



Delft University of Technology

## **Editors' note on the refutation of "Assessing citizen adoption of e-Government initiatives in Gambia**

### **A validation of the technology acceptance model in information systems success"**

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## Quality-enhancing measures for academic publishing

## Editors' note on the refutation of "Assessing citizen adoption of e-Government initiatives in Gambia: A validation of the technology acceptance model in information systems success"



What are some of the typical features of an academic publication process? The process is intended to be balanced – it considers arguments pro and against presented methods and results; rational – it responds to clear quality criteria to inform reject, revise or accept decisions; objective – it considers research on its merits and not on the identity of its authors; iterative – it applies feedback and revision to increase publication quality, if appropriate; and increasingly global – it often crosses geographical, discipline and cultural boundaries. The latter is particularly important for Government Information Quarterly given its multidisciplinary character and authorship, and global audience. Academic debate and criticism are an intrinsic part of this process. They help include a variety of perspectives and ultimately help increase the quality of research and establish validity and reliability of its findings.

The process also involves mechanisms to assure the quality, integrity and completeness (coverage of the relevant areas) of the journal's publication record, such as: double blind reviews, engaging multiple independent reviewers, multiple rounds of revision possibly involving different reviewers, and corrective publications. In journals like Nature, five types of corrective publications are common (Nature, 2016):

- refutations – readers' criticism along with possible authors' response,
- errata – notification of errors made by a journal,
- corrigendum – notification of errors made by authors,
- retractions – notification of invalid results, and
- addendums – notification of peer-reviewed additions to a paper.

Various journal policies exist to guide the process: policies to manage corrections, e.g. Elsevier's policy on article withdrawal, retraction, removal and replacement (Elsevier, 2018a); policies on editorial decision-making, e.g. Elsevier's policy on editorial independence (Elsevier, 2018b); policies on publication ethics including responsibilities of the publishers, editors, referees and authors, e.g. Elsevier's policy on publishing ethics (Elsevier, 2018c); and others.

Government Information Quarterly has been implementing various measures aimed at ensuring the quality of its publication processes, such as: appointing experienced researchers in various areas of the journal to the positions of editors, associate editors and members of the editorial board; reducing the numbers of manuscripts handled by a single journal editor by distributing the load among a team of associate editors; assigning manuscripts to handle by associate editors based on their areas of expertise; performing rigorous screening of submitted manuscripts to determine their suitability for full review and desk-

rejecting most of them; increasing the number of reviews required to make decisions typically from two to three; engaging members of the editorial board to perform one out of three reviews for every desk-accepted manuscript; publishing special issues with recognized conferences in the areas of the journal to publish suitably extended and revised versions of their best papers; and others. In addition, recognizing that peer review is a critical building block in the scholarly publication process, the article "The Art of Scholarly Reviewing: Principles and Practices" (Bannister & Janssen, 2019) published in the current issue revisits the role and challenges faced by reviewers, and proposes how publishers, editors and reviewers themselves can jointly increase review quality.

This note is part of the publication process outlined above. It concerns the publication of the article "Assessing citizen adoption of e-Government initiatives in Gambia: A validation of the technology acceptance model in information systems success" in Government Information Quarterly, the critique of this article by David Jung, and the authors' response. The publication of refutations, including readers' criticism of published work and possible authors' and editors' response, are an intrinsic part of the publishing process. It is aimed at helping the research community to learn and grow.

The aim of this note is to create awareness of various mechanisms and policies available to assure the quality of the journal's publication record, to see such mechanisms in action, and to outline systemic, quality-enhancing measures adopted by Government Information Quarterly. Above all, the aim is to promote healthy discussion about the quality of academic publications and the underlying publication processes.

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Tomasz Janowski is the Head of the Department of Applied Informatics in Management at the Faculty of Economics and Management, Gdańsk University of Technology, Poland; Invited Professor at Danube University Krems, Austria; and Co-Editor-in-Chief of Government Information Quarterly, Elsevier. Previously, he was Invited Professor at Università della Svizzera Italiana, Switzerland, Invited Professor at University of Minho,

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Marijn Janssen is full Professor in ICT & Governance and head of the Information and Communication Technology section of the Technology, Policy and Management Faculty of Delft University of Technology. He is Co-Editor-in-Chief of Government Information Quarterly, Associate Editor of the International Journal of Electronic Business Research (IJEER), Electronic Journal of eGovernment (EJEG), International Journal of E-Government Research (IJEGR), Decision Support Systems (DSS) and Information Systems Frontiers (ISF). He serves as conference chair of IFIP EGOV series, is programme chair of IFIP I3E2016, track chair at AMCIS and minitrack chair at the HICSS conference series.

His research is focused on the design and service orchestration of public-private service networks. Public-private networks can be characterized by interacting public and private parties having different objectives and requirements, various degrees of technology-readiness, a pluriform systems landscape, path dependencies and the need to be compliant with the regulatory environment. Service orchestration is aimed at integrating disparate activities performed by separated organizations taking into account aspects ranging from the institutional and organizational level to the technical level. By current technology developments like cloud-computing, Software as a Service, semantic services, linked open data and policy developments like open data this landscape is fundamentally changing. The traditional relationship between governments and the public is challenged resulting in a more open government. He was ranked as one of the leading e-government researchers in a survey in 2009 and 2014 and has published over 320 refereed publications.

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