

Conclusions.

Within DG research there are both academic and practitioner orientations. DG research, as with other disciplinary fields, has the goal of enhancing the knowledge about its subject matter and promoting a healthy discussion among members of its academic community. However, DG research, as a practical agenda, is also looking to impact the reality of government agencies. As reported in this study, digital government research has been represented in the top main journals. However its representation varies across journals and disciplines. Public Administration journals are consistently having at least two articles a year, but Public Policy and MIS journals are idiosyncratic. Public policy as a discipline and some MIS journals do not appear to be readily available to DG researchers wanting to publish in those outlets.

The top journals in each of the disciplines have had different DG publishing patterns over the last five years. Based on our analysis, it is difficult to decipher whether the level of DG research is representative of the attention other cognate sub-disciplines (such as public management, organizational theory and behavior, or human resources management) receive in mainstream journals. The extent to which an emerging field, like DG, is able to compete for exposure in top journals and with other well-established research areas needs more investigation. Therefore, these findings can be used in follow on studies to further explore this issue.

Emerging academic fields have used different publication strategies to gain visibility, legitimacy, and influence within the research community. At least three different publication alternatives can be identified: publication of individual articles in existing journals, organizing special issues or symposia in existing journals, and creation of dedicated journals with the specific objective of publishing research within the new academic field. This study seems to demonstrate that special issues are a viable way to gain prominence and also visibility in journals and in the field itself. A follow up study to these findings investigates the feasibility of these publishing strategies by surveying the opinions and experiences of digital government scholars. For more information on that, visit the following link at <http://www.ctg.albany.edu/projects/journal>. Many things influence the course of digital government research. This study aims to take a snapshot in time, across a five-year period to create base line data to follow the development of the field.