

Guest Editorial Preface

Special Issue on Public Service Innovations through Information and Communication Technologies: Theory and Practice

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Over 15 years of electronic government (e-government) research has witnessed the strategic and innovative use of information and communication technologies (ICT) to change public administration practices. These reforms have been found in both developed and developing countries at all levels of government. These innovations have shown real challenges in realizing the potential benefits of e-government for public service delivery. The objective this Special Issue on “Public Service Innovations through ICT: Theory and Practice,” is to explore public service innovations through ICT use in government, by examining theoretical and empirical e-government research studies on developed and developing countries demonstrating public service innovations. Public service innovations are extremely important given the constraints that governments face, with lack of resources and a need to provide greater outreach to citizens. The range of papers in this special issue examines topics such as crowdsourcing to channel choice management. These papers show the importance of citizens for public service innovations through ICT, something that should be considering when governments choose to adopt new information systems.

There are seven papers in this special issue on public service innovation through ICT. The first paper by Zheng and Manoharan examines the influence of government capacity on e-services. With data from 146 municipalities in New Jersey, their research finds that government capacity, specifically administrative capacity, positively affects government performance in e-services. The second paper by Zulfa, Klievink, de Reuver, and Janssen examines collaboration between government, the private sector and citizens. This paper aims to synthesize e-government maturity models and platform development models to act as a guide to move from government-centered public service improvement to collaborative innovations by government, businesses and citizens. The third paper by BeBe and Bing examines the antecedents of user participation in crowdsourcing and importance of online community involvement in local public administration. The paper contributes with potential implications and recommendations for local public management to achieve effective services delivery in developing countries through crowdsourced work. Roy, in the fourth article, examines the Canadian public sector’s efforts to devise mobile service capacities predicated upon efficiency, engagement, and innovation, and how such capacities are intertwined with both the advent of Gov 2.0 and the inertia of traditional public administration. Through three typologies of public sector governance,

Roy seeks to better understand these tensions and formulate fresh insights into the sorts of reforms that governments must envision in order to leverage mobility as a basis for not only more efficient service delivery but also wider opportunities for public engagement and service innovation. The fifth article by Clark, Zingale, Logan, and Brudney examines crowdsourcing. Their paper provides an overview of the concept of crowdsourcing, gives examples of its use in the private and public sectors, and develops a framework for how governments can begin to strategize and think about crowdsourcing to solve problems when engaging with citizens. The authors conclude with important considerations about how governments should strategize their crowdsourcing efforts. The sixth paper by Nanyang explores social media applications (SMAs) that have increasingly being used by the public sector to interactively communicate with citizens, businesses, and other stakeholders, but we know little about what drives their adoption and usage. In this paper the author hypothesize that SMA adoption is jointly shaped by top management characteristics, organizational attributes, and interorganizational and environmental factors. The final paper by Madsen and Kraemmergaard examine citizens' use of e-government channels. Channel choice studies have found that citizens use multiple channels in a service encounter and e-government channels supplement, rather than replace traditional channels. These authors offer contributions to the channel choice literature and recommendations on multichannel management to practitioners.

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