



## The Necessities of an Electronic Government in the Third Millennium with an Emphasis on Iran

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**ABSTRACT**

This study is aimed at investigating the frameworks and executive rules for the country's E-government, the obstacles on establishment of a digital government for providing comfort and for the citizens, the initial preparation for the communication infrastructures, including internet band width, local software, electronic equipment, structural changes in organization, crisis management and acceptance of changes by governmental managers and staff, creating the culture and codes of electronic citizenship providing necessary training and education about this phenomenon. What is important is that an implementation of Electronic Government reduces the distance between people and government and people themselves will be part of the government. Upon establishing such a government, a strong mutual link will be created between people and governors. Also the government could move forward to its ultimate goal of downsizing and privatization and the cost of using online services will be significantly reduced. The crucial concerns in this respect are: creating necessary infrastructures, developing of a more administrative and executive culture among governmental managers, providing necessary educations and training for people, and reducing the cost of web-based services.

**Keyword:**  
Electronic Government, IT development, Digital readiness, Citizenship Technology

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## INTRODUCTION AND STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

One of the concepts that has been extensively studied in advanced societies in recent times, and sometimes even successfully implemented, is the concept of e-government.

E-government is a virtual government with a virtual organization that provides its government services on an on-line basis and engages them in various political, social, economic, and cultural activities. Among the expected results of such a process, the reduction of administrative corruption and greater transparency of affairs, an increase in the level of responsibility, the continuous improvement of processes, greater convenience, and growth of resources and lower costs of services can be mentioned. Having the advent of information and communication technologies, customer service centers are getting closer, and individuals can get their services even from their personal computers and mobile phones. The e-government also saves the time and money of government, citizens and business. Globalization also forces governments to establish e-government for the purpose of selling their goods and services, as well as exporting their culture to other cultures and civilizations. (Montazeri et al., 231: 2014).

The e-government is the easy use of information technology to distribute public services directly to the customer, and throughout the day and night. The e-government is a way for governments to use new technology to provide individuals with the necessary facilities to access government information and services, improve service quality, and offer wider opportunities for participation in democratic processes and symbols (Alwani et al., 14: 2003).

E-government is a digital one without any wall and a government without building and virtual organization that provides government services directly to applicants and engenders them in all-round activities. Governments around the world are facing a transformational challenge and need to rebuild their systems to deliver efficient and effective services, and public information and information through ICT. Based on the finding of various studies, including a recent research by Lappas, Triantafillidou, Yannas, and Klefodimos (2017), governments have been quite successful in providing one-way services but rather unsuccessful in providing bilateral services.

### SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY

Generally speaking, the expectations of individuals, groups, and organizations about the services, products, and how they are delivered are increasingly changing, and governments must meet these needs and expectations. They want that the working hours of state institutions increase and whenever they want to do their jobs, they do not expect to receive services and provide them with better quality and cheaper services. Governments are also competing to raise capital and earn money. So, with this in mind, there are new possibilities that e-government provides these facilities to them.

Not only does e-government integrate itself with society, it also makes the government focus on resources that are most needed. The e-government promotes self-service culture, and citizens are able to help themselves as much as possible to reduce their costs and waste (Jalali Farahani, 53: 2001).

In the past and before the Industrial Revolution, communications between government sectors were limited. Therefore, the governments were of a type of fabric, and the central government oversaw the local governments.

With the advent of the technologies that were created in the age of the industry, the regulatory gap was shortened and sovereignty exercised widely. In the past, there was no universal cause for universal democracy, and only in a small area voting was done. Today, the use of modern technology has made changes in organizations and governments. Currently, many governments are using ICT, in particular from the Internet or web-based networks, to improve the service to citizens and local organizations, businesses, employees and other non-governmental organizations in an effort. (Sanayeei et al., 65: 2002).

### THEORETICAL ISSUES

#### Definition of e-government

The e-government provides the fast and efficient use of information technology to distribute public services directly to the applicant, on a weekly basis throughout the week. The e-government is a way for governments to use new technology to provide applicants with the necessary facilities to access government information and services, improve the quality of services, and offer wider opportunities for participation in democratic processes and symbols (Moghimi et al., 2011).

In general, electronic governance involves the use of information and communication technology (ICT) by government departments to provide more favorable public services for citizens. The implementation of e-governance will increase the transparency and interaction of the public service system and create a cost-effective and efficient solution for government and citizens. It also enhances the level of accountability of government and government agents and plays a leading role in reducing government corruption (Joseph, 2017).

### THE IMPORTANCE AND NECESSITY OF E-GOVERNMENT

Today, the level, expectations of society and individuals about services and products, as well as the manner and quality of its presentation, are increasingly changing, and governments should also meet these needs and expectations. They want to increase the working hours of state institutions and they can do their jobs whenever they want to, get better quality services, get cheaper services and goods, and get things that are most responsive. The state of government for these expectations is now the e-government. Governments also compete to attract capital, jobs and employment, skilled workers, and more. And to this end, they need some new features that the e-government provides them with. Therefore, electronic government not only ensures its integration with society, but also makes the government focus on resources that are most needed.

#### The structure and dimensions of e-government

The e-government is considered to be the main source of communication with the public. This is done with citizens, businesses, employees and other governmental institutions; in such cases this connection forms the heart of the e-government. In order to establish such communications, the government should draw the trust of the interested parties in e-government in order to engage in this and to assure them

that their privacy and security will not be bullied. Menash, Jianing, and Durrani (2017) by using Technology Acceptance Model concluded that factors influencing the general acceptance of the public include perceived profitability, perceived easiness, perceived quality level and more importantly the level of trust.

Although there is still little research about the level of e-government acceptance and readiness among users, limited research has been done in this area and there has been spectacular findings, for instance Alryalat (2017) concluded that the level of trust felt by the audience plays the most important role in this regard.

### **THE CURRENT STATE OF IRAN FROM AN E-GOVERNMENT PERSPECTIVE**

The connection of 130 operating systems to the National Information Network provided the infrastructure for providing online government services but with the ultimate goal of the fifth development plan, it is still far from reaching the second-tier region in the e-government sector. The implementation of the e-government in Iran approved by the Supreme Administrative Council and based on the Applied Information Technology Development Plan (TEC), in July 15, according to which the government was obliged to provide non-public services to the people in order to improve the quality, reduce costs and streamline information between the executive agencies.

But nearly 13 years after the adoption of this regulation, Iran does not have a satisfactory state of affairs in the field of e-government. Although the development of e-government in Iran is one of the main axes of the Takfah document but the plan was stopped in 84 and, as a result, the interruption in the implementation of e-government in the country was created. Note 13 of the Budget Act of 85 also obliged executive agencies to provide electronic systems for the provision of all state services and then in 1986, the Supreme Information Technology Council approved the comprehensive information technology system of the country to once again address the development of e-government as one of the main axes.

Despite all these strategic documents, there was no guarantee for the operation of e-government in the country and the development of a roadmap for e-government in the ninth government and then in the tenth government was not implemented. For this reason, the e-government has not yet been implemented in the real sense of the country and government agencies continue to provide their services to the public in person. Findings of Ndayizigamiye and Gladys Khoase's (2017) study reveals that there is a direct but negative correlation between the implementation of e-government and different hindering factors. These factors involve: limited application of e-business by major suppliers, the low level of computerization of various tasks by company, high cost of using computers and network technology, insecure connection systems and various concerns regarding the legal issues involved in here.

In the meantime, the fifth development plan could be the strongest law in the field of e-government in Iran which requires executive machines to provide online and electronic services up to 95 years and its infrastructure must be provided by connecting to the national network of information. According to the plan, Iran should be ranked second in the e-government development index at the end of the fifth-95-year program. Also, one of the most important

headings of this law in this section is Article 46 which connects all government agencies to the National Information Network and provides 100% of government services to the Communications Ministry.

### **CHALLENGES FACING IRAN**

There are a number of basic barriers and challenges to creating an e-government. Some of them can be briefly mentioned: As noted above, the prerequisite and, of course, the nature of e-government projects, is the integration of government services and information. Therefore, one of the main obstacles facing these projects is island management and inconsistency between public and private organizations that prevent integration. But it should be noted that the purpose of integration, the hardware and software connection of all organizations to a single network; integration means creating a common understanding of all trends, processes, rules and regulations in organizations. An example of a violation of this common understanding is the issue of land ownership in related institutions, such as the municipality, the filing of documents, the judiciary, etc.

Due to the lack of common definitions and integrated peer-to-peer data, the applicant faces a different set of information in each organization. Shat and Pimenidis (2017) by referring to challenges facing governments in the current age emphasized the high involvement of citizens in national platforms including elections. Meanwhile they focused on the decisive roles of e-government in setting the scene and providing the necessary infrastructures for such general nation-wide contribution of people. These problems can be applicable to the current situation in Iran.

### **E-GOVERNMENT DEPLOYMENT STRATEGY**

- The first step in defining a strategy for deploying e-government is its definition. That is, policymakers need to know exactly what they are looking for. After this stage, we have to make a strategy. This strategy should include the following steps:

- Defining the structure of e-government and its key components
- Determine audience and e-government users
- Making a perspective that is easy to understand and embodies the expected results of e-government.
- Determine operational objectives that can be measured and measurable.
- Identifying the necessary policies to support the satisfactory fulfillment of e-government
- Define a way to determine the degree of organizational readiness for the deployment of e-government.
- Define the process and stages of deployment of e-government.

### **Effects of E-Government**

With the introduction of the e-government, the boundaries of the organization will become weaker and employees are partners in the organization's information and this is the partnership of the staff of the organization, the knowledge workers and there will be scholars who will be continuously learning and training and creativity and innovation will become their main task.

### **The three main areas of e-government are:**

A) E-government Management (Improving Government Work Processes):

In this area, the e-government pays particular attention to promoting the internal organization of the public sector. These measures include:

- Reduce the cost of processes
- Reduced costs by improving the output to or from the work
- Manage how the process works
- Design, monitoring and control over the operation of resources in the processes - financial, human and other. The improvement and promotion of state and private sections is among the vital dimensions of e-government and has a significant role in reduction of necessary budget and correction many financial disorders various countries are struggling with (Abu-Shanab, 2017).
- Establishing strategic communications in your area
- Linking forces and organizations, building capacity in storing various government data to increase power investigate the development and implementation of strategies and policies that guide government processes.
- Enabling the transfer of power, authority and resources in processes from existing domains to new ones.

B) The communication of citizens, citizens of electronics and electronic services this aspect deals specifically with relations between government and citizens, whether as voters or owners of interests that is legitimate by the public sector or by customers who use public services.

These can also be related to improved processes. In particular, this aspect is:

- Dialogue with citizens providing detailed information about public sector activities.

This relates to a specific type of response, which is to respond to public sector employees against their actions and decisions. Among the leading sectors in this area is the social and communication network. Social networks are an integral part of the field of e-government development. Social networks are among the most important technologies that have transformed the type and structure of communication between government sectors and citizens. And governments around the world use and take advantage of their capabilities in various ways (al-Badi, Al-Hinai & Al Salti, 2016).

- Hearing Citizens' Voices to Increase Citizen Participation in Public Sector Actions and Decisions. This aspect can be interpreted as the growth of democracy or participation.

Improvement of public services Improvement of services provided to citizens. Given dimensions such as quality, ease of access and costs. In this regard, Deventer, Klerk, and Bevan-Dye (2018) research findings, using the Technology Acceptance Model (TAM), show that ease of access and perceived utilization and perceived comparative advantage play a significant role in audience attitudes and their use of Internet services as well as their kind of behavior in using these services from the government.

### C) Creating external interactions of the electronic society

This aspect of the electronic government addresses the relationships between public institutions and other institutions, public institutions with each other, private sector companies, nonprofit organizations, and social

groups. The use of this case can also lead to improved processes. Different aspects of this aspect of e-government include:

- Better activities with business organizations
- Improving interactions between public sectors and business organizations:

These aspects involves conducting business-to-business interactions with public sector organizations, providing services to them, and improving quality, ease and reduce business costs.

- Development of social groups
- Social and economic capacity building and local social group capital

### E-GOVERNMENT CAPABILITIES AND BENEFITS

After examining the definitions of e-government, its functions and features, we are now going to examine the extent of the implementation of e-government in Iran. Because the realization of a project is in fact the result of the efforts of its specialists, first, we look at the text approved by the Supreme Administrative Council on the Electronica Government. The text of this document is as follows:

The Supreme Administrative Council at the ninety-third meeting of 15/8/1381 at the suggestion of the Management and Planning Organization of the country in order to achieve the objectives of the law of the Third Development Plan, in order to obtain accurate and timely information in various economic, social and cultural sectors through automation. Activities, accelerating the implementation of affairs, improving the provision of services to people with maximum order and accuracy, and increasing the quality of decision-making at different levels and providing non-attendance services, also, lowering costs, increasing efficiency and effectiveness in different sectors, prompting the rapid and correct flow of information between executive agencies and in line with the implementation of e-government.

E-city implementation steps: The implementation of the city is carried out in several stages, the stages of development, realization, interaction, transaction and integration of the five stages of development of such cities can be. In the implementation of the electronic city, attention should be paid to the lifestyle of the epoch and it should be noted that the traditional lifestyle for the information society will lead to contradictions and abnormalities. Therefore, a suitable model of life, considering the cultural and social conditions of the society in question, is one of the e-cities' programs. The development of e-cities has brought many gains to citizens, urban organizations and other stakeholders in the city.

### MODELS OF E-GOVERNMENT IMPLEMENTATION

Among the various e-government implementation models outlined below, some of them need to be mentioned. UN models, Laine and Lee, and the Gartner Group are being introduced in detail because of their importance.

A. United Nations Model a five-step model for implementing an e-Government has been identified in a study conducted by the United Nations in 2002. The United Nations presents this model to determine the state of

development of countries, while demonstrating their readiness for adoption of information technology. The emphasis of this model, which has an applied attitude, focuses on users, as well as the type and number of services provided to them. Identifying each of these steps is done by examining the state of electronic government in the countries of the United Nations and how it is developed in the world.

B - Laine-Lee Model: This model is based on Karen Laine, a professor at the Faculty of Urban Affairs and Jong-Woolley, a professor at the University of Nevada, Las Vegas, a business school, based on a series of managerial, organizational, and technical feasibility studies, based on the experiences of the United States. This argument comes from the state government, and model innovations are applied at both local and central government levels. According to this study, the following steps are required to create an e-government based on the Internet and digital methods.

All of this indicates the importance of establishing an e-government in each country, which itself requires the recognition of the concept of e-government as well as the benefits and qualities that it can bring to countries. Meanwhile, the implementation of e-government requires awareness of the capabilities and capacities of the countries that they intend to create and that it cannot be done without a proper feasibility analysis. In this regard, there are several models for deploying e-government that, although each of them uses their names or particular terms to introduce this process. But in the end all of them retell a concept. In this paper, while referring to several examples of these models, they are also referred to and briefly discussed briefly. Finally, they were all shown to be evolutionary and step-by-step in the implementation of e-government.

## CONCLUSION

Base on the current piece of study the development of e-government can be of a great value to various sections of the society and can introduce wider horizons for the new needs and wants continually emerged in the modern world. By getting a better understanding of the specific features of e-government and its incomparable capabilities in providing substantially more efficient services to the public, governments may decide to exert more effort to tackle the problems hindering its application by government and its acceptance by people. Care also should be taken to avoid common pitfalls on the way which might make this new phenomenon counterproductive or endanger the bright future envisioned by its true implementation. Moreover, there is no single best way of creating and development of e-government. Therefore various available models and their distinctive features should be well studied before choosing one to modify, adapt and employ in certain sociocultural context.

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