

SUCCESS FACTORS INFLUENCING E-GOVERNMENT IMPLEMENTATION

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ABSTRACT

eGovernment is a progressively global marvel that depicts a highly beneficial endeavour and has consumed the attention of numerous governments and people around the world. eGovernment has been established as a promising vehicle for improving the services provided to the citizens by the governments. The motivational drive to implement eGovernment has resulted in the implementation of numerous eGovernment visions and strategic agendas by several governments worldwide. Based on document analysis and literature review, this paper discusses the success factors influencing the implementation of eGovernment. The significance of the paper is to give information regarding eGovernment which can be of use to various governments and stakeholders dealing with eGovernment issues, policies and strategies. It can also be helpful to scholars who wish to learn and understand the success factors influencing eGovernment implementation.

KEYWORDS: *eGovernment, Success Factors, Implementation*

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1. INTRODUCTION

Most researchers posit that eGovernment projects are initiated as a key factor in the national strategies to enhance the efficiency and effectiveness of the government operations, and improve the relationships between citizens and the state (Al-Adawi .et.al, 2005; Majozi, 2012; Evans & Yen 2006, Dangol, 2012). Bwalya et. al. (2012) concurs to this, that when implemented successfully, eGovernment may culminate in improved public service delivery which is relevant, efficient and appropriate. More and more governments are using Information and Communication Technologies (ICTs) especially Internet or web-based network, to provide services between government agencies and citizens, businesses, employees and other non-governmental agencies (Fang, 2002). eGovernment is an increasingly global phenomenon that has attracted the attention of many governments (including policy makers, politicians and citizens) around the world (Accenture, 2005). Several governments have been motivated to make and to continue to make substantial financial and political commitments to establishing eGovernment for improving the services delivery (Accenture, 2005; Sharma & Gupta, 2003). Numerous governments have and are implementing numerous eGovernment visions and strategic worldwide (Accenture, 2007). Guided by their ICT policies, eGovernment visions and strategies, most countries implement their eGovernment through some stages.

2. STAGES OF DEVELOPMENT OF E-GOVERNMENT

The four stages of development of eGovernment services commonly followed and used by most countries include: publishing (web presence), interaction, transaction, and transformation (integration) (Al-adawi, Yousafzai & Pallister, 2005; Affisco & Soliman, 2006). According to Rorissa and Demissie (2010), a website at the first stage (publishing) presents static information about the government agency, whereas a website at the second stage (interacting) allows the downloading of forms (for completion offline) and provides search functions. An eGovernment website at the third stage (transacting) allows the completion of an entire task online without requiring citizens to travel to the relevant offices. A website at the fourth and final stage (transforming) is usually a single-point portal that integrates all eGovernment services by a number of branches of government at all levels (Rorissa & Demissie, 2010).

3. STATUS OF E-GOVERNMENT WORLDWIDE

According to the UN eGovernment survey report, in 2012, no country Worldwide had a true single-sign-on integrated portal. The United States, Republic of Korea, Israel, Australia, Norway, Denmark, Bahrain, Qatar, United Arab Emirates and New Zealand are among the few that came close to a pure one-stop shop portal with information, services and participation services integrated on one site in 2012. However, it is reported in the 2012 UN eGovernment survey report that, most countries from the European Union (EU) follow the approach of separate portals for their information, service and participation offerings. Their eGovernment services focus on the nationally organized one-stop channel for the provision of twenty basic e-services essential to their citizens while the government provided information forms a separate portal with information services integrated on it from across all sectors.

Despite recent expansion in mobile telephony, most countries in Africa remain at the tail end of the digital divide (UN eGovernment survey, 2012). The key challenge for the eGovernment development of Africa remains the widespread lack of infrastructure and functional literacy. Although most African countries are a long way short of the computing and telecommunications infrastructure on which many Western eGovernment initiatives have been based (ITU, 2002), there have been great strides forward in eGovernment implementation frameworks which the developing states are coming up with. Africa has seen improvement in eGovernment with countries in the region looking to increase their online presence through developing websites for government ministries and agencies (UN eGovernment Survey report, 2012).

Most countries have invested considerable resources in eGovernment in the last few years. They have expanded infrastructure and human skills on which to build further advances in service delivery and employ the full potential of information technologies for long-term sustainable development (UN eGovernment Survey report, 2012).

4. OBJECTIVE

This literature review was aimed at discussing success factors affecting or influencing the implementation of eGovernment.

5. METHODOLOGY

The information used to compile this paper was mainly obtained from several literatures. These include journal articles, seminar papers, empirical studies, books, Internet websites and blogs and UN reports.

6. FINDINGS

Success factors influencing eGovernment Implementation

The implementation of eGovernment is affected or influenced by so many factors, which can either be failure factors or success factors (Heeks, 2003; Dangol, 2012). Heeks (2003) further points further that, eGovernment success and failure depends on the size of gap that exists between 'current realities' and 'design of the e-government project'. The larger this design-reality gap, the greater the risk of e-government failure. Equally, the smaller the gap, the greater the chance of success (Heeks, 2003).

Various motivational reasons for eGovernment implementation can be found posited in most literature (Ebrahim & Irani, 2005; Gupta & Jana, 2003; Jaeger, 2003; Relyea, 2002; Moon, 2002; Layne & Lee, 2001). Al-Shehry et. al., (2006) has presented a classification of these motivational forces as: political, economic, social, technological and managerial reasons.

According to Matavire et. al. (2010), perspectives on the core requirements for successful implementation of eGovernment differ throughout the literature. Whitson and Davis (2001) argue that successful implementation of eGovernment services affects the way the government agencies measure their transaction with users. They do so by focusing users as key to the transaction process. eGovernment services are affecting how the public sector (government) provides services to the public by shifting from system-oriented to user-oriented focus (Kaaya, 2012).

Success factors are those occurrences whose presence or absence determines the success of an ICT project (Gichoya, 2005). Gichoya term those occurrences as **drivers, enablers and inhibitors**. According to Gichoya, the absence of drivers and enablers can cause failure and their presence can also cause success. Gichoya argues that the **drivers** are the factors that encourage

or reinforce the successful implementation of ICT projects. Some of these drivers Gichoya mentions are listed below as: Vision and strategy; Government support; External pressure and donor support; Rising consumer expectations and Technological change, modernization, and globalization.

Other researchers have sketched the major drivers of eGovernment as technological (Borins, 2002; Culbertson, 2004; Suan, 2005; OECD, 2000), organisational and environmental (Zakareya, Irani & Al-Shawi, 2004). Silcock (2001) underlines the importance of these elements operating together: According to Kaaya (2012), one of key prerequisites for implementing eGovernment services is to have the necessary infrastructure in place, such as computer hardware and software, together with reliable telecommunications services for connectivity. Kaaya argues further that, to ensure users' easy access to government information online, availability of the infrastructure should be coupled with availability of human resources with necessary skills to collect and organize information. Silcock (2001) points that for a successful eGovernment implementation, political will and adequate commitments from top government officials are essential. This is also supported by Stanforth (2007) that eGovernment implementation is dependent on the network of actors involved and is inherently a political process as opposed to it being a technology process.

Similarly, Ngulube (2007) affirms this that even though ITC infrastructure and available ICT expertise may influence the implementation of eGovernment, the support and active commitment of influential politicians may play a significant role in promoting eGovernance “buy in”. According to Wilson III, (2004), if politics are wrong then the other major drivers of eGovernment will not work. Leadership should be committed to “press changes in the face of institutional rigidity, technological backwardness, and political resistance...” (Wilson III, 2004). Suan (2005) argues that eGovernment can be implemented successfully if it is regulated by a legal framework. Legal issues revolve around cyber-security, digital signatures and personal data protection and confidentiality (Ngulube, 2007).

Enablers are the active elements present in society, which help overcome the potential barriers (Gichoya, 2005). Some of these enablers Gichoya mentions are listed below as: Effective project coordination and change management as well as Good practice. According to Gichoya, **Inhibitors** do not necessarily prevent the implementation of ICT projects but they do prevent

advancement and restrict successful implementation and sustainability. Some of these factors for failure mentioned by Gichoya are listed below as: User needs; Technology; Coordination; ICT policy; Transfer of ICT idolisers and Donor push (Gichoya, 2005).

Silcock (2001) points out that, even though most of the excitement centres upon the Internet, governments must be aware that eGovernment affects every aspect of how organisation delivers service to the public. Silcock argues that, it is not just business processes; nor just human resources. It is all these areas combined. At the centre of it all is the customer. Silcock highlights that how well governments grasp the integration of all the components will largely determine how much value eGovernment can bring to citizens and to governments themselves. Governments will need committed leadership...and a clear strategy for overcoming the barriers to change... (Silcock, 2001). Heeks (2003) argues that, implementing an eGovernment is more difficult if stakeholders consider new and technological approaches as a threat to their power or position. Organizational changes may be important as success factors in developing countries, as shortage of skilled manpower or computer applications in developing countries are largely caused by lack of coordination among stakeholders (Gichoya, 2005; Sharma, Bao & Qian, 2012).

Nour (2007) suggests efficiency, effectiveness, access, accountability, equity, empowerment and participation, transparency, availability of services, responsiveness and integrity as critical goals of an eGovernment. Achieving meaningful eGovernment development is a process that needs well-thought out and context-aware strategies (Bwalya et. al., 2012). According to Bwalya et. al., (2012), context-aware strategies incorporate in their designs the characteristics of the local context such as the level of education of the people, likelihood of access to ICTs, computer literacy, and other e-citizen-ready requirements.

6. CONCLUSIONS

Conclusion that can be drawn from the reviewed literature is that most countries are adopting and implementing the eGovernments world wide for improving service delivery to their citizens (Matthes & Kreutz 2007; Nkomo, 2012). From the literature, it can be concluded that eGovernments level and status differ and vary from country to country. For instance eGovernments in developing states differ from the eGovernments from the developed countries.

This is partly influenced by a lot of factors such as availability of resources, as well as good sound strategic plans and policies. Achieving meaningful eGovernment development is a process that needs well-thought out and context-aware strategies (Bwalya et. al., 2012) and its start all well with a good strategic framework by the government. It is believed that when implemented well, eGovernment is likely to help do various things such as improve efficiency and effectiveness of public service delivery by the governments. It also believed that it can help reduce crime and lead to a transparent and less bureaucratic environment.

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