

Profiling the EG Research Community and Its Core

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Abstract. Electronic Government Research (EGR) has progressed beyond its stages of infancy and has unfolded into a respected domain of multi- and cross-disciplinary study. A sizable and dedicated community of researchers has formed. So far, however, few, if any, accounts exist which sufficiently analyze the profile of the electronic government research community. The contribution of this paper is to describe this profile and give a detailed account of the core researcher community, name the most prolific researchers, determine their disciplinary backgrounds, and identify their preferred standards of inquiry. The study also identifies and quantifies the preferred publishing outlets in EGR, distinguishing between core journals and core conferences, on the one hand, and non-core sites, on the other hand. This study advances the understanding of the emerging structure and profile of the academic domain of EGR and helps researchers identify adequate publishing outlets for their domain-related research.

Keywords: Electronic Government Research, EGR, core EGR community, core EGR journals, core EGR conferences, prolific EGR scholars, disciplinary breakdown, multi-disciplinary EGR, EGOV EndNote Reference Library, EGRL.

1 Introduction and Research Questions

Previous Analyses of the Electronic Government (EG) Study Domain: EG owes the first sign of self-recognition as a separate domain of research to Grönlund who in 2003 attempted to formulate a foundational EG theory [5]. In several follow-up studies the author suggested that the study of EG and EG Information Systems (EGIS) should encompass the political, the administrative, and the societal spheres of government [6]. EG, he asserted, was an immature field lacking academic rigor in many, if not most, contributions [6-9].

Two reviews of the early EG literature [1, 10] produced contrasting and contradicting results, one supporting Grönlund's claims, the other dismissing them. While these authors mainly viewed EG from their own mono-disciplinary perspectives, other EG scholars pointed at the transdisciplinary nature of the phenomena under study in EG, which precluded any single discipline to declare sole ownership of the domain and of the phenomena of study [4, 11, 12]. While these analyses and discussions revolved around the foundations and the acceptable standards of inquiry in EG research (EGR), the forming of the EGR community itself and the roles and orientations of their leading members had not been included in those studies. Up to this time it has not even been known how many researchers the EG community formed and what their backgrounds were.

The Body of Knowledge in Electronic Government: Elsewhere [13], it has been argued that EG as a domain of study has progressed beyond its stage of infancy and that EGR has produced a steady stream of no less than three hundred, English-language, peer-reviewed articles per annum ever since 2004. For a young domain of study, this is a remarkably high output volume. It was further found that roughly half of the annual research volume is published in so-called EG core journals (ibid).

An additional third of this annual output is published in the proceedings of one of three annual EG core conferences, that is, the Electronic Government Track at the Hawaii International Conference on System Sciences (HICSS), the dg.o conference organized by the Digital Government Society of North America (DGSNA), and the Europe-based DEXA/EGOV conference, each of which has been conducted for about a decade and has produced a sizable contribution to the academic knowledge in EGR (ibid). Over five sixths of EGR, hence, is published in EGR core journals or proceedings of EGR core conferences.

After the record year of 2005 with almost 500 peer-reviewed publications, EGR went through a short phase of declining publication numbers, until 2008, when an increase of some 17 percent to 368 EG publications was recorded. The topical breakdown showed that half of EG publications were dedicated to (1) *organization, management, and transformation*. With around ten percent each, four topics followed: (2) *digital democracy*, (3) *e-services*, (4) *design studies and tools*, and (5) *policy, governance, and law*. The topic of (6) *infrastructure, integration, and interoperability* ranks in sixth place with a little under seven percent followed by the two small topical areas of (7) *information security* and (8) *foundations and standard of inquiry* (ibid).

The analysis also uncovered that 85 percent of all EG publications were non-technical in nature. Most publications were empirically based. Over 3,500 authors were recorded; however, more than three quarters of those authors had published only a single article or paper. In other words, around 800 individuals had published more than one article or paper on EG, suggesting that the core community of EG researchers, that is, individuals with at least one EG-related publication per annum over the past four years, would be even smaller.

Contribution and Research Questions: It is the aim and contribution of this paper to produce insights in and advance the understanding of the composition of the EGR community. In particular, the following research questions will be addressed:

- (R1) Which individuals form the inner core of this community of EG researchers, and how many are there?
- (R2) Which disciplines do the core EG researchers represent/were they trained in?
- (R3) Which general methods (quantitative/qualitative) do they prefer in their research?
- (R4) Which outlets for publications do the core EG researchers prefer?

The results of these analyses point to where the EG study domain might be headed, and what the prospects for interdisciplinary projects in EG might be.

Paper Organization: This paper is organized as follows: First, the data source and method are presented; then, the results are presented; third, the findings are discussed; and finally, conclusions are drawn and future research is outlined.

2 Data and Method

2.1 Data

The data source for this analysis is the publicly available EG reference library (EGRL) 2008 version 4.4. (EGRL08), which contained a total of 2,632 reference entries. These entries had to meet the following criteria for inclusion:

At a minimum a paper or an article had to

- a) Have passed an academic peer review process,
- b) Be published in the proceedings of an academic conference or in an academic journal,
- c) Be published in English (or, if published in another language, an English-language translation had to be publicly available),
- d) Be of at least seven pages (or equivalently, 3,700 words) in length (including references) for a non-technical article, or
- e) Be of at least four pages (2,250 words) in length (including references) for a technical article.

While these criteria allow for inclusion in the reference library of research notes and research-in-progress papers as well as full-length technical papers, in computer science, for example, they explicitly exclude non-academic accounts, posters, birds-of-a-feather reports, workshop summaries, symposium summaries, conference and event introductions, extended abstracts, commentaries, editorial notes, book reviews, and other rudimentary or light pieces of work.

As an exception, some twenty non-peer-reviewed papers with a high citation count in the academic literature, such as Balutis' introduction to EG in Public Manager [2, 3] were purposefully included to maintain the reference library's comprehensiveness and ease of use.

The EGRL08 was populated with reference records found through keyword and full-text searches, both by hand and electronically, in journals and academic conference proceedings, when they met the above-specified criteria. The core journal outlets in EGR, public administration research (PAR), political science research (PSR), information systems research (ISR), and other domains and disciplines were included in the searches as well as the proceedings of the ICIS and AMCIS conferences as well as some regional or special-topic conferences in EG. Since EG has attracted the attention of numerous disciplines and their publishing outlets, iterative keyword searches have been conducted across the archives of JSTOR, Project MUSE, Science Direct, EBSCO, the ACM Digital Library, IEEE Xplore, and Springerlink among quite a few others.

Keywords used in the searches included "e-Government," "digital government," "e-Governance," "PMIS" (that is, Public Management Information Systems), "IT" or "ICT (that is, information technology or information and communication technology) in Public Administration or public sector," "e-democracy," "digital democracy," "e-participation," "e-inclusion," "digital divide," "e-Services in government," "e-voting," "e-campaigning," "e-rulemaking," and the acronyms "G2G, G2B, G2E, G2C, IEE" (which stand for government-to-government, government-to-business, government-to-employee,

government-to-citizen, and internal effectiveness and efficiency) and also spelling and acronym variations of those.

From its first release in 2006, the number of entries in the EGRL had grown from some 1,500 to a total of 2,632 by fall of 2008 (version 4.4). This latter version served as the basis for the analysis presented below. Please note that EGRL08 does not contain references published after September of 2008 but a well-informed estimate of the number of publications for the final quarter of that calendar year was made [13].

2.2 Method

The following scheme was used for coding the 2,632 entries in EGRL08:

- (a) Type of publication outlet (core EG journal; core EG conference; other (non-core EG) journal; other (non-core EG) conference, book section, edited book, monograph, and other publication).
- (b) Topical orientation of article (foundations and standards of inquiry; organization, management, and transformation; infrastructure, integration, and interoperability; services; participation, inclusion, voting, and e-democracy; policy, governance, law, and trust; design studies, information systems development (ISD), algorithms, and tools; security; and other topical orientations).
- (c) Type of article (technical publication, non-technical publication, hybrid, and other type).
- (d) Basis of article (empirical, conceptual, review, hybrid, and other basis).

Core Journals: The following criteria were used to determine which journals would be considered core outlets for EG publications:

(1) A clearly stated and enacted focus on EG in the editorial objectives and scope, (2) editorial board comprised of leading EG scholars, (3) strictly upheld high review and acceptance standards to ensure that published articles are of higher-quality, (4) consistently large output volume of EG research articles, (5) leading EG scholars frequently and repeatedly publish their work in the outlet; (6) a global geographical reach as indicated by institutional origin of submitting authors, (7) publisher's sustained commitment to EG, (8) publisher's academic reputation, and (9) journal's academic reputation. Journals with a wider scope definition than EG, which had a particularly strong publication record regarding EG (criterion #4) and a good reputation as an academic journal (criterion #9) were also considered for inclusion.

Using these criteria, the initial list of core journals encompassed

- (1) Inderscience's *Electronic Government, An International Journal* (EGaIJ),
- (2) ACI's *Electronic Journal of E-Government* (EJEG),
- (3) Elsevier's *Government Information Quarterly* (GIQ),
- (4) IOS Press' *Information Polity* (IP),
- (5) IGI's *International Journal of Electronic Government Research* (IJEGR),
- (6) Taylor & Francis' *Journal of Information Technology and Politics* (formerly *Journal of E-Government/ JITP/JEG*), and
- (7) Emerald's *Transforming Government: Process, People, and Policy* (TGPPP).

The short academic track records of the majority of these journals prevented them from scoring high in terms of academic reputation (criterion #9); so, no ranking of these journals has been attempted.

Core Conferences: For identifying core conferences in EG, similar criteria as for core journals were used:

(1) A clearly stated and enacted focus on EG in the call for papers, (2) a relatively long track record of regular annual recurrences of the conference, (3) a consistently large output volume of completed EG research papers, (4) strong gravitational power; that is, a global geographical reach as indicated by institutional origin of submitting authors and participants, (5) strictly upheld high review and acceptance standards, leading to high-quality papers, (6) proceedings available from a publisher of high reputation, and (7) a major and recurring EG community event attached to the conference such as an annual meeting of a professional EG association, an EG symposium, a doctoral consortium on EG, an EG workshop series, or an EG job placement center.

Three aforementioned conferences met the specified criteria:

- (1) The EG track at HICSS,
- (2) DEXA EGOV, and
- (3) DGSNA's dg.o conference.

As also mentioned above, for almost a decade, these three conferences have consistently attracted a large number of high-quality submissions from a wide subsection of active EG scholars. Review and acceptance standards for submissions to these three conferences have been aligned to maintain high-quality papers, and the proceedings of these three conferences (published by IEEE, ACM, and Springer respectively) are restricted to include only completed research papers.

Core EG Researchers: In the period from its early beginnings in the late 1990s until this research was conducted in 2008, the study domain's academic output had peaked in 2005 [13]. However, most publications were recorded in the second half of that decade. Therefore, it was reasoned that researchers with less than four publications in EG within five years had to be considered non-core, while authors with four to seven publications within half a decade would count as extended EGR community. Researchers with eight or more publications or one or more publication per year, hence, would reasonably qualify as members of the core EGR community.

For every author found in the EGRL08 the number of publications was counted, and the results were sorted from highest to lowest. For the members of the above-defined core EGR community with eight publications or more, a web-based research was conducted to identify these researchers' disciplinary backgrounds and academic trainings. For the core EGR group the topical orientation was analyzed based on publications as well as regarding the general methods (quantitative/qualitative) that the researchers of the core group had employed in their research. Further, publication outlets were analyzed which the core EG researchers had preferred.

3 Findings

3.1 Research Question (R1): Which Individuals Form the Inner Core of This Community of EG Researchers, and How Many Are There?

When addressing the research question it is helpful to understand the overall composition of the EG research community: How many individuals actually form the core

community and the extended core community, and how many individuals are occasional contributors to the body of knowledge in EG? The analysis of the EGRL08 provided a clear answer to this question: The core community (including the extended core community) comprises 225 scholars from around the world.

The vast majority of contributors (93.6 percent) must be categorized as non-core, when the criteria for peer-reviewed publications are applied (more than three publications in five years). Even if the standards were lowered to only more than two publications in five years for making it to the core, the effect would be minimal (241 as opposed to 225 core members) and still 93.1 percent of authors would qualify only as occasional or non-core contributors. In other words, the extended worldwide EG core community is rather small. Figure 1 shows a breakdown of the EG community in terms of numbers of publications and core-to-non-core ratios.

PUBLICATIONS PER AUTHOR	#	CUMULATIVE COUNT	PERCENTAGE	TYPE OF ENGAGEMENT
8 or more	55	55	1.6%	Core Community
6 to 7	47	102	1.3%	Extended community
4 to 5	123	225	3.5%	Extended community
2 to 3	588	813	16.8%	Non-core
1	2693	3,506	76.8%	Non-core
3,506			100.0%	

Fig. 1. EG Community As Defined By Number of Publications (2008)

As shown in Figure 2, fifty-five scholars were identified who had published eight or more peer-reviewed articles on EG. Together these scholars published a total of 749 articles. Since this sum contains double counts due to co-authorships, the total volume of publications recorded in EGRL08 which core EG researchers had authored represents less than 28.5 percent of the whole body of academic knowledge in EG.

3.2 Research Question (R2): Which Disciplines Do the Core EG Researchers Represent / Which Disciplines Were They Trained in?

Twelve core EG researchers (or 21 percent) had an academic training background in three or more disciplines, while 23 (or 41 percent of the) researchers had a pure mono-disciplinary training and research background. Another 21 (or 37 percent of) EG scholars were trained in at least two separate disciplines. Scholars with pure mono-disciplinary backgrounds mainly came from two disciplines: Computer Science with nine (or 16 percent) of all core EG scholars, and Public Administration with seven (or 12.5 percent) of all core EG scholars. In Figure 3 the various disciplines participating in EGR are enumerated.

Core EG Researcher Community											
Rank	# Pubs	Researcher	Region *)	Rank	# Pubs	Researcher	Region *)	Rank	# Pubs	Researcher	Region *)
1	44	Gil-Garcia, J. R.	NoAm	12	22	Weerakkody, V.	Europe	9	9	Georgiadis, P.	Europe
2	38	Pardo, T. A.	NoAm	11	11	Bekkers, V.	Europe	9	9	Horan, T. A.	NoAm
3	35	Scholl, H. J.	NoAm	11	11	Ferro, E.	Europe	9	9	Joia, L. A.	LaAm
4	27	Janssen, M.	Europe	11	11	Fletcher, P. D.	NoAm	9	9	Niehaves, B.	Europe
5	26	Dawes, S. S.	NoAm	11	11	Garson, G. D.	NoAm	9	9	Pan, S. L.	NoAm
6	23	Macintosh, A.	Europe	11	11	Henriksen, H. Z.	Europe	46	8	Ambite, J. L.	NoAm
7	22	Cresswell, A. M.	NoAm	11	11	Hovy, E.	NoAm	8	8	Ebberts, W.	Europe
	22	Grönlund, A.	Europe	11	11	Irani, Z.	Europe	8	8	Flak, L. S.	Europe
	22	Wimmer, M. A.	Europe	11	11	Jaeger, P. T.	NoAm	8	8	Gouscos, D.	Europe
10	19	Wagenaar, R. W.	Europe	11	11	Klischewski, R.	Africa	8	8	Helbig, N. C.	NoAm
11	18	Andersen, K. V.	Europe	11	11	Tarabanis, K.	Europe	8	8	Krimmer, R.	Europe
12	14	Norris, D. F.	NoAm	32	10	Carter, L. D.	NoAm	8	8	Mentzas, G.	Europe
	14	Welch, E. W.	NoAm	10	10	Choudrie, J.	Europe	8	8	Moon, M. J.	NoAm
14	13	Becker, J.	Europe	10	10	Kim, S. T.	NoAm	8	8	Samet, H.	NoAm
	13	Chen, H.	NoAm	10	10	Lenk, K.	Europe	8	8	West, D. M.	NoAm
	13	Reddick, C. G.	NoAm	10	10	Roy, J. P.	NoAm	56	7	intentionally left blank	
	13	Shulman, S. W.	NoAm	10	10	Tambouris, E.	Europe			intentionally left blank	
	13	Trautmüller, R.	Europe	10	10	Vintar, M.	Europe			intentionally left blank	
19	12	Dwivedi, Y. K.	Europe	10	10	Xenakis, A.	Europe			intentionally left blank	
	12	Luna-Reyes, L. F.	NoAm	40	9	Fountain, J. E.	NoAm			intentionally left blank	

*) NoAm = North America (w/ Mexico) / LaAm = Latin America (w/o Mexico)

Fig. 2. The 55 Most Prolific EG Researchers by # of Publications (2008)

RANK	DISCIPLINE / FIELD	FREQUENCY	%	RANK	DISCIPLINE / FIELD	FREQUENCY	%
1	Public Administration	17	34%	13	Accounting	1	2%
2	Political Sciences	14	28%		American Studies	1	2%
3	Management of Information Systems	13	26%		Biology	1	2%
4	Business Administration	12	24%		Chemistry	1	2%
	Computer Science	12	24%		Economics	1	2%
6	Information Science	5	10%		Library and Information Sciences	1	2%
7	Educational Administration	4	8%		Operations Research	1	2%
	Mechanical Engineering	4	8%		Organizational Behavior	1	2%
9	Law	3	6%		Organizational Psychology	1	2%
10	Civil Engineering	2	4%		Psychology	1	2%
	Industrial Engineering	2	4%		Social Sciences	1	2%
	Physics	2	4%		Technical Science	1	2%

Fig. 3. Disciplines of the 55 Most Prolific EG Researchers (2008)

In summary, the five most frequent disciplinary backgrounds in EGR are Public Administration, Political Science, Management of Information Systems, Business Administration, and Computer Science.

3.3 Research Question (R3): Which General Methods (Quantitative/Qualitative) Do Core EG Researchers Prefer in Their Research?

When analyzing this aspect of EGR, it became clear that EG scholars draw from a wide range of methods with Action Research and grounded-theory based qualitative studies at one end of the continuum and purely quantitative methods including algorithmic studies and simulations at the other end of the continuum. This study merely distinguished between “qualitative” and “quantitative” studies in order to gain an overall perspective.

<i>Methods Used</i>	<i>Number of Authors</i>	<i>Percentage</i>
Both / Mixed	25	45.45%
Purely Quantitative	25	45.45%
Purely Qualitative	5	9.1%
Total	55	100.0%

Fig. 4. Methods Used by Most Prolific EG Researchers

Both qualitative as well as quantitative methods include a whole range of methodological approaches supporting fairly diverse epistemological stances and ontological claims, whose stated purpose of study was not within the scope of this research (see Figure 4). Interestingly, seven of the top-ten most prolific EG scholars used both quantitative and qualitative methods in their research, while two used mainly qualitative, and one used predominantly quantitative methods in their studies. EGR provides a home to multiple methodological approaches, which exceed the methodological range of a number of disciplines engaged in EGR. Hence, when EGR-related research is submitted to more narrowly structured mono-disciplinary outlets, including some non-core EGR outlets, difficulties in the paper acceptance process might occur.

3.4 Research Question (R4): Which Outlets for Publications Do the Core EG Researchers Prefer?

Unsurprisingly, EG-oriented conferences appeared earlier (1999/2000) than journals dedicated to the domain of study (2003-2007). As discussed before, some journals (GIQ, IP) and conferences (HICSS, AMCIS) extended their scope, while other journals and conferences remained mildly interested.

Rank	Core Journal	# of Pubs	Rank	Core Journal	# of Authors
1	GIQ	41	1	GIQ	22
2	EGAIJ	29	2	IJEGR	14
3	IJEGR	23	3	EGAIJ	13
4	IP	17	4	EJEG	9
5	EJEG	12	5	IP	7
6	TGPPP	10		TGPPP	7
	JITP	10	7	JITP	6

Fig. 5. Number of Publications from Core EG Researchers per Core Journal (left); Number of Core EG Researchers Publishing in Core Journals (right)

The core journals attracted numerous publications from the most prolific EG researchers, with GIQ and EGAIJ combining the lion's share of publications (see Figure 5, left table). Among the core EG research community, GIQ and IJEGR had the best reach into the core community (see Figure 5 – right table). For example, 22 (or 40 percent) of the 55 most prolific EG researchers had published in GIQ at least once.

Of course, the core group also published elsewhere. The following outlets were most frequently used: *Communications of the ACM* (CACM); *Computer*; *Decision Support Systems* (DSS); *Information Systems Journal* (ISJ); *Information Technology & Management* (IT&M); *International Journal of Electronic Governance* (IJEGR); *International Journal of Public Administration* (IJPA); *Journal of the American Society of Information Science & Technology* (JASIST); *Journal of Enterprise Information Management* (JEIM); *Journal of Government Information* (JGI); *Journal of Public Administration Research and Theory* (JPART); *Public Administration Review* (PAR); *Public Performance & Management Review* (PPMR); *Social Science Computer Review* (SSCR) among other journals.

In terms of number of publications from the core group, SSCR and CACM lead the field (see Figure 6 – left table); with regard to number of authors preferring non-core outlets, again, CACM and SSCR lead the field (see Figure 6 – right table). About 46 percent (25 of 55) of the EG core group also used other publishing outlets for a total of 38 articles (see Figure 6).

With regard to conferences, the core group favored the three core conferences (DEXA/EGOV, dg.o, and HICSS) clearly over other conferences for presenting their research. As shown in Figure 7 (upper left table), the EG core community had most articles published at DEXA/EGOV and HICSS. These two conferences also had the farthest reach into the core community with 67 percent (HICSS) and 60 percent (DEXA/EGOV) (see Figure 7, upper right table). While non-core conferences attracted up to 20 members from the core group, no single non-core conference was able to even remotely match the core conferences in number of publications (see Figure 7, lower left table). Interestingly, Americas Conference on Information Systems (AMCIS) had a reach almost as far as the dg.o conference and attracted 27 percent of core EG researchers (dg.o: 31 percent).

Rank	Non-Core Journal	# of Pubs	Rank	Non-Core Journal	# of Authors
1	SSCR	9	1	CACM	8
2	CACM	8	2	SSCR	8
3	JEIM	7	3	JEIM	7
4	ISJ	6	4	ISJ	6
5	IJPA	6	5	IJEG	5
6	PAR	6	6	IJPA	5
7	IJEG	5	7	JASIST	4
8	JASIST	5	8	PPMR	4
9	Computer	4	9	Computer	3
10	PPMR	4	10	IT&M	3
11	DSS	3	11	JGI	3
12	IT&M	3	12	PAR	3
13	JGI	3	13	DSS	2
14	JPART	2	14	JPART	1
	Other Journals	38		Other Journals	25

Fig. 6. Number of Publications from Core EG Researchers per Non-core Journal (left); Number of Core EG Researchers Publishing in Non-core Journals (right)

Rank	Core Conferences	# of Pubs	Rank	Core Conferences	# of Authors
1	DEXA/ EGOV	141	1	HICSS	37
2	HICSS	105	2	DEXA/ EGOV	33
3	dgo	56	3	dgo	17

Rank	Non-core Conferences	# of Pubs	Rank	Non-core Conferences	# of Authors
1	AMCIS	26	1	AMCIS	15
2	ASPA	6	2	ICEGOV	4
3	ICEGOV	5	3	ASPA	2
4	Other Conf	45	4	Other Conf	20

Fig. 7. Number of Publications from Core EG Researchers per Core Conference (upper left); Number of Core EG Researchers Publishing in Core Conferences (upper right); Number of Publications from Core EG Researchers per Non-core Conference (lower left); Number of Core EG Researchers Publishing in Non-core Conferences (lower right)

4 Discussion and Conclusion

At first glance, it might be disillusioning to find that the core EG community is relatively small (55 individuals), and even the extended core community comprises only a total of 225 scholars, while the vast majority of contributors (that is, 3,281 scholars) engages only occasionally in EGR. However, as the rapidly expanding

body of academic knowledge in EG demonstrates, this community has been highly productive. More research would be necessary to better understand the level of productivity and the relative size of this community when compared with other disciplinary and multi-disciplinary domains.

Most researchers listed in the core group (Figure 2) have their primary institutional affiliations either in Europe (27 EG researchers) or in North America (26 EG researchers). Only one scholar of the core group is based in Africa and another one in Latin America (excluding Mexico). No core EG researcher was found in Asia or in Oceania. This seems to indicate that EGR is predominantly conducted at institutions in Europe and North America.

What had already been suggested on the basis of casual observations has been confirmed by this research: Almost 60 percent of EG researchers have obtained multiple disciplinary trainings in their academic careers. Those trained in just one discipline have frequently engaged in collaboration with researchers from different training backgrounds. This suggests that, in principle, openness exists with regard to methods and standards of inquiry, which helps enable cross-disciplinary collaboration. While six disciplines (Public Administration, Political Science, MIS, Business Administration, Computer Science, and Information Science) were most frequent among core EG scholars, it is noteworthy that another seventeen disciplines are represented in that core group of EG scholars.

The wealth of diverse academic backgrounds also translates into a diversity and richness of methodological instruments and tools of inquiry among EG scholars. Almost every other researcher in the core group routinely uses mixed (that is, both quantitative and qualitative) methods, while 45 percent of the core scholars rely solely on quantitative methods. These results suggest that research conducted by the core group has more quantitative than qualitative orientations; yet, the qualitative elements in EG are strong, since more than 50 percent of core EG researchers regularly employ qualitative methods in their studies.

Whether or not the EG community will be able to support seven core journals over the long haul remains to be seen. However, in the core researcher group, GIQ, EGAIJ, and IFEGR have the strongest standing in terms of both number of articles and number of authors. In terms of non-core journals, SSCR, CACM, JEIM, ISJ, and IJPA are most prominent among core EG scholars. It is remarkable that the flagship journals in US Public Administration (PAR, *Administration & Society*, *American Review of Public Administration*, JPART) or Public Policy (*Journal of Policy Analysis and Management and Policy Science*) do not play any significant role in EGR.

The three EG core conferences attract the overwhelming number of papers and authors. So far, AMCIS is the only non-core conference with noticeable attractiveness to core scholars. It remains to be seen how other conferences such as ICEGOV or ECIS/PACIS can gain ground among the core scholars. Traditional public administration conferences such as APPAM or ASPA do not play any recognizable role in EGR.

Summary. The contribution of this study has been to shed light on the composition of the core EGR community and to provide a sharp profile of its core researcher group detailing disciplinary backgrounds and publishing preferences. As a result, major disciplinary backgrounds have been determined, preferred methods could be quantified, and preferred publishing outlets and conferences could be identified.

So far, only the number of publications per author has been counted without any attempt to rank order or weigh the publications or the authors' contributions. While the sheer publication count can serve as a good initial indicator of authors' interest in

and commitment to EGR, it certainly does not sufficiently describe any particular author's relative standing and influence in the EGR community. For such a purpose, a dedicated citation analysis needs to be undertaken, which will be one of the logical follow-on studies to this research.

Future research also needs to explore in more detail the topical orientations of the extended EGR community. It will also be worthwhile to observe whether or not the EG researcher community will expand or contract over the next decade depending on the research project funding situation in the various regions.

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