

Volume 6, Issue 2
Presidential Panel
Letter from the SICA Chair

Dear readers,

I am honored to present *Volume 6, Issue 2* of the SICA Occasional Paper Series, with important reflections on the history and contribution of ASPA's oldest section. I am proud of the efforts of Dr. Ljubinka Andonoska and Dr. Samanta Varela Castro, who have contributed to compiling these critical topics about international and comparative public administration. The Occasional Paper Series, originally established in 1975 under the guidance of Fred W. Riggs, continued until 1993. We successfully relaunched the Series in 2019, benefiting from its online accessibility and open-access format.

In the issue, Dr. Louise K. Comfort examines the significance of context in public administration, as articulated by Fred Riggs in her article *Public Administration in a Global Context*. Riggs' work on the ecology of public administration emphasizes the importance of understanding the broader social, economic, and environmental contexts in which government agencies function, advocating for a more holistic perspective on public administration. Dr. Comfort further explores how the evolving "ecology" of public administration demands new approaches, skills, and collaborative strategies to address challenges ranging from information accessibility to the impact of artificial intelligence. Looking forward, the study and practice of public administration must adapt to these emerging realities, necessitating a stronger focus on global cooperation, ethical leadership, social equity, and sustainable development.

The issue features an article on the Presidential Panel conducted by SICA at the 2024 ASPA Annual Conference in Minneapolis, MN. This panel, held in celebration of SICA's 50th anniversary, marks the section's inaugural Presidential Panel. We sincerely thank ASPA for supporting this critical dialogue, commemorating a significant milestone for the association's first section.

The panel featured a distinguished group of experts in international and comparative public administration: Dr. Kim Moloney (Chair), Dr. Naim Kapucu, Dr. Jeanne-Marie Col, Dr. Meghna Sabharwal, Dr. Edgar Ramirez, and Dr. Krishna Tummala. The panelists provided valuable insights into the discipline's scholarship, pedagogy, and practical aspects, emphasizing its continued relevance to public administration today.

Fred Riggs aptly stated, "The new paradigm for public administration must be comparative, i.e., global since the solution of the problem to which it addresses itself will require increasing communication between scholars and practitioners in all countries." Such approaches are even more critical in today's complex world, with governments increasingly facing challenges of various dimensions. This perspective is especially relevant in today's complex world, where governments are increasingly confronted with multifaceted challenges. Public administration, with its deep and intricate roots extending across national borders, is a field that plays a critical role in addressing these challenges.

Public administration is a field with deep, complex roots that reach across national borders, and the panel explored this status through the role of ASPA, its scope, and its influence. Although the growing body of approximately 45 public administration journals may have international appeal, the definition of "international" can vary based on how it is interpreted. Public administration has undeniably had a significant, though nuanced, impact on global practice. Its principles and methodologies shape governance systems worldwide, although the degree of influence depends on how adaptable these theories and practices are to different local contexts.

Considering the 50-year history of SICA, its progression from a more traditional framework to one that embraces contemporary challenges—such as globalization, climate crises, and shifting power dynamics—offers valuable insight into how the field of public administration must continue to evolve. Looking ahead, challenges such as the integration of international organizations, the ongoing crises we face, and the diminishing sovereignty of states in an increasingly globalized world will undoubtedly influence the future direction of the discipline. Ultimately, public administration must find a way to balance the sovereignty of states with the complex realities of international collaboration and governance. The SICA Presidential Panel addressed these critical issues, and several other topics related to international comparative public administration.

I hope that you find the articles informative and thought-provoking. We invite both SICA members and non-members to submit their work in any of the following categories: Research Ideas (including short literature reviews and/or conceptual or methodological discussions), Case Studies, Policy Briefs (addressing public issues and solutions based on evidence), Practitioner Perspectives (offering insights on public problems), Reflections (on events pertinent to comparative public administration), and Book Reviews.

As SICA celebrates its 50th anniversary, we look forward to the continued growth of the Occasional Paper Series, aiming to increase its visibility and impact. We aspire for it to serve as a global platform for exchanging ideas among scholars, practitioners, and students.

Best wishes,
Aroon

[Aroon P. Manoharan](#) Ph.D.,
Chair, ASPA Section on International and Comparative Administration (SICA)
Associate Professor
Director, [National Center for Public Performance](#),
Sawyer Business School
Suffolk University, Boston, MA



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