

**UNPACKING THE GLOBAL PERSPECTIVE: EXAMINING NISPACEE REGION-
FOCUSED PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION RESEARCH IN AMERICAN SCHOLARLY
JOURNALS**

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Abstract

Comparative and international public administration research in the United States (US) has enjoyed moments of both prestige and inattention over the last several decades, changing as a reflection of the topical, methodological, and geographical preferences of public administration scholars. This variation in research efforts over time – and the publication of research results – is important in that it reflects the concentrated efforts of a scholarly field to substantively contribute to the improvement of individual and organizational performance. In short, the intellectual products of scholars in any given field embody the contribution of academe to the functioning of various aspects of society. These contributions are, in and of themselves, worthy of attention and critical reflection. This paper purposefully examines public administration research published in US-based academic journals over a 16-year period from 1997 to 2012 with an aim of beginning to establish a broad understanding of work completed to date. Key trends that have characterized empirical and conceptual research are described, focusing on the scope, purpose, and methods of published research, as well as author affiliation. Concluding comments on collaboration in public administration research are provided.

1. Introduction

Comparative and international public administrative research in the United States (US) has enjoyed moments of both prestige and inattention over the last several decades, changing as a reflection of the topical, methodological, and geographical preferences of public administration scholars. Prior to the 1940s an intensive international focus by scholars in the US was not as evident (Heady, 2001), changing in the 1950s and 60s with the emergence of the “Comparative Administration Group” (CAG) aimed at promoting the creation a body of knowledge in the realm of comparative and development administration (Heady, 1978). Though declining in intensity after the CAG was disbanded, these international and comparative research efforts have resulted in a number of important contributions to knowledge in the field of public administration (Hou et al., 2011; Jreisat, 2005). This variation in research efforts over time – and the publication of research results – is important in that it reflects the concentrated efforts of a scholarly field to substantively contribute to the improvement of individual and organizational performance. In short, the intellectual products of scholars in any given field embody the contribution of academe to the functioning of various aspects of society, and constitute the primary method of creating and distributing knowledge (Bowman & Hajjar, 1978). These contributions are, in and of themselves, worthy of attention and critical reflection.

Comparative and international work in American public administration has enjoyed new attention over the last several decades, with a number of scholars and practitioners calling for a broadening of perspective and a purposeful shift in attention towards administrative systems outside the US (Jresiat, 2002, 2005; Hou et al., 2011; Newman, 2011). These calls to establish and nurture collaborative cross-cultural research have proved fruitful, with transnational and transcontinental endeavors increasing in frequency and intensity. This global perspective is important to improving understanding of administrative systems in the US, as well as teaching, research, and engagement (Hou et al. 2011). Interestingly, this area of research has generated a substantial body of work that reflects on the contributions and shortcomings of these efforts (Jreisat, 2005; Riggs, 1976; Savage, 1976), with many embracing a broad focus that seeks to tease out the impact of work on global basis.

It is important, however, to make a purposeful attempt at assessing how global the research really has become, and the extent to which that research is focused on different regions across the globe. This process of purposeful reflection on comparative and international research is not uncommon (Heady, 1978, 1998; Jreisat, 2005; Van Wart & Cayer, 1990), though other efforts are generally focused on the broader field of comparative research as opposed to narrower regions. This paper specifically investigates the body of scholarly work examining public organizations and public service provision in the region comprising the Network of Institutes and Schools of Public Administration in Central and Eastern Europe (NISPAcee, including Central and Eastern Europe, Central Asia, the West Balkans, and the Caucasus). Countries in the NISPAcee region are important in a global context, together accounting for more than 484 million inhabitants in 2011, almost 7% of the world’s population (World Bank, 2013). Beyond population, the functioning of governance structures and public services within NISPAcee countries are important in that a number are candidates for European Union (EU) membership, in accession talks to become members, or are current EU members (European Commission, 2013).

This paper will begin with a discussion of relevant literature, focusing the past work that underscores the importance of international perspectives in public administration research and on the necessity of periodic “stock-taking” in a given academic field. The discussion will then move

to the methods and findings of the analysis of research from US-based journals that focus, either singly, comparatively, or as part of a multinational study, on countries in the NISPAcee region (a list of countries in the NISPAcee region is included in the Appendix). The paper will conclude with comments on future research endeavors focusing on the region.

2. Review of the Literature

2.1 Calls for Collaboration and Increasing Comparative and International Research in the US

The importance of both collaborative activities and expanding the focus of comparative and international research among US public administration scholars has been notable in recent years. These shifts are necessary in that they may serve to better reflect the realities of public sector work and to better orient and shape public service pedagogy and practice. Given the status of public administration as an applied field, the need to maintain and foster the interconnectedness of theory and practice is evident.

Koppell (2010) noted that the boundaries of our research and conceptualization must fit our realities, and that this requires, among other things, that we turn our gaze outwards beyond just an American context. The pressing and complex problems faced by public sector agencies, and those private sector organizations contracted to provide public services, cannot in some cases be limited to the confines of individual nations, thus requiring an increasingly comprehensive focus. These activities are, in and of themselves, framed in a complex network of "... cross-border cooperation and, in some cases, reliance on institutions that span nation-states is an increasingly common response to transnational public policy challenges" (Koppell, 2010, p. s46). These activities are not limited to neighboring countries, instead expanding to the "... interaction between phenomena experienced on opposite sides of the globe in the realm of security, environmental protection, and public health" (Koppell, 2010, p. s50)

Similarly, Kettl's (2006) discussion of the importance of boundary-spanning collaborative public sector activities is applicable to this discussion. He noted several relatively new factors that create or exacerbate the complexity of public sector work or shape public sector goals, including "... political processes that complicate administrative responses, administrative tactics that are increasingly indirect, and wicked problems that levy enormous costs when solutions fail" (Kettl, 2006, p. 13). Thus, public sector activities in the US should consider and embrace collaborative work with an aim of responding more efficiently and effectively to these emerging challenges. Research, then, must be fundamentally reconsidered in light of the new relationships among formerly separate and distinct legal entities.

Hou et al. (2011) argue for a shift to "Public Administration with a Global Perspective," noting that a broader scope is necessary to more effectively build public administration theory and to more accurately orient both teaching and research activities (p. i45). Importantly, this perspective seeks to both acknowledge the reality of increasingly collaborative public sector activities noted by Kettl (2006) and Koppell (2010) while also appreciating the historically and developmentally unique nature of geographical areas. Hou et al. (2011) note that "[r]esearchers should place their studies into the context of the stages of human development in socioeconomic dynamics, with a retrospective view into the past for lessons, experience, and inspiration, and with a prospective view into the future for challenges and solutions" (p. i48). The intent, then, is to recognize and appreciate the still influential forces of the past while also focusing on current and future challenges. These calls for a broader focus and collaborative work are notable, and

assessing the nature and extent of past work is a necessary first step in creating understanding of the global nature of US public administration research.

2.2 Stock-Taking

This paper fits within a particular type of activity labeled as “stock-taking,” a purposeful and focused effort to assess published conceptual and empirical research within fields of study, specific journals, or during particular period of time. Within the field of public administration these efforts have assessed the field as a whole (Bowman & Hajjar, 1978), single journals over a specific time period (Raadschelders & Lee, 2011; Stallings & Ferris, 1988; Terry, 2005), and specific areas of study, including comparative public administration (Van Wart & Cayer, 1990).

Stock-taking articles focus on a number of distinct characteristics of published work, including the research subject and purpose, geographical region, methods and unit of analysis, and author affiliations and nationality (Fitzpatrick et al, 2011; Raadschelders & Lee, 2011; Van Wart & Cayer, 1990), the selection of which is driven by the intent of the study and the aim of the research question. Generally, the intent of stock-taking work is to describe and critically assess any number of these variables as they are related to the focus of the study, working to then suggest or prescribe important characteristics or avenues of future research. Importantly, this activity is not a definite and all-encompassing assessment of a body of work and does not serve to objectively establish a future research agenda. Rather, it can be thought of as a snapshot of an evolving body of knowledge at a point in time with attention to highlighting important aspects of that body of work.

The next section will describe process of reviewing and selecting articles, and the process of coding and analysis of key variables.

3. Methods

3.1 Focus of this Study and Journal Selection

The purpose of this study is to examine the emergence of theoretical and empirical research on countries in the NISPAcee region in peer-reviewed, academic journals published in the United States. Of note, a number of top journals in the field of public administration are located outside of the US, and these journals publish rigorous and noteworthy conceptual and empirical research on countries on the region of focus for this paper. However, as this study is purposefully aimed at examining research emanating from the US, only those journals published in the US or with a substantive link to a US-based professional organization or other entity were included.

Determining the same for individual authors would not have resulted in the same clarity of location, and thus was not pursued. An initial list of journals from Fitzpatrick et al. (2011) and Van Wart and Cayer (1990) was reviewed and narrowed to only those journals published in the US. This list was then expanded iteratively to include other US-based journals as they appeared in reference lists of the articles resulting from the initial search.

3.2 Article Search, Review, and Selection

A focused keyword search was conducted for each of the 16 journals examined, with legal names of countries in the NISPAcee region and other regional descriptors (e.g., “Eastern Europe,”

“Central Europe,” etc.) serving as the foundation for the list of keywords. In those cases where countries had both a formal and a more commonly used informal name both were included as separate keywords. As the goal of this paper is to examine contemporary research, a 16-year period spanning the full calendar years from 1997 through 2012 was chosen.

A preliminary review of articles resulting from each search was conducted, and those articles not directly and substantively linked to the region were excluded from consideration. For the purpose of this paper, the research must have an identifiable and concrete focus on one or more countries from NISPAcee region and not just inclusion as part of a broader study. This serves to narrow the scope of the research to the work that is primarily and purposefully concerned with the region. Other publications were excluded if they only focused on micro-level considerations (e.g., a profile of an official from a NISPAcee country) as were published book reviews. Selection was also contingent on a focus that was identifiably linked to matters of public administration. The definition of what constitutes research in the field of public administration follows that of Fitzpatrick et al. (2011), who present an inclusive focus of “... activities required to deliver public policies” (p. 823). This search, review, and selection process resulted in a total of 80 articles from 14 journals.

3.3 Coding and Analysis

The coding process was focused on a number of important factors identified in Fitzpatrick et al. (2011) and Van Wart and Cayer (1990) and a number specific to this research. Articles emerging from the search of journals were coded for the topical focus of the paper, as well as genre, purpose, and data collection methods. “Genre” is used here as a broad term to encompass the nature of the article as conceptual or theoretical, as “apparent research,” or as formal research. The term “apparent research” was created by Fitzpatrick et al. (2011) to describe work that is not based on past work, does not explain methods or data collection, and does not connect findings to conclusions. Articles were coded for the overall purpose of the paper (e.g., descriptive, exploratory, or explanatory/causal), and data collection methods (e.g., qualitative, quantitative, or mixed methods). The national focus of the articles were also noted, categorizing papers as examining a single country, explicitly comparing two countries, examining multiple countries (but still with a close focus, identified in the findings as “multiple”), or as part of a broader multi-national study, usually including more than 10 countries (identified in the findings as “multi-national” studies).

Abstracts for each article were reviewed, and if additional information was necessary the entirety of the article was reviewed. Both authors reviewed the articles separately, and any unresolved questionable of coding were discussed to ensure appropriate categorization. The next sections details the findings of the content analysis of the documents that emerged from the search, focusing on the subjects, genre, purpose, national focus, and other key characteristics of the articles.

4. Findings and Discussion

A number of published articles fell just outside the timeframe for this study, and are worthy of mention. These include discussions on the concepts of policy-making capacity, the role government in society, institutional design, and government reform in Eastern Europe (Rice, 1992), as well as investigations of independence and transitional processes for former Soviet

countries and concomitant challenges for public administration education (Newland, 1996). These studies provide context in that they highlight the importance of examining the processes of shaking the vestiges of communism and the growing pains associated with transitioning to a democratic system of government.

Turning our attention to the identified time frame, we found a number of valuable articles written over the past 16 years on topics ranging from budgeting to decentralization, with a diversity of national focus and using varied research methods. To this end, we have categorized our findings by total articles by journal; subject; scope and focus; and genre, methods, and purpose of articles.

4.1 Journals and Distribution of Articles

If we examine the distribution of articles published in U.S.-based journals since 1998, we can see that the majority of NISPAcee country-related studies have been allocated to four primary journals. As Table 1 indicates, *Public Administration Review (PAR)*, *Journal of Public Affairs Education (JPAAE)*¹, *Administration & Society (A&S)*, *Public Budgeting and Finance* account for 53 of the 80 journal articles identified. Given *PAR*'s "broad, diverse audience" and reputation as one of the field's premier journals (Terry, 2005, p. 643), it unsurprisingly published the most articles with 18, while *JPAAE* (thirteen), *A&S* (twelve) and *Public Budgeting and Finance* (ten) were the only other journals to publish at least 10 articles on the region over the selected time span.

Table 1 U.S.-Based Journals and Frequency of Articles on NISPAcee Region Countries

Name	Number	Percentage
Public Administration Review	18	23%
Journal of Public Affairs Education	13	16%
Administration & Society	12	15%
Public Budgeting and Finance	10	13%
American Political Science Review	6	8%
Public Integrity	5	6%
Administrative Theory & Praxis	3	4%
The Journal of Developing Areas	3	4%
American Journal of Political Science	2	3%
Journal of Public Administration Research and Theory	2	3%
Public Administration Quarterly	2	3%
The American Review of Public Administration	2	3%
Public Works Management and Policy	1	1%
Review of Public Personnel Administration	1	1%

In contrast, four journals published two articles over the same period (*American Journal of Political Science*, *Journal of Public Administration Research and Theory*, *Public Administration Quarterly*, and the *American Review of Public Administration*), while *Public Works Management*

¹ This designation includes articles published in the *Journal of Public Administration Education* in 1997, the predecessor to the *Journal of Public Affairs Education*.

and Policy and *Review of Public Personnel Administration* each only published one NISPAcee country-related article. When considered a whole during this rather inclusive time frame, it is apparent that American public administrationists are not choosing to publish a substantial amount of research, conceptual or empirical, that focuses on the NISPAcee region. Importantly, this may not signal lack of interest in the region, rather just a lack of published, formal research emerging in American scholarly outlets. Understanding the content of this body of work that has emerged is an important next step.

4.2 Subjects and Scope of Articles

Table 2 details the 10 subject areas coded during the canvassing of the literature, from various types of reform to local government, and bear some resemblance to the results outlined in Table 1. For example, the results indicate of the 80 articles identified, 18 centered on reform (e.g. administrative, institutional, civil service), 16 focused on education, training, teaching, pedagogy, and 15 covered budgeting and public finance. Similar to the numbers reported in Table 1, where two of the four highest targeted journals were *JPAE* and *Public Budgeting and Finance*, articles on education and budgeting/public finance were the second and third most frequently published topics at 20% and 19% of the total, respectively.

A number of articles have been published focusing on public administration education as related to the unique and varied social, political, and economic context of the NISPAcee region. Notably, a special issue of the *Journal of Public Administration Education* was published in 1997 that included both American and NISPAcee-region authors focused on the applicability of models of US public administration education in former Soviet and Communist countries (Lapsina, 1997; Liman, 1997; Maggiotto, 1997).

Table 2 Subjects of Articles on Public Administration in NISPAcee Countries in U.S.-Based Journals

Subject	Number	Percentage
Reform	18	23%
Education / Training / Teaching / Pedagogy	16	20%
Budgeting / Public Finance	15	19%
Ethics / Corruption / Transparency	14	18%
Networks / Intergovernmental Relations	11	14%
OB / HR / Public Service Motivation	11	14%
Economy	5	6%
Development / Capacity Building	3	4%
Decentralization	3	4%
Local Government	2	3%

Note: Articles were coded for up to two topics each; percentage column reflects the number of articles exploring this topic out of the total number of articles included in the study and thus adds to more than 100%.

Recent work that examines collaborative, cross-cultural educational activities with the US (Miller-Milleson & Gould, 2004) and preparation of public administration students working in the potentially diverse societies found in the NISPAcee region (Brintnall, 2008). A portion of this recent research has examined public administration education in a comparative, multinational

context (Hajnal, 2003), while others are more focused, single country examinations of issues like Yildiz, Demircioglu, and Babaoglu’s (2011) examination of undergraduate public policy education in Turkey.

Likewise, inquiry in the realm of public budgeting and finance was substantial, and included retrospective investigations of these issues in the context of the transition to a democratic system of government (Kravchuck, 1998; Leloup, Ferfila, & Herzog, 2000; Makinen, 2001), taxation (Mertens & Tesche, 2002; Zorn, Tesche, & Cornia, 2002), the emergence of systems of local government financing (Leigland, 1997; Martell & Guess, 2006), function-specific budgeting programs (McNab, 2011), and intergovernmental transfers (Schroeder, 2007; Slukhai, 2002). The specificity of these types of investigations resulted in a number of focused, single-country studies. For example, a recent study by McNab (2011) examined the implementation of programmatic budgeting in the Serbian Ministry of Defense, focusing on both conceptual issues as well as communication and coordination challenges associated with the implementation of a long-term budgeting system. Other topics did not receive as much attention in published research. Table 2 illustrates the dearth of attention paid to issues related to economy, development and capacity building, decentralization, and local government. These findings are particularly worth noting considering the vast amount of resources allocated to NISPAcee countries for each of the aforementioned subject areas.

When NISPAcee countries are compared against one another a similar top-heavy distribution emerges.

Table 3 Scope and Focus of Articles on NISPAcee Region Countries in U.S.-Based Public Administration Journals

Scope of the Article	Number	Percentage
Single	53	66%
Comparative	2	3%
Multiple	5	6%
Multinational	20	25%
Single Country	Number	Percentage
Russia	17	21%
Ukraine	7	9%
Turkey	6	8%
Poland	5	6%
Bulgaria	4	5%
Bosnia and Herzegovina	2	3%
Czech Republic	2	3%
Kyrgyzstan	2	3%
Macedonia	2	3%
Albania	1	1%
Estonia	1	1%
Georgia	1	1%
Lithuania	1	1%
Serbia	1	1%
Slovenia	1	1%

Table 3 details the scope (single, comparative, multiple, multinational country analysis) and focus (frequency of countries as the single focus of a study) of the published articles.

Single country studies consisted of 66% of the 80 articles surveyed, with 17 focused on Russia. Though several emerged, as noted, from a single issue of *JPAE* that focused intently on public administration education in Russia, the total is still considerably higher than other single country studies.

When compared to countries such as Bosnia and Herzegovina (two articles) and Serbia (one article), a number of factors can provide explanations for the discrepancy. Aside from the obvious differences in size, both geographically and in terms of population, Russia's more stable, longer standing administrative and economic infrastructure provides scholars with the ability to conduct research with more concrete conclusions. For example, Barbashev and Straussman's (2007) article on public service reform in Russia from 1991-2006 notes that "the collection of data and the statistical analysis of the public service in Russia began in 1995 when Goskomstat (Federal Statistical Committee, or FSC) started to document trends such as the number of public servants distributed among the branches of government at both the federal and regional levels" (p. 374). Their ability to bring a more comprehensive understanding of how age, level of professionalism, gender, and remuneration have each affected the transformation of Russian public service is backed by data over a longer period of time. Countries such as Bosnia and Herzegovina and Serbia, which are both currently progressing along the path to EU accession, lack this longer history of democratic and administrative development of which scholars can analyze, critique, and ultimately recommend prescriptive solutions.

4.3 Research Genre, Purpose, and Methods

Table 4 details the genre, methods, and purpose of the articles surveyed, providing additional depth of understanding of the nature of the research conducted on the NISPAcee region over the past 16 years.

Table 4 Genre, Methods, and Purpose of Articles on NISPAcee Countries in U.S.-Based Public Administration Journals

Genre	Number	Percentage
Conceptual	11	14%
Conceptual / Research	2	3%
Apparent Research	24	30%
Research	43	54%
Methods	Number	Percentage
Qualitative	31	39%
Quantitative	33	41%
Mixed	5	6%
Not Applicable	11	14%
Purpose	Number	Percentage
Descriptive	48	60%
Exploratory	13	16%
Explanatory / Causal	19	24%

Research articles, as described above, comprised slightly over half of the literature, where as “apparent research” accounted for 30% (24) of the 80 publications.

The methods utilized also shed light on research in the region, and perhaps the data sources available to scholars over this time period. Of the 80 articles analyzed, 39% were qualitatively grounded, while 41% analyzed quantitative data. Of the 31 articles that fell under the former category, 24 focused on a single country, three on multiple, three were multi-national, and one was comparative in nature. Not surprisingly, a majority fit squarely within the descriptive genre. For instance, Bryce’s (2000) qualitative study on the devolution of power to local governments in Russia and Stewart, Siemienska, and Sprinthall’s (1999) analysis of gender and ethics in two Polish provinces each used interviews to provide specific, non-generalizable findings on reforms in each country.

Qualitative methods provide an alternative humanistic perspective to the reform experience in areas where economic, educational, and other social factors may make compiling quantitative data more difficult. A number of countries in the NISPAcee region include broad swaths of rural areas, and thus may be largely untapped in comparison to the data that has been compiled on reform in larger urban centers. The collection and analysis of qualitative data may be most appropriate and useful in these potentially complex and varied cases that may emerge due to geographic considerations. According to Bryce (2000), the case study conducted in Cherepovetz, Russia is useful because “there are more Cherepovetzes than Moscows, St. Petersburgs, and Kievs.... [This can] serve as a learning and training tool and perhaps as a revelation to many Western public administrators who are unacquainted with the ongoing experiences of localities adjusting to devolution in Russia” (p. 27).

At the country-level of analysis, however, quantitative data were employed more frequently, and studies tended to fit within the explanatory/causal genre. Fourteen of the 33 quantitative studies were identified in this review were multi-national in nature, allowing for a broader comparison of countries and experiences. For example, Battaglio and Legge (2009) conducted a 17-country study using the comprehensive International Social Survey Programme (ISSP) to compare public opinion on the privatization of electricity in developed market economies (e.g., Australia, Great Britain, and France) and Central and Eastern Europe (e.g., Hungary, the Czech Republic, and Russia). Desinova et al. (2009) and Gelbach (2007) each conducted comprehensive quantitative studies that included at least 25 countries, ultimately improving their ability to draw generalizable conclusions.

The variation among these several characteristics was impressive and, as noted in the concluding comments, attention to the interconnectedness of subject, scope, context, and methodological choices is a primary consideration for future research efforts.

4.4 Author Affiliation

Given the breadth of the NISPAcee region – and the variation and complexity of socioeconomic and political development among these countries – it is natural to inquire about the types of individuals authoring these articles and their connections to the countries subject to investigation. Though institutional affiliation is not a perfect method of assessing expertise in a particular country, it does serve as a means of establishing some amount of direct experience living and working in a specific area.

Of the 80 articles that emerged from our search, a total of 17 (21%) were authored by at least one individual affiliated with an organization located in country in the NISPAcee region, and

all had at least one author matching the country of focus for each individual article. Slightly more than half (52%) of the articles were single- or co-authored by individuals who were solely based in the country of focus for the research, while just under 48% included an American coauthor. All participating authors from a NISPAcee country were based in a university-based or affiliated department, school, or research center. Nearly all of the articles – 15 of the 17 – were focused on a single country, and their temporal distribution was relatively uniform over the 16-year period of this study.

5. Conclusion

5.1 State of US-Based Research Focusing on the NISPAcee Region

Public administration research has, to a varied extent, embraced a global perspective and agenda. It is crucial, though, to be specific in our efforts to unpack that global nature. Our understanding of this phenomenon must include the nature and characteristics of the work on a regional basis, including the NISPAcee region. To that end, this aim of this paper was to review the conceptual and empirical scholarly research on public administration in American journals covering countries in the NISPAcee regional.

Our review of the 80 articles from 14 US-based journals indicates that the topic, purpose, genre, and methods of the research are highly varied. Much of the research is descriptive in nature, and movement towards exploratory research and, ultimately, seeking explanation and attempting to determine causality, is key. More than half of the articles were characterized as formal research, while conceptual and “apparent research” articles were evident in smaller proportions. Given the importance of rigor in research, the latter seems somewhat distressing and is worthy of explicit attention in the formulation of future research. Though a number of articles were explicitly comparative, or studied phenomena within multiple countries concomitantly, slightly more than half were focused on single countries. The distribution across countries was uneven, with a handful of countries receiving more attention than the rest. At the very least, this creates space for discussion of scope and focus of research, legal and regulatory context, and units of analysis. Finally, the mix of authors and institutional affiliations indicates the space and opportunity for additional collaborative work.

5.2 Limitations of this Research

It is important to highlight a number of limitations of this research, with specific attention to those related to the aim of the paper. First, this paper examines only articles appearing in peer-reviewed journals. Other types of scholarly publications, including books, monographs, professional reports, and research emerging from think tanks and professional research organizations are valuable and make substantive contributions to knowledge. Authors may choose to format and publish their work via different media that may be equally or even more impactful than academic journals. Related, this paper is unable to assess the full body of scholarly work examining countries in the NISPAcee region authored by American scholars as they may choose to publish their work in journals outside of the US. Rigorous scholarly contributions via exceptional journals housed in other parts of the world can be as important and as impactful as those published in the US. Finally, this paper only includes publications from a relatively limited time period extending into the recent past. Public administrative theory, our understanding of practice, and the

contributions of both to future efforts to shape public service provision have a much longer and richer life than is examined here. However, given the aim of this paper, these limitations are acceptable.

5.3 Future Research and Collaborative Activities

Though efforts to describe the treatment of NISPAcee regional countries in US-based journals substantively improves our understanding of the breadth and depth of research, it does not allow for the creation of a specific research agenda. Instead, that activity of agenda setting must fall to the talented and dedicated scholars in both the US and the NISPAcee region. It can be stated, however, that future research should seek to better understand complex systems of public service provision and the need to build administrative capacity and governance models (Farazmand, 2009) and the need to think about relationships with the private sector (Abonyi & Van Slyke, 2010). Both should seek to capture adequate depth and richness of detail related to context and situations in an effort to build theory in a manner that allows for applicability in a broad area.

Interestingly, Kettl's (2006) discussion of collaboration in public service is equally applicable to scholars of public administration. This paper underscores the necessity of engaging in collaborative research efforts to, as noted by Hou et al. (2011), "... [emphasize] theory building that bridges 'particularism' and 'universalism,' attending to observations in specific ethnic, cultural, and political contexts, while at the same time looking for greater explanatory power, wider practical implications, informed policy learning, and transfer" (pp. i45-i46). Creating substantial and lasting relationships between scholars in the NISPAcee region and the US may create broad benefits available and applicable to both sides. Indeed, the benefits of collaborative activities are certainly not one-sided, and the development of situationally and contextually contingent theory may indeed be tremendously useful in an American context (Hou et al, 2011, p. i49). Further, these efforts are undoubtedly made more complex by the intricacies of the relationships between language and knowledge, suggesting that this collaborative work will necessarily be of a deep and enduring nature, requiring interactions that seek the heart of theories and congruence in meaning and understanding. This type of work has the potential to be profoundly beneficial to the processes of shaping government and serving citizens.

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7. Appendix

Table 5 NISPAcee Region Countries

Albania	Armenia	Azerbaijan
Belarus	Bosnia and Herzegovina	Bulgaria
Croatia	Czech Republic	Estonia
Georgia	Hungary	Kazakhstan
Kyrgyz Republic	Latvia	Lithuania
Macedonia	Montenegro	Poland
Republic of Moldova	Romania	Russian Federation
Serbia	Slovakia	Slovenia
Tajikistan	Turkey	Turkmenistan
Ukraine	Uzbekistan	
