E-GOVERNMENT AND TRANSPARENCY: AN ANALYSIS OF IMPLEMENTATION IN DEVELOPING COUNTRIES

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Abstract
Electronic government (e-Government) is an important strategy in improving governance, especially in developing countries. This study analyses the relationship between e-Government implementation and increased transparency in government. Results show that e-Government helps to expand access to information, reduce corruption, and improve the efficiency of public services. However, implementation in developing countries faces various challenges, such as limited technological infrastructure, low digital literacy, and resistance to traditional bureaucratic culture. Political factors also affect the success of e-Government implementation. It takes a shared commitment and cross-sector collaboration to overcome these obstacles. With infrastructure strengthening, public education, and institutional support, developing countries can maximise the benefits of e-Government in creating more transparent and accountable governance.
Keywords: Electronic Government, Transparency, Implementation in Developing Countries.

Introduction

The rapid development of information and communication technology has encouraged various sectors, including government, to adapt to the changes. With ICT, governments can improve the quality and accessibility of public services, speed up administrative processes, and reduce operating costs. The implementation of e-government systems makes it possible to be more transparent in the delivery of information, reduce bureaucracy, and empower citizens through wider access to information and participation in decision-making processes. Initiatives such as public service portals, mobile applications, and web-based information management systems are concrete examples of how ICT can improve efficiency and accountability in government (Ajibade, 2022) .

Electronic government (e-government) is the concept of using information and communication technology (ICT) by government agencies to improve the efficiency, effectiveness, transparency, and accessibility of public services and interactions with citizens, the private sector, and other organisations. E-government encompasses a variety of digital applications and platforms designed to support administrative functions, decision-making, and information distribution more quickly and accurately (Singh & Srivastava, 2020) . By utilising technologies such as the internet, web-based applications, and digital devices, e-government aims to create governance that is more

inclusive, responsive, and facilitates public participation in the democratic process. The integration of e-government is expected to not only strengthen public trust in government agencies, but also reduce corruption and increase public accountability (Alshekh ., 2021)

Thus, electronic government (e-government) emerges as an innovative solution in improving the efficiency, effectiveness, and transparency of public administration processes. With the implementation of e-government, the government can provide more accessible public services, reduce bureaucracy, and increase interaction between government, society, and the private sector (Nurdin & Stockdale, 2021) .

In developed countries, the implementation of e-government has proven its ability to increase transparency, minimise corruption, and strengthen public trust in government. However, the implementation of e-government in developing countries still faces various challenges, ranging from limited technological infrastructure, low levels of digital literacy, to resistance to change in bureaucratic work culture. In fact, the implementation of transparency through e-government has the potential to be one way to answer the problems of corruption, poor governance, and reduce inequality in access to public services (Fuentes & Tuttle, 2021) .

On the other hand, the push for a more open and transparent government is growing amidst increasing public demands for fairness, participation and accountability. This puts developing countries in a strategic position to optimise the use of technology in creating better governance. However, the extent to which e-government contributes to transparency efforts in developing countries remains a question that has not been systematically answered (Heeks & Mundy, 2020) .

Therefore, it is important to analyse the implementation of e-government in developing countries. This research aims to understand the extent to which e-government implementation is able to improve government transparency and identify the main challenges faced by developing countries in implementing it.

Research Methods

The study in this research uses the literature method. The literature research method is an approach carried out by reviewing, analysing, and summarising various relevant literature sources, such as books, journals, scientific articles, reports, and other documents, to obtain data or information that supports a study. This method aims to understand concepts, theories, or previous findings related to the research topic, so as to build a strong theoretical foundation or framework (Cooper, 2010) ; (Creswell, 2013) . Literature research usually involves a process of identifying sources, evaluating credibility, organising information, and synthesising results to produce a rigorous and structured analysis. This method not only helps the researcher to find research gaps, but also strengthens the argument by basing it on data that has been tested through previous studies (Kitchenham, 2004) .

Results and Discussion

Electronic Government and Transparency in Developing Countries

Electronic government (e-government) is one of the strategic solutions in an effort to improve transparency, efficiency, and accessibility of public services, especially in developing countries. By utilising information and communication technology (ICT), various administrative processes and interactions between the government and the public can be carried out more quickly and openly. This step is necessary because many developing countries still face challenges such as complex bureaucracy, unequal access to information, and corrupt practices that harm the community. E-government provides an opportunity to improve government performance while strengthening public trust in state institutions (Pour, 2020) .

One important aspect of e-government implementation is transparency. Transparency allows the public to obtain accurate and open information about various government policies, budget management, and activities of government agencies. In developing countries, the problem of lack of transparency is often an obstacle in the process of development and democracy. By bringing digital technology, the government can more easily provide data openly through online portals, so that the public and related parties can oversee the running of the government and ensure the use of state resources in accordance with predetermined goals (Mahmod & Rahman, 2022) .

However, the implementation of e-government in developing countries faces various obstacles. Inadequate technological infrastructure, low levels of digital literacy, and budget constraints are often the main obstacles. Developing countries tend to have uneven internet networks, making access to e-government services difficult for people in remote areas. In addition, the low level of digital literacy makes many citizens unable to use e-government platforms optimally, so they continue to rely on conventional methods. This is a big challenge for the government to ensure that e-government does not just create a new digital divide (Al-Tameemi & Al-Mamoori ., 2021)

However, successful implementation of e-government in developing countries is not impossible. Many countries have shown significant progress in utilising e-government to improve transparency. For example, some countries implement web-based systems to track budget utilisation, tax payments, or report corruption cases. This approach not only reduces opportunities for data manipulation, but also speeds up administrative processes that previously took a long time to complete. Digitalised systems also allow the public to participate in decision-making, such as through online surveys or direct participation mechanisms (Rana et al., 2021) .

In addition, international collaboration can also be an important driver in e-government implementation. Many developing countries receive technical and financial assistance from global organisations or developed countries to build ICT infrastructure

and improve human resource capacity. This support allows developing countries to learn from best practices that developed countries have implemented in e-government. With the transfer of technology and knowledge, governments in developing countries can accelerate the digital transformation process while overcoming some of the challenges that were previously difficult to handle independently (Elbahnasawy ., 2023)

The implementation of e-government not only impacts transparency, but also encourages government accountability. With more open data, the public can more easily assess the performance of government officials and oversee public policies. In developing countries, where corrupt practices are often a problem, e-government also serves as a monitoring tool that can reduce loopholes for abuse of authority. Transparency strengthened through digital technology helps build trust between the public and the government, which ultimately contributes to a more harmonious and stable relationship (Jarrahi ., 2020)

However, for e-government to be truly effective, it requires a strong commitment from the government to adopt a culture of transparency. Many developing countries still have structural barriers in their government systems, such as resistance from officials who feel they are losing control due to data disclosure. In addition, the shift towards e-government also requires clear supporting policies, such as regulations on data security, privacy protection, and digital infrastructure management. Without adequate commitment, the implementation of these innovative technologies will only go on the surface without touching the fundamental issues (Amadi & Okeke, 2022) .

In the future, the development of e-government could be one of the main keys in accelerating the reform process in developing countries. With constantly evolving technologies, such as artificial intelligence and blockchain, there is great potential to further increase transparency and efficiency in government. However, successful implementation of e-government also requires support from the public. Digital education is an important thing that must be empowered by the government to ensure that people have sufficient capabilities to use these technologies (Alateyah & Crowder, 2020) .

Overall, e-government offers great opportunities for developing countries to overcome various challenges in governance. With transparency at its core, e-government can be an effective tool to promote accountability, reduce corruption, and increase public participation in development. While there are many obstacles to overcome, with the right commitment, collaboration and strategy, e-government has the potential to drive significant positive change in developing countries.

Barriers and Opportunities for E-Government Implementation as a Transparency Tool

The implementation of e-government as a transparency tool faces various obstacles that need to be overcome to achieve optimal results. One of the main

obstacles is the lack of adequate information and communication technology infrastructure, especially in remote areas. Limited access to the internet and technological devices is often a barrier for the community, thus reducing the effectiveness of the e-government implementation. In addition, the quality of human resources in terms of digital literacy is also a significant challenge that can hinder the implementation of this programme (Chang & Lin, 2021) .

Another obstacle is the lack of public awareness and acceptance of the concept of e-government. Many individuals still do not understand the benefits and workings of the system, and are sceptical of the transparency it offers. Distrust of digital mechanisms often stems from a lack of education on the use of technology in government, as well as concerns over personal data and cybersecurity risks. This calls for a comprehensive education and socialisation programme to build public trust (Srivastava & Teo, 2023) .

On the internal government side, resistance to change is also a significant obstacle in the implementation of e-government. Some people in the bureaucracy feel disturbed by the shift towards digital systems, as this change can shift old habits or even affect their position in the organisational structure. Bureaucratic attitudes that are resistant to innovation often slow down the development of new systems that are more transparent and efficient (Sinha & Gupta, 2023) .

Funding is also a major challenge in e-government implementation. The implementation of digital technology in government institutions requires considerable initial investment, both for infrastructure development and human resource training. In many cases, limited government budgets are often an obstacle to accelerate the development of e-government in various regions. In fact, this investment is very necessary to ensure the sustainable operationalisation of the system (Nair, 2023) .

Amidst these obstacles, there are great opportunities that can be utilised from the implementation of e-government as a transparency tool. One of them is the increasing desire of the public to monitor government more proactively. The digital age allows citizens to monitor government policies and activities more easily, putting pressure on state institutions to be more open and accountable. This awareness can be a momentum to strengthen e-government systems (Waheeb, 2022) .

Technological advances are also a great opportunity for e-government implementation. Developments in big data, artificial intelligence, and digital security systems provide the basis for implementing a more sophisticated and responsive system. Cloud computing technology, for example, enables more efficient management of government data, while at the same time facilitating data access for the public. Thus, the government can optimise this technology to increase transparency in its operations (Denhardt, 2023) .

Technology not only speeds up bureaucratic processes, but also enables the government to reach more citizens effectively. E-government provides opportunities

for equitable access to public services, especially for people in remote areas. With digital integration, previously hard-to-reach services, such as filing legal documents or accessing public information, can be done more easily and cheaply. This supports the government's efforts in creating wider inclusion (Waheeb, 2022).

In addition, the growing trend of digitalisation in society is an opportunity that should not be missed. Younger generations who are already familiar with technology can be the most adaptive group to e-government, thus providing great potential for its successful implementation. The government can utilise the capacity of this generation as a driver as well as a partner in socialising digital services to a wider layer of society (Nair, 2023).

The implementation of e-government also opens up opportunities to create a government system that is free from corrupt practices. Data transparency and digitally recorded process flows minimise the space for manipulation or abuse of authority. With tighter supervision through digital systems, the government can build better public trust in state institutions (Sinha & Gupta, 2023).

Overcoming obstacles and capitalising on opportunities in e-government implementation requires long-term planning, cross-sectoral cooperation, and strong commitment from all parties. A combination of strategies that include infrastructure strengthening, public education, technology development, and close supervision will be the key to successful implementation of e-government as a transparency tool. Ultimately, e-government has great potential to deliver a more effective, fair, and open government for all elements of society.

Strategies for Improving the Effectiveness of E-Government Implementation in Developing Countries

In facing the challenges of the digital era, developing countries are increasingly recognising the importance of e-government implementation as an effort to improve public service efficiency, transparency, and citizen participation. However, the effectiveness of e-government implementation often faces various obstacles, including inadequate infrastructure, limited human resources, and low levels of digital literacy among the public. To overcome these obstacles, an integrated and sustainable strategy is needed to ensure that e-government can run effectively (Srivastava & Teo, 2023).

A crucial first step is to build a reliable and wide-ranging technology infrastructure. Many developing countries still face the obstacle of limited internet access in remote areas. Therefore, the government must invest in the development of communication networks that reach all regions, including rural areas. Strong infrastructure is the main foundation so that the e-government system can be accessed and utilised by all levels of society without exception (Chang & Lin, 2021).

In addition to infrastructure, strengthening people's digital literacy is also an important element in this strategy. The government needs to organise special

educational programmes, either through hands-on training or digital campaigns, which aim to improve people's ability to interact with e-government systems. This programme should not only target the younger generation but also older age groups, considering that most digital services are designed for all citizens regardless of age (Alateyah & Crowder, 2020) .

Human resource capacity building within government institutions should also be prioritised. Developing country governments often lack an IT-savvy workforce capable of designing, managing and integrating digital systems with public services. For this reason, competency development programmes and training for civil servants in technology need to be expanded, especially to improve technical expertise, analytical skills, and understanding of data security (Amadi & Okeke, 2022) .

Data security cannot be ignored in the implementation of e-government. With the increasing use of electronic systems to manage public information, the risk of cyber-attacks and data leakage is becoming higher. Therefore, the government must ensure that e-government systems are equipped with strong security protocols and adequate privacy protection. Investment in encryption technology, firewalls, as well as digital fraud prevention mechanisms should be taken seriously to avoid potential losses (Jarrahi ., 2020)

In addition, e-government implementation strategies should also include aspects of transparency and accountability. The designed system should allow the public to access relevant information, oversee the management of resources, and provide feedback on the services provided. Thus, e-government is not only a platform to facilitate public affairs, but also an important instrument in encouraging government transparency (Elbahnasawy ., 2023)

Public participation in e-government development needs to be given more attention. The government should involve citizens in designing and testing the implemented digital system, so that the results obtained really fit their needs. This approach not only increases public trust in e-government, but also ensures that the system built is inclusive, responsive, and appropriate (Rana et al., 2021) .

Ultimately, the success of e-government implementation in developing countries depends on strong political commitment from the government. The government must adhere to a long-term vision and integrate e-government development into national strategic policies. With close collaboration between various parties, including the private sector, academia, and the general public, e-government can be an effective tool to accelerate bureaucratic reform and improve the overall quality of public services.

Conclusion

Electronic government (e-Government) plays an important role in improving transparency in developing countries. By utilising information and communication technology, e-Government can improve government efficiency, minimise corrupt

practices, and provide wider access to public information. However, e-Government implementation faces challenges such as limited digital infrastructure, lack of technological literacy among citizens and government officials, and resistance to change in traditional bureaucratic systems.

In developing countries, e-Government implementation is often uneven due to differences in technological and economic capacity between regions. While some countries have successfully integrated e-Government to support transparency, many still struggle with technical barriers and a less adaptive work culture. In addition, political factors also play a significant role in the success or failure of implementation, especially where vested interests prevent a more open system. To ensure the sustainability and effectiveness of e-Government in improving transparency, developing countries need to focus on improving technological infrastructure, empowering human resources, as well as digital education campaigns that involve the public at large. A collaborative approach between governments, the private sector and international organisations can provide the necessary support to overcome key obstacles. With a shared commitment to maximise the potential of e-Government, developing countries can create more transparent and accountable governance.

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