

The Scope and Trends of Public Administration Publications from Selected Journals Between the Year 2000 and 2019

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UDK: 35(05):311.11(048.8)"2000/2019"
311.11:35>(05)"2000/2019"

<https://doi.org/10.31297/hkju.24.2.2>

Preliminary report / prethodno znanstveno priopćenje

Received / primljeno: 14. 9. 2023.

Accepted / prihvaćeno: 6. 6. 2024.

This article explores the nature, scope and trends in public administration (PA) publication in 2000-2019 period. The paper examines 2,798 articles published in four public administration journals focusing on four themes: (1) authorship/co-authorship, (2) topics of focus, (3) methodology, and (4) funding status of the articles. The study finds that there has been a significant change in the characteristics of authors, methodology, and the nature of topics

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published in these selected journals during the first and second decades. The paper identifies huge disparities in author contributions by region, gender, and profession, as well as in funding. These findings are important in the wake of increased globalisation and internationalisation of academic research.

Keywords: public administration scholarship, gender, authorship, methodology, funding

1. Introduction

Public administration scholars have debated the paradigmatic orientation of the field since the politics-administration dichotomy was introduced by Wilson (1887), a century ago. These assessments focused on the quality, methodology, content, institutional orientations, and relations to practice (Peci & Fornazin, 2017, p. 100). A consensus had emerged that PA lacked clear disciplinary boundaries and dominant intellectual approach given its drift towards political science or business administration (Onder, Gündoğdu & Ayhan, 2019). The findings of these studies also indicate that PA lacks a central theoretical foundation and is suffering from what Miller and Jaja (2005) referred to as “intellectual crisis”. It is on the basis of this continuing discussion that this paper aims to examine the trends in the scope and nature of PA publications in selected journals since the turn of the new millennium. This is important, since PA continues to evolve as an academic discipline and improvement in the discipline can be achieved if the strengths and weaknesses as well as the challenges and opportunities reflected in PA publications are clearly established.

The evolution of PA as a separate field of study begun with the establishment of the National Association of Schools of Public Administration (NASPAA) in 1970 (Ferris & Stallings, 1988). In the 1970s, scholars were keen on analysing the content, quality, methodology, and institutional aspects of PA research. Since then, researchers have focused on various themes including, but not limited to the origin, evolution, and growth of public administration as an academic discipline (Svara, 2001; Henry, 2009; Onder & Nyadera, 2020), methodological orientations in public administration research (Mele & Belardinelli, 2019), and collaboration among authors (Corley & Sabharwal, 2010). In addition, some studies have been conducted to track Public Administration teaching in higher

education (Adams & White 1994). Some recent studies have also looked at the nexus between the rule of law and governance (Ropret, Aristovnik & Kovač, 2018), collaborative innovation with external stakeholders in public administration (Jukić et. al., 2019), excellence in public administration (Aristovnik et. al., 2018), the development of public administration in different parts of the world including central Europe (Kotnik & Kovač, 2018), as well as the development of public administration studies in different Central European Countries (Pevcin et. al., 2019)

Over the years, the scope has expanded to examine the content of PA articles and journals. For example, Colson (1990) undertook an in-depth study seeking to rank which PA journals were cited most often. He found the most cited journals in PA at the time were (1) Public Administration Review, (2) Administrative Science Quarterly, (3) American Political Science Review, (4) Administration & Society, and (5) Journal of Policy Analysis and Management. Other studies have included systematic bibliometric analysis of PA journals (Ni, Sugimoto & Robbin, 2017) as well as analysis of specific topics (Lecy, Mergel & Schmitz, 2014). Their research has made PA scholarship much broader and informative.

Some scholars have narrowed the focus of PA publications to specific national trends. Su et al. (2013) examined 1,090 articles published in five Taiwan public administration journals during the 1990–2020 period. They were particularly interested in authorship and efficiency research topics, keywords, as well as research purpose and method. Farazmand (2019) examined the trends of public administration research in Iran during the 2004–2017 period. A total of 520 articles from three databases were reviewed using content analysis. Similarly, Ayhan, Çolak, and Önder (2022) studied public administration scholarship between 1990 and 2019 in Türkiye. Sanina, Balashov, and Kaysarova (2017) studied the latest tendencies in Russian research on public administration (2010–2014) in Russian academic journals. Farber, Powers and Thompson (1984) examined the number of citations public policy academicians affiliated with Association of Public Policy Analysis and Management (APPAM) member institutions. They concluded that the research orientation of 70% of these faculty members were political scientists. Schroeder et al (2004) conducted a detailed analysis of top PA scholars by examining their curriculum vitae and conducting a survey. Their findings indicated that more than 74% of the top 63 PA scholars did not pursue a doctorate in PA. However, three-fourths of them had single-authored papers and two-thirds had multi-authored papers in the Public Administration Review (PAR).

By examining previous literature, one can establish that there has been great interest among PA scholars to establish the trends characterising PA research. Indeed, these studies reflect a blossoming discipline that continues to adapt and offer guidance to PA scholars and practitioners. This paper seeks to add to the existing literature an important contribution on the trends that have developed in PA scholarship in the last 20 years, with a large number of samples from four selected journals.

Furthermore, the changes in the empirical world require academic disciplines to adapt to new and emerging trends, as well as to shed some of their previous weaknesses that hold authors and practitioners back. For example, PA has become more international and therefore, academic journals ought to be the avenues through which scholars from different parts of the world, different gender and levels of profession debate and share ideas on contemporary PA issues.

This study analysed the articles published from 2000 to 2019 from selected PA journals. The journals were selected based on their rankings on the Web of Science (Impact Factor) and Scopus (SJR: Scientific Journal Rankings). They include Administrative Science Quarterly (ASQ) – SJR (Q1: 13.521) and the Impact Factor (8.73), Journal of Public Administration Research and Theory (JPART) – SJR (Q1: 5.875) and the Impact Factor (3.407), Public Administration Review (PAR) – SJR (Q1: 4.120) and the Impact Factor (4.659) and Journal of Policy Analysis and Management (JPAM) - SJR (Q1: 2.661) and the Impact Factor (3.828).

2. Methodology

The study uses a content analysis approach. A total of 2,798 articles published in selected journals were identified and analysed (see Table 1). The main objective of the study is to examine the nature and scope of authors, funding, themes/topics and methodology used in the published articles from the selected journals. Data has been generated and assessed through content analysis of articles and coded according to descriptive information and methodologies that have also been used in previous studies (Ferris & Stallings, 1988; Houston & Delevan, 1990; Onder et. al., 2019; Hendren, Luo & Pandey, 2018).

Table 1: *The articles published by decade (2000–2019)*

Journal	Decades		Total
	2000-2009	2010-2019	
ASQ	184 (47.9%)	200 (52.1%)	384
JPAM	271 (48.3%)	290 (51.7%)	561
JPART	272 (39.8%)	412 (60.2%)	684
PAR	571 (48.8%)	598 (51.2%)	1,169
Total	1,298 (46.4%)	1,500 (53.6%)	2,798

Source: Authors.

The study is guided by following hypotheses.

Hypothesis 1: The selected journals and PA publications in general demonstrate an increase in co-authorship.

Analytical dimension: The number of authors, gender, profession,

Hypothesis 2: PA publications are increasingly multidisciplinary.

Analytical dimension: Topics and themes, theory or practice orientation and methodological approach.

Hypothesis 3: PA research is attracting funding/grants.

Analytical dimension: funding declaration by authors

Hypothesis 4: PA publications reflect an international authorship.

Analytical dimension: regional distribution of authors.

Using the SPSS software, a data set was created that included: (1) General information about authors such as number of authors, 1st and 2nd authors' gender, region, university or practitioner affiliation, and academic rank; (2) year of publication, (3) the general approach of each article: literature review or empirical (4) methodological orientation: quantitative, qualitative, or mixed (5) funding for the research (6) main topics, and (7) any difference among the journals.

Chi-square tests for nominal data was used to compare variation by decades. We also used simple OLS regression to explain annual changes for interval level data. Tables and figures were also provided to fortify understanding the trends in terms of annual changes and decade differences.

3. Previous Studies

Previous studies have examined different dimensions and levels of analysing PA publications and articles. While this study focused on four levels of analysis, other levels that have previously been explored but will not be featured in this paper include the language of publication, affiliation of authors, and co-authorship among others.

Authorship and co-authorship. Scholars such as Eaton and colleagues (1999), Fox and Mohapatra (2007), Hafernik, Messerschmitt and Vandrick (1997), and others have in the past looked at the nature of collaboration between authors and authorship in PA. These studies examine the gender, profession (whether the author is an academician or practitioner and their level of qualification), and region of origin, as well as the number of authors involved in the study. Apart from the aforementioned reasons, there has been a strong desire for practitioners and academicians to collaborate or at least communicate their ideas and experiences. This goal can be achieved through collaboration in research or a contribution by both practitioners and academicians in publications. This led to an increased number of publications on practice-oriented themes such as administrative turnover (Feiock et al., 2001), evidence-based PA practice (Jennings Jr & Hall, 2012), public policy (Skok, 1995), and management practices (Box, 1999), among others. Equally important to note, journals such as Public Administration Review (PAR) emerged to promote communication between theory (academicians) and practice (practitioners). Studies by Legge and Devore (1987) and Douglas (1996) examined the percentage of articles featured in the 10 highest ranked PA journals that were published by faculty members. In their findings, they established that there was a nexus between the productivity of graduates, publications in top journals, and the reputation of the program (university). This study will examine the characteristics of authors whose works have been published by the top PA journals in the last two decades.

Methodology. The other prominent issue has been the analysis of the methodological orientation of the discipline as captured in the articles that have been published in PA journals over time. Ferris and Stallings (1988) and Perry and Kraemer (1986) analysed articles published in the Public Administration Review journal based on their respective methodology and design approaches. Houston and Delevan (1990; 1994) did a content analysis of six PA journals and compared articles in practice-oriented and academic journals. They concluded that at the time, PA articles were

characterized by less quantitative methodology and less advanced theory testing when compared with articles from social work, business management, and administration. Initially, PA scholarship was mostly characterised by literature review with less empirical research (Onder, & Brower, 2013). The predominant approaches for empirical research include qualitative, quantitative, or mixed methods. Then, increasingly quantitative methods and more recently mixed method approaches have gained prominence (Battaglio & Hall, 2018). Indeed, the choice of which method to adopt while conducting research is heavily influenced by the discipline and the nature of research. In public administration, the growing complexities and demands of the public sector have called for more rigorous methodological approaches to improve and strengthen the quality of outcomes, scholarship, and responses to the growing needs of PA practitioners and academicians (Ospina & Dodge, 2005).

Funding. Funding has been a central theme in examining the trend of different disciplines of social sciences (Brintnall, 1999; Marimon, et. al., 2011). The inclusion of funding in analysis is important because the process of acquiring grants to finance research is often rigorous, and only studies that are expected to make an impact on society typically receive funding. Funding has been included in this study so as to examine the proportion of articles published in the top four PA journals that were funded between the year 2000 and 2022. Funding is not only essential in enhancing quality research, but it also functions as a measure of how valuable a discipline has become to deserve endowment. It also reflects the nature and quality of studies being undertaken in the discipline.

The topics and themes being taught and researched in a given discipline are important for understanding the evolution and direction of the discipline. In public administration research, scholars such as Fenwick (2018) have sought to examine key themes that were taught in public administration courses between 1996 and 2016. The nature of topics/themes that researchers are focusing on has been included in this study to shed light on the direction in which PA research is heading. Also, authors have examined what topics are attracting more studies in PA, such as bureaucracy, administrative history, non-profit organisations, taxation, intergovernmental relations, policy, politics, decision-making, organization behaviour, new public management, public service, and other subfields of PA (Hood, 1995; Moon, 2001).

4. Findings and Discussion

4.1. Authorship Patterns, Characteristics, and Trends

Number of Authors. The study examined how many authors per paper were published in each journal between 2000 and 2019. Chi² test (Table 2) shows that there has been a significant increase in the number of articles with three, four, five and more authors, while there is a significant dramatic decline with single authored articles and gradual decline with two authored articles between the first decade and the second decade of the new millennium in all four journals.

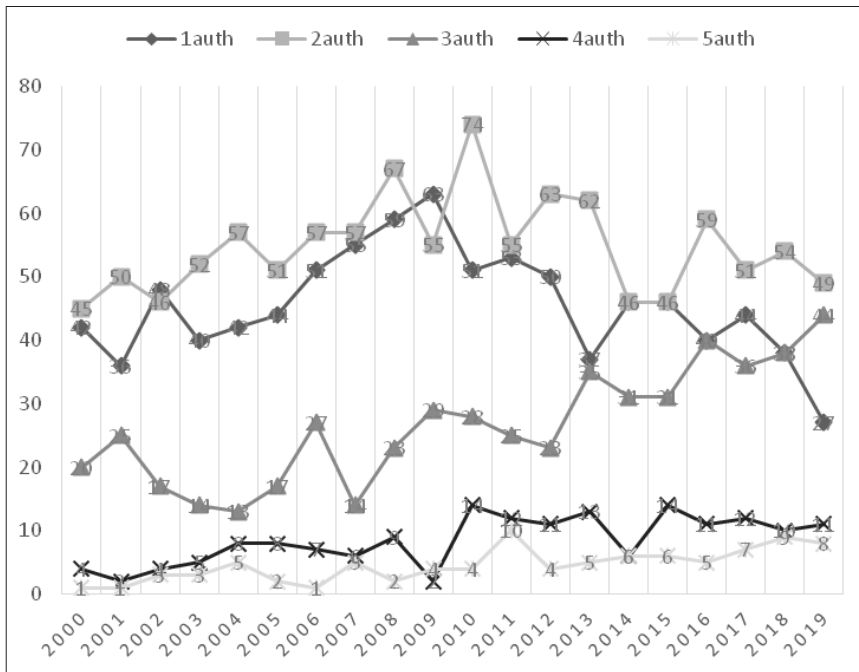
Table 2: *Descriptive statistics and trends of PA scholarship by main features of principal authors*

Main categories	Sub categories	2000-2009		2010-2019		Statistical Values
		Articles	%	Articles	%	
Number of authors	1	480	37.0	432	28.8	N:2,798, Pearson Chi2: 57,200, Eta: .138, df: 4, P<0.001
	2	537	41.4	559	37.3	
	3	199	15.3	331	22.1	
	4	55	4.2	114	7.6	
	5 & more	27	2.1	64	4.3	
		N:1,298	M:1.95, sd:1.089	N:1,500	M:2.24, sd:1.185	

Source: Authors.

This reflects increasing collaboration among authors and perhaps an increase in interdisciplinary cooperation or fields requiring more technical expertise. Specialization can improve research because individual scholars will use methods that they are most adept at using and comfortable with (Zhu, Witko & Meier, 2019, p. 291). Simple OLS regression (Figure 1) findings also show significant collaboration and a promising trend in the rise of number of authors per single paper with the percentage increase, especially in 3rd, 4th and 5th co-authors, while showing a significant decrease in single and two authored papers. Another reason for multi-authorship can be the increasing demand for postgraduate students to publish a paper as a requirement for graduation. This means more graduate students are collaborating and publishing with their supervisors.

Figure 1: Change in the numbers of authors by the years (%)



N: 2798, R²: .14, W: 1.8: P<0.001

Y=b+X_i+e, where Y: Number of authors, X_i: Years

Source: Authors.

In addition, our findings complement previous studies such as Endersby (1996). According to Endersby (1996), 50% of publications in Public Administration, Economics and Political Science were single-authored in the late 1990s. In humanities, during the same period, the number of single authored research was even much higher (Lunsford & Ede, 1996). Although the percentage of single-authored public administration articles was as high as 65% in a study by Houston and Delevan (1990), our findings show that the percentage of single authored articles has reduced to about 35% after the millennium, which means that there is a continuous decline regarding the sole authorship. The increase in number of authors has also been characterised by growing collaboration between PA scholars and others from different disciplines. Figure 1 show the trend in collaboration by the years and between the first and the second decade of the millennium in the four journals. However, there is no significant variation among the journals.

Profession. The second variable in examining the authorship trend is to look at the nature and level of profession of the authors. Previous studies by Ospina and Dodge (2005) noted that collaboration in PA scholarship, especially between practitioners and academicians, faced immense challenges despite the importance of more collaborative work to enhance quality scholarship with contributions from both consumers and producers of knowledge. PA is a unique field since it cuts across theory and practice (Egeberg, 1994; Teoh, Welch & Wong, 1998; Box, 1999).

Scholars and practitioners ought to have an avenue in which their experiences and knowledge can be exchanged (Douglas, 1996, p. 433). By looking at the profession of the authors, this paper seeks to establish two important trends. First, it looks at the rank of academicians publishing in these four journals to establish whether more experienced academicians (e.g. associate and full professors) or emerging researchers are also getting to share their findings in these top journals. The fact that academic professionals increasingly publish in top journals is good as a sign for the institutionalization of research culture in PA scholarship, but on the other hand, it might have a crowding out effect for practitioners who may not have advanced technical research skills. This might reflect a loose connection between practitioners and theoreticians.

Table 3: *The profession of authors*

Main categories	Sub categories	2000-2009		2010-2019		Statistical Values
		Articles	%	Articles	%	
Profes- sions of Authors	Reseracher	99	7.6	150	10.0	N:2,798, Pearson Chi2: 12,354, Cramer V:.66, .138, df: 2, P<0.002
	Practitioner	54	4.2	34	2.3	
	Academician	1,145	88.2	1,316	87.7	
		N:1,298	Med:3, sd.556	N:1,500	Med:3, sd.:611	
Title of Authors	Dr	92	7.7	129	9.4	N:2,568, Pearson Chi2: 37,359, Eta.:.112, df: 3, P<0.001
	Asst.Prof.	360	30.2	525	38.2	
	Assoc.Prof	254	21.3	313	22.8	
	Professor	487	40.8	408	29.7	
		N:1,193	Med:3, sd.1.008	N:1,375	Med:3, sd.:990	

Source: Authors.

As observed in the previous findings (Ni, Sugimoto & Robbin, 2017, p. 503), there has been a continuous decline in the contribution from non-academic authors or practitioner contributions; the percentage of practitioner authorships has decreased to 4.2 % and 2.3 %, respectively in two decades. The academicians continue to dominate publications in the four PA journals, with contribution from practitioners being on the decline in the second decade of the millennium. The data shows that more experienced academicians (associate and full professors) publish more than both practitioners and researchers. However, while assistant professor publications are increasing, full professor publications are decreasing each decade. This trend is also echoed in the findings by Houston and Delevan (1994), who indicated a similar trend. We argue that the growing emphasis on academic journal rankings and metrics means that they are largely attractive to academicians and not practitioners. Some journals now focus more on attracting and publishing the works of established and well-known academicians in the field at the expense of practitioners and emerging scholars who may not be very prominent. To address this growing problem of divergence among academicians and practitioners, journals could have special issues for papers published by or with practitioners. We also agree with Perry (2018) that there should be more incentives to encourage collaboration between scholars and practitioners.

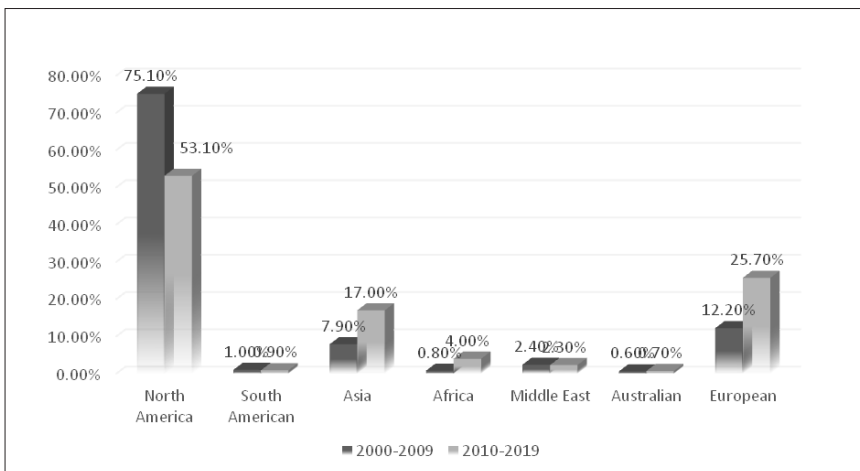
Global distribution of authors. In examining the identity of the authors based on geographical distribution, this study has established an interesting trend. Over the years, PA scholarship has spread across the world as interest in understanding the administrative systems of other regions gained momentum after the first and second world wars. Scholars, particularly from the global south, have continued to lag behind in publishing articles in high impact journals of PA over the last seven decades. Even with the growing instances of collaboration, still few authors from Africa, Asia, the Middle East, and Latin America feature in these journals. The constraints facing scholars of PA from developing countries have attracted the attention of researchers such as Gulrajani and Moloney (2012), Hirschmann (1981), van Wart & Cayer (1990). These studies attribute the low number of scholars from developing countries involved in PA research to authoritarian tendencies experienced in the regions in question, lack of macro-economic success, and the inability to predict administrative reforms because of political regimes. They argue that these factors have generated general disillusionment with the study of PA.

The geographical trend of authors' origin in each of the four journals shows that authors from North America (ranging between 53% and 75%) and Europe (ranging from 12% and 25%) dominate all four journals with

a significant percentage of all the articles emanating from North America. Regions such as Africa, Australia, South America, and the Middle East have lower representations.

Heady, Perlman, and Rivera (2007) blame PA’s predilection for grand theories that were abstract and had little relation to what was being experienced in developing countries. Jreisat (2005) believes that dispersion on the units and levels of analysis, as well as conceptual fragmentation, affect the involvement of non-western scholars in research. Our analysis also shows that in collaboration, western scholars are publishing as principal authors more than their counterparts from developing countries. The numbers of articles authored by international authors has been increasing. Ni, Sugimoto and Robbin (2017, p. 505) found that this number in 2016 reached a majority of PAR authors. However, these international authors’ workplaces are still located in the USA. Our regional affiliation of authors data based on the current workplace/country showed that these rates are still very low, even though PAR stands out with international authors. There has been a steady and high growth by Asian (from 8% in 2000 to 17% in 2019) and African (from 0.08% in 2000 to 4.00% in 2019) scholars publishing as first authors in the top four PA journals. However, the globalization of PA scholarship in US based journals was not realized since there is huge discrepancy among different regions. The strength of Asian countries shows not only through economic growth but also through increased contributions to the PA scholarship.

Figure 2: *Principal authors by the regions*



Source: Authors.

Administrative experiences of different institutions at cross-national, regional, and local levels hinder contribution of authors to top journals, since evaluations are based upon judgment of values and cultural bias (Altowaitee et. al., 2019) of both developed west/north and developing east/south world. In addition, problems of developing countries are at times considered less appealing to the journals' audience, or the audience simply lacks interest in public administration systems beyond their borders (Gulrajani & Moloney, 2012, p. 22). There are non-western countries that have been largely ignored by western countries because of ethnocentrism (Heady, 2001) and orientalism (Jreisat, 2012) at worst, or Ameri-centrism and Euro-centrism at best. Developed north perspectives and issues might be evaluated as a context for the other part of the world. Jreisat (2005) articulates that today's public administration functions in a different time and faces different challenges, requiring new concepts and methods that would include the global world. We argue that the journals need to take into account the unique needs and capacities of authors from regions that have historically been marginalised and perhaps those whose first language is not English.

Gender. The study also analysed the proportion of authors' gender. The question of gender is not new in PA, as serious efforts have been made over the years to embrace gender and the idea of otherness in policies, representation, programs, bureaucracy, and outcomes (Guy & Schumacher, 2009). While numerous studies are examining the role and representation of gender in public administration (Rubin, 2000), the different elements of gender in PA academic publications remain less examined. Noteworthy is that the relationship between co-authorship and gender has been explored extensively in other disciplines (Grant & Ward 1991; Breuning & Sanders, 2007). A study by Miller and McTavish (2011) shows that the majority of editors of top journals in PA and management are male, and female scholars are at a disadvantage in PA scholarship.

Apart from assessing the total number of female authors publishing in the top four PA journals, this study also examined the number of female authors who published as principal authors in collaborative work. The findings indicate that there is significant statistical increase in both the total number of female authors in the first (27.7%) and second decades (33.4%) of the new millennium, and also that there are less female authors publishing as first authors in these four journals during the period. The data also shows that male authors dominate publications in these four journals at an average of 72.3% in the first decade and 66.6% in the second decade, with a gradual decline.

Table 4: *Gender classification of authors*

Main category	Sub categories	2000-2009		2010-2019		Statistical Values
		Articles	%	Articles	%	
Gender of Authors	Male	938	72.3	999	66.6	N:2,798, Pearson Chi2: 10,483, Eta:0.061, df: 1, P<0.001
	Female	360	27.7	501	33.4	
		N:1298	Med:1, sd:.448	N:1,500	Med:1, sd:.472	

Source: Authors.

The low representation of female authors can be attributed to the broader dominance of masculinity that has not been addressed over the years. PA is yet to fully adopt a gendered lens both in practice and scholarship, as men continue to dominate these fronts. We believe that affirmative action needs to be embraced to encourage more women's scholarship and publication in PA. Some of the ways to accomplish this goal is by providing research funding to women, and by enabling gender sensitive topics to thrive in the discipline.

4.2. Funding Status in PA Publications

Examining the proportion of funded studies is important because it shows the extent to which topics in PA are attracting funding, as this is a reflection of their relevance and their potential contribution to the society. In the past, as noted by Perry & Kraemer (1986), few studies in Public Administration received some sort of funding, and those that received funding did so through their universities. Ferris and Stallings (1988) established that at the "peak" of when the most PA studies acknowledged funding, only 11% of the publications were funded. The lack of funding in PA scholarship has raised questions of "Were PA scholars applying for research grants offered any by government and non-government agencies?" and "If so, could low response mean that funding agencies do not take PA research with high regard?"

A trend in the number of articles published in the four journals having received funding between 2000 and 2019 has not increased. A total of 930 articles representing 33.2% of the articles acknowledged funding, while 66.8 % of the publications indicated that they received no support. The

findings also suggest that the trend of studies that were funded remains low even when comparing the various journals. JPAM and JPART seem to have more funding than other two with an average of 30% of the publications. However, this percentage shows an increase from around 11% reported by Ferris and Stallings (1988) to an average of 30%. This can be attributed to increasing emphasis on quantitative approaches in PA scholarship.

Table 5: Table showing funded and non-funded publications between 2000-2019

Main category	Sub categories	2000-2009		2010-2019		Statistical Values
		Articles	%	Articles	%	
Funding Status	Funded	421	32.4	509	33.9	<i>No significant change over the decades</i>
	Not Funded	877	67.6	991	66.1	
		N:1,298	Med:2, sd:.468	N:1,500	Med:2, sd:.474	

Source: Author.

The lack of funding for PA publications can be attributed to the overall emphasis on STEM disciplines at the expense of social sciences. This has in extension affected subfields of social sciences such as public administration. We argue that as PA continues to establish itself as an independent discipline, more research funding will go a long way in cementing its contribution and impact on both science and society.

4.3. Methodological Orientation

In order to identify the methodological orientation, we hereby list what we have investigated in this paper: whether articles are only literature reviews or supported by empirical findings, the research design, theory development, hypothesis testing, and statistical techniques used in the articles. Perry and Kraemer (1986) found that 50% of PAR articles offer empirical studies with well-defined research designs. Houston and Delevan (1990, p. 677) reported that five other major public administration journals had published 35% empirical studies on average. The findings

show that 85% of the publications in the four top PA journals since the year 2000 are empirical in nature.

Table 6: *Descriptive statistics & trends of PA scholarship by research orientations & methods*

Main categories	Sub categories	2000-2009		2010-2019		Statistical Values
		Articles	%	Articles	%	
Research Orientations	Empirical	1,072	82.6	1,301	86.7	N:2,798, Pearson Chi2: 9,385, Eta:.061, df: 1, P<0.001
	Literature Review	187	14.4	167	11.1	
	Other	39	3.0	32	2.1	
		N:1,298, Med:1, sd.:.47		N: 1,500, med: 1, sd.: .416		
Research Method	Quantitative	730	68.1	1,054	81	N:2,374, PChiS- quare: 71,452, df: 2, P<0.001
	Qualitative	300	28	182	14	
	Mixed metho	42	3.9	66	5	
		N:1,072, Med:1, sd.:.555		N:1,302, Med:1, sd.:.533		

Source: Authors.

One of main criticisms toward PA was poor theorizing due to poor methods. Lack of strong theoretical and conceptual frameworks has made it very difficult for the findings to gain credibility (Zhu, Witko, & Meier, 2019, p. 288), which could be the main criticism for many other fields of social sciences.

The paper examines whether the authors use quantitative, qualitative, or mixed-method approaches. In addition, it also examines whether the authors used simple or advanced methodology. We also examined the detailed nature of the methodology to see whether simple or advanced/rigours versions of the methodology were used. The study shows that a majority of the publications relied on either qualitative or quantitative method, whereas the mixed method remained less utilized. The growth of the quantitative method in PA research is seen as an improvement in giving the discipline a “science” identity, and journals seem to prefer articles

with a quantitative research approach (Pitts & Fernandez, 2009). Only 3.9% of the papers published since the turn of the new millennium adopt mixed method. However, it is evident that qualitative methodology is still relevant, especially in the case of comparative studies.

Mixed method is a design and process of research based on the combination of both quantitative and qualitative methods for data collection and analysis through selecting, sequencing, and connecting (Honig, 2019, p. 300; Mele & Belardinelli, 2019, p. 335). Although mixed method approaches have the advantage of providing a more holistic view of social science research by improving the interpretability of results, reducing bias, providing context, and validating measures and constructs (Hendren, Luo & Pandey, 2018, p. 905) to avoid the shortcomings of narrower individual designs, there are numerous barriers in using mixed methods in terms of the amount of time and effort (Battaglio & Hall, 2018, p. 825;). Supporting Hendren, Luo and Pandey (2018, p. 909), this study finds that despite their low percentage, mixed methods are increasingly being used in the new millennium. AQS (8.5%), JPART (6.9%) and PAR (3.6%) have higher rates of mixed methods, while JPAM has the lowest rate (0.6%) of mixed methods used in the articles. However, the quantitative side of mixed methods seems to be dominant. Compared to PA journals, policy journals seem to be using mixed methods less, which is similar to other recent studies (Mele & Belardinelli, 2019, p. 339; Hendren, Luo & Pandey, 2018, p. 909).

In terms of individual journals, the trend is similar to the findings above. JPAM leads with the highest percentage of quantitative methodology at 93.7%, JPART follows with 72%, AQS has 69% of the journals publishing articles using quantitative methodology, while PAR has 67% during the same period. PAR has distinguished itself from other leading journals by publishing articles with qualitative methods (30%). JPART and ASQ tend to publish more mixed method articles compared to the other two. A gradual decline in the use of qualitative methods has been observed over the years and decades.

Major criticism toward PA scholarship was the lack of intellectual identity and rigor of public administration research (Zhu, Witko, & Meier, 2019, p. 288; Moynihan, 2018 p. 2; Houston & Delevan, 1990). Previous studies show that there has long been a perception that public administration was somewhat methodologically backward compared to closely related disciplines such as political science (Onder & Brower, 2013, p. 127; Zhu, Witko, & Meier, 2019, p. 289). However, the findings of this study show

that PA scholarship employs an empirical approach and advanced quantitative and qualitative methods in the new millennium, with an increasing trend compared to the 1980s. This trend is useful because it helps strengthen the position of PA as a science with solid research components.

4.4. Trending Themes and Topics

According to Sigelman (1976), more established disciplines are characterised by focus on fewer topics and issues. In the past, most of the topics in PA focused on studying public administration systems and comparative politics (Peters, 1996; Heady 2001).

Table 7: Trends in Topics Published between 2000 and 2019

Topics	2000–2009	2010–2019	Total
Bureaucracy	71 (5.5%)	53 (3,5%)	124 (4.4%)
Public Administration	185 (14.2%)	144 (9.6%)	329 (11,7%)
Ethics & Accountability	48 (3.7%)	53 (3.5%)	40 (3,6%)
Budget & Finance	84 (6.5%)	80 (5.3%)	164 (5,9%)
Governance & Participation	93 (7.1%)	129 (8.6%)	222 (7,9%)
Administrative Law	13 (1.0%)	7 (0.5%)	20 (0,7%)
Management	118 (9.1%)	8 (5.6%)	202 (7,2%)
Intergovernmental relations	10 (0.8%)	18 (1.2%)	28 (1,0%)
Policy	279 (21.5%)	341 (22.7%)	620 (22,1%)
Leadership	29 (2.2%)	41 (2.7%)	70 (2,5%)
Efficiency, Performance & Quality	153 (11.7%)	253 (16.8%)	406 (14,6%)
Institutions	31 (2.4%)	31 (2.1%)	62 (2,2%)
Organizational Theory and Behaviour	174 (13.4%)	243 (16.2%)	417 (14,9%)
NGOs	10 (0.8%)	22 (1.5%)	32 (1,1%)
Total	1,298 (100)	1,499 (100)	2,797 (100)

Source: Authors.

Research done in 2014 to examine the interdisciplinary nature of public administration revealed that while topics of core public administrati-

on, management, economics, and psychology were increasing, political science, sociology, and law were decreasing respectively in 1966, 1990, and 2014 (Shafritz et al. 2022, p. 22). As the focus keeps shifting, so are the topics and themes being studied. Table 7 presents the findings on the trends in themes and topics of articles published in the four journals between 2000 and 2019.

The papers written first set of topics between 2000 and 2010 were dominated by the first set of topics: policy (21.5%), public administration (14%), organizational theory and behaviour (13.4%), efficiency, performance and quality (11.7%), and budget and finance (6.5%). However, in the second decade, the trend started changing, albeit with slight variation. This set of topics includes policy (22.7%), organizational theory and behaviour (16.2%), efficiency, performance and quality (16.8%), and budget and finance (5.3%). Looking at the changes that have occurred in the two decades, one can observe that topics such as governance and participation are gaining prominence. Similar to previous findings from PAR (Ni et al., 2017:501), the locus of discipline seems to be coming closer to economics, psychology, and political science, while the impact of management and sociology is gradually declining, and law is dramatically declining. We observe that the themes and topics in PA research are very diverse, and this makes it attractive to multidisciplinary researchers. The findings also indicate that PA is a dynamic field and is constantly evolving with changes in the international and domestic scenes. We predict that themes and topics in PA research will continue to evolve with reforms in governance, advancements in technology and globalisation.

5. Conclusion

This paper concludes that trends in the new millennium have had mixed characteristics. In general, one can note that there has been an increase in the number of publications and authors across all the four top journals. This has been accompanied by an increase in diversity of topics/multidisciplinary approach, collaboration among authors in their studies, and a more sophisticated methodology as empirical studies are gaining more prominence among the four journals. Furthermore, it is important to note that there has been a rise in the use of mixed methods. This can be attributed to the existing credibility of qualitative methods despite them losing some ground. More importantly, the paper shows that a growing

number of PA scholarship and research is benefiting from more funding. As seen in the declaration of the authors in the articles published between 2000 and 2019, a high number of studies received some form of funding, more than in the previous two decades (1980–2000). As PA research continues to become global, there is still room for improvement. The findings show that very few authors from countries in Africa, Latin America, Middle East, and some parts of Asia have been able to publish in the leading journals over the last twenty years. The challenge could emanate from language barrier, perceived lack of interest from journal audiences on topics touching on PA in the global south, as well as weaker research skills, which can be further worsened by continued emphasis on the adoption of quantitative/empirically oriented studies.

This study aims to contribute to the literature by providing a recent picture of the field, which can help address enduring concerns and the challenges of PA scholarship, and lead to the advancement of knowledge and the future of the field by: (1) encouraging bridging theory and practice together to maintain stronger academicians' and practitioners' contributions, (2) increasing gender contributions, (3) encouraging global contributions from different regions, (4) benefiting from advanced quantitative and qualitative or mixed methods, and (5) searching for funding opportunities to facilitate more research.

The findings presented in this paper, based on time series data, revealed several gaps or obstacles in advancement of PA scholarship. First, practitioners are staying out of the loop of getting published in top journals. Second, due to the interdisciplinary nature of PA, three methodological strategies (quantitative, qualitative and mixed) have been widely used by the researchers. However, this study's findings suggest further research to examine locus of field for the rising empirical research trends that favour quantitative methodological strategies. PA researchers diverging from qualitative studies is another area that deserves research attention. Qualitative research employs well-established methodologies capable of answering "big questions" in PA and strengthening academic relations to practice. Third, our results show that there is a huge regional difference in published PA scholarship. PA needs more replications in different international settings, but international cooperation seems to be very weak. Diffusion of innovations and theories from the centre to periphery and back are needed to further encourage global contributions without regional parochialism. A global public administration perspective offers more opportunities and clearer understandings of the strengths and weaknesses of public administration processes, functions, and global problems. Top

PA journals should be aware that they are not explaining and reflecting the realities of North America and Europe only, but also carrying out their duties for the sake of science and PA academic field of the entire world. With a more inclusive PA scholarship, they can encourage better solutions for PA problems in the future. PA scholars ought to realize the massive influence of unfolding globalism. Global public administration opens the door for effective adjustment and transition from traditional, ethnocentric perspectives to a wider scope that integrates knowledge from various places and cultures.

Table 8 gives an overview of the trends in PA scholarship between the year 2000 and 2019.

Table 8: *Trends in public administration scholarship by the decades*

	2000-2009	2010-2019
Number of authors	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Lesser number of authorships – Dominance of single & two authorships 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Increase in multi-authorships-Significant decline in single authorship, – Significant increase in 3 & more authorship
Professions of Authors	Academicians dominated	Academicians dominated but significant decline of the number of practitioners, while increased number of researchers
Title of Authors	Dominated by full professors, Authorships by assistant professors are second but major gap between two.	Dominated by assistant professors, major decline of authorship by full professors, minor increase by doctorate, minor increase by associate professors
Regional Contributions	Dominated by North American authors, followed by European and Asian, other regions have very low contributions.	Still dominated by North American but significant decline (losing almost 40 %) Europeans and Asians doubled their contribution, contributions from other areas still very low, have not changed
Gender of Authors	Dominated by male to the rate of one-fourth	Still dominated by male but significant increase in female authorships to the rate of one-third
Major Topics	Dominated public policy and organization and management theory, while performance –efficiency, public administrations are also important topics covered.	Dominated public policy and organization and management theory, performance –efficiency topics are increasing, while public administrations topics decreasing, budget and finance also important topics.

Emerging Topics	Governance and participation Information technologies NGOs	Good Governance topics increased Data management and Artificial intelligence, behavioural studies
Produced from Thesis	Very low number of articles produced from thesis	Trend has not changed
Funding Status	One third of articles were produced from funded projects	One third of articles were produced from funded projects, there is a slight increase in the funding status.
Research Orientations	Empirical research is dominant orientation, still one fifth is sole literature review.	Empirical research is dominant orientation, empirical orientation increased, and literature review decreased to one tenth
Research Method	Articles dominated by Quantitative methods but one third of articles are using qualitative methods	Use of quantitative methods increasing, while the use of quantitative methods is declining, one fifth of articles using qualitative methods. Also mixed methods have an increasing trend.

Source: Authors.

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THE SCOPE AND TRENDS OF PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION PUBLICATIONS FROM SELECTED JOURNALS BETWEEN THE YEAR 2000 AND 2019

Summary

Public administration scholarship has been a dynamic field of study since the discipline was established. While struggling with an identity crisis of whether it is part of political science or is an independent discipline, public administration has evolved to become an important area of study. Scholars have recognised and appreciated the need to evolve with the discipline, which explains the change in topics and thematic areas of research over the decades. This study sought to examine the nature of changes public administration scholarship has experienced since the turn of the new millennium. The 21st century has brought with it new set of experiences, as well as expectations that have in turn shaped the issues that are being studied in the field. Furthermore, with globalisation also on the rise, the question of who and from where public administration scholarship is making contributions has become increasingly important, especially considering the voices of the global south and women in leading journals. Apart from that, there is a growing concern over the scientific nature and rigor of studies/research being done within departments of public administration. Therefore, this study also examines the trending methodological orientation of public administration research since the year 2000. Funding has become a key factor in academic research, and it has become a sign of how relevant a discipline is, depending on the amount of research funding which scholars in that field are able to attract. The paper also presents findings on the trends in funding public administration research since the year 2000.

Keywords: public administration scholarship, gender, authorship, methodology, funding

OBUHVAT I TRENDOMI ZNANSTVENIH RADOVA OBJAVLJENIH U ODABRANIM ČASOPISIMA IZMEĐU 2000. I 2019. GODINE

Sažetak

Znanost o javnoj upravi dinamično je znanstveno polje još otkako je disciplina uspostavljena. Unatoč borbi s krizom identiteta, odnosno dilemom je li javna uprava dio političkih znanosti ili neovisna disciplina, znanost o javnoj upravi evoluirala je u važno područje proučavanja. Znanstvenici su prepoznali potrebu za razvojem discipline, što objašnjava promjene tema i tematskih područja u istraživanjima tijekom desetljeća. Ovo istraživanje nastoji ispitati prirodu promjena koje je znanstveno polje javne uprave iskusilo od prijelaza u novo tisućljeće. 21. stoljeće sa sobom je donijelo nova iskustva i očekivanja koja su zauzvrat oblikovala pitanja koja se proučavaju na terenu. Nadalje, s globalizacijom koja je također u porastu, pitanja tko i odakle doprinosi znanosti o javnoj upravi postaju sve važnija, posebno imajući na umu zastupljenost globalnog juga i žena u vodećim znanstvenim časopisima. Osim toga, raste zabrinutost zbog znanstvene prirode i strogosti studija/istraživanja koji se provode u znanstvenim ustanovama posvećenima javnoj upravi. Stoga ova studija također ispituje trendove u metodološkoj orijentaciji istraživanja u javnoj upravi od 2000. godine. Financiranje je postalo ključni čimbenik u akademskim istraživanjima, ali i pokazatelj relevantnosti discipline koja sve više ovisi o iznosima novčanih sredstava za istraživanja koja su znanstvenici u tom polju u stanju privući. U radu se iznose i spoznaje o trendovima financiranja istraživanja u javnoj upravi od 2000. godine.

Ključne riječi: znanstveni rad u javnoj upravi, rod, autorstvo, metodologija, financiranje