

Chapter 20

The e-Government Concept and e-Government Applications

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ABSTRACT

Since the end of the last century, computers have become a widespread phenomenon in most developed and developing countries. In the last decade, all around the world, governments and private organizations have attempted to explore new searches, opportunities, and investments for making their services vibrant, independent from space and/or time, comfortable, and contemporary. These initiatives have also been done with a view to increase their services' quality by employing the opportunities offered by the Internet technology. The electronic government (e-government) concept has developed as a result of these efforts. E-government offers the opportunities that offer citizens and the government to execute their mutual duties and obligations via electronic communication and process. E-government has several aspects, including social, technical, economic, political, and public administrative. However, most dominating concepts of e-government arise from the technical perspective and a combination of the socio-economic and public administrative perspectives. In this study; concept, structure, and frame of e-government were defined. The Networked Readiness Index was investigated, and featured topics for e-government applications were determined. Necessity of e-government in both developed and developing countries were investigated, and digital divide, which negatively affects e-government formation in developing countries, was investigated.

INTRODUCTION

Change has been an inevitable human experience since the beginning of time. The motion of change has increased continuously and its speed

has achieved incredible levels in the second half of the 20th Century. Technology renewed itself in every 100 years in the 19th Century, in every 20 years during 1960s and in every 10 years in 1970s. In the 2000s technology renews itself in every 2 years. Human beings have not been able to reach such change speeds during any historical

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period. Even the most remarkable expectations fail to determine sufficiently the scale of change we experience. Many sociologists have admitted that they have difficulties to predict the magnitude of changes of the “Information Age” (TIC, 2002).

In recent years, information and communication technology (ICT) revolution has induced transformational economic and social shifts around the world. The Internet and its allied technologies have started to transform the economy, production, trade, health, publication, tourism and entertainment, all stages of education, politics and public administration -- in short, every element of life. The effect of time and space differences is removed and business, trade, education and entertainment styles are changed in unprecedented levels. New opportunities on public administration, making public administration more transparent and serving people rapidly, efficiently and respectfully have been emerging. The rate and scope of business life is changing and globalization is affecting all types of organizations whether small or large. The entire world is becoming a potential market for the factories and also a potential source of competition (SPO, 2001).

Methods

In this study, concept, definition and scope of the e-government were determined as a result of literature review. E-government portals of the leading countries determined in line with the last three years results of network readiness index conducted throughout the world by the World Economic Forum were investigated and e-government applications of these countries were classified according to their e-government web portals. Factors impeding the establishment of e-government were determined and the world wide status of these impediments was mapped according to the research which was made by the United Nations (UN) in 2010 and various specifications were made in accordance with these maps.

Defining E-Government

Public and private organizations and institutions have started to use ICTs in their areas of operation in a bid to harness the opportunities that come with effective ICT encapsulation in various business processes. Governments and other organizations, which adopt rational, efficient, transparent and effective administration, have started to increase the quality of their services by adopting and using ICTs. Adoption of Internet technologies has enabled governments to:

- Offer public services more rapidly and transparently.
- Determine economic and social development strategies based on the demands and characteristics of citizens.
- Operate all government agencies in a more rational and efficient way (United Nations, 2004).

E-Government appeared as a term in the literature and practice in the mid to late 1990s (Peristeras et al, 2009). As a new and rapidly growing field, the concepts and theories of e-government are yet to reach maturity. Researchers from different disciplines address these phenomena from their respective speculations and conceptualize it in a scattered fashion (Shareef et al, 2011). The United Nations defines e-government as “utilizing the Internet and the world wide web for delivering government information and services to citizens” (United Nations & DPEPA, 2002). Government services can be managed and offered through a variety of different forms of ICT platforms and applications (Devendra, 2010).

Writers and commentators have characterized e-Government in different as follows:

- Whereby public services are developed by making organizational changes, democratic developments are ensured and public

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