

**Public Administration Research in South Africa: An Assessment of
Journal Articles in *Journal of Public Administration & Administration
Publica* from 1994-2006**

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**A minor dissertation submitted in fulfillment of the requirements for the award of the degree
of Master of Social Science in Public Affairs and Administration**

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Department of Political Studies
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DECLARATION:

This work has not been previously submitted in whole, or in part, for the award of any degree. It is my own work. Each significant contribution, to and quotation in, this dissertation from the work(s) of other people has been attributed, and has been cited and referenced.

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Together with, Professor Robert Cameron, we put together the database of the journal article publications from the two journals, *Journal of Public Administration* and *Administratio Publica*. Thus the database was used collectively but for different purposes, namely this master's mini-dissertation and independent research carried out by Professor Cameron. Thus this dissertation is simply one aspect of a larger research initiative.

Chapters two and three of this dissertation have been used in a joint conference paper presented in Namibia at the Association of Southern African Schools and Departments of Public Administration and Management (ASSADPAM) annual conference. These chapters formed much of the conceptual analysis of this presentation. Since this conference these two chapters have been updated. Interpretation of the research results for this presentation was largely done by Professor Cameron however. While there might be some overlap, chapters four and five of this dissertation are my own interpretation and understandings of the research findings.

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Abstract:

This dissertation is a study on Public Administration research in South Africa. It explores the current nature of Public Administration research in the country by analysing and categorising journal articles extending over a thirteen year time period from 1994-2006. The hypothesis guiding this dissertation is that South African Public Administration research focuses too heavily on practitioner-orientated research (applied research) rather than enhancing basic, theory-generating research. The methodology used is a content analysis of two prominent South African Public Administration journals: *Journal of Public Administration (JOPA)* and *Administratio Publica (AP)*. A total of 383 articles (278 from *JOPA* and 105 from *AP*) were classified according to a set of descriptive and analytical variables to measure research characteristics prevalent within the field. Findings from this study not only confirm the hypothesis but also conclude that research deficiencies identified in the British and United States contexts exist within South African Public Administration research. This implies that there has been little evidence of developing a cumulative knowledge base within the discipline and research methodologies are generally of a poor quality making little effort to contribute to a systematic, scholarly base of Public Administration knowledge. Therefore basic, scholarly theory development in the field is weak.

Chapter One:

Introduction – Setting the Scene for the Study of Public Administration Research in South Africa

1.1. An Introductory Overview:

The practice of Public Administration is able to trace its origins back to some of the earliest ancient civilizations. (Cox, Buck & Morgan, 1994; Frederickson & Smith, 2003; Shafritz, Hyde & Parkes, 2004). In this regard the discipline is associated with a long standing tradition of bureaucratic involvement in some of the most fundamental aspects of society. As a formal academic field of study however, Public Administration is comparatively new. Frederickson & Smith (2003: 2) note: “As a separate self-conscious or self-aware academic intellectual thing – a body of knowledge, a field of professional practice, an academic subject, a form of politics, a social construction of reality; Public Administration is young.” This research dissertation is concerned with Public Administration as an intellectual academic field; more specifically, it is concerned with the systematic patterns of inquiry, or research, that contributes to developing a scholarly body of Public Administration knowledge.

Unlike most other social science disciplines, Public Administration is both an academic, theoretically based field but also a professional practiced career path choice. From its beginnings, there has been a continuing debate concerning the nature of Public Administration: should it be a social science along with psychology and sociology, or should it be considered an administrative science along with business administration? (McNabb, 2002: 15). As an academic field of study, Public Administration is obligated to advance theoretical and paradigmatic understanding of government institutions and processes. (Wright, Manigault & Black, 2004: 747); as well as strive to maintain legitimacy with the social science disciplines by building and applying appropriate theory. These considerations are fundamental since they influence the scope and direction of the research within the field. (McNabb, 2002: 15).

It is through research that this understanding of public institutions can be advanced; new knowledge can be generated; legitimacy restored; and, theory can be developed within the academic realm.¹ In this regard, scholarly research acts not only as an important, but as an imperative vehicle for establishing the status of Public Administration. Furthermore, being a practitioner-orientated field, research is allocated a special role: it serves on the one hand as a guide for much needed theory development and on the other, it must also be able to inform the practices of, and decisions made by policy-makers and public managers. (Wright et al, 2004: 747). This interface has contributed to a long-standing tension with regards to the nature of the discipline.

The way in which research produces and improves upon Public Administration knowledge is by asking questions that relate to the core concerns within the field and consequently providing answers to these problems. Scholarly research tests existing theories in order to see if they are strengthened or weakened. The research questions important to Public Administration are complex and often involve phenomena that are not easily identified, isolated, manipulated, or even directly observed. (Wright et al, 2004; Denhardt, 2001; White & Adams, 1994). Consequently, research endeavors intending to generate new knowledge have become not only a difficult, but a much debated task.

Given the complexity of Public Administration research questions – research answers have also become imbued with extensive debate. To provide good answers scholars must not only determine what should be the focus of research but also what data and methodology would be most helpful and legitimate, in answering the field's questions. (Wright et al, 2004: 748). Studying Public Administration research therefore is not only concerned with the quality of research produced, but it is also about the methodologies employed by researchers to provide answers to their research questions. The methods of research must be carefully designed to complement the research question and ensure the validity and reliability of the findings. Both McCurdy & Cleary (1984) and Wright et al (2004) make valid arguments in this regard. Their work will be discussed in greater detail in the following chapters. In agreement with Perry and Kraemer (1986: 353), the ultimate test

¹ Knowledge can also be generated and advanced primarily through education. According to certain schools of thought knowledge can also be advanced through the practice of public administration – read for example Franklin & Ebdon (2005).

of research methodology is whether it contributes to the development of knowledge within the field. In this regard, Public Administration research, research methodology and theory development are inextricably linked.

To successfully study Public Administration research, one cannot deny studying the different debates of surrounding methodology. For decades discussions about methodological rigour have been expressed within the academic arena, considering which approaches are more legitimate or acceptable than others. These works include authors such as McCurdy & Cleary (1984); Perry & Kraemer (1986; 1994); Houston & Delevan (1990; 1994); Stallings & Ferris (1988;1994); White & Adams (1994); Lan & Anders, 2000; and, Wright et al, 2004. This persistent problem concerning the approaches and methods used in Public Administration stems from the argument over the dual nature of the discipline. (McNabb, 2002: 15). The traditional quantitative social science approach and the “softer” qualitative paradigm define the parameters of the Public Administration methodology debate.

1.2. Why This Area of Study?

The Public Administration research literature reveals that there is an extensive amount of work on the topic. A thorough overview of the literature on Public Administration research only identified major studies in the Unites States of America, Britain and South Africa. The study of Public Administration research has received considerable attention and is much debate internationally. The most dominant perspective in this literature is what one may term the United States perspective. For example McCurdy & Cleary (1984); Perry & Kraemer (1986; 1994); Houston & Delevan (1990; 1994); and Lan & Anders (2000) are just a few examples of authors who have conducted studies on this topic in the United States. There is one study by Greenwood & Eggins (1995) that provides a valuable analysis of how Public Administration is being researched and taught in Britain.

The study of Public Administration research is fairly new and underdeveloped in South Africa. Arguably, the two most notable studies, have been conducted by Hubbell (1992) and Wessels (2005) in this area of interest. While it is important that South African Public Administration is understood within the broader international context of the field it was also vital that this dissertation

highlights local relevance. This has been taken into consideration especially when designing the research methodology. Both the international and local studies on Public Administration research will be discussed in the following chapter.

Given the advanced nature of Public Administration in the United States of America and in Britain, it is appropriate that the research literature is used as the background for this dissertation. These two contexts are arguably leading and driving the research debate. They provide a lens through which one is better equipped to analyse and contribute to South African and international Public Administration research. Aside from the issues above, a primary concern of this dissertation is to build upon the recognised studies on Public Administration research. One of the key arguments of this dissertation depends upon the extent to which researchers in the field understand and extend upon the grounding debates, issues and arguments of these recognised studies.

The authors cited above attempt to gain clarity on a number of issues in their study on Public Administration research. They have questioned and determined the quality of Public Administration research outcomes; debated what the most appropriate research methods are; made valuable recommendations regarding future research within the field; and, identified the broad implications of their findings for the both the current form and development of Public Administration as a whole. These contributions have helped the Public Administration community to better understand the grounding debates and identify where progress can be made in terms of advancing the field. This particular dissertation demonstrates that there is significant room for greater contribution and understanding of these wider Public Administration issues at a local, South African level. By establishing the state of research within Public Administration, one is able to get a more sophisticated understanding of its broader status as a field of study; only then can one partake in activities to improve the current status of Public Administration research in South Africa.

As an academic area of study and everyday practice, Public Administration is a critical field to the transformation and development of South Africa. (Cameron, 2005: 6). Both the professional and the academic facets of the field have inevitably been shaped by the political and social contexts of our country. Public Administration academics, along with various other sectors of society, face the difficult task of contributing to our transformation on various different levels, one of them being

research. Sound academic research should therefore not be viewed as an end in itself but rather a process that aims to rationalise, substantiate and strengthen decisions made within the public sector.

Given this challenge, theoretical and knowledge-based development of Public Administration in South Africa is important for various reasons. For example authors such as Frederickson and Smith (2003: 3-5) argue that there is a strong need for theory in an applied, practical and interdisciplinary field such as Public Administration. Scholarly research stimulates theory and knowledge development which in turn becomes collective and built upon by other researchers within the field. Theory development is crucial to advancing both the academic and practical faces of Public Administration considering that, "the daily realities of practice cannot alone drive theory building since the type of knowledge required is different from that needed from the other." (Stallings & Ferris, 1994: 120). This illustrates the notion that the theoretical and practical facets of Public Administration should not be viewed as existing at opposite ends of a continuum (mutually exclusive), but both components should rather be developed to improve upon each sphere. In this regard this dissertation does not intend to present an exclusive dichotomy between practitioner-orientated research and theory-generating research.

Considering this, theories of public organisation provide a basis for understanding practice and should inform everything that a "reflective practitioner" does."(Denhardt, 2001: 257). In the same way that Frederickson and Smith (2003: 5) note that the validity of any theory depends on its capacity to describe, explain and predict; Dehardt (2001: 257) contributes further by stating that, theory is equivalent to learning the "logic" of the field, so regardless of how today's practice may change the logic will continue to apply tomorrow.

The failure to teach and research Public Administration in a theoretical, knowledge-based manner indeed has practical implications. (Denhardt, 2001; Frederickson & Smith, 2003; Cameron, 2005; Bourgon, 2007). Wessels (2005: 1500) also supports this argument. He claims that public officials alone cannot solve the problems that they are faced with in their every-day practice of the discipline. "These problems need hard-to-come by knowledge to be solved, knowledge produced through the intervention of researchers trained in one or more of the various scientific traditions. It

is safe to assume that the academic subject Public Administration has to produce research results solving public administration problems which cannot be solved by competent public officials alone.” It is clear therefore that Public Administration research undoubtedly informs the political debate and contributes to making better informed policy and public sector responses. (Johnson, 2002; Kuye, 2005; Wessels, 2005).

Research, as a scholarly activity, is important to the field of Public Administration since it can be used to test existing theories on the one hand, and on the other research can contribute to developing new and original knowledge that promotes theory development. Johnson (2002: 3-4) notes that research supplies public officials with much needed information about what works well and why, so that they are able to make well-informed, rational choices which ultimately affect the lives of citizens. Whether or not public administrators are involved in their own independent research, they are increasingly being exposed to the demands of today's evolving public sector that places them in a position that requires them to possess some form of research skills, at least on an interpretive level.

By the same token however, knowledge-based (contributing to theory development) should not equate to an “ivory-towered theory approach” (Cameron, 2005:13) but rather enhance and emphasise the need to develop scholarship of the subject, so that it can inform the practice of the discipline. This preference of an academic approach does not imply therefore that there is no need for practical research, but this needs to complement, not substitute the theoretical frameworks within the field. While it is imperative that public servants are skillfully trained in order to carry out their capacity mandates, it is equally important that theory is not ignored or underdeveloped, so that it is no longer able to add value to practitioners. It is only through adequate research that new knowledge and theory can be developed thereby contributing to a more appropriate framework or paradigm through which South African Public Administration can be understood and practiced.

In the same manner that basic, theory-generating research can positively influence the practice of the field, applied research that is empirical and is focused at problem-solving can also contribute to building theories. For example a substantial amount of research and literature on Public Management is practice-orientated focused with much emphasis on the adoption of “best

practices". (Lynn, Hienrich & Hill, 2001: 156-157). These "best practices" can be lead to established generalisations resulting in testing, refinement and eventually theory-building. This explanation reiterates the idea that both types of research are not mutually exclusive.

1.3. Public Administration Research Literature Overview:

1.3.1. International British & United States Research Literature:

Wessels' (1999: 361) notes that an overview of the literature tends to highlight somewhat of a critical and pessimistic view of the state of Public Administration research, both internationally and locally. This position is evident in the following statements made by leading academics on the subject. For example as early as 1976 Wamsley and Zald comment that, "The search for a theory of public administration over the decades has taken on aspects of a quest for the Holy Grail or a hunt of a mythical unicorn. The search has been filled with zeal and piety, but seldom has it been made clear what it is that is sought, nor have the searchers been altogether certain of its existence." McCurdy & Cleary (1984: 49) argue in their seminal article "*Why Can't We Resolve the Research Issue in Public Administration*" that "Research methodology in public administration remains weak and fragmented. Considerable uncertainty exists regarding the criteria that public administration research should meet, and the uncertainty is being transmitted to doctoral students entering the field."

Concluding from their study Perry and Kraemer (1986: 364) worryingly note that "Public administration research continues to be eclectic, non-cumulative, skewed towards problem-solving and poorly supported...(it) has not matured to a point where it is capable of sustaining the knowledge creation needs of the field." For these authors their main argument centers on the fact that Public Administration research methodology is weak and that research does not attempt to build upon, or extend existing knowledge within the field. For them the multidisciplinary influence on the traditional boundaries of Public Administration has presented methodological diversities, making it more challenging to determine an appropriate approach to conducting research. Consequently, this has often led to disagreements concerning the relevance and importance of knowledge and theory generation within the field. Perry & Kraemer's (1986; 1994) study also raises the issue that there is no widely agreed criteria of what is required of research in the field of Public

Administration; and should these requirements be any different from other applied disciplines such as social work or law?

Houston and Delevan (1990: 678) argue that "...Public Administration research is engaged in little theory testing...perhaps the persistent lack of empirical research explains the gap between theory and practice." Put differently, these authors express concern since their study found that there was little, if any, evidence of basic research being conducted within the field. Rather the emphasis is centred on carrying out practice-orientated applied research. (McNabb, 2002: 16). Rodgers and Rodgers (2000: 436) equate Public Administration to the "Israel of Academic Disciplines" – because we are always squabbling over the precise (and priceless) boundary lines that define our identity." Collectively therefore, these studies agree firstly, that research is important to the existence of Public Administration since it is the "engine" that propels the field forward (McCurdy & Cleary, 1984: 54); and secondly, unfortunately there is a critical mass that raises fundamental concern about research and how these deficiencies impact on the existence and of Public Administration.

1.3.2. South African Research Literature:

The current state of Public Administration research in South Africa is closely related to the history of the country as a whole, as well as the history of the discipline more specifically. Prior to 1994, Public Administration did little to reflect the serious problems of governance and administration in our country – its paradigm was fairly weak in terms of providing real guidance in analyses and prescription for complex public management related issues. (Schwella, 1992: 336). The existence of the discipline was severely constrained by the Apartheid ideology at the time so that any research, training or teaching of Public Administration did little to disrupt or threaten the status quo. (Hubbell, 1992: 2).

Public Administration was characterised as being "in-bred" in nature and critical thought was inhibited by the fact that the field was dominated by one person and his tightly-knit group of followers, J.J.N. Cloete. (Hubbell, 1992: 2). Given the overarching and commanding dominance of the political ideology on the one level and J.J.N. Cloete's influence on the other, the field was narrowed intellectually on most accounts (research, theory development, critical studies and so

forth). Essentially little was done to promote critical administrative thought to progress and advance the status of the field. With a history of this kind, it is hardly surprising that Public Administration research in South Africa has much room to progress and mature.

In addition, Cloete (2000), Mabin (2003) and Cameron (2005) not only make reference to the inherent problem of the descriptive nature of Public Administration research in South Africa, but also comment that the quality of research is very low. Cameron (2005) suggests that the practitioner-orientated research evident in South Africa is descriptive, inductive and based on observations provided in relation to specific cases and experiences. Based on this argument, he would argue that this practitioner-informed type of research is not sufficient enough to drive knowledge and theory development within the field alone. What is needed is systematic and valid scholarly research that can accurately establish issues of causality and promote the use of theory that in turn, can inform practice. Cameron (2005) suggests that more empirical research is needed to test this proposition.

The two most notable South African studies concerning Public Administration research have been conducted by Hubbell (1992) & Wessels (2005). The relatively low number of studies concerning this topic is illustrative of the fact that this area of research is relatively young and underdeveloped within our country. Locally, this literature reverberates similar conclusions and apprehensions that were raised internationally about Public Administration research. Hubbell's (1992: 1) study found that research fell largely within a "functionalist paradigm" and "lacked critical analysis". He concludes that many of the articles analysed for his study "were simply not very good science." (Hubbell, 1992: 13). In a similar vein Wessels (2005: 1506) study found that there was a "relatively low percentage of articles focusing on Public Administration as a subject, theory and methodology...is an early indication of a possible bias towards practice or application and a possible theoryless empiricism." Most of the articles studied related to issues of management and the practice of Public Administration, while only a mere 4.6% related to theory-development and research within the field.

It must be noted that both South African studies employ a slightly different approach to analysing Public Administration research than the international examples. Both Hubbell (1992) and Wessels

(2005) only analyse research according to what authors in the journals write about, in other words their area or topic of interest. They do not analyse journal articles according to what research methodology was used to conduct this area of study – a critical distinction from international research studies. Given that the methodology debate is inherent to understanding Public Administration research, this dissertation is designed to incorporate analysis of the methods and approaches used within research. It is therefore more aligned with international examples of journal analyses.

Together, both the international and local literature critiques raise fundamental questions concerning the methodological and philosophical reflection of research in Public Administration. Collectively, both international and local Public Administration research findings suggest that research is predominantly focused on conceptualising researchable problems, rather than employing methodologies that can assist in generating original theories or advancing upon existing ones. White & Adams (1994: xiii) capture these concerns regarding Public Administration research in a series of questions, below. These questions highlight inherent issues that this particular study confronts:

- Why is there so little mainstream social science research being done in the field?
- Is the field too varied to develop a cumulative body of knowledge due to its double-sided nature?
- Is the type of knowledge that practitioners use different from scholarly knowledge?
- Are the methodological standards of mainstream social science appropriate for research in our field Public Administration?
- Why are many of the topics of journal research relatively unimportant to knowledge and theory development within the field?

Denhardt (2001: 526) terms these above issues the “big questions” that plague the Public Administration research fraternity. He notes that for more than two decades they have continued to distress researchers within the field. The above comments point to the “crisis of identity” faced by Public Administration, largely due to the diverse and applied nature of the field. International literature suggests that unresolved research questions/debates, along with their respective

research problems, will continue to be passed further onto scholarly generations; thereby perpetuating a cycle of stagnant theory development, at the cost of both scholars and practitioners. This dissertation does not intend answering each of these “big questions” individually, but rather attempts to contribute and extend the knowledge regarding the surrounding debates. In this way it is an effort to advance Public Administration research locally.

1.4. Research Hypothesis:

In its simplest sense a hypothesis is a question or statement that seeks information regarding some form of problem; that can either be true or false. (Meier & Brudney, 1995: 171). In this regard, hypotheses form the basis to testing theories by explaining specific relationships between certain variables under study. (Johnson, 2002: 13). The hypothesis guiding this dissertation is that South African Public Administration research focuses primarily on practitioner-orientated research rather than enhancing theory-generating research. By stating “primarily”, this dissertation implies that more than half of the research will focus on practitioner-orientated research activities, characterised by description and conceptualizations of researchable problems. It must be noted, that the focus of the study is not to prove that practitioner-orientated research equates to applied research, in the same way that it does not aim to equal basic research to theory-orientated research. Rather it attempts to prove, based on previous studies’ findings, together with this study’s findings, research as found in South African journal articles has a bias towards the former.

In this regard, this dissertation questions whether similar research deficiencies identified in the United States and British contexts exist within South African Public Administration research. Findings suggest that there has been little evidence of developing a cumulative knowledge base within the discipline and research methodologies are generally of a poor quality making little effort to contribute to a systematic, scholarly base of Public Administration knowledge. This would lead one to conclude therefore, that theory development in the field is weak.

If this hypothesis is true, the findings can be used to support the argument that Public Administration research in South Africa is largely descriptive; it lacks theory-building and cumulativeness; and, there are little efforts that concentrate on advanced quantitative and qualitative research methods and designs.

1.5. Research Dissertation Objectives:

This research dissertation has several objectives following from the primary research hypothesis. Based on the assumption that journal articles are an accepted, valid and reliable indicator of Public Administration research, the objectives follow:

1). **Measure the current state of Public Administration research in South Africa.** It does so by questioning the extent to which the international problems of poor research quality and poor research methods are evident and true within South Africa.

2). **Answer certain questions regarding the nature of Public Administration research within this country.** These questions include: who is contributing to Public Administration research, or who is publishing in Public Administration journals?; what are researchers writing about (their areas of research)?; what purpose does this research serve?; what research methodologies are being employed by researchers and is there a “correct” methodology for our field Public Administration?; is there a dominance in gender and race research patterns; and, is language a relevant factor in Public Administration research.

3). **Identify the main research interests; the predominant research methods within the field; and, what the overarching focus of research is within South African Public Administration.** These are the main issues surrounding and informing the research debate in our country. Although it is possible for empirical applied research to contribute to theory-building, this study sets out through its methodology to question whether the practitioner-orientated research evident in South Africa, is at this level of doing so.

4). **Contribute to the overall Public Administration research debate in South Africa.** Given that much of Public Administration, post-apartheid has focused primarily on fast-tracking development and service delivery within society, this study aims to question if knowledge acquisition and theory development of the subject has perhaps been placed second to this overarching position by the research community. In other words this study aims to contribute to the

inherent debate of theory versus practice and how this interface has manifested itself within South Africa.

5). **Assess changes and identify trends in publishing patterns and research methodology** within the given time period of 1994-2006 by splitting this period into two separate time intervals: 1994-2000 and 2001-2006. Essentially conclusions regarding research approaches; methodology; institutional affiliations; author rank(s); language use; gender and race² frequency can be drawn.

1.6. Research Methodology:

Collectively, regardless of its origin, Public Administration research literature concentrates on one of three research sources. The first being studies that analyse doctoral dissertations; doctoral programmes; or thirdly, studies that assess research publications in refereed academic journals. In all three instances the studies question how each respective variables (programmes, dissertations or journal articles) contribute to the academic state of Public Administration. In this way the literature findings, regardless of the angle employed, are often complementary. For the purpose of manageability, this dissertation focuses predominantly on Public Administration research literature that is centred upon journal content analyses. This is important since one of the key ingredients of an academic discipline is the quality of research found within its journals. Are the articles that are being published enhancing theory development and knowledge in the discipline, or are they largely practice-orientated?

Stallings & Ferris (1988: 111) argue that professional journals as well as books, in any academic field are a valuable indicator and data source of the research being conducted within the field. Based on this assumption, data for this research dissertation was collected and analysed by making use of the journal content analysis method by selecting and categorising journal articles, published in arguably the two most prominent South African Public Administration journals: *Journal of Public Administration (JOPA)* and *Administratio Publica (AP)* between the years 1994-2006. This

² Racial and gender transformation are two key components in our country's developmental agenda – this fact is acknowledged and advocated. It must be noted however, that this study is concerned primarily with the state of Public Administration research and not necessarily how and to what degree the field is transforming in terms of constitutional obligations and mandates. Data concerning race and gender variables is not central to this research dissertation and are therefore not analysed in great detail. This information has been flagged for a future project which is part of the broader NRF research to be done by other individuals.

database was used for collective, but different research purposes: for this dissertation and independent research by other individuals. Other research sources such as doctoral dissertations and programmes were therefore not included.

A content analysis is a research method in itself, and therefore the comparative method is not used to draw distinctions between the two journals, *JOPA* and *AP*. Bernard (1995: 339) describes the logic that the content analysis method is based upon: "The idea [of content analysis techniques] is to reduce the information in a text to a series of variables that can then be examined for correlations." In this regard, content analysis can be described as the quantitative component of document analysis – such that the process involves compartmentalising the written material into researcher-selected units or categories. (McNabb, 2002: 24). Measurement and interpretation of these categories make explanatory and critical analysis of the data possible, for example through the use of statistics. Traditionally, interpretation of the data gathered by the process was limited only to quantitative analysis but since the early 1970's this strict quantitative-qualitative distinction seemed too rigid and unwarranted amongst researchers. (McNabb, 2002: 24). McNabb (2002: 24) goes on to explain that generally, content–analyses act as a combination of the two approaches (qualitative and quantitative) which are simultaneously used to translate the data findings.

In accordance with previous content analysis studies, only pieces published under the heading "articles" were included and symposia articles, book reviews, conference papers and review essays were excluded from the total population sample. This study did not make use of random sampling from each journal. Instead every article within both publications, during the given time period was used since it was feasible to do so; to make up a 100% representative dataset. In doing so this also avoided the issue of data sampling error. This process gave rise to an empirical database of 383 journal articles (105 from *AP* and 278 from *JOPA*), which were used to test the proposed hypothesis.

Each of the 383 articles were studied and categorised according to thirteen different variables pertaining to research quality and methodology.³ These variables were divided into two general sets: a purely descriptive group which related to universal author and journal characteristics, such

³ The entire codebook for the analysis of articles can be viewed in the appendix.

as year and author; and a more analytical set that required a certain amount of analytical interpretation of the journal contents at hand, which included for example research purpose and methodology used. Together these variables contributed to determining the quality of Public Administration research in South Africa.

Establishing the use of these thirteen variables was informed by analysing and critiquing previous journal studies, both at an international and local level. These works are discussed more closely in the following chapter, which include: Perry & Kraemer (1984; 1994); Stallings & Ferris (1988; 1994); Houston & Delevan (1990; 1994); Adams & White (1994); Lan & Anders (2000); and, Wright et al (2004). Certain variables, such as research methodology have been used successfully in prior studies on Public Administration research. Where this was the case these variables were borrowed to inform this study. Previous international studies' methodology therefore acted as a template through which the South African situation could be portrayed, and this study is to a certain degree an adaptation of this work. This study also aimed to keep the methodology relatively simple so that it could be easily understood and interpreted. While the reliance on the United States and British influence was important on the one hand, this study also recognised the challenge of creating its methodology such that it would be contextually relevant to South African Public Administration. It was for this reason that where necessary, new original and locally relevant variables were introduced into this study. For example given our country's historical background and emphasis on development, variables relating to macro-reorganisation, race and gender were introduced. The purpose of these variables, with reference to this study, is to relate these findings to research within the field not to conclude whether equity and transformation has or is taking place.

In order to identify changes and trends in Public Administration research variables, the thirteen year time period under review was categorised into two time intervals: 1994-1999 and 2000-2006. Readers will note that unlike *JOPA*, *AP* publishing volumes do not necessarily correspond to consecutive years. For instance, although the published volumes logically follow on from one another, there was no *AP* publication in the years 1998 and 2001. It is for this reason that the study uses both years and volumes as a research variable.

It ought to be reiterated at this point that this study aims to identify changes in research publishing patterns primarily regarding research topic, purpose, methodology, focus and cumulativeness over this time. It does not attempt to comment or analyse on the broader transformational issues as they are unfolding within the field, and therefore the two time intervals do not necessarily correlate with broader political changes, such as the implementation of the final Constitution. This allows for a more detailed analysis of the research information to be identified over time so that conclusions regarding shifts in research approaches can be made.

1.7. Research Limitations:

Perhaps the most obvious limitation to not only this dissertation, but any global study on Public Administration research is that very few countries have researched and written on this subject. Essentially, this is only a Masters level mini-dissertation and therefore it is limited by length and time constraints. Admittedly, these journals are not a “mirror image” (Perry & Kraemer, 1994; 101) of Public Administration research, but they are arguably the two premier Public Administration academic journals in the country. Adding further journals, for example *Politea*, to the data samples would obviously not make this consideration viable. In addition this journal is not an exclusive Public Administration journal but alternates annually with Political Science articles which also raises issues of representation. This dissertation does however make for a good starting point for further research within the field.

1.8. Chapter Outlines:

Chapter Two:

Presenting itself as a literature review, this chapter introduces the reader to the overarching issues and debates inherent to Public Administration research. This chapter answers important questions regarding the research debate at an international (British & United States) and local level. A feasible conceptualisation of Public Administration research is given as a valid departure point. The chapter then moves towards analysing and critiquing six international studies and two South African studies in great detail. Intrinsic tensions of Public Administration research, such as the theory-practice interface and the quantitative versus qualitative methodological paradigms are brought to the readers' attention. Collectively these studies aim towards developing a theoretical

understanding of Public Administration research. In this regard the chapter operates as a template through which Public Administration research in South Africa can be better understood.

Chapter Three:

Having discussed how Public Administration research manifests itself at an international level, this chapter exists to relate and apply these works to the South African environment. This chapter discusses the methodology used in this dissertation to perform the analysis of the journals' content. Not only does it highlight the similarities and differences between previous studies on Public Administration research, but it also makes an argument for greater relevance by introducing variables that are more suitably designed to compliment the South African Public Administration scenario. Criticisms lodged against prior works are acknowledged and incorporated into the overall framework, for the primary purpose of not demonstrating similar shortfalls. Essentially, this chapter acts as a "step-by-step" guide of how this study was performed.

Chapter Four:

Together with the methodology chapter, this section forms the core to this dissertation. It acts as a forum whereby the findings for this particular study of South African Public Administration research are presented, analysed and interpreted. By interpreting and triangulating analytical variables, the objective of this chapter is to study the extent to which international Public Administration findings and deficiencies exist within South Africa. The original hypothesis of the study is therefore either confirmed or rejected. This chapter also discusses the reasons why the current state of Public Administration is present.

Chapter Five:

This concluding chapter draws the important issues and debates together to give the reader a well-rounded outlook of the overall South African Public Administration research debate. It does so by answering the questions set out at the beginning of this chapter as the research objectives. This chapter aims to synergise international and local research findings to make well-informed and contextually relevant recommendations so that the current situation can be positively changed.

1.9. Chapter Summary:

This introductory chapter has presented Public Administration research as a valid and noteworthy area of study. It is through the activity of research that the academic status of a field such as Public Administration is advanced and matured. Research contributes to generating theory development, as well as building upon previous work conducted within the field thereby contributing to a cumulative and recognised knowledge base. Public Administration research is complex and multifaceted, influenced by the eclectic and dual nature of the discipline. One must understand these debates to successfully understand and contribute to the research issues at hand. This dissertation intends to contribute to the overall Public Administration research debate by firstly, studying previous studies on Public Administration research; and secondly, by supplying and analysing information about research trends over a thirteen year time-frame. Descriptive and analytical variables were designed to answer specific questions relating to these trends and issues, for example what are the topical preferences of Public Administration research, or what are the gender and race publishing patterns in South Africa? By studying the dataset, more informed conclusions can be made regarding the present state of research within the field and knowledgeable recommendations can be communicated and suggested.

Chapter Two:

Literature Review – Understanding the Grounding Debates and Issues Concerning Public Administration Research

2.1. An Overview:

Research, as an academic and scientific activity, portrays itself as a guiding beacon within any field or discipline for the reason that it serves as the primary generator of knowledge, theory and scholarship development. The quality and nature of research, impacts profoundly on both the status of the discipline and status of the profession, as well as the ability of scholars to further develop theory, so that the field is able to advance and “mature.” (Adams & White, 1994; White, Adams & Forrester, 1996; McCurdy & Cleary, 1984; Perry & Kraemer, 1986; 1994; Stallings & Ferris, 1988; 1994; Houston & Delevan, 1990; 1994; Box 1994).

The introductory chapter highlighted the generic concern of poor Public Administration research; an issue that has invited much debate and critique over the years. Evaluating Public Administration research is part of a much larger debate concerning the social positioning and application of the field within the academic realm. Given that opinions vary concerning the type of research and methodology needed for Public Administration, naturally the reasons contributing to the poor quality of research will also be extensive.

Despite these different explanations, Perry & Kraemer (1986) highlight five historical themes that influence the nature of Public Administration research. These five themes, albeit worded slightly differently, consistently emerge from the literature. They can to some degree be viewed as contributors or reasons of poor Public Administration research globally. These common themes include (Perry & Kraemer, 1986: 348): (1) the eclectic nature of Public Administration makes it difficult to identify methodologies that define and are associated with the field exclusively; (2) Public Administration research reflects too little interdisciplinary communication; (3) research within the field has not been cumulative – in other words research outputs are not engaging with debates and previous similar research; (4) the relationship between research and practice is fundamental in

determining and selecting research methodology; and, (5) Public Administration research lacks adequate institutional support. These points will be examined in greater detail in section two of this chapter.

Evidently, the above themes demand critical academic attention. This dissertation analyses the Public Administration research debate primarily from an academic perspective considering that the main concern is about theory development. This chapter is a review of the current literature on the issues and debates surrounding Public Administration research. It attempts to provide a balanced literature review of the material.

The chapter begins by examining the meaning of the activity of *research* and how it contributes to knowledge and theory development within the field of Public Administration. At this point a distinction is made between scholarly and non-scholarly research, as well as explaining the difference between basic and applied research that is used within Public Administration. The second part of the chapter is dedicated to analysing previous studies on Public Administration research, such as Perry & Kraemer (1986); Houston & Delevan (1990) and Stallings & Ferris (1994) to name a few. Reviewing these works also implies highlighting any criticisms and shortfalls that they might have been subjected to. This section will also examine some of the reasons contributing to the poor state of Public Administration research at an international level. Specific reference will be granted to the five themes that were mentioned previously by Perry & Kraemer (1986).

One of the main purposes of this chapter is to relate the international United States and British literature to the South African scenario - this forms the basis of the third and final part of the chapter. At this point the history of South African Public Administration is discussed as well as the rise of the New Public Management (NPM) movement and its impact on research. The purpose of this section is not to provide an in-depth analysis on the debates of NPM, since the scope is too broad, but simply explain how it has manifested itself within the South African context. The reader is also introduced to the debate of the bipolar tension between theory and practice and the consequential effects that this tension has on research. All these factors are studied with the integrating aim of questioning how they influence and impact on Public Administration research.

2.2. A Starting Point - Clarifying Research as a Concept & Activity:

Establishing definitional boundaries and clarifying concepts is always a tricky task since it requires reflection of philosophical and practical dimensions of the topic at hand. Given this complexity, together with space constraints, this dissertation will relate predominantly to Public Administration research methodology literature rather than extending the debate to other social science literature & methodologies. To successfully define the concept of Public Administration research, it is important that its relationship with knowledge and methodology of the subject are recognised. In other words the linkage between research as an academic activity, methodology and knowledge development must be made. Perry & Kraemer (1986: 348) note the important link between research and methodology: "Methodology and research are closely linked. Methodology exists to guide the conduct of research; methodology is reflected in research...(our) assessment of methodology is necessarily an assessment of public administration research." Attempting to unpack the concept of research therefore obliges one to reflect on in-depth epistemic questions relating to Public Administration, for example: What kind of knowledge do our research methodologies strive towards? (Wessels, 1999: 362). Although there is much discussion and dispute around what constitutes *research*, in an attempt to reduce the risk of diversion, this conceptual framework does not devolve too deeply into these main debates.¹ This section simply aims to draw a working definition of the activity of research.

2.2.1 Definitions & Dimensions of Research:

Research is important since it is closely related to the search for knowledge and the understanding of societal phenomena. (Brynard & Hanekom, 1997: 1). In this regard, research should not be viewed as an end in itself but rather a process that aims to rationalise, substantiate and strengthen decisions within the public sector. It can be argued therefore that research has a practical application or utilitarian basis. An important characteristic inherent to the concept of research is that it is usually defined according to a *process* (often referred to as the endeavour, search, inquiry, scientific investigation and so forth), as well as the *goal* (discovering new facts and data that are valid). (Wessels, 1999: 363).

¹ Defining research and how it relates to theory and knowledge development can become very philosophical. This clearly extends beyond the boundaries of this dissertation. For a more detailed discussion on this understanding of research Wessels (1999; 2005) is a good starting point.

According to Leedy (1989: 4-8) research is a method of action which serves as a means through which people can solve problems in an attempt to extend the boundaries of knowledge. Hence, research encompasses the interpretation of data in order to reach a conclusion – that will hopefully contribute to a valid knowledge base. Hutchinson (1992: 669) offers a further explanation to research. He claims that it is a scientific investigation/study in order to establish facts to reach new conclusions – it can be distinguished from other human activities by its systematic nature. Johnson (2002: 4-5) would tend to agree with Hutchinson (1992) as she states, “Research is a systematic search for answers to questions we might explore, investigate, examine or uncover. The key is that it is systematic. It is also empirical in that it is derived from experiment, observation, or experience...process for gathering and interpreting data to understand and guide decisions” Being systematic implies that as an activity, research needs to be conducted in a meaningful way; for example identifying a problem, formulating and testing hypotheses. (McNabb, 2002: 6). In addition it can be argued that if good social science research is systematic it will always be relevant to everyday life and activities. (Wright, Manigault & Black, 2004: 747-748). Research methodology on the other hand, refers to the steps involved in a given approach, for example the various qualitative and quantitative research approaches, such as case studies or statistical analyses respectively.

As an activity, research can be classified as basic or applied research. (Brynard & Hanekom, 1997; Johnson, 2002; Kuye, 2005). It is important to note two imperative points: both types of research can contribute to theory-generation and they are not mutually exclusive from one another – in the same way that the theoretical and practical sides of Public Administration are not either. In this regard, the difference in approaches is closely associated with the special role that research plays in a practical field such as Public Administration. On the one hand research is required to guide the much needed theory-development of the field and on the other it is also required to influence the practices and even decisions of managers and policy-makers. (Wright et al, 2004: 747-748). One can therefore conclude that if conducted in the correct empirical fashion, both basic and applied research have the potential to led to enhanced theory development.

Basic research explores and tests theories through the use of hypotheses. (Johnson, 2002: 5). Put differently, this type of research involves the conceptual construction of research problems through

the use of theoretical models. (Kuye, 2005: 4). For scholars, basic research is intended to contribute and improve their general knowledge base in order that this knowledge can be used to make decisions and guide future actions. As will be discussed later in this chapter, both the importance and usefulness of theory generation for Public Administration practitioners in their daily workplace understandings is equally imperative. McNabb (2002: 16) notes that although slowly changing, there has been very little evidence of basic research in Public Administration. "Academicians or practitioners have conducted very little "pure" or theoretical research, although interest in theoretical research is increasing." (McNabb, 2002: 16). Basic research is not necessarily done to find a specific solution or solve a particular problem. For example basic research might include studying the types of doctoral programs across several universities and questioning how they contribute to Public Administration research. The application of the results from basic research is what can be connoted as applied research, and is usually associated more widely with practitioners. (Kuye, 2005: 4). This illustrates the non-exclusive existence of both types of research.

Applied research is undertaken with the specific aim of providing a certain solution, to produce results that will aid in solving an immediate problem. Johnson (2002: 6) argues that this type of research is usually focused on providing information that can be used within the policy arena, such as policy development, or monitoring and evaluation of policy programmes. In this regard, applied research for example, could be used in Public Administration to determine and describe a certain condition, such as is poverty. Research findings could contribute to answers and solutions as to whether poverty is increasing or decreasing in a particular area, or determine how poverty relates to other societal phenomena such as crime or HIV/AIDS, provided that the correct research methodologies are used. Certain trends and generalisations may be drawn over time and through the use of testing and refinement this has the potential to lead to theory development. This type of research is therefore closely associated with the practice, rather than the theoretical side of public administration. From the above discussion on basic and applied research, one can conclude that these approaches attempt to resolve researchable problems from different angles.

The problem does not lie in the fact that research might be predominantly focused on practitioner problem-solving, but rather that there is perhaps an unwillingness or inability of researchers to

utilise more appropriate research tools or methodologies to bring about theory development; even if its in the practical sphere.

2.2.2 Research – How it Relates to the Scholarly Knowledge of Public Administration?

A critical distinction in the literature points to the idea that not all research activities or results can be regarded as scientific or scholarly.² (Pauw, 1996; Wessels, 2005; Brynard & Hanekom, 1997). Without running the risk of becoming involved in a deep philosophical debate regarding science, one can deduce that not all acquisition of knowledge is scientific. The scientific and non-scientific converses of research are what Wessels (1999: 363) refers to as “the two faces of research.” This is elaborated in the works of Pauw (1996: 67) and Hanekom (1997: 3) who explain that although it is possible for certain investigations to have characteristics of scientific work (it is rational, systematic and objective), as well as use methods that originate in science (such as surveys and observations); it does not necessarily mean that this research is scientific in nature or will necessarily lead to scientific knowledge. An apt illustration of this is using a telephone directory to gain and use the knowledge that it provides (telephone numbers). (Wessels, 1999: 362).

What then is scholarly research and what knowledge contributes to advancing theory? Research literature suggests that the outcome or product of the research activity (the quality and type of knowledge) determines whether it is scholarly or not. (Brynard & Hanekom, 1997; Mouton, Auriacombe & Lutabingwa, 2006). The type of knowledge that contributes to theory development is different from ordinary knowledge in that it is the outcome of rigorous, methodological and systematic enquiry. It is also based on collective, validated experiences of members of the scientific and scholarly community rather than individual accounts of a given event(s). (Hanekom & Brynard, 1997; Mouton et al, 2006; Perry & Kraemer, 1986; Wessels, 2005). In this way not only is it inherently skeptical but ongoing research within the scientific community is able to support, advance and generate new knowledge. “The acceptance or rejection of scientific statements is

² For example different definitions of research explain whether it is understood to be scientific or not. Hutchinson (1992: 669) and Johnson (2002: 4-5) define both the process and outcome of research as being scientific in nature, while others such as Funk & Wagnalls (1946: 968), define research purely as a conditioned inquiry to gain factual knowledge.

based on the outcome of ongoing research.” (Mouton, 1996: 13). This implies knowledge that is valid and is committed to accurate, unbiased representations of reality.

Regardless of its source, scholarly research is therefore indispensable for the existence and advancement of Public Administration as a field of scientific knowledge and scholarship. (Wessels, 1999: 365). This inevitably has led many academics to consider and question the current state of Public Administration research within their respective contexts. For example some have queried whether the outputs of current research activities can be considered scientific, and if so, how are these outputs contributing to the field of Public Administration as a verifiable and scientific knowledge base? The main debate concerning the extent to which Public Administration research is contributing to the fields theoretical and knowledge base is an important one. A sub-debate is also brought into light however, which questions what types of research benefit and satisfy the needs of both academics and practitioners within the field. This will be discussed in further detail in the third section of this chapter.

2.3. Previous Studies on Public Administration Research - Their Contribution to the Knowledge of the Field?

2.3.1 Different Frameworks of Public Administration Research:

As a starting point, examination of the literature leads to two dominant emphases that are prevalent to international and local discussions of Public Administration research which are closely interrelated.³ (Houston & Delevan, 1990; 1994; Bailey, 1994 & Perry & Kraemer, 1986; 1994)

The first research emphasis questions the degree to which research outputs, for example journal articles or PhD theses, are contributing to a verifiable and useful knowledge base that can advance Public Administration as an applied science. Here the focus lies in assessing the quality of research being produced and questioning whether research interests and methodologies are addressing core concerns within the field. Put differently, this emphasis highlights whether *research outcomes* are contributing to the broader scholarship and development within the field to

³ The first chapter noted the different frameworks for studying the state of Public Administration research: either through the analysis of doctoral programmes, doctoral theses or academic journal assessments. The literature from all three approaches is most often complimentary. Regardless of the framework chosen however, the studies on Public Administration research are centred on the two emphases discussed above.

extend and advance a systematic body of scholarly knowledge. Assessments of this kind include the works of McCurdy & Cleary, 1984; Perry & Kraemer, 1986; 1994; Wessels, 2005; White & Adams, 1994; and, Wright et al, 2004.

International and local research findings suggest that the focus is relying too heavily on conceptualising problems regarding the practice of public administration rather than empirical efforts to develop and test theory within the field. (Perry & Kraemer, 1986; 1994; Houston & Delevan, 1990; 1994 & Box, 1992; Bourgon, 2007). Relating to this point, the research literature highlights the idea that the field lacks a broad theoretical framework to guide, inspire and unify scholars. The general argument is that there is a need for clear distinct research questions to inform research thereby contributing to theoretical and knowledge-based development in Public Administration, as advocated by authors such as Houston & Delevan, 1990; Lowery & Evans, 2004; Bourgon, 2007).

The second major research emphasis found within the literature is centred upon the analysis of the nature of research methodology. This angle questions whether the *type of methodologies* used will have a more profound impact on the quality of research produced. This discussion is therefore centred upon which types of methodologies are more suitable to produce usable and scientifically acceptable knowledge. In this regard, research methodology is a key issue to understanding Public Administration research. If it is flawed it most likely to lead to poor research results, which in turn will impact negatively on theory and knowledge development of the field.

There has been no single research method that has overwhelmingly dominated Public Administration research. (McNabb, 2002: 20). There is however, a philosophical split that exists between those that favour an "empathic" *qualitative* research approach and those that claim that the *quantitative* method is the only valid and truly scientific approach. (McNabb, 2002: 20). The majority of studies illustrate the tendency to make use of the latter approach in preference to quantitative paradigm. Therefore one can conclude that a core facet to the debate on Public Administration research is centred on the types of research methodology that Public Administrators are currently using and *should* be using. In this regard this emphasis has both a normative and an

actual stance. The works of Perry & Kraemer (1984; 1986); Houston & Delevan (1990; 1994) and Wright et al (2004) are examples of this second concern.

Evaluation of both these types of studies generally conclude that Public Administration research not only fails to contribute to a systematic and growing body of knowledge but also fails to adhere to rigorous standards of social science research. (White, 1999; 1). Although this research debate has been prevalent over the last few decades within the United States and British research communities, it is still a new area of interest in South Africa. This is illustrated by the fact that there have been only two studies researching this topic. (Hubbell, 1992 & Wessels, 2005). The focus of this section therefore will only concentrate on the United States and British works of Public Administration research, while the South African studies will be discussed and critiqued in the following section.

2.3.2 United States and British Work on Public Administration Research:

The grounding American article, "*Why Can't We Resolve the Research Issue in Public Administration*" published by McCurdy & Cleary (1984) initiated a series of research discussions concerning the state, quality and methodology of Public Administration research. While McCurdy & Cleary (1984) focused primarily on research as it pertains to doctoral dissertations, their findings concluded that the standards that guide Public Administration research should be questioned. This set the tone for future research studies to come, not only in the United States but also in Britain, that have lasted for more than over a decade. For example the work of Perry & Kraemer, 1984; Stallings & Ferris, 1988; Houston & Delevan, 1990; Box, 1992; Adams & White, 1994; Greenwood & Eggins, 1995; White & Adams, 1996; Lan & Anders, 2000. These ongoing debates and revisions of previous studies are a prime example of how scientific knowledge should be supported and open to testing within the academic community.

Although there have been no well-known journal content analyses carried out in Britain, Greenwood and Eggins (1995) offer valuable comment on the changing nature of Public Administration, with respect to how it is taught; how it is practiced; and, how research is being conducted in Britain. These two authors conducted a study to assess how Public Administration was being taught in British higher education. They concluded that a curriculum shift from the social

sciences towards management and business approaches have impacted on the academic state of the field. (Greenwood & Eggins, 1995: 143). The way in which Public Administration is taught undoubtedly impacts not only on the way that the discipline is understood but also on the manner in which research is carried out in the field. Although the teaching component is not a primary focus of this dissertation, their work holds relevance to the broader understanding of the methodology debate.

Concluding from their study, Greenwood & Eggins (1995: 146) identify four trends that have impacted on the broad academic state of Public Administration – which relate to how the field is understood, taught and most importantly for this dissertation, researched. These trends are interrelated and impact on one another. The first trend that they identify was *from theory to practice*. Historically, as an academic field of study, Public Administration has drawn on a wide range of disciplines and has been crucially concerned with the combination of theory and practice. (Greenwood & Eggins, 1995: 146). It has always aimed to seek a better understanding of the way in which government works and manage more efficient and responsive government policies. In the past two decades however, Greenwood and Eggins (1995: 148) argue that Public Administration has moved from a theoretical emphasis to a more practical stance which emphasises skills, processes and techniques. The second trend identified was *policy to management*. They argue that within the last two decades there has been a significant influence from management frameworks such as rational choice theory and public management that now compete and offer diverse understandings of how to manage the public sector. (Greenwood & Eggins, 1995: 147).

The third trend identified was *social science to business* which argues that during the 1980's "public administration witnessed a variety of upheavals including privatisation, NPM and cutbacks in public sector expenditure." (Greenwood & Eggins, 1995: 147). This was a time when public sector managerial models linked to intellectual movements such as Public Choice Theory, began to emerge which placed emphasis on value for money, managerial efficiency and private sector management techniques. Public Administration began to be understood as a reflection of these broader public sector occurrences and was viewed as a component of these business and management approaches.

The fourth and final trend, *from knowledge to skills*, represents the bifurcation of the study of Public Administration, with the development of traditional theoretical approaches in the one direction and public management in the other. (Greenwood & Eggins, 1995: 147). The proposal of these new approaches has led to competing with the defense of the old ones which has in turn resulted in rigorous debates concerning the balance of skills and knowledge needed by people who study and research Public Administration. Greenwood and Eggins (1995: 147) argue that “as the traditional academic and theoretical concerns have declined in favour of greater emphasis on skills and techniques, the effect has been to blur still further the discipline’s focus...which has created potential problems of superficiality and incoherence.” While these four trends were identified within the British context it becomes evident that parallel conclusions can be drawn with the United States studies of Public Administration research.

Through the use of empirical evidence, James Perry and Kenneth Kraemer (1986) conducted one of the first United States studies that assessed the state of research methodology in the field. They did this by analysing the contents of two American journals, namely *Public Administration Review (PAR)* and *Administration and Society (A&S)* during the period of 1975–1984. They then proceeded to compare changes in research methodology within the two journals, during this ten year time period. These authors’ commentary revolved around the two interwoven influences of Public Administration research: firstly, they commented on the outcome and quality of research during this time period, and secondly, they question whether the methodology used in academic research acted as a conscious effort to advance knowledge about Public Administration.

Emerging from their study, Perry and Kraemer (1986: 358) reached three broad conclusions or evaluative statements about Public Administration research. Put differently they highlight three important research deficiencies within the field generally. Firstly the authors concluded that research is applied rather than basic, with little or no evidence of theory testing being performed. This implies that the research outcomes failed to contribute to the broad scientific knowledge base of Public Administration. (White, 1999:1). Most articles were at their initial stages of research involved in identifying or conceptualising problems and variables for future studies.” (Houston & Delevan, 1994: 126). By this they imply that most research exists at a “superficial” and simple level whereby a purely descriptive stance is adopted rather than generating new theories or hypotheses.

Secondly, Perry and Kraemer (1986) found that Public Administration research lacks cumulateness. In other words authors often “cherry pick references” so that important local and international work is ignored or under utilised. (Cameron, 2005: 18). This is a serious academic concern since it suggests that authors are not engaging with earlier studies to build on or extend prior knowledge. In a similar regard authors are then unaware of the criticisms and shortcomings of certain approaches, somewhat vital information to the validity and scientific face of research. The third finding to stem from Perry and Kraemer’s (1986) study is that research lacked adequate financial institutional support, for example from organised research entities. “Eighty percent of the articles failed to identify any sources of financial or institutional support. Poor reporting, journal policy, or faculty ingratitude does not cause this omission. Instead it is indicative of the low level of such support.” (Perry & Kraemer, 1994: 364). This finding showed little improvement over what Lan and Anders (2000: 163) reported more than a decade later: “approximately 85% (of articles) did not indicate any sources of financial or other institutional support.” (Lan & Anders, 2000: 163).

An extension of Perry and Kraemer’s (1986) study was carried out by Stallings and Ferris (1988). These authors examined methodological trends of research throughout *PAR*’s 45 year history, from 1940 to 1984. (Houston & Delevan, 1994: 126). Stallings and Ferris (1988) highlighted one main fault within Perry and Kraemer’s (1986) study: they created variable categories that were not mutually exclusive. An example of this is the authors’ category of “research stage.” This category aimed to place articles in their representative stage of research, such as problem delineation or establishing causality, thereby determining the reason for research. Coding should meet two main criteria: categories should be *exhaustive* (categories must exist for all known phenomenon) and categories must be *mutually exclusive* (there must be one and only one category into which the phenomenon being coded can properly be placed). (Stallings & Ferris, 1988: 596) “It is the failure to meet this second criterion that constitutes a major weakness in the Perry-Kraemer study.” (Stallings & Ferris, 1988: 596).

Consequently, Stallings and Ferris (1988: 581) adapted their methodology slightly so that three new binary variables were created (conceptual, relational and evaluative) to overcome this shortcoming. Despite the slight methodological difference in overall research design, Stallings and

Ferris (1988) reached similar conclusions to their predecessors. Findings were conducive to previous data as they conclude that research is still confined to its preliminary stages with little evidence of theory-testing or casual analysis. The authors note that "...conceptualisations remain the most frequent reported form of research, making up 70% of articles in the *PAR*, as Perry & Kraemer noted" and "our data show that lack of funding is clearly not a new problem." (Stallings & Ferris, 1994: 115-118). In addition the authors note that there is an infrequent use of advanced and sophisticated research methodology, such as multivariate analyses, frequently found in other traditional social science disciplines. "...conventional mainstream research, using explanatory designs, contributed to less than 30 percent of the research. By their assessment, explanatory designs make up only a small portion of research within the field." (White, 1999: 2).

Both Perry & Kraemer (1986) and Stallings & Ferris (1988) studies were criticised on a further account. Both studies are based on the underlying assumption that *PAR* and *A&S*, in the case of Perry & Kraemer, were representative of all research published in Public Administration. Houston & Delevan (1994: 126) agree with Stallings & Ferris (1988: 584) that certainly, if there is only one journal to be focused on then *PAR* is arguably the best source since it is the premier journal within the field. It is still possible however that this source may be under-representative. The authors explain that researchers may publish their work elsewhere since they might feel their findings will be valued and utilised more by readers other than those reading *PAR*. Since *PAR* is sponsored by the American Society for Public Administration (ASPA) it must communicate a wide amount of research for both academics and practitioners – whose interests and methodological competencies may well, differ; thereby encouraging articles that will be suitable for a general audience. (Houston & Delevan, 1994: 126). Consequently, more specialised topics may be sent to other journals with a more sophisticated focus. In addition two further possibilities exist as to why *PAR* may be under-represented. Editorial processes may not facilitate the publication of more research articles over the years – for example Dwight Waldo (1966) who was editor of *PAR* from 1966-1977 showed preference for articles reviewing research reports rather than individual research projects. (Stallings & Ferris, 1994: 120).

Lastly, Stallings & Ferris (1994: 120) note that the relatively small number of research articles appearing in the journal might be a direct result of the peer review process performing its gate-

keeping function. Instead of intentionally disfavouring research articles, the indicative amount of research articles being published are truly the only articles which adhere to the more solid methodological strictness of research. For the above 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 & Delevan, 1994: 126).

Based on these criticisms Houston & Delevan (1990) set up a study to extend the knowledge on Public Administration research in six journals other than *PAR*. Once again despite this deviation from the original studies on Public Administration research previous findings were verified. The authors concluded that not only does the field of Public Administration lack a broad theoretical framework/paradigm to guide and inspire scholars but research is engaged in little theory-testing. (Houston & Delevan, 1994: 134-136). These two factors both impact on and reinforce one another, and also have serious implications for the development and maturity of the field. These authors’ findings reinforce the work of Vincent Ostrom (1974: 16-17) who concluded more than three decades ago that Public Administration is in a state of “intellectual crisis” because of the insufficient paradigms to facilitate theory advancement.

In a similar attempt to broaden data representation, Adams & White (1994) compared Public Administration dissertation research methods with five other fields, four of which were also applied in nature. They found that most Public Administration research lacked an explicit theoretical or conceptual framework, obvious flaws existed in their methods of data collection and many offered conclusions that contributed neither to theory development or the improvement of practical professional practice. (White, 1999: 2-3). In this regard their findings raise fundamental questions regarding the quality of research and the extent to which academics entering the field after their PhD dissertations are actually equipped to partake and contribute to a systematic knowledge-base. Certainly, characterising much of their research as a “theoretical wasteland” and “mindless empiricism” (White, 1999: 3) does not bear much hope.

Lan and Anders (2000) conducted a journal analysis across eight journals over a three year period (1993-1995); with the primary aim of questioning whether there are in fact recognised paradigmatic

views that guide research in contemporary Public Administration. Their primary focus was centred therefore on the intellectual core of the field rather than solely focusing on the methodologies used to conduct research. While this focus is slightly different from the above mentioned studies these authors asked relevant questions relating to the advancement of Public Administration theory. For example, their study set out to ask the following questions, amongst many more: (1) what type of subjects do Public Administration researchers regularly study? (2) is there an enduring group of scholars conducting research within the field? (3) what are the primary methods of analysis used in their studies? (4) what are their data sources? By answering these questions they were in a sense building upon prior categories used by Houston & Delevan (1990) and Perry & Kraemer (1986; 1994) and so forth.

Their study revealed that of the 634 articles reviewed 71.5% concentrated their research on issues associated with the public sector; with a heavy emphasis on the executive branch (35.3%). Without the authors implicitly stating this could perhaps infer that a large degree of these articles revolved around policy decisions, considering that this is the primary sphere of policy-making within government. Additionally, the authors found that a large percentage of the studies concentrated on subjects of organisational management (30.9%); personnel management (13%); political and legal institutions and processes (11.4%); and, finance and budgeting (10.2%). Subjects associated with theory development and methodological concerns, such as administrative theory (8.8%) and refinement of research methods (3.7%) accounted for the minimal amounts of the total population sample. In a similar regard qualitative studies continue to remain the most popular choice of research methodology employed within the field.⁴ Despite this weighting, Lan and Anders (2000) study illustrated a slight improvement in the use of descriptive and intermediate statistical techniques (43.1%) as opposed to previous studies. In accordance with prior studies however, Lan and Anders (2000) reach the same conclusion that there is little evidence of more advanced statistical techniques, such as regression analysis or multivariate analysis, within Public Administration research.

⁴ The case study still remained the most used qualitative method within this study. (25.3%). Ethnographic studies illustrated a small percentage of total methodologies used (1%).

In one of the most recent studies on Public Administration research, Wright et al (2004) contribute to the evaluation of the research process by focusing on two components, namely: measurement and data collection. They analyse these two components in quantitative research methods only. Their research is carried out by examining six Public Administration research journals over a three year period. Their approach is somewhat different in that they only concentrate on *one research methodology* (quantitative approaches) and they are concerned with how data is *collected and measured*; in other words the current state of measurement practices within quantitative studies. (Wright et al, 2004: 747).

Their findings suggest two main weaknesses in quantitative research published in the field of Public Administration. Firstly, the authors argue that research too often relies on pre-existing data sets and researchers seldom develop measures uniquely for their particular study. Not only do they argue that this presents potential problems of reliability and validity, but "because the nature of the research problem should guide the selection of particular data collection methods, this dependence of Public Administration research on a limited number of methods may indicate that the range of possible research problems has been restricted or that inappropriate data collection methods have been used to study such problems." (Wright et al, 2004: 757). Often, the authors add, important questions regarding how data is collected remain unanswered. The second primary weakness identified states that the source of measures used was often unclear or unspecified in the research report and only occasionally were measures of reliability and validity supplied to the reader. (Wright et al, 2004: 757). In other words researchers are frequently failing to report measurement properties, for example where they obtained their methodology frameworks from or what informed their choice of variables that they used. Additionally Wright et al (2004: 759) argue that researchers are not providing evidence reliability and validity, as well as descriptions of their measurement variables. This ultimately restricts the ability of both researchers and practitioners in the field to appropriately judge the accuracy of reported research findings; interpret the research findings within the context of other research; and, even learn from the research methods used. (Wright et al, 2004: 759).

2.4. The Methodology Debate – An Underlying Hierarchy:

Martin Landau (1972) comments on the importance of methodology within an academic field such as Public Administration: "...methodology, in its basic sense, has to do with the organising assumptions, the concepts and definitions that underlie any systematic inquiry. These are elements that provide a field with coherence and relevance. Hence a close and continuing concern with the logic and procedure of analysis remains a prime necessity for any discipline if it is to locate its centre and clarify its principal points of reference."

For decades researchers have questioned what the most appropriate and legitimate research methodologies are for Public Administration. This persistent problem inherent to Public Administration research stems from the argument over the nature of the discipline (McNabb, 2002: 15-16); in other words the different kinds of methods and knowledge that the theoretical and practical sides of the field demand. This debate is generally manifested in the quantitative versus qualitative research debate. Lan and Anders (2000: 150) note that both methods are well represented within the field of Public Administration, so that there is not one dominant agreed upon approach. Given this argument, this is perhaps a factor that certainly perpetuates this legitimacy debate.⁵

Present day comments on this debate can be traced back to the discussions between two of the most prominent figures in Public Administration theory, Herbert Simon and Dwight Waldo. Herbert Simon's (1957) book *Administrative Behavior* was representative of the "behavioral revolution" and the modern advances made in the so-called hard sciences, such as physics, engineering and aviation. (Wamsley & Wolf, 1996: 17). His writings advocated a call to science whereby a true scientific approach/method should be used to study Public Administration. In a devastating attack on Luther Gulick's POSDCORB "proverbs", Simon asserted himself against the then mainstream Traditionalist paradigm to build on ideas of rationalism, logical positivism and functionalist social science, otherwise known as modern behavioural science. (Wamsley & Wolf, 1996: 17). He attacked Gulick's work on epistemological grounds claiming that it were nothing more than descriptions of administrative functions. Simon would thus argue a case for research methods that

⁵ The theory practice interface which can be linked to the different use of methodologies (quantitative and qualitative) can also manifest itself through the skills versus knowledge debate. This is discussed in further detail in the final section of the chapter.

aligned themselves with “hard” or quantitative scientific methods, which could be used to describe and analyse the world in an objective, empirically verifiable reality, independent of human subjectivity. Simon (1957) confirms this when he speaks of Public Administration research: “What is needed is empirical research and experimentation to determine the relative desirability of alternative administrative arrangements.”

Dwight Waldo on the other hand would tend to disagree with this outlook. His famous piece of work, *The Administrative State (1948)*, was written at a time when the concept of public administration was taking on a new meaning and academics began studying different dimensions of administration, particularly focusing on decision-making models and cultural influence. Waldo work was influenced by the focus on social systems when the human factor became a prime concern. (Gildenhuis, 1988: 140). He would therefore argue that there is no such thing as absolute objectivity in research. In response to Simon's call for a more scientific approach to research, he would suggest that important issues in Public Administration do not always lend themselves to the neat distinction between the “facts” and “values” that logical positivism requires. (McCurdy & Cleary, 1984: 52). One must therefore consider whether these “soft” issues that Waldo refers to would be susceptible to theory-testing and rigorous scientific methods. Although slightly modified, the two sides of this debate are still evident in Public Administration research; through the quantitative and qualitative approaches to research. .

Most researchers today believe that not only quantitative but also qualitative models, if carried out correctly, are valid approaches for research in the social and administrative sciences. (White, 1999; McNabb, 2002). In addition authors such as Lan and Anders (2000: 150) also comment on the predominance of one approach to conducting research: “...we should move beyond arguments as to which research method is legitimate, towards discussions as to whether the methods have been appropriately used.”

Despite this recognition there seems to be an underlying bias towards quantitative or “hard” social science research methods within Public Administration, an issue that has attracted major criticism towards research. (Bailey, 1994; Box, 1992; White, 1999). For example Perry & Kraemer (1994: 224) question the “adequacy of the researcher's grasp of the tools and craft associated with

qualitative methodology". While they call for an improvement in this type of approach to research, they also comment: "Traditional social science methods are valuable as a means of advancing the field. Indeed, the most valued research in the field comes from the social sciences and is based on its methods. Alternative methods may be equally valuable, although we do not espouse them." (Perry & Kraemer, 1986: 347).

McCurdy & Cleary (1984); Perry & Kraemer (1994) and Lowery & Evans (2004) are critical of the qualitative, case study methodology. These authors do not argue for the abandonment of this approach but they do simultaneously call for renewed commitment of rigour in the qualitative approach as whole. In other words they argue that there needs to a more specified, conceptual linkage that should tie paradigms, theoretical perspectives, research methods and techniques. Only then can qualitative research be accepted in a similar light as the strong quantitative approach. This critique highlights the idea that the usefulness of the case-study methodology is only as good as the extent to which it incorporates and balances the practical dimension with theoretical substance and debates. Since the interpretation of the case-study method is arguably largely subjective it is critical that it is indeed matched with tools that are able to guide and facilitate learners and academics alike so that informed and theoretical conclusions can be drawn.⁶

Critics of the social science quantitative approach, on the other hand argue that these studies emphasise and focus too narrowly on research that engages in theory testing and fails to recognise the use of alternative methodologies, such as interpretive or critical research. (White, 1999: 1). Bailey (1994: 184) explains precisely the basis of this argument: "Throughout this literature and, indeed, across the discipline, there is a fundamental bias towards, an unarticulated value favouring the acceptability of empirical or quantitative research methods over qualitative..." "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 on the significance of their work." In other words "hard" quantitative research methods are used as a benchmark to assess other research efforts. This underlying assumption surmises that there is a linkage between conformity to mainstream social science research and the production of higher quality research

⁶ For a defense of the case study approach one should consult Bailey (1994) who advocates this approach. In addition White (1999) makes a claim for two other research approaches critical and interpretive research used by post-positivist thinkers – rather than the mainstream, quantitative, explanatory research.

outputs. Interestingly enough, Adams and White (1994) proved this to not necessarily be true in their study of Public Administration research across six different applied disciplines.

These criticisms of “soft” research methods are a result of inappropriate assumptions about what is considered “acceptable” research in Public Administration. (Box, 1994: 76). For example both McCurdy and Cleary (1984) and Perry & Kraemer (1986) state their primary concerns are centred on what methodologies are being used in academic research. They also evaluate research in Public Administration against mainstream social sciences such as economics, political science or sociology. As a result of this thinking, academics or authors who make use of quantitative methods are hailed within the field, while those performing alternative methods are not given the same recognition.

In response to this underlying hierarchy, Box (1994: 77) argues that choosing the mainstream social science disciplines as a comparative base for evaluating the quality of Public Administration research is not without its associated problems. He begins by stating that the most obvious weakness is the assumption that traditional positivist methods are the most appropriate comparison may be inaccurate. This assumption has also been compared to locking Public Administration research into a narrowly positivist quantitative “straightjacket.” (Box, 1994: 76). On this note, it could be argued that the field is yet to progress and learn the value of other qualitative and participatory forms of research. As a retort, quantitative advocates may argue that the Public Administration community does not have anything besides the traditional positivist approach to compare too. Secondly, Box (1994: 77) argues, that while the studies have found the state of Public Administration research to be deficient in relation to the mainstream disciplines this is largely based on personal perceptions rather than empirically supported data. He notes that at no point is the status of research in the so-called mainstream disciplines determined using the same measures that were used to exploit Public Administration. Lastly and very importantly, he concludes that there is a greater need for Public Administration research to be compared to other practice-orientated disciplines such as law, architecture and so forth as they might be more suitable for comparison. At the time of Box’s writing (1992) he noted that there was no attempt to gain ground in this regard although two years later White and Adams (1994) conducted a study of this nature, comparing Public Administration with five other applied fields.

Essentially what this debate does by raising these concerns is question to what extent knowledge and theory development are different in applied practice-orientated disciplines, such as Public Administration, in relation to the mainstream social sciences. Furthermore it also raises fundamental questions as to whether the needs of academics and practitioners would be met by different types of research. This theory versus practice debate will be discussed in greater detail in the following section of this chapter.

2.5. Reasons for Poor Research Methods & Outcomes:

This section of the chapter presents possible arguments as to why research in Public Administration is characterised by such poor quality research outcomes and methods as found in previous studies. The tensions and contradictions discussed are by no means specific to any one context they are rather part of the scholarly development of the field internationally. Reference will be made specifically to the five themes put forward by Perry & Kraemer (1986: 348) that were discussed in the introductory section of the paper. To recap, these included: (1) the eclectic nature of Public Administration; (2) the interdisciplinary influence on the field and the lack of communication between various sub-fields; (3) the lack of cumulateness in Public Administration research; (4) inadequate institutional support to support research within the field; and finally, (5) the complex relationship between theory and practice and the impact that this has on research methodology. These five themes can clearly be bridged with and related to the four trends identified by Greenwood and Eggin (1995), namely: *from theory to practice; from policy to management; from social science to business; and, from knowledge to skills.*

2.5.1. The Eclectic Nature of Public Administration:

The issue of whether Public Administration is a discipline or not has occupied large amounts of consideration in Public Administration thought (Perry & Kraemer, 1986; McCurdy & Cleary, 1984; Houston & Delevan, 1990). Analysis of the academic-practice interface is imbued with questions regarding the intellectual core of field which has direct influence on the scope, methodology and research employed within the field. (McNabb, 2002: 15). To make sense of this consideration one is confronted with questions regarding the double-sided nature of the field and the ideal balance between theory and practice, often at opposing ends of the scale. Honey (1957), aptly summarises

this dilemma: “a common pool of understanding was lacking with regard to the (a) what Public Administration is whether it is a separate field or discipline from other social science, and (b) the nature of research that has meaning for Public Administration.”

The historical character of the field, with the inherent focus on the practice of public administration may well contribute to the lack of theoretical research. (Houston & Delevan, 1990; 135).

Traditionally, the field has been viewed as the training ground for the public service and has focused on the importance of practicing public administration, which has led to the “self-conscious” effort of “clinging” to the emphasis of practice, thereby hindering its intellectual development. (Stallings & Ferris, 1988: 120).

Locating Public Administration in the larger realm of social and natural sciences has direct bearing on identifying common and acceptable research methodologies. (Perry & Kraemer, 1986: 348).

This presents a situation whereby researchers are not only confronted with various competing paradigms to choose from, but they are also caught between the tensions of providing basic and applied research for the field. On the one hand, although there is an underlying bias towards using quantitative methods, critics argue “that the field is still guided by outdated and inappropriate positivist notions.” (White, 1999: 3). The other side of the coin claims that while there has been a methodological shift towards qualitative methods, critics are wary since they “lack a strong theoretical framework for interpretive and critical research.” (Orosz, 1998: page unknown). This once again points to the need for an agreed upon set of research questions that are able to direct research that can contribute to knowledge development within Public Administration..

2.5.2 Interdisciplinary Communication:

The interdisciplinary influence on the traditional boundaries of Public Administration provides yet a further explanation to the poor standard of research. This factor not only has the potential to act as a barrier to research and knowledge coherence within the field but also blurs the boundaries of what is “acceptable” research and not. (Bogason, 2002; Kuye, 2005; Raadschelders, 2005; Rodgers & Rodgers). Greenwood & Eggins (1995: 147) argue that as the changes and developments in Public Administration, such as NPM, have impacted on the field there has been

an establishment of new boundaries and focuses – at times some of which have been rather controversial.

Historically, Public Administration has always drawn knowledge from a range of disciplines, such as economics, political science and law. (Greenwood & Eggins, 1995: 146). As the wealth of knowledge has expanded and the breadths of the field have grown, it has become more difficult for scholars and practitioners to define and understand where the relevant boundaries are and where they might move too. As Bogason (2002: 7) explains: “In sum we have several bases for common understanding of what the field of Public Administration is about – but the bases are moving, and the ground is sliding...” As the disciplines and business management are merging closer to Public Administration, new fields of study are being created as spin-offs from the original tradition of the field, for example development management or governance schools. These fields not only use but contribute to the development of research and theory within Public Administration; so that scholars are now confronted with “an overload problem of sorts: how to select from among all the organisational options available for their professional development.” (Perry & Kraemer, 1986: 350).⁷ This intellectual diaspora is to a large degree a disservice to the field, since the more interdisciplinary it becomes the greater the danger that Public Administration might become less relevant. (Raadschelders, 2005: 595). As the discipline expands to incorporate and relate to new fields, the less certain scholars and other stakeholders are in determining the boundaries and basic terms of the field. (Perry & Kraemer, 1986: 350).

While certain scholars might view this myriad of influences as a disadvantage, others might view this as a huge advantage to research and the development of theory. For example the diversity and developmental challenges in South Africa can be remedied from various angles each offering different and worthwhile understandings of the same concepts. Bogason (2002: 10) elaborates that the closer theorists and practitioners get to action the more difficult it will become to think in terms of one discipline only – so that the various disciplines become aspects of a whole. A response to

⁷ This intellectual overload is confirmed by Rodgers and Rodgers (2000) who conducted a study to assess the publishing patterns of “undisciplined mongrels” (faculty from Public Administration who publish in a wide variety of journals) as opposed to “disciplined purists” (faculty who are trained in Public Administration and publish exclusively in Public Administration journals). Their hypothesis was that the “undisciplined mongrels” would have a higher publishing rate than that of the “disciplined purists” due to the “undisciplined nature” of the field. This they found to be true but also worrying.

this however might be, that this too might lead to fragmentation and there is the potential that the practitioner and academic alike, might become a “jack of all trades and a master of none.” (Bogason, 2002: 10). The challenge therefore lies in selecting appropriate approaches and achieving a balance between research methods and influences from other fields.

2.5.3. Cumulativeness:

Just as the above interdisciplinary problem poses integrative issues so does the problem of cumulativeness of relevant knowledge. In this way these two issues are interrelated. To a large degree this problem has been discussed in previous paragraphs. Knowledge accumulation is hindered due to various factors, namely: the diverse, growing and ever-changing scope of the field; the lack of fixed core content of the field; the value-judgments attached to specific research methodologies; disagreements amongst competing scholarly interests as well as the evolving and multi-faceted public problems. (Perry & Kraemer, 1986: 351; Box, 1992: 88). Regardless of what the cause, if little attention is given to earlier studies within the area of Public Administration research, little if any efforts can be made to contribute to the valid and scientific base of knowledge of the field. Essentially, therefore without cumulativeness one cannot contribute to knowledge and theory development.

2.5.4. Lack of Institutional Support:

Previous authors on Public Administration research have highlighted the inadequacy of available institutionalised support. (Perry & Kraemer, 1984; Stallings & Ferris, 1988; Cameron, 2005). Public Administration as an academic and vocational field historically has not lacked institutional research outlets that have had the potential to promote basic research; for example various publication outlets and government institutions that would benefit from advocating and supporting basic research efforts. Greater research must be conducted as to assess why there is so little institutional support for Public Administration research – for example studying the extent to which government does indeed support basic research studies. Perry & Kraemer (1984: 352) note that although an increase in institutional support could improve research efforts this alone is not enough. They argue that there needs to be a greater recognition and value attached to basic research endeavours at various levels of the Public Administration community, from universities (recruiting, promoting and teaching) through to government institutions.

2.5.5. Bridging Theory and Practice:

Just as the tension of the politics and administration dichotomy is central to the field of Public Administration, in a similar manner the debate between theory and practice is central to Public Administration research and education. (Denhardt, 2001: 527). The theory-practice discussion should be viewed as an interface rather than a distinctive dichotomy and is closely associated with the eclectic nature of Public Administration. This tension is centred on the fact that the need for and occurrence of utilitarian (applied) research has driven out investments of basic research. (Perry & Kraemer, 1984; Cameron, 2005). In other words Perry and Kraemer (1984) would argue that applied research is carried out at the expense of theory development within the field, contributing to the stagnation of theory advancement. "Academic Public Administration is simultaneously provided with and robbed of the means for advancement of knowledge by some of its own institutionalised values." (Perry & Kraemer, 1984: 351).

While this dichotomy has for years penetrated international scholars' understandings of Public Administration, in some ways it is overstated. In an interview with one of the leading academics in Public Administration, Christopher Pollit (2007) argued that while this theory versus practice tension is often placed along an opposing continuum, this is somewhat of a false dichotomy, given that there is no watertight distinction between the two approaches. (Interview, Brussels, 6 February, 2007). In addition Pollit (2007) argues that the practice of public administration cannot be adequately carried out without being informed by theory. By the same token much of the practice of Public Administration informs theory. It is therefore foolish to suggest that the theory–practice interface exists at opposing ends. Taking this into consideration, the challenge lies perhaps in achieving a balance between the two approaches since each has value that can be added to the other. In this way they are inextricably linked. In this regard, there are various different ways in which the theory-practice question can be answered. Inevitably this often gives rise as Box (1992) highlights; firstly to different positions regarding theory versus practice, and secondly, to different or preferred methodologies amongst practitioners and academics. These different positions will now be discussed in greater detail:

2.5.5.1. Theory Informs Practice:

For some, “theories of public organisation provide a basis for understanding practice and should inform everything that a “reflective practitioner” does.” (Denhardt, 2001: 527). This position advocates that theory can add value to the practice of Public Administration, in that it opens new possibilities for practice. Advocates of this position would argue that despite the applied nature of Public Administration, it must still have an empirical, rigorous and systematic core. (McCurdy, 1984: 53). According to Frederickson and Smith (2003: 3), “theory is the bedrock to understanding Public Administration.” Furthermore, these authors strongly argue that theory is highly important to the applied, practical and interdisciplinary nature of Public Administration since it provides a range of uses to the practitioner. Since theory has the capacity to describe, explain and predict societal phenomena public administrators are better equipped to understand reality and thus benefit from the scholarship of the field. (Frederickson & Smith, 2003: 3).⁸

This argument is supported by Bourgon (2007), who herself is a practitioner. She discusses the importance of theory, as the most basic level that guides Public Administration. She highlights her concern about the growing gap between the reality of those serving in the public service and the theory that, in principle, is there to guide them. (Bourgon, 2007: 15). As a result, this implies that public servants are left without an integrated theory to guide their actions. The fact that this concern has been raised by a practitioner highlights that there is a demand for theory from a practical perspective and that practitioners and academics do not have to work in isolation from one another.

According to this viewpoint, theory is therefore equivalent to learning the “logic” of the field, so regardless of how today’s details of practice may change the logic will continue to apply tomorrow. (Denhardt, 2001: 527). In addition Cameron (2005: 13) argues that the more Public Administration and its relative components, such as research, gets “enmeshed” within a practice, skills-based approach the further it moves away from a proper knowledge-based academic field. This is somewhat of a paradox.

⁸ This is just one way in which theory can be of use to practitioners, for a more detailed overview consult his well-known *The Public Administration Theory Primer* (2003).

2.5.5.2. Practice is Unrelated to Theory:

For others, theory is often unrelated to practice. This argument is based on the notion that theory typically stands at a distance from practice; therefore understanding theory may not necessarily aid practice. (Denhardt, 2001: 527). For this group of thinkers, the knowledge-based approach is often criticised for being too abstract, irrelevant or narrow when it comes to actual problems that practitioners face in their everyday experiences. (Box, 1999: 82).

According to Bogason (2002: 16) specific features of Public Administration research do not “sit well with practitioners”. He mentions that for practitioners there is a preference to focus on process rather than content and Public Administration research may not be interested enough in the “nuts and bolts” of implementation. Public Administration research is often centred on the higher politics of public affairs, ministers, civil servants and therefore provides few insights into the more “humble business of policy implementation.” (Bogason, 2002: 17). In this regard, practitioners possess their own type of knowledge that is fundamentally different from that of science which has the potential to offer greater solutions to practical problems. Unfortunately, this group of thinkers would argue that this knowledge does not carry equal legitimacy to that knowledge associated with the “hard” sciences, given the hierarchy of “preferred” research methodologies. (White, 1999: xiii).

Cunningham and Weschler (2002: 106) comment on this divide. These authors claim that the difference in orientation between scholars and actual public servants (for example line managers), lies at the controversy of the theory-practice debate. “We scholars have failed to put tools and findings of construction and deconstruction into the hands of potential reflective practitioners.” (Cunningham & Weschler, 2002: 106). This begs the consideration that there is a greater need for theory development within the field and research is one way through which this can be achieved.

2.5.5.3. Practice Informs Theory:

In a similar light, the theory-practice interface can be understood from yet a further angle. Instead of theory leading practice, this group of thinkers might argue the opposite. Researchers in Public Administration observe practice and then reflect practical developments in their theoretical work, for example the case of budgeting. (Denhardt, 2001: 527). In other words practice informs theory.

This can also be understood as grounded theory. "The information that practitioners own is needed by scholars to develop and test theories, which can then be applied by practitioners to improve the practice of public administration and by scholars both in further theory development and for the teaching of public managers." (Bailey, 1999: 190).

2.6. The South African Discussion - The State of the Academic Field:

The research debate in South Africa requires an assessment in terms of its content, quality and breadth, as well as the relevant people involved in its progression. (Schwella, 1999: 323). By understanding the history of the field, academics are able to assess how theory has progressed, decided if change has occurred for the better and where the field might be heading in the future.

2.6.1. History of Public Administration Research in South Africa:

As a social scientist one has to acknowledge that the academic history of Public Administration has been heavily influenced by the surrounding political and social contexts of the time. This serves to reinforce the notion that research is informed by current events and that contemporary practices/theories should endeavor to improve the real world in the future. (Thornhill, 2006: 1). Inevitably, therefore, the deeply divided society that characterised the South African landscape during the 1970's and 1980's impacted on the realm of Public Administration development.

Hubbell (1992: 2) explains the close relationship between the political and administrative interface inherent to the nature of South African Public Administration: "The academic field of South African Public Administration and the South African government have had a close association over the years. Indicative of this close relationship is the number of South African public administration academics who have had significant government experience." It is hardly surprising therefore that during this period, the field was very much constrained by the Apartheid political ideology so that any training or research that was undertaken did so as not to disrupt the status quo of the time. Public Administration at the time did little to reflect the serious problems of governance and administration in our country at the time – its paradigm was fairly weak in terms of providing real guidance in analyses and prescription for complex public management related issues. (Schwella, 1992: 336). If academics had adopted a critical posture towards the ruling government it is more than likely that they would have been harassed with critical consequences.

The following two statements shed light on the political situation. "For those academics who had their doubts, many of them decided to be good soldiers and not buck the prevailing uncritical tendency that marked the discipline" (Hubbell, 1992: 4). This comment is supported by Thornhill (2006: 6) when he states, "The situation implied that research was often limited to topics that could withstand possible scrutiny by the National Intelligence and that would not elicit negative comments from government.

In addition to the constraining political situation, the field was at the disadvantage of developing in isolation to emerging international trends and schools of thought due to our the prevailing government system. Researchers were largely dependent on limited literature available from a limited number of countries and they were often refused entry into a country to attend conferences or from doing research. (Thornhill, 2006: 1). Even when one was allowed access into a foreign county to conduct research, without sounding too casual, it was expected that you kept "a low profile." (Interview with Professor Thornhill, Stellenbosch, 30 November 2006). Combined, these factors all made it extremely difficult for the scholarship of South African Public Administration to advance during a time characterised by surrounding political upheaval.

Some critics may question the reasons as to why other social science disciplines, such as sociology, was able to criticise and study the "real" effects that Apartheid had on society and Public Administration did not. Put simply, Public Administration unlike these other disciplines, acted at the time as a vital engine for the ruling political ideology – thereby disallowing it to be critical on both theoretical and practical grounds. In this regard both the practice and study of Public Administration was so closely linked to the state it acted as a form of political machinery and was "supporting" the state in a way that other disciplines were not. This is illustrative of the two facets if the field working, hand in hand to compliment each other.

During this period, the predominant academic paradigm was secured by the work of one individual, J.J.N. Cloete, who is also acknowledged as the founding father of Public Administration in our country. (Rowland, 1987: 59). His work was basically a description of six generic administrative processes (policy-making, financing, organising, staffing, determining/improving work procedures and controlling) that were detrimentally inwardly focused. (Schwella, 1999: 336). By simply

focusing on the internal administrative aspects of the organisation Cloete's work simply reduced Public Administration to primary management phenomena that could be present within any organisation. Cloete's work infiltrated the scholarship and research domains of Public Administration such that it would ultimately determine and dominate the paradigm within South Africa up until the early 1990's. For example two of J.J.N. Cloete's books *Sentrale, provinsiale en munisipale instellings van Suid-Afrika*, (Van Schaik, 1964) and *Inleiding tot die Publieke Administrasie* (Van Schaik, 1967) were the prescribed textbooks at most South African universities (Thornhill, 2006: 2).

This work was essentially descriptive analyses of the public sector rather than the "real" political and administrative problems of the day. For example take the quote by Cloete (1981: 24): "The Republic of South Africa is a democratic state. Therefore all administrative action on all levels of government (central, provincial and municipal) should uphold the tenets which characterise a democratic state." It goes without saying that this statement is a distorted reflection of the political situation at the time. In addition to these problems, students were encouraged to learn in such a fashion that they should recite their textbooks from cover to cover – so that the process became an end in itself, rather than a means to advance knowledge. (Interview with Professor Thornhill, Stellenbosch, 30 November 2006). This method of teaching and research was hardly a way in which new theory could be generated.

One way in which research is facilitated is through the relationship individuals (often students) have with the research leaders (supervisors) around specific areas of interest. (McCurdy & Cleary, 1988; Thornhill, 2006; Hubbell, 1992). Most supervisors at other tertiary institutions, during this time, were followers of Cloete's administrative approach. Given the dominance and monopoly of Cloete's work, the field not only adopted a very narrow focus but also became a "tightly knit club" with somewhat of an "inbred nature." (Hubbell, 1992: 2- 3). These followers of Cloete's generic process, accepting it as the *priori* focus of the field, were known as the traditionalists. (Rowland, 1987: 60). Other researchers, besides academics, were employees of public institutions and therefore had conflicting interests regarding their areas and outcomes of research. For instance at certain universities, such as the University of Pretoria, only full-time employed public servants were permitted to register for post-graduate studies (Thornhill, 2006: 2); thereby inevitably impacting

heavily on the outcomes of research and contribution to a valid scientific knowledge base. As a result research concentrated on the craft of Public Administration rather than developing theories that would be relevant and beneficial to both the study and practice of public administration. (Cameron, 2005: 3; Thornhill, 2006: 2). As long as the J.J.N. Cloete's work remained unchallenged it remained a "safe house for the discipline during highly turbulent times" (Schwella, 1999: 335), and in this regard there was little incentive to develop the field theoretically due to the close association of followers.

The reductionism of Cloete's work ultimately led to criticisms on many accounts and many levels, for example through the work of Cameron, 2005; Fitzgerald, 1990; Marias, 1988; Rowlands, 1987; Schwella, 1999; and, Thornhill, 2006. These critics note that the overriding influence of the administrative approach did not contribute to valid scientific knowledge within Public Administration, considering its narrow-focus and its contribution to the stagnation of Public Administration theory development. One of the first and earliest criticisms lodged against Cloete's generic administrative approach was that it represented a variation of Gulick's POSDCORB, which had decades earlier been discredited by Herbert Simon. (Marias, 1987; Fitzgerald, 1990). These authors argue that nowhere does Cloete acknowledge firstly the origins of the administrative approach and secondly, the shortcomings associated with it. Cameron (2005: 4) agrees that Cloete was indeed a "spiritual descendent of this technicist approach". Building on this argument, Marias (1988: 185) states that mere description of administrative processes cannot be explained or classified as theory or paradigm. "The administrative process has no basis for validity; at least, it was never proved that is. It consisted of and still consists of hasty, unproven generalisations. It was introduced without any effort having been made to prove its validity." The lack of theory obviously explains the minimal contribution to a verifiable body of scientific knowledge.

Schwella (1990) was also highly critical of the traditionalist approach on three main accounts. First he accused the "paradigm" of being reductionist – in that it simply reduced the complexity of public administration to administrative process that actually stated nothing about the inherent nature of South African Public Administration. (Schwella, 1999: 334). Secondly, it was faulted on the grounds of reification – elevating the generic administrative approach to the level of reality and; lastly, it lacked relevance. In other words it focused primarily on the internal aspects of bureaucratic

function rather than reflecting on the serious problems of governance. In practice therefore, Public Administration was seen as bureaucratic, hierarchical and unresponsive aimed at controlling rather than developing the citizens of the country. (Fitzgerald, McLennan & Munslow, 1997: page unknown).

Cameron (2005: 4) explains that as the Apartheid edifice began to disintegrate not only was the administrative approach challenged by a group of “young turks” (reformists), but new emerging paradigms began to take shape. The year 1991 was a significant one for South African Public Administration as the New Public Administration Initiative (NPAI) was formed by a progressive group of academics who held the Mount Grace 1 Conference, the equivalent of the Minnowbrook Conference in America during the late 1980’s. This conference was a “call to arms” for resolutions to be passed; in order that a more progressive and normative approach to Public Administration theory and research could be adopted. (Cameron, 2005: 6). This was an important watershed in the advancing of the discipline at the time, since it recognised the shortcomings of the previous administrative academic approach. Fanie Cloete (2000: 14) summarises the conference conclusions as it relates to Public Administration research and theory development: Public Administration at the time was too descriptive; more rigorous scientific analysis, explanation and prediction of government and administrative phenomena was necessary; and a more open and critical debate concerning theoretical advancement for these purposes were needed. Despite this initial stance towards a greater emphasis on Public Administration research and theory, there is debate as to whether these recommendations have actually been met. (Hubbell, 1992; Cameron, 2005; Wessels, 2005).

In response to the generic process shortcomings, Schwella (1999: 344) suggested a new model termed the “Open Systems Approach” which was based largely on systems theory. This framework advocates the study and research of Public Administration as a complex, interacting system of structures which operate and are influenced by the surrounding environment of society. Schwella (1999: 345) highlights three interacting societal systems: political, economic and social. He also includes Public Management as an integral component to this model. In this regard, Public Management represents an important teaching, research and professional perspective. A critical examination of the management approach to public administration reveals that it is nothing more

than the outdated administrative approach in disguise since it has the same substructure. (Marias, 1994: 116).

While this is inevitably an advance on the administrative processes as the core focus of the discipline, its shortcoming is that this model is a variant of self-adjusting systems theory, which has been discredited for many years. (Cameron, 2005: 5).⁹ In addition, Fitzgerald (1990: 15) agrees that while Schwella's model acknowledges the great need for theory development, it remains in many ways enmeshed in the general methodological functionalism of the previous approach.¹⁰

2.6.2 South African Studies on Public Administration Research:

As mentioned, the study of Public Administration research is still a relatively new endeavour in South Africa. The two most recognised studies that have been undertaken in this regard are those of Hubbell (1992) and Wessels (2005).

Hubbell (1992) explored the question of where South African Public Administration as an academic field has been and in what theoretical direction it is heading. His study undertook a qualitative assessment of South African Institute of Public Administration (SAIPA), *Journal of Public Administration*, between the years 1986-1990. At this point in history, this was the only academic Public Administration journal available in South Africa. (Cameron, 2005: 5). His conclusions stated that the majority of articles analysed fell within what could be termed a functionalist perspective, lacking any critical analysis. (Hubbell, 1992: 13). More conclusively he 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. These findings must be interpreted within the broader political and social realm. Hubbell (1992) conducted this study at a time when South Africa was in the midst of transition and considering Public Administration's murky past the certainty of the country, let alone the academic nature of the field, was highly volatile.

⁹ The shortcomings and critiques of systems theory is discussed in greater detail by Erasmus (1994) and Hill (1997)

¹⁰ Due to space constraints not all alternative frameworks for studying Public Administration could be discussed in detail. Both Rowland (1999) (The Reappraisal Approach) and Fitzgerald's (1995) three strategic areas of reform provide useful alternatives to understanding South African Public Administration during post-Apartheid.

More recently however, Wessels (2005) conducted a study of journal articles in similar vein – to question the research status and theoretical development of the field in South Africa. His study takes a slightly different approach from international studies on Public Administration research, as he analyses whether research findings are addressing the core knowledge needs of the government. (Wessels, 2005: 1500). In other words his study serves a utilitarian state purpose. Despite this differentiation, his study should be recognised as a primary attempt at theoretical advancement within the field since it aimed to push the boundaries of Public Administration research in this country and should therefore be given credit for this attempt.

Articles from the *Journal of Public Administration*, between the years 2000 and 2004 were the unit of analysis in Wessels' study. Once again as in Hubbell's (1992) study the focus only concentrated on one variable – research topic excluding other important aspects such as type of methodologies used. In other words both authors only classified the articles according to the subject content. In Wessels' study (2005) categories of classification are informed by the proposed unit standards for Public Administration and Management, in defense that they can be considered a "safe middle ground" between academics and practitioners. (Wessels, 2005: 1504). His findings reinforce the international dilemma at a localised level: the majority of research articles are primarily practice orientated with little emphasis on theoretical development. Approximately eighty two percent of the articles relate to the management of the public service, such as management of public institutions/organisations and human resource management. Only four articles focused on Public Administration theory and research issues. "The relatively low percentage of articles focusing on Public Administration and as a subject, theory, and methodology, is an early indication of a possible bias towards practice application and a possible theory-less empiricism." (Wessels, 2005: 1506). Following on is a table of Wessels (2005) findings:

Categories	No	Per cent	Priority
1 Policy Analysis & Management (POL)	12	13,80	5
2 Development Management (DEV)	8	9,20	7
3 Public Organisational Development & Management (ODM)	14	16,10	2
4 Managing public service delivery (PSD)	17	19,55	1
5 Human Resources Management (HRM)	14	16,10	2
6 Financial Management & Procurement (FMP)	6	6,90	10
7 Information, Knowledge, Communication & Technology Management (ICT)	14	16,10	2
8 Public Management Ethics (ETH)	9	10,35	6
9 Public Administration and Management history, theory and research (HTR)	4	4,60	11
10 Disaster Studies (DIS)	0	0,00	12
11 Inter-Governmental Relations (IGR)	9	10,35	6
12 Do not fit in any of the above	8	9,20	7
Total:	115	100	

Table: Profile of research issues reported in the *Journal of Public Administration (JOPA)* in the period 2000—2004.

Cameron (2005: 16) supports Wessels' (2005) findings and argument within the South African context, as he claims that more empirical investigation is needed within the field. He substantiates this position by concluding that South African journal articles are most often descriptive, concentrating on the operations of public sector bodies that draw largely from secondary literature; or they have been influenced by the NPM framework which tend to be skewed towards providing practical solutions, rather than drawing experience from rigorous theoretical/academic research. (Cameron, 2005: 16).

In addition Cloete (2000:14) also makes reference to the inherent problem of description in South African Public Administration research. He claims that that it lacks sufficient analytical, explanatory and predictive techniques and that there is a need for more rigorous scientific analysis. "...too little conceptual as well as quantitative analyses are still undertaken, while no serious intellectual debates on competing models of analysis are being conducted. There are far too many cases of problem-identification and too few problem-resolution exercises reported." (Cloete, 2000: 14).

While Wessels' (2005) contribution to South African Public Administration research is notable, his study can be faulted on several grounds. Firstly, the reason of academia is not solely to serve as a utilitarian "sausage machine" for states needs. This would simply be falling into the trap of the relationship that the administrative process approach had with the previous government.

Essentially, what Wessels (2005) does is he equates the core problems and knowledge needs of the government with those of the field of Public Administration. Adding to this, at the beginning of his study Wessels (2005: 1500-1503) argues towards the importance of the relationship between scientific knowledge and how it contributes to Public Administration theory development. After advocating a move away from the use of practical indicators, in a contradictory fashion, he goes on to use exactly that to form the basis of his study - primarily practice-orientated benchmarks to “advance research.”

The proposed unit standards for Public Administration and Management that he uses within his study are a product of the South African Qualifications Authority (SAQA), established by the Ministers of Education and Labour to oversee the development of the National Qualifications Framework. (NQF) (Cameron, 2005: 12). Clapper (2000: 56) notes that SAQA has an operative agenda in that it is concerned with the skills-base needed by public servants, so that there is “an inordinately strong emphasis on tasks only.” In this regard, Wessels study uses indicators that are designed to serve the use of the state not necessarily the academic and theoretical side of Public Administration; for example there is no topical category for intergovernmental relations or administrative reform two impertinent issues in the study of Public Administration.

2.6.3. The Rise of New Public Management & it's Impact on Public Administration Theory & Research:

Undoubtedly NPM can be described as one of the most discussed models for public sector reform in recent years, hailing a “paradigm” shift in Public Administration.¹¹ With the onset of democracy, South African Public Administration was not only given the chance to become more legitimate but also the opportunity to establish new theories and new knowledge-based research to inform the field. This was the time that the field could really reassert itself. A significant factor at this point in South Africa's history was the quest for solutions to the deterioration of public services and ways in which service delivery could be fast-tracked to reduce the backlog of Apartheid service demands. In this regard, pursuit of transformation was driven by the so-called paradigmatic shift from Public Administration to Public Management, a manifestation of the NPM movement. (Vil-Nkomo, 2000:

¹¹ For a more detailed overview of NPM see Hughes (2003). For a critique of NPM as it applies to developing countries see Manning (2001)

47). In agreement with this statement, Cameron (2005: 6) notes that "Public Management was regarded as the knight in shining armour that was going to train the new generation of public servants." Adoption of Public Management approach was largely viewed as the most beneficial way that the field could not only cater for the needs of the state but also progress as an academic discipline. Representative of this progression was the adoption of the NPM framework, which manifested itself largely under the domain of Public Management, within the field.

While NPM is a definite advancement from the previous administrative approach, it too carries many deficiencies. Cameron (2005: 6) highlights an important point regarding South Africa's adoption of NPM. He notes that NPM emerged internationally in the 1980's, so that by the time South Africa turned to this framework there were already emerging international criticisms questioning the applicability and usefulness of NPM. These critiques and discussions however were largely ignored by the South African government and academic community at large. Cameron (2005: 6) comments that as a vehicle for developing and advancing the knowledge-base of South African Public Administration, NPM has portrayed disappointing results. In somewhat of an ironic sense the advent of the new democratic era "heralded a false dawn" for Public Administration research and to a large degree led the field of Public Administration into an "intellectual cul-de-sac." (Cameron, 2005: 7).

The shift from Public Administration to Public Management under the auspice of NPM is doubted by some critics. For example Cameron, 2005; Lynn, 1994; Mikulowski, 2002; Pauw, 1999; Wildavsky, 1985; argue that Public Management has always been inherent to Public Administration. Mikulowski (2002: 155) states, "Public management can be considered a part of the public administration system which is responsible for its internal organisation and functioning, for mobilisation and the effective use of its resources such as finance, personnel, infrastructure and equipment." In a similar light, Wildavsky (1985) has long doubted whether anything is valid if it is reduced to the concept of language. Lynn (1994: 234) supports this thought as he states: "By substituting one word, namely "administration" for "management" the old world of public administration is being revived under the new rubric of public management."

These authors view Public Management as an inherent component to the broader subject of Public Administration both in terms of the theoretical and practical application of the fields. In other words Public Management is only part of the subject not the whole basis of study. Critics argue that as Public Management has displaced Public Administration there is greater emphasis on the service delivery end of government activities, while the work of government itself and how it is organised is largely ignored. (Mikulowski, 2002; Lynn, 1994). Attempts to initiate business or private sector principles into the public sector can be traced back to before NPM was introduced as a subject of study. NPM was different to these previous approaches however, in that it placed a greater emphasis on consumer choice, based on the Public Choice Theory.

Public administration cannot simply be reduced or equated to management as they can be defined as two different activities. Public administration does however involve the management of resources in an attempt to fulfill the roles of the state. By focusing too heavily on Public Management one carries the dangers of falling into the similar trap that JJN Cloete's generic administrative process approach did: reductionism, the acceptance of facts-values distinction and the elevation of efficiency as the primary goal. (Cameron, 2005: 9).

Mabin (2004: 51) notes that the emphasis on restructuring and change during South Africa's transition, did not single government out as the only role-player responsible for making a significant contribution to the transformation objective. Other important drivers, notably "schools of government" were also regarded as main actors in the pursuit of bringing about new policies and training of public servants. He further notes the relationship between these schools, training and the promotion of research; thereby highlighting the important link between research and education. "Good training demands intellectual preparedness on the part of the trainers (schools) and that in turn demands the genesis of new knowledge – in other words research." (Mabin, 2004: 51). This illustrates that often influences and new directions in the way that the field progresses does not emerge directly from intellectual engagement but from changes/needs reflected in societal demands and the growth and development of the state. (Kuye, 2005: 8). Hence these schools are viewed as having a special responsibility on redefining the role of the public services and development.

A number of these schools, serving the main purpose of supplying the government with trained bureaucrats and senior managers, were influenced by the newly introduced framework of NPM and Public Management, for example Witwatersrand's Graduate School of Public and Development Management (P&DM). (Cameron, 2005; Mabin, 2004). P&DM viewed and positioned itself as a "champion of a new management paradigm for the public service" so that it "aimed to imply a more responsive, accountable, innovative, entrepreneurial approach to the business of government." (Cawthra, 2000: 61). Kuye (2005: 9) would agree with this as he argues that these schools have been utilised as a vehicle for societal and state change whereby they market their skills to government. He states: "It is interesting to note that schools of Public Administration and Management were forced to address the rapid need of society in order to become competitive and marketable in order to provide quality education...the emphasis was on managerial skills with the ability to understand the interplay between accounting, financial management and organisational behavior. But in doing that, there was a real need to embrace such important issues as collective bargaining and public-private sector interface."

Based on the analysis of the literature, it can be concluded that, in many ways NPM is more inclined towards the practice and promotion of the skills-base development of Public Administration. For example Argyriades (2006: 6) notes that many of the NPM models, the New Zealand one in particular, was "driven primarily by practitioners and private sector consultants rather than academics or theoreticians."

2.6.4. Theory-Practice Interface - Manifestations in South Africa Through the Knowledge versus Skills Debate:

It must be noted that the theory-practice debate is not the same as the skills versus knowledge debate, although inextricably interlinked. The latter is simply a manifestation of the former and is used to explain the existence of the theory-practice understanding in South Africa.¹² Cameron (2004: 438) that under the influence of the pernicious NPM, the discipline has become increasingly regarded as a narrow basket of skills and techniques. It was noted in earlier parts of this chapter the importance of bridging theory and practice. For particular researchers such as Cameron (2005)

¹² Defining what a skill is can become a complex task. The author is aware of this skills debate in South Africa but this is not the focus of this dissertation. This dissertation understands this debate as a manifestation of the theory-practice interface of Public Administration.

the theory and practice of Public Administration are inextricably linked. As discussed in earlier parts of the chapter, the failure to teach and research Public Administration in a knowledge-based manner indeed has practical implications. Cameron (2005) argues this in accordance to international authors who also agree that the very existence of this theory-practice bond implies a specialised set of research questions and research designs appropriate to address this relationship. (Bailey, 1999: 187).

Earlier sections of this dissertation have discussed the dual nature of Public Administration and how this impacts on the scope and direction of research within the field. Due to this practitioner-academic interface research has two primary purposes: firstly, to improve scholars' understanding of the dynamics of public organisations and its impact on employees and the polity (basic research); and secondly, to develop information to improve the practice of administration by practitioners within a specific country context, including the identification of theories and models that can be applied in problem-solving (applied research). (Bailey, 1999: 194). The complexity however lies in the fact that over the past two decades both the practice and theoretical side of Public Administration have witnessed new shifts in thinking, which in many ways have been grounded by Public Management, or more recently NPM.¹³

According to Cameron (2005:13), considering South Africa's broad transformation and developmental objectives, there is a danger that the skills-based approach is supplanting the theoretical knowledge-based research in South Africa. While there have been a few attempts at using and developing theory in Public Administration, for instance Pauw & Wessels (1999) and Wessels (2005) these are minimal representations of how far the paradigmatic debate needs to travel. In this regard there is both a concern and a greater need surrounding the theoretical construct of the field in South Africa. (Cameron, 2005; Cloete, 2000; Schwella, 2000).

With South Africa's triumphant transition also came immense developmental challenges. Given these overarching demands, the Public Administration community "got caught up in the euphoria of the New South Africa." (Cameron, 2005: 20). Mabin (2004: 53) agrees as he states that much of

¹³ It is important at this point to relate to the four trends that were identified earlier by Greenwood & Egging (1995) and the impact that these have had on Public Administration research.

the training and focus of the discipline has been what might more or less be narrowly described as “capacity-building activity.” Shifts in focus occupied the research agenda to occupy efforts on empowering and training public servants, fast-tracking skills development and improving service delivery. In a sense these objectives aimed to reduce the “gap” between theory and practice. While this development was a much needed, it has arguably occurred at the expense of Public Administration research and theory building. (Cameron, 2005: 20).

As a result of the mixed impacts of South Africa's need to transform, NPM influences and schools of government, many Public Administration academics have been sucked into capacity-building initiatives of the country, particularly through consultancy work. Years later, Cameron (2005: 20) continues, not only is research quality still second to capacity-building that dominates the agenda of Public Administration academic communities, but donors are still more likely to fund praxis research that does little to build intellectual capacity. In other words there has been too much emphasis on the one side of the Public Administration coin without the benefits of the other.

This emphasis on the practice of public administration and skills development has largely led to the disappearance of theory at local conferences, since it is often viewed as an unwelcome obtrusive invader, which does little to advance the needs of practitioners. (Cameron, 2005: 17). As a result this only aggravates the tensions between the theory-practice interface and does little to promote knowledge-development for the field of Public Administration as a whole. Evident of this uneasiness is the fact that much of Public Administration empirical research is generated through the use of consultants and their respective work. Since many officials and government departments lack the relevant research, experience and knowledge to inform policy and implementation decisions, especially following the early years of transition, this is of no surprise. (Atkinson & Bekker, 2004: 447). The debate and tension stems not from whether the contribution of consultants should be accepted or not, but rather whether their research methodologies and knowledge generated, is of the appropriate standards to contribute to theory development within the field. For a more precise analysis of this debate consult the rebuttal between Cameron (2004/2005) and Atkinson & Bekker (2004/2005) which captures these exact issues.

2.7. Chapter Summary:

This chapter has served as an introduction and overview to the grounding issues and debates that define Public Administration Research. Research is a fundamental aspect of any academic field as it acts as a mechanism that advances and matures the field respectively. The first part of the chapter distinguished between the different applications of research (applied and basic) as well as the differentiation between scholarly and non-scholarly research. It also explained why there is a much higher status given to validation of scholarly knowledge as opposed to other modes of inquiry. One of the main objectives of the chapter has been to relate international Public Administration research literature to the South African context. A brief history of the field's development was given with specific reference to how Public Administration research has evolved to the present day situation. It becomes apparent that despite the importance of knowledge development in the field, research is still dominated by efforts to conceptualise and describe problems, delineate possible areas of inquiry and describe objects for study. There is little evidence of more rigorous and casual analyses. This brings to mind that perhaps researchers are not using the appropriate tools or methodologies for the research that they are conducting, whether basic or applied, and this is in fact posing a hindrance to theory generation.

This raised the question regarding whether certain research methodologies are considered to be of greater "scientific" value as opposed to alternative research methods, such as case studies. It was illustrated that this debate is closely related to the double-sided nature of Public Administration; put differently the theory-practice bond. Although different understandings of this interface were discussed it becomes apparent that theory development is necessary within the field but should not be conceptualised as an "ivory-towered" approach as to divide academics and practitioners. In this regard it was discussed how the failure to teach and research Public Administration in a knowledge-based manner will consequently have practical implications. The discussion as a whole highlights the need for scholars and practitioners to seek and agree on acceptable criteria and research tools for determining valid research. Collectively this information serves to inform the following two chapters: the methodology of this particular study and the research findings so that interesting parallels if any can be drawn.

Chapter Three:

Research Methodology – A Framework for Bringing the Debate to South African Public Administration Research

3.1. Chapter Overview:

The question guiding this dissertation asks whether similar Public Administration research deficiencies, evident at an international level are found in South Africa. This is done by critically examining the nature of research in two Public Administration-related journals: *Journal of Public Administration (JOPA)*, previously known as the journal of the *South African Institute of Public Administration (SAIPA)*, and *Administratio Publica (AP)*; across a thirteen year time frame, from 1994-2006 through a longitudinal study. With reference to the two dominant emphases mentioned in chapter two, this study assesses more specifically, firstly, the quality of research outcomes in these journals and how they are contributing to the acquisition of knowledge in Public Administration as an academic discipline in South Africa. Secondly, this study analyses the types of research methodologies and designs being used within the field. By empirically studying this data, research trends can be identified and comments regarding the future of Public Administration can be made.

In this regard, the chapter serves as a forum through which the international research themes and issues, discussed in chapter two, can be applied to the South African experience. The central aim of the dissertation is to study the extent to which South African Public Administration is focusing on practitioner-orientated research as opposed to developing and generating theory. By doing this the dissertation intends to assess whether local Public Administration is characterised by the similar, poor quality nature of research, found in Britain and the United States, namely: little theory-testing and lack of basic research attempts; research efforts remaining at the primary stages of conceptualisation; “cherry-picking” with little evidence of building upon previous important debates; and minimal attempts at using “advanced and sophisticated” research methodologies traditionally associated with the social science disciplines. (Houston & Delevan, 1990: 134-136). In this way the

methodology acts as a template through which these claims and propositions can be tested locally. While some of these variables used in the methodology are an extension of other authors' work, this study has tried to incorporate a certain degree of relevance to best fit the South African Public Administration context. By doing this, a framework is created that is better able to reflect the research problems within the country.

It is imperative at this point to reiterate the importance of research methodology, as mentioned in the previous chapter. Methodology has a direct bearing on research in that it guides the research inquest by presenting necessary steps to generate scientific knowledge. (McNabb, 2002: 5). In this regard, methodology contributes to knowledge and theory development within Public Administration as an academic and scientific field of study. It becomes clear that weak methodology will inevitably impact negatively on the research results and therefore consequently on theory advancement. It would be useful at this point to once again make reference to Perry & Kraemer's (1984: 348) explanation of this relationship: "Methodology and research are closely linked. Methodology exists to guide the conduct of research; methodology is reflected in research... (our) assessment of methodology is necessarily an assessment of public administration research."

3.2. Recap of Research Objectives and Hypothesis:

This research dissertation has several objectives as already mentioned both in chapter one and in the introduction of this chapter. The primary hypothesis of this dissertation is to assess the state of Public Administration research in South Africa and question whether research focuses primarily on descriptive research rather than enhancing integrated theory-generating research. In other words does South African Public Administration experience similar characteristics and problems as identified and explained by Perry & Kraemer (1986); Stallings & Ferris (1988); Houston & Delevan (1990); Adams & White (1994) and Lan & Anders (2000). If this initial hypothesis is true, these findings can be used to support the argument that Public Administration research in South Africa is largely descriptive; it lacks theory-building and cumulativeness; and, there are little efforts that concentrate on advanced quantitative research methods and designs. Consequently, one could further conclude that there is a distinct bias towards practitioner research rather than research that focuses on building new or upon existing theory, in South African Public Administration.

Emanating from this hypothesis are several research objectives: to measure the current state of Public Administration research in South Africa; answer certain questions regarding the nature of Public Administration research; and, contribute to the overall Public Administration research debate. In addition further objectives include identifying the main research interests; the predominant research methods within the field; and, what the overarching focus of research is; and, finally to assess changes and identify trends in publishing patterns and research methodology. From a clarification perspective, the international literature is studied to provide a “backdrop” for understanding this particular study and carrying out its methodology. In this regard this dissertation aims to contribute to the overall public administration debate in South Africa.¹

3.3. Data Collection:

As mentioned previously in the introductory chapter, data for this research study was gathered by conducting a content analysis of published research material in the two journals, *JOPA* and *AP*; both of which were studied in print format. These two journals are arguably the two most prominent journal outlet publications in South African Public Administration.

JOPA is the oldest Public Administration journal in South Africa, therefore making it the premier journal within the field. The journal began in 1965, then under the original name *SAIPA*, and until 1989 it was the only journal to formally represent the field. *JOPA* is a quarterly journal issued on behalf of the South African Association of Public Administration and Management (SAAPAM), whose mission is to “further the understanding of the theory and practice of Public Administration and Management by publishing articles of interest to practitioners and scholars.” In this regard the material is informed by both academics and practitioners, which in theory should raise important considerations towards the theory-practice interface, as well as its associated research problems. It could be said that this journal has a dual set of objectives to communicate with practitioners as well

¹ Chapter one gives a more thorough overview of the research objectives and thus are not repeated again in this chapter. In addition, certain research variables of this study relate to the transformation of the country as a whole. This study is concerned primarily with the state of Public Administration research and not necessarily how and if, the field is transforming in terms of its developmental mandates. Although certain comments might be made to describe gender and research findings, there will be no in-depth discussions regarding race and gender implications as a result of this data – in an attempt to refrain from opening up intense political debates that might shift the focus of this particular study. The race and gender data derived from this database will however be used in future research as part of the broader NRF project.

as advance the science of the field. Theoretically this would have implications for the content of its articles and research methodologies.

AP on the other hand is the official journal to the Association of Southern African Schools and Departments of Public Administration and Management (ASSADPAM) and mostly publishes academics work. Its editorial policy aims to advance the "interest in and study of Public and Development Management and Public Administration." Both these journals are peer-reviewed and accredited to the Department of Education to assure that they meet broad professional and educational standards. It can be argued that these two journals are recognised as being the official journals that are most representative and indicative of Public Administration research within the field during the time period under review.

As in previous studies, such as Perry & Kraemer (1984) and Stallings & Ferris (1988), it was suspected that the greatest probability of finding research outputs was in those pieces published under the heading "articles." Considering this and manageability reasons, symposia articles, book reviews, conference papers and review essays were excluded from the total population sample. Therefore only published data found under the heading "articles" were used as the unit of analysis for this study. Included in the analysis were 278 *JOPA* articles and 105 *AP* articles. Although sampling is a possibility often used in content analyses (for example Houston & Delevan, 1990), this study did not make use of random samples. Instead the full population data set was examined in both journals to avoid the issue of sampling error. The data set can therefore be seen as 100% representative sample. Each one of these journal articles was then classified and coded according to thirteen variables some that were purely descriptive, for example year and title, and others that were more analytical, such as research purpose and research methodology used by authors.

As mentioned the time period under review extends over thirteen years, from 1994-2006. As a means for identifying changes in research methodology and the other research variables, the collected data were categorised into two separate time intervals: 1994-1999 and 2000-2006.² This allowed the distribution of research information to be analysed in relation to these specific sub-sets.

² It is useful to note once again for the reader's purpose that *AP* publishing volumes do not necessarily correspond with consecutive years. Despite the fact that there were no articles published in 1998 and 2001, the *AP* articles analysed are still a 100% representative sample as no volumes are missing.

Although the two different time periods (1994-1999) and (2000-2006) do correlate slightly with the shift of *SAIPA* converting to become the *JOPA* in 1999, these specific time sets were not informed directly by any major political historical dates. While this journal change represented a change in ideology, which was largely influenced by the political change within the country, thereby recognising the need to become a more inclusive and representative discipline, this study's time splits have been chosen for no other reason than for practicality. Research patterns need to be identified and this seemed like the most appropriate split. From these trends, informed comments regarding the future of public administration can be made.

3.4. Rationale for Using the Two Journals:

During the initial stages of proposing this research dissertation, some constructive criticism highlighted the idea that using only two journals as a data source was perhaps a little too limited and the study could therefore be criticised on the grounds that it was an under-representative sample. The issue of under-representation was a primary criticism of some of the main studies done in the United States context, for example Perry & Kraemer (1986) and Stallings & Ferris (1988). These points are noted for the reasons that firstly, these comments have not gone unnoticed and secondly, to emphasise that naturally, when one conducts a study, they aim to use the most representative samples available as to ensure validity and reliability of the findings. There are however a few considerations as to why no additional journals were included in this project.

Given the space and time constraints, as well as the interdisciplinary and multidisciplinary influences on Public Administration, incorporating other journals into this study would only make it more difficult to establish boundaries of which journals to include and exclude from the analysis. Interdisciplinary journals are less satisfactory since they focus on generic management issues and questions that transcend the boundaries of the public sector. (Stallings & Ferris, 1988: 111). Others, for example public policy personnel journals, are by design only meant to be of interest to a subset within the field. Furthermore, other journals may still be relatively new within the field and therefore may not represent a sufficient source of data of the field over time. As a last point of defense, this particular study on Public Administration research is modeled and informed on similar studies carried out internationally, some of which only concentrate on one or two primary Public Administration journals. Considering that this is one of the primary studies to be carried out in

South African Public Administration, this is a solid departure point for future research. These points are well-received and can be argued in favour of this study too.

Concerns also expressed the fact that there is the possibility that South African Public Administration academics publish articles in international journals rather than through local journal outlets. This was taken into consideration but proved to be of minimal importance since an examination of highly ranked international journals indicated that only three South African Public Administration lecturers have published in ranked journals over the last ten years.³ Since the exception rather than the rule is to publish ones' articles at an international level, it is therefore contended that *JOPA* and *AP* are representative of Public Administration research in the country. There is the issue raised by Rodgers and Rodgers (2000) of "undisciplined mongrels", Public Administration faculty individuals, who publish in a wide variety of journals as opposed to "disciplined purists", faculty who publish exclusively within Public Administration journals. To what extent this issue is evident in South Africa should be a subject of future study.

The second reason as to why these journals have been used as the source of data is more of a technical and methodological understanding. As the two preceding chapters explained, there are multiple indicators that are able to accurately measure Public Administration research; for example PhD theses and programmes. Examining professional journal articles and their content is simply one indicator of this phenomenon. Essentially this implies that it is safe to conclude that professional journal articles are a valid indicator of measuring Public Administration research. McNabb (2002: 11) explains that a valid indicator "accurately measures the concept it is intended to measure...containing very little error." Or put differently, valid measures actually measure what the research assumes they measure, otherwise known as construct validity. (Johnson, 2002: 66).

There are several ways in which this validity has been established amongst the Public Administration research community. Firstly, journal articles illustrate *face validity* in that researchers such as Perry & Kraemer (1986) and the like, accept them as a valid indicator of the concept in question. Professional journal articles are one of two conventional and recognised forms

³ In total there were 20 ranked journals that were examined to reach this conclusion. These journals were chosen based on the ranking of the Public Management Research Association (PMRA) (2006) ranking system.

of publication outlets in any academic field, the other being books. (Stallings & Ferris, 1988: 111). This implies therefore that academics and researchers alike accept and recognise them as a source for valid research data. Secondly, this argument is strengthened by the fact that professional journal articles have been used over the years as an indicator to measure the condition of Public Administration research in several different studies. This illustrates *consensual validity*. "An indicator has consensual validity if numerous persons in different situations accept the indicator as a valid indicator of the concept." (McNabb, 2002: 11). In addition these studies compliment one another since they have reached similar and supporting conclusions time and time again, as discussed in Chapter Two. Lastly, journal articles further act as a valid indicator as they illustrate *correlational validity* with other valid indicators of Public Administration research studies, such as PhD theses in McCurdy & Cleary's (1984) research study and doctoral programmes in White, Adams and Forrester (1996) Public Administration research assessment. "An indicator has correlational validity if it correlates strongly with other indicators that are accepted as valid." (McNabb, 2002: 11).

3.5. Explanation of the Variables Used:

Bernard (1995: 339) identifies a major difficulty with using the content analysis approach in this type of study. He notes that the major difficulty with the process is the subjectivity inherent in identifying the original codes and categories that are to be analysed. It is almost impossible according to Bernard (1995), to avoid interjecting a certain degree of researcher bias into this step of the analysis. (McNabb, 2002: 24). It is for this reason in particular, that utmost rigour has gone into determining the thirteen variables used within this analysis. In addition the overarching intentions of the study were to keep the methodology as simple as possible and to keep the variables as mutually exclusive as far as possible. In other words create variables and sub-variables that allowed articles to be placed into only one category of distinction in order to be as objective as possible.

Defining and conceptualising the variables used in this study was based on analysing, critiquing and modifying previous international and local studies. In some ways therefore it was an extension of these studies. In this regard, it was imperative that the study's methodology did not portray similar shortcomings of previous research attempts. This study recognises the importance of using

international work on Public Administration research as a template for this particular research methodology. Having said this, it was also important that this study did not only have or rely on a United States influence but be adapted where possible to make it more contextually relevant to South African Public Administration. Ideally therefore, the author would have preferred to rely more greatly on past South African Public Administration research studies, than on experiences from the United States, due to this relevance and contextual perspective. Considering that the only two South African studies of a similar nature (Hubbell, 1992; Wessels, 2005) concentrated solely on one main descriptive variable (research topic by primary subject matter) this was however not possible. To determine the more analytical variables that concentrate on information regarding research methodology, international studies inevitably had to be used as a directive tool.

The variables specific to this study were also informed by a set of questions relating to the nature of Public Administration research in South Africa. They relate specifically to the research outcomes and methodologies used by the Public Administration community. These questions included for example: what are the topical preferences of researchers; what purpose does the research serve; who is publishing material in *JOPA* and *AP*; what research methodologies are being employed by the empirical studies; is there a dominance in gender research patterns; and, is language a relevant factor in Public Administration research. As each variable is examined and explained, it becomes evident that each one is designed to answer a question that is not only relevant too, but also informs and guides the Public Administration debate.

Each article selected was coded according to two general sets of variables: a purely descriptive set, and a more analytical set of variables requiring some interpretation of the article contents at hand.⁴ Together these sets of variables describe characteristics of Public Administration research and are useful for two purposes: (1) characterising Public Administration research in general, and (2) identifying journal-specific variations. (Perry & Kraemer, 1986: 354). The first set addresses general author(s) and article information, in the form of nine variables, namely: the authors' name; year of the publication; research topic; institutional affiliation; sources of research report; academic ranking of the author; gender; race; and language. An additional four variables were chosen to record information about the research approach and methodology used in the study. These

⁴ Please refer to the complete coding scheme found in the appendix.

include: research purpose; research methodology; research focus and cumulateness. This second category aims particularly, to communicate information pertaining to the purpose of the research and empirical methodologies employed. (Houston & Delevan, 1990: 127). The variables will now be discussed in greater detail.

3.5.1. Descriptive Variables:

Two of the descriptive variables are self-explanatory, author(s) and year, and therefore need no explanation or introduction. These were used mainly for organisational and reference purposes, as well as to record and recognise any publishing changes across the time period under review.

3.5.1.1. Research Topic Variable:

Put simply, research topic, concentrates mainly on the primary area of research the author is interested in. Although slightly different, both South African studies base their work entirely on this one variable. In other words, both Hubbell (1992) and Wessels (2005) analyse and classify journal content according to what the authors area of research was; thereby excluding important information regarding methodologies used to conduct research. To a certain degree one cannot only equate Public Administration research to what authors are writing about and it is therefore important that extra variables are included in an analysis; not only so that together they have the potential to triangulate and support one another but also that a more wholesome account of research can be given.

At an international level, although they make use of other analytical variables, Perry & Kraemer (1986) and Stallings & Ferris (1988) are the only studies to use "research topic" to describe characteristics about research. Although this variable does not explain information about the methods and approaches used to conduct research, it is still of importance since it is designed to answer the question of, "what are the topical preferences of researchers in Public Administration?" To a certain degree therefore this variable is also somewhat analytical since it is one way in which the findings will either prove or disprove the original hypothesis that research in South Africa concentrates primarily on practical issues rather than on knowledge acquisition and theory-development.

Articles were classified according to different areas or themes of research interest.⁵ In other words the categories chosen were based on themes. This is a slight differentiation from the Perry and Kramer study (1986) who allocate each sphere of government their own sub-variable. The study tried to avoid categories based on levels/spheres of government. For example an article on financial management at local government level was coded into the financial management category. There was however a category dedicated entirely to a sphere of government, namely that of local government reorganisation. This category deals primarily with questions of administrative transformation at local government level.

Generic themes such as, public policy or ethics, used within previous studies obviously were replicated in this methodology since they can be applied across almost any public administration situation. Given the broad changes that have occurred in the field since the 1980's and even 1990's when most of these studies were conducted, as well as the particular South African context to which this methodology applies, new and arguably more relevant research topics were added within this category for this study. These included the topics of information technology and communication (ITC) and e-governance, as well as local government reorganisation that are specific to South Africa. Although not explicit, topic categories were placed along somewhat of a continuum; ranging from practical areas of interest such as public policy and budgeting, to topics that were more aligned to knowledge development within the field, such as Public Administration theory and administrative reform.

One way in which Perry & Kraemer's (1986) study was criticised was on the grounds that their categories were not mutually exclusive; such that articles could not be placed into one and only one category alone. (Stallings & Ferris, 1988: 123). A similar problem applies to this variable. It is possible that articles could be placed within more than one category. An article on performance management illustrates this problem very clearly. Such an article could be placed into the area of public management but is also related and relevant to human resource management or financial management. Similarly, public participation and service delivery overlap in characteristics and

⁵ Put differently, the thematic category that the author(s) researched determined the classification of the article, rather than for example the sphere of government that the author was researching or writing about. The research topics Intergovernmental Relations and Local Government Reorganisation were designed to incorporate articles of this nature.

areas of interest. Being aware of this problem, when categorising the articles, it was asked where the article *primarily* fitted. In fairness however, this is more of a problem relating to the way in which this particular variable can be measured – how else can one measure what the Public Administration community is writing about without coding them in such a fashion? The sub-variables into which the articles were classified will now be discussed in greater detail:

Public Administration Research & Theory:

This sub-variable is centred on and emphasises the development of Public Administration theory. Articles were placed into this category if they discussed and contributed to issues such as Public Administration research, administrative theory, bureaucratic theory and organisational theory. This sub-variable was viewed as being pivotal to testing the original hypothesis of the study, given the centrality of developing Public Administration theory and knowledge.

Administrative Reform:

This sub-variable was introduced to relate specifically to South Africa's broad political transformation and development process. While the American political context represents a relatively stable internal political environment, at least at the time that these Public Administration research studies were carried out, South Africa's history has not been the same. Articles were placed into this area of interest if they focused on issues associated with political macro-reorganisation. While they might not necessarily be linked to theory development they were concerned with the broad reorganisation and transformation of the country, for example articles analysing public sector reform and transformation of the state.

Public Management & Administration:

This is largely a straightforward category that dealt with generic public management and administrative functions, such as planning, organising, controlling and leadership. Articles associated with and pertaining to performance management were also classified under this heading. Rather than focusing on administrative theory and theory-building as in the first category, the focus here is on administrative activities and problem-solving.

Public Policy:

This category is designed to incorporate those articles that not only deal with analysing the policy cycle (policy development, Implementation and evaluation), but also articles that are specifically sectoral in nature. Therefore on the one level these articles might explain the different aspects of the policy cycle, while on a further level they might contextualise these stages to a particular sector. For example an article that might discuss the housing, health or environmental management policy more specifically.

Ethics & Accountability:

Ethics and accountability include those articles that are associated with codes of conduct, anti-corruption strategies, and public bodies that are intended to bring about more transparent and accountable activities within the public sector.

Development & Citizen Participation:

South Africa is increasingly being recognised and advocates itself as a developmental state. This variable aims to capture articles dealing with these developmental issues. The Constitution (1996) has identified developmentally orientated Public Administration as one of its primary objectives. Public participation is seen to be the cornerstone of this developmental process; thereby forming a link between the two. Articles were categorised under this heading if they dealt with issues of public participation, organisations promoting public involvement, community development, environmental development and so forth. A relevant example might be an article discussing Integrated Development Plans and how they contribute to local development or a discussion on Environmental Impact Assessments.

Human Resource Management:

Articles were assigned to this sub-variable if they focused on labour relations, personnel management and wage-related issues. Since this can also be classified as a broad administrative function, any articles that were concerned with the well-being of public sector employees were classified under this heading, for example recruitment and tenure. It is evident why an area of primary interest such as performance management is difficult to exclusively classify, as evidently there are areas of overlap. For example performance management can also be understood from a

human resources perspective in terms of performance appraisals and employees meeting specific target indicators.

Financial Management:

This too can be broadly understood as a straightforward administrative function. Articles were placed into this category if they discussed issues relating to auditing, budgets, budget-cycles and so forth. These articles were often also linked to issues relating to accountability and public management.

Intergovernmental Relations:

This sub-variable is introduced in a slightly different fashion to the way in which Perry & Kraemer (1986) use it. They allocate each sphere of government their own sub-variable, so that there is a separate sub-variable for state, federal and urban governments. Considering the case for simplicity and the fact that our three spheres of government, and the way that they relate to one another, has been such an integral component in South Africa's transformation, this study decided to incorporate these relations into this one sub-variable. This variable also aimed to capture the relevance of co-operative governance between the three spheres. Therefore any articles concerned with the relationships between the three spheres of government, in terms of their powers and responsibilities were placed under this heading.

Information, Communication, Technology (ICT) & E-governance:

This is a modern and newly introduced sub-variable designed to deal with technological advancement of managing information, communication, knowledge and technology in the public sector. For example articles relating to e-governance and the internet were placed into this category.

Service Delivery:

This sub-variable is also a newly introduced addition to the study. It is somewhat different from the citizen participation and development sub-variable in that it deals more specifically with service delivery in South Africa. This variable is linked largely to the legacy of NPM and its objective of improving service delivery, as noted by Hughes (2003). Articles discussing these and related

issues were classified under this heading. For example delivery issues such as Batho Pele or custom/citizen care and public interest, as well as notions of service delivery payment would fall into this category.

Local Government Reorganisation:

This is also a newly introduced category that was designed to relate specifically to South Africa's transformation. These articles dealt largely with the metropolitan reorganisation at the local level, highlighting issues that are associated with redefining boundaries and structural reform.

Other:

This category contains miscellaneous articles that did not directly relate to the mainstream issues of Public Administration. Articles included under this heading dealt with for example: globalisation; economists' explanations of the informal economy or trading activities; international relations issues and federalism in other African countries, such as Nigeria. Since these articles could not simply be ignored for the purposes of this study, this category was included.

3.5.1.2. Institutional Affiliation:

Although this next variable is not used widely in the United States context, this study wanted to get an idea of where most research was being initiated and which institutions are most likely to publish in each journal. This category is therefore designed to contribute to the question of, "which institutions are contributing most to Public Administration research?" Analysing data from this variable allows one to understand which institutions are most likely to publish and which are contributing most to the state of Public Administration research in South Africa. Additionally, analysis of this variable also allows one to describe the rate of publishing between university and non-university institutions, such as consultants or non-governmental organisations, for instance the Human Sciences Research Council (HSRC). All non-university affiliations were classified under the heading "other." It is assumed that *JOPA* will have a mixture of academics and practitioners publishing while *AP* will be more academically orientated. Findings will highlight whether Public Administration research is dominated by academicians (such as full professors or senior lecturers) or non-academicians, such as consultants or government officials. In this regard this variable is closely related to the institutional affiliation of the author(s).

In addition conclusions can be drawn as to which universities in particular are publishing most often and what their particular areas of interest are. For example correlations can be drawn as to which universities are more interested in the praxis of public administration and which are more concerned with the development of theory. Theoretically if most of the articles published are found to be more lenient towards practical issues rather than the theoretical development of the field, correlations can be drawn to those universities that publish the most, especially when paralleled to the two different time intervals: 1994-1999 and 2000-2006.

3.5.1.3. Institutional Support:

Throughout the studies conducted on Public Administration research, the issue of lack of institutional support and funding has been illuminated. This variable is therefore interested in the contributors of research to the field and is designed to answer “what is the frequency of funding for Public Administration research?” Houston & Delevan (1988: 128) note that the level of institutional and financial support for Public Administration studies is an important “reputational indicator” of the fields’ research. It is therefore useful to determine both the type (not simply financial) and level of support for Public Administration as a field in this country, as well as which institutions are most likely to support Public Administration research.

3.5.1.4. Academic Ranking of the Author(s):

This variable also contributes to supplying descriptive information about who is publishing and who is most likely to publish in the two journals. Academic ranking of author(s) takes a different stance to the institutional affiliation variable since it is designed to question “who is publishing within university institutions.” In other words which group of academics (full professors, associate professors, lecturers and so forth) dominate research in Public Administration? This variable will also provide information regarding the correlation between academic rank and the rate of publishing. It was important that the authors’ academic rank was reflected at the time of publishing which could be different to their present day ranking. Given the extensive time-frame over which this study extends and other factors such as authors moving institutions, it was often not possible to obtain ranking information at the time of the publication, specifically for *JOPA* since it has more articles. In the case of *AP* the editor had supplied author information, when then article was

published, in terms of their rank status so this was not a problem. In the case of *JOPA* however, even the current editor Professor Chris Thornhill, attempted to help on this issue but for certain individuals was unsuccessful. In an attempt to not skew the data, individuals whose rank information at the time of publishing could not be obtained were placed within the category “unknown.”

3.5.1.5. Gender:

This variable is not used in any of the United States studies on Public Administration research. Considering the impact of political transition in this country and the Constitutional prerogative to advance gender equality, this is an important indicator that is able to measure and relate to the overarching objectives of transformation. In this regard it is an attempt to contextualise the study to become locally relevant. This variable's purpose is to question whether there is a dominant gender pattern when it comes to publishing articles. In other words this variable is designed to answer “what is the frequency of female and male publishing?” in the two journals. This information will then be able to explain whether in fact transformation is taking place in terms of promoting gender equality in Public Administration research. There is an expectation that there will be an increase in the rate of females publishing, particularly in the second time interval considering the implication of Constitution. Conclusions can also be made as to which institution most males and females are affiliated too. As in the case of author rank, when the gender of an individual was unclear the editors of the journals were consulted for this information. Once again however, this information was also not always known to even them despite their positions. These cases were also categorized under “unknown.”

3.5.1.6. Race:

Racial transformation is understandably the key component of the development agenda in South Africa. While this study recognises the importance of this variable in South Africa's transition and by no means intends to downplay its significance, its sole focus is on the problems of Public Administration research and not on the political landscape of the field, as mentioned earlier. This variable therefore, serves only an informative function (presentation purposes only) and will not be analysed in great detail. As with gender, there is an expectation that there will be an increase in the rate of people publishing, particularly in the second time interval. While this variable provides

important and interesting representative data, this study intends to remain as focused on the original question as possible. This data however can be a useful platform for future research, particularly around the issue of what extent previously disadvantaged groups are publishing.

3.5.1.7. Language:

Having discussed the history of Public Administration in South Africa in the previous chapter, it is safe to conclude that there was a considerable Afrikaans influence both at an academic and practitioner level within the field. This variable intends to fulfill a simply descriptive function in that it will present language trends in publishing within this time-frame.

3.5.2. Analytical Variables:

Whereas the above descriptive variables are largely generic in nature and supply information regarding the general characteristics of the article and author, these analytical variables actually “unpack” information regarding the research design and methodology employed. In other words these variables have the purpose of providing knowledge about how, why, and what informed the research at hand. These four analytical variables include: research purpose; research methodology; research focus; and, cumulativeness.

3.5.2.1. Research Purpose:

This variable is borrowed from earlier work by Stallings and Ferris (1988) who developed three mutually exclusive variables to make up this category, namely: CONCEPTUAL; RELATION and EVALUATE. In other words each article is coded according to its primary purpose, what it was intentionally developed for. This variable contributes information to the question, “what is the purpose of the study or research?” Articles were classified as CONCEPTUAL if their primary purpose was to identify and conceptualise a researchable problem, thus being largely descriptive in nature. They were placed into this category if they delineated a problem or identified a crucial variable for future research. (Stallings & Ferris, 1988: 112). In this regard, articles classified as CONCEPTUAL most likely correlated with the primary stages of the policy cycle, namely: problem identification and problem definition and so forth. Similarly, articles examining casual relationships among variables were placed under the category RELATION. In other words articles were placed

into this category if they concluded with a casual statement of some kind The third binary variable, EVALUTE, was constructed to house those articles that analysed a particular policy or program.

3.5.2.2. Research Methodology:

This variable reflects general methods and approaches of enquiry used in Public Administration research (Perry & Kraemer, 1986: 354). In other words it indicates the different styles or designs carried out the respective authors' research endeavours. This variable is thus designed to answer the question of "what methodologies are employed to conduct Public Administration research?" This was address by examining the research designs, unit of analysis, quantitative techniques if any, and the data that was collected. Three sub-variables were created to indicate these methods, namely: DESKTOP; QUALITATIVE; and, QUANTITATIVE.

Articles were classified as DESKTOP if they consisted significantly of secondary research, such that they do not contribute too new knowledge. This category was designed to incorporate those articles whereby authors have simply researched a problem, for example by gaining their information from journals, books, policy documents, databases and so forth. Not to say that this type of research is "wrong" as such, but it does not engage in any primary research and therefore cannot contribute to basic research that is necessary for advancing the theory and knowledge within the field of Public Administration. By design this category highlights those articles that make recommendations based on a literature review. This is not generating new knowledge in the sense that they have not conducted any primary research and therefore can not be seen as developing new knowledge within the field. It presumes therefore, that no (or insignificant) empirical research has been undertaken whether it is of the quantitative or qualitative variety. It also presumes that no significant new theory or framework has been developed.

One of the debates in Public Administration is whether much of QUALITATIVE research is indeed rigorous enough to be classified as good social science research. Arguably, the premier Public Administration academic network in the world, the Public Management Research Association (PMRA) in its call for papers for its 2007 conference has a strict definition of non-quantitative research. It defines it as, "non-empirical pieces that develop a theory or theoretical framework that provides insight into a compelling research question or subject of study in public management.

Strong conceptual papers should identify foundational assumptions and key concepts, develop an internally consistent logic or model of causation, and result in specific programmes or testable hypotheses'."

This paper does not take such a strict definition of qualitative research. It does however take the view that certain minimum standards have to be met. At the other extreme is the definition used by Lowery and Evans (2005: 311) who argue that qualitative research is anything employing non-quantitative methods. The problem with this loose definition in the South African context is that it would include the large amount of secondary literature.

A few new ideas do not mean new theory. Unstructured participation observation is not qualitative research, nor are a couple of unstructured interviews. Even a well put together literature review is not a new contribution to knowledge in itself. If articles had these underdeveloped methodological features they were classified as desktop.

This study has gone for a reasonably strict but not overtly restrictive definition of qualitative research. Ethnography, phenomenology, case studies, hermeneutics, grounded theory and action science are examples of qualitative research. (McNabb, 2002:277). Johnson (2002:118) says that qualitative data analysis is used for data collected in a semi-structured way. Unstructured observations, open-ended interviews, analyses of written documents and focus group transcripts all require the use of qualitative techniques.

QUANTITATIVE research involves the use of numbers. It involves statistical steps and experiments to identify relationships between variables. (McNabb, 2002: 21-22). It includes experimental research such as treatment and control groups, quasi-experimental such as correlational, time series and longitudinal studies. (Johnson, 2002:43). It also includes descriptive statistics, surveys and regression analysis. The author was also aware of the fact that research can be both qualitative and quantitative. For this reason the articles were coded on the basis of whether it is primarily quantitative or qualitative research.

There is certainly a degree of interconnectedness between this methodology variable and the research purpose variable. Despite this “overlap” the two variables are inherently different and designed to bring about different information. On the one hand the research purpose variable indicates what the study wants to achieve or to a degree the reason it was conducted (its purpose). On the other, the research methodology variable illustrates how the study achieves this purpose – how it brings about that intended aim. For example articles that were classified as CONCEPTUAL would largely have employed the DESKTOP techniques to carry out its research. EVALUATE might also use DESKTOP techniques but to generate new knowledge it would have to make use of either QUALITATIVE or QUANTITATIVE methods.

3.5.2.3. Research Focus:

This dichotomous variable was borrowed from Perry & Kraemer's (1986) study that distinguishes whether the research at hand is orientated towards theory building or practical problem resolution. In other words it is designed to answer the question: “Is the conducted research orientated more towards theory generation (needs of academics) or more towards practical problem-solving (needs of the practitioners)?” Articles were classified as contributing to theory generation if they contributed to new social science knowledge. If however the article suggested more practical recommendations this was then classified as being praxis orientated. It must be noted that being praxis orientated does not equate to being DESKTOP. For example a quantitative survey can be carried out to establish the needs of practitioners in a certain government department – this is not geared towards broad theory generation within the field but sways rather towards the needs of practitioners. This variable is therefore not so much about the type of methodology used (means) but more what it is contributing towards (ends).

3.5.2.4. Research Cumulativeness:

This was also a newly introduced variable for the reason that it could measure whether in fact research was contributing to a systematic knowledge base within the field. Research cumulativeness implies that the researcher has engaged with the grounding debates within their particular area of study and built on or extended that knowledge. It is important that articles conduct a literature review to illustrate that they understand these issues and positions, as well as what their relative shortcomings are. When a study is cumulative it is one way in which new

scholarly knowledge can be generated within the field. In order for an article to be classified as cumulative it cannot simply be a literature review or indicate an impressive bibliography, but an extension and interpretation of these previous works. Christopher Pollitt (2006) further comments on the issue of cumulativeness when he states that a literature review should include what the primary literature sources discuss not what the researcher thinks it should or would like it to include. In addition Cameron (2005: 18) postulated in his review of South African Public Administration that authors often “cherry pick references” and that important local and international work is ignored or under-utilised. This variable tests this proposition. This is one of the most difficult variables to classify since one cannot be a specialist within all areas and the author acknowledges that there will obviously be a few grey areas when it comes to material on certain topics.

3.6. Chapter Overview:

The primary research question guiding this study as a whole, and its methodology more specifically, involves assessing the state of Public Administration research in South Africa and finding out if it focuses to heavily on the practice of the discipline rather than concentrating on engaging in basic, theory-generating research. If this is proven to be true, it can be argued that the same research deficiencies highlighted in the British and United States context, apply locally. This chapter introduced the methodology employed, namely a content analysis of *JOPA* and *AP* over a thirteen year time period, to carry out this particular research endeavour. Methodology is important since it is closely related to research in that it guides the research inquest so that it is able to generate and contribute to knowledge development. In this regard the understanding of methodology reflects the understanding of research. The purpose of the chapter therefore has been twofold: to highlight the importance of methodology and how it impacts on research; and, to explain the methodology used to carry out this study on Public Administration research.

This chapter introduced and explained the thirteen variables used to categorise the specific journal articles in this study. Some of which were purely descriptive in nature providing general information about the article and author, while others were more analytical which required interpreting research design and methodology on a more sophisticated level. Some of these variables are borrowed from other studies and some have been newly introduced in an attempt to make the study more contextually relevant. By analysing the variables and data, this dissertation aims to contribute to

the overall public administration debate in South Africa. Limitations of this dissertation were also highlighted which included issues of under-representation and relevance and contextuality.

Chapter Four:

Research Findings of the Content Analysis of Public Administration Research in South Africa

4.1. Chapter Overview:

Both the literature review and the chapter on research methodology prepared the reader for the presentation of the research findings so that they can be more easily contextualised and understood within the broader Public Administration research debate. Bearing in mind that the purpose of scholarly research is to explore, describe, explain and understand the core issues of a field of study (Wessels, 2005: 1506), both this chapter and chapter five has been tasked with illustrating, analysing and interpreting the findings of the content analysis conducted in the two journals: *Journal of Public Administration (JOPA)* and *Administratio Publica (AP)*.

The contents of research are a good representation or indication of value placed on research by the Public Administration field as a whole. This study's contents will either verify or decline the central research hypothesis: that South African Public Administration places too much emphasis on purely conceptual, isolated and descriptive research. The results will further highlight whether there is little theory-testing and theory-generation attempts regardless of the type of research (basic or applied) that is employed. In addition the research results will illustrate whether there is evidence of developing a cumulative and systematic, scholarly knowledge base within the field or if authors "cherry-pick" references with little evidence of building upon previous important debates. It will also become clear if there are attempts at using "advanced and sophisticated research methodologies traditionally associated with the social science disciplines." (Houston & Delevan, 1990: 134-136).

Essentially, this chapter's findings will confirm whether local Public Administration experiences similar, poor quality research characteristics and deficiencies, to those identified by academics in the United States and British contexts. The presentation of the results will, in addition will highlight

any changes in research methodology and noticeable trends in publishing patterns within the time period, 1994-2006. This chapter therefore concerns itself with presenting an original database that was compiled to systematically analyse and evaluate Public Administration research in South Africa.

With the intent of greater clarity and comprehension, the results of the dissertation study are presented according to the two general sets of variables set out in chapter three. The first set was largely a descriptive category, consisting of nine variables that were designed to answer questions relating to the general information of the article and author, such as ranking of the author; and, the second analytical category consisted of four evaluative variables that delivered information pertaining to the overall purpose of research and methodologies that were used to carry out the research. By analysing and interpreting these categories, conclusions regarding the nature of Public Administration research could be reached in terms of its purpose; validity and overall impact on the field. ¹

4.2. Results – Descriptive Characteristics of Research:

4.2.1. Research Topic:

Certain variables, such as author and year/volume are self-explanatory and incorporated purely for classification purposes so therefore these need not be discussed. One of the most basic but informative variables concerns itself with asking: “what are the topical preferences of Public Administration researchers?” or put differently “what are Public Administration authors writing about?” Although this variable has been classified as descriptive in nature it is also analytical to a certain degree since it can be used to deduce useful information about whether research is being conducted with theory-generation in mind. Descriptive information relevant to the above questions is provided in bar chart figures 4.1 and 4.2 for journals *JOPA* and *AP* respectively.

¹ Each variable is discussed in relation to a bar chart for greater clarity – the tabulation of research findings are presented in the appendix along with the codebook for analysis.

In conjunction with Perry & Kraemer's (1986; 1994) findings, the distribution of research topic, as shown in the diagrams below, confirms the broad dispersal of research within the field. An analysis of this variable confirms that subject matter is more evenly distributed in *JOPA* than in *AP*. Despite this slight variation both journals share the most frequent subject matter: public management and administration, measuring 14% (*JOPA*) and 17.1% (*AP*) of total number of journal articles analysed. This confirms that areas relating to public management and administration issues were the most popular area of research substance. No topical area accounts for more than 20% of research but development and citizen participation (10.9%); ethics and accountability (10.4%); financial management/budgeting (8.6%); service delivery (8.6%) and information, communication, technology (ICT) and human resource (HRM) (7.6%) are prevalent themes in Public Administration research in *JOPA*. Public policy (10.5%); development and citizen participation (9.5%) and HRM; information, communication and technology (ICT); and, local government reorganisation (all 8.6%) are common research areas in *AP*. Comparison of subject matter also indicates that there is minimal research interest in intergovernmental relations in both journals: 3.2% (*JOPA*) and 0% (*AP*). In both journals there is a considerable amount of research areas which can be classified as "other": 12.6% (*JOPA*) and 9.5% (*AP*). This category included articles on globalisation, federalism and economic models that largely fell out of the direct ambit of the study of Public Administration. This is illustrative of the multi-disciplinary impact that other subject areas are having on the study of the field.

Results indicate that preference for administrative functions such as human resource management and ICT are generally addressed and given relatively equal importance in *JOPA* and *AP* articles; with maybe a slight exception in financial issues where *JOPA* indicated a higher preference. In both journals however, the topic that is most likely to equate with basic research and knowledge development, public administration research and theory, scored fairly poorly on both accounts: *JOPA* (5.4%) and *AP* (5.7%).

FIGURE 4.1 DISTRIBUTION OF ARTICLES BY PRIMARY SUBJECT MATTER IN JOPA (N=278)

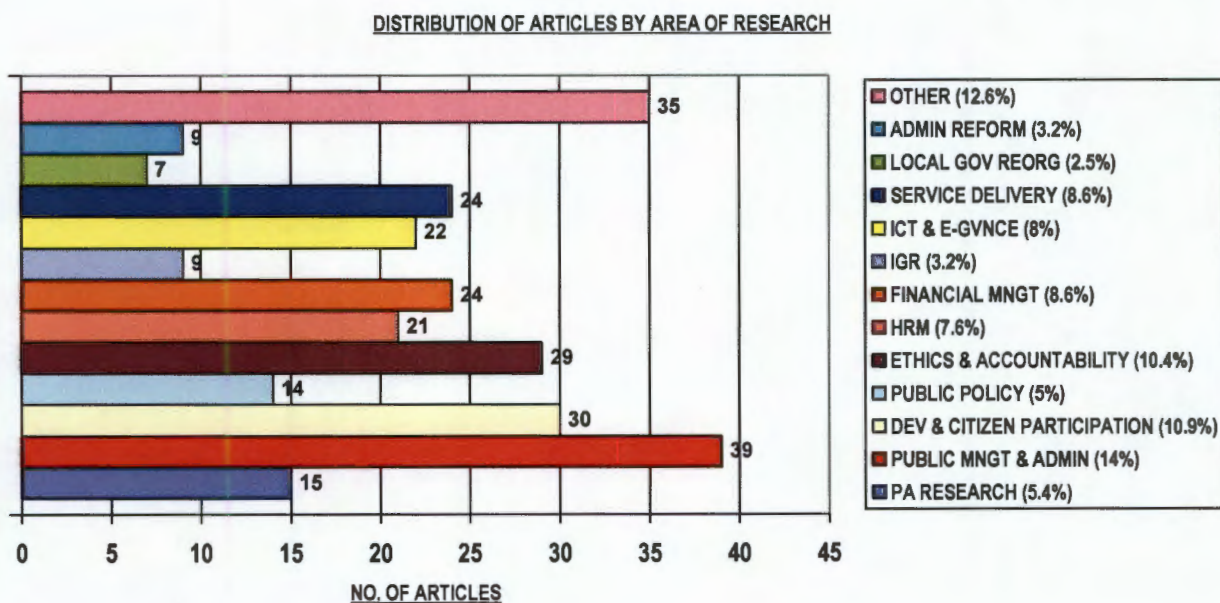
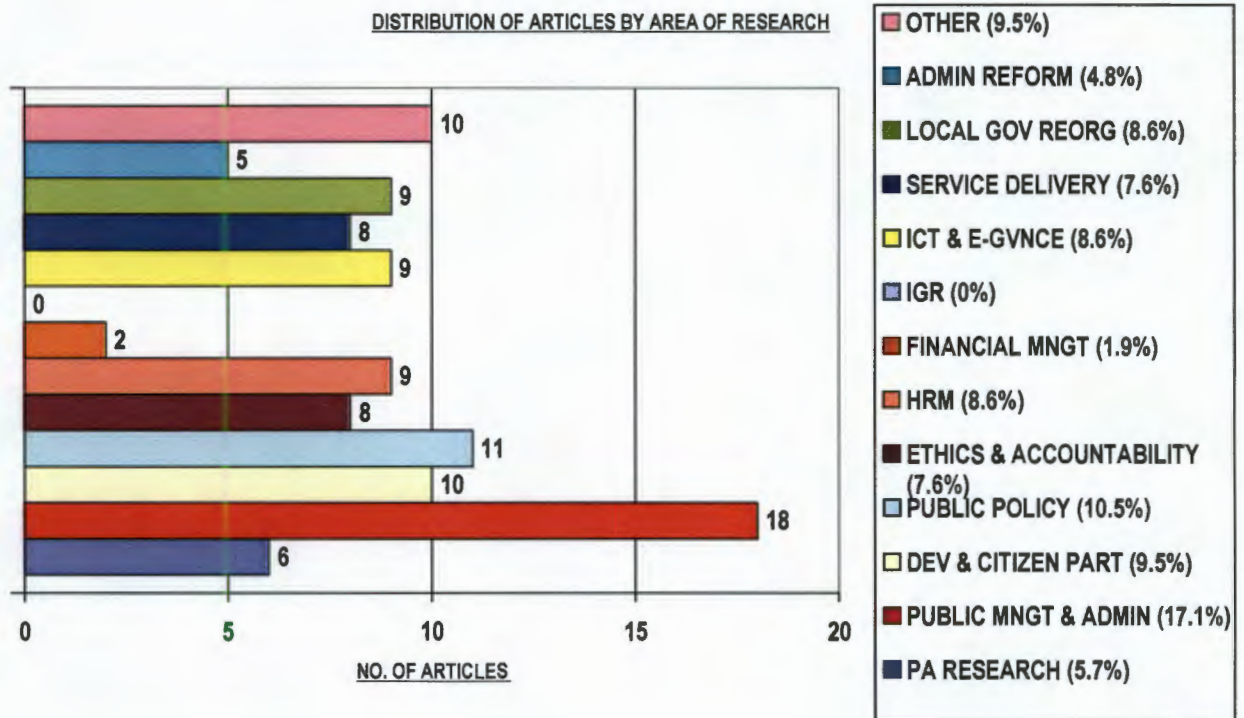


FIGURE 4.2 DISTRIBUTION OF ARTICLES BY PRIMARY SUBJECT MATTER IN AP (N=105)



4.2.2. Institutional Affiliation:

The next descriptive variable is concerned with the institutional affiliation of authors, or “which institutions are contributing most to Public Administration research in South Africa?” Figures 4.3 and 4.4 illustrate these findings. Overall one can conclude that 78% (*JOPA*) and close to 77% (*AP*) of the total number of authors are affiliated to university institutions. Therefore it is safe to state that the majority of Public Administration research originates from tertiary establishments rather than other organisations such as government or stand alone research entities.² The university that publishes most frequently in *JOPA* is Pretoria (20%) followed by the University of South Africa (UNISA) (10%) and then the University of Stellenbosch (8.5%). *AP* illustrates rather different

² Readers will note that the previous Vista University has been given its own separate category. The author is aware that this university has been incorporated into other tertiary institutions, but it was not always clear, even after consultation with the editor of the journals, as to which campuses became part of which university.

institutional publishing results. The most frequent university to publish in this journal is by far Stellenbosch (31.3%) trailed by Nelson Mandela University (10%) and finally with 7.5% of articles, the University of KwaZulu- Natal.

Of the nineteen institutional groups that were identified each one recorded some form of publishing in *JOPA* from 1994-2006; while three institutions had a zero track record of publishing in *AP* during this thirteen year time frame. These three institutions included: University of Cape Town (UCT); University of Limpopo; and, the University of Fort Hare. There are several possible reasons as to why these institutions are not publishing, which makes for interesting research. For example at UCT publishing journal articles internationally counts towards more for promotion purposes than if academics had to publish locally. This could then be a reason as to why this institution has a narrow publishing record in *AP*.

Of the tertiary establishments contributing to the Public Administration research articles, the majority of the research stems from the more traditional Afrikaans speaking university organisations, such as University of Stellenbosch or Pretoria, rather than the previous technikons that have recently been renamed as universities of technology, such as Tshwane University of Technology (TUT). In *JOPA* less than half (41.2%) of the research traces its origins back to traditional universities³. 36.8% of research comes from comprehensive universities, in other words previous technikons or universities that have been amalgamated with previous technikon institutes. This compares to slightly more (45%) of research stemming from traditional universities in *AP*; and 32.5% originating from comprehensive universities (previous technikons or universities that have incorporated the former). These figures must be analysed bearing in mind that the previous technikons in the past were not permitted to give degrees. With the amalgamation and renaming process they are now recognised to be of the same level as traditional universities and can grant degrees. As a result one could argue that there has been an increase in the number of Public Administration degrees being awarded from previous technikons as well as the amount of research being developed from these institutions.

³ Traditional universities are classified here as universities that have not incorporated or been amalgamated with a previous technikon.

In both *JOPA* (22%) and *AP* (22.5%) almost a quarter of research originates from the category termed "other." This category was included so that a distinction between university and non-university affiliations could be made as to determine the total research that was derived from outside of university boundaries. Figures 4.4 and 4.6 illustrate these findings. In *JOPA* government contributed (40.5%) to research in the category "other", while 19% of research in this category originated from the HSRC and foreign academics. Just over 13% of research in this category can be accounted for from consultants⁴. Government's contribution to research in the "other" category was much lower in *AP* measuring 22.2%, followed by 16.7% of research stemming from the Council of Scientific and Industrial Research (CSIR). Foreign academics' contributions were slightly higher (25%) than in *JOPA*. Consultants' contribution to research in this category measured 11.1%. There is greater contribution by students to Public Administration research in *AP* (8.3%) than in *JOPA* (1.2%) as measured within this category.

A common problem that was evident within the findings is that developmental and non-governmental agencies that publish, seldom make claims as to what methodology they employed, or if their respective studies were part of a wider research project. This obviously impacts on the credibility and design issues such as reliability and validity. To conclude however, these overall figures indicate that the majority of Public Administration research is conducted predominantly by those who work in university institutions. Of these university institutions the majority of research stems from the traditional Afrikaans universities.

⁴ These figures are percentages of the total 22% of the "other" category. When compared on a par to other university institutions i.e. to overall research, government contributed 8.91%; the HSRC 4.18%; foreign academics 4.18%; 2.9% by consultants and students 0.3% in *JOPA*. These values were calculated by taking the "other" percentage and multiplying it by the total value of "other" i.e. 23%. E.g. 25% of 23% or $0.25 \times 23\% = 5.75\%$. Similarly in *AP* government contributed to 5% of overall research when compared on the same level as other institutions; CSIR 4%; foreign academics 5.6%; consultants 2.5% and students approximately 2%.

FIGURE 4.3 DISTRIBUTION OF AUTHORS BY INSTITUTIONAL AFFILIATION IN JOPA (N=388)

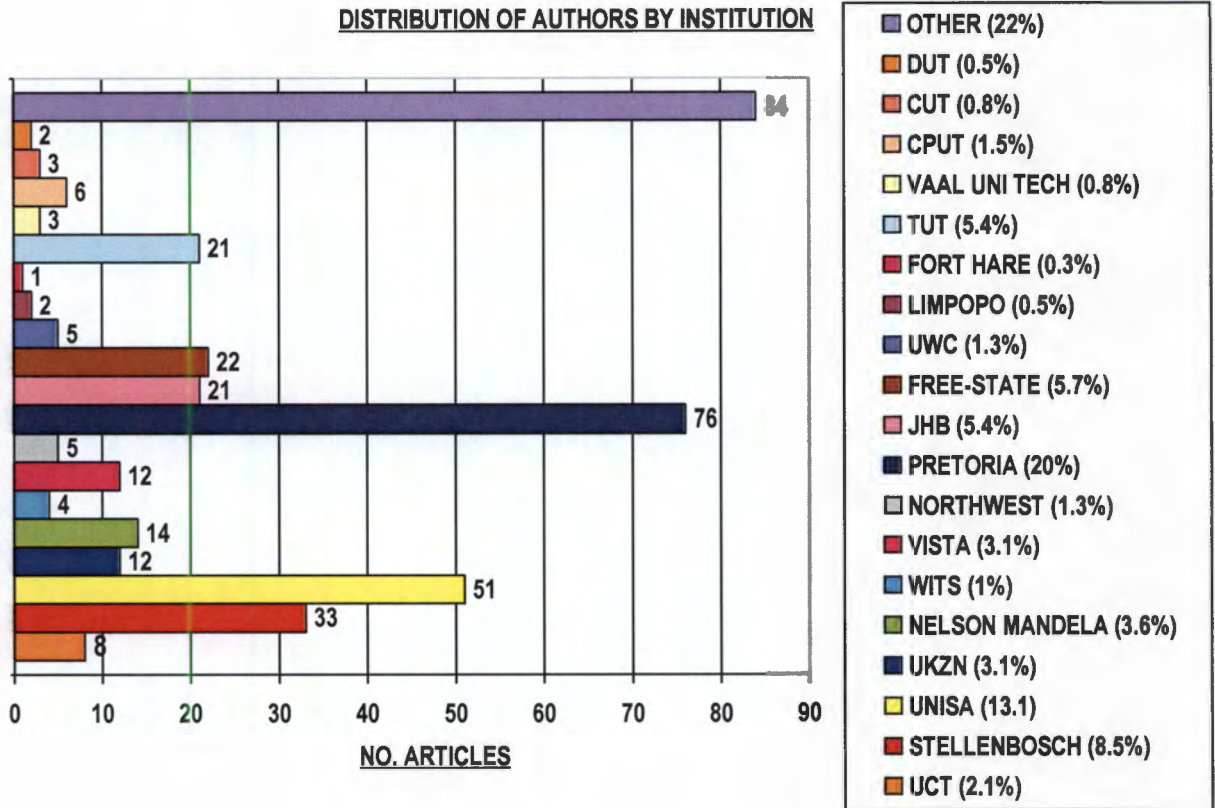


FIGURE 4.4 DISTRIBUTION OF "OTHER" ARTICLES IN JOPA (n=84)

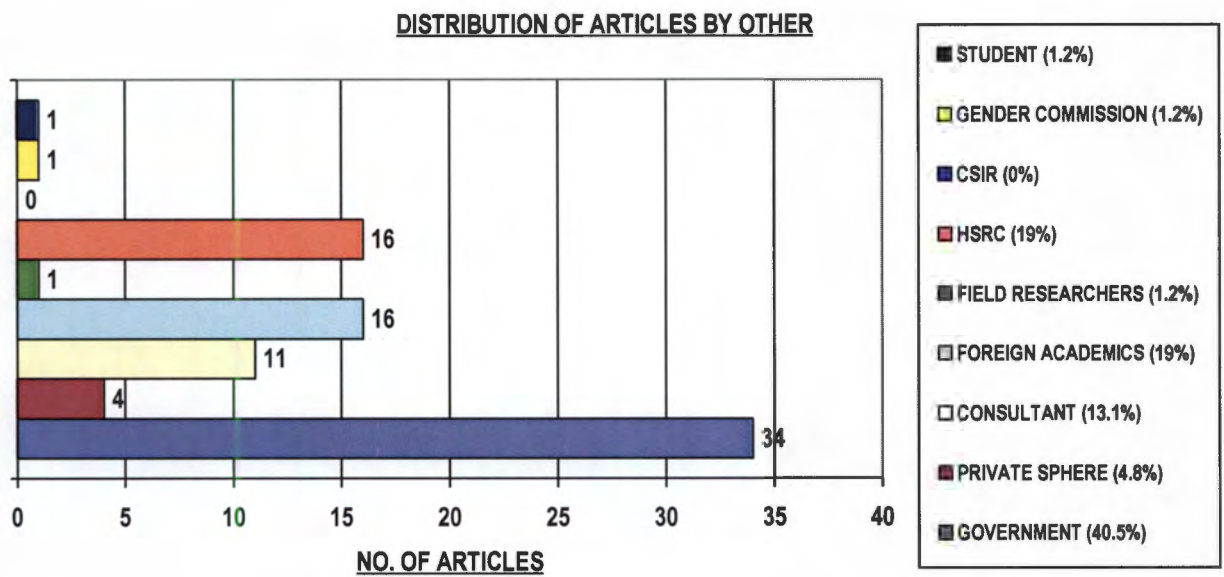


FIGURE 4.5 DISTRIBUTION OF AUTHORS BY INSTITUTIONAL AFFILIATION IN AP (N=160)

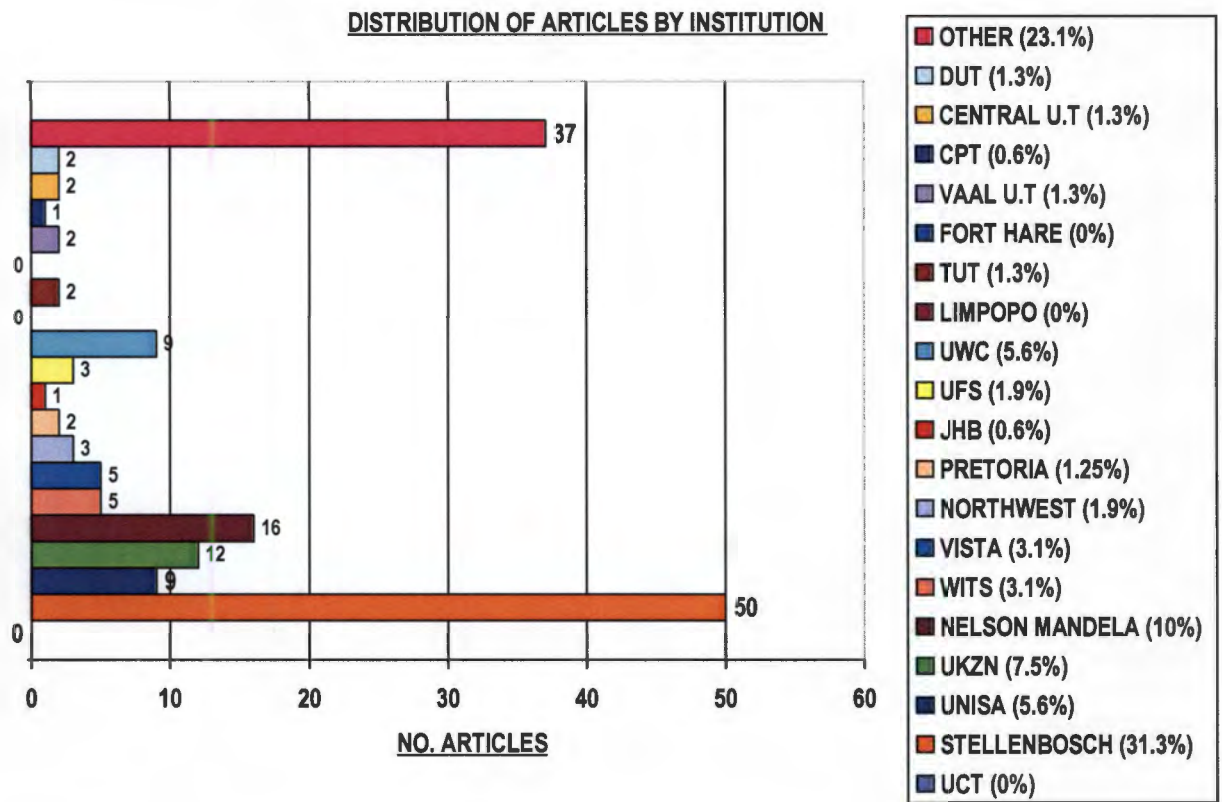
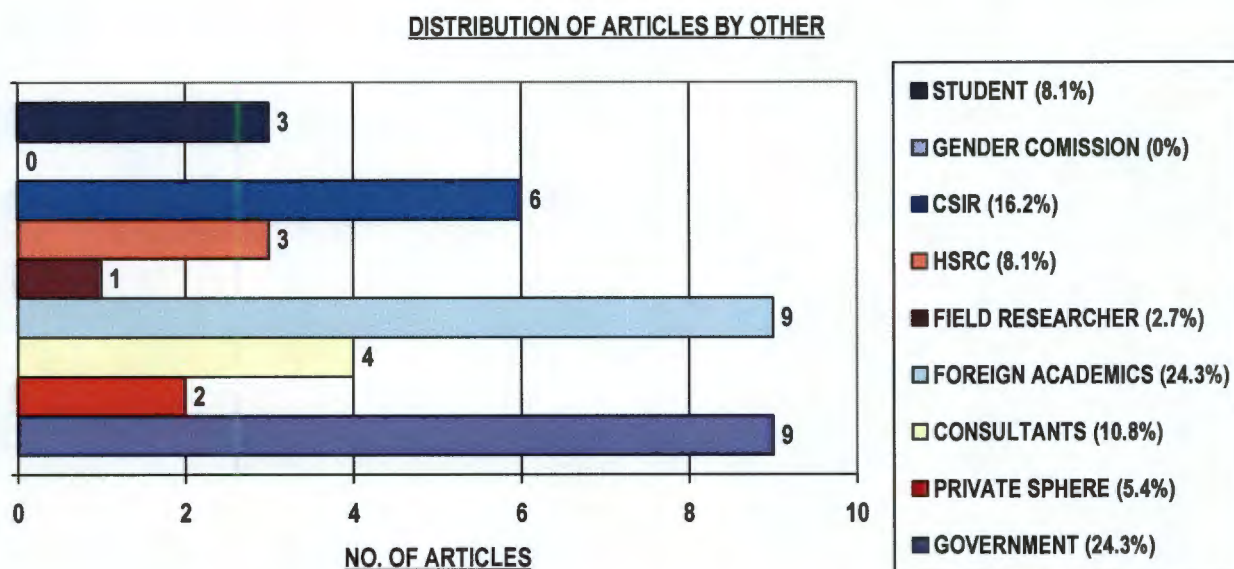


FIGURE 4.6 DISTRIBUTION OF “OTHER”ARTICLES IN AP (n =36)



4.2.3 Institutional Support:

This variable examined “what is the level of institutional support?” for Public Administration research. If institutional support is an important “reputation” indicator as Houston & Delevan (1990: 128) suggest, then Public Administration research in this country has much to work towards. These figures were recorded based on the assumption that if authors had received some form of financial or institutional support, they are required to reference this contribution at the beginning or at the end of their articles. Figures 4.7 and 4.8 illustrate trends in institutional funding - highlighting that there is clearly a lack thereof for research within the field. In total there were fourteen *JOPA* articles that indicated some form of institutional support. *AP* presented worse findings in this regard with only two articles receiving some form of institutional or financial support throughout the entire period under review. It must be noted that authors publishing as part of a development agency

such as the Human Sciences Research Council (HSRC) does not necessarily mean that they have been commissioned to carry out research. It is more than likely that these individuals have been employed by organisations such as the HSRC as full-time researchers.

FIGURE 4.7 DISTRIBUTION OF ARTICLES BY INSTITUTIONAL SUPPORT IN JOPA (n=14)

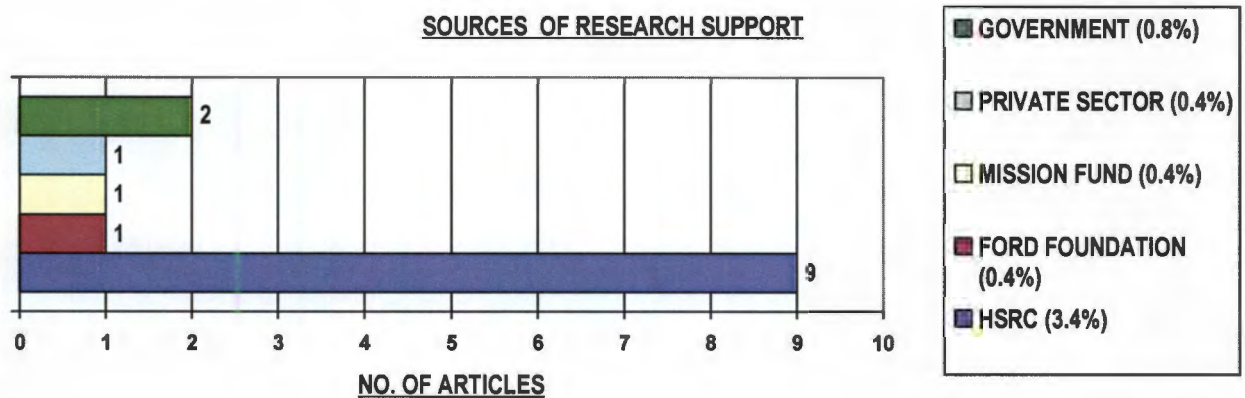
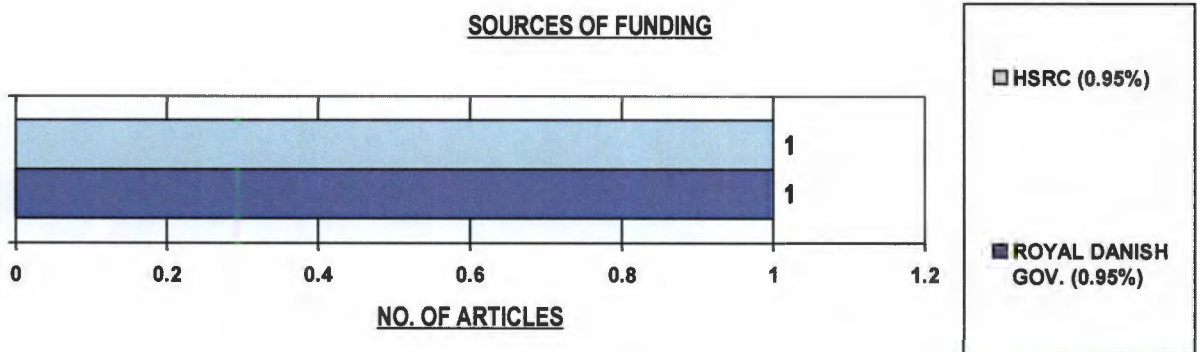


FIGURE 4.8 DISTRIBUTION OF ARTICLES BY INSTITUTIONAL SUPPORT IN AP (n=2)



4.2.4 Academic Ranking of Author(s):

This data provides basic descriptive answers to the question of "who from university faculty publishes in Public Administration journals?" More specifically this variable is designed to answer to what extent senior versus junior university faculty members publish within the two journals. Therefore if authors were from institutions other than universities they were classified under the heading "other". As in the case of other variables such as gender and race, often the rank of authors' was unknown even after consultation with the editors. When this was the case these individuals were classified under the category "unknown."

Given that *AP* is a biannual publication compared to *JOPA* which is published quarterly it seems obvious that there would be a greater number of authors in the latter. Figures 4.9 and 4.10 demonstrate that the majority of research is being conducted by both full professors and senior lecturers. This confirms that the majority of Public Administration research is being conducted at a tertiary education level. In both journals the majority of research is being conducted by senior faculty members: 59.2% in *JOPA* and 60.7% in *AP*. As to be expected *AP* indicates a slightly better result than the more practitioner-orientated *JOPA*. Oddly however, in *JOPA* there are greater number of full professors (34%) accounting for research than in *AP* (26.3%). Senior lecturers account for 20.6% of research being published in *JOPA*. In *AP* results indicate that senior lecturers (28.1%) are publishing slightly more frequently than professors (26.3%). Lecturers account for approximately 17% of research in *JOPA* articles, and slightly more in *AP* (18.7%). Non-academicians account for approximately 18% of total research in both journals.

In both journals there are authors' ranks that are uncertain; as is the case for the following two variables, author gender and race. Often authors do not indicate, for example whether they are a full-professor or an associate professor, or a senior lecturer or simply a lecturer. Not only are there significant differences in terms of ranking but this had the potential to skew the data findings to some degree. A workable solution around this problem is to suggest to the editors of the journals to supply this information as a compulsory foot or end note when each article is published, so that future research can be continued.

FIGURE 4.9 ACADEMIC RANK OF AUTHOR(S) IN JOPA (N=388):

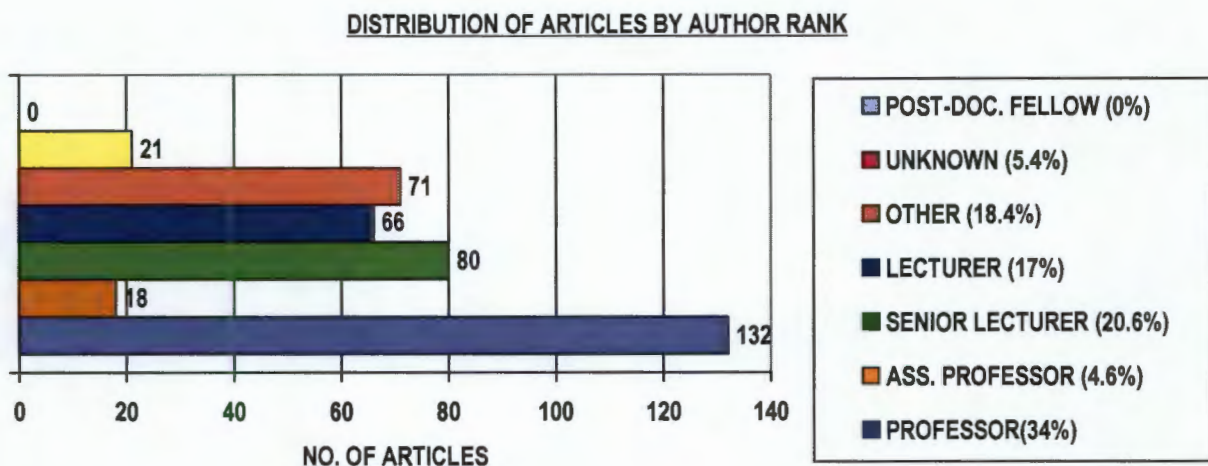
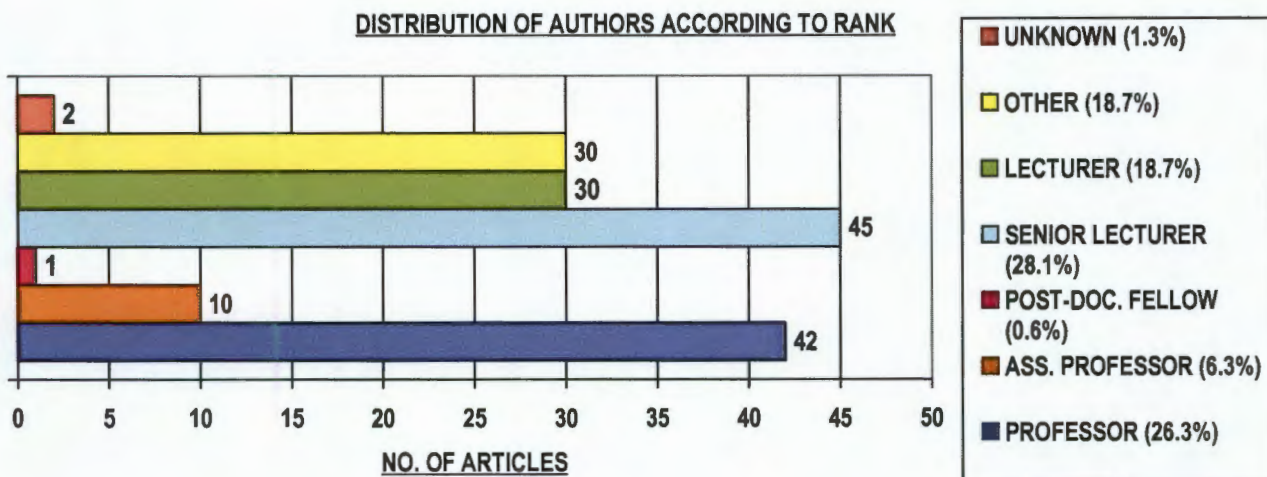


FIGURE 4.10 ACADEMIC RANK OF AUTHOR(S) IN AP (N=160):



4.2.3. Author(s) Gender:

Gender representation in both journals is overwhelmingly dominated by males. Figures 4.11 and 4.12 illustrate these findings. In the thirteen year time period, seventy-six females have published in *JOPA* and a mere fifteen females have published articles in *AP*. While this number is considerably better in *JOPA* it is obvious that the female to male publishing ratio is still minimal. For every nineteen females that publish in *JOPA* there are seventy-two males who publish. The findings do suggest that the number of females who publish have been increasing in more recent years than in the beginning of the study. What was even more interesting when trawling through these findings is that generally the same women continued to publish over the thirteen year time frame; suggesting that little efforts are being done to draw new female authors and researchers into the field of Public Administration. This issue then also brings questions regarding representivity. Whether these statistics generally reflect gender representation within Public Administration schools and departments, given that it is academics who publish overwhelmingly, is still uncertain. If this is not the case then it could be that women generally publish less. This facet of Public Administration research makes for interesting and valuable further research. For example, if the latter is correct, further studies could indicate whether women are burdened by greater domestic responsibilities such as child-rearing thereby hindering potential publishing rates.

FIGURE 4.11 RELATIVE FREQUENCY OF GENDER PUBLISHING PATTERNS IN JOPA (N=388)

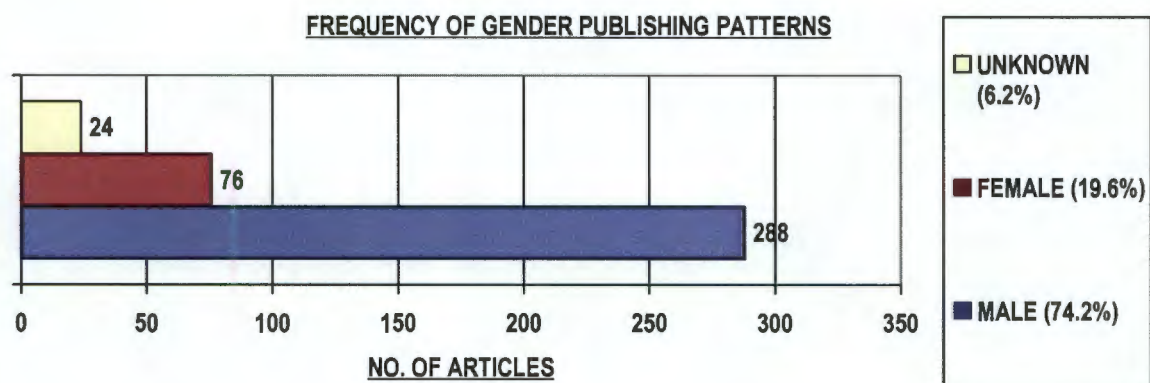
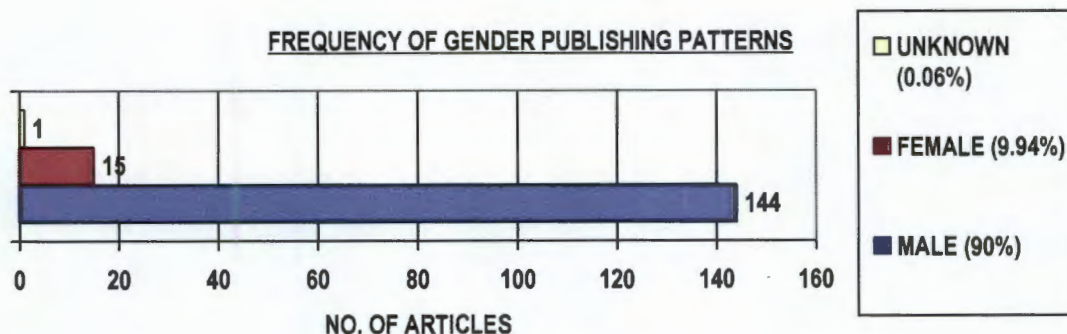


FIGURE 4.12 RELATIVE FREQUENCY OF GENDER PUBLISHING PATTERNS IN AP (N=160)



4.2.4. Author(s) Race Classification:

The trend in both journals is that the greatest number of publications are published by White authors. In *JOPA* those classified as White account for approximately 69% published articles; while *AP* fairs slightly worse in relation to Blacks publishing (21%) as opposed to 30% in *JOPA*. As with gender the results indicate that these figures have improved considerably in the later years of the study as opposed to the earlier years of the study.

FIGURE 4.13 RELATIVE FREQUENCY OF RACE PUBLISHING PATTERNS IN JOPA (N=388)

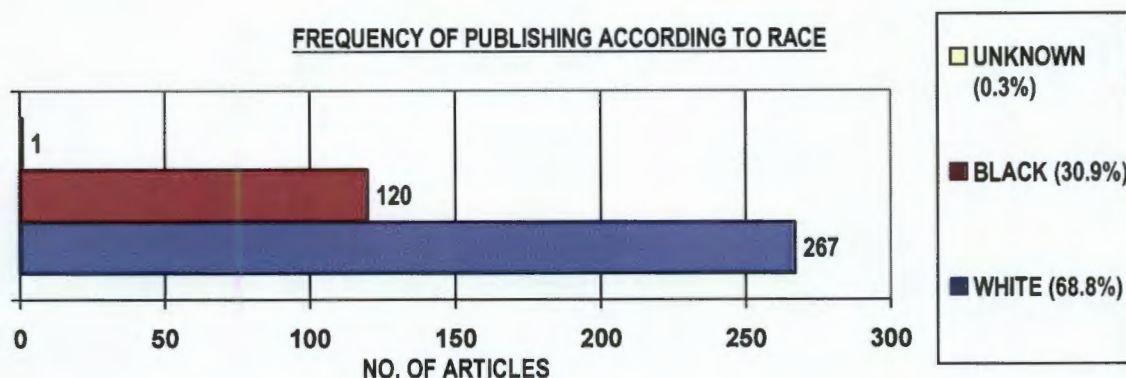
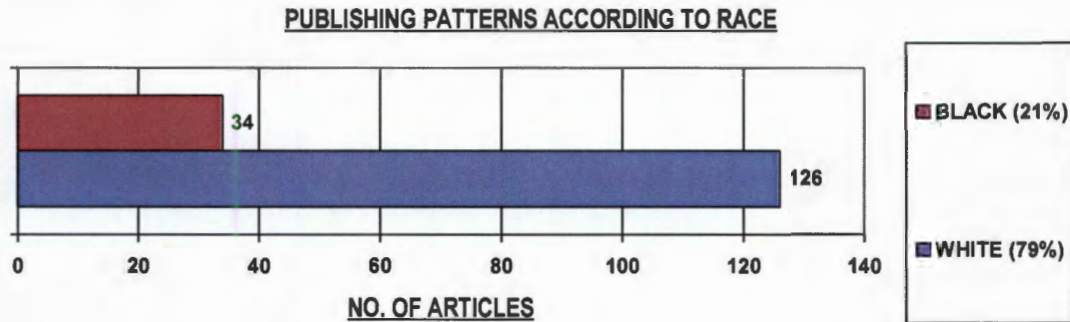


FIGURE 4.14 RELATIVE FREQUENCY OF RACE PUBLISHING PATTERNS IN AP (N=160)



4.2.4. Language Publishing Trends:

Figures 4.15 and 4.16 present the data for this variable. English is presently recognised as the official publishing language in both *AP* and *JOPA*. Few articles published in Afrikaans were evident in the first six years of the study but this ended in 2000 for both journals. *JOPA* indicates a greater number of Afrikaans published articles. The shift from Afrikaans to English as the 'de facto' language of the public service is reflected in the data. This variable therefore has not necessarily had a strong influence on Public Administration research in South Africa.

FIGURE 4.15 RELATIVE FREQUENCY OF LANGUAGE PUBLISHING PATTERNS IN JOPA (N=278)

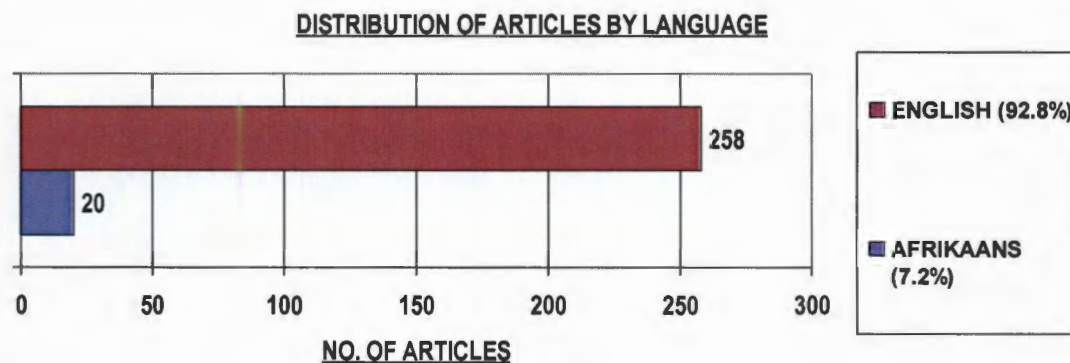
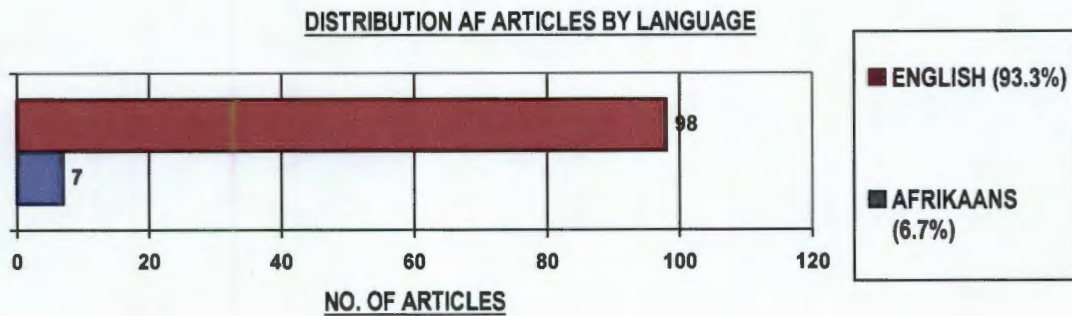


FIGURE 4.16 RELATIVE FREQUENCY OF LANGUAGE PUBLISHING PATTERNS IN AP
(N=160)



4.3. Results – Analytical Characteristics of Research:

4.3.1. Research Purpose:

This variable addresses the question “what is the major purpose of research?” by reporting the data according to three delineated intentions behind why the research was conducted initially. Figures 4.17 and 4.18 illustrate that Public Administration research emphasis is predominantly conceptual in nature. An overwhelming 79.9% of articles in *JOPA* and 87% in *AP* were catalogued under this heading, indicating as Perry & Kraemer (1986; 1994); Stallings & Ferris (1988; 1994) and Houston & Delevan (1990; 1994) did, that most Public Administration research concentrates on the juvenile, underdeveloped stages of research.

This indicates that most research in the two journals, *JOPA* and *AP*, have as their primary purpose, identifying and conceptualising researchable problems; suggesting that research is largely descriptive in nature. In other words research efforts are purely conceptual. Efforts to examine relationships and explain casual analysis amongst variables appear less frequently within both journals. Only a low 14.4% of the total *JOPA* journal articles were classified as relational, while *AP*

published a lower proportion of articles in this category, measuring 10.5%. In both journals the least frequent research purpose was to evaluate or analyse a policy or program: *JOPA* (5.7%) and *AP* (2.5%). Surprisingly, *JOPA*, which caters for both academics and practitioners, presents slightly better findings than the academically-orientated *AP* in all three instances.

FIGURE 4.17 DISTRIBUTION OF ARTICLES ACCORDING TO RESEARCH PURPOSE IN *JOPA* (N=278)

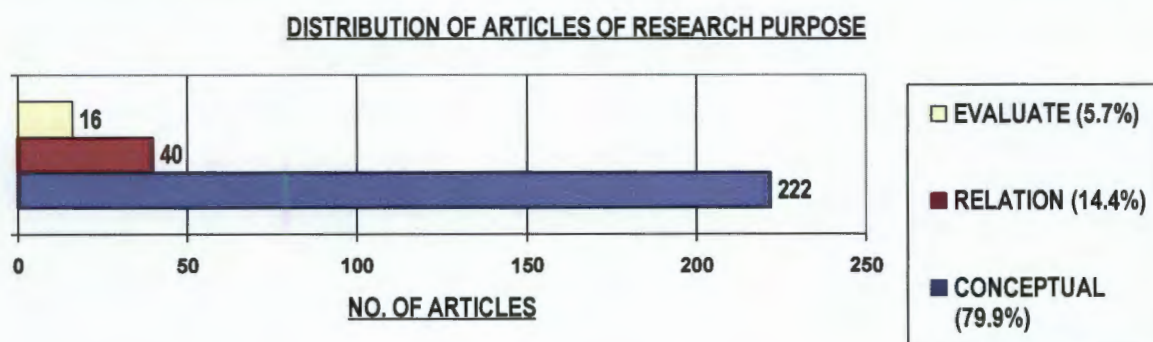
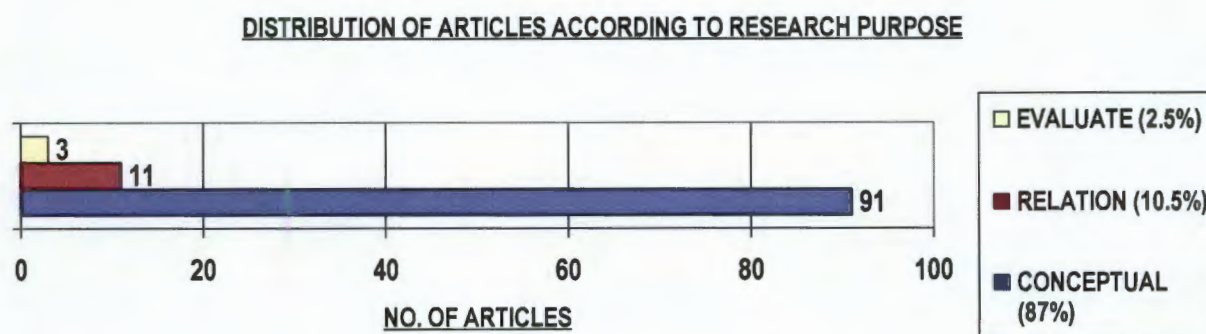


FIGURE 4.18 DISTRIBUTION OF ARTICLES ACCORDING TO RESEARCH PURPOSE IN *AP* (N=105)



4.3.2. Research Methodology:

One of the most important questions relevant to this study is "what methodologies are employed to conduct Public Administration research?" Findings for both journals indicate very similar research approach methods. Figures 4.19 and 4.20 present a worrying set of data - more than 65% of research in both journals is secondary in nature. 67.3% of research in *JOPA* and 79% in *AP* can be

classified as desktop. In some cases the research methods and approaches (if any) were not even evident in the research articles. Being classified as desktop implies that the majority of Public Administration research is not contributing to new knowledge or contributing to theory-generation. In this regard, most authors are not employing methodologies that are adding to a systematic knowledge base within the field. This supports that suggestion made in previous chapters that researchers are unable or not prepared to engage with more appropriate or beneficial methodologies that can promote theory building. In addition, when articles classified under desktop are analysed together with the above conceptual findings these two approaches reinforce one another. Taken together, these findings appear to suggest that both journals do not emphasise or promote research that requires systematic and rigorous presentation, analysis and interpretation of data given the largely conceptual and secondary nature of research that is being produced in the majority.

When research has been empirical in nature, the data demonstrates that there is a definite preference towards the use of qualitative rather than statistical, quantitative research methods. This finding reinforces early studies on Public Administration research which also demonstrated this trend. (McCurdy & Clearly, 1986; Perry & Kraemer, 1984; 1994; Stallings & Ferris, 1988; 1994; Houston & Delevan, 1990; 1994). A figure of 22.3% of total research articles in *JOPA* made use of a qualitative approach compared to a lower 13.3% in *AP*. Little empirical analysis involved using quantitative methods only 10.4%% (*JOPA*) and 7.7% (*AP*) of articles did so. Surprisingly, when interpreting this data collectively, it is once again *JOPA* that illustrates better findings, rather than the expected "more academic" *AP*.

FIGURE 4.19 DISTRIBUTION OF ARTICLES ACCORDING TO RESEARCH METHOD IN *JOPA* (N=278)

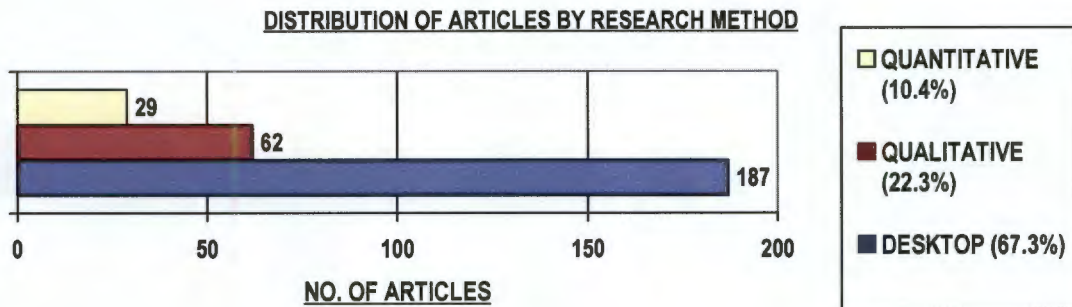
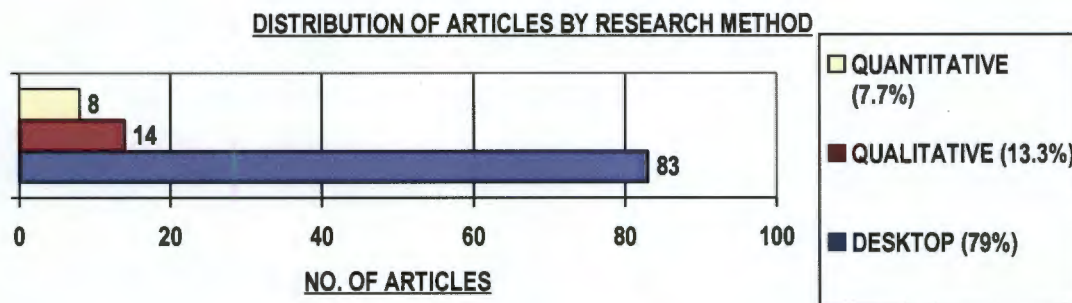


FIGURE 4.20 DISTRIBUTION OF ARTICLES ACCORDING TO RESEARCH METHOD IN *AP* (N=105)



4.3.3. Research Focus:

Figures 4.21 and 4.22 reflect that the majority of research articles published undoubtedly orientate themselves more towards practical problem-solving (needs of the practitioners) than theory generation (academic needs). More than 80% of articles in both journals emphasise this bias towards problem-solving. *JOPA* accounts for 86% of praxis-orientated articles while *AP* is slightly worse with 89%; both illustrating predominance of practitioner needs focus. This is not to say that problem-solving, applied research cannot contribute to theory-generation, but it cannot simply be descriptive and conceptual in nature; it also has to make use of the appropriate methods to allow this. For example although categorising articles as being praxis-orientated does not equate articles as being desktop in nature, there was a clear correlation or link between articles that were

classified as desktop and praxis-orientated. More advanced qualitative and quantitative studies can be conducted to serve the needs of practitioners rather than academics and knowledge generation.

FIGURE 4.21 DISTRIBUTION OF ARTICLES ACCORDING TO RESEARCH FOCUS IN JOPA (N=278)

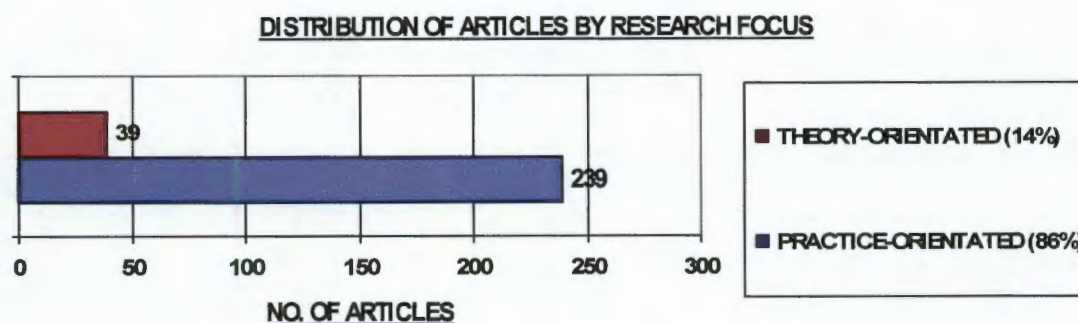
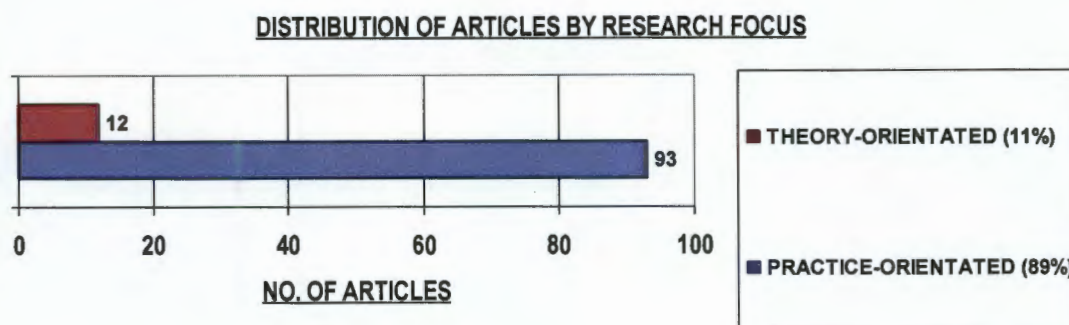


FIGURE 4.22 DISTRIBUTION OF ARTICLES ACCORDING TO RESEARCH FOCUS IN AP (N=105)



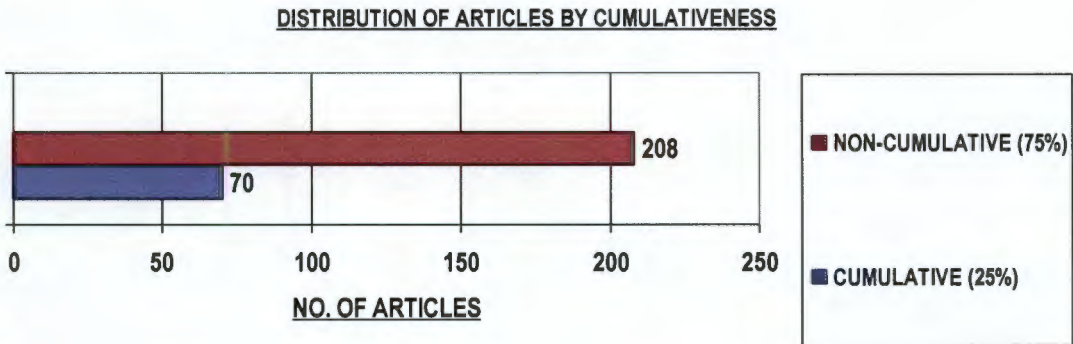
4.3.4. Cumulativeness of Research:

This variable was designed to answer whether researchers are firstly engaging with grounding debates in their respective research areas and secondly, whether they are in fact using this knowledge to build upon and extend a systematic research base for the field as a whole. This variable therefore is a valid indicator of how well Public Administration research is doing to contribute to verifiable scholarly knowledge that was discussed in chapter two. It does not

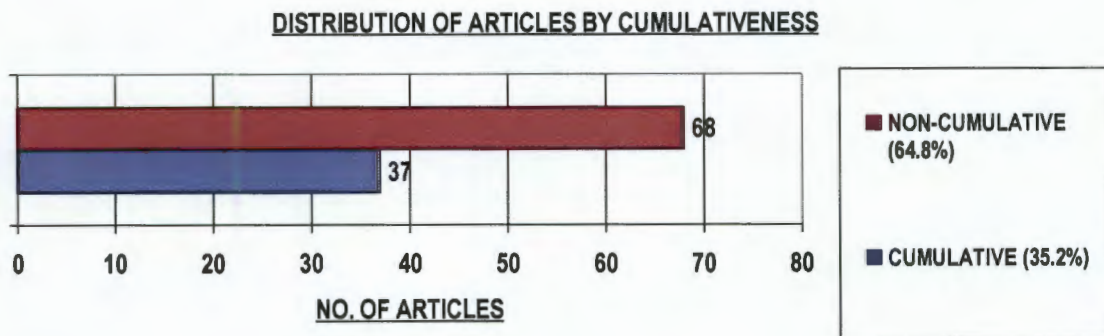
therefore, simply measure whether the research article has made use of a literature review, it is more than that. It measures whether in fact the author has used this knowledge and information to in fact inform their methodologies and scope of their studies. Additionally, it is a vital facet to research since not only does cumulativeness illustrate efforts to systematise empirical theory regarding Public Administration (Perry & Kraemer, 1986: 351) but it also raises ones confidence in the overall research findings. If done correctly, cumulativeness does exactly what it is designed to bring about: it increases the potential usefulness of the study by making it easier for other researchers to borrow from and build on their work. (Wright et al, 2004: 760). Based on these assumptions, unfortunately, this confidence and potential usefulness is evidently lacking in most of the research articles published in both journals.

Both journals indicate that more than 60% of articles in both journals are not cumulative: *JOPA* (75%) and *AP* (64.8%). Thus in thirteen years, only 25% (*JOPA*) and 35.2% (*AP*) of articles were cumulative in nature thereby suggesting that the majority of articles do not engage with the necessary works to extend existing knowledge boundaries in Public Administration. In one instance, in *JOPA* an article published in 1999 issue four, indicated no referencing what so ever – indicative of the poor state of cumulativeness. This is one of the variables whereby *AP* fairs slightly better than the more practically-orientated *JOPA*. Information is presented in figures 4.23 and 4.24.

FIGURE 4.23 DISTRIBUTION OF ARTICLES ACCORDING TO RESEARCH CUMULATIVENESS IN *JOPA* (N=278)



**FIGURE 4.24 DISTRIBUTION OF ARTICLES ACCORDING TO RESEARCH CUMULATIVENESS IN AP
(N=105)**



4.4. Results - Changes in Research Methodology Over Time from 1996-2000 & 2001-2006:

As a means for identifying changes in Public Administration research methodology, the data from the five main analytical variables were categorised into two separate time intervals: 1994-2000 and 2001-2006. These variables include: research topic; research purpose; research methodology; research focus and research cumulativeness. In this way findings can highlight any changes in research methodologies and publishing patterns.

Referring to figure 4.25, the *JOPA* distribution of research by primary subject matter was generally slightly more stable during these two periods than *AP*. Articles on Public Administration research and theory in *JOPA* decreased slightly over the time intervals from 6.6% to 4.7%. *AP* experienced a positive change in this regard for this subject area in the same period; from 5% to 6.6%, somewhat of a positive move. There were significant declining shifts in *JOPA* in the subject areas: public management and administration (17.6% to 12.3%); ethics and accountability (14.2% to 8.6%); administrative reform (6.6% to 1.6%); IGR (6.6% to 1.6%) and, other (13.2% to 12.3%). *AP* also experienced a decline in research in four of the above areas, although on a slightly greater

level. Public management and administration decreased from 20% to 13.3%; ethics and accountability decreased (11.7% to 2.3%); service delivery (10%-6.6%); local government reorganisation (10% to 6.6%); administrative reform (6.7% to 2.3%); and, other (15% to 2.3%). IGR is one subject area where *AP* did not record one article throughout the entire study period. *JOPA*, unlike *AP* illustrated an increase in service delivery (4.4% to 10.7%) and local government reorganisation (0% to 3.7%) in the later years under review - indicative of the broader political changes taking place within the country as a whole. Findings indicate that the remaining research topics: development and citizen participation; public policy; HRM; and, ICT & e-governance all increased in the second interval under study in both journals.

For certain of these topics declines and increases in research interest were to be expected. The year 1994 was a watershed year in the sense that it represented the beginning of a new political ideology and broader political and administrative changes were inevitable. Thus it is hardly surprising that administrative reform research topics illustrate a decline in the second interval, as these changes occurred simultaneously or shortly after our country's transition. The results imply that the research focus has shifted to other important issues such as public policy and development and citizen participation, illustrating increases in both journals over the intervals. ICT and e-governance portray a significant increase during the two time frames – indicative of the impact that technological advances have had on the field especially more recently.

FIGURE 4.25 - Comparison of 1994-2000 and 2001-2006

Distribution of Articles by Primary Subject Area

JOPA (N=278)

<u>Subject Matter</u>	<u>1994-2000</u>		<u>2001-2006</u>		<u>TOTAL</u>	
	N	%	N	%	N	%
PA Research & Theory	6	6.6	9	4.7	15	5.4
Public Management & Administration	16	17.6	23	12.3	39	14
Development & Citizen Participation	8	8.8	22	11.8	30	10.9
Public Policy	3	3.3	11	5.9	14	5
Ethics & Accountability	13	14.2	16	8.6	29	10.4
HRM	5	5.5	16	8.6	21	7.6
Financial Management & Budgeting	9	9.9	15	8	24	8.6
IGR	6	6.6	3	1.6	9	3.2
ICT & E-Governance	3	3.3	19	10.2	22	8
Service Delivery	4	4.4	20	10.7	24	8.6
Local Government Reorganisation	0	0	7	3.7	7	2.5
Administrative Reform	6	6.6	3	1.6	9	3.2
Other	12	13.2	23	12.3	35	12.6
TOTAL:	91	100	187	100	278	100

AP (N=105)

<u>Subject Matter</u>	<u>1994-2000</u>		<u>2001-2006</u>		<u>TOTAL</u>	
	N	%	N	%	N	%
PA Research & Theory	3	5	3	6.6	6	5.7
Public Management & Administration	12	20	6	13.3	18	17.1
Development & Citizen Participation	4	6.7	6	13.3	10	9.5
Public Policy	4	6.7	7	15.6	11	10.5
Ethics & Accountability	7	11.7	1	2.3	8	7.6
HRM	3	5	6	13.3	9	8.6
Financial Management & Budgeting	0	0	2	4.4	2	1.9
IGR	0	0	0	0	0	0
ICT & E-Governance	2	3.2	7	15.6	9	7.6
Service Delivery	6	10	2	4.4	8	8.6
Local Government Reorganisation	6	10	3	6.6	9	7.6
Administrative Reform	4	6.7	1	2.3	5	4.8
Other	9	15	1	2.3	10	9.5
TOTAL:	60	100	45	100	105	100

FIGURE 4.26 - Comparison of 1994-2000 and 2001-2006

Distribution of Articles by Research Purpose

JOPA (N=278)

<u>Research Purpose</u>	<u>1994-2000</u>		<u>2001-2006</u>		<u>TOTAL</u>	
	N	%	N	%	N	%
CONCEPTUAL	73	80.2	149	79.7	222	79.9
RELATION	14	15.4	26	13.9	40	14.4
EVALUATE	4	4.4	12	6.4	16	5.7
TOTAL:	91	100	187	100	278	100

AP (N=105)

<u>Research Purpose</u>	<u>1994-2000</u>		<u>2001-2006</u>		<u>TOTAL</u>	
	N	%	N	%	N	%
CONCEPTUAL	51	91.1	40	81.6	91	87
RELATION	5	8.9	6	12.3	11	10.5
EVALUATE	0	0	3	6.1	3	2.5
TOTAL:	56	100	49	100	105	100

Figure 4.26 shows that although there was a decrease of conceptual articles in both journals (a positive move), *AP* (a decrease of 9.5%) represented a greater decrease in this regard than *JOPA* (0.5% decrease). Despite these decreases the conceptual approach remains the dominant purpose to conducting research in Public Administration. Relational articles, important for establishing causality, experience a decline in the second time interval in *JOPA* (15.4% to 13.9%) while *AP* indicate a healthy improvement of more than 3% in the same time period. Considering that *AP* is meant to advocate academic concerns this is a reassuring trend. Evaluative articles indicate a positive move in both journals; although *AP*'s increase is significantly larger.

Figure 4.27 illustrates that the general methodologies employed during research changed significantly for the better in the latter time frame. Significant declines in the use of the desktop method is evident in both journals, most notably *JOPA*. Both the use of qualitative (9.9% to 28.3% in *JOPA* and 8.9% to 18.4% in *AP*) and quantitative methods (9.9% to 10.7% in *JOPA* and 5.4% to 10.2% in *AP*) increased considerably during the second half of the study. Although the end scores

reading in total are not ideal, this is a positive and welcome move since it indicates an upward trend in the use of more systematic and empirical analyses to research and the generation of new knowledge. This movement correlates with the decline of research articles that are praxis-orientated. (Figure 4.28). The second time interval witnessed considerable increases in articles that were geared towards academic needs and theory generation in both *JOPA* and *AP*. This trend is a positive and reassuring move. In spite of this improvement however, the final distribution of articles, according to this dichotomous variable at the end of 2006 however, still calls for considerable improvement in both journals.

**FIGURE 4.27 – Comparison of 1994-2000 and 2001-2006
Distribution of Articles by Research Methodology**

JOPA (N=278)

Research Method	1994-2000		2001-2006		TOTAL	
	N	%	N	%	N	%
DESKTOP	73	80.2	114	61	187	67.3
QUALITATIVE	9	9.9	53	28.3	62	22.3
QUANTITATIVE	9	9.9	20	10.7	29	10.4
TOTAL:	91	100	187	100	278	100

AP (N=105)

Research Method	1994-2000		2001-2006		TOTAL	
	N	%	N	%	N	%
DESKTOP	48	85.7	35	71.4	83	79
QUALITATIVE	5	8.9	9	18.4	14	13.3
QUANTITATIVE	3	5.4	5	10.2	8	7.7
TOTAL:	56	100	49	100	105	100

FIGURE 4.28 - Comparison of 1994-2000 and 2001-2006
Distribution of Articles According to Theory versus Problem-Solving

JOPA (N=278)

<u>Research Focus</u>	<u>1994-2000</u>		<u>2001-2006</u>		<u>TOTAL</u>	
	N	%	N	%	N	%
THEORY-BUILDING	9	9.9	30	16	39	14
PROBLEM-SOLVING	82	90.1	157	84	239	86
TOTAL:	91	100	187	100	278	100

AP (N=105)

<u>Research Focus</u>	<u>1994-2000</u>		<u>2001-2006</u>		<u>TOTAL</u>	
	N	%	N	%	N	%
THEORY-BUILDING	4	7.1	8	16.3	12	12
PROBLEM-SOLVING	52	92.9	41	83.7	93	88
TOTAL:	56	100	49	100	105	100

Figure 4.29 illustrates that *JOPA* has a more stable results concerning the issue of cumulateness. Findings indicate that there was more than 5% improvement in cumulateness in research articles from 1994-2001, while *AP* indicates an opposite negative trend. During this period *AP* articles worsened in terms of the lack of cumulateness by more than 20%. The second interval witnessed a decline from almost 47% to 22% in cumulative articles. Although these findings are a cause for concern, this is one of the few variables whereby *AP* illustrates better overall results than *JOPA*.

FIGURE 4.29 - Comparison of 1994-2000 and 2001-2006

Distribution of Articles According Cumulativeness

JOPA (N=278)

	<u>1994-2000</u>		<u>2001-2006</u>		<u>TOTAL</u>	
	N	%	N	%	N	%
CUMULATIVE	19	20.9	51	27.3	70	25
NON-CUMULATIVE	72	79.1	136	72.7	208	75
TOTAL:	91	100	187	100	278	100

AP (N=105)

	<u>1994-2000</u>		<u>2001-2006</u>		<u>TOTAL</u>	
	N	%	N	%	N	%
CUMULATIVE	26	46.4	11	22.4	37	35.2
NON-CUMULATIVE	30	53.6	38	77.6	68	64.8
TOTAL:	56	100	49	100	105	100

4.5. Chapter Summary:

This chapter presented this study's findings according to the discussed descriptive and analytical variables, in order to question the current state of Public Administration research in South Africa. Analysed collectively, these variables' findings offer cause for concern. By triangulating findings from the five main analytical variables (research topic; research purpose; research methodology; research focus; and, research cumulativeness) one can conclude that South African Public Administration research is characterised by bleak conditions if it remains unchanged. Research topics likely to advance theory development within the field represent low measures when compared to more practical subjects such as public management. Additionally, Public Administration research, as based on these journal findings, is largely descriptive and conceptual in nature skewed towards problem-solving and the practice of the discipline. Research methods are predominantly secondary in nature with little efforts to develop and test existing theories, thereby suggesting that it is incapable of sustaining the knowledge needs of the field. Although the research trends have overall represented some positive changes in the latter half of the study this alone is not enough to restore confidence in the final study's figures. Essentially there is an idea that the field has become enmeshed in the practice of Public Administration at the expense of

research and scholarly investment. Although all this seems a bleak existence there are ways in which this can be improved.

Chapter Five:

Conclusion - Discussion & Implications of Public Administration Research in South Africa: Where to From Here?

5.1. Concluding Overview:

Studying Public Administration research is a valid and noteworthy area of examination. By understanding and analysing the weighting that a field, such as Public Administration gives research, one is able to better examine and comprehend the academic status of the field, as well as to what degree it is maturing. This concluding chapter acts as a summary of the main points that have been discussed throughout this dissertation with regard to this topic. This chapter is also responsible for explaining what the implications are of this study's findings. In this regard, one of the biggest challenges of this study was to use the international knowledge in a beneficial manner but without failing to contextualise the approach to successfully fit and complement the South African scenario. Where possible the study incorporated original and circumstantial variables that would aim to make this a more relevant and authentic framework for studying Public Administration research in South Africa. In this way useful parallels and distinctions can be drawn and more informed inferences can be made about the status of Public Administration research in South Africa.

The findings illustrate that there has been a shift in the balance of the practice-theory interface of the field in that overwhelming concerns for practical applications have prevented the commitment to pursuing the scholarly research and knowledge needed within the field. There is wealth of reasons for this: the political history of South Africa combined with the eclectic nature of the field; multidisciplinary influence on the subject; the idea that there is no broad theoretical framework to guide research; the trends towards consultancy and so forth. Recommendations, based on the findings of the study, are also provided in an attempt to better this situation of South African Public Administration research.

5.2. Findings & Hypothesis:

The primary hypothesis guiding this dissertation is that South African Public Administration research focuses primarily on conceptual practical research rather than enhancing or developing theory-generating research. In other words the findings from this study found that more than half of the research did not contribute to theory-generation or advancement: 80% (*JOPA*) and 87% (*AP*) research can be described as purely conceptual; 67.3% (*JOPA*) and 79% (*AP*) was desktop in nature and 60% of all research did not build on existing knowledge or similar work done by others. In conclusion the research was predominantly conceptual in nature. Put differently, the research deficiencies identified in the British and United States contexts are evident within South African Public Administration research. There has been little evidence of developing a cumulative knowledge base within the discipline and research methodologies are generally of a poor quality making little effort to contribute to a systematic, scholarly base of Public Administration knowledge. Therefore theory development in the field is weak.

Based on the previous chapter's findings, according to the analysis of the variables, the hypothesis of this study has been proved. Public Administration research in South Africa is largely atheoretical – reinforcing the notion that theory development in the field is weak. It is largely descriptive and secondary in nature with little attempts to engage in theory-generating or primary research endeavours. It is only through these primary research quests that theory can be enhanced and developed which consequently allows the field to mature and advance. The majority of the research methodologies are defined as DESKTOP which suggests that South Africa has even further to advance than international contexts given that this approach dominates over qualitative and quantitative research methods. The majority of research and knowledge accumulation was non-cumulative indicating that authors were not readily engaging and interpreting the grounding knowledge within their particular fields of interest. Research is essentially skewed towards problem-solving and the needs of practitioners rather than theory and academic development of the field.

In order to contribute to the South African Public Administration debate this particular study was informed by a set of descriptive and analytical variables designed to answer primary questions regarding the nature of research as set out in the introductory chapter. These five questions consisted of: who is contributing to Public Administration research, or put differently, who is

publishing in Public Administration journals?; what are researchers writing about (their areas of research)?; what purpose does this research serve?; what research methodologies are being employed by researchers and is there a “correct” methodology for our field Public Administration?; is there a dominance in gender and race research patterns; and, is language a relevant factor in Public Administration research? By providing answers to these questions in the following section, this dissertation contributes to some of the fundamental issues surrounding and informing the Public Administration research debate in South Africa.

A further objective of this study was to measure the current state of Public Administration research by assessing to what degree these international findings are prevalent locally. South African Public Administration is characterised by similar research problems that occur internationally (Britain & United States). Although this study conducted a more systematic analysis on research methodology, the results strengthen the local work of Hubbell (1992) and Wessels (2005); thereby concluding, as these authors suggest, that South African Public Administration research is largely instrumental in character and predominantly falls within a functionalist paradigm. In other words much of the research can be explained from a utilitarian perspective: either serving the needs of the state or those of practitioners.

5.3. Discussion & Implications of the Findings -What Does This telling Us about Public Administration Research in South Africa:

By triangulating and scrutinising the analytical variables simultaneously, this confirms the accuracy of the original hypothesis. Through this analysis, it is obvious that the findings of each variable designed to supply information regarding the state of research, reinforces and supports conclusions drawn from each other. In this regard, each set of findings serve to support and underpin each other. Public Administration research as it appears in the two journals, *JOPA* and *AP*, is largely conducted by academics situated in tertiary institutions. In both instances a traditional university (a university that was not previously classified as a technikon or has not incorporated a previous technikon) produced the largest number of research articles. In comparison, contributions made by government and developmental agencies such as the HSRC, are considerably less. An area for future study might highlight which departments these university authors are affiliated to in order to test the impact of cornerstone disciplines of Public Administration, such as economics,

sociology or law on research within the field, as Lan & Anders (2000) did. This would also contribute to the debate on the multidisciplinary influences on Public Administration research.

The majority of research being conducted is centred prevalently upon management issues and administrative processes, essentially revolving around the practice of Public Administration. Little commitment to researching topics that would advance basic research and theory development is evident within the two journals. Categories designed to measure this objective featured one of the lowest scores in both journals suggesting that these themes are weighted more towards advancing the practice rather than the theory of the field. It not to say that these issues are not an important component within Public Administration, but it is questionable whether they should in fact be the principal focus of the field. (Hubbell, 1992: 10). Bearing in mind that to grow and be recognised as a field of study, Public Administration must extend the frontiers of knowledge to identify the fundamental research questions and the appropriate methods to answer them (Perry & Kraemer, 1986; 1994; Wright et al, 2004), the following research findings require serious consideration.

Most articles indicate that Public Administration research is dominated by endeavours to identify and conceptualise problems that could be used for future research. This process is largely carried out in a descriptive manner with little evidence of establishing causalities or theory-testing. In other words its present primary function is to identify, delineate and describe research problems. Currently, there are few attempts being made to establish causal and explanatory relationships between the variables within the research articles. When theories are tested or causalities explained, it is very basic in nature. These findings coincide with Hubbell's (1992: 13) argument that many contributors to research often ignore variables that are relevant to their analysis thereby making theory testing or generation impossible. Perry & Kraemer (1986; 1994) describe this similar situation in the United States, as the "problem delineation" and "variable identification" stages of research which are symbolic of the initial, primary stages of the research undertaking.

These findings can be equated to what Stallings & Ferris (1988; 1994) state as: "research is dominated by efforts to conceptualise, researchable problems, delineate possible areas of inquiry, and describe objects of study." Furthermore Houston and Delevan (1990; 1994) also shed light on the current situation; that research attempts tend to represent early phases of research with a persistent lack of empirical research and theory-testing. As a faculty, Public Administration

researchers must realise that the emergence of a collective research agenda, will only result from a broader focus than the more limited emphasis on management problems, analyses of policy choices and evaluation of specific programmes. (Stallings & Ferris, 1994: 122).

Perry and Kraemer (1986: 353) note that the ultimate test of research methodology is whether it contributes to the development of knowledge within the field. Based on this argument, perhaps then of greater concern is that the majority of research within field is not generating new or original knowledge – it is predominantly secondary (DESKTOP) in nature. This does not even necessarily mean that the research being conducted is applied rather than basic, it simply means that the current research in the journals is atheoretical, focused more towards the practical needs of the field rather than theory development. The exception, rather than the norm is for researchers to highlight and justify the use of particular variables and to explain how their respective research designs contribute to overall validity and reliability of the study. This suggests that Public Administration in South Africa is doing little to generate new theoretical knowledge, thereby contributing to the stagnation of the field as a scholarly area of study. The fact that there are only modest attempts to stimulate primary knowledge, merely confirms Perry & Kraemer's findings (1986; 1994), that Public Administration research is applied rather than basic and is predominantly atheoretical.

Luton (2005: 11) argues that every review of Public Administration research has found that qualitative research methods are a dominant mode within the field. Houston & Delevan (1994: 134) state that a number of articles in their research sample were simply making use of univariate and bivariate statistics suggesting that the causal arguments drawn are as a result weak, since plausible rival hypotheses cannot be dismissed. At an international level, in more recent years, recommendations regarding the use of methodology are more commonly referring to and recognising the importance and usefulness of both quantitative and qualitative research approaches. See for example Luton (2005); Lan & Anders (2000); Wright et al (2004) and Lowery & Evans (2004).

Within this arena of debate, these studies argue that it is not so much about which is the most legitimate or superior approach to conducting useful research, it is rather about using either method appropriately to guide systematic research, with regard to specific research questions, to

produce valuable knowledge for the field. In this regard it is not so much about placing quantitative and qualitative methods at an opposing competing ends to one another, or choosing one approach at the expense of downplaying the other. Wright et al (2004: 748) argue and support this point: "At issue is not the respective legitimacy of qualitative or quantitative methods; rather, it should be about when and how to apply such methods in a ways that builds confidence in research findings." Lan and Anders (2000: 150) agree: "...the debate regarding the predominance of quantitative or qualitative methods in Public Administration research seems a moot point. Both methods are well presented in these mainstream journals...suggests that we should move beyond arguments as to which research method is more legitimate, towards discussions as to whether the methods have been appropriately used." In this regard one can conclude that while there may be preferred methods amongst different groups of researchers, there is no "correct" method for conducting Public Administration research.

Considering this debate at a local South African level, one can conclude that the current state of Public Administration research is one step removed, possibly worse than the above-mentioned international situation, when methodology is concerned. While the United States and British studies recognise and acknowledge both methods as appropriate approaches for conducting research in the field, this study is stating that the situation in South Africa is somewhat different: it is more about getting individuals to conduct some sort of primary research to begin with. Presently, secondary research is by far the predominant method for conducting research. At least when qualitative methods are employed this indicates primary, systematic and an empirical approach to advancing new knowledge within the field. The point to be made in this regard is that South African Public Administration is far from employing primary research standards, be it qualitative or quantitative, as the normal benchmark of research; let alone the requirements for submitting research articles as is the case of most United States Public Administration journals, such as *Journal of Public Administration Research and Theory*. Our, South African situation therefore, is not at the level of suitably allocating either of these primary research methods to specific research questions, it is more about facilitating and making possible some form of primary research inquiry as the norm rather than the exception.

This relates to the point made throughout this dissertation that a further explanation of the current research situation, is not solely about whether it is practice-focused or not but whether researchers

are in fact making use of appropriate research methodologies to enhance theory generation. Reasons as to why researchers are not making use of more appropriate and suitable methodologies, for example lack of knowledge or inability, or unwillingness would make for interesting future research that would complement this study's findings.

This study's findings confirm McCurdy & Cleary's (1984: 52) point that Public Administration research that a substantial amount of research appeared to have no purpose in that it was neither applied, nor basic; nor qualitative or quantitative in approach. They comment on this condition: "...they (dissertations) were so general they were of little importance." In many instances this was also the case in this particular study – supposed academic articles presented themselves as something that could be equated to a practitioner manual report. If one does not theorise on empirical research then it is no different from what practitioners are doing in their day-to-day routines. This then is by no means considered scholarly Public Administration knowledge.

This point links up to the finding that South African Public Administration research is not cumulative. Evidence of this deficiency at a local level, once again strengthens what Perry & Kraemer (1986; 1994) concluded: that researchers are therefore not engaging and absorbing linkages with their respective research purposes and broader literature debates within their subject fields. If researchers are not partaking in this simple, yet essential step within their research processes, it is of no wonder then that some articles have no apparent purpose or that most research cannot move beyond conceptualising or describing problems.

As concluded in international studies, South African Public Administration research is focused on conceptual problem-solving, thereby limiting the development of a scholarly knowledge needed to promote theory generation within the field. As many have noted, part of the disconnect between academics and practitioners is caused by the differences in research purpose and focus, as well as the intended audiences. (Franklin & Ebdon, 2005: 634). These two groups' needs are not necessarily mutually exclusive, as discussed in chapter two. For example practitioners, based on their need for usable knowledge, rely heavily on theory generation, research results and the extent to which generalisations based on these two can be made. This applied knowledge that is useful for practical purposes however, can only be generated through basic research and theory-testing – associated with primary research. "Sound theory...is developed only through the testing and

refining of empirical propositions derived from theory." (Houston & Delevan, 1994: 134).

Considering that the majority of South African research is conceptual and secondary in nature, the degree to which the current state of research is beneficial too and adequately meeting practitioners' needs is even questionable.

This then leads one to a fundamental question as posed by Stallings & Ferris (1994: 122): why has all this apparent amount of conceptual research not gotten under way? The findings of this study clearly illustrate that there is a large amount of delineated researchable problems that can be used in future endeavours; the reasons as to why more advanced research has not been undertaken is however not as clear. In order for Public Administration as a scholarly field to advance and mature, it is necessary that this conceptual research becomes "operationalised." What this implies is that researchers evolve these researchable issues into more relational and evaluative research – not only benefiting the academic community but also practitioners who can benefit from this information to make well-informed, daily decisions. Taking into account that the data for *JOPA* illustrates increases in both relational and evaluative research towards the end of the study this might be an indication that progressing towards more systematic and basic research is perhaps slowly under way. This trend unfortunately is not true however for *AP*, which indicates an overall decrease in the relational purposes of research in the latter half of the study.

The last set of questions to be answered concentrates on the role of gender, race and language publishing patterns. In all three instances, this study designed respective variables to simply provide descriptive information regarding the dominance patterns and not to comment from a political or transformation perspective. Research is certainly predominated by male publishing patterns (greater than 60% in each journal), as well as White researchers within the field. One cannot conclude, based on these findings if this is representative of the field as a whole or if in fact there are other significant factors at play for example the gate-keeping function of the journals' editors. This data base in particular lends itself for interesting and useful research in this regard. Although there were definite changes present within the database concerning the language shift from Afrikaans to English, this variable does not present as a chief factor in Public Administration research in this country.

5.4. Reasons for Poor Public Administration Research in South Africa:

What then are some of the driving explanations behind this miserable state of Public Administration research in South Africa¹? The following are some possible reasons that contribute to the poor quality of Public Administration research in South Africa, as understood through the analysis of *JOPA* and *AP* articles reviewed.

5.4.1. Lack of Funding:

The general lack of funding could also be a reason as to why the Public Administration faculty is lacking advanced and high quality research. This study's findings by no means illustrate a new or a unique problem in Public Administration research; they simply reinforce Perry & Kraemer (1986; 1994); Stallings & Ferris (1988; 1994) and Houston & Delevan (1990; 1994) arguments that Public Administration research does not enjoy as much institutional and financial support as other disciplines in the social sciences thereby acting as one of the obstacles to conducting high quality Public Administration research.

Stallings & Ferris (1994: 120) note that this is a problem has persistently remained unchanged since the 1940's. Unfortunately, without financial resources, adequate research about public administration is unlikely to occur. (Perry & Kraemer, 1994: 105). This can be explained from various angles. One explanation is that Public Administration research proposals do not successfully compete for funding against other disciplines from the funding agencies, such as the National Research Foundation. Or alternatively, since research is not extending beyond the initial descriptive and conceptual stages, in other words the desktop stage, there is no "real" need for fieldwork, data collection and statistical analysis and therefore researchers do not actually require funding. Perhaps it comes down to a combination of both. Whatever the exact reasoning behind the lack of funding, Stallings and Ferris (1994: 121) note that if Public Administration authors are content to continue with research that is merely descriptive and characterised by research methods that are not explanatory, then the lack of funding is "really self-imposed."

¹ Reasons contributing to the poor state of Public Administration research were previously discussed in chapter two. This section does not intent to simply repeat this literature but discuss reasons that are more specific to South Africa. This section however should be understood and read in conjunction with the points made in chapter two in mind.

5.4.2. The Eclectic & Multidisciplinary Nature of the Field:

From a more theoretical standpoint, the eclectic nature of the Public Administration could be contributing to the problems associated with research. This point is founded on the introductory discussion (chapter one) regarding the inherent and continual tensions that the theory-practice interface presents to conducting research; the lack of a unifying theory to guide scholars; and, the multidisciplinary nature that the field is continually adopting. These issues will be discussed in further detail.

Due to the complexity of Public Administration's dual nature, research within the field serves an equally double-sided significance. On the one hand Public Administration is an intellectual field of study that is required to advance theory and a scholarly body of knowledge, as to establish the academic positioning of the field. In this regard research acts as the primary channel through which theories can be developed (basic research), tested and advanced so as to build upon existing knowledge. Public Administration is persistently trying to present itself as a well-established and advanced academic field of study, reliant on scholarly knowledge and research for this objective to be realised. (Perry & Kraemer, 1986: 349).

On the other hand public administration is a training ground for practitioners (Houston & Delevan, 1994: 135), concerned with the operation and social role of the public institutions and therefore presents itself as a professional and practical field. In this regard, research is required to supply information that can inform and guide the daily activities faced by individuals who practice public administration as a vocational career path. Research allows for and supplies this group of individuals with knowledge about how public institutions operate, and is thus encouraged to be applied so that it is useful and appropriate for practitioners. In this regard one can conclude that theory is not unrelated to practice and is of use to practitioners, since it can be argued that if good social science research is systematic it will always be relevant to everyday life and activities. (Wright et al, 2004: 747-748). Inevitably and inescapably, the dual nature of research has impacted on the type of research and the methodologies produced within the field. This has led the Public Administration faculty to adopt multiple missions that require not only academic research but also professional service. (Perry & Kraemer, 1986: 349).

The inherent nature of the theory-practice interface, it is continually impinging on the way in which research is being conducted. For example this tension is evident within the methodology debate of qualitative versus quantitative approaches, or how faculty of Public Administration is educated upon formally entering the field. It is only through theory-generating or primary research however that both sides of Public Administration can be advanced and more applicable to the relevant situations. The scope, direction and methodology used to conduct research within the field is further complicated, shaped and influenced by a number of interacting and cooperative factors, such as the historical development of the field within a specific context like South Africa; or the multidisciplinary influence on the field.

Clearly, by its very nature Public Administration requires a well-balanced mixture of both basic and applied research. What is imperative is that both types of research contribute to theory development. With the impact of NPM on both teaching and research in South Africa some authors argue that this balance has been disrupted to unreasonably favour the practical face of the discipline. (Greenwood & Eggins, 1995; Cameron, 2005; Kuye, 2005; Argyriades, 2006). To reiterate a statement made in an earlier chapter by Argyriades (2006: 6), that many of the NPM models were "driven primarily by practitioners and private sector consultants rather than academics or theoreticians." This suggests that the practical influence and knowledge needs not only grounded, but facilitated the introduction and existence of this movement in various settings.

With the euphoria of the New South Africa and its flanking developmental challenges, the Public Administration academic community got submerged into finding possible solutions to these prevailing societal confrontations largely at the expense of expanding and investing within basic scholarly research. (Cameron, 2005: 20). Part of this commitment to finding developmental solutions meant fast-tracking training, placing large emphasis on capacity building and skills development and empowerment within the public sphere. Traditional academic concerns rooted in knowledge and theory has declined in favour of greater emphasis on skills, processes and techniques. (Greenwood & Eggins, 1995: 2). Kuye (2005: 9) supports this argument when he states with reference to South Africa: "It is interesting to note that schools of Public Administration and Management were forced to address the rapid needs of society in order to become competitive and marketable in order to provide quality education...the emphasis was on managerial skills with

the ability to understand the interplay between accounting, financial management and organisational behaviour.”

While these have been without any doubt praiseworthy initiatives this focus has contributed to, as Stallings & Ferris (1988: 120) would say, Public Administration “self-consciously clinging” to the emphasis on conceptual practical research, thereby hindering its intellectual development. This discussion highlights that the wider South African historical influences have also contributed indirectly to the current state of Public Administration research in the sense that overarching priorities became the focus of the day.

While these collective statements suggest that that the practice-orientated qualities have supplanted the traditional academic concerns of knowledge and theory development there is a bigger point that needs to be made: there is very little primary research being conducted that is needed to inform applied practice research. A research agenda is therefore unlikely to emerge from the everyday practice of the public sector alone. (Stallings & Ferris, 1994; White, 1994). The maturing of Public Administration as a discipline requires a conscience change since the field must engage in a greater amount of empirical theory testing and development than is currently the case. (Houston & Delevan, 1994: 137).

A further reason as to why Public Administration research portrays the current status that it does is because globally, the field lacks a broad unifying theoretical framework or paradigm to guide and inspire scholars. (Mosher, 1956; McCurdy & Cleary, 1984; Houston & Delevan, 1994; Lan & Anders, 2000). Essentially this discussion can be traced back to the comment by Wamsley and Zald (1976: page unknown) in chapter one that, “The search for a theory of public administration over the decades has taken on aspects of a quest for the Holy Grail or a hunt of a mythical unicorn. The search has been filled with zeal and piety, but seldom has it been made clear what it is that is sought, nor have the searchers been altogether certain of its existence.” These authors argue that since there is no agreed upon theoretical system for guiding the systematic identification of research questions, this has arguably led to the overall lack of theory, research tools and cumulativeness of research characterising the current state of the field.

A factor, also relating to the nature of the discipline, that contributes to the complexity of this problem is the multidisciplinary influence weighted upon Public Administration. Historically Public Administration has always been interdisciplinary. Considering the rapid global changes however, there is a growing number of combined academic areas that contribute to understanding and solving the complex societal problems that countries face; especially in a context such as South Africa characterised by a young democracy. Evidently, as the social sciences are merging closer to Public Administration, new fields of study are being created as spin-offs from the original tradition of the field.

These multifaceted effects were confirmed by Lan & Anders (2000) when they found that there are several different competing paradigms or frameworks that guide researchers' inquiries, such as managerial versus political positions. This is further proved by the various sub-fields that have been developed, such as governance studies, public health studies or environmental management studies. This factor not only has the potential to act as a barrier to research and knowledge coherence within the field but also blurs the boundaries of what is "acceptable" research and what is not. Reiterating the point made earlier by Perry & Kraemer (1986; 350) researchers are not only confronted with an overload problem of sorts but the sub-fields are lacking relevant communication amongst one another. This eclecticism is not only reflected in the classification of the subject but also in how research is performed. Taken together, this state of affairs and the notion that the field lacks an agreed upon research framework, is perhaps worsened by the fact that the history of Public Administration in South Africa has had somewhat of a defective past, under the dominance of a single school of thought.

5.4.3. Education of Public Administration Faculty:

McCurdy & Cleary (1984: 49-50) argue that part of the failure of Public Administration to develop a solid research base is related to the way that the Public Administration faculty is educated – the stage of an academic career when a researcher is first trained in the research process. A factor which has impacted on the education of the Public Administration faculty is the way in which respective departments have been relocated into business schools or schools of management, often moves which are not always welcomed. (Greenwood & Eggins, 1995: 21). This creates obvious tensions on different levels. For example with regard to differing values, culture and contexts between not only those of the private and public sectors, but also the theoretical and

practical sides of Public Administration more specifically. These moves represent educating individuals according to a different set of principles. For example if the faculty are largely professionally orientated, how does this prepare the individual for a research career? Take for instance, under business circumstances a doctoral degree might be more greatly orientated towards the professional practice of the field rather than acting as a research degree whereby individuals partake in rigorous basic research. This will have understandable future effects on the way in which scholars conduct future research within the field.

According to Mabin (2004: 54) the Minister of Public Services and Administration is also critical towards the failure of "schools of government" to deliver graduates who are unable to apply their knowledge in the public sector and lack significant managerial capacity. It is at this point that one must be reminded of the importance of scholarly research and development in Public Administration, as highlighted in the introductory chapter: well trained and educated public bureaucrats are arguably, able to make better informed decisions to formulate, critically analyse and implement more suitable policy options. In this way theory is able to guide and inform everyday practice of the discipline. This serves to reinforce the objective that there is a greater need to develop scholarship and investment in Public Administration research which not only has the potential to raise the quality and level of research but also to impact on the actual practice of the discipline

5.4.4. Consultancy:

Traditionally, research has always been an important indicator of staff development since it is a way to advance scholarship. Greenwood and Eggins (1995: 64) note that increasingly Public Administration staff are expressing concern that research is being "crowded out" as a result of higher student numbers and growing administrative burdens. A consequence of this has been that there has been a marked shift away from conducting research towards partaking in consultancy activities. As a result, consultancy as well as research, has become an indicator of staff development. This is a further example of the change that has engulfed the field of Public Administration. (Greenwood & Eggins, 1995: 67). This is similar situation occurring in South African Public Administration.²

² Refer for example to the debate between Cameron and Atkinson & Bekker (2004; 2005) in *JOPA* Vol. 39 and 40 in this regard.

Many academics have turned to consultancy and applied research as a means for not only securing more profitable income but also because the potential of these academics has been met by the demands and needs of our democratic government. In addition, our country's new political systems required a more representative bureaucracy and as a result a number of talented (black and some white) scholars went into government to help build the capacity of the new state. As a result some excellent scholars have been lost to the consulting field; and many senior people who do remain in academia also focus on consulting at the expense of research and scholarship.

The opportunity for large-scale consulting has not only occurred on an individual level. By no means unique to South Africa, this trend is also evident at an institutional level. (Greenwood & Eggins, 1995: 66). Many Public Administration departments have extended their traditional boundaries and objectives of teaching students and conducting basic scholarly research, to become engaged in short course development and training initiatives and consultancies to different localities of government. In some instances universities see their respective Public Administration departments as prospective financial areas, or "cash cows" that have the potential to raise funds for the institution as a whole. Unfortunately, as Greenwood & Eggins (1995: 66) note, "today in fact the distinction between applied research, consultancy, short course development, and even teaching, has become blurred with all four being perceived as an interlocking application of proven expertise." These authors note that the preference and reliance on this trend of consultancy, has "had a knock-on effect" to "crowd out" traditional academic research and even teaching.

A further negative consequence has been the growing tension that academics feel between "consultancy" and "teaching" often being difficult to reconcile the two with boundaries often blurred. Being academics, especially when taking part in even applied research there is a need to be as objective as possible, often however this comes into conflict with the needs and demands of the client. This impacts on research since often it is not clear under "which hat" so to speak, individuals are conducting or publishing research: as an academic with a specific research agenda or as a consultant with specific client needs.

5.4.5. Poor Research Designs:

Considering that the majority of research articles studied, were both secondary in nature and non-cumulative poor research designs are a major cause for concern locally. In addition, referring back to a point made in chapter four, often research or development agencies such as the HSRC also fail to communicate important information regarding validity and reliability of their respective data. A reason that contributes to the poor quality of research, that is evident not only in South Africa but also in Britain and in the United States, is the lack of available data that can be used to empirically test and develop theories. (Houston & Delevan, 1994; Lynn, Heinrich & Hill, 2001). Few data sets are collected to facilitate interaction amongst researchers as well as long-term studies.

Researchers are left to collect their own data for each study and are often discouraged or under-funded in this undertaking of conducting empirical research. Houston & Delevan (1994: 135-136) note that data sets particularly are lacking at the organisational level as most data is concentrated at the individual, city and national level. Obviously, this may not necessarily be the case within South Africa and would therefore make for interesting research as a starting point to recognise and highlight whereby such knowledge is lacking.

Wright et al (2004) offer a further reason as to why Public Administration portrays the research standards it does. They argue that researchers are not adhering to important research measurement practices, such as incorporating validity and reliability processes into their research designs. Currently, they argue that researchers are largely relying on poor self-administered surveys for data collection rather than allowing the nature of the problem to guide alternative more appropriate research methods. Secondly, Wright et al (2004: 757) highlight, that the majority of researchers are failing to classify and report the measurement properties of their studies. For example they make little effort to discuss where, why, how and what determined the source of their measures and how they relate to the study's overall purpose. Adding to this initial research problem, Wright et al (2004) also found that researchers are paying little attention to introducing inherent measures of reliability and validity into their research designs.

This ultimately implies that researchers are not reporting this information, either because they do not develop and test their measures for reliability and validity properties, due to various reasons relating for example to ignorance, time or difficulty. Consequently this suggests that there are possible weaknesses in the field when it comes to research preparation – meaning that perhaps

researchers have not been provided with the necessary skills to perform these measurement duties or they do not have a good understanding of their importance. (Wright et al, 2004: 759). Alternatively, researchers do develop adequate measures and simply do not report these procedures in their respective publications. This severely restricts the ability of researchers and practitioners to appropriately judge the accuracy of, interpret and learn from the reported research findings. (Wright et al, 2004: 759).

Although some researchers might regard the information about the source, reliability and validity of measures to be too detailed and irrelevant, failure to report such information hinders efforts to extend the frontiers of knowledge in various ways. (Wright et al, 2004: 749). This links to the issue raised earlier by McCurdy & Cleary (1984: 52) about certain research pieces not actually being clear as to what they intend to achieve and seemingly having no value to research frontiers. Providing information regarding measurement principles serves three important functions within Public Administration: it provides confidence in the research results for fellow researchers and users within the field; it facilitates theory-building by providing the scholarly community with information that can help describe, evaluate and accept findings within the context of their work; and, lastly, when this information is not provided it often limits efforts to build upon and advance theory and practice of research itself. (Wright et al, 2004: 750).

Relating to this problem of poor research designs Houston & Delevan (1990; 1994) argue that there is a perceived anti-quantitative bias that exists among certain American Public Administration scholars. As a result this reduces the use of these techniques in conducting research and published literature consequently, expressing a greater preference to qualitative methods. Luton (2005) supports this argument for two reasons: firstly, qualitative research has always been an intrinsic part of our field and secondly; he argues that because of the type of knowledge that Public Administrators seek, qualitative research designs will always be both inherent and useful to our discipline. In a summarised version, he identifies a number of interrelated reasons as to why this is true. Luton (2005: 7) proclaims that Public Administration undertakes qualitative research since we seek knowledge that is: pragmatic; contextual; action-orientated; information that is not limited by what science can tell us; thick in description and complexity to understand causation; and, because we want to engage with and make our research relevant to practitioners. As a result qualitative methods should not be frowned upon but used in a systematic and empirical manner to advance

knowledge that is important and appropriate to our field. This anti-quantitative bias is more progressive than the situation in South Africa. Reiterating once again that a primary goal should be to elevate the majority of research to be primary in nature first, regardless if it is qualitative or quantitative in nature.

5.5. Recommendations to Improve the Current Public Administration Research

Situation in South Africa:

It is relevant at this point to reiterate the introductory point made by Wright et al (2004: 747-748) at the beginning of this dissertation: "Unfortunately, the research questions important to Public Administration do not lend themselves to scientific study in the same way found in the natural sciences. Rather, the important issues facing Public Administration are complex and involve phenomena not easily identified, isolated, manipulated, or even directly observed. Consequently, the generation of new knowledge in Public Administration is a difficult and tenuous process." This dissertation has acted witness to the intensity and complexity of the Public Administration research debate that has been ongoing for almost three decades. Compounded with the many complicated and intertwined reasons owing to the state of research in the field, one would wonder if there is in fact any hope for viable progressions to be made. Despite this rather disheartening but realistic start to understanding research, positive improvements and advancements can be made on several grounds.

5.5.1. Embrace the Broad Nature of Public Administration:

From an academic perspective, the practicality and usefulness of scholarly research and theory is evident, even in a field as fragmented and applied as Public Administration. (Frederickson & Smith, 2003; Bourgon, 2007; Cameron, 2005). These authors argue that Public Administration theory is necessary for the advancement of not only the academic but the practical side of the field based on its capacity to inform, explain and predict certain phenomena. It is no longer so much about debating whether Public Administration has an intellectual core or not, as academics we acknowledge that this is true; it is about how our faculty uses this intellectual core and how it will be advanced that is more important.

Although, it has been argued that there is no unifying theory to guide and inspire scholars within the field, the broad and multidisciplinary nature of the field should be viewed as a strength rather

than a weakness for conducting research. It is for this very reason that there is an increased need for reliable theoretical frameworks within Public Administration. (Frederickson & Smith, 2003: 229). In addition competing paradigms and approaches are more likely to give rise to new and original theoretical breakthroughs. (Lan & Anders, 2000: 162).

Essentially Public Administration is a dynamic and changing discipline – the reality we seek is rich, tangled and intertwined. (Lan & Anders, 2000: 162). Considering that the social science world is not only becoming smaller internally, and it merging in some institutions with business schools inter and intra-disciplinary communication becomes an imperative facilitator to theory development. In order to reduce the issue of fragmentation is essential that academics from different and related disciplines communicate amongst themselves regarding issues of theory development. This can be done on a micro-level within tertiary institutions, as well as at a macro-level through academic conferences or research units.

It was stated earlier that the debate regarding the legitimacy and superiority of qualitative versus quantitative research methods is somewhat of a moot point. When South African Public Administration does reach the level of making primary research the norm rather than the exception, it is important to note that it is not so much which approach is used but rather how these methods are used that should occupy more attention. Both qualitative and quantitative approaches are evident within the field and as long as they are used in the correct, systematic manner they are contributing to new and research. For example researchers should concentrate on how to use more advanced qualitative methods such as qualitative comparative analysis (QCA) or refining the use of the case study approach as to bring about better long-term results for the collective good of the field. Thus researchers should concentrate on purifying how such methods are used and when to use them, for example appropriately matching research questions with the correct research tools. This then leads the discussion to the following recommendation.

5.5.2. Broad Methodological Improvements:

Given the problems that Wright et al (2004) raised about the incorrect use of methodological measurement in the previous chapter it is useful to make some recommendations in this regard. Wright et al (2004: 751) makes some useful suggestions with regard to researchers' responsibilities when submitting material that is to be published. These are simple procedures that

go a long way to not only improve the reliability and validity of research articles, but also to raise the confidence (face validity) in research findings. Firstly, the authors argue that researchers should provide background information regarding the source of their research measures and methods of data collection. This communicates important underlying information to the reader. For example if the study is based on or uses previous studies' variables then this informs the reader that these measures have been successful in past research contexts. This information is also likely to indicate whether the measures have in fact survived previous peer review. (Wright et al, 2004: 751). In addition if data was collected through self-administered surveys for example, how did the author address bias with the study or how were potential extraneous variables accounted for?

The second point made by these authors is that researchers should provide how each study variable was operationalised within their published research materials. This also involves explaining the research context and how it has been informed by previous research efforts but also why it is perhaps different from these prior attempts. Additionally, the relationship or links that each measure has with the chosen variables of the study must also be explained and verified. (Wright et al, 2004: 751-752). Together abiding by these simply procedural guidelines, the validity and reliability of the research can be wholly improved.

5.5.3. The Role of Editorship:

Just as researchers have a responsibility to consciously advance and be aware of the quality of research articles that they submit for publishing, the role of editors also plays a vital and important role in improving the current state of research. Journal editors and peer reviewers, as acting gatekeepers, are in a unique and direct position to improve these conditions. It is unlikely that changes in research reliability and validity will be enhanced, if editors do not request or make this information a necessary condition for publishing. Although one must recognise that the majority of South African research articles are primarily secondary collectively editors and peer review committees should incentivise and encourage research that goes beyond these descriptive and conceptual stages of research.

5.5.4. Improve the Value Attributed to Research Beginning at an Educational Level:

This recommendation is closely related to the point made by Perry & Kraemer (1986: 1994) that it is necessary to “institutionalise” research in order for noticeable research progressions to be made within the field. The process of increasing and encouraging greater value to be placed upon conducting academic scholarly research begins at an educational university level. In agreement with McCurdy & Cleary (1984), it is at this level that potential Public Administration individuals are groomed and coached regarding the important debates and methods for conducting scholarly research. In order to upgrade the importance of research, changes and recognition of this significance needs to take place at the level of both the educators as well as students.

Research methods and courses should not be taught on an ad hoc basis. These courses should be compulsory and an integral component of any Public Administration degree, especially at a post-graduate level. Arguably, by understanding and engaging with debates surrounding methodology these issues will not be new or intimidating when students begin the process of undertaking research dissertations. Additionally, students should be competent enough to work in conjunction with fellow students (across several levels, such as masters and PhD) or supervisors to develop original data bases so that new knowledge can be developed and advanced.

At the level of educators and the faculty more specifically, staff development in terms of updating and advancing research skills should be of equal importance. Often staff members lack sufficient research capacity and are therefore unlikely to pass effective research information over to their respective students, be it in the classroom or through a supervisory role. By updating and revising research skills, is not necessarily a call for increased resources but a clear framework for staff development within academic faculties to assess how they are contributing to keeping the department abreast to the latest advancements in terms of research and general debates.

In addition, one of the greatest challenges to building cumulative knowledge is the lack of systematic data. (Lynn et al, 2001; Houston & Delevan, 1990; 1994; Brower et al, 2000). Many qualitative studies are based on weak and incomplete data sets. (Brower et al, 2000: 388). A methodological suggestion is that Public Administration faculty needs to contribute to establishing data sets, particularly where information gaps exist – whether to be used in a qualitative or

quantitative manner. When these data sets are established they should be circulated for comment and improvement. In this regard additional avenues for further research can be identified and ventured, thereby contributing to cumulativeness within the field.

In addition academics should be encouraged to spend sabbaticals furthering their research at credible overseas academic institutions and attending established academic conferences as a means for transferring knowledge back to their every-day practices. Mabin (2004: 65) supports this idea as he states interaction with foreign academics regarding research is a privilege that South African academics can now enjoy freely. He notes however that these research ideas must extend beyond the transfer of management information, but rather how our faculty can grow and mature from a scholarly point.

Perry & Kraemer (1994) make both an interesting and useful suggestion, that the value of research would be greatly facilitated if Public Administration programmes or university faculties developed research ties in the form of internships or partnerships with government and formal research units. Where this situation does currently exist, revision and monitoring needs to be put in place to ensure that scholars are not simply being subjected to applied and practical research, but research that is contributing to the scholarly advancement and maturity of the field as a whole. In other words, individuals should use these practical experiences to develop data bases that can generate basic scholarly research. Perry & Kraemer (1994: 105) note the benefits driving this proposition: "This objective would be advanced by seeking to upgrade the role of the government research bureaus so that they respond to local needs but in the context of general research interest within the field."

Considering the vast changes and influences that Public Administration faces it is inevitable that these changes will impact on the way that the essential core of the field is understood, taught and research is conducted. The four trends identified by Greenwood & Eggins (1995:146) that continue to impact on the field are: *from theory to practice; from policy to management; from social science to business; and, from knowledge to skills*. Considering these shifts in ideologies, it seems likely that these distinctions will continue to give rise to debate surrounding questions regarding research within the field. It is important to note, that due to these shifts in thinking attention to developing skills, techniques, training and the practice of the discipline is likely to remain the focus of the day.

Theoretical, critical and analytical considerations are just as important however. Tertiary institutions should bear in mind that “graduates who think as well as do” (Greenwood & Eggins, 1995: 68) prepares not only the individual more adequately for the working environment but also benefits the employer (often government) more equally.

The function of higher education is not only a utilitarianism one, to analyse the needs of practitioners, or the needs of the state. This is only part of understanding and researching in Public Administration. Tertiary Public Administration institutions are also responsible for advancing the field in an academic and scholarly fashion, such that theory development is of equal importance. To reiterate this point reference to Bourgon’s (2005) earlier point should be made, regarding the growing gap between theory and practice.

5.5.5. Increase Funding & Institutional Support for Public Administration

Research:

The lack of institutional and financial support relates closely to the issue of the low value attributed to research. Without substantial financial and institutional support it is unlikely that the current state of Public Administration research is going to improve. The reassuring point is that the challenge of the lack of funding is occurring not only within a local context but it is rather a persistent international problem, inherent to research within the field. On many levels therefore, greater institutional support and commitment must be given to Public Administration research.

On the one hand this relates to an important point, that due to its very nature, Public Administration research should theoretically appeal to societal institutions that are intrinsically dependent upon research. These institutions include, for example various governmental sectors that deal with the modern array of public administration problems; developmental agencies; and even universities who are responsible for training potential Public Administrators who can add and contribute to valuable knowledge of the field. Based on these assumptions, there is evidently no lack of a need for Public Administration research. Funding Public Administration research should be viewed as a broader societal investment that can not only advance the careers and interests of academics per se but also the greater good of society.

On the other hand however, the majority of Public Administration research is descriptive and secondary in nature, therefore one could argue that the need for financial support is not that great. Thus, it is only through collective commitment and support, that academics and the profession of the field will begin to experience the benefits of institutional and financial support. At an individual level, if authors want to qualify for funding they must realise that they are going to have to engage in research that is in some degree primary in nature. Collectively, particularly through organisations such as ASSADPAM and SAAPAM, the field must vigorously chase and secure funding on the basis that our field has a legitimated right when compared to other disciplines. These organisations should appeal to developmental agencies and government, representing the field as a whole for funds to conduct relevant and useful research

5.5.6. Improve Upon Consultancy:

Largely for the purposes of generating external income, it is clear that there is undoubtedly both scope and demand for academics to undertake consultancy work. As long as academics struggle to secure forms of institutional and financial support, dependency upon consultancy is unlikely to be reduced. Whereas traditionally, research has been an indicator of staff development, now increasingly consultancy in many departments is beginning to have equal status in this regard. Indicative of the changes being made both internally and externally to the field, this issue a decade ago would have seemed rather impossible. (Greenwood & Eggins, 1995: 67). As concerns have become more practical so the departments of Public Administration marketed themselves as a commodity.

Consultancy and academic research do not have to exist as being mutually exclusive to one another; they can in fact complement and work in favour of one another. Academics should remember that although there is a demand for consultancy that aims to solve the problems of practitioners, this does not always benefit their individual scholarly development or the field as a whole. Drawing up practical manual reports regarding functions and job descriptions, or simple repetitions of legislature is hardly scholarly knowledge advancement. Therefore, academics partaking in consultancy work should focus on “smart consultancy” – or consultancy activities that are consistent with a higher education approach. In other words this work should be undertaken in the same rigorous manner that academic research should be conducted, abiding to careful methodological considerations, such as data collection and validity and reliability. Acting as a form

of research grant, the income derived from consulting should be used by academics to transform this consultancy information into acceptable academic research and submit it for accredited publication. In this way a “win-win” situation is achieved. Academics must be aware of the possible imbalance between private consultancy work and the pressure and work load of teaching. It is also important that consultancy work being conducted does not become the basis of the teaching material as found by Greenwood & Eggins (1995) in many British tertiary institutions.

5.6. Conclusion – Drawing this Debate to a Close:

This study of South African Public Administration research has presented its findings on Public Administration research. It reaches the above conclusions by primarily focusing on two focal levels. The first level consisted of analysing and studying international (British and United States) studies on Public Administration research so that as much knowledge could be used to inform and direct the second and possibly more important level, of this dissertation. This second level consisted of carrying out an independent study on South African Public Administration research through the use of a journal content analysis over a thirteen year time frame (1994 - 2006) in two prominent South African Public Administration journals, *AP* and *JOPA*. In this regard these two platforms are in continuous interaction throughout the dissertation serving to enlighten where possible the other level of the debate.

The debate on Public Administration research is by no means concluded or resolved, especially in South Africa where the interest in the topic is only beginning. The issues and debates surrounding Public Administration research are not easily answered nor are the potential answers given, easily digested. Whatever the explanations however, two things are clear: firstly, there is a long list of questions to pursue regarding the topic and secondly, there are numerous research methods with which to pursue them.

As an academic field of study, it is necessary that Public Administration clarifies its own set of research questions and research designs that can compliment the vibrant and rapidly changing nature of the field. Put differently, the field needs strategy for coupling important questions with the techniques for answering them. In somewhat of a paraadoxal sense, by analysing the grounding

debates that influence Public Administration research, what is made more apparent is the fact that there is more room for comment and input concerning these very issues.

Chapter two presented itself as a literature review discussing both international (British and United States) and local work on Public Administration research. Considering the recent interest in the topic studied it was necessary for this study to rely on international works; but where necessary changes were made to contextualise the research environment. As a starting point this chapter highlighted how not all research activities can be regarded as contributing to original scholarly knowledge, or are primary in nature. This was discussed with particular reference to Public Administration research. Generally, studies concluded that Public Administration research is predominantly descriptive and conceptual in nature, with little efforts to develop or test theoretical propositions. The field experiences an intrinsic lack of funding that has been prevalent for a few decades and there is generally little effort to build-upon or extent the knowledge and work done by fellow researchers in the field. The eclectic and multi-disciplinary nature of the field; the lack of communication amongst disciplines; little efforts to systematise and cumulate knowledge were some of the possible reasons as to why Public Administration research faces the deficiencies that it does. The history of South African Public Administration was also viewed as problem posing on the current state of research.

Based on this knowledge from previous studies on Public Administration research, this dissertation developed a set of variables to test the hypothesis that similar deficiencies described in Britain and United States exist locally. Chapter three was responsible for explaining the broad methodology and how and why specific variables (descriptive and analytical) were used as appropriate measures. In this way the validity and the reliability of the study was increased. Chapter four confirmed the overarching hypothesis and discussed implications of these findings. For example possible reasons as to why there is little funding within the field as a whole or why consultancy, along with research has become an indicator of staff development. Based on these findings it is obvious that Public Administration research has much to work towards.

It would be easy to simply conclude that the current state of Public Administration research portrays a negative and miserable future. This dissertation concludes that because the interest of Public Administration in South Africa is still within its beginning stages and has much room to

develop the problems surrounding research in the field should be viewed simply as a point of departure. There have not been many studies that have been conducted to assess this research situation; thus without being presented with this knowledge it is impossible to change the situation.

Considering this, there is so much potential for future research projects relating to Public Administration research. For example individuals could look at the relationship between research and education more specifically by analysing PhD theses and the rate of publishing once graduates have obtained their PhD degrees. Similarly, Public Administration research could be compared to research within other disciplines. Another angle might be to study how training within the public sector is impacting upon research, or based on this study's race and gender data, at what pace transformation is taking place within the field and how this is influencing research.

It is useful to remember that the international contexts discussed are considerably advanced when compared to South African Public Administration and they still have not resolved these research issues. The focus of Public Administration research in the immediate days after our country's transition was a product of time, place and necessity. It is encouraged that these findings reflect the need for a further change and shift in research focus so that the field is able to advance and mature to a level whereby the balance between practical and scholarly research can be restored. This will impact more constructively and profoundly in the long-term on the practice of Public Administration. This study's findings should be used therefore, as a "stepping stone" to improving the present situation. In other words this current analysis is not a static or final conclusion of how research within the field is set to be – with the correct and focused procedures positive changes can and will take place.

Variable Codebook for Analysis of Articles:

Variable 1: Author(s)

Variable 2: Year/Volume

Variable 3: Research Topic

1. Public Administration Research & Theory
2. Administrative Reform
3. Public Management & Administration
4. Public Policy
5. Ethics & Accountability
6. Development & Citizen Participation
7. Human Resource Management
8. Financial Management
9. Intergovernmental Relations
10. Information, Communication & Technology (ICT) & E-Governance
11. Service Delivery
12. Local Government Reorganisation
13. Other

Variable 4: Institutional Affiliation

1. University of Cape Town (UCT)
2. University of Stellenbosch (Stellenbosch)
3. University of South Africa (UNISA)
4. University of Kwa-Zulu Natal (UKZN)
5. Nelson Mandela University (Nelson Mandela)
6. University of Witwatersrand (Wits)
7. Vista University (Vista)
8. Northwest University (Northwest)
9. University of Pretoria (Pretoria)

10. University of Johannesburg (JHB)
11. University of Free-State (Free-State)
12. University of Western Cape (UWC)
13. University of Limpopo (Limpopo)
14. Tshwane University of Technology (TUT)
15. University of Fort Hare (Fort Hare)
16. Vaal University of Technology (Vaal Tech)
17. Cape Peninsula of Technology (CPUT)
18. Central University of Technology (CUT)
19. Durban University of Technology (DUT)
20. Other

Variable 5: Institutional Support

Variable 6: Academic Ranking of Authors

1. Professor
2. Associate Professor
3. Post-Doctoral Fellow
4. Senior Lecturer
5. Lecturer
6. Other
7. Unknown

Variable 7: Gender of Author(s):

Variable 8: Race of Author(s):

1. White
2. Black

Variable 9: Language of Article:

1. English
2. Afrikaans

Variable 10: Research Purpose

1. Conceptual
2. Relational
3. Evaluative

Variable 11: Research Methodology

1. Desktop
2. Qualitative
3. Quantitative

Variable 12: Research Focus

1. Theory-Building (Theoretical)
2. Problem Resolution (Practical)

Variable 13: Research Cumulativeness

1. Cumulative
2. Non-cumulative

Variable 3: Research Topic

Journal of Public Administration:

TOPIC:	Vol. 29 1994	Vol. 30 1995	Vol. 31 1996	Vol. 32 1997	Vol. 33 1998	Vol. 34 1999	Vol. 35 2000	Vol. 36 2001	Vol. 37 2002	Vol. 38 2003	Vol. 39 2004	Vol. 40 2005	Vol. 41 2006	TOTAL	%:
P.A. Research & Theory:	1	1	-	-	1	3	-	1	-	1	2	2	3	15	5.4
Public Management & Administration:	1	1	3	2	4	1	4	1	1	3	6	7	5	39	14
Development & Citizen Participation:	-	2	-	1	1	2	2	2	4	3	7	4	2	30	10.9
Public Policy:	-	1	-	-	1	-	1	1	1	3	-	2	4	14	5
Ethics & Accountability:	1	-	1	1	4	6	-	3	-	3	1	5	4	29	10.4
Human Resource Management:	1	1	-	-	-	1	2	2	1	2	5	6	-	21	7.6
Financial Management/Budgeting:	2	1	3	1	-	2	-	2	3	2	3	3	2	24	8.6
Intergovernmental Relations:	1	1	-	-	1	2	1	-	-	-	1	1	1	9	3.2
ICT & E-Governance:	-	1	1	1	-	-	-	1	5	8	1	2	2	22	8
Service Delivery:	-	1	-	-	1	2	-	-	5	-	6	6	3	24	8.6
Local Government Reorganisation:	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	1	2	2	1	7	2.5
Administrative Reform:	1	1	-	2	1	-	1	1	-	-	-	2	-	9	3.2
Other:	1	-	1	2	-	4	4	1	3	1	2	11	5	35	12.6
Total Number:	9	11	9	10	14	23	15	15	24	27	36	53	32	278	100

Administratio Publica:

	<u>Vol.</u> <u>1994</u>	<u>1995</u>	<u>1996</u>	<u>1997</u>	<u>1999</u>	<u>2000</u>	<u>2002</u>	<u>2003</u>	<u>2004</u>	<u>2005</u>	<u>2006</u>	<u>TOTAL:</u>	<u>%:</u>
<u>TOPIC:</u>													
P.A. Research & Theory:	1	1	-	-	1	-	-	1	1	-	1	6	5.7
Public Management & Administration:	-	1	4	4	2	1	1	2	1	-	2	18	17.1
Development & Citizen Participation:	-	1	-	2	1	-	2	-	1	2	1	10	9.5
Public Policy:	-	-	1	-	1	2	-	-	1	2	4	11	10.5
Ethics & Accountability:	3	2	-	-	2	-	-	-	1	-	-	8	7.6
Human Resource Management:	2	-	-	-	-	1	3	1	-	-	2	9	8.6
Financial Management/Budgeting:	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	1	-	2	1.9
Intergovernmental Relations:												0	0
ICT & E-Governance:	-	1	1	-	-	-	-	1	3	-	3	9	8.6
Service Delivery:	-	1	-	-	-	1	-	-	1	4	1	8	7.6
Local Government Reorganisation:	2	1	1	-	1	1	-	-	2	1	-	9	8.6
Administrative Reform:	-	-	2	-	1	1	-	-	-	1	-	5	4.8
Other:	-	2	-	2	1	4	-	-	-	-	1	10	9.5
YEAR TOTAL :	8	10	9	8	10	11	6	5	12	11	15	105	100

Variable 4: Institutional Affiliation

Journal of Public Administration

<u>YEAR:</u>	<u>Vol.</u> <u>29</u> <u>1994:</u>	<u>Vol.</u> <u>30</u> <u>1995:</u>	<u>Vol.</u> <u>31</u> <u>1996:</u>	<u>Vol.</u> <u>32</u> <u>1997:</u>	<u>Vol.</u> <u>33</u> <u>1998:</u>	<u>Vol.</u> <u>34</u> <u>1999:</u>	<u>Vol.</u> <u>35</u> <u>2000:</u>	<u>Vol.</u> <u>36</u> <u>2001:</u>	<u>Vol.</u> <u>37</u> <u>2002:</u>	<u>Vol.</u> <u>38</u> <u>2003:</u>	<u>Vol.</u> <u>39</u> <u>2004:</u>	<u>Vol.</u> <u>40</u> <u>2005:</u>	<u>Vol.</u> <u>41</u> <u>2006:</u>	<u>TOTAL:</u>	<u>%:</u>
University of Cape Town	1	-	1	-	2	-	-	-	1	1	-	1	1	8	2.1
University of Stellenbosch	2	-	2	-	3	2	2	2	4	2	4	4	8	33	8.5
University of South Africa	-	4	3	7	6	5	3	1	3	3	4	11	1	54	13.1
University of KwaZulu-Natal	-	1	-	-	2	-	-	-	3	1	1	3	1	12	3.1
Nelson Mandela University	-	2	-	-	-	4	1	2	-	-	3	1	1	14	3.6
University of Witwatersrand	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	1	-	-	-	-	2	4	1
Vista University	-	1	-	-	1	-	3	-	4	3	-	-	-	12	3.1
Northwest University	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	-	1	1	1	5	1.3
University of Pretoria	-	-	1	1	1	1	6	5	9	18	12	18	4	76	20

University of Johannesburg	-	-	-	-	1	1	1	1	-	1	1	-	-	-	-	6	11	21	5.4
University of Free-State	-	2	1	-	2	1	-	-	1	5	6	1	3	22	5.7				
University of Western Cape	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	-	2	2	1	1	5	1.3				
University of Limpopo	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	2	-	2	0.5				
University of Fort Hare	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	-	1	0.3				
Tshwane University of Technology	-	-	-	-	2	-	2	2	-	3	10	2	21	5.4					
Vaal University of Technology	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	2	-	-	3	0.8					
Cape Peninsula of Technology	-	-	1	-	-	-	1	-	-	-	2	2	6	1.5					
Central University of Technology	-	-	-	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	3	0.8					
Durban University of Technology	-	-	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	2	0.5					
Other	6	2	2	4	2	8	3	2	5	8	19	14	9	84	22				
TOTAL:	10	12	11	13	17	28	19	18	32	45	59	76	48	388	100				

Of the Category "Other" this Includes:

<u>YEAR:</u>	<u>Vol.</u> <u>29</u> <u>1994:</u>	<u>Vol.</u> <u>30</u> <u>1995:</u>	<u>Vol.</u> <u>31</u> <u>1996:</u>	<u>Vol.</u> <u>32</u> <u>1997:</u>	<u>Vol.</u> <u>33</u> <u>1998:</u>	<u>Vol.</u> <u>34</u> <u>1999:</u>	<u>Vol.</u> <u>35</u> <u>2000:</u>	<u>Vol.</u> <u>36</u> <u>2001:</u>	<u>Vol.</u> <u>37</u> <u>2002:</u>	<u>Vol.</u> <u>38</u> <u>2003:</u>	<u>Vol.</u> <u>39</u> <u>2004:</u>	<u>Vol.</u> <u>40</u> <u>2005:</u>	<u>Vol.</u> <u>41</u> <u>2006:</u>	<u>TOTAL:</u>	<u>%:</u>
Government	6	2	7	2	1	4	-	-	1	1	2	6	2	34	40.5
Private Sphere	-	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	2	-	1	-	-	4	4.8
Consultants	-	-	-	-	1	-	-	-	1	-	8	-	1	11	13.1
Foreign Academics	-	-	-	1	-	-	3	-	1	7	-	-	4	16	19
Field Researcher	-	-	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	1.2
HSRC	-	-	-	-	-	4	-	1	-	-	6	3	2	16	19
CSIR	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	0	0
Gender Commission	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	1	1.2
Student	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	1	1.2
TOTAL:	6	2	8	4	2	8	3	1	5	8	17	11	9	84	100

Administratio Publica:

<u>YEAR:</u>	Vol.5 1994	Vol.6 1995	Vol.7 1996	Vol.8 1997	Vol.9 1999	Vol.10 2000	Vol.11 2002	Vol.12 2003	Vol.13 2004	Vol.14 2005	Vol.15 2006	<u>TOTAL:</u>	<u>%:</u>
University of Cape Town	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	0	0
University of Stellenbosch	3	6	3	9	6	7	2	2	5	2	5	50	31.3
University of South Africa	4	3	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	9	5.6
University of KwaZulu-Natal	-	1	2	-	3	1	-	-	1	1	3	12	7.5
Nelson Mandela University	-	-	6	1	1	2	2	-	3	1	-	16	10
University of Witwatersrand	-	-	1	-	1	-	-	-	1	-	2	5	3.1
Vista University	1	-	-	-	-	1	2	-	1	-	-	5	3.1
Northwest University	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	2	-	-	-	3	1.9
University of Pretoria	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	-	2	1.25
University of Johannesburg	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	1	0.6
University of Free-State	-	-	-	-	-	1	1	-	1	-	-	3	1.9
University of Western Cape	-	-	3	-	2	3	-	-	-	-	1	9	5.6

University of Western Cape	-	-	3	-	2	3	-	-	-	-	1	9	5.6
University of Limpopo	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	0	0
Tshwane University of Technology	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	1	2	1.25
University of Fort Hare	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	0	0
Vaal University of Technology	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	1	2	1.25
Cape Peninsula of Technology	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	-	1	0.6
Central University of Technology	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	-	2	1.25
Durban University of Technology	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	2	1.25
Other	2	3	-	5	2	2	1	1	3	5	12	36	22.5
TOTAL:	11	13	15	16	15	17	9	6	18	14	26	160	100

Of Other this Includes:

<u>YEAR:</u>	<u>1994:</u> Vol.5	<u>1995:</u> Vol.6	<u>1996:</u> Vol.7	<u>1997:</u> Vol.8	<u>1999:</u> Vol.9	<u>2000:</u> Vol.10	<u>2002:</u> Vol.11	<u>2003:</u> Vol.12	<u>2004:</u> Vol.13	<u>2005:</u> Vol.14	<u>2006:</u> Vol.15	<u>TOTAL:</u>	<u>%:</u>
Government	-	1	-	2	-	-	1	-	1	-	3	8	22.2
Private Sphere	-	-	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	2	5.6
Consultants	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	3	4	11.1
Foreign Academics	2	2	-	1	1	1	-	1	-	1	-	9	25
Field Researcher	-	-	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	2.8
HSRC	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	2	-	3	8.3
CSIR	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	2	4	6	16.7
Gender Commission	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	0	0
Student	-	-	-	-	1	1	-	-	-	-	1	3	8.3
TOTAL:	2	3	-	5	2	2	1	1	3	5	12	36	100

Variable 5: Institutional Funding Variable:

Journal of Public Administration:

<u>YEAR:</u>	<u>Vol.</u> <u>1994:</u>	<u>Vol.</u> <u>1995:</u>	<u>Vol.</u> <u>1996:</u>	<u>Vol.</u> <u>1997:</u>	<u>Vol.</u> <u>1998:</u>	<u>Vol.</u> <u>1999:</u>	<u>Vol.</u> <u>2000:</u>	<u>Vol.</u> <u>2001:</u>	<u>Vol.</u> <u>2002:</u>	<u>Vol.</u> <u>2003:</u>	<u>Vol.</u> <u>2004:</u>	<u>Vol.</u> <u>2005:</u>	<u>Vol.</u> <u>2006:</u>	<u>TOTAL:</u>	<u>% Total</u> <u>Articles:</u>
HSRC	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	8	-	-	9	3.2
Ford Foundation	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	-	1	0.36
Mission Fund	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	-	1	0.36
Private Sector Funding	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	-	-	-	1	0.36
Government	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	1	2	0.72
<u>TOTAL:</u>	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	11	-	1	14	5

Administratio Publica:

<u>YEAR:</u>	<u>1994:</u>	<u>1995:</u>	<u>1996:</u>	<u>1997:</u>	<u>1999:</u>	<u>2000:</u>	<u>2001:</u>	<u>2002:</u>	<u>2003:</u>	<u>2004:</u>	<u>2005:</u>	<u>2006:</u>	<u>TOTAL:</u>	<u>% Total</u> <u>Articles:</u>
Royal Danish Government	-	-	-	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	0.95
HSRC	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	1	0.95
<u>TOTAL:</u>	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	2	1.9

Variable 6: Academic Ranking of Author(s):

Journal of Public Administration:

<u>Year</u>	<u>Professor</u>	<u>Associate Professor</u>	<u>Senior Lecturer</u>	<u>Lecturer</u>	<u>Other</u>	<u>Unknown</u>	<u>Year Total</u>
<u>Vol 29. 1994</u>	1	-	-	4	5	-	10
<u>Vol. 30 1995</u>	2	1	3	4	2	-	12
<u>Vol. 31 1996</u>	3	-	2	4	1	1	11
<u>Vol. 32 1997</u>	3	-	2	4	4	-	13
<u>Vol. 33 1998</u>	5	2	4	4	2	-	17
<u>Vol. 34 1999</u>	6	2	7	3	7	3	28
<u>Vol. 35 2000</u>	7	-	5	3	1	3	19
<u>Vol. 36 2001</u>	8	1	5	2	2	-	18
<u>Vol. 37 2002</u>	10	4	7	5	6	-	32
<u>Vol. 38 2003</u>	16	-	11	3	5	10	45
<u>Vol. 39 2004</u>	21	4	13	2	19	-	59
<u>Vol. 40 2005</u>	30	4	16	14	9	2	76
<u>Vol. 41 2006</u>	20	-	5	14	8	2	48
<u>TOTAL:</u> <i>N=388</i>	132	18	80	66	71	21	388
%:	34	4.6	20.6	17	18.4	5.4	100

Administratio Publica:

<u>Year</u>	<u>Professor</u>	<u>Associate Professor</u>	<u>Post Doc. Fellow</u>	<u>Senior Lecturer</u>	<u>Lecturer</u>	<u>Other</u>	<u>Unknown</u>	<u>Year Total</u>
<u>Vol. 5</u> <u>1994</u>	2	1	-	4	3	1	-	11
<u>Vol. 6</u> <u>1995</u>	2	-	-	7	-	3	1	13
<u>Vol. 7</u> <u>1996</u>	4	-	-	6	5	-	-	15
<u>Vol. 8</u> <u>1997</u>	3	2	-	1	6	4	-	16
<u>Vol. 9</u> <u>1999</u>	6	2	-	2	2	3	-	15
<u>Vol. 10</u> <u>2000</u>	5	3	-	4	3	1	1	17
<u>Vol. 11</u> <u>2002</u>	3	-	-	4	2	-	-	9
<u>Vol. 11</u> <u>2003</u>	2	-	-	2	1	1	-	6
<u>Vol. 12</u> <u>2004</u>	7	1	-	5	2	3	-	18
<u>Vol. 13</u> <u>2005</u>	3	1	1	1	3	5	-	14
<u>Vol. 14</u> <u>2006</u>	5	-	-	9	3	9	-	26
<u>TOTAL:</u> <i>N= 160</i>	42	10	1	45	30	30	2	160
%	26.3	6.3	0.6	28.1	18.7	18.7	1.3	100

Variable 7 Gender of Author(s):

Journal of Public Administration:

<u>Year</u>	<u>Male</u>	<u>Female</u>	<u>Unknown</u>	<u>Year Total</u>
<u>Vol. 29 1994</u>	10	0	-	10
<u>Vol. 30 1995</u>	11	1	-	12
<u>Vol. 31 1996</u>	10	1	-	11
<u>Vol. 32 1997</u>	11	2	-	13
<u>Vol. 33 1998</u>	15	2	-	17
<u>Vol. 34 1999</u>	25	3	-	28
<u>Vol. 35 2000</u>	14	4	1	19
<u>Vol. 36 2001</u>	14	4	-	18
<u>Vol. 37 2002</u>	23	8	1	32
<u>Vol. 38 2003</u>	31	9	5	45
<u>Vol. 39 2004</u>	35	15	9	59
<u>Vol. 40 2005</u>	52	20	4	76
<u>Vol. 41 2006</u>	37	8	4	48
<u>TOTAL:</u> <i>N=388</i>	288	76	24	388
%	74.2	19.6	6.2	100

Administratio Publica:

<u>Year</u>	<u>Male</u>	<u>Female</u>	<u>Unknown</u>	<u>Year Total</u>
<u>Vol. 5 1994</u>	11	0	-	11
<u>Vol. 6 1995</u>	11	2	-	13
<u>Vol. 7 1996</u>	14	1	-	15
<u>Vol. 8 1997</u>	13	3	-	16
<u>Vol. 9 1999</u>	13	2	-	15
<u>Vol. 10 2000</u>	17	0	-	17
<u>Vol. 11 2002</u>	9	0	-	9
<u>Vol. 11 2003</u>	5	1	-	6
<u>Vol. 12 2004</u>	16	1	1	18
<u>Vol. 13 2005</u>	13	1	-	14
<u>Vol. 14 2006</u>	22	4	-	26
<u>TOTAL:</u> N=160	144	15	1	160
%	90	9.94	0.06	100

Variable 8 Race of Author(s):

Journal of Public Administration

<u>Year</u>	<u>White</u>	<u>Black</u>	<u>Unknown</u>	<u>Year Total</u>
<u>Vol.29 1994</u>	9	1	-	10
<u>Vol.30 1995</u>	11	1	-	12
<u>Vol.31 1996</u>	11	0	-	11
<u>Vol.32 1997</u>	10	3	-	13
<u>Vol.33 1998</u>	16	1	-	17
<u>Vol.34 1999</u>	18	10	-	28
<u>Vol.35 2000</u>	13	6	-	19
<u>Vol.36 2001</u>	12	6	-	18
<u>Vol.37 2002</u>	21	10	-	32
<u>Vol.38 2003</u>	31	13	1	45
<u>Vol.39 2004</u>	46	13	-	59
<u>Vol.40 2005</u>	47	29	-	76
<u>Vol.41 2006</u>	21	27	-	48
<u>TOTAL:</u> <i>N=388</i>	267	120	1	388
%	68.8	30.9	0.3	100

Administratio Publica:

<u>Year</u>	<u>White</u>	<u>Black</u>	<u>Year Total</u>
<u>Vol. 5 1994</u>	10	1	11
<u>Vol. 6 1995</u>	12	1	13
<u>Vol. 7 1996</u>	11	4	15
<u>Vol. 8 1997</u>	16	0	16
<u>Vol. 9 1999</u>	10	5	15
<u>Vol. 10 2000</u>	14	3	17
<u>Vol. 11 2002</u>	5	4	9
<u>Vol. 11 2003</u>	4	2	6
<u>Vol. 12 2004</u>	15	3	18
<u>Vol. 13 2005</u>	9	5	14
<u>Vol. 14 2006</u>	19	7	26
<u>TOTAL:</u> <i>N = 160</i>	126	34	160
%	79	21	100

Variable 9 Language of Article:

Journal of Public Administration:

<u>Year</u>	<u>Afrikaans</u>	<u>English</u>	<u>Year Total</u>
Vol. 29 1994	3	6	9
Vol. 30 1995	5	6	11
Vol. 31 1996	3	6	9
Vol. 32 1997	3	7	10
Vol. 33 1998	5	9	14
Vol. 34 1999	1	22	23
Vol. 35 2000	-	15	15
Vol.36 2001	-	15	15
Vol. 37 2002	-	24	24
Vol. 38 2003	-	27	27
Vol. 39 2004	-	36	36
Vol. 40 2005	-	53	53
Vol. 41 2006	-	32	32
<u>TOTAL:</u> <i>N=278</i>	20	258	278
%	7.2	92.8	100

Administratio Publica:

<u>Year</u>	<u>Afrikaans</u>	<u>English</u>	<u>Year Total</u>
Vol. 5 1994	1	7	8
Vol. 6 1995	5	5	10
Vol. 7 1996	0	9	9
Vol. 8 1997	0	8	8
Vol. 9 1999	0	10	10
Vol. 10 2000	1	10	11
Vol. 11 2002	0	6	6
Vol. 11 2003	0	5	5
Vol. 12 2004	0	12	12
Vol. 13 2005	0	11	11
Vol. 14 2006	0	15	15
<u>TOTAL:</u> <i>N = 105</i>	7	98	105
%	6.7	93.3	100

Variable 10: Research Purpose

Journal of Public Administration:

<u>Year</u>	<u>Conceptual</u>	<u>Relation</u>	<u>Evaluate</u>	<u>Year Total</u>
<u>Vol. 29 1994</u>	7	2	0	9
<u>Vol. 30 1995</u>	10	1	0	11
<u>Vol. 31 1996</u>	8	1	0	9
<u>Vol. 32 1997</u>	7	3	0	10
<u>Vol. 33 1998</u>	12	1	1	14
<u>Vol. 34 1999</u>	18	2	3	23
<u>Vol. 35 2000</u>	11	4	0	15
<u>Vol. 36 2001</u>	11	3	1	15
<u>Vol. 37 2002</u>	18	4	2	24
<u>Vol. 38 2003</u>	23	4	0	27
<u>Vol. 39 2004</u>	32	3	1	36
<u>Vol. 40 2005</u>	38	10	5	53
<u>Vol. 41 2006</u>	27	2	3	32
<u>TOTAL</u> N= 278	222	40	16	278
%	79.9	14.4	5.7	100

Administratio Publica:

<u>Year</u>	<u>Conceptual</u>	<u>Relation</u>	<u>Evaluate</u>	<u>Year Total</u>
<u>Vol. 5 1994</u>	8	0	0	8
<u>Vol. 6 1995</u>	10	0	0	10
<u>Vol. 7 1996</u>	9	0	0	9
<u>Vol. 8 1997</u>	6	2	0	8
<u>Vol. 9 1999</u>	9	1	0	10
<u>Vol. 10 2000</u>	9	2	0	11
<u>Vol. 11 2002</u>	5	1	0	6
<u>Vol. 11 2003</u>	5	0	0	5
<u>Vol. 12 2004</u>	11	1	0	12
<u>Vol. 13 2005</u>	8	1	2	11
<u>Vol. 14 2006</u>	11	3	1	15
<u>TOTAL:</u> N = 105	91	11	3	105
%	87	10.5	2.5	100

Variable 11: Research Methodology

Journal of Public Administration:

<u>Year</u>	<u>Desktop</u>	<u>Qualitative</u>	<u>Quantitative</u>	<u>Year Total</u>
<u>Vol. 29 1994</u>	6	1	2	9
<u>Vol. 30 1995</u>	9	1	1	11
<u>Vol. 31 1996</u>	7	1	1	9
<u>Vol. 32 1997</u>	9	0	1	10
<u>Vol. 33 1998</u>	10	3	1	14
<u>Vol. 34 1999</u>	20	1	2	23
<u>Vol. 35 2000</u>	12	2	1	15
<u>Vol. 36 2001</u>	10	3	2	15
<u>Vol. 37 2002</u>	17	4	3	24
<u>Vol. 38 2003</u>	20	6	1	27
<u>Vol. 39 2004</u>	19	13	4	36
<u>Vol. 40 2005</u>	30	15	8	53
<u>Vol. 41 2006</u>	18	12	2	32
<u>TOTAL:</u> <i>N=278</i>	187	62	29	278
%	67.3	22.3	10.4	100

Administratio Publica:

<u>Year</u>	<u>Desktop</u>	<u>Qualitative</u>	<u>Quantitative</u>	<u>Year Total</u>
<u>Vol. 5 1994</u>	6	1	1	8
<u>Vol. 6 1995</u>	10	0	0	10
<u>Vol. 7 1996</u>	8	1	0	9
<u>Vol. 8 1997</u>	5	1	2	8
<u>Vol. 9 1999</u>	8	2	0	10
<u>Vol. 10 2000</u>	11	0	0	11
<u>Vol. 11 2002</u>	4	0	2	6
<u>Vol. 11 2003</u>	4	1	0	5
<u>Vol. 12 2004</u>	10	2	0	12
<u>Vol. 13 2005</u>	9	1	1	11
<u>Vol. 14 2006</u>	8	5	2	15
<u>TOTAL:</u> <i>N=105</i>	83	14	8	105
%	79	13.3	7.7	100

Variable 12: Research Focus

Journal of Public Administration:

<u>Year</u>	<u>Practice-Orientated</u>	<u>Theory-Orientated</u>	<u>Year Total</u>
<u>Vol. 29 1994</u>	6	3	9
<u>Vol. 30 1995</u>	11	0	11
<u>Vol. 31 1996</u>	9	0	9
<u>Vol. 32 1997</u>	10	0	10
<u>Vol. 33 1998</u>	14	0	14
<u>Vol. 34 1999</u>	19	4	23
<u>Vol. 35 2000</u>	13	2	15
<u>Vol. 36 2001</u>	14	1	15
<u>Vol. 37 2002</u>	20	4	24
<u>Vol. 38 2003</u>	21	6	27
<u>Vol. 39 2004</u>	32	4	36
<u>Vol. 40 2005</u>	43	10	53
<u>Vol. 41 2006</u>	27	5	32
<u>TOTAL:</u> <i>N=278</i>	239	39	278
%	86	14	100

Administratio Publica:

<u>Year</u>	<u>Practice-Orientated</u>	<u>Theory-Orientated</u>	<u>Year Total</u>
<u>Vol. 5 1994</u>	8	0	8
<u>Vol. 6 1995</u>	9	1	10
<u>Vol. 7 1996</u>	9	0	9
<u>Vol. 8 1997</u>	5	3	8
<u>Vol. 9 1999</u>	10	0	10
<u>Vol. 10 2000</u>	11	0	11
<u>Vol. 11 2002</u>	6	0	6
<u>Vol. 11 2003</u>	5	0	5
<u>Vol. 12 2004</u>	11	1	12
<u>Vol. 13 2005</u>	8	3	11
<u>Vol. 14 2006</u>	11	4	15
<u>TOTAL:</u> <i>N = 105</i>	93	12	105
%	89	11	100

Variable 13: Research Cumulativeness

Journal of Public Administration:

<u>Year</u>	<u>Cumulative</u>	<u>Non-Cumulative</u>	<u>Year Total</u>
<u>Vol. 29 1994</u>	2	7	9
<u>Vol. 30 1995</u>	2	9	11
<u>Vol. 31 1996</u>	4	5	9
<u>Vol. 32 1997</u>	1	9	10
<u>Vol. 33 1998</u>	3	11	14
<u>Vol. 34 1999</u>	4	19	23
<u>Vol. 35 2000</u>	3	12	15
<u>Vol. 36 2001</u>	6	9	15
<u>Vol. 37 2002</u>	10	14	24
<u>Vol. 38 2003</u>	9	18	27
<u>Vol. 39 2004</u>	5	31	36
<u>Vol. 40 2005</u>	13	40	53
<u>Vol. 41 2006</u>	8	24	32
<u>TOTAL:</u> <i>N=278</i>	70	208	278
%	25	75	100

Administratio Publica:

<u>Year</u>	<u>Cumulative</u>	<u>Non-cumulative</u>	<u>Year Total</u>
<u>Vol. 5 1994</u>	2	6	8
<u>Vol. 6 1995</u>	3	7	10
<u>Vol. 7 1996</u>	7	2	9
<u>Vol. 8 1997</u>	6	2	8
<u>Vol. 9 1999</u>	4	6	10
<u>Vol. 10 2000</u>	4	7	11
<u>Vol. 11 2002</u>	0	6	6
<u>Vol. 11 2003</u>	2	3	5
<u>Vol. 12 2004</u>	3	9	12
<u>Vol. 13 2005</u>	4	7	11
<u>Vol. 14 2006</u>	2	13	15
<u>TOTAL:</u> <i>N=105</i>	37	68	105
%	35.2	64.8	100

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