Chapter 1
E-Government Service Development

Mahmud Akhter Shareef
McMaster University, Canada

Norm Archer
McMaster University, Canada

ABSTRACT

E-government (EG) is an alternative channel to regular brick and mortar government office. This information and communication technology (ICT) driven delivery system offers government services to its different stakeholders in a more comprehensive, efficient, and effective way than it was through physical government office. At different stages of EG development and growth, functions, pattern, and capacities of offered services are distinctively different, and as such, association of technology is also different with these different stages. This chapter is designed to understand prime components, recognize stakeholders, and identify differentiable growth stage of EG. To fulfill this objective, this chapter is divided into four sections.

INTRODUCTION

Al Gore, former Vice President of the USA, has said: "In this fast-moving, fast-changing global economy — when the free flow of dollars and data are the source of economic and political strength, and whole new industries are born every day — governments must be lean, nimble, and creative, or they will surely be left behind" (Al Gore, 1993). This was the mission of EG when it was first introduced in the era of the fierce proliferation of information and communication technology (ICT). As a new and rapidly growing field, the concepts and theories of EG are still being developed. Researchers from different disciplines – such as political science, information systems, sociology, and organizational study – address the phenomenal paradigms of EG from the viewpoint of their fields. We have analyzed many different studies that discuss EG initiatives and missions,

development strategies, proliferation and adoption, service maturity, and interoperability (Reddick, 2006; Al-Mashari, 2007; Gil-Garcia and Martinez-Moyano, 2007; Heeks and Bailur, 2007; Schedler and Summermatter, 2007; Wang and Liao, 2008; Van Dijk *et al.* 2008; Kim *et al.,* 2009; Robin *et al.,* 2009; Shareef et al. 2010a). It is clear that EG from its inception until now has aimed to accomplish not only the benefits of ICT in the public administration system, but also competence and competitive advantage in the present open market competition with the private sector. It can do this by introducing top quality, cost effective, and efficient citizen-centric service; offering a political gain through good governance; reforming organizations through power decentralization; and providing a citizen-centric administration system in the government organizational structure through cultural reformation. Other important aspects of EG are equal service availability for privileged and underprivileged groups across the country, and behavioral and attitudinal changes in individual and group performance. EG offers domestic economic gain from effective government service design and from the international attention received through proper image building of the country online and global interaction.

As a new and rapidly growing field, the concepts and theories of EG are still being conceptualized. Researchers from different disciplines – such as political science, information systems, sociology, and organizational study – address the phenomenal paradigms of EG from the viewpoint of their fields. After addressing and analyzing different studies representing EG initiatives and missions, development strategies, proliferation and adoption, service maturity, and interoperability (Reddick, 2006; Al-Mashari, 2007; Gil-Garcia and Martinez-Moyano, 2007; Heeks and Bailur, 2007; Schedler and Summermatter, 2007; Wang and Liao, 2008; Van Dijk *et al.* 2008; Kim *et al.,* 2009; Robin *et al.,* 2009; Shareef *et al.* 2010a) it is clear that EG from its inception until now has had several targets. Not only do governments

adopting EG hope to accomplish the benefits of ICT in the public administration system, but also competence and a competitive advantage in the present open market competition for some services with the private sector. To reach these goals, they have introduced top quality, cost effective, and efficient citizen-centric service and have worked to gain politically by offering good governance, organizational reformation through power decentralization, a citizen-centric administration system in the government organizational structure through cultural reformation, and equal service availability for privileged and underprivileged groups across the country. Governments have worked to establish behavioral and attitudinal changes in individual and group responses, and economic gain from domestically effective government service design, international attention through proper image building of the country online, and global interactions. The World Bank website (2005) viewed EG as: "information technologies…that have the ability to transform relations with citizens, businesses, and other arms of government... [and] can serve a variety of different ends: better delivery of government services to citizens, improved interactions with business and industry, citizen empowerment through access to information, or more efficient government management... benefits can be less corruption, increased transparency, greater convenience, revenue growth, and/or cost reductions." Shareef *et al.* (2010b) defined the comprehensive concept of EG as: "EG as an applied system can be defined as the modern evolution of government organizational structure for the presentation and delivery of all types of government information, services, and functions to all its users and stakeholders. It provides increased efficiency and efficacy in terms of service quality, time, and cost and in availability and accessibility. It also provides ease of use, transparency, participation in the public service function and decision making, democratization, and globalization through the use of modern ICT."

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