Chapter 14
Towards a Model for Engaging Citizens via Gov2.0 to Meet Evolving Public Value

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ABSTRACT

The adoption of Gov2.0 is intended to be an efficient and effective way of reaching digital citizens where they are, thereby facilitating the dissemination of information and enabling citizen participation. Since citizens are actively using Web2.0 tools and applications in their social lives, it is assumed that Gov2.0 would provide a means to lend their voices to the decision-making process. However, Gov2.0 has not been successful in engaging citizens and has not lived up to expectations. Governments need to reassess their engagement models via Gov2.0 to achieve a desired level of public value. To engage effectively in the process of public value co-creation, a synergistic integration of citizens and governments must occur. The authors use the co-creation lenses to suggest that citizen participation and satisfaction can help to enhance public value. A validated research model and measures are proposed that link citizen-government synergistic integration to participation and satisfaction in order to achieve public value. The paper concludes with suggestions for future avenues of research.

INTRODUCTION

Web2.0 technologies have revolutionized the means of communication for government agencies, initiating the Gov2.0 concept (Bonsón et al., 2012). Gov2.0 denotes the government use of Web2.0 technologies (hereafter Gov2.0) (Bryer &Zavattaro, 2011) by government agencies (G2G) or by the private sector

(G2B) or citizens (G2C) (Jaeger, 2003), and the boundaries between these classifications are increasingly blurred (Bryer &Zavattaro, 201; DiMaio, 2009). Gov 2.0 has socialized and commoditized government data, processes and services (DiMaio, 2009). Many benefits of Gov2.0 were expected, such as matching citizens' preferences with public services, greater utilisation of e-services by citizens, and better control of costs (Janssen & Estevez, 2013).

Motivated by a desire to reach citizens wherever they are, Gov2.0 has been an integral part of most e-governments' current and future plans (Larsson & Grönlund, 2014). For example, Kavanaugh et al. (2012) have studied the Blacksburg town government use of social media such as Twitter and Facebook, as an additional channel through which to communicate with citizens. Sandoval-Almazan et al. (2011) found that there has been an increase in Mexican local government use of Web2.0 tools and applications such as Facebook and Twitter from 2008 and 2011. Gov2.0 was seen as the vehicle to realise the Open Government Initiative core values of e-government: transparency, participation, and collaboration (Linders & Wilson, 2011); however, this was not the case (Millard, 2010). Government agencies that seem to be active in engaging their citizens via Gov2.0 are often using Gov2.0 as another channel for the dissemination of information (Brainard & Derrick-Mills, 2011).

In this paper, we see Gov2.0 as a rich context of capabilities to study the synergistic integration of citizens and governments public value co-creation. Supported by the shift from "need to know" to "need to share" (Dawes et al., 2009), Gov2.0 has transformed the relationship between citizen and the government by offering a platform for public value co-creation. Whilst Gov 2.0 is widely available, its current utilization is largely one-way from the government to citizens (Hand & Ching, 2011). Therefore, there is a need for an integrated approach that allows citizens to co-create substantial and unique public value for each other. In spite of the burgeoning interest in Gov 2.0 and public value, our understanding of their relationship remains limited. Citizen participation can ensure that public value is created efficiently and effectively (Hand & Ching, 2011). Gov 2.0 can enhance citizens' capabilities for self-organizing and collaboration (Benkler & Nissenbaum, 2006). However, Gov 2.0 has failed to increase citizen participation and has not lived up to expectations (Millard, 2010; Osimo, 2010).

By Web2.0 technologies, we mean a set of technologies (e.g. RSS), applications (e.g. blogs) and concepts (e.g. collective intelligence) that include micro blogs (Twitter), social networking services (Facebook), multimedia sharing (YouTube), and mash-ups (Bertot et al., 2010). We define Gov 2.0 as "The use of social networking platforms, content creation and sharing tools, web logs, and microblogging tools within government organisations and their interactions with citizens" (Mergel, 2012, p. 34). By public value, we mean "a reflection of collectively expressed, politically mediated preferences consumed by citizens, created not only through outcomes but also through a process of achieving trust and commitment" (O'Flynn, 2007, p. 358). By public value co-creation we can understand "enabling citizen participation and satisfaction via Gov 2.0 and improve the ways in which public value can be met" (Aladalah et al., 2016, p.3000).

Embracing a synergistic integration perspective of Gov2.0, this paper accomplishes two main research objectives. First, we emphasize the role of the synergistic integration between citizens and governments as a means of co-creating public value. Second, we explain how the synergistic integration between citizens and governments in Gov2.0 is expected to increase citizen participation and satisfaction via Gov2.0 to realise public value using the proposed research model. Specifically, we endeavour to answer the following research question: How can citizen participation and satisfaction via Gov2.0 be leveraged to enhance public value co-creation?

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