

## Editorial

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# Information Polity publishes more than strong empirical studies: It is a rich platform for learning and debate

Like other journals, we have a key focus on innovative empirical studies, which in our case advances our understanding of issues relating to the information polity. We are open to publishing both qualitative and quantitative research-based studies and we strongly encourage authors to submit studies based on innovative methodologies, such as living lab studies or survey experiments. This issue contains highly interesting contributions on digitalization as organizational work (Gidlund & Heidlund, 2023), e-credentials markets (Schedler et al., 2023), public sector digital transformation barriers (Eden et al., 2023), social media consumption and political distrust in Egypt (Ghorbani et al., 2023) and media users' and professionals' responses to personal data receipts (Van den Broek & Van Buggenhout, 2023). Such unique contributions to knowledge will continue to form the backbone of the journal. However, our ambition goes further than this. We aim to be a broad platform for learning and debate for the academic community of e-government scholars.

The development of an academic field does not only depend on focused new empirical studies. We believe that an academic field such as digital government studies requires a broad variety of contributions. The journal aims to provide the basis for strong research but also for teaching and learning, both within the academic and practitioner communities. We want to contribute to societal debates and provide value for professionals, policymakers and practitioners. We also aim to contribute to processes that empower of marginalized groups in society. In this respect, we are keen to publish a variety of 'types' of contribution and encourage researchers to submit a variety of high quality work. Such contributions could include systematic literature reviews, conceptual think pieces, methodological papers, essays, country reports and book reviews.

Systematic *literature reviews* have become a normal feature of the academic exploration of our field. Many of these studies are based on sophisticated methodologies, often derived from methods used in medical studies, to systematically map a research field. We welcome literature reviews, especially if they map a new and upcoming field or a specific topic area, and if they form the basis for further empirical work. The review of digital discretion by Busch & Henriksen (2018) is a good example of a review that was subsequently used as the basis for empirical research. In the current issue, the literature review by Varajão et al. (2023) on digital transformation success in the public sector is a significant contribution to the field.

*Conceptual think pieces* require a broad and original understanding of the field. At the same time, strong conceptual papers are crucial to redirect empirical research and propose a new conceptual understanding as a basis for further empirical research. A great example is the critical reflection on self-learning algorithms in public administration by Gerrits (2021) with the intriguing title 'Soul of a New Machine'. Another

valuable contribution is the risk management framework for algorithms developed by Bannister and Connolly (2020). Such contributions provide ‘building blocks’ for the further theorizing of eGovernment studies.

*Methodological papers* are scarce in our field, but at the same time they are important to stimulate debate in the academic community about the kinds of research strategies we need to realize our ambition of doing robust and relevant research. At *Information Polity*, we have not received many methodological papers in the last few years, but we would be highly interested in submissions on current topics like using machine learning in e-government research or on guidelines for conducting virtual ethnography in eGovernment research.

In order to realize our ambition to be a broad platform for learning and debate we also publish other contributions that have not been double-blind peer reviewed. We have opened up the journal to a limited number of high quality non-reviewed contributions such as essays, country reports or overviews of recent legislation. These contributions are not academically peer reviewed in the traditional sense but are assessed internally by our Editorial Team. An important overview of the EU’s General Data Protection Regulation is a good example (Bennett, 2018). This issue contains a very interesting policy review on children’s right to participation in AI (Fors & Mathiyazhagan, 2023). Also, the country reports on regional government websites in Kenya (Kimemia, 2022) and on eGovernment in Thailand (Sagarik et al., 2018) are nice examples of this type of contribution, as they provide a descriptive review of a domain that has not been covered much in published literature. The current issue contains a very relevant multi-country report on national approaches for citizen data management in response to the COVID-19 pandemic (Demircioglu & Zhu, 2023). Finally, *book reviews* continue to be important and are a brilliant way of alerting our readers to new intellectual contributions to the field of eGovernment. This issue contains an excellent review of Chung, Choong-sik’s (2020) *Developing Digital Governance: South Korea as a Global Digital Government Leader* (Lee-Geiller, 2023).

In sum, we are interested in publishing high quality papers that are relevant to our academic community of eGovernment scholars. The key focus will always be strong empirical research studies, but we also encourage you to submit other types of relevant contribution. If you have an idea for a publication which is quite different from a regular research paper but very relevant for our field, do not hesitate to contact us. We will be happy to discuss how the contribution can fit within the ambitions of the journal. In the end, the ability to be a rich platform for learning and debate depends on the quality of the material that you submit. Be innovative and surprise us with your ideas!

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