



Research Journal of Social Sciences

ISSN: 1815-9125

JOURNAL home page: <http://www.aensiweb.com/RJSS>

2015 Special; 8(5): pages 9-13.

Published Online 16 January 2015.

Research Article

Realistic Agendas for Future of E-Government Implementation in Malaysia

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Received: 11 October 2014; Revised: 21 November 2014; Accepted: 25 December 2014; Available online: 16 January 2015

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ABSTRACT

In line with the development of functional diversity in providing services to the community, the government has applied the use of ICT in the public sector to improve the capacity and quality of public sector services. The phenomenon of e-government is not only able to change the way public sector service delivery, but also a similar change pattern in electronic government and the community. Through the services provided, the community can take full advantage of using e-government. Along with the development of electronic government, various attempts have been made to encourage people to use this application. Unfortunately, the number of Malaysians consumer use electronic government applications is still not achieving the optimum level of usage. Although efficient service innovation is seen, but the efficiency depends on its acceptance among people. Use of this innovation on a large scale is very important so that the electronic government policy objectives will be achieved. For that reason, this research seeks to determine the effectiveness of the application of e-government at the local level in the Municipal Council Seberang Perai (MPSP), Penang, Malaysia. The study involved users of services to be provided electronically in MPSP. This research has been made by using mixed methods, quantitative and qualitative in studying the effectiveness of e-government implementation. From this study, the researchers aim that e-government system being used optimally by society and civil servants, but improvement is needed to rectify the effectiveness of this system in local government administration which is the Municipal Council Seberang Perai (MPSP).

Keywords: awareness and acceptances, effect of implementation, e-government, technology readiness

INTRODUCTION

The role of information technology in supporting the operation and management system in government institutions is increasingly important. Since 2000, the government has introduced more innovative public services through the use of electronic tools. Electronic government is giving a great influence on policy implementation and policy of the e-Government. This is because through the role of electronic services it is able to accelerate a variety of everyday affairs. Since the era of information and

communication technology (ICT), the community began to use the application of information technology in recording all the information and data by the official government. These methods seen as an alternative that can produce work effectively and efficiently and at the same time manage the administration of a country. Starting with the application of information technology in implementing the recording of daily affairs, information technology taking steps to widen its function as a medium for the dissemination of information online to the public in the era of

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globalization [1]. With the significant development in the field that has led to various changes based on e-Government, the aspect of information into a very valuable commodity and effectiveness of the delivery of information is very important. This is because it not only save time and reduce the costs, it even conventional services through counter and telephone services.

In the era of globalization, the Malaysian government has devised various agendas for the nation to equally compete with developed countries, so they are not considered to be lagging behind in this era of globalization. The Government has introduced electronic government, which aims to increase the productivity and effectiveness of Public Service to the pursuit of excellence in services through the use of IT and multimedia. Malaysia also expects ICT development will have a positive impact on developing countries in term of economic, political, social and governance of the state itself.

Society is now increasingly vulnerable to globalization that demanded the government able and willing to offer better services to them. Therefore, the government should work towards is to introduce new rules or at least improving existing mechanisms in providing the best service through enhanced service delivery system the best. The importance of effective policy delivery system has attracted the attention of government and is one of the main strategies to stimulate economic development and to make information technology (ICT) as one pulse development. This study will focus on the implementation of e-Government and e-PBT application as a platform for people to have access to official information from the government. In addition, e-Government and e-PBT is seen as an alternative to become the bridge in the digital divide between the government, the urban and rural population and to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of e-Government administration.

2. Problem Statements:

Local Authorities (PBT) are one of the three levels of government in the form of federalism system. PBT is under the administration of the State that is, a region-based administration system. System Information and Communications Technology (ICT) are necessary to the Local Authorities (PBT), or e-PBT that aims to improve administrative efficiency and service to the community as the finest in the area. In fact, the existence of e-PBT is a continuation of the establishment of the Electronic Government (e-Government). The objective of e-Government is to improve the facilities, access and quality of interaction between citizens, businesses, and government. In addition, the objective of e-Government is also to increase the level of computerization of government agencies at the federal level and ne-Govern entry. Overall, the e-Government is a platform for the government to be

more responsive to the demands of the people based on "business-oriented".

However, in terms of the implementation of the on-line application services by residents, it still at unsatisfactory level. Based on news commented by Datuk Seri Najib Tun Razak as a Deputy Prime Minister at that time, he described the level of computer usage among people in e-Government is still at a low level at just 18 per cent. This thing happens because there are some challenges or constraints for some people to use these applications. There are a number of people are still not aware of the advantages and benefits that will be gained if they choose to apply e-Government as a medium to interact with public service agencies compared to manually which is through the service counter or correspondence. According Zahri, among the issues or constraints that hinder the use of e-government among Malaysians is like accessibility and ICT infrastructure, security and data difficulties, behavior and consumer awareness, performance and capabilities of the Internet or systems, as well as lack of help support provided.

In addition, the effectiveness of e-government incompetence, also caused by households who cannot afford to have a computer. However, there are also households who have computers but they do not have a broadband network to surf the internet. Currently, Malaysia recorded broadband penetration rate of only 25% compared with developed countries such as the Republic of Korea 95%, Singapore 88%, Japan 64% and the US 60%. This percentage shows that Malaysians are still far behind in the use of network bandwidth and bandwidth limitation is also a reason for Malaysians difficulties to get online information.

Although the other alternative for internet access has been found with the broadband penetration rate of 25%, it has an impact, especially to the younger generation in the era of globalization in Malaysia. They explore cyberspace with the use of broadband to access the Internet, but broadband access is still at a low level satisfactory because access will be influenced by the area occupied by the web browser. Apart from that, the knowledge of IT and computer skills is still at a low level. This is because there are some people remain living in poverty and it proved that they are still involved in ICT illiterate. This shows how the effectiveness of e-Government services if there are still people who have a low level of basic education in ICT. This is because not all people have a high knowledge of online services, and their average is composed of a group of people over the age of 50 years old or pension [3].

Dynamic changes in the global field also affect the development of the public sector in our country, namely the issue of the efficiency and effectiveness of electronic services in Malaysia is still a famous topic. These problems include services that do not reach the target, there is no transparency in the

delivery of information, communication processes are limited and slow and dissemination of information does not apply across the board. This contradicts the statement Chief Secretary to the Government Tan Sri Mohd Sidek Hassan, that the latest report of the Institute of Management Development shows that the quality of public services increased from 53 percent in 2005 to 57 percent in 2006 and the International Management Report that shows that the quality of public services increased by index effectiveness of 79 percent for 2005 to 81 percent in 2006 [2]. The other problem is also because of security issues in e-Government services are still less effective. This includes payment security, identity of users and others. They are very concerned about safety and the law can protect them from credit card fraud and dissemination of personal information.

Quality of public services continues to become the target of complaints by some people, especially in terms of issue of the delivery system. Although more than 20 years ago public employees absorbed by various policies, systems and slogans such as Punch Card, Clean, Efficient Trust Policy, Implementation of Islamic values and others, but still high public expectations for public services in line with the development of information and communication technologies (ICT) such as the implementation of e-Government, said to be capable to improve the overall quality of public services [3].

3. Research Objectives:

There are various matters identified by the occurrence of the problems described in this study. Among the questions are:

- I. To investigate the public awareness of the development of e-Government existence in Seberang Perai Municipal Council (MPSP)
- II. To investigate the application of e-Government that can be used by the local community
- III. To investigate the e-Government functions as an intermediary medium of information between the government and citizen

4. Literature Review:

E-government:

E-Government is one of the government's plans to transform public services in Malaysia. This transformation occurs in a relationship either internally or externally and in the use of information communications technology (ICT) modern. Therefore, the letter "e" is placed at the beginning of the word to denote the transformation [5]. Roy [6], interpreted the e-Government as one of the several definitions of innovation or change continuously in the process of delivering services that involve the participation of the people and processes in governance. This process will undergo a transformation in the relationship between internal and external parties with the use of information

technology, especially the internet. Based on these definitions, he put into four dimensions that are the process of change to service delivery, security, transparency and reliability. It is also supported by Amorretti [7], who said that the use of e-Government is actually to improve the efficiency, effectiveness, transparency and accountability of the government. While the United Nations [4], defines e-Government as the application of ICT to transform the relationship either internally or externally. The use of ICT, especially internet technology as a tool to make a better government in providing their services to all parties is better in providing their services for those who need it. The usage then can optimize the delivery system and the participation of all sides consistently to meet their needs and requirements.

Technology Readiness:

Raha *et al.* [8] focuses on the evaluation of the implementation of the e-Government project blueprint document based e-Government implementation in Malaysia and e-readiness index. The study assesses the extent to which various factors delivery channels (terminal in the office, phone, fax machine, kiosk, Internet access and interactive television) and to access the application by various segments of society as well as spending within budget. The results from a pilot study, shows that e-Government applications is still in its simplicity. Phase factor e-readiness of the public sector is still low and there is a limited access channel to the terminal in government offices and kiosk machine. The study found that factors of credit card payment transactions, use of language such as Malay and English and the facilities for people with disabilities is still low. Therefore, the achievement of e-government applications is still not comprehensive at all levels of society.

Awareness and Acceptances:

Though Malaysia has been introducing e-government system utilization rate and revenue, but it still not be at a satisfactory level and can be proud of. This thing happens because there are some challenges or constraints for people to use this application. Some people are still not aware of the benefits and advantages to be gained if they choose to apply e-Government as a medium to interact with public agencies compared to the manual method, namely through the service counter or letter correspondence. The issues or constraints that hinder the e-Government usage among Malaysians is like accessibility and ICT infrastructure, security and data difficulties, behavior and consumer awareness, performance and Internet capability or system, and support that is available.

Factors like no computers, no Internet connection and ICT in an area (rural areas), causing people dealing with issues such as economic development, less knowledge, people are not aware

of the existence of the latest technology, people do not usually use the latest technology and all that are the reasons why technology skills among local citizens is still low. The impact on people is they do not get benefits from the development of e-government application system. In fact, the last study also recognizes the digital divide is between the cause failure of implementation and acceptance of e-government applications among Malaysians. Farouk [9] in his study states that, limited access to ICT facilities such as telephone lines and Internet connections in rural areas is one of the three main factors of the public reluctant for using e-government. According to Kaur *et al.* [10], among the factors that influence e-Government adoption such as shortage of cyber laws, availability of services and the existence of the digital divide for individuals who live in rural areas. Ahmad [11] also stated that one of the challenges that will affect the implementation of e-Government is the digital divide. On that basis, to ensure that all citizens have the opportunity to use this service, the government tried to improve and upgrade the ICT facilities for public access. Various facilities have been developed for Internet access.

Effects of Implementation:

Measurement of e-Government implementation is based on projects that have been implemented by the government. There is some opinion about how to measure the delivery of e-Government implementation. According to Muhammad and Mokhtar [12], they state that to make an assessment, the important thing is to know what will be assessed. According to them, in e-Government the problem that may be assessed, including the selection of e-Government services, whether appropriate or not, or whether or not the service. Next, whether the implementation of e-Government is correct or otherwise, or to meet the objectives or not. While for customers or users, whether they are satisfied or not with the services also provided.

E-Government application process can also be seen as a process of transformation in the public service in Malaysia. According Hodgets, this change occurs suddenly, not smoothly and continuously. According to him, this process of change occurs in three dimensions, the first in which it occurs from a set state to another. He was referring to before and after the application of e-Government. Secondly, it is seen to cause change. For example, the existence of the application of e-Government is due to the proliferation of information and communication technologies (ICT) are demanding reforms in public administration and claims from external parties such as rural people looking for convenience in the delivery of services more efficient and effective. The trial was due to the impact of those changes. For example, the use of e-Government applications have seen changes in work culture of the public service of

a traditional way of working, that is the use of paper to use the Internet as the main medium, especially in the portals of ministries.

Application of ICT has also widened functions on small industries and temperate (SMI). According to Tengku Azmi [13], one alternative is to encourage SME business growth through the use of ICT in all levels of management. According to the statistic released by the domain registration my. Domain Re-Governmentistry (MYNIC), a body that oversees the domain registration in Malaysia, the number of registrations business websites in Malaysia is encouraging the domain of 93260 over the next two decades, from 2005 to 2007.

5. Methodology:

In this cross-sectional survey, the data will be collected from Seberang Perai Municipal Council (MPSP) distribution of questionnaires and the data will be analyzed and interpreted through Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS), version 19.0 to determine the relationship involved. Besides, this research is a form of research from a mixed method. Mixed Method Approach aims to assess a program that has been implemented in the community. The first step is to collect qualitative data in the needs assessment to determine what questions need to be addressed. This is followed by the design of instruments for measuring program impact. The instruments then used to compare certain results for both before and after the program implemented. From this comparison, follow-up interviews were conducted to determine why the program does not work. This mixed methods study is often found in the assessment of long-term projects (Refer to study the effects of the long-term program).

6. Conclusion:

A study on the application of e-Government in Seberang Perai Municipal Council (MPSP) implemented as an alternative to facilitate people to MPSP administrative information and services online provided by MPSP. The use of alternative focuses on the establishment of electronic government in line with the government's objective to reduce paper usage in business administration. For the success of this application, the support from the public through their involvement in various programs run by MPSP is really encouraged. Therefore, the public who lives under the administration of MPSP should be sensitive to the transformation performed by MPSP by frequently visit to the official portal MPSP from time to time. This application is important to inform people about the facilities and activities carried out by MPSP in that area.

Acknowledgments:

No acknowledgment.

Authors' Contribution:

Siti Nur Illani developed the ideas and had an important role in the results and materials section. Dr. Abd Rahim performed the discussion and the arrangement of the section.

Financial Disclosure:

No conflict of interest.

Funding/Support:

No financial assistance was obtained from any organization or company. The project was funded by the authors.

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