



Responsiveness to E-Government Developments with its Causal Factors: An Empirical Study Across Asia

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Abstract

E-government allows governments to use innovative information and communication technologies (ICTs)- specifically web-based internet applications - so that citizens and businesses are able to conveniently access government information and services. It is also directed towards improving quality of services as well as encouraging participation in democratic institutions and processes. This paper tries to examine the development of e-government initiatives across a cross section of Asian countries. Towards this end it utilises tools like correlation coefficients, pooled regression and panel regression analyses. The results suggest that factors like economic development and transparency of information may play an important role in the effectiveness of e-government systems.

Keywords

E-Government; Correlation Coefficient; Pooled Regression; ANOVA; Panel regression.

The evolution of Information Technology (IT) has majorly impacted citizens' interaction with their governments; this in turn has affected their expectations from the government (Dodd 2000). While e-commerce has resulted in changes in dealings on the private sector, e-government has done the same for next generation developments in the public sector. Governments in different parts of the world are actively introducing e-government initiatives as a way of reducing costs, providing better services to the citizens and raising effectiveness of delivery at local, regional, and national levels. As many as 179 out of 192 UN members have reported on strategy development for implementation of e-government systems; naturally e-government has emerged as one of the top priorities for governments throughout the world (UN 2008).

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E-government has been variously described as Electronic Government, Electronic Governance, Digital Government, Online Government, e-Gov, etc. (Gronlund 2004). There are many definitions for the term e-government, thereby reflecting the priorities of the government in its strategies. According to Fang (2002), e-government allows governments to use innovative information and communication technologies (ICTs)- specifically web-based internet applications - so that citizens and businesses are able to conveniently access government information and services. It is also directed towards improving quality of services as well as encouraging participation in democratic institutions and processes. E-government is not necessarily only about businesses and processes. The focus is on using ICTs for transforming structures, operations and the culture of government (Alshchri and Drew 2010). According to the OECD, e-government can be an important vehicle for any kind of reform process since it serves as a tool of reform, regenerates interest in public management reform, focusses on internal inconsistencies and realigns commitment to good governance objectives (OECD 2003). According to the World Bank (2001) e-government is the system of information and communication technologies owned or operated by the government which transform relations with citizens, the private sector and/or other government agencies in order to encourage empowerment of the citizens, raise delivery of services, improve accountability, increase transparency and increase efficiency of the government (Nodu 2004).

Many countries around the world have launched e-government initiatives with a view to effective delivery of services to the citizens. However there has been a noticeable difference in the extent to which such initiatives have been implemented across different nations. While the developed countries have expectedly taken far more effective strides in this direction, the experience in the developing world has left a lot to be desired. With this in mind it was intended that the present work would examine how the development in e-government in the 47 Asian countries chosen for the study is reflected across the parameters employed for this purpose. It is hoped that the policy implications arising from such a study will help to fine tune the e-government interventions in this nations, thus facilitating more effective implementation.

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