Electronic government research is constantly evolving and some notable developments have been made in theory and practice. This special issue integrates literature from various disciplines and angles to provide a comprehensive view of electronic services in the public sector. The papers included in this issue cover an assortment of fundamental e-government topics, such as technology acceptance, systems development, IS success, IS security and digital divide. The included studies use diverse methods to explore e-government services. These methods include case studies, action research and quantitative surveys. This issue includes six papers that provide an international perspective on e-government initiatives for both government-to-constituent and government-to-government initiatives.

The first paper “Evaluating Public Programs Implementation: An Exploratory Case Study” by Sorrentino and Passerini combines policy studies and organization theory to explore the evaluation of system implementation. The authors employ a case study to enhance the existing literature on implementation evaluation by providing theory-grounded perspective on an e-government project in Milan. This study addresses a current gap in the literature as no attempt has been made to-date to evaluate the effects of this intervention. The findings support the need for an evaluation approach where interdisciplinary information can improve both the resulting system and the development process.

The next paper by Sarantis, Charalabidis, and Askounis, entitled “A Goal-Driven Management Approach Based on Knowledge Exploitation for e-Government Projects,” highlights the strong influence of project management on IS success. In particular, the authors propose a conceptual model for e-Government project management. This model addresses fundamental project management elements, such as goals, milestones, and deliverables that can be adapted to cover a plethora of diverse e-government projects. The authors present a knowledge base or template of standard project components that can be used to improve management decision making during e-government project development. The proposed model is beneficial to both public officials and practitioners, who can use the knowledge base to incorporate lessons learned from past projects into current endeavours in a more systematic manner. These enhancements to project management will significantly increase the likelihood of e-government project success.

The following paper is by Dunkerley and Tejay and is entitled “Theorizing Information Security Success: Towards Secure E-Government.” It explores IS security within
the organizational context. Given the growing prevalence of electronic initiatives in the public sector, information security is imperative to the success of e-government. This paper identifies fundamental components of information system security success that can be used to predict the success of information security initiatives. The value of the proposed model is evaluated in the e-government context. The authors use the findings to organize a notable amount of IS security literature.

The fourth paper, entitled “Harnessing Interagency Collaboration in Interorganizational Systems Development: Lessons Learned from an E-government Project for Trade and Transport Facilitation,” by Phuaphanthong, Bui, and Keretho, identifies the primary critical success factors for creating and maintaining interagency teamwork in a major, interorganizational IS development project. To identify these critical success factors, the author used an action research approach. The paper reveals the results of a four-year long action research project in Thailand that required cooperation from over forty entities in both the public and private sectors. Such a large-scale project has numerous implications for practice and theory. The author recommends a stepwise approach for instituting interagency collaboration.

The paper entitled “G2C Adoption in Malaysia: Trust, Risk and Political Self-Efficacy,” by Hussein, Mohamed, Ahlan, Mahmud, and Aditiawarman, explores government-to-citizen (G2C) interaction using an integrated framework centered on the technology acceptance model. In addition to technology adoption, the authors posit that factors such as trust, risk and political efficacy have a pertinent impact on citizens’ intentions to use G2C systems. This paper integrates fundamental IS constructs with a popular political science construct to present a comprehensive model of e-government adoption. The authors test the proposed model with Malaysian citizens. The results have several interesting implications for research and practice.

The sixth and final paper, entitled “The Same Wine but in New Bottles: Public E-services Divide and Low Citizens’ Satisfaction: An Example from Lebanon,” is written by Harfouche. This paper explores the e-services divide, its antecedents, and its impact on low satisfaction. To test the relationships among the aforementioned variables, the author administers a survey to over 300 Lebanese citizens. The results indicate that contrary to predictions by the Lebanese government, introduction of the virtual channel of services delivery system will create a public e-services divide. This divide goes beyond an access and skill divide to also account for the differences in citizen willingness to use e-government services. This difference results in lower citizen satisfaction with government.

In summary, this issue incorporates e-government advancements in theory and practice from across the globe. The papers integrate constructs from information systems and referent disciplines, such as psychology and public administration, to enhance the existing e-government literature. These studies utilize diverse methodologies to explore the evolution of e-service initiatives in the public sector. Hence, this special issue includes comprehensive models of e-government phenomena that provide a cross-cultural tool for improving e-government initiatives.

Enjoy!

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