm one - The politics-administration dichotomy	1927-1937: Paradigm two - The principles of administration 1937-1950: The challenge 1947-1950: the reaction to the challenge	1950-1970: Paradigm three - Public Administration as Political Science	1956-1970: Paradigm four - Public Administration as Administrative Science 1970-till probably 1990s: Paradigm five Public Administration as Public Administration
S. X. Hanekom (1988) Phases	1900-1926: Phase 1 - The separation of politics and administration	1927-1937: Phase 2 - Scientific management phase	1938-1970: Phase 3 - Identify crises phase	1970s-1988: Phase 4 - Synthesis phase (South African generic Processes)
Chris Thornhill (2006) four generations	1880s – early 1920s: First generation	Late 1920s – 1940s: Second generation	1938 – 1980s: Third generation (South African generic Processes emerges in 1967)	1990s: Public Management and New Public Management:
The academic development phases of Public Administration in South Africa				
Robert Cameron (2005, 2008)	1967-1989: The generic administrative processes	1990-2002: the Public Management approach and the NPM approach	2003-till present: Criticism of NPM; Search for a new unifying approach	

2.1.1 Phase 1: The separation of politics and administration (1900-1926) - First generation

In the first generation, two scholars from both sides of the Atlantic Ocean stand out according to Raadschelders (1999). Lorenz von Stein in 1855 is considered the founder of the science of Public Administration in Europe and Woodrow Wilson in 1887 in the United States was the first to consider the science of Public Administration as an area of study (Thornhill, 2006).

Wilson, although a political scientist, is considered to have been more influential to the science of Public Administration than Von Stein because of the article he wrote entitled '*The study of Administration*' which was published in June 1887 in the *Political Science Quarterly*. The article is "...generally considered as the origin of the study of Public Administration" (Thornhill, 2006: 795). According to Shafritz et al., "...Wilson provided the rationale for public administration to be an academic discipline and professional specialty..." (2004: 7).

Wilson argued over four concepts which have been summarized by Thornhill (2006) as: the separation between politics and the public administration; the consideration of the government from a commercial perspective; comparative analysis between political and private organisations and political schemes; and reaching effective management by training civil servants and assessing their quality. The last concept shows the thinking behind looking at Public Administration as an academic field: that it should be for the training of, or to prepare students for, a career in the public service. Wilson wanted the study of Public Administration to also focus on organisation and management in general and not only studying personnel problems as many reformers of the time advocated (Shafritz et al., 2004). He wanted the study of administration to be clearly distinguished from that of politics (Thornhill, 2006). Hence, Wilson defined good public administration in the good government tradition of rigid separation of administration from politics (Shafritz et al., 2004). This was to be accomplished, as the civil service reform movement of the day advocated, by mandating the technical training of civil servants for a

hierarchical, specially trained, efficiency-centred bureaucracy different from Weber's 'ideal type' (Thornhill, 2006).

Weber's classic essay in 1947, *On Bureaucracy*, described bureaucracy as an "ideal type", representing a goal of industrial society as it shook off the particularism (treatment based on status, not functional role and ability) of pre-industrial society (in Shafritz et al., 2004: 50-55). Weber's model of the bureaucracy promoted the notion of merit and technical expertise, professionalism and competence in the public service (Millar, 2005). Frank J Goodnow with his publication of *Politics and Administration: A Study of Government* in 1900 also made a major contribution to the discipline. Goodnow's book was regarded as one of the cornerstones of Public Administration and later of the politics-administration dichotomy (Hanekom, 1988). Goodnow made a separation between the political processes and the administrative processes which needed to be executed with the integrity and precision of the science (in Shafritz et al., 2004). This politics-administration dichotomy emphasised the locus of Public Administration then (Hanekom, 1988). Although the politics-administration dichotomy implied a highly stylised and inaccurate view of the role of administration in American government, it established the importance of both the executive establishment and the systematic study of the field (Shafritz et al., 2004).

Therefore two things can be attributed to Wilson and Goodnow according to Kettl (1993). First, they believed that by establishing a professional administration, it will lead to a new American state which used science to pursue efficiency. Second, they sought to distance administration from the political spoils and scandals that undercut administrative effectiveness in the last half of the 19th century. So, Wilson is hailed to have articulated the politics-administration separation and Goodnow for having indoctrinated it (Kettl, 1993; Shafritz et al., 2004). On the European side, Von Stein is acclaimed to be the last scholar who attempted to present the study of Public Administration as a coherent and unified discipline (in Raadschelders, 1999). Von Stein considered the science of Public Administration to be an integration of several disciplines, an interaction between theory and practice, and that it should strive to adopt a scientific method (Thornhill, 2006).

It was only from 1914s into the late 1920s that in the United States Public Administration established itself as an academic discipline, when various universities started formal training programmes⁴ in Public Administration (see Stone and Stone, 1975; Martin, 1952). Leonard D White, in his publication, *Introduction to the Study of Public Administration* in 1926, clearly articulated Public Administration's preliminary objectives as an academic discipline to an extent that it became the first American textbook that was solely devoted to Public Administration (Henry, 1975; Hanekom, 1988; Shafritz et al., 2004). White noted four critical assumptions that formed the basis for the study of the discipline. These four assumptions as summarised by Shafritz et al. were: (1) administration is a unitary process that can be studied uniformly, at the federal, state, and local levels; (2) the basis for the study is management, not law; (3) administration is still an art, but the ideal of transforming it into a science is both feasible and worthwhile; and (4) the recognition that administration "has become, and will continue to be the heart of the problem of modern government." (2004: 7). Shafritz et al. praised White's text for not making itself a "prescriptive, cookbook approach" to Public Administration texts (2004: 7).

2.1.2 Phase 2: The scientific management phase (1927-1937) – Second generation

This was a scientific management period propagated by Fredrick Taylor as far back as 1911 and had a profound effect on Public Administration for the entire period between two world wars (Cox et al., 1994). This generation was concerned with the identification of subject matter for study purposes - a focus of Public Administration: such as principles of administration as applied anywhere (derived by Gulick and Urwick's POSDCORB). They believed that a single Science of Administration, which exceeds the borders between the private and the public sector, could exist (Thornhill, 2006). However, Henry

⁴ For an elaborated history on institutions that offered programmes in Public Administration see Stone, A. B and Stone, D. C. 1975. Early Development of Education on Public Administration, in Mosher, F. C (Ed). American Public Administration: Past, Present, Future. Alabama: University of Alabama Press, pp 25-36. Also see Martin, R. C. 1952. Political Science and Public Administration: A Note on the State of the Union. The American Political Science Review, 46(3), pp. 660-676

(1975) noted that the principles were important to these scholars but where they were applied was less important, hence focus was favoured over locus.

Scholars such as W F Willoughby in 1927; Luther H Gulick and Lyndall Urwick in their 1937 "Papers on the Science of Administration" notably turned the scope of Public Administration to become that of managing and organizing large governments (Henry, 1975; Hanekom, 1988; Cox et al., 1994). Willoughby's *Principles of Public Administration* was published in 1927 as a second fully fledged text in the field, with indications of "a new thrust of Public Administration." (Henry, 1975: 379). Public administration academics were in demand in the 1930s and 1940s because of their managerial knowledge; as a result the focus in this era was on administrative principles (Henry, 1975). Henry observed that "while the focus on administrative principles waxed, no one thought seriously about its locus" (1975: 379). For Henry (1975) the locus of the field was everywhere since, according to the perception of the second generation scholars, principles were principles and administration was administration. Also, for Henry (1975) since public administration scholars had contributed more in the formulation of administrative principles than had other researchers from other fields, it made sense that they lead the academic pack in applying them in practice.

2.1.3 Phase 3: The identity crisis phase (1938-1970) – Third generation

In 1938 the first series of challenges in the field began, what Henry (1975) called a dissent from mainstream Public Administration. The first scholar to do so was Chester I. Barnard in *Functions of the Executive* in 1938 although it did not gain much attention until Herbert A. Simon presented a challenge of the principles of administration theory. It could be said therefore that, Wilson and the second generation scholars' ideas were left unchallenged up until after 1945. The third generation scholars who arose after the Second World War challenged the ideas held by second generation scholars. Some scholars attribute the intellectual or identity crisis within the discipline to have been as the consequence of the war (i.e. Ostrom, 1974; Raadschelders, 1999; Kettl, 1993). Ostrom (1974) argues that the Second World War years provoked a challenge from

which the study of Public Administration never recovered. The aftermath of the World War II saw the growth of government, which sparked interest in the study of the state and administrative law both in U.S. and Europe (Raadschelders, 1999). Hereunder is the legacy of the third generation scholars and their contribution in the buildup of the discipline.

Two challenges took place in the history of the field. First there was a rejection of the notion of separating politics and public administration that cannot be separated in any remotely sensible fashion. An example of this came with a volume edited by Fritz Morstein Marx in 1946 *Elements of Public Administration* which questioned the assumption that politics and administration could be dichotomized (Henry, 1975). The second objection challenged the “principles of administration” as logically inconsistent (Henry, 1975). Robert A. Dahl, Herbert A. Simon and Dwight Waldo addressed the validity of principles from various perspectives (Henry, 1975). Herbert A. Simon, whose major works included *Models of Man* (1957), *Organizations* (co-authored with James March, 1958), and *The Sciences of the Artificial* (1969), launched a devastating critique of the field in 1946 with his publication *Administrative Behavior*. This had a huge impact as Simon argued that “for every principle of administration there is a counter-principle” thus “...rendering the whole idea of principles moot” (Henry, 1975: 380). Simon rejected the principles of Public Administration as little more than proverbs and concluded that they could be arrayed into logically contradictory sets (Ostrom, 1974). In the philosophy of science, Simon was especially interested in how theoretical (non-observable) terms arise in scientific theories and how they can be handled in axiomatization (in Shafritz et al., 2004). According to Ostrom (1974), Simon’s challenge was a devastating blow to the discipline that has never been effectively countered.

Another and most profound scholar of the third generation was Dwight Waldo whose writing extends from the 1960s to the 1990s; he played a central role in the development of Public Administration theory, both in his writings and through several conferences he organized over the years (Shafritz et al., 2004). Waldo argued that the disagreement was with the rigid separation between politics and administration and not with politics-administration itself. This led to Public Administration’s return to the wing of Political

Science, which led also to a new definition of the locus of public administration: the executive government institutions (Hanekom, 1988). Public Administration, according to Bendor (1994) has been noted by some scholars to have enjoyed a solid position within political science in the decades (1920s and 1930s) before World War II, partly because much of political science itself was practically oriented. This left the field with a sense of a lost identity as the two pillars (politics-administration dichotomy and principles of administration paradigms) which defined Public Administration were toppled and abandoned by most intellects in the field. However, what stirred more problems in the field and in its mother discipline was Simon's proposed alternative "new paradigm" in which he called for two kinds of public administrationists: those pursuing a pure science of administration based on a thorough grounding in social psychology and those prescribing for public policy. While there was a lot of resistance from scholars within the field, it also meant separation from the mother discipline and Political Science was now becoming weary of the continuing independence of its subfield (Henry, 1975).

It was during this period of the 1950s that Public Administration distinguished itself as a separate study from Political Science (Raadschelders, 1999). Bendor (1994) traces the separation history of the two disciplines on articles that were published in the American Political Science Review (APSR). In his view, judging on the fewer articles related to the discipline being published on APSR was that "Political [S]cience in the 1950s was moving away from practical research, whereas [P]ublic [A]dministration was not" (Bendor, 1994: 29). Kettl (1993) also noted that after World War II, Political Science was moving toward new theoretical questions that Public Administration was ill-prepared to answer because they had self-consciously clung to linking the fields' practice and its study. This separation allowed the discipline to establish itself as an independent discipline with an own body of knowledge. However, Dwight Waldo (1984 cited in Thornhill, 2006) indicated that Public Administration in the postwar period had found new foci and disciplines, in addition to political science, that were relevant to its subject of study. These included social psychology, economics, sociology, and business administration (Thornhill, 2006). Waldo did not see this as crisis at all but believed that it is the process in the advancement of the discipline, hence highlighting the interdisciplinary nature of the study of Public Administration (in Shafritz et al., 2004).

In the early 1970s a movement of young, politically left-of-center scholars influenced by the turbulence of the 1960's, argued that agencies, and the field, needed to pay more attention to "social equity" and Waldo's "democratic administration", in more than one way, basically questioning the state of the discipline and profession of the public administration. These scholars called for a "New Public Administration" under a bearer of George Frederickson (Adams, 1992: 367) at the 1968 Minnowbrook conference called by Dwight Waldo (Shafritz, 2004). Frederickson's paper "Toward a New Public Administration" in 1971, called for social equity in the performance and delivery of public services (Shafritz et al., 2004: 193). He proposed a new public administration movement in which administration would be more responsive to the public, more prescriptive, more client-oriented, and more normative; yet still more scientific (Shafritz et al, 2004: 193). Basically George Frederickson and the other new public administration propagators placed emphasis on organisational theory and behaviour (Shafritz et al., 2004).

Shangraw, Crow and Overman argued that "New" Public Administration, as defined by Frederickson, includes functions (to carry out legislative mandates), goals (to change those policies and structures that systematically inhibit social equity), and adaptation (change is basic to new Public Administration) which arguably public administration also can be described "in terms of functions, goals, adaptation" (1989: 153). Some of the proponents of the new public administration explicitly saw themselves as constructing an alternative to technical rationality or, as Adams states, "saw itself as departing from technical rationality in its 'antipositivist' stance" (1992: 367). However, critics have argued that the new public Administration proponents "ironically remained well within the confines of modernity's...other central tenets, the progressive development of knowledge" (Adams, 1992: 367). The critics of the "new" public administration are simply arguing that "its significance lies more in its discovery of anomalies within the framework of traditional theories than in the presentation of some new alternative." (Shangraw et al., 1989: 157). While the proposed new public administration was seen as a clear break with the orthodoxy of mainstream public administration, however, as O'Toole so usefully points out, this "break with orthodoxy" was entirely

compatible with the tenets of reformism as developed in the Progressive Era (Adams, 1992).

2.1.4 Phase 4: Synthesis phase (1970s-1990s):

In the previous phase Public Administration suffered two blows. First, it suffered the rejection of the politics-administration dichotomy and second, it suffered the lack of a theoretical guide (paradigm crisis) and a comfortable disciplinary home (Kettl, 1993). As Kettl emphasises: "Public Administration had lost both of its traditional anchors, its theoretical base and its disciplinary home" (1993: 411). One thing though can be attributed to the discipline in the second phase era: establishing itself as an independent discipline with an own body of knowledge. The synthesis phase was about the clarity on a locus of the field of study (Hanekom, 1988); however it was an uneasy search for its identity (Kettl, 1993). Ostrom in 1974 in his publication *The Intellectual Crisis in American Public Administration* concluded that field had fallen into a state of critical self-examination and faced a serious intellectual crisis. Various traditional Public Administration scholars identified specific administrative process or functions and auxiliary activities as the subject matter (focus) of Public Administration, which a move towards scientific approaches has challenged.

New approaches and conflicting theories dominated the field which then led to more paradigm crises in the study of Public Administration. An example of new approaches was Graham Allison's "Conceptual Models of the Cuban Missile Crisis" in 1969, which according to Kettl (1993), undermined traditional studies of public administration more than any other work of the behavioural era. Allison, using his three different models⁵ to explain the Cuban crisis, instead of focusing on how to structure bureaucracies to produce desired outputs, sought to explain why certain structures produced observed outputs

⁵ Kettl (1993) goes into more detail to explain Allison's models than the author does here because the focus is not on the actual theories but on the historical impact they had on the study of Public Administration.

(Kettl, 1993), thus establishing a forum to studying administration outside traditional Public Administration channels. Four other new approaches were implementation, public management, economic theories and public bureaucracy which, according to Kettl “had little in common but their rejection of traditional Public Administration” (1993: 413).

2.1.5 Phase 5: Public Management (1990s-till present)

Public management emerged in the 1980s and 1990s as a significant field in its own right dominating and disintegrating the study of Public Administration (Shafritz et al., 2004: 381). Some literature suggests, however, that it emerged in the 1970s (e.g. Kettl, 1993). Since then it has become a term for all manner of administrative studies. As public administration and public policy scholars began to see themselves tackling similar questions, the name “public management” began to trickle into research as a means of uniting the efforts of public administration and public policy researchers. Public management has also been viewed as a synthesis of the generic management literature with research in public administration, a development that paralleled the policy school movement (Perry and Kraemer, 1986). Its definitions are multiple and overlapping as some view public management as a subfield of Public Administration, while others cast it more broadly as an umbrella field that encompasses elements of public administration, public policy, and generic management (as cited in Pitts, 2007: 2). According to Pitts, “theoretical approaches to public management are borrowed broadly from a number of social science disciplines, including economics, political science, sociology and organization theory” (2007: 2).

For Kettl (1993) public management is as practically minded as Public Administration as its approach builds on the same case-study tool that distinguished Public Administration in the post-World War II years in which case studies were believed to be unscientific. Kettl’s (1993) argument is similar to Ventriss’s (1991) criticism of the management approach. Ventriss argues that “the educational schism is clear: that management is not policy or a collection of analytical skills -it is skill-oriented knowledge that is reflective of a pragmatic approach to service delivery” (1991: 11) further referring to it as a “nuts

and bolts” approach aimed at preparing students as managerial janitors of the public sector.

Stallings and Ferris (1988), extending on the work of Perry and Kraemer in their investigation of changes in the types of research designs and methods used in the study of Public Administration between 1940-1984 as reflected in *PAR*, found that Public Administration research using a case study approach (CASESTUDY) only became prominent in articles appearing in *PAR* in one brief period. Their findings show a period after World War II from 1945-1949 when research articles reported results based upon case study designs and dominant again from 1975 till the 1980s. Ever since the introduction of Public Management case studies have been a trend. Many of the top ranking United States universities changed their programmes “running away from being referred or even associated with the term public administration” to be called “public management program” or “public policy and management school” (Ventriss, 2000: 501). For Ventriss, this is a reflection of “an applied (and hence less theoretical), and, more importantly, less rigorous methodologically Public Administration as compared to other social sciences, which has lost respectability and credibility amongst *its own* scholars” (2000: 501).

2.1.6 Drawn implications on the state of Public Administration research in the U.S.

McCurdy and Cleary (1984) asked a question “*Why Can’t We Resolve the Research Issue In Public Administration?*” While the answer is not that simple, history does provide some perspective to their question. As can be seen from the historical perspectives illustrated above, an identity crisis is not a new problem in the field. Sarah Jordan (2005), an American doctoral student then, gave her perspective on the unfortunate prolonged identity crisis lamented over for so long and criticising the state of the discipline’s knowledge growth, has argued that it will continue to haunt the next generation. However, as she (Jordan, 2005) also has rightfully identified that the scholarly crisis is as

a result of the field's historical background (lack of true methodological pluralism, the resurrection of dichotomies, and the persistent denial of meaningful debate in public administration scholarship).

The crisis has to do with the epistemological question concerning the nature of the study of Public Administration. The major finding that history points out is that the field has been plagued with different approaches, all of which, as Kettl (1993) argues, are struggling for the very soul of the field. "Some of the conflict comes from fundamental disagreement over defining the basic questions. Some comes from stark differences in method, which especially distances newer, mathematically based approaches from older, descriptive approaches." (Kettl, 1993: 407). Kettl (1993) argues that the controversy with the study of Public Administration flows from three fundamental problems. The first problem stems from different approaches that come from two conflicting traditions (Madisonian versus Hamiltonian)⁶ in American Politics with each tradition leading to a very different perspective on the role of administration. The second fundamental problem is that different scholars pursue very different ends in their study of administration (academics versus practitioners). For some scholars, their goal is to build a body of theory that would explain the role administration plays in society. Basically their central goal seeks to establish the study of administration firmly among the respected social sciences. For others, while acknowledging the importance of theory building, theory is just a step toward a more important goal: understanding the administrative process so that its functions can be improved. Finally, because of the fundamental differences, the field has over a long period of time been struggling with the accumulation of knowledge.

It can be argued therefore that since its proliferation as an independent discipline, Public Administration "...has experienced a crisis of identity..." (Raadschelders, 1999: 281). According to Raadschelders (1999) the identity crisis has not been limited to the United States alone as there have been reports, on a smaller scale, on the European continent

⁶ Madisonian scholars place emphasis on the balance of power as the best protection against tyranny because they are wary about too much government action and cautious about the concentration of administrative powers. On the other end, Hamiltonian scholars seek a vigorous state vested with a strong administrative apparatus. For a more detailed discussion see Kettl (1993: 407)

such as in Britain, France, Germany and the Scandinavian countries. Taking Britain as an example, the identity crisis can be traced to Rhodes's review of the British Public Administration where he argued that it was atheoretical, historical, and focused on administrative engineering (Rhodes 1996, 508)⁷. Cynically Rhodes said that an optimist would describe the future of British Public Administration as bleak while the pessimist would be living and working in the U.S. In a summary, Rhodes (1996) viewed the state of British Public Administration in this manner:

In the 1990s, British Public Administration has lost its coherent identity, has not found a new role, and is losing its institutional base in universities. (Rhodes, 1996: 507)

Raadschelders (1999) categorized the identity crisis facing the study of Public Administration as *academic* and *existential* crisis. With respect to an existential crisis Raadschelders wondered whether or not Public Administration, as a study, "is a unified, coherent study sufficiently independent discipline among others (e.g. versus political science, business administration, and so forth) or a sub-discipline within" (1999: 281). The academic crisis Raadschelders (1999) referred to, with regard to the study of the field, were those concerning the epistemological basis of the study such as how to acquire knowledge and the extent to which Public Administration knowledge is scientific or interpretive. Some scholars such as Nakamura (a Japanese Public Administration scholar though schooled on American soil) are of the notion that the discipline should be developed into an applied science directed toward the rational, coherent, effective, efficient and economical administration of government. Thus the crisis facing the discipline seems to exist across borders. In fact, Nakamura (2007) is of a belief that these aspects of good government are the hallmarks of teaching public administration. Unapologetically, Nakamura (2007) believes that the emphasis on theories and concepts should not be the focus of the discipline:

⁷ See also Rhodes, Dargie, Melville, and Tutt (1995) review of twenty-five years (1970-1995) of Public Administration in Britain (study cited in Raadschelders, 1999). Full citation of study: Rhodes, R.A.W.; Dargie, C; Melville, A; and Tutt, B. 1995. The State of Public Administration: A Professional History, 1970-1995. *Public Administration (UK)* 73: 1-15.

I contend, however, that contemporary public administration has unfortunately tried to emulate political science, as a pseudo-natural science. The emphasis on theories and concepts have led to the devaluation of practical and pragmatic dimensions of the discipline. As taught, public administration often neglects the real application aspect, especially for governments in developing regions...I hold that in teaching public administration, the conceptual and theoretical should be reduced and there should be increased focus on practical application. (Nakamura, 2007: 2)

Vincent Ostrom (1974: 14; 18) had argued that Public Administration is faced with a paradigmatic crisis because of the proliferation of prevailing theories; the methodological experimentation; the explicit discontent among scholars; the large amount of philosophical speculation; and the debate surrounding fundamental epistemological issues. Ostrom was indeed on par with his argument because years later the discipline is experiencing discontent and unreach resolutions on the discipline's paradigm stance (i.e. the appropriate problems for study) and the selection of methods of study appropriate for those problems. Ostrom (1974) proposed that the solution was to develop Public Administration as a science of association. Clearly, these are serious intellectual crisis of the discipline and very much linked to Raadschelders' (1999) identified existential academic crisis.

It is pertinent then to say that since the discipline's proliferation after the Second World War any attempt to create a unified discipline has been difficult (Raadschelders, 1999). It can be seen that the growth of the discipline since World War II generated an academic identity crisis, in which few decades later, has been felt nowhere else than primarily in the debate over the nature and quality of research and on the research conducted by doctoral students in pursuit of their doctorates. A series of studies in the *PAR* debates over the last few decades that have been conducted, where studies have questioned the current state of research in the field of Public Administration, have neglected the earlier developments of the study of Public Administration. They thus indicated the first fundamental problem which Kettl (1993) identified as that the problems in the discipline are as a result of different approaches that came from two conflicting traditions. The identified problems with research in the field are no different from the historical epistemological and paradigm struggles which have been ongoing for decades.

According to Ostrom (1974), it was the ambiguities of the shifting theoretical scene brought about by a shift in working styles in scholarly research. Some examples include

the introduction of case studies and the adoption of the behavioural approach. Ostrom (1974) believed that the effect of the wartime experiences of many of the students of Public Administration led to a new style of research, reflected in case studies which dominated the field after World War II. Adams and White define a case study “as research conducted within a single agency or political jurisdiction, or research that spanned a handful or less of single agencies or political jurisdictions for comparative purposes...might range from a single, small county agency to an entire state government, or even a policy area of the federal government.” (1994: 573). Case studies dominated the teaching in Public Administration as a tool to give students a sense of reality about administration. However, they were used in the absence of administrative theory - as a result these realities became increasingly incongruent with theory (Ostrom, 1974). Also the adoption of the behavioural approach was with hope that theory will gradually evolve from accumulation of tested hypotheses, as Ostrom (1974) explained. Hence, according to Ostrom (1974), the new research strategies merely served to deepen and reinforce the challenges to traditional Public Administration theory.

The statement by Franklin and Ebdon (2005) below, indicates also some of the subtle frustration in the U.S. with the discipline’s lack of consensus as well as the disjointed front on paradigms, methods, practice versus theory debacle and the impact this has on the state of the field decades later.

Academics charge theory is not scientific enough, practitioners claim it is not useful, acapractions and pracademics are left stranded in a no man’s land—neither fish nor fowl. Results from theory, research and practice are descriptive and prescriptive, but often fail to explain and predict; thus condemning public administration to be in a perpetual crisis. Just what is it? Is it a discipline, a field, an applied program; one discipline, interdisciplinary, multidisciplinary? (Franklin and Ebdon, 2005: 629)

2.2 South African history of Public Administration as a study discipline

According to Robert Cameron (2005; 2008), historically in South Africa, Public Administration was taught at Afrikaans-speaking and ethnically-based Universities, with the exception of one English-speaking university, the University of Cape Town. Cameron (2005; 2008) has also argued that Public Administration as an academic discipline in

South Africa is outdated and is lagging behind in keeping up with current international trends; in fact according to him there has been very little development of new thinking in the discipline. While Cameron has not explicitly conceptualised the following categories as the historical developments of the South African Public Administration, he has correctly identified them as trends in the field which can be classified into categories. According to Cameron (2005, 2008), South African Public Administration has followed three trends, which will be categorised as phases here, namely: Phase 1: the generic administrative processes (1967-1989); Phase 2: the Public Management approach and the NPM approach (1990-2002); and Phase 3: the criticism of NPM and a search for a new unifying approach (2003-present) (See table 1).

2.2.1 Phase 1: The Generic Administrative Processes (1967-1989)

The South African Public Administration as an academic discipline can be said to have been propagated by JJN Cloete in 1967 with a first text in the field *Introduction to Public Administration*. JJN Cloete propagated that Public Administration is comprised of six generic administrative processes or functions (policy-making, financing, organising, staffing, determining/improving work procedures and controlling) (Marais, 1994; Maserumule, 2005). These generic administrative processes or functions became the centerpiece of the subject-matter or the focus of Public Administration education (Maserumule, 2005: 17). These administrative functions have ever since dominated the academic institutions of Public Administration in South Africa, (Cameron, 2005; Marais, 1988; 1994; Hanekom, 1988). Some scholars argue that Cloete's generic administrative approach has led to a stagnation of Public Administration thought (i.e. Rowland, 1986; Cameron, 2005). According to Maserumule (2005), the curricula both at technikons (now referred to as Universities of Technology) and universities was then the same and the approach in the teaching of the subject followed the traditional instructions paradigm which was largely discipline-based rather than practice-orientated. Most of the books that were written at the time revolved around Cloete's generic administrative processes or functions. Maserumule (2005) believes that until recently, most professors or lecturers of Public Administration were JJN Cloete's former students which can be argued to explain

the dominance of the administrative processes at the time. Marais said “if there was a lost generation, academically speaking, it is the generation of students of (1965-88) who were fed on the bone-dry administrative process approach” (1994: 113). Evident also is how JJN Cloete and his scholars neglected the theoretical underpinnings which were significant in the discipline. In fact, Cloete’s introduction to Public Administration (1967, 1981) made no reference of the important theories of the times according to Cameron (2005).

Although these scholars are making a valuable criticism to JJN Cloete and scholars⁸ that followed his paradigm, however they tend to ignore the fact that the environment that these scholars were learning under was very different because of the political turbulences in the country. South Africa was largely, academically and otherwise, isolated from the rest of the world in the 1970s until the late 1980s because of sanctions which meant that the academics had to depend and rely on, limited literature available from few countries (Thornhill, 2008). They had no other option but to work with what they had. As Thornhill states:

Academics were often refused entry to other countries to attend conferences or do research...also prohibited from doing research in some world renowned bodies...or at home, from doing research into sensitive areas (such as the Group Areas policy or the policy of separate development) that could imply criticism of the then-government. They also had limited access to public sector documents as a result of stringent legislation relating to confidentiality, secrecy and state security. (Thornhill, 2008: 7).

However, Schwella (1999) argues differently in that he believes the reason for the dominance of the administrative process approach in South African Public Administration was that the academics were generally of the same type as the government of the day and shared the political opinions of the previous South African regime. Another reason raised by Schwella (1999) is that the administrative process approach provided a safe house for the discipline during highly turbulent times. By this Schwella (1999) insinuates that South African Public Administration as an academic

⁸ Some of these scholars as identified by Thornhill (2008: 8) include P C Fourie (University of Free State, late 1960s); W B Vosloo (University of Stellenbosch, 1960s); and B J Roux (Unisa, 1960s).

discipline was not separate from political patronage. He argues, "the social and political context closely associated with dominant regime perceptions exerted a constant and disempowering influence on a paradigm development and change within the academic discipline of Public Administration in South Africa." (Schwella, 1999: 336).

Cameron (2005) argued that Cloete's approach was not a theory. However, the earlier challenge of generic administration processes approach came from Marais (1988), who argued that it was not a theory but an approach that had been outdated before it was even introduced in South Africa; rather it was the description of the work activities of public servants. Similar comment was observed in Hanekom (1988). And it has been argued that Gulick's work might have influenced the South African Public Administration discipline through JN Cloete's 'generic administrative processes' approach according to Cameron (2005). It is of interest to note that administrative processes were rejected long ago: overseas the interest waned as early as the 1940s and reached a low ebb after the Second World War; whereas in South Africa it was just being introduced in 1967 (Marais, 1988). The reasons for diminished interest were because it was realised that fixed and immovable principles had no place in social sciences. Also, it was realised that administrative process is an insufficient starting point for reaching conclusive explanations regarding phenomena of public administration (Marais, 1988: 181).

Fitzgerald (cited in Cameron, 2005) and Schwella (1990) have challenged Cloete's generic administrative processes approach. Schwella (1990) criticised the generic administrative approach for three things. First, he criticised it as being reductionist in that it reduces public administration to the generic administrative processes. Second, he criticised it for reification: elevating the generic administrative approach to the status of reality. The last criticism was that of lack of relevance in that it did not reflect the serious problems of governance and administration in South Africa. A survey of eight public administration departments in the mid-1980s showed that the second-generation of Cloete's scholars headed six out of the eight (Rowland, 1986). Notably, Rowland warned that "...the poverty of thought [*in the discipline*] should not be ascribed to the generic administrative processes approach but rather to the dogmatism of its supporters" (1986: 66) (*italics authors own emphasis*). Marais argued that the administrative process

approach was couched in severely simplistic terms and because it was based on “extreme oversimplification it led to an uncritical mode of thinking; it was defended rather than criticised or improved by its followers.” (1994: 108).

That could be the reason also that Schwella (1999) raised, as a concern, that a number of academics were not engaging or were choosing to ignore the paradigmatic debate in South Africa. He ascertained that a change in a socio-political context could influence the status of the paradigm debate and the discipline of Public Administration. Indeed, he was correct because in the early 1990s during the country’s transitional period the field saw an awakening as the period influenced the South African Public Administration paradigm debate. However, some of the paradigm debates had already emerged and were evident (Marais, 1988; Hanekom, 1988; Rowland, 1986).

2.2.2 Phase 2: Public Management to New Public Management (NPM): (1990-2003)

The transition into a democratic South Africa saw a number of initiatives to transform the discipline and the institutions in which it was taught. The initiatives included the formation of the New Public Administration Initiative (NPAI) by a number of progressive Public Administration academics in order to transform the discipline (Cameron, 2005; Schwella, 1999; Marais, 1994), such as: the commencements of programmes in public sector management at the University of Witwatersrand; the establishment of new or increased capacity at the Institute of Governance at the University of Fort Hare; and the founding of the School of Government at the University of the Western Cape and the School of Public Policy and Development at the University of Durban-Westville (Schwella, 1999: 337).

In 1991 the NPAI held a Mount Grace conference where a number of resolutions were passed, calling for a more progressive approach to the theory, teaching and practice of

Public Administration in South Africa (McLennan and Fitzgerald, 1992 cited in Cameron 2005 and cited in Schwella, 1999⁹). Some of the resolutions passed were:

- Public Administration is too descriptive: it lacks sufficient analytical, explanatory and predictive techniques;
- it is reductionist, restricting and reifying Public Administration to one view of the administrative process only;
- more rigorous scientific analysis, explanation and prediction of governmental and administrative phenomena are necessary, supplementing their mere description; and
- for this purpose, an open and critical debate on explanatory models must be encouraged (McLennan and Fitzgerald, 1992 cited in Cameron 2005: 6).

From the resolutions adopted South African Public Administration was found to be outdated in a rapidly transforming society such as South Africa (Schwella, 1999). According to Schwella (1999), the impetus was also given to the theoretical debate by the series of so called Winelands Conferences which were hosted every second year prior to the Mount Grace I and II conferences. While Winelands conferences have been less mentioned by most scholars for their role in the discipline, perhaps because of their bias towards practice; however Schwella (1999) has praised their themes as having played a significant role – for their impetus towards the change they provided even prior to the political changes in South Africa.

However, Schwella (1999) raised the question as to what extent these activities (between both the Mount Grace I and the Winelands Conferences) have broadened the theoretical and paradigmatic debate in the discipline? He argued that some relevant academic and professional actors have chosen to neglect the debate (Schwella, 1999). This was not totally correct because Marais had already had his critical response on the paradigm

⁹ For a more detailed resolutions adopted at the NPAI Mount Grace I conference see Schwella (1999: 338-340)

debate in 1994 and was later followed by Fanie Cloete (2000), Mabin (2004) and Cameron (2005). In fact the model Schwella proposed towards a new approach was seen as an advance on the administrative processes model, its shortcoming being that it is a variant of the self-adjusting systems theory, which in social sciences, at any rate, has been discredited for many years (Cameron, 2005). His proposed systems approach was seen as a repeat of the JJN Cloete mistake of uncritically adopting outdated models (in Cameron, 2005). Again this highlighted the backward thinking in the discipline and showcased it to lag behind in keeping with the international trend and paradigm debates.

Mount Grace I was seen more as a call to arms than any rigorous analysis of the discipline (Cameron, 2008). Public Administration was discredited, being regarded as an antediluvian field inextricably linked to the training of apartheid public servants, hence Public Management was regarded as “the knight in shining armour that was going to train a new generation of public servants” (Cameron, 2008: 48). Again this embracing ignored the emerging international criticism of Public Management, along with the fact that important Public Administration institutes in America (among other places) chose not to go down that route (Cameron, 2005: 6). Indeed as Maserumule (2005) pointed out that the introduction of the Public Management curriculum was problematic because it is instrumentalist in its approach to education. As a result, students learn skills in a theoretical vacuum (Maserumule, 2005).

Cameron (2008) argued that the goals of Mount Grace 1 have largely been unfulfilled. He argues that most Public Administration tertiary institutions do not focus on knowledge-based teaching and research but concentrate on building state capacity and training of public servants. Cameron (2005: 2) further asserted that the field has been influenced by the market oriented New Public Management. According to Cameron (2008):

Public Administration, post-apartheid, is certainly more legitimate. However, as a knowledge-based discipline the advent of the new democratic era has heralded a false dawn. If anything, the discipline has headed off in a different intellectual cul-de-sac. Many public administration schools and departments (although not all) have moved away from the ‘generic administrative processes’ approach. However it has largely been replaced by NPM type approaches which are also deficient in many respects. (Cameron, 2008: 48).

Indeed the influence has been evident as the transition period saw a large emphasis on public management and as a result, many Public Administration institutes wanted to keep

up with change in the country and also moved away from the generic administrative processes approach and embraced the NPM movement (Maserumule, 2005). According to Cameron (2005) they even changed their names from Public Administration to Public Management, although some added a development component to it. While it can be argued that this was in keeping with the transformation of the country's public administration, however, the resolutions of Mount Grace I - though attacking Public Administration orthodoxy in South Africa - were still not responding to the intellectual crisis the discipline was facing.

2.2.3 Phase 3: Criticism of Public Management, the New Public Management and a search for a new approach (2003-till present)

Marais (1994) argues that the management approach to public administration is a logical successor to the outdated administrative process approach simply because both have the same substructure. Marais (1994) further argued that management is incorrectly offered as an approach, but it is a technical skill. In the words of Marais "A management approach is, therefore, at best is a dehumanizing technical skill forced on us by the wastages of a grossly mismanaged public sector. After all, a management approach is based on an assumption that the civil service is inefficient. It arose as a result of inefficiency. However the inefficiency of a civil service cannot be removed through the application of management principles, but only through proper education." (1994: 116).

The shift away from social sciences towards a management and business-type approach in the discipline has been a call for concern for Public Administration thought devotees such as Cameron (2005). The concern about NPM has been that just like the generic administrative approach it leaves the discipline open to criticism because of its action-oriented and prescriptive nature. NPM, it is argued, is not a theory but rather a discrete set of ideas that can be broadly divided into two categories. First, there is a use of private management principles, such as great autonomy for managers, performance management, and new financial techniques. Second, there is greater use of market mechanisms such as public-private partnerships and privatisation in service provision (Hood, 1991). There is worry that, as Cameron argues,

Traditional concerns with knowledge are being supplanted by practice-oriented teaching. There has been a move from studying subjects such as politics and philosophy towards management-focused courses. Limited case study teaching devoid of contextual teaching has arguably become the most important Public Administration teaching method in South Africa. Knowledge-base education is gradually being supplanted. Lecturers are seen as facilitators rather than academic experts. Important philosophical issues, such as comparative Public Administration, the politics-administrative interface and ethics, are seemingly being sacrificed on the altar of 'nuts and bolts' skills-based NPM courses. (Cameron, 2005: 9-10).

Hence, Ventriss (2000) sees the NPM approach in this light:

...the New Public Management does address certain administrative issues fairly effectively. It is, however, a limited and somewhat pedantic perspective that leaves uncovered important historical and normative concerns central to public administration and the public service. Yet, in many respects, the New Public Management does pose a challenge about what is unique to public administration as an intellectual enterprise and what issues are crucial to its *raison d'être*. It is obvious in my analysis that I find certain aspects of New Public Management rather disconcerting. For example, I find it weak on methodological grounds by not adhering to methodological pluralism and its tendency to "conceptually stretch" its rather prosaic assumptions to levels of abstraction where such assumptions do not belong. (Ventriss, 2000: 512- 513)

It became evident therefore that, amongst academic discourses there was a split over proposed outdated models that were being advocated as prime forces of change needed in the new South African Public Administration thought paradigm. While other scholars have called for new approaches and improvement of research in the field, Robert Cameron (2008) is not asking for a new theory of public administration. "He wants more theory building because of the weakness of theory development in Public Administration research." (Auriacombe, 2008: vii).

2.2.4 Drawn implications for South African Public Administration research

From the historical background some implications can be drawn for South African Public Administration as well. These implications are closely linked to research crises in the field. Clearly, South African Public Administration research problems are largely inherited from its history as literature reveals. Although South African Public Administration is lagging behind international trends, similar sentiments exist in the U.S. and European literature debates over the discontent issues. Unresolved epistemological issues within the discipline do largely provide the reason for the different beliefs around the nature and quality of the discipline's research. Therefore, the identified crisis with research in the field can be traced back to its own historical problems across the

continents. One wonders as to whether the research problems will reach any resolution or consensus, considering that the discipline cannot reach a resolution over appropriate problems for study and the selection of methods of study appropriate for those problems. Robert Cameron (2008) has concluded about the state of the discipline that while it is now politically legitimate, the academic field of Public Administration has not really progressed intellectually since the early 1990s. In actual fact, Cameron (2008) places blame on the management approach that it has not advanced the discipline but instead it has eschewed knowledge-based education in favour of practical skills.

Part Two

2.3 Significance of research in Public Administration

Public Administration – although a highly contested issue - is seen as an area of intellectual inquiry, a discipline or study, as well as a field - a process or activity of administering public affairs (Henry, 1975). According to Adams and White “[T]he quality and character of research in an academic field is widely thought to have an important bearing on that field’s status as a discipline or profession” (1994: 565). This means that research in any discipline endorses the field’s status. Research also increases both the faculty’s knowledge and the student’s knowledge of the field. Research is extremely important in advancing the field and according to Kraemer and Perry research needs to take top priority in Public Administration programs (1989: 9). Importantly, the need for academic research in Public Administration is widely recognised (Cleary, 1992; Houston and Delevan, 1990; Kraemer and Perry, 1989; Stallings and Ferris, 1988; Perry and Kraemer, 1986; White, 1986b; Mosher, 1956). Hence Kraemer and Perry (1989) gave three reasons why research should become more prominent in Public Administration programs.

The first reason is the basic responsibility of Public Administration faculties and students to advance knowledge in the field. The authors (Kraemer and Perry, 1989) maintain that it is the responsibility of the faculties and students to defend the position that Public Administration warrants recognition as a separate field, with semi-autonomous or

independent organizational and degree status from political science or business administration. As an independent field, Public Administration must not only import theory and knowledge from other disciplines but must also export theory and knowledge. Hence, according to them, Public Administration educators and scholars, through research, "...have an obligation to extend the frontiers of knowledge given their central roles in the educational process" (Kraemer and Perry, 1989: 9).

Their second reason, stemming from the assessments of doctoral programmes in Public Administration (see chapter four: discussion on doctoral programmes) is that the preparation of doctoral students requires a rich research atmosphere including active faculty researchers, assistantships, and opportunities to work on real research projects (Kraemer and Perry, 1989). Several other scholars (i.e. Douglas, 1996; Ventriss, 1991; Perry & Kraemer, 1990 as cited in Brewer, Douglas, Facer, & O'Toole, 1999: 375) have supported the same notion as Kraemer and Perry (1989) that doctoral programmes should employ and retain faculty members who are productive researchers. The underlying principle is that those faculty members will be more capable of training students to conduct research, in part because they can involve them in real research projects (Brewer et al., 1999).

The last reason why research should be given greater priority in Public Administration discipline is rather a pragmatic one, according to the authors (Kraemer and Perry, 1989): it has to do with the effectiveness of research. This is because research, is viewed as enhancing the institution's reputation, as externally funded research serves as a mark of accomplishment, an expansion of university resources and a sign of a first-rate academic department (Kraemer and Perry, 1989). Therefore the key issue is with the nature and role research plays in the advancement of knowledge in the field, especially research conducted by students in pursuit of doctorates (Stallings, 1986), as it signifies the growth of the field and is seen as responsible in its contribution in the advancement of the field's status as an independent discipline.

Table 2: Research on published research journal articles in Public Administration			
Scholars	Research topic	Criterion	Findings
Perry & Kraemer (1986)	Research Methodology in the Public Administration Review, 1975-1984	7 descriptive variables: year of publication, volume, issue number, author(s), author's organization, general subject area, sources of research support 4 methodology variables used: Research stage; Research methodology; Method of empirical analysis; Focus	• research is largely applied • not cumulative • lacks adequate institutional support
Stallings & Ferris (1988)	Public Administration Research: Work in PAR, 1940-1984	3 sets of variables used: research approach and research methods; topic area within the field of public administration; and author characteristics	• research published in PAR is conceptual and not directed towards the development of empirical theory or the testing of causality • hence the field is characterized by research that is applied, atheoretical, and non-cumulative
Houston and Delevan (1990)	Public Administration Research: An Assessment of Journal Publications	• A sample of 218 articles from the six identified journals. • 1st variable: created three categories (conceptual; Relational; or Evaluative) • 2nd variable: type of research design employed (non-empirical, pre-experimental, case study, co-relational (non-experimental), quasi-experimental, and experimental)	Similar conclusions reached as in studies by Perry & Kraemer (1986) and Stallings & Ferris (1988) • research was engaged in little theory testing • research is largely conceptual • Public Administration journals generally represent a source for the dissemination of academically oriented research. • Public Administration research generally receives an even lower level of financial support than has been previously determined by Perry & Kraemer (1986) and Stallings & Ferris (1988). • Non-empirical

2.4 The State of Public Administration Research in the U.S.

Over the past three decades, scholars have assessed the quantity and quality of research in the field of Public Administration by examining dissertations written by Public Administration students and articles published in Public Administration and related journals (Brewer et al., 1999: 374). The results have been most discouraging. Some

writers have discussed research methods employed by doctoral students in the course of their dissertations while others have commented on appropriate research strategies for the field as a whole, including its university-based faculty (Stallings and Ferris, 1988). However, the criticism raised by McCurdy and Cleary (1994) had first been identified earlier on in the mid 50's by Frederick Mosher in his 1956 article "Research in Public Administration: Some Notes and Suggestions". Mosher found that research in Public Administration has fallen short of its effectiveness because "there has not been enough research performed; the stimulus for research effort has been insufficient; and research output is falling behind the needs." (Mosher, 1956: 178). Mosher (1956) made several observations which he argued were "hazardous" problems for Public Administration to have anything to offer other disciplines:

The field has not channeled its research efforts; its scope of interest seems unlimited; it has not developed a rigorous methodology; it has been pretty blasé about definitions; it has not agreed on any paradigms or theorems or theoretical systems; it has not settled on any stylized jargon or symbols; with a very few experimental exceptions, the field has not been modeled or mathematized into an "adminimetrics." (Mosher, 1956: 176)

There are other scholars in Public Administration that have examined doctoral dissertations and journal publications to determine the type of research that has been conducted, assessed its quality, and to prescribed approaches to research (see Cleary, 1992; Houston and Delevan, 1990; Perry and Kraemer, 1986; Stallings and Ferris, 1988; White, 1986b). Other studies have addressed philosophical issues about knowledge acquisition and theory development in a field that strives for both basic and applied knowledge (see Adams, 1992; Bailey, 1992; Box, 1992; White, 1986a). The evaluation of these works generally concluded that Public Administration research (including doctoral dissertations) not only fails to contribute to a systematic and growing body of knowledge but also fails to adhere to scientific standards of rigorous research (as cited in Cameron and McLaverty, 2008). Also the studies that have only focused primarily on research as it pertains to doctoral dissertations (Cleary, 2000; Adams and White, 1994; Cleary, 1992; McCurdy and Cleary, 1984; and White, 1986b), have raised similar serious concerns about the future of Public Administration research. They all can be represented through an outcry by White and colleagues (1996) that Public Administration doctoral research

appears to advance knowledge and theory development in the field only to a rather limited degree.

The concern with the quality of Public Administration research was reflected in a Public Administration Review (PAR) series of articles by Perry and Kraemer (1986), Stallings and Ferris (1988), and Houston and Delevan (1990). Table 2 represents these authors who have examined journal articles in assessing the quality of research in Public Administration. According to Box (1992) while these scholars acknowledged the value of "alternative" methodologies which are not part of "mainstream" social science research (such as case studies, interpretive research, and critical theory), "as a whole they found [P]ublic [A]dministration research to be lacking in the rigor characteristic of mainstream research" (Box, 1992: 62). In addition to this methodological deficiency, the critiques found that Public Administration research focuses on the discussion of problems or issues relating to professional practice rather than on developing or testing theoretical propositions (Box, 1992: 62). However, Box questioned the *PAR* series debates and argued that it is "...an unduly pessimistic view of research in the field and that this view is the result of inappropriate assumptions about what is acceptable as research in public administration." (1992: 63). Houston and Delevan (1990) have also raised their concerns with the use of *PAR* and argued that:

...research published in *PAR* is not representative of all public administration research. For example, since *PAR* is sponsored by the principal professional organization, the American Society for Public Administration (ASPA), it enjoys a wide circulation among academicians and practitioners. It thus must communicate research to individuals with a wide variety of interests and methodological competencies, encouraging the publication of broad articles that can be read by a general audience. Empirically sophisticated pieces on narrow topics may, therefore, be sent to other journals where highly specialized articles may have a better chance of acceptance. For these reasons, research published in *PAR* actually may be less methodologically narrow in application than that published in other journals, thereby under representing empirically sophisticated and cutting-edge research projects. (Houston and Delevan 1990: 675).

However, Perry and Kraemer motivated for their use of the *PAR* journal as representative of the field's research with three factors: (1) *PAR* has been recognized as the major public administration journal among political scientists as well as public administration scholars. (2) *PAR* research articles are peer reviewed. This process assures that articles meet broad professional standards. (3) Programme prestige ratings are highly correlated with

publications by faculty in *PAR*. Therefore, according to them, “*PAR* is a publication of the major professional society whose goal is to advance the art and science of public administration, it is reasonable to assume that strengths and weaknesses of the field are reflected in it.” (Perry and Kraemer, 1986: 218). Perry and Kraemer have also acknowledged and admitted that *PAR* is not a mirror image of the field because of its “dual set of objectives aimed simultaneously at communicating with practitioners and advancing the science of the field; and this dual set of objectives obviously has implications for the content of *PAR* articles and the representation of research methodologies published in the journal” (1986: 218), hence, advising that generalizations from their research must be made with appropriate caution by other scholars. Again, Perry and Kraemer have pointed out that there could have been other factors impacting on the articles published in *PAR* during the period of their research. An example could have been the editorial policy of which perhaps the aim may have been to achieve a balance between academic and practitioner articles during that period. The latter point, though significant, was however never investigated to see if that could have been the case. Stallings and Ferris have motivated against the use of other journals saying that the most satisfactory data source was the *PAR* because “in addition to being the official journal of the main professional organization, it is most representative of research of general interest to the field over a long time period” (1988: 580-581).

On the state of research in the field, Perry and Kraemer (1986) empirically presented an initial examination of the methods of research actually used in the field. Their study analysed 289 research articles published in *PAR* from 1975-1984 for their analysis articles. Each was coded on eleven variables (see table 2), about half reflecting purely descriptive information and the others requiring some interpretation of the contents of the article. They found that Public Administration research was lacking in the rigor characteristic of mainstream research. Perry and Kraemer (1986) made three evaluative statements concerning the state of research in the field from their findings. First, they argued that research is applied rather than basic. If research is largely applied then it logically follows that little theory testing is performed. This means that it failed to contribute to systematic scientific knowledge according to White (cited in Cameron and McLaverty, 2008). Second, Public Administration research has not been cumulative.

Finally, Public Administration research lacks adequate institutional support (university and extramural funding, organized research institutes, collaborative groups, external rewards).

Stallings and Ferris (1988) extended on Perry and Kraemer's (1986) work of an examination of methods of research actually used in Public Administration field. However Stallings and Ferris (1988) study looked at research over a two historical phases starting from the Second World War to post-Second World War period.

Looking at articles published in *PAR* over a 45 year period (1940-1984) Stallings and Ferris (1988) findings showed that the recent history (assuming that was between 1975-1984) of research in Public Administration, differed little from the state of affairs nearly a half century ago. Research was still dominated by efforts to conceptualize researchable problems, delineate possible areas of inquiry, and describe objects for study. "Little causal analysis or theory testing has taken place over the years, and causal analyses, while significantly more frequent now than in previous decades, comprise only a small proportion of current research." (Stallings and Ferris, 1988: 583-584). Sound theory, according Houston and Delevan (1990), is developed only through the testing and refining of empirical propositions derived from theory. In their study a similar conclusion to that of the study by Kraemer and Perry (1986) was reached.

The last study to investigate the quality of the field's research, looking at articles in published journals was conducted by Houston and Delevan (1990). Their aim was to show whether the findings by previous studies will be conclusive; thus they extended Stallings and Ferris's (1988) research on the topic by providing an analysis of research articles published in sources other than *PAR*. The journals selected for analysis included: *Administration & Society (A&S)*, *Public Administration Quarterly (PAQ)*, *International Journal of Public Administration (IJPA)*, *Public Budgeting and Finance (PBF)*, *Review of Public Personnel Administration (ROPPEA)*, and *Policy Studies Review (PSR)*. A systematic sample was drawn from all articles and symposium pieces published during the five-year period, 1984-1988. Approximately 6 or 7 articles per year were picked from each journal to give a total sample of 218 articles from the six journals identified. The study coded articles as either falling into one of the three categories: conceptual (to

identify or conceptualize a researchable issue), relational (to examine relationships among variables), and evaluate (to analyze a particular policy or program). A second variable was created to represent the type of research design employed in the study and contains the following categories: non-empirical, pre-experimental, case study, correlational (non-experimental), quasi-experimental, and experimental. As was found in previous studies, Public Administration literature is dominated by articles intended primarily to develop conceptual issues for future research (CONCEPTUAL). Less frequent are empirical efforts to examine relationships among variables and thus to test empirical theories (RELATION). Even less frequent is the evaluation of public policy (EVALUATIVE) (Houston and Delevan, 1990: 677). Their findings concluded that Public Administration research was engaged in little theory testing and if any empirical research was conducted, it indicated little theory testing which was rather basic in nature, hence supporting the argument raised in previous studies (Houston and Delevan, 1990). Methodological critiques based on analyses of published research articles offered by Perry and Kraemer (1986) and by Stallings and Ferris (1988) had concluded that Public Administration research has not utilized sophisticated research methods, hence the field is characterized by research that is applied, atheoretical, and non-cumulative.

2.5 The state of South African Public Administration research

While there have been minimal empirical studies undertaken in South Africa, Cameron (2005) argues that South African Public Administration education and research is at an intellectual crossroads. Cameron and McLaverty (2008) believe that the problems identified in American Public Administration research apply in South African Public Administration. Hence Cameron (2005) proposed that empirical research in that regard to be undertaken. There are various concerns that have been raised over the state of research in the South African Public Administration.

Cloete (2000), and Mabin (2004) and Cameron and McLaverty (2008) have all argued that the quality of Public Administration research in South Africa is very low. At the 2004 Association of Southern African Schools and Departments of Public Administration

and Management (ASSADPAM) conference, Public Administration academics conducted a self-evaluation exercise on the quality of the discipline's research in the country. The overwhelming response was that research was of an extremely low quality (Cameron, 2005). At the Mount Grace II conference (held in 1999, set up as a review of the progress of Mount Grace I) the findings were that research in South African Public Administration was something that needed prominent attention. A recent perusal of the list of NRF rated researchers revealed that only 6 researchers who would broadly regard themselves as Public Administration academics are rated (Cameron, 2005; 2008).

Cameron and McLaverty (2008) argue that Public Administration in South Africa has been sucked into functional activities at the expense of academic research and theory development in the field. As a result, "There has not been the same development of a cumulative and meaningful knowledge base in the discipline that there has been in the other social sciences. Theory development is weak" (Cameron and McLaverty, 2008: 71). Cameron (2005) concludes three things about Public Administration research in South Africa as also identified in American Public Administration research. He concluded that, (1) there is very little theory testing; (2) there has not been a development of a cumulative and meaningful knowledge development; and (3) that little published research is funded by outside sources (Cameron, 2005).

The implication drawn here is that literature is prophetically pointing out that knowledge development and theory testing in Public Administration research needs attention, but more research that is empirical must be undertaken to make explicit assumptions made about the status of the field. It should be acknowledged though that the advancement of Public Administration research is still a relatively new endeavour in South Africa (Cameron and McLaverty, 2008). In actual fact there had not been a study analysing doctoral research in the South African Public Administration field until recently (see Wessels, 2008). Most studies that have been conducted have focussed generally on published journal articles (i.e. Hubbell, 1992; Wessels, 2004; Wessels, 2008; Cameron and McLaverty, 2008). Even though these studies focused their research on articles published in the South African Public Administration journals and not dissertations or theses, their findings point towards the quality of research in the discipline.

Hubbell's (1992) study undertook a qualitative assessment of the South African Institute of Public Administration (SAIPA), *Journal of Public Administration*, between the years 1986-1990. His findings reached a conclusion that the majority of articles analysed fell within what could be termed a functionalist perspective, lacking any critical analysis (cited in Cameron and McLaverty, 2008). More conclusively Hubbell (1992) claimed that the majority of articles were not scientific in nature, thereby failing to contribute to the development of Public Administration as a scientific field of study (cited in Cameron and McLaverty, 2008: 76).

Wessels's (2004) study analysed research articles in two journals, namely *Politeia* and *Journal of Public Administration* from 2000 to 2002 to provide a baseline for evaluating the scientific spirit of the contributions. Seventeen articles in the nine issues of *Politeia* and forty-nine articles in the twelve issues of the *Journal of Public Administration*, excluding editorials, viewpoints and book reviews were selected. His conclusion was that: "Several articles did not state their purpose explicitly in the abstract or the introduction, which necessitated searching for it in the articles". In both journals "purpose" appeared to be *descriptive*. The assessment revealed that the purpose of 52 (94%) of the articles in *Politeia* and 42 (86%) articles in the *JPA* was to *describe*. Considering that 45 (45%) of all the articles in this study had a descriptive purpose, it is significant that only 9 (09%) were based on empirical research designs using primary data. Only 21% of the articles in both journals were aimed at improving on or refuting existing theories, testing hypotheses or models, or confirming any causal relationships between variables. Most of the articles 64 (71%) of the *Politeia* articles and 53 (06%) of the *JPA* articles) showed the practice orientation of Public Administration" (Wessels, 2004: 180).

Cameron and McLaverty (2008) undertook an analysis of the two main South African Public Administration journals, *Journal of Public Administration* (JPA) and *Administratio Publica* (AP) from 1994-2006 to establish the state of academic research in the field. A data basis of 392 articles was compiled consisting of 294 articles from JPA and 98 from AP. The provisional findings of the study showed that research has been overwhelmingly conceptual as about 84% of JPA research and 91% of AP was classified

as conceptual (Cameron and McLaverty, 2008: 85). “This indicates that most research in these two journals have as their primary purpose to identify and conceptualise a researchable problem and not to undertake systematic research” (Cameron and McLaverty, 2008: 85). Articles which looked at causal relations between variables showed very low results and the research focus indicated that most research was practice rather than theory orientated. Their results seem to strengthen the premise that the quality and nature of research in the discipline is poor, because they found that most of the research to be descriptive, practice-oriented and noncumulative and lacks knowledge and theory development (Cameron and McLaverty, 2008).

2.6 Chapter Summary

The chapter has discussed the historical development of Public Administration as an academic discipline, both internationally and in South Africa. The impact the history has had on the current state of research in the field was also discussed and a strong link was drawn. Both international and South African literature on the status of Public Administration was investigated drawing on empirical studies and a common outcry about the poor quality of research was observed. In a nutshell the chapter discussed the specific concerns about the state of research in the discipline. These concerns focused on the nature of the research questions addressed; the accumulation of knowledge in the field; theory testing and development; scientific rigor; and the development of Public Administration as a mature field of study. The next chapter examines, specifically, the debates over doctoral dissertations.

Chapter III:

The quality and nature of Doctoral Research in Public Administration

3 Chapter purpose

While the need for academic research in Public Administration is widely recognized, unfortunately, the research problem has not been resolved. Knowledge production by Public Administration scholars continues to be criticized as insufficient to meet the field's needs (Brewer et al, 1999). Most attention on research problems in Public Administration has focused on the role of research, in particular the function, type, and quality of research by doctoral students (Stallings, 1986: 235). The debate over the quality of doctoral dissertations and their contribution towards developing the state of the field nears its third decade. This chapter's aim is to focus on these debates.

Some writers have discussed research methods employed by doctoral students in the course of their dissertations while others have commented on appropriate research strategies for the field as a whole, including its university-based faculty (Stallings, 1986). The studies that have focused primarily on research as it pertains to doctoral dissertations such as Cleary (1992; 2000); Adams and White (1994); White (1986b) and McCurdy and Cleary (1984) in the *PAR* series have not been positive at all. All - with an exception of one report by Cleary (2000) as it indicated some improvements as far as the rigorous research output was concerned - have come to similar conclusions about its quality. Most have concluded that relatively few of the core problems of Public Administration have been studied adequately or intensively, research is noncumulative, and atheoretical. Therefore, this highlights that quality of research marks the discipline's independence, as well as indicating that there is growth of knowledge taking place - as in the other fields of study.

There is an outcry about the state of research in the discipline at present. The accumulated works of Public Administration scholars and doctoral dissertations have received a reasonable share of attention (Streib, Slotkin and Rivera, 2001) over the past few decades. Of the many debates concerning the status of Public Administration, the

quality of doctoral dissertation research has recently been one aspect of the larger debates - more broadly, the question of their contribution towards knowledge development to advance the status of the field and the practice-theory nature of research focus. However, the fact remains, as discussed in the previous chapter that research plays a significant role and the field's hopes rest on the research conducted by its scholars. Therefore, the first theme will look at research papers and articles that have questioned the quality of doctoral research in the discipline (both internationally and in South Africa). The second part looks at identified reasons for the poor quality of doctoral research and the response papers from other scholars defending the discipline's research quality against these criticisms. Then the chapter summary will follow.

3.1 The investigation on doctoral research in Public Administration

The doctoral dissertation is an expression of scholarship and research of the highest standard. Not only should it be the end product of independent scholarship of a high quality, says Mouton (2001), but it should also make a significant contribution to the existing body of knowledge in a particular discipline or field. The only way for a significant contribution to be made, as well as the enhancement of the field, is through the dissemination of that knowledge by publication. Kamler (2008), writing on the Australian doctoral publications experience, states that publications are increasingly used in universities to measure personal and institutional performance, and as a criterion for achieving academic promotion and competitive research funding. And when the results of research are not published, there are diminished opportunities for the kinds of professional dialogue and knowledge building that can take a field forward (Kamler, 2008). Studies conducted in the U.S. have also supported the notion (Adams and White, 1994; Douglas, 1996; Cunningham & Weschler, 2002)

A ground-breaking study to this inquisition by McCurdy and Cleary (1984) set the tone which then initiated a series of research and debates concerning the state, quality and methodology of Public Administration research. The study by McCurdy and Cleary (1984) examined 142 dissertation abstracts published in the 1981 edition of *Dissertation*

Abstracts International (DAI). Using the criteria of purpose, validity, theory testing and causal relationships, central importance of topic, and leading edge importance of topic, they concluded that: “[f]ew of those doctoral projects meet the criteria that conventionally define careful, systematic study in the social sciences.” (1984: 50). McCurdy and Cleary challenged the standards that guide Public Administration research and asked that they should be questioned. Thayer (cited in Box, 1992) challenged McCurdy and Cleary’s findings for what he saw as an attempt to lock Public Administration research into a narrowly positivist quantitative “straightjacket”.

White (1986b) replicated the McCurdy and Cleary (1984) analysis and examined some 300 dissertations for the period 1979-1984. Using a wider variety of types of methods (he admitted his criteria were more generous than those which were used by McCurdy and Cleary) found the state of dissertation research to be similar to that described by McCurdy and Cleary (1984) and concluded that dissertations contributed little to the knowledge base of the field. White (1986b: 231) placed much of the blame on doctoral programs. White argued that the doctoral dissertation experience should prepare students for research and publication, and that dissertation committees need to work harder to ensure that their students’ topics and methods prepare them for research and publication (1986b cited in Brewer et al., 1999).

Cleary (1992) replicated his previous research with McCurdy in 1984. He used the following six criteria to analyze the abstracts of the 165 dissertations included in the *Dissertation Abstracts* (1990) under public administration: research purpose, methodological validity, the testing of theory, causal relationships, importance of topic, and topic on the cutting edge. Before applying the criteria to the 1990 dissertations, Cleary (1992) did a fresh analysis of a sample of 1981 dissertation abstracts to test his judgments. The test judgments coincided with the earlier conclusions in over 95 percent of the cases sampled. Therefore Cleary concluded “It seems safe to conclude, therefore, that the judgments I made on the 1990 dissertations were closely analogous to those originally made on the 1981 dissertations and that the two studies are comparable.” (1992: 56). Comparative to the 1984 findings, Cleary’s (1992) research concluded that the quality of dissertations had improved somewhat. “Taking the six criteria as a group,

there has been a substantial change in the nature and quality of doctoral dissertations between 1981 and 1990. The average number of criteria met in 1981 was two; the average number of criteria met in 1990 was three. In addition, in 1981, no dissertation met all six criteria, and only 19 (13.4 percent) met at least four; in 1990, 3 projects met all six criteria, and 57 (34.5 percent) met at least four.... This difference is substantial.” (Cleary, 1992: 58).

However, Cleary’s (1992) findings also indicated that the percentage of “practitioner projects” was basically the same in the two years surveyed, increasing slightly from 1981 to 1990. The 1984 *PAR* article defined practitioner projects as those that involved applied research on management problems with little attempt to employ a rigorous research design or methodology (McCurdy and Cleary, 1984). There were 21 such projects (14.8 percent) in 1981; there were 30 (18.2 percent) in 1990, therefore meeting one of the six tests. However doctoral dissertations relying on a single case study declined in number in 1990. In 1981, there were 37 such projects (26.1 percent) and in 1990 they were only 27 (16.4 percent). Cleary’s other findings also showed that doctoral dissertations written in 1990 on topics that might be considered more central to the field of public administration were more likely to have a rigorous research design. Approximately two-thirds of the 53 analyses coded as “important” in this study satisfied at least three of the remaining five criteria of the study. Only half the remaining 112 dissertations did this. A substantially larger number of dissertations in 1990 did not deal with what he deemed to be a topic or an issue affecting public administration, let alone an “important” issue. There were 26 dissertations (15.8 percent) in this category in 1990, compared with 13 (0.2 percent) in 1981.

Unfortunately, the amount of improvement was found to have been modest at best when Adams and White (1994) replicated White’s 1986b research. Adams and White (1994) compared the dissertation research generated by Public Administration graduates in 1992 with that generated by graduates from five other fields, of which four (planning, management, criminology, and social work) were similar to Public Administration in being practice-related fields, and one women’s studies, was included because, arguably, some of the more innovative theory in the social sciences has been associated with this

field. A total of 830 abstracts in all six fields were assessed along several parameters. These focused on (1) the existence of a framework of some kind to guide the research, (2) obvious flaws in the research, (3, 4, 5) relevance of the findings to theory or practice, (6) importance of the topic, and (7) an overall indicator of quality. Public Administration ranked second among the six fields in the number of dissertations having no discernible framework for the research, first in having obvious flaws, in the middle on relevance of the research to theory or to practice, last in number of dissertations on important or very important topics, and third in overall quality of dissertation research. Overall, then, the quality of doctoral research may have improved slightly, but it suffered by comparison with that generated by graduates in other applied social science fields (White et al., 1996). Moreover, all of the six fields examined exhibited much less than desirable quality in doctoral research (Adams and White, 1994). Indeed, the majority of the dissertations studied lacked a theoretical framework, were methodologically unsound, and tended to address questions of moderate to low interest to the field. Also Adams and White (1994) found that Public Administration differed from the other fields in three unique ways: there was an abundance of practice research, foreign focus, and case study dissertations. Hence the authors argued that "these unique features appear to have a significant influence on the quality of dissertation research in the field" (Adams and White, 1994: 571).

In 2000 Cleary replicated the earlier study by McCurdy and Cleary (1984) to analyze 168 doctoral dissertations listed under the heading of public administration in *Dissertation Abstracts 1998*. The focal point of the study was whether identifiable changes or improvements in dissertation quality have occurred in recent years. Cleary (2000) analysed dissertations on the six evaluative criteria presented in his 1981 study with McCurdy (research purpose, validity, theory testing, causal relationship, importance of topic and cutting edge). He used dissertation abstracts as units of observation. The 1998 situations showed substantial improvements in quality over those in *Dissertation Abstracts* of 1990, almost as much improvement as those studies showed over the projects of 1987. Compared to 1990, a substantially higher percentage of the 1998 dissertations set out to conduct basic research and to report on the findings. In addition,

more doctoral students were found to be using rigorous research designs that involve attention to causal relationships.

3.2 Response debates on the nature and quality of doctoral research in Public Administration

Adams and White (1994) made a bold suggestion on how doctoral dissertations can be improved - although they also acknowledged the inappropriateness of their suggestion. Adams and White suggested that “[o]ne way to improve dissertation research in public administration might be to simply eliminate practice research, foreign focus, or case study dissertations” (1994: 573). The rationale behind their bold suggestion was because practice research dissertations are a distinguishing feature of doctoral research in Public Administration (Adams and White, 1994).

Their study (Adams and White, 1994) found that even foreign focus dissertations dealt with practice related research. Their study results further indicated that Public Administration ranked first in the number of practice-oriented dissertations and most often, these dissertations were case studies. This problem was also identified by previous research by McCurdy and Cleary (1984) and White (1986a), which indicated that the “practitioner” research was the most favored approach to research in Public Administration.

Bailey (1992: 48) observed that White’s (1986b) findings corroborated McCurdy and Cleary’s (1984) conclusion that “most [P]ublic [A]dministration dissertations are not set up in such a way that they can make much of a contribution to the development of our conceptual base or even to our base of information,” leading to a further concern that “students are not researching anything really important in public administration” (McCurdy and Cleary, 1984: 54). However Bailey criticised the two studies as being flawed in one aspect: their use of mainstream social science methodology limited the measurement and interpretation of their data. As a result Bailey argues that “only tentative conclusions can be drawn from these studies, given the biases built into the

research designs and the limitations of the mechanisms used to collect the data.” (1992: 48).

Bailey (1992) has persuasively argued that case studies can be a legitimate and proper form of research - in other words, can be just as rigorous as mainstream research if attention is paid to the logic and practice of case study research. However, ways to improve the quality of all types of dissertations must be found. Establishing acceptable methods of enquiry in the discipline has been seen as another way that can improve the quality of doctoral dissertations in the field. Houston and Delevan have proposed that several things need to take place to address these problematic issues in the discipline. One of the propositions is that, “[P]ublic [A]dministration scholars must seek to agree on the acceptable criteria and research tools for determining valid research. This would entail the acceptance and development of both quantitative and qualitative methodologies as complementary, rather than contradictory tools.” (1990: 680).

The above proposition seems to be in support an argument Bailey (1992) raises in what she calls a bias over qualitative methods in the field. As she puts it below:

Throughout this literature and, indeed, across the discipline, there is a fundamental bias, an unarticulated value, favouring the acceptability of empirical or quantitative research methods over qualitative. Empirical, or “hard” methods, are considered *a priori* to produce more scientific, and thus better, findings than “soft” methods. The result is a hierarchy of researchers based solely on their methods rather than the significance of their work. Scholars who utilize quantitative methods, the “numbers crunchers,” are revered while those performing qualitative or case study research, which, done properly, can be much more intricate, are devalued, if not scorned. (Bailey, 1992: 47).

However, according to Adams and White argument, “qualitative research should employ some logic of inquiry such as grounded theory, naturalistic inquiry, or ethnomethodology to guide research activities. This helps to insure methodological rigor, and aids in the development of empirically grounded theory that may contribute to both knowledge development and use.” (1994: 570). And in Adams and White’s (1994) study, their findings indicated that few of the dissertations in all of the fields made reference to one of the qualitative logics of inquiry employed in the social sciences. These findings according to Bailey raises serious concerns since the application of criteria derived from the “pure” disciplines of social science where theory does not have to have practical value were applied. Bailey’s argument is that the mainstream social sciences research

methods does not apply to Public Administration because “unlike the mainstream social sciences, a bond exists between theory and practice” in the study of and the existence of the theory-practice bond sets Public Administration apart from other social sciences” (1992: 49). That is more like locking Public Administration into a ‘strait jacket’ of mainstream social sciences methods. Hence it implies the need for a specialized set of research questions and research designs that are appropriate to address them.

3.3 Doctoral research in South Africa

In South Africa, only one study has been found which attempted to look at doctoral theses - although the aim was to look at research trends in the field. Wessels (2008) has pioneered such a study in the South African context. The main question Wessels addresses is whether dissertation (for a master’s degree) and thesis (for a doctoral degree) research by South African postgraduate students in Public Administration focus on the issues which are of real importance. His study provided a profile of South African master’s and doctoral research in Public Administration in terms of institution, type of qualification and research issues/themes (Wessels, 2008). The study profiled that during the period from 2000 to 2005 a total of 342 doctoral and master’s degrees were awarded by South African institutions of higher education, of which 76 (22.22%) were doctoral degrees, 180 (52.63%) were research master’s and 86 (25.15%) were coursework master’s.

When only focusing on doctoral research output, 2005 saw a slightly larger number of doctorates awarded in that year compared to the years before that. Wessels (2008) study reveals that from the period of 2000-2005, the University of Pretoria awarded the most doctorates with an output of 22.37%. The University of KwaZulu-Natal awarded the second most doctorates with 19.74% degrees awarded, the University of Cape Town is third with 13.16% while the University of the Free State and the University of Stellenbosch were concurrently fourth with 11.84% of the doctoral degrees awarded. As in the U.S. (although this is not a comparative study) the findings also showed that less than 78.95% of the total number of doctoral degrees was awarded by only five

institutions (Wessels, 2008). These institutions also seem to have some sort of a doctoral programme in place with well established academics in the field, directing these programmes. Finally, the study showed that five institutions (28% of the total) did not award a doctorate during the period from 2000-2005. Overall, it can be argued that the research output in the field is very low.

With regard to topics of significance, Wessels (2008) study indicated that, for doctoral studies, the most popular categories of research topics are “Managing Public Service Delivery (PSD)” and “Public Organisational Development & Management (ODM)” both constituting 25% of all the doctoral output in each category. In the third place is “Policy Analysis and Management (POL)” with 11.84% of the doctoral output and fourth is “Human Resources Management (HRM)” with 10.53% of all theses. In total, 72.37% of the total number of theses falls within the boundaries of these four categories. The four categories of topics according to Wessels (2008) “can be described as practice biased”, strongly supporting the argument that research in the field is practice-oriented (Cameron and McLaverty, 2008).

The category “Public Administration and Management History, Theory and Research (HTR)” which is more “theoretical in nature” (Wessels, 2008: 114) suffered neglect when compared to other four categories but it tended to be researched more by doctoral candidates. According to the findings, it ranked tenth overall when looking at both doctoral theses and master’s dissertations under this topic. Although this category is the tenth most popular category overall (2.92% of dissertations and theses) analysis showed that “when a topic in this category is researched, 50% of the candidates do it for research master’s and 40% for a doctoral degree” (Wessels, 2008: 114). So what conclusions were reached by Wessels study?

While the study’s aim was not to investigate the quality of doctoral theses, his findings do shed some light in that there are few doctoral studies engaging in the testing or improvement of theory in the discipline but most aim to address issues to improve practice. Wessels (2008: 118) concludes that the average for the period 2000 to 2005 in South African Public Administration is one doctorate for approximately every three and a half master’s graduates. Wessels (2008) feels that the 22.22% average of doctorates

produced during the 2000 to 2005 period paints a positive picture. But is the output making a sufficient contribution in terms of knowledge development; are the scholars engaging in rigorous research and is the knowledge accumulative? The study leaves these questions unaddressed but recommends that follow up studies need to be conducted that will investigate the degree these doctoral theses contribute towards new knowledge in the field. Wessels' (2008) study can be praised for paving the way for more research to be conducted on the quality and nature of doctoral research in South African Public Administration.

3.4 Chapter summary

From the review of the studies above what seems to be a key theme is that doctoral dissertations are characterized as applied, atheoretical, and lacking in empirical rigor, and thus they have little impact on knowledge development in the field. In general, the conclusion drawn is that doctoral research in the field engages in little theory testing and therefore does not contribute to the development of a coherent body of knowledge and this is due to too much emphasis placed on practice rather than engaging in intellectual development (Houston and Delevan, 1990: 675).

Practice research is found to be the dominating feature of in the dissertations in the U.S and there is striking resemblance in the South African Public Administration field as was identified in the only doctoral study conducted in South Africa by Wessels (2008).

Chapter IV

Types of doctoral programmes and theses in Public Administration that are offered at South African universities

4 Chapter purpose

In Chapter Two, the historical development of the South African Public Administration as an academic field was discussed. The findings showed that with the transition into a democratic country and the call for a new paradigm at the Mount Grace Conferences (one and two) as well as the Wineland Conferences by academics and practitioners in the field, Public Administration academic institutions underwent a transition of their own. In keeping up with the changes in the country's public administration, they began moving away from the generic administrative processes approach and embracing the NPM movement (Maserumule, 2005). Some went as far as to change their department names from Public Administration to Public Management, although some added a development component to it. To some scholars (i.e. Cameron, 2008) this implied harm in the discipline's knowledge development and accumulation because it meant that the teaching of theory was being supplanted by business-like type curriculum aimed at improving practice. This needed to be confirmed by visiting all websites of institutions to find out which universities offer Public Administration; what their departments are called; in which faculties they are located; whether they are separate or joined into other departments; and the size of the departments (i.e. number of staff in the department). These questions are important because they shed some light into the research crises that have been identified by some of the South African Public Administration scholars.

This chapter specifically focuses on the types of doctoral programmes and theses in Public Administration offered at South African universities. Wessels (2008) provided a profile of institutions in South Africa offering Public Administration at masters' and doctoral levels (see table 3). However, since Wessels's (2008) profile did not distinguish between institutions offering Public Administration at a doctoral or masters' level, this

research paper seeks to establish, first all the institutions offering Public Administration; second those that offer doctorates in the discipline; and types of theses offered; as well as PhD programmes.

4.1 South African Higher Education system

South African higher education underwent transformation post-1994 from its easily distinguishable classifications of either historically black universities (HBU) or historically white universities (HWU) or historically black technikons (HBT) or historically white technikons (HWTs) (See appendix 2) (Centre for Science Development, 1997). These changes have brought about a new shape and size of the Higher Education sector through mergers of institutions, constituting fewer but more complex types of institutions(see appendix 1) classifiable as 11 traditional universities, 6 comprehensive universities (those that have merged with either another university or techikon), and 6 universities of technology (previously called Technikons) (IRDP, 2007). However, before the new Higher Education classifications, in 1997 the Centre for Science Development investigated differences in the quality and capacity for research methodology training across Universities, Technikons, and Historically White and Historically Black Institutions. The study reached a conclusion that Technikons and Historically Black Universities have less satisfactory resources and less capacity to deliver adequate research training than Historically White Universities (Centre for Science Development, 1997).

4.2 South African institutions offering Public Administration.

Wessels (2008) identified that 18 universities offered Public Administration irrespective of whether it is up to the masters or doctoral levels (see table 3). Table 3 (as adapted from Wessels' (2008) study) represents institutions offering Public Administration at the South African Higher education and their previous classifications. Since this study's focus is on doctoral dissertation/thesis, finding out exactly which universities offer doctoral degrees in Public Administration and types of doctoral programmes and theses (see Table 5) was

necessary. As represented in Table 3, there are 10 traditional universities, 6 comprehensive universities and only 2 universities of technology in South Africa offering Public Administration (as taken from table in Wessels, 2008).

Table 3: South African Institutions in higher education offering master's and doctoral programmes in Public Administration (Adapted from Wessels (2008) table © <i>Administratio Publica</i> 15(3))			
	Institution	HBUorHWU/HBTorHWT	Category of institution
1	Stellenbosch University	HWU	Traditional
2	University of the Western Cape	HBU	Traditional
3	University of KwaZulu-Natal	merged institutions	Traditional
4	North-West University	HBU	Traditional
5	University of Cape Town	HWU	Traditional
6	University of Pretoria	HWU	Traditional
7	University of Limpopo	merged institutions	Traditional
8	University of the Witwatersrand	HWU	Traditional
9	University of the Free State	HWU	Traditional
10	University of Fort Hare	HBU	Traditional
11	Nelson Mandela Metropolitan University	merged institutions	Comprehensive
12	University of South Africa	HWU	Comprehensive
13	Cape Peninsula University of Technology	merged institutions	Comprehensive
14	University of Johannesburg	merged institutions	Comprehensive
15	Central University of Technology	merged institutions	Comprehensive
16	University of Venda	HBU	Comprehensive
17	Tshwane University of Technology	merged institutions	University of Technology
18	Durban university of Technology	merged institutions	University of Technology

Table 4 represents the findings showing that out of ten traditional universities nine indicated that they offer a Public Administration qualification at a doctoral level (the

University of Fort Hare was an exception), and one comprehensive university (Nelson Mandela Metropolitan University) also does so.

Table 4: Types of Public Administration Degrees Offered at South African Universities

University	Type of doctoral degrees	Means by which the type of programme or thesis is offered
University of South Africa (UNISA)	DAdmin; D Litt et Phil; DPA	Research programmes; 2yrs
Stellenbosch University	PhD	Part time; research only
University of the Western Cape	PhD	Thesis only
University of KwaZulu-Natal (UKZN)	DAdmin	By coursework and research or research based only
North-West University	PhD	Research and coursework
University of Cape Town	PhD	Thesis only; 2yrs
University of Pretoria	PhD; DAdmin & DPhil	PhD: Part I: course work; part II: research. DAdmin & DPhil: thesis only
University of the Witwatersrand	PhD	Thesis; Part time and full time; attendance of research seminars required from candidates
Nelson Mandela Metropolitan University	DPhil	Fulltime research doctoral degree: 2years (fulltime), 6years max (part time)
University of the Free State (FS)	DAdmin & PhD	Thesis only. Duration: 2years min
University of Johannesburg	PhD	Thesis only
Central University of Technology	DTech	Not explained

4.3 Types of theses awarded by institutions offering Public Administration in South Africa

The South African higher education system does not discriminate between types of doctorates although their different outputs are acknowledged. Wessels' (2008) study gave different types of doctorates offered by South African universities such as DPhil, DAdmin, DCom, DLitt et Phil, DPA, DTech and PhD. Wessels' (2008) approach was to refer to all the different types of qualifications as doctorates for clarity purposes; however, there are marked differences based on the outcome of a specific qualification. For example, a Doctor of Public Administration (DPA), mostly common in the U.S. and only offered at the University of South Africa (UNISA) in South Africa, is a terminal applied-research doctoral degree in the field of public administration (government), which focuses upon practice. The research focus of the typical DPA addresses applied issues, with the results providing professional outcomes that are of direct relevance to practice. Hence it is designed to provide senior-level public managers, or quasi-public managers, with the substantive skills, knowledge and values necessary in this era. Students in most programs develop a thorough knowledge of the legal, ethical and political environments of public administrators.

Students understand the administrative functions of governmental agencies and gain expertise in strategic planning, advanced management techniques, programmes implementation and results-based leadership. DAdmin also is designed and targeted at public service officials. However; DPA/DAdmin research is both theoretical and practical. The DPA dissertation is usually at the same level as a PhD in terms of effort, rigour, contribution to knowledge, supervision and assessment. On the other end a PhD is more concerned with developing theory and is more appropriate for people who wish to become professional researchers, or who wish to pursue a career in academia.

Table 4 indicates the South African institutions that offer doctoral degrees in their various types. There are five types of thesis or qualification offered by twelve South African institutions offering Public Administration at a doctoral level. The different types that are offered are: DAdmin; PhD; DPA; DPhil; and DTech. Of the twelve institutions shown in Table 4, eight offer PhD degrees (which is more concerned with developing theory and is

more appropriate for potential professional researchers or those who wish to pursue a career in academia). This is half of the institutions that offer Public Administration in South Africa as was shown in Table 3. Of the eight institutions offering PhD degrees, seven offered them by thesis only, leaving just two institutions (University of Pretoria and North-West University) which offer their degree by coursework and research (which indicates that these institutions have a doctoral programme). Four institutions offer DAdmin (targeting public service officials), and only the UKZN offered this type of degree by coursework and research. Only two institutions offered DPhil qualification (University of Pretoria and Nelson Mandela Metropolitan University). A DTech was only offered at the Central University of Technology, a comprehensive institution. DPA degree was only offered by UNISA. Table 4 indicates also that some institutions offer more than one type of doctoral degree. Two institutions indicated to offer three types of doctoral degrees, one to pursue academia and two practice oriented degrees. These institutions are UNISA (DAdmin; DLitt et Phil; DPA) and the University of Pretoria (PhD; DAdmin; DPhil). UFS had two types of degrees, DAdmin and PhD. A study needs to be conducted to show what type of thesis is the most favoured in the discipline in terms of students' enrolments in pursuit of their doctorates. It will be of interest to know since a PhD degree is offered in more than half of the institutions, does this translate to it being the most favoured qualification in the field in terms of student enrolment?

4.4 Institutional location and Designation of Public Administration departments

Some observations were made when websites of South African institutions offering Public Administration were searched to find out where Public Administration departments were located and what they are called. The Centre for Science Development (1997) when they conducted their research noted this challenge in locating disciplines in the social sciences - and this was before transformation of the Higher Education system took place. "It was observed that institutions differed in the prevalence of Social Science departments and there is some variation too in whether programmes are offered separately or combined in various ways; naming of departments differs too" (Center for Science Development, 1997: 11). Another identified hurdle when this researcher searched

university websites was that each institution seemed to have a different way of “packaging” its Social Science departments into faculties, just as it was identified by the Centre for Science Development in 1997.

But one common factor is that Public Administration departments are not separated from the Social Sciences faculties, as will be shown later in this section. The South African experience reflect to have departments of Public Administration being separately housed or independent from other departments as is commonly done in the United States institutions but their location within faculties remains widely-spread.

4.4.1 What are Public Administration departments called?

Bendor (1994) argued that Public Administration departments are often situated, quite appropriately, in professional schools, which by design are oriented toward solving practical problems. In South Africa as revealed in Table 5, it is no surprise that most departments are placed in faculties as well as linked to departments designed towards professional practice. As shown in Table 5, in keeping with the transition and the management wave which took over the academic and practice circles of the discipline in the early 1990s, most institutions divorced the use of naming their departments Public Administration in favour of Management or Public Management while one added a Development component to it. Public Administration departments all call themselves with different names. It became difficult to try and group them according to similar name preferences since they are all called different things.

The big questions perhaps to be asked is: what is in the name? Why all Public Administration departments will prefer to distinguish themselves from one another? Does the name preference indicate the department’s area of study and focus? Breaux, Clynch & Morris’s (2003) study in the U.S. revealed little difference in the content of core curricula, and little relationship between the core curricula and other variables such as mission statement, type of faculty and institutional location of the programme; students were found to be obtaining a mix of professional skills and environmental context. Using

Breaux et al. (2003) findings, it seems that South African scholars could be obtaining the mix of programmes as the type of faculties and institutional location of Public Administration programme could be perhaps explain the high number of practice oriented doctoral research found in Wessels' (2008) study. Also, institutions define their department names as professional schools concerned with preparing students for practice rather than for academia, hence the departments have a practice inclination in their names and location. This is further validated by a number of departments declaring that they are schools of government studies (i.e. North-West University; Central University of Technology; and University of Johannesburg). While more than seven had management in their names but it was management with something else. Each institution that used management in the names, either called itself Economic and Management Studies (University of Western Cape) or Public Management and Planning (University of Stellenbosch) or Public Management and Administration (University of Pretoria) or just a Department of Public Management (UFS) or Government Management (Central University of Technology). Only UKZN is still called the Department of Public Administration

The UKZN and University of Pretoria, at least, have kept the use of Public Administration in their names. However, it seems that the University of Cape Town (UCT) still has Public Administration not as an independent department but a programme within the Department of Political Studies. Nelson Mandela Metropolitan University's department name indicates it to be attached to political studies but is easily distinguishable from it. Upon visitation to the institutions websites it was clear which departments were on their own (meaning not linked, dependent or attached to another department such political studies or economics). Only UCT and Nelson Mandela Metropolitan University's indicated to be attached to or dependant on another department as their names also suggest in Table 5.

Table 5: Faculty locations and names of Public Administration departments at South African Universities

Name of institution	Faculty name	Department name
1.University of South Africa (UNISA)	College of Economic and Management Sciences	School of Management Sciences
2.Stellenbosch University	Faculty of Economic and Management Sciences;	School of Public Management and Planning
3.University of KwaZulu-Natal (UKZN)	Faculty of Management Studies	Dept of Public Administration
4.North-West University	Faculty of Arts;	School of Social and Government Studies
5.University of Cape Town (UCT)	Faculty of Humanities;	Dept of Political Studies
6.University of Pretoria	Faculty of Economic and Management Sciences;	School of Public Management and Administration
7.University of the Witwatersrand	Faculty of Commerce, Law and Management;	Graduate school of Public and Development Management
8.University of the Free State (UFS)	Faculty of Economic and Management Sciences;	Dept of Public Management
9.University of Johannesburg	Faculty of Humanities;	Dept of Public Governance
10.Nelson Mandela Metropolitan University	Faculty of Arts;	Dept of Political and Governmental Studies
11.Central University of Technology	Faculty of Management Sciences;	School for Government Management
12.University of the Western Cape	Faculty of Economic and Management Sciences	School of Economic and Management Sciences

4.4.2 Location of Public Administration departments within Faculties

It was interesting how some institutions located Public Administration departments in either faculties with Economic and Management Sciences or in Commerce, Law and Management while others were located faculties called Management Sciences. What was concerning was why Public Administration in South African universities was housed in the Management or Commercial Faculties?

Table 5 showing only institutions which offer a doctoral degree in Public Administration, indicates the faculties housing Public Administration departments. These faculties were then grouped according to similar names. For example, those who are named Arts or Humanities were grouped together to come up with frequency of different departments were located in similar faculties (see Table 6). About 8 (66.70%) of the Public Administration departments are located in faculties other than Humanities or Arts (see Table 5). Table 6 shows that about 5 (41.70%) departments are located in the Faculty of Economics and Management Sciences, 2 (16.70%) in the Faculty of Management Sciences/Studies and 1 (8.30%) is in the Faculty of Commerce, Law and Management. Only 4 (33.30%) departments were located in the Faculty of Arts/Humanities.

Dept. designation by faculty	Frequency	percentage
Economic and Management Sciences	5	41.70%
Arts/Humanities	4	33.30%
Management Studies/Sciences	2	16.70%
Commerce, Law and Management Sciences	1	8.30%
Total	12	100.00%

4.4.3 The size of Public Administration departments

Information available as according to the 2007 list¹³ of the members of Association for South African Departments of Public Administration and Management (ASSADPAM), indicates a number of pertinent features. The departments' size of staff (excluding tutors and administration staff) is shown by figures on table 7. The table reflects number of staff members at the various departments as at the end of 2007. The information as gathered may be possible that it left out those who form part of the academic teaching staff but may not be members of ASSADPAM. For an example, the list shows that in 2007 there were

¹³ List received via email correspondence with Dr Ivar Meyer of the University of Stellenbosch

only two UCT ASSADPAM members, one at the University of Pretoria. This indicates that the list only shows members of ASSADPM but not all academic staff in the field. The University of Pretoria's School of Public Management and Administration self-evaluation report of 2008 indicated that there are in fact ten academic staff members excluding support staff (admin and tutors) of which the ASSADPM list did not reflect.

Table 7 shows that UNISA leads with the highest number of staff members – 28 (22.05%) in total, followed by the University of the Witwatersrand and Tshwane University of Technology with 16 (12.60%) each. Stellenbosch University and University of Free State both had 15 (11.81%) academic staff members. What is positive with the above institutions was a high number of staff with doctorates and have achieved a professoriate status, meaning that they are in a better position to supervise and guide research of their students. Universities with less academic staff are Nelson Mandela Metropolitan University with 3 (2.36%); Central University of Technology and UCT with only 2 (1.57%) respectively. Of concern though was how small other departments were – yet in the Wessels' (2008) study they out-performed some of the institutions with high number of academic staff in terms of the doctoral research outputs. For example, the University of Pretoria has 10 (7.87%), and UCT has only 2 (1.57%) academic staff members, but were both ranked in the top 3 in Wessels study (to be discussed in the next section). So what does this mean: why would other institutions have few academic staff members and yet outperform those with so many? A further investigation into staff-student ratio and whether it affects the quality of programmes and the type of scholars the institution produces will need to be conducted. The Centre for Science Development (1997) has, however, already discovered that the staff-student ratio impacted negatively on the quality of research method teaching in the social sciences at South African universities. Overall though, the departments are significantly small as more than 7 departments have 10 and below academic staff.

PhD programme, facilities and department sizes				
University	Type of doctoral degrees	Means by which the type of programme or thesis is offered	Size of Departments	
			Total	%
University of South Africa (UNISA)	DAdmin; D Litt et Phil; DPA	Research programme: 2yrs	28	22.05%
Stellenbosch University	PhD	Part time: research only	15	11.81%
University of the Western Cape	PhD	Thesis only	12	9.45%
University of KwaZulu-Natal (UKZN)	DAdmin	By coursework and research or research based only	8	6.30%
North-West University	PhD	Research and coursework	8	6.30%
University of Cape Town	PhD	Thesis only: 2yrs	2	1.57%
University of Pretoria	PhD; DAdmin & DPhil	PhD: Part I: course work; part II: research. DAdmin & DPhil: thesis only	10	7.87%
University of the Witwatersrand	PhD	Thesis: Part time and full time; attendance of research seminars required from candidates	16	12.60%
Nelson Mandela Metropolitan University	DPhil	Fulltime research doctoral degree: 2years (fulltime), 6years max (part time)	3	2.36%
University of the Free State (UFS)	DAdmin & PhD	Thesis only. Duration: 2years min	15	11.81%
University of Johannesburg	PhD	Thesis only	8	6.30%
Central University of Technology	DTech	Not explained	2	1.57%

4.5 Doctoral programmes: a tool to enhance quality research

According to the Szanton and Manyika (2002) examination of the 23 institutions in South Africa, only 19 offer PhDs across disciplines. Mouton, presenting at the Postgraduate Research Indaba (2007), concluded that the poor quality of doctoral dissertations in South Africa is due to four factors. First, it has to do with institution suffering from overburdened and inexperienced supervisors. Second, there is insufficient research preparation for doctoral students. Third, there is insufficient national and institutional financial support for students, in that doctoral students take an average of 4 years to 6 years to complete their studies while NRF (National Research Foundation) funding is limited to only 3 years. Lastly, insufficient institutional attention is devoted to postgraduate support as doctoral students are left on their own with an assumption that they are capable of conducting quality research. All the factors highlighted by Mouton are very important and impact on each other in such a way that inexperienced supervisors meant to prepare students are incapable to adequately prepare students to undertake their doctoral research. If they themselves are inexperienced to supervise and lacking skills in research methods, how will they assist or prepare their students better? The institutions' scant attention devoted to doctoral scholars impacts on the quality of the student's final product and on their completing their doctorates within the timeframe of the years funded by the NRF.

Kamler cited that internationally there has been a move to develop doctoral degree programmes for publication in order to better prepare students for participation in research culture (Kamler, 2008). The South African experience seems to be lagging behind as for the most part. Doctoral students appear to be left to their own devices to conduct their research without any teaching support (Mouton, 2001). As it stands, in South African universities, doctoral studies have remained very much the same over the years as Mouton (2001) argues. They have always been viewed as the research degrees par excellence (Mouton, 2001).

According to Douglas (1996), the role of Public Administration programmes is not just to teach, it is also to advance the field and find ways to improve the practice of Public Administration. Felbinger et al. (1999) sharing the same notion about what the role of

doctoral education should be, as borrowed from the social sciences perspective, the reproduction of the professoriate to ensure continued knowledge development through research and the dissemination of knowledge through teaching. As simply stated, “the traditional purpose of doctoral education is the creation of a new generation of scholars who will pursue careers in academe.” (Felbinger et al., 1999: 459).

Concerns about the quality of research in Public Administration, with emphasis placed on the role of doctoral programmes, especially their educational role in expanding research knowledge in the field as far as in preparing students for scholarly research raises serious questions. Blame is placed on the role of doctoral programmes which are found to be lacking in adequately preparing students to conduct scholarly research instead; they are focused on producing highly specialised scholars for the public service (Houston and Delevan, 1990; Jordan, 2005). Research in the U.S. reveals that in most universities, very few students pursue doctoral studies for an academic career compared to students who plan to pursue careers as practitioners (Douglas, 1996; Felbinger et al., 1999; Cunningham & Weschler, 2002). With so few scholars pursuing doctoral studies for academic careers, the questions that remain is how productive are the few scholars that do pursue academic careers and how well do Public Administration programmes prepare them for such endeavors?

Denhardt (2001) questioned Public Administration education as to whether it educates students with respect to theory or practice. In chapter one an argument from Houston and Delevan (1990: 679) was quoted over the field’s programmes’ emphasis on practice and how this has hindered intellectual development. This is congruent with Jordan’s argument. Jordan (2005) argued that programmes of Public Administration education have moved away from the development of broad scholars that are skilled in a range of methodologies and philosophies. She contends that the “...increased professionalization of the discipline and the concomitant pressure towards the acceleration of graduate education” is partly to blame (Jordan, 2005: 703). While she acknowledges the need to produce highly specialised scholars but she nevertheless is of the opinion that this should not be at a risk of developing them into methodologically plural scholars (Jordan, 2005). Houston and Delevan had blamed this failure of programmes in placing too much focus

on preparing students for the public service, especially at masters' level as result for the dearth of intellectual inquiry. The South African experience could be argued to be in the same trend.

The problem seems to lie partially with Masters of Public Administration (MPA) programmes. As McSwite clearly articulates the role of the MPA degree "is to educate practicing public servants such that they can carry out their day-to-day work in a manner that is informed by broad understandings and relevant conceptual perspectives." (2001: 111). While there is no doubt that the focus of MPA programmes is to prepare students for practice and are much less research oriented than doctoral programmes, Cunningham and Weschler (2002) argued that even these programmes under prepare students in the field because students are learning in a vacuum of important theories and research methodologies. Studies looking methodically at the core curriculum of NASPAA-accredited programmes to see the emphasis of education have shown that the programmes focus on preparing students for professional practice (Franklin and Ebdon 2005). A study by Roeder and Whitaker (1993) concluded that programmes tended to be either more predominantly focused on an analytical approach or on an institutional-management approach.

If then the Masters programmes place less emphasis on theories and research, how then can students that wish to pursue the academic route be expected to perform rigorous research when their training has geared them towards practice research? The MPA programmes (as in other fields) open the door for students wishing to pursue a doctorate; hence, how it prepares those students will determine the caliber of doctoral scholars and the type of research they conduct as part of their knowledge contribution in the field. MPA programmes play an important role in that if students pursue their doctorates, their foundation in those programmes can and will further influence doctoral students' productivity through publications.

A South African study by the Centre for Science Development (1997) which was a survey conducted on the quality and capacity for research methodology training across universities, showed that social research methodology training in South Africa is delivered on a piecemeal basis across the spectrum of Social Science departments, each

shaped by a variety of institutional settings and by different disciplinary standards. What is alarming with the above findings was the poor performance of Public Administration departments ranking last, in terms of having adequate specialist teaching research methods. Also unsurprising, with regard to the adequate training or preparation of students in research methods, within discipline profiles History, Education and Social Work rated their programmes as “highly adequate,” while Political Science and Public Administration (grouped as one discipline in that study) was the main disciplinary area reporting inadequacy (Centre for Science Development, 1997). Reasons provided for low adequacy ratings included unfavourable staff: student ratios, lack of staff skills, and students’ poor numeracy skills.

The Centre for Science Development (1997) study found differences between the levels at which research methodology courses are offered at Universities and Technikons (Universities of Technology). Universities were found to offer research methodology courses up to masters’ levels, with Technikon courses being concentrated at 4th year (B Tech) level (Centre for Science Development, 1997). The Centre for Science Development (1997) recognises the quality and nature of the training and support of postgraduate students as a key factor in the overall research capacity of any higher education system. “Postgraduate students themselves produce significant quantities of research, and are also the pool on which the academic and research labour markets draw.” (Centre for Science Development, 1997: 24). The quote below from the report findings illustrates exactly the significance of the problem with postgraduate studies and the impact this has on the quality of research:

Overall, most departments surveyed offered at least a Master’s programme (by coursework or research), with some offering support for Doctoral/Laureatus studies. Clearly, though, there are significant differences between types of institution, with Historically White Universities and Technikons most likely to provide training at doctoral level. By contrast none of the responding departments at Historically Black Technikons offered training at this level, and half offered no postgraduate training at all. (Centre for Science Development, 1997: 24).

When the Centre for Science Development (1997) asked institutions to suggest areas of improvement, three key things were identified in the area of supervision as possible problem areas: first, the assumption that all postgraduate students should know how to conduct research and write a thesis, when obviously they do not; second, the intellectual

and social isolation of the “lonely researcher” marked by inadequate supervision, and/or a lack of communication between supervisor and student; lastly, the student’s misperception of standards, requirements, and of the supervisor’s role and functions. Mouton (2001) identified the first problem by arguing that doctoral students are left on their own for most parts. Clearly, these findings indicate a big need for programmes to exist at doctoral levels. However, the South African experience is rather different, as at the Higher Education most universities that offer Public Administration do not have set teaching programmes of research methods at a doctoral level as was shown in Table 7 above. Perhaps it is because of that very assumption that at postgraduate level, a doctoral student should know how to conduct research independently, demonstrating research skills of high caliber. Perhaps the problem lies with the very understanding of pursuing a doctorate. A doctorate is understood as an independent pursuit of scholarship; therefore scholars find themselves working in isolation because it is assumed they are capable and should showcase independent skills of enquiry.

4.6 Types of PhD programmes offered at South African universities

When this researcher visited various websites to get an indication as to whether South African universities offered doctoral programmes and what types of programmes existed, it was no surprise to see that most institutions did not have doctoral programmes but offered their doctorates by thesis only. The only exceptions were the University of Pretoria, the North West University and University of KwaZulu-Natal (UKZN) which offered doctoral programmes with coursework built in as part of their doctoral programmes. Prof Petrus Brynard, a PhD coordinator at the University of Pretoria, described their PhD programme in this manner:

Public Affairs was created to take advantage of the unique synergies of SPMA's (*School of Public Management and Administration*) interdisciplinary faculty and research programs. The degree program is designed to prepare scholars for research and teaching in the multidisciplinary field of public administration and management. The faculty of SPMA has created a program that emphasizes the study of public administration and management, policy analysis, public sector economics, human resources management, co-operative governance and intergovernmental relations, research methods and financial management. The curriculum is designed to equip students with the necessary skills for independent research and analysis of problems, issues, and solutions in government and the non-profit sector. (Prof Petrus Brynard, 2001).

The University of Pretoria has built a research method component into the curriculum of their PhD programme. It is of no surprise that Wessels (2008) study showed that University of Pretoria and UKZN excelled in doctoral research output for the period 2000-2005, with the University of Cape Town in third place. Having a teaching component leads to doctoral students having continuous contact with the institution, inspiring active scholarship and by attending lectures or classes also enabling interaction between doctoral candidates (Perry and Kraemer, 1986). Jordan (2005) identified this kind of approach as a means also of improving the quality of doctoral dissertations in the discipline. This also perhaps indicates why the University of Pretoria had the highest doctoral research output in Wessels' (2008) study. Maybe, also scholars can complete their doctorates within a short period of time because of the full time engagement with the programme.

Looking at the Pretoria University PhD programmes, one notable fact is how it is structured. It is linked to effective teaching and the contextualisation of theoretical frameworks provided in the programme is structured into three parts. Part 1 is compulsory coursework, part two is choosing an area of specialisation as an elective with a comprehensive sit-in-exam, which in turn is the gateway to part 3 of the programme, to submit a proposal for a research project for the thesis, which shall be defended before an evaluating committee (see appendix 3). However, a close look into Wessels (2008) study showed that the University of Pretoria topical research preferences were in practice-oriented research topics. This could then mean that among doctoral scholars enrolled in their programmes there is a high preference for research aimed at improving practice rather than knowledge development. However, a deeper analysis of the actual theses themselves is needed for definite conclusions to be made.

UKZN, while not offering a PhD programme but a doctoral programme in DAdmin, also ranked second in Wessels (2008) study and their handbook indicated that their DAdmin is offered as part of a doctoral programme (UKZN Faculty of Management Studies Handbook, 2007). Some institutions such as the University of the Witwatersrand only required attendance of research seminars – there is no indication as to whether these are

support seminars where teaching of research methods takes place but what was clear was that it is not coursework.

It also does not help that some doctorates in South Africa are offered by thesis only and can be undertaken on a full time (2 years min-3years maximum) or on a part-time basis (approximately 5-6years). Table 4 shows how different types of doctoral programmes are offered in various university departments. Various universities have a part time option while others only offer a doctoral degree on a part-time basis (Stellenbosch University) and by thesis only without any coursework to support the student. Mouton (2007) argued that such conditions lead to poor quality of research conducted and it leads also to high rate of scholars not completing the doctoral studies, thus affecting the already low number of scholars registering for doctoral studies.

Most of the studies that supports the importance of having educational programmes to provide support and preparing students for research productivity have been conducted in the U.S. (i.e. Douglas in 1996). Can South Africa learn from the U.S. institutions in having doctoral programmes? Douglas (1996) conducted a study on the productivity and quality of academic programmes - a survey of the status and productivity among Public Administration and Affairs schools. The study was a replication of earlier studies conducted in the field by Morgan, Meier, Kearney, Hays and Birch in 1981 and Legge and Devore in 1987. Douglas's (1996) main question was to ascertain how productive the faculties, graduate students, and graduates of Public Administration and Public Affairs programmes have been. There are several reasons for providing faculty productivity measures. According to Douglas (1996) productive measures indicate the extent to which programmes are contributing to the knowledge in the field. Second, graduate student and graduate productivity measures are useful because they are a means of determining the degree to which programmes are preparing students to add substantively to the field. "Uncovering which institutions tend to excel in these tasks will provide a starting point from which to determine the programme characteristics that lead to important research." (Douglas, 1996: 433). Lastly, such assessments assist prospective doctoral students in knowing which graduate schools can best meet their educational needs. Douglas (1996) and other studies have found that the most productive schools tend

to produce the most productive graduate students and graduates, so it can only make sense that prospective doctoral scholars will want to be in such an environment that will keep them engaged, hence stimulating productivity in them.

To properly assess the effectiveness of Public Administration programmes in training and motivating students to conduct scholarly research, Douglas measured the publication productivity of the graduate students and graduates of Public Administration and Public Affairs programmes. Douglas (1996) noted that many programmes that were found to have highly productive faculties in earlier studies by Legge and Devore (1987) and Morgan et al. (1981) have maintained top positions, while the remainder of the programmes tended to change positions in an unpredictable manner. In his study Douglas found a relationship to exist between programmes with productive faculties and programmes with productive graduate students and graduates. Therefore the analysis revealed that a relationship exists between faculty and student productivity, thus supporting the last reason for the significance of productivity assessments of Public Administration programmes. Inferences can thus be drawn using the findings in Douglas (1996) study to explain the productivity of the two universities (UKZN and University of Pretoria). The reason for the successful completion of doctorates to produce a high research output by scholars enrolled in these institutions could be linked to their doctoral teaching programmes. Of course a high output in research does not reveal the quality of the theses produced by the graduate students, however, it highlights a very important point that doctoral scholars will want to be in an environment that will keep them engaged, hence stimulating their productivity.

It must be noted that Douglas's (1996) findings also showed that faculties that were highly productive seem to be more effective at generating top academics than programmes with relatively unproductive faculties. His analysis led him to conclude that "[s]tudents who attend these institutions work with faculty members who are busy conducting research. Being exposed to these professors, and sometimes publishing articles with them, furnishes students with the motivation, skills, and knowledge essential to conduct scholarly research." (Douglas, 1996). This statement supports Kraemer and Perry (1989) and Brewer et al. (1999) in their call for strengthening a close working

relationship between faculty researchers and doctoral students whereby students are involved in real research projects which exposes them to research methods, encouraging them to become productive students and graduates. MPA programmes can be a good starting point which will not only encourage students to pursue their doctorates but buildup accumulative research issues.

A study examining the cause for productivity, a relationship between faculty and student productivity in the institutions with a high research output needs to be conducted in South Africa. However, some inferences can be drawn. A good example is from the University of Cape Town which came third in the output of doctorates and fifth in the overall postgraduate research output frequency in Public Administration programmes. A recent journal publication between a faculty professor Robert Cameron and his MPA student Lauren McLaverty¹¹ show cases a good example of involvement of students in real research projects to become productive students and graduates. Another example is co-authored journal article "Electronic technology and service delivery in the South African public service" which was by Professor Kuye from the University of Pretoria and Naidoo¹² who was a doctoral candidate then. This signifies that exposure to and involvement in faculty research projects will enhance the type of scholarship by creating students who are not afraid to conduct rigorous research because they feel competent in different research methodologies and knowledge of theory as well as critical engagement early on in their academic careers. MPA programmes leading up to doctoral education should develop theory competent students (McSwite, 2001; Denhardt, 2001) who are not faced with an identity crisis which then transcends the immediate concern for methodological rigor or practical import and also impacts on their understanding of their place within the field itself (Jordan, 2005).

According to Jordan "[a]s methodological balkanization becomes more strenuous, I can only see that this crisis will become more intractable and students less likely to enter (or

¹¹ Lauren McLaverty was a masters' student under Professor Robert Cameron from the University of Cape Town when she co-authored the research paper. See reference list.

¹² Published in the *Journal of Public Administration* vol. 38 no3.1 (September 2003) special issue

remain in) the field at all.” (2005: 703). Sara Jordan, Aimme Franklin and Carol Ebdon¹³ are perfect examples of students who started contributing in the field while doctorate candidates and have written several articles and response articles, critically and competently engaging with theories and big questions of the field. They therefore, show that when a programme has adequately prepared students such an environment can stimulate productivity in graduate students and graduates.

4.7 Chapter summary

The chapter sought to examine different types of PhD programmes and theses offered in Public Administration. Several things can thus be concluded about the types of Public Administration PhD programmes offered by South African universities. First, there is an observed difference in performance between institutions that offer PhD degrees on part-time basis or by research only as compared to institutions with a prerequisite structured PhD programmes. As was highlighted in Table 4, out of the 9 higher education universities offering PhD degrees, the University of Pretoria and North-West University are the only institutions with a structured doctoral programme. Hence the University of Pretoria had the highest research output in Wessels’ (2008) study (although his study did not actually indicate whether these were contributions from PhD theses). Therefore distinguishing between different types of qualifications of doctorates that were offered is important as it will show as to whether there is scientific activity in scholarly research.

Second, while it is not known what is the preferred doctorate degree (e.g. DAdmin, PhD, etc) among doctoral students Wessels (as discussed in Chapter III), found that the most popular categories for research topics were Managing Public Service Delivery (PSD) and Public Organisational Development and Management (ODM) - which are practice biased (Wessels, 2008) to the neglect of the testing of theory-oriented research topics. It can thus be argued that there is less emphasis to contribute to scientific knowledge in the field.

¹³ Sara Jordan, Aimme Franklin and Carol Ebdon are active contributors on the *Administrative Theory & Praxis* journal which focuses on scholarly critical theoretical debates. See reference list.

This implies that students in Public Administration prefer perhaps less use of rigorous scientific research methods but favour descriptive or practice-oriented research. This leads to one final point. Most social sciences departments are not teaching research methods at doctoral level (Centre for Science Development, 1997) which produces scholars who may be feeling inadequately prepared to produce quality research.

University of Cape Town

Chapter V

Conclusion

5 Chapter purpose

The journey of this study has been an integrative literature review over the state of research, especially doctoral research, in Public Administration as an academic discipline. In the beginning of Chapter One, three objectives were generated to conduct an overview of the literature on the content and quality of doctoral research. This chapter reviews the main objectives the study set out to achieve in the beginning. Therefore, hereunder is the conclusion around the main objectives of this study.

5.1 The study objectives were:

This study's overall aim was to conduct an overview of the quality of doctoral research in Public Administration. The first objective was to review literature by examining the state of Public Administration research looking at both international and South African literature. The next objective examined the literature on the state of doctoral research and lastly a critical analysis of the South African PhD programmes and doctoral theses was conducted. The results findings under all the objectives showed a negative picture about what has been written about the state of research in the discipline. Literature, both abroad and in South Africa, have showed heavy criticism about the quality of research in the field. International literature, specifically in the U.S. revealed a gloomy picture about the status of discipline's research.

Public Administration research as reviewed in the *PAR* series debates looking at published journals was heavily condemned as applied, lacking theoretically, noncumulative and lacking in empirical rigor, thus making little impact on knowledge advancement in the field. The critics argued that Public Administration is more concerned with improving practice (i.e. Houston and Delevan, 1990) while scholars such as Bendor (1994) and Streib et al. (2001) attempted to defend the state of research in the

discipline, arguing that the *PAR* series critics are trying to lock Public Administration research into a mainstream positivist strait jacket. Bendor (1994) argued that Public Administration as a field originates from practical research - it is an applied science and its research will therefore be applied in nature. But critics have argued that research still needs to expand knowledge in the discipline through testing out of theoretical propositions. The South African experience was shown to be the same as in the U.S. In South Africa, research was also criticised for its focus on practice-oriented research. The reason for this orientation was blamed, on both internationally and in South Africa, on the historical development of Public Administration as an academic discipline. Its interdisciplinary nature since it distinguished itself as an independent discipline from Political Science has been noted to show why the research crisis have not been resolved as scholars still do not know where to focus.

5.2 The main findings of the study

Does the same research crisis identified in the U.S. exist in South African Public Administration research? The main findings drawn were that the historical backgrounds of the discipline, due to its identity crisis observed over decades have a lot to do with the research crisis in the field. However, there is also a scholarly crisis as a result of field's lack of true methodological pluralism, the resurrection of dichotomies, and the persistence of denial of meaningful debate in public administration scholarship. Hence in the U.S., the state of research was found to be engaged in little theory testing and if any empirical research was conducted, it indicated little theory testing which was rather basic in nature, it was noncumulative, and applied (Perry and Kraemer, 1986).

In South Africa Robert Cameron (2008) has concluded that the state of the discipline, while it is now politically legitimate, the academic field of Public Administration has not really progressed intellectually since the early 1990s. Cameron (2008) placed the blame on the management approach evolution – which it was believed would advance the discipline - but instead it has eschewed knowledge based education in favour of practical skills. And on the state of research in South Africa, studies analysing published journal

articles concluded that the quality and nature of research in the discipline is poor, because they found that most of the research is rather descriptive, practice-oriented and noncumulative and lacks knowledge and theory development (Cameron and McLaverty, 2008).

This research also looked at the nature and quality of doctoral dissertation/thesis and their role in the advancement of knowledge in Public Administration. This was the second objective of this study. The findings were also not positive and much blame was placed on the doctoral programmes of which were seen as inadequately preparing students to conduct rigorous research. McCurdy and Cleary first concluded that very few doctoral projects meet the criteria that conventionally define careful, systematic study in the social sciences. As a result McCurdy and Cleary (1984) challenged the standards that guide Public Administration research and asked that they should be questioned. Also studies replicating McCurdy and Cleary (1984) yielded similar findings about the quality of doctoral dissertations as descriptive, not accumulative, and atheoretical. In South Africa, so far, Wessels' (2008) study is the only that has focused at postgraduate research in Public Administration. While the study's aim was not to investigate the quality of doctoral theses however his findings do shed some light in that there are few doctoral studies engaging in the testing or improvement of theory in the discipline but most aim to address issues to improve practice.

The last chapter of the study critically examined the types of PhD programmes and theses in Public Administration offered at South African universities. The drawn conclusions were that South African universities offered four types of theses (DPA, DAdmin, DPhil and PhD) over 11 institutions (10 traditional universities and 1 comprehensive university). Only three institutions offered a doctoral programme (University of Pretoria, UKZN, and University of the North West). Only the University of Pretoria and the University of the North-West offered a PhD programme with a built in coursework component. The University of Pretoria also had the highest output on doctoral research but close analysis revealed that the topics covered by students had a practice bias. Wessels (2008) concluded that there seems to be a considerable overlap between the South African government's knowledge needs and the research preferences of postgraduate

researchers in Public Administration. On the other hand, it may create another type of concern, namely that researchers in Public Administration may not be busy with activities of science and that they may not be contributing to scientific knowledge. Perhaps the problem lie in the location of Public Administration departments in faculties as was argued in Chapter Four.

The finding in the previous chapter revealed that most departments in South Africa are located in the Faculty of Economic and Management Studies and have divorced themselves from being called Departments of Public Administration. Many have embraced the management approach which was linked to the preferred practice-oriented research when scholars pursue the doctorates. The data collected also showed that Public Administration departments are significantly small in size when looking at number of their academic staff as 7 departments had a total of 10 and below staff members. Further analysis revealed that South African Public Administration is lagging behind while internationally there have been moves towards the use of doctoral programmes - which have been proven to produce scholars who produce quality research. Hence there is a great need for Public Administration departments to employ doctoral programmes which help doctoral students to be competent in employing research methods and improve the quality of doctoral research. This in turn will add and contribute towards the knowledge development of the discipline.

5.3 Major implications drawn in this study

A number of implications can be drawn about the quality of doctoral thesis in South African Public Administration. The first implication is that the conclusion reached by Mouton (2007), presenting at the Postgraduate Research Indaba, around the four factors identified for the poor quality of doctoral dissertations in the South African higher education seem valid. First, institutions seem either to be suffering from over-burdened and inexperienced supervisors - otherwise how can the poor quality of research identified and poor research output be explained? Second, there is insufficient research preparation for doctoral students as it was seen that only three institutions (University of Pretoria, the

University of KwaZulu-Natal and the University of North-West) had doctoral programmes in Public Administration (most offered doctoral degrees by research only, on a part time or fulltime basis). The third factor is the insufficient national and institutional financial support for students as the number of years it takes for doctoral students to complete their studies is 4 to 6 years while NRF funding is limited to only 3 years. Lastly, there is clearly insufficient institutional attention devoted to postgraduate support as doctoral students are left on their own with an assumption that they are capable to conduct quality research.

The second implication is that, while research on the quality of doctoral theses in South Africa still needs to be undertaken, from the studies conducted on published journals it is safe to conclude that doctoral research is in trouble. However, more research with specific focus on the nature and quality of doctoral research and the quality of doctoral programmes in the South African Public Administration has to be undertaken. Indeed the field is plagued with a crisis as there is no agreed upon methods and research design for analysing and classifying data and generally accepted research criteria to apply to the analysis of topics of fundamental interest in the field. Scholars in the discipline are divided between practice and academic research. Overall, literature has strongly suggested that Public Administration is far from achieving its research priorities, or even agreeing on what they are: are the needs to improve practice or the study of the field?

5.4 Suggestions and areas for future research

- Studies on the quality of doctoral theses in South Africa need to be conducted. Such studies will unveil the future of doctoral research in knowledge development as well as their role in developing Public Administration within the social sciences disciplines.
- Agreement on the research methodology employed in the discipline as means to develop or contribute towards knowledge development is needed.

- The significance of doctoral programmes in the South African universities offering Public Administration needs to be conducted. It could be done by conducting a comparative study between South African institutions that offer doctoral programmes and those that offer their doctoral degrees by thesis only. This will help to determine the success rate of scholars between these institutions.
- A study examining the cause for productivity, looking at a relationship between faculty and student productivity in the institutions with a high research output needs to be conducted in South Africa. Also an investigation into staff-student ratio and whether it affects the quality of research and the type of scholars (productive) the institution produces will need to be conducted.
- What type of thesis is the most favoured in the discipline in terms of students' enrolments in pursuit of their doctorates? Since a PhD degree is offered in more than half of the institutions, does this translate to it being the most favoured qualification in the field in terms of student enrolment?

5.5 Final remarks

The findings in this study have indicated that the South African Public Administration as an academic discipline shows scholarly activity to develop a solid research base. The quality of research in the discipline is in crisis, reflecting the state of the field's historical identity problems and the failure to agree on ways to improve the quality of its research. Literature has shown that part of the failure in the field's research is related to the stage of an academic career when students in the discipline are first trained in the research process in a systematic way, through a doctoral programme. Doctoral programmes need to be developed and recognised by all faculties in institutions offering Public Administration in South Africa. This study has shown that most institutions in South African do not have doctoral programmes, thus failing to adequately train doctoral students develop research standards to be able to make significant contributions to the field of study. Clearly most South African faculties only see a doctorate as a research degree and offer it by research only for scholars to undertake it on their own, while upon

searching various departmental websites, it was evident that most prefer to orient their doctorates towards professional practice. This was further validated by the preferred names used by departments to distinguish themselves and in their faculty locations within institutions.

Doctoral programmes may improve the poor state of doctoral research in the discipline. However, very few institutions offer doctoral programmes in South Africa. The calls made by Mabin (2004), Cloete (2000) and Cameron (2005, 2008) about the poor research quality and the research crisis facing the South African Public Administration need to be adhered. And doctoral research plays a significant role in building and in the expansion of knowledge in the discipline. Therefore, doctoral programmes must be a prerequisite putting emphasis on research methodology and design before students can be allowed to undertake their thesis, if inquiry in Public Administration is to progress.

Reference list:

- Adams, Guy. B and White, Jay. D. 1994. Dissertation Research in Public Administration and Cognate Fields: An Assessment of Methods and Quality. *Public Administration Review*, 54(6), 565-576.
- Adams, Guy B., 1992. Enthralled With Modernity: The Historical Context of Knowledge and Theory Development in Public Administration. *Public Administration Review*, 52, 363-374.
- Auriacombe, C. 2008. Guest Editorial. *Administratio Publica*, 15(2), ii-x.
- Bailey, M. T. 1992. Do Physicists Use Case Studies? Thoughts on Public Administration Research. *Public Administration Review*, 52(1), 47-54.
- Bendor, J. 1994. The Fields of Bureaucracy and Public Administration: Basic and Applied Research. *Journal of Public Administration Research and Theory: J-PART*, 4(1), The Berkeley Symposium on Public Management, 27-39.
- Box, R. C., 1992. An Examination of the Debate over Research in Public Administration. *Public Administration Review*, 52, 62-69.
- Breaux, D. A., Clynych, E. J., & Morris, J. C. 2003. The core curriculum content of NASPAA-accredited programs: Fundamentally alike or different? *Journal of Public Affairs Education*, 9, 261-273.
- Brewer, G. A., Douglas, J. W., Facer II, R. L. & O'Toole Jr, L. J. . 1999. Determinants of Graduate Research Productivity in Doctoral Programs of Public Administration. *Public Administration Review*, 59(5), 373-382.
- Cameron, R and McLaverty, L. 2008. Public Administration Research in South Africa: An Assessment of Journal Publications: 1994-2006. *Administratio Publica*, 15(2), 69-96
- Cameron, R. 2008. Public Administration in South Africa: The State of the Academic Field. *Administratio Publica*, 15(2), 43-68.
- Cameron, R and McLaverty, L. 2007. *Public Administration Research in South Africa: An Assessment of Journal Publications: 1994-2006*. Paper presented at ASSADPAM Annual Conference, Polytechnic of Namibia, Windhoek, Namibia, 29 May -1 June.
- Cameron, R. 2005. Public Administration in South Africa: The State of the Academic Field. Paper Presented at International Association of Schools and Institutes of Administration, Como, 11-15 July.

- Carr, H.H., Cheney, P.H. and Mann, R.I. (1986) cited in Chang, P. L and Hsieh, P. N. 1997. A qualitative review of doctoral dissertations on management in Taiwan. *Higher Education*, 33, 115-136.
- Centre for Science Development. 1997. *Report on Social Science Research Methodology Teaching at South African Tertiary Institutions*. Compiled by Ann Tothill and Charles Crothers on behalf of the CSD's Research Methodology Audit Team Human Sciences Research Council, 7-69.
- Chang, P. L and Hsieh, P. N. 1997. A qualitative review of doctoral dissertations on management in Taiwan. *Higher Education*, 33, 115-136.
- Cleary, Robert E. 2000. The Public Administration Doctoral Dissertation Reexamined: An Evaluation of the Dissertations of 1998. *Public Administration Review*, 60(5), pp. 446-455.
- Cleary, Robert E., 1992. Revisiting the Doctoral Dissertation in Public Administration: An Examination of the Dissertations of 1990. *Public Administration Review*, 52, 55-61.
- Cloete, F. 2000. The Discipline of Public Administration & Management at South Universities, in Theron, F. & Schwella, E. (eds). *The State of Public and Development Management in South Africa. The Mount Grace II Papers*. University of Stellenbosch: Stellenbosch, 10-33.
- Cox, R. W., Buck, S.J. & Morgan, B.N. 1994. *Public Administration in Theory and Practice*. Prentice-Hall: New Jersey
- Cunningham, R and Weschler, L. 2002. Theory and the Public Administration Student/Practitioner. *Public Administration Review*, 62(1), 104-111.
- David, M and Sutton, C. D. 2004. *Social Research: the basics*. London: Sage Publications, p 7
- Denhardt, R. B. 2001. The Big Questions of Public Administration Education. *Public Administration Review*, 61, 526-534.
- Douglas, J. W. 1996. Faculty, Graduate Student, and Graduate Productivity in Public Administration and Public Affairs Programs, 1986-1993. *Public Administration Review*, 56(5), 433-440.
- Felbinger C. L., Holzer, M., & White, J. D. 1999. The Doctorate in Public Administration: Some Unresolved Questions and Recommendations. *Public Administration Review*, 59(5), pp. 459-464.
- Fitzgerald, McLennan & Munslow (1997) cited in Cameron, R. 2008. *Public Administration in South Africa: The State of the Academic Field*. Paper Presented at International Association of Schools and Institutes of Administration, Como, 11-15 July.

- Franklin A, L. & Ebdon, C. 2005. Practical Experience: Building Bridges Between Science and Practice. *Administrative Theory & Praxis*, 27(4), 628–649.
- Hanekom, S. X. 1988. Historic Events in the Development of Public Administration 1887-1987, in Gildenhuys, J. S. H. (ed), *South African Public Administration: past, present and future*. South Africa: Owen Burgess Publishers, pp 67-77.
- Henry, N. 1975. Paradigms of Public Administration. *Public Administration Review*, 35(4), 378-386
- Hood, C. 2001. *The Art of the State: Culture, Rhetoric, and Public Management*. Oxford: Clarendon Press.
- Houston, D.J. & Delevan, S.M. 1990. Public Administration Research: An Assessment of Journal Publications. *Public Administration Review*, 50(6), 674-681.
- Hubbell, L. 1992. A lack of Relevance; A Lack of Heterodoxy: Political Correctness in South African Public Administration. *Administratio Publica*, 4(1), 1-17.
- Isaac, P. D., Quinlan, S. V., & Walker, M. M, (1992) cited in Chang, P. L and Hsieh, P. N. 1997. A qualitative review of doctoral dissertations on management in Taiwan. *Higher Education*, 33, 115–136.
- Jordan, S. R. 2005. Methodological Balkanization, Language Games and the Persistence of the Identity Crisis in Public Administration: A Student's Perspective. *Administrative Theory & Praxis*, 27(4), 689-706.
- Kamler, B. 2008. Rethinking doctoral publication practices: writing from and beyond the thesis. *Studies in Higher Education*, 33(3), 283–294.
- Kettl, D. 1993. "Public Administration: The State of the Field", in A. Finifter, (ed). *Political Science: The State of the Discipline*. Washing D.C.: APSA.
- Kraemer, K.L. & Perry, J.L. 1989. Institutional Requirements for Academic Research in Public Administration. *Public Administration Review*, 49(1), 9-16.
- Mabin, A. 2004. The Role of Research and Training in the Transformation of the Public Service. *Administratio Publica*, 12(2), 50-69.
- Marais, D. 1994. Old and New Public Administration: The intellectual crisis in South African public administration, in Bayat, M. S. & Meyer, I. H. (eds), *Public administration. Concepts, theory and practice*. Halfway: Southern, 102-121.
- Marais, D. 1988. Public Administration: Paradigmatic status. in Gildenhuys, J. S. H. (ed), *South African public administration: Past, present and future*. Pinetown: Owen Burgess Publishers, 168-192.
- Martin, R. C. 1952. Political Science and Public Administration: A Note on the State of the Union. *The American Political Science Review*, 46(3), 660-676.

- Maserumule, M. H. 2005. Designating Technikons Universities of Technology in South Africa: Implications for Public Management Education. *AJPAM*, 16(1), 14-27.
- McCurdy, H. E. & Cleary, R. E. 1984. Why Can't We Resolve the Research Issue in Public Administration? *Public Administration Review*, 44(1), 49-55.
- McSwite, O. C. 2001. Theory Competency for MPA-Educated Practitioners. *Public Administration Review*, 61(1), 111-115.
- Millar, G. A. 2005. A Profile and Analysis of Major Departments of Slavic Languages and Literatures. *The Slavic and East European Journal*, 20(1), 60-69.
- Mosher, F. C. 1956. Research in Public Administration: Some Notes and Suggestions. *Public Administration Review*, 16, 169-178.
- Mouton, J. 2007. Postgraduate studies in South Africa today: myths, misconceptions and challenges. Keynote address delivered at the International Conference *Postgraduate supervision: state of the art and the artists*, 23-26 April 2007. Stellenbosch, South Africa.
- Mouton, J. 2001. *How to succeed in your master's and doctoral studies*. Pretoria: Van Schaik.
- Nakamura, A. 2007. *Experiences in Teaching Public Administration as an Applied Science: A Japanese Perspective*. Paper Prepared for Presentation to the Meeting of Heads of Schools and Institutes of Public Administration and Management Development on "Standards of Excellence in Public Administration Education and Training Development" 25 June. Vienna, Austria.
- Neuman, W. L. 1994. *Social Research Methods: qualitative and quantitative approaches*, 2nd edition. Boston: Allyn and Bacon, 80-81.
- Ostrom, V. 1974. *The Intellectual Crisis in American Public Administration*. Tuscaloosa: University of Alabama Press.
- Pauw, J. C. 1999. The Concept of Public Administration, in Wessels, J. S & Pauw, J. C. (eds), *Reflective Public Administration: views from the South*. Cape Town: Oxford University Press, 7-10.
- Perry, J.L. & Kraemer, K.L. 1986. "Research Methodology in the Public Administration Review, 1975-1984." *Public Administration Review*, 46(3), 215-226.
- Pitts, D. W. 2007. *How Effective is Public Management Research? An Analysis of Scope and Methodology*. Paper prepared for presentation at the 9th Public Management Research Conference, Tucson, Arizona, October 25-27.
- Raadschelders, J. C. N. 1999. A Coherent Framework for the Study of Public Administration. *Journal of Public Administration Research and Theory: J-PART*, 9(2), 281-303.

- Rhodes, R. A. W. 1996. From Institutions to Dogma: Tradition, Eclecticism, and Ideology in the Study of British Public Administration. *Public Administration Review*, 56(6), 507-516.
- Roeder, P. W. & Whitaker, G. 1993. Education for the public service: Policy analysis and administration in the MPA core curriculum. *Administration & Society*, 24, 512-540.
- Rowland, R.W. 1986. "The State of Thought of Public Administration in South Africa." In Hanekom, S.X., Rowland, R.W. & Bain, E.G. (eds). *Key Aspects of Public Administration. Revised Edition*. Johannesburg: MacMillan.
- Schwella, E. 1999. "The Paradigmatic Debate in South African Public Administration: A Continuing Struggle". Chapter Thirteen. In Wessels, J.S. & Pauw, J.C. (eds). *Reflective Views of Public Administration: Views from the South*. Cape Town: Oxford University Press.
- Schwella, E. 1990. The Theoretical Debate in South African Public Administration. *Administration Publica*. 2(2), 101-115.
- Shangraw, Jr, R. F., Crow, M. M.; & Overman E. S. 1989. Public Administration as a Design Science. *Public Administration Review*, 49(2), Special Issue: Minnowbrook II. Changing Epochs of Public Administration, 153-160.
- Shafritz, J.M., Hyde, A.C., Parkes, S.J. 2004. *Classics of Public Administration*. (5th Ed). United States of America: Wadsworth.
- Simon, H. A. 1947. A Comment on "The Science of Public Administration". *Public Administration Review*, 7(3), 200-203.
- Stallings, R.A. & Ferris, J.M. 1988. Public Administration Research: Work in PAR, 1940-1984. *Public Administration Review*. 48(1), 580-587.
- Stallings, R. A. 1986. Doctoral Programs in Public Administration: An Outsider's Perspective. *Public Administration Review*, 46(3), 235-240.
- Stillman II, R. J. 1997. American vs. European Public Administration: Does Public Administration Make the Modern State, or Does the State Make Public Administration? *Public Administration Review*, 57(4), 332-338.
- Stone, A. B and Stone, D. C. 1975. Early Development of Education on Public Administration, in Mosher, F. C (Ed). *American Public Administration: Past, Present, Future*. Alabama: University of Alabama Press, 25-36.
- Streib G., Slotkin B. J, & Rivera M. 2001. Public Administration Research from a Practitioner Perspective. *Public Administration Review*, 61(5), 515-525.
- Szanton, D. L., and Manyika, S. 2002. *PhD Programs in African Universities: Current Status and Future Prospects*. Berkeley, CA: Center for African Studies. Retrieved

from http://ias.berkeley.edu/africa/Research/AfricanPhDCover_Report_Ref.pdf
(20 November, 2008).

- Thornhill, C. 2008. Research in Public Administration: Some South African Developments. *Administratio Publica*, 15(2), 1-18.
- Thornhill, C. 2006. The Domain of Public Administration. *Journal of Public Administration*, 40(4.1), 793-806.
- Ventriss, C. 2000. New Public Management: AN Examination of its Influence on Contemporary Public Affairs and its Impact on Shaping the Intellectual Agenda of the Field. *Administrative Theory & Praxis*, 22(3), 500 – 518.
- Ventriss, C. 1991. Contemporary Issues in American Public Administration Education: The Search for an Educational Focus. *Public Administration Review*, 51(1), pp. 4-14.
- Waldo, D (1955), cited in Hanekom, S. X. 1988. Historic Events in the Development of Public Administration 1887-1987, in Gildenhuys, J. S. H. (ed), *South African Public Administration: past, present and future*. South Africa: Owen Burgess Publishers, pp 67-77.
- Waldo, D. (1948) cited in Shafritz, J.M., Hyde, A.C., Parkes, S.J. 2004. *Classics of Public Administration*. (5th Ed). United States of America: Wadsworth
- Wessels, J. S. 2008. South African Trends in Master's and Doctoral Research in Public Administration. *Administratio Publica*, 15(2), 97-120.
- Wessels, J. S. 2004. Public Administration research ... a South African masquerade. *Journal of Public Administration*, 39(1), 168-184.
- Wessels, J. S. 1999. Research in Public Administration, in Wessels, J. S & Pauw, J. C. (eds), *Reflective Public Administration: views from the South*. Cape Town: Oxford University Press, 361-381.
- White, J.D. 1999. *Taking Language Seriously: The Narrative Foundations of Public Administration Research*. Washington DC: Georgetown University Press.
- White, J. D. 1986a. "On the Growth of Knowledge in Public Administration." *Public Administration Review*, 46, 15-24.
- White, J. D. 1986b. Dissertations and publications in Public Administration. *Public Administration Review*, 46(3), 227-234.
- White, J., Adams, G. & Forrester, G. 1996. Knowledge and Development in Public Administration: The Role of Doctoral Education and Research. *Public Administration Review*, 56(5), 441-452.

Wilson, W. 1887. The Study of Administration, in Shafritz, J.M., Hyde, A.C., Parkes, S.J. 2004. *Classics of Public Administration*. (5th Ed). United States of America: Wadsworth.

Internet sources

Durban University of Technology research report 2005. Retrieved:
<http://research.dut.ac.za/dut/files/DUT%20Research%20Report%20final.pdf> (24 Jan 2009)

Link to Jstor database: <http://www.jstor.org>

Link to South African Universities: <http://www.pub.ac.za/links/edu.html>

Prof Petrus Brynard, P. 2001. University of Pretoria PhD co-ordinator. School of Public Management and Administration. Retrieved:
<http://www.up.ac.za/academic/soba/pers-pbrynardz.htm> (11 December 2008)

University of KwaZulu-Natal Faculty of Management Studies: in the college of law and Management Studies. Handdook for 2007. retrieved:
<http://www.ukzn.ac.za/handbooks/2007/Fac90Handbook2007.PDF> (24 Jan 2009)

Appendix 1: A list of Universities in South Africa.

Link: <http://www.pub.ac.za/links/edu.html>

Traditional universities

- University of Cape Town, (Cape Town)
- University of Fort Hare, (Alice), (East London)
- University of the Free State, (Bloemfontein)
- University of KwaZulu-Natal, (Durban, Pietermaritzburg, Pinetown, Westville)
- University of Limpopo, (Polokwane, Ga-Rankuwa)
- North-West University, (Mafikeng, Mankwe, Potchefstroom, Vanderbijlpark)
- University of Pretoria, (Pretoria)
- Rhodes University, (Grahamstown)
- University of Stellenbosch, (Stellenbosch)
- University of the Western Cape, (Cape Town)
- University of the Witwatersrand, (Johannesburg)

Comprehensive universities

- University of Johannesburg, (Johannesburg)
- Nelson Mandela Metropolitan University, (Port Elizabeth)
- University of South Africa, (Pretoria - Distance Education)
- University of Venda, (Thohoyandou)
- Walter Sisulu University for Technology and Science, (Buffalo City, Butterworth, Mthatha, Queenstown)
- University of Zululand, (Empangeni)

Universities of technology

- Cape Peninsula University of Technology, (Bellville, Cape Town)
- Central University of Technology, (Bloemfontein, Welkom)
- Durban University of Technology, (Durban, Pietermaritzburg)
- Mangosuthu Technikon, (Durban)
- Tshwane University of Technology (Pretoria)
- Vaal University of Technology, (Vanderbijlpark)

Former Universities and Technikons

- Bond South Africa (Sandton)
- Border Technikon, now part of Walter Sisulu University for Technology and Science
- University of the Cape of Good Hope, renamed University of South Africa in 1916
- University of Durban-Westville (Durban), now part of University of KwaZulu-Natal

- Eastern Cape Technikon, now part of Walter Sisulu University for Technology and Science
- Medical University of South Africa (Ga-Rankuwa), now part of University of Limpopo
- University of the North (near Polokwane), now part of University of Limpopo
- University of Natal (Pietermaritzburg, Durban), now part of University of KwaZulu-Natal
- University of North-West (Mafikeng) (formerly the University of Bophuthatswana), now part of North-West University.
- University of Port Elizabeth, (Port Elizabeth), now part of Nelson Mandela Metropolitan University.
- Potchefstroom University for Christian Higher Education (Potchefstroom), now part of North-West University.
- Rand Afrikaans University (Johannesburg), now part of University of Johannesburg
- Technikon SA, now merged with Unisa.
- Transvaal University College predecessor of the University of Pretoria and the University of the Witwatersrand
- University of Transkei, now part of Walter Sisulu University for Technology and Science
- Vista University (multi-city campus university), now merged with other universities.
- Technikon Witwatersrand, now part of the University of Johannesburg

Appendix 2 Center for Science Development classifications of South African universities prior 2001

Historically Black Universities (HBUs): University of the North; University of the North-West; University of Venda; University of Fort Hare; University of Zululand; University of Durban-Westville; University of Transkei; University of the Western Cape; Vista University.

Historically White Universities (HWUs): University of Pretoria; University of South Africa; University of the Witwatersrand; Rand Afrikaans University; Potchefstroom University for Christian Higher Education; University of the Orange Free State; University of Natal; Rhodes University; University of Cape Town; University of Stellenbosch.

Historically Black Technikons (HBTs): Technikon Northern Gauteng;¹⁰ Technikon North-West; ML Sultan Technikon; Mangosuthu Technikon; Peninsula Technikon; Eastern Cape Technikon; Border Technikon.

Historically White Technikons (HWTs): Technikon Pretoria; Natal Technikon; Port Elizabeth Technikon; Cape Technikon; Free State Technikon; Technikon South Africa; Vaal Triangle Technikon.

DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY (PhD)

PROGRAMME IN PUBLIC AFFAIR

PHILOSOPHY

The PhD will prepare students for the challenges of the current and new millennium. The public sector and related fields are confronted with challenges that compel students of today to acquire advanced knowledge, skills and research techniques relevant to a rapidly changing and developing public sector. Students who complete this PhD programme will be able to make a significant contribution in domestic and international affairs. The latter is critical for South Africa to be relevant in the new millennium, because global competitiveness is now based on the quality of human resources and innovation which nations can contribute to the world. We seek to produce graduates who will have a better understanding of the public problems that confront our country and the world.

In this programme, students will develop excellent conceptual and analytical skills applying qualitative and quantitative approaches. These techniques will be combined with the use of modern technology to promote advanced analysis and interpretations of data as well as the development of relevant policy scenarios.

The PhD will be a course work programme comprising of required (core) courses and electives. The combination of the two will help students to identify and select a field of concentration thus leading to a topic(s) of specialisation for in-depth study. A student will develop a specialisation in a field with the option of a related concentration in a second field. For example, a major field of specialisation in public sector economics with a secondary concentration in fiscal intergovernmental relations.

RESEARCH FOCUSED PhD

The PhD programme places an emphasis on epistemology thus requiring that students must pursue research. The School of Public Management and Administration (SPMA) places an emphasis on innovative research on themes, topics, programmes and trends in public affairs in a democratic and changing South Africa and a rapidly advancing world arrangement.

The research programmes are linked to effective teaching and the contextualisation of theoretical frameworks provided in the programmes.

Students are required to engage in research, analysis and application. They are also encouraged to participate in professional conferences, seminars and colloquiums.

TEACHING METHODS

Beyond in-class lectures, the following other forms of communication will be used:

- Tele-teaching
- Tele-conferencing

STRUCTURE OF THE PhD

PART 1: COURSE WORK

Compulsory courses (900 level)

(All of the following courses:)

- Co-operative Governance and Intergovernmental Relations
- Public Sector Economics/Micro and Macro Economics
- Theories and Practices of Public Administration and Management
- Public Human Resources and Management
- Policy Analysis (*advanced level*)
- Financial Management and the Public Sector
- Research Methods and Quantitative Analysis/Econometrics

PART 2. ELECTIVES

Electives that lead to areas of specialisation

(A student should select **one** of the following areas of specialisation:)

POLICY ANALYSIS SPECIALISATION

(Any **three** of the following:)

- Income Distribution and Maintenance Policy
- Programme and Project Analysis
- Comparative Policy Analysis
- Public Finance
- Policy Analysis and Development
- Non-profit and Private Sector Relations

PUBLIC SECTOR ECONOMICS SPECIALISATION

(Any **three** of the following:)

- Public Finance
- Intergovernmental Fiscal Analysis
- Programme and Project Analysis
- Regional Economic Development

- Local Government Finance
- Environmental Economics

INTERNATIONAL MANAGEMENT SPECIALISATION

(Any **three** of the following:)

- Comparative Policy Analysis
- International Political Economy
- International Management
- Comparative Public Administration and Management
- International Finance
- International Trade

Students opting for this specialisation are highly encouraged to consider studying a foreign language, e.g. French, German, Mandarin Chinese, Arabic, etc.

INTERGOVERNMENTAL RELATIONS SPECIALISATION

(Any **three** of the following:)

- Provincial, Metropolitan and Local Government Administration
- Intergovernmental Fiscal Analysis
- Policy Analysis and Development
- Local Government Finance
- Non-profit and Private Sector Relations

LOCAL GOVERNMENT MANAGEMENT AND ADMINISTRATION SPECIALISATION

(Any **three** of the following:)

- Municipal Financial Resource Management
- Organised Local Government (*Special Readings**)
- Compatability between Needs and Resources (*Special Readings**)
- Performance Monitoring and Accountability
- Non-profit and Private Sector Relations

PUBLIC MANAGEMENT AND ADMINISTRATION SPECIALISATION

(Any **three** of the following:)

- History of Management and Policy
- Management of Development
- Project Management
- Administrative Theories

- Administrative Law
- Comparative Public Administration and Management

TELECOMMUNICATION AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY IN MANAGEMENT

(Any three of the following:)

- Applied Computer Technology in Management
- Telecommunications and Information Management
- Freedom of Information (*Special Readings**)
- Role of the Media in Decision-making (*Special Readings**)
- Political Communication

Each field of specialisation will comprise of three courses. Other areas may be developed, but must be approved by the PhD Committee.

(**Special Readings*: These are special topics which are peculiar to the developing South African situation. Other Special Readings can be developed with the approval of the PhD Committee.)

COMPREHENSIVE EXAMINATION

- A student shall sit for a comprehensive examination. The examination will comprise of:
 1. subject matter covered in the core;
 2. courses making up the area of specialisation.

Successful completion of the comprehensive examination will allow the candidate to proceed to Part 3 of the degree.

- The qualifying examination can be in the form of "practical" assignments, i.e. assignments in which the student will have to develop, say, a policy proposal for a particular matter, which will be evaluated by an internal evaluating committee. A student can be requested to defend his/her practical assignment.

PART 3: THESIS

- After passing the practical examination as in part 2, a student should submit a proposal for a research project for the thesis, which shall be defended before an evaluating committee to which members of other tertiary institutions can be

invited. The committee will comprise of three and no more than four academic staff members. All members must hold doctoral degrees and the majority must be professors. The committee will be chaired by a specialist from the School.

- After approval of the proposal a student can continue with the thesis.
- The completed thesis will be evaluated by internal and external examiners and the student will be required to defend the thesis before an evaluating committee consisting of internal and external members.

PhD COMMITTEE

A PhD committee will be constituted to oversee the development of a field of specialisation by a student. The committee will comprise of three and no more than four academic staff members. All members must hold doctoral degrees and the majority must be professors.

NOTES:

- A student who passed any of the compulsory courses for a masters degree, with a similar name as that of the PhD, will not be allowed to repeat the particular compulsory course for the PhD, but should enrol for a PhD 900 level course.
- A student who passed one or more of the elective courses for a masters degree, will be required to select elective courses which were not offered previously.
- Should a student successfully complete Part 1 and 2 of the PhD, but is not successful in **three** attempts to provide an acceptable research proposal within a specified period of time, the candidate may be recommended for a terminal masters degree. The same consideration may be granted to a candidate who does not complete the PhD thesis within a specified period of time.
- Certified proof of courses passed for other masters degrees, should be provided.