Introduction

GENERAL INTRODUCTION ON GLOBAL INFORMATION AND DIGITAL COMMUNICATION REVOLUTION IN MALAYSIA

One of the fundamental questions concerning the future of Malaysia’s national “e” agenda is how to reform the state institutions to achieve good ICT governance and better delivery of services. It is acknowledged that good ICT governance model depends critically on the state actors’—be it public, private, or civil society—abilities to utilise information and communication technologies (ICTs) by making use of networks, and engaging within a multiple level of interactions (Norris, 2005). The call by Government policymakers for widen and more direct involvement in improving network governance is coincided with the converging trend of multimedia, broadcasting and telecommunications industry, which affects virtually every single stakeholder of these sectors. Facilitated by the convergence scheme, all stakeholders are able to interact, collaborate, and practising of what is known as the self-regulatory regime, progressively evolving and come out from the traditional or old regime associated with unilateral policy directives from the Government. The fundamental principles of this new regulatory framework was based on the values of transparency, technology, neutral, and self-regulation, which covers the scope of economic, technical, consumer, and social regulation (MCMC, 2014).

The concept of ‘policy community’ involves the process which allow members to share resources and experience through the ‘complex web of interactions as well as participate in the process of policy making and refinements (Humphreys, 1994). The outcome of this is the emergence of networked participatory interactions (Calista & Melitski, 2007) as well as a number of ‘policy networks’ domains. Such ‘policy networks’ may be defined as a (more or less) structured cluster of public and private actors as well as civil communities, who are stakeholders in a specific domain of policy and possess resources which allow them to affect policy outcomes. Theoretically, the workings of policy networks are critical for promoting the diffusion of policy innovations. There is a view (as argued some of the chapters) that Malaysia is fast becoming a ‘network state’—where different parts of the policy processes are linked together with a high speed or converging multimedia and information infrastructure, and being further extended to a regional as well as global level. Consequently, network ICT governance is not based on government-like structures that operate on a rather authoritative basis, but the political power within the policy setting and processes is exercised by sharing and pooling resources through establishing policy networks. For Malaysia, through the new and self-regulatory regime, the practice of policy networks of multiple stakeholders are crucial because these are perceived to be better situated in understanding the local situation and local dynamics relevant to the promotion of ICT
governance whilst propelling Malaysia as the global communication and multimedia (CM) hub. Thus, riding upon the convergence of ICT – particularly through the Internet and the World Wide Web, there shall be an ever expanding mode of engagement from different actors in the policy process, seeking more autonomy and participation.

CONTEXTUAL BACKGROUND

The ICT Evolution in Malaysia: Historical Overview of Malaysia’s National IT Agenda

Malaysia’s telecommunication infrastructure development can be traced back to the late 1970s when it was geared largely to support primary sources of basic telecommunications services – namely the telephone, telegraph, and telex service. The then Department of Telecommunication was the agency that managed the data communication services, i.e., approval of leasing, mainly for commercial or private sector use such as banks or airline system. The Fourth Malaysia Plan (1981-1985) precipitated the establishment of the Public Data Network (PDN) and gradual change of the communication network from an analogue to a digital base. Eventually, various services were introduced including MAYPAC (Malaysian Packet Switched Network) and MAYCIS (Malaysian Circuit Switched Network), Data Transmission on the Switched Telephone Network (DATEL) which were all oriented towards global access at greater speeds of data transmission capability (Wijasuriya, 1998). The 1980s also saw the establishment of Malaysian Institute of Microelectronic Systems (MIMOS) – a government R & D facility whose initial focus on stimulating the microelectronic industry has since expanded greatly in terms of providing the backbone network for access to the Internet or the information superhighways. MIMOS developed RangKoM (Rangkaian Komputer Malaysia - Malaysian Computer Network) in 1987, which paved the way for linking a number of institutions. In 1987, Telekom Malaysia (TM) was corporatized in respond to the rapid advances in telecommunications technology; however, at that time the Government was still influencing important policy decisions, i.e. the approval of Dasar Telekomunikasi Negara (DTN) in May 1994 which provides the blueprint for policy guidelines for the development of the telecommunications infrastructure of the country for the period 1994-2020. To exploit the most of information revolution, Malaysia’s own MEASAT-1 (Malaysia East Asia Satellite) launched in January 1996 further marked an exciting journey which supplemented the already improved infrastructure such as a fiber optic cable network nation-wide, optical fiber cables (including those laid under the seabed connecting Sarawak and Sabah), the introduction of the Integrated Services Digital Network (ISDN), the Asynchronous Transfer Mode (ATM), microwave, satellite and other key technologies.

The construct of the ICT-led agenda during the end of 1980s followed the political representation model, that is the activity of making citizen’s voices, opinions, and perspectives “present” in the public policy making processes (Dovi, 2008) in which the members are not only politicians and political party members. In fact, this was encapsulated by the formation of the Association of the Computer Industry Malaysia (PIKOM) in 1986 which facilitated the development of an IT culture through its programmes and activities. The establishment of the National Information Technology Council (NITC) chaired by the Prime Minister further underscores the importance of the entire IT industry in overall national development and government intent in guiding future directions in the interest of the nation (NITC, 2014). NITC, despite has been shrunked in size as well as solely represented by the key bureaucrats (as opposed to its diversified members in its early formation), functions as a think tank and advises government on IT development in the country. It has initiated the formulation of a national IT
plan which will identify key programmes geared towards transforming the nation into a knowledge based society. While driving the agenda of ICT for the country, the NITC in its early formation comprises of members from industry and NGOs as well as prominent experts among academicians that reflect some semblance of Castell (2006; 2005)’s notion of “network society.”

Government agencies and industry partners around the world are met with the challenge of developing effective governance framework identify new opportunities; create innovative solutions and most importantly keeping up with the ever changing technology innovations centred on digital convergence. Moreover, during the 1990s, the growth of the Internet and an increasingly awareness of the implications of convergence of ICT, new media and telecommunications, led to a new global policy discourse involving various countries led by the US and the European engaged in a scores of international agencies such as WTO, and its predecessor organisation - the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATT) (Humphreys & Simpson, 2005, pp. 149-169).

Policymakers have come to the painful realisation that the governance issues associated with cyberspace are not merely academic but also affecting the political and policy processes. One of the fundamental issues concerning the future governance is how to reform its institutions and working mechanisms in order to boost effectiveness by concentrating on offering citizens more participatory roles as networked actors (Calista & Melitski, 2007) thereby achieve good ICT governance.

Malaysia has not been spared of this. The two initial overarching initiatives are the Malaysia’s Multimedia Super Corridor (MSC) which began in 1994 and the National IT Agenda (NITA) which came immediately after, but is more encompassing as it envisages the entire nation (Azzman, 2000). The concept of an intelligent city has been intensely debated across various fields such as geography, urban planning, and sociology, usually in relation to debates on the knowledge economy (Agar, Green, & Harvey, 2002; Gad, et al., 2012; Komninos, 2011; Massey & Wield, 2003; Saxenien, 2006). The making of intelligent cities embraces different configurations of spatial and digital factors that are realized in various forms, such as business incubators, R&D centers, science parks, technopoles, and innovation centres (Castells & Hall, 1994; Komninos, 2011; Massey & Wield, 2003). From the state’s viewpoint, the realization of the MSC project is akin to interpreting a vision for a new Malaysia. Interestingly, MSC – after a decade since its formation, has now evolved and expanded into a number of cybercities across few states in Malaysia, seeks consistently for dual role objectives of not just an intelligent city or property development but at the same time symbolizes the country’s effort to embrace new future with the Malaysian’s mould. Mahathir Mohamad (former Prime Minister) has summed this up in his speech at the opening of the Multimedia Conference on the Multimedia Super Corridor in Kuala Lumpur on August 1, 1996:

_I see the MSC as a global facilitator of the information age, a carefully constructed mechanism to enable mutual enrichment of companies and countries using leading technologies and the borderless world. Other plans may sound similar because they use “IT,” “Cyber,” or “Multimedia” to market one development or another. But we are not adding new facilities to existing ones; we are building and installing the latest on a huge 15-by-50 km greenfield site. We are not just upgrading. We are talking here about something much more far-reaching. We are talking about changing the way we live and work within the MSC. This special area will be a global testbed for the new roles of government, new cyberlaws and guarantees, collaborations between government and companies, companies and companies, new delivery of healthcare, and applications of new technologies [italics added]. We are taking a single-minded approach to developing the country using the_
new tools offered by the information age. The MSC will be the R&D centre for the information based industries, to develop new codes of ethics in a shrunken world when everyone is a neighbour to everyone else, where we have to live with each other without unnecessary tension and conflicts. (Mahathir, 1996, p. 2)

The officially stated goal in the setting up of Cyberjaya is to create an intelligent city, a “model” city for the other states in Malaysia. Underpinning this effort is the top-down approach of interweaving high-class ICT facilities and urban infrastructure with the aim of attracting the experts in a broad spectrum of fields—engineers, researchers, and professionals in ICT fields—to live and work in Cyberjaya. The transformative potential and consequent benefits of the MSC, as the nucleus for growth access is prevalent across all levels of development including information, knowledge and techno-preneurship initiatives in Malaysia, however, the MSC is seen not merely an infrastructure project, but rather as a living organism that would continue to evolve and innovate technology development to propel the country to the k-economy.

Azzman (1998a), in addition, argues that NITA and the MSC are the two key ICT instruments that are interrelated and complement each other. According to Mahathir Mohamad, the MSC will be a “…. multicultural web of mutually dependent international and Malaysian companies collaborating to deliver new products and new services across an economically vibrant Asia and beyond…” (MDeC 2014). The NITC, chaired by the Prime Minister, functions “as the primary advisor and consultant to the Malaysian Government on matters pertaining to ICT in Malaysia’s national development” (NITC, 2000). To be sure, the vision of NITC is in line with the aspirations of Vision 2020 (NITC, 2013):

To evolve a knowledge society in the Malaysian mould where the society is rich in information, empowered by knowledge, infused with a distinctive value-system and is self-governing.

Arguably, network society has always been going further that the information society as it is not purely the technology that defines modern societies, but also cultural, economic and political factors that characterised the network society. As a matter of fact, Saloma-Akpedony (2008) has alluded to the foundation of “knowledge society” encapsulated by the philosophy of Malaysia’s National Information Technology Agenda (NITA) when charting the development of MSC. Some seven years after the formation of the MSC, the Internet continues to challenge traditional governance concepts, and to redefine the boundaries of policy making. ICT as a key enabler has clearly been given great importance to improve Malaysia’s competitiveness so much so it transpired in recent Malaysian Plans, the Outline Perspective Plan 3 (OPP3) as well as numerous sectoral master plans or blueprints. To date, some current policy initiatives eventually emerged include MyICMS886, National Broadband Plan, Critical National Information Infrastructure (CNII), National Cyber-Security Policy (NCSP), Malaysian Public Sector Open Source Software Programme, Intellectual Property (IP) Commercialisation Policy, Science and Technology (S&T) Policy, National Biotechnology Policy, National Creative Industry Policy etc (see NITC Website for more information). At the core, Malaysia’s Vision 2020 visualize the creation of a civil society as the ultimate goal where all Malaysian will have access to learning through ‘infostructure’ for personal, organisational and national advancement by the year 2020 (Azzman, 1998a; Xue, 2005). Additionally, it should be noted that the liberalisation of the education sector in 1995 has seen the formation of the Multimedia University (MMU) in 1998 with a special mission to producing ICT-graduates as well as ICT-related research outputs. Apparently, there has been a surge in interest in the evolution experiences of Malaysia information technology
s; advises, counsels and provides input to the Government in setting the agenda for the way forward in the development and growth of the MSC Malaysia and ICT industry in general (The Star Online, 2010). The aim is to reach out the impact of intelligent cities as widest as possible across the country.

This initial schema for new governance could actually be traced back to the privatisation of the Telecommunications Department Malaysia (TDM) in 1987, and the formation of the National Telecommunication Policy (NTP) in 1994, which paved the way for the full liberalisation of the industry (Moggie, 1999). The liberalisation of the telecommunication sector indeed marked an important milestone to exploit the most of the digital convergence of ICTs (Ahmad, 2008). The enactment of Communication and Multimedia Act 1998 (CMA1998) legitimises the process of convergence between the telecommunications, broadcasting, and the Internet. This is in tandem with the theme envisaged by NITA’s vision of K-Malaysia 2020; that is to transform the entire apparatuses of Government as well as the Malaysian society by means of ICT. Some educational scholars see it as the impact of globalisation across all sectors, into an information society, then a knowledge society, and finally a “value-based” knowledge society. This concept is analogues to the ‘tidal wave’ of change (Fariza, et al., 2011) has been clearly identified as the strategic desired end-state envisioned that have been made in a particular reference to the Strategic Agenda that highlights the need to address five areas critical to our migration to the E-World, namely E-Community, E-Public Services, E-Learning, E-Economy and E-Sovereignty (NITC website).

The creation of the new regulatory framework as an importance piece under the new regime would require, among others, a fresh mindset to understand the changing pattern of governance in the information age particularly the movement from a largely hierarchical power structure to an increasingly networked governance structure3.
At the heart of convergence is interconnectivity and the exciting potential it offers for a dramatic transformation into a globalised economy and knowledge-driven society (Moggie, 1999). The new emphasis by the Malaysian Government is on creating a public policy environment that encourages the growth of the C&M industry and facilitates the development of an electronic marketplace where the possibilities for further growth are limitless. Perhaps, more importantly, there is an increasing need to cooperate locally amongst policymakers, regulators, and other industry players and consumers, in order to compete globally which is the key item in the new regime.

With a marked shift of movement towards digital convergence, Malaysia is now fast adapting itself to meet the demand of this converging landscape. A number of grassroots initiatives were spawned and listed in the NITC’s website such as Digital Malaysia, New Economic Model, MSC Malaysia, MSC Flagship Applications, MSC’s Cybercities, MyGovernment Portal, eKualaLumpur,.My Domain Registry, Malaysian Communication and Multimedia Commission, Communication Content Infrastructure, Creative Industry Lifelong Learning Programme (NITC, 2014). As the technologies became progressively more sophisticated and broadly dispersed, from the policy network’s viewpoint, it is found that one of the biggest challenges in designing a comprehensive national policy framework for the converging industries faced by the Government, is to commit the nation to the basic principles of transparency, fairness, healthy competition, and industry self-regulation (Moggie, 1999). These mainly theoretical points were elaborated in great details as in Chapters 2, 3, 4 and 5.

**Digital Convergence, Policy Networks, and the Quest for New Mode of ICT Governance**

From the turn of the twenty-first century, the immediate blurring of borders between telecommunication, broadcasting and computing posed invariable challenge to the old legislative and regulatory infrastructure, and ultimately, raised the further quest for a new mode of governance. Conceptually, the outcome of this development resembles the creation of new synergies, new behaviours, new opportunities and innovations (Negroponte, 1996), which begins to crafting an indispensable role in a new governance dimension in most countries. Regarding this, the new ICT has played a pivotal role by opening up the potential for a shift away from rigid hierarchical forms of organisation, towards more flexible, adaptive and interactive systems and networks (Castells, 1996; 2005). It quickly becomes clear that the ability to raise up effectively to the challenge of new governance depends greatly on the manner in which the potential of ICT can be used to increase political participation and to address other “democratic deficits” in representative democracy (Pautz, 2010).

Surely, a state which is typically hierarchical and organised based on the structure of command and control will become the stumbling factor for new mode of governance. To be sure, ICT is high on the agenda for many countries in the world regardless their status of development. This is not to say other sectoral economies, such as agriculture, manufacturing, human resources training and development, or other subjective factors such as the social and cultural context, and the state-society relations, do not tap the most opportunity in the information age, but to stress the significance of the digital technology as the key dimension for new governance. Field scholars clearly emphasise that the proficiency with which ICT and digital technologies is conducted constitutes the most important aspect of the whole governance function and directly affects all other public policy activities (Castells, 1996; Axford & Huggins, 2001, Hendriks, 2009). Humphrey, (1994, p. 5), in his analysis of the perspective of the mass media as an area of ‘public policy’ for instance notes:
... the organisation of the mass media system in a liberal democracy involves, more than most areas, addressing the crucial and quintessentially ‘political’ question of the proper balance of public and private involvement in policy-making.

Certainly, no state can be presumed to be ahead in its “e” agenda if it lacks the capacity to govern its ICT policy effectively. As this process is increasingly inevitable, Castells (1996) argues, the network patterns of authority have become a salient feature which redefines governance and facilitates the shift away from rigid hierarchical forms of organisation, towards more flexible, adaptive and interactive systems of networks. The shift eventually, prompted a complete re-evaluation of the role of network actors.

Further, the nature of digital technology integrates multiple platforms into a single channel. The merging of content and carriage is made possible via various CM applications. As a case in point, the convergence policy is now fast becoming the primary driver of connectivity agenda to close the prevailing gap between the “have and have-nots” within the society, as opposed to one during the previous regime, where such efforts are less integrated. New governance issues are now being championed and being taken to a new height in correspondence with an ever expanding growth of digital technologies. Thereby, this corroborates the fashionable trend for people-centred agenda, commonly articulated in the national information infrastructure (NII) scheme. Indeed, convergence policy is having a critical role, particularly in establishing a foundation for governance process of future information societies.

Meantime, for over three decades, the competition for new technologies has been escalated, and is not only confined within industrial players, who pioneered the major exploitation of new technology, but also the national governments worldwide whose policies and regulations gaining momentums with the information industry. This requires special attention, mainly because the policies outcomes have greater impact to all citizens. A combination of academic debates and empirical gathering since 1970s has made an interesting discovery with regard to the changes in governance patterns, which appear to take the “form of relatively stable sets of private and public organisations that negotiate in a horizontal, coordinating manner” (Coleman & Perl, 1999, p. 693). According to Coleman and Perl (1999, p. 693), “public authorities increasingly deal with corporate actors possessing a well-developed power base rather than with an amorphous public or with broad groups like social classes.” Ironically, in the developing countries, the relationship between the broad socio-economic development and governance are now more than ever, evident and critical, where there is limited political participation and where political-bureaucrat elites hold great power in directing the state’s policies and action.

As it happened, one obvious fact is that convergence policy is directly linked to states’ relationships with industry players and other stakeholders. Digital technology, such as the Internet, brings in itself the force that greatly affects the nature of this relationship to make representative institutions more transparently accessible and open to interactive discussion (Coleman, 2006). It is a kind of ‘self-organising, inter-organisational networks’ which have led to the State’s sovereignty being compromised. Rhodes has coined the term ‘the hollowing out of the state’ to describe this situation (Rhodes, 1996, in Davies, 2002). Within the larger perspective of network society, “the architecture of relationships between networks, enacted by light-speed operating information technologies, configure dominant processes, and functions in our societies” (Castells, 1996, p. 470).

Therefore, the digitalisation process has progressively brought about an exponential impact throughout the world and in itself is challenging and complex. Digital convergence has emerged and proliferated as an influential global medium with two unique features - the coming about, or more
accurately, the blend between telecommunications and other digital media technologies; and, the opening up of a new governance landscape. Coinciding with the dramatic impact of interconnected global network society on public policy making has been the debate on the nature and functions of the nation state. It has been established that the capabilities of the state, in terms of governance, is also determined by adopting governance system that attempts to boost effectiveness by concentrating on offering citizens more participatory roles as networked actors (Calista & Melitski, 2007). It is also commonly agreed by many practitioners that in order to realising the proper governance policy in the information age requires active and meaningful practices that can secure widening of political participation, thereby meeting social and political objectives (Calista & Melitski, 2007; Coleman, 2006; Nuraizah, 2003; Moggie, 1999).6

Governments, around the globe, declare in the information age agenda, that they seek for a better governance process. However, declaration is one thing and the practice is something else. Experience reveals that most government declare policies, vision and commitments but fail to lay down the practical implementation required to meet the intended objectives. Hence, what matters most is not so much the declared intention, rather the actual practice.

There also, have been a surge of interest and scholarly debates from various disciplines from political science to technological communication and international relations to government studies to decide the ideal model for new mode of governance suitable for the information age (Hendriks, 2010). Various concepts and models have already been generated in the literature that attempt to provide the best approach or to solve the issue of the lack of effective governance. For instance, Loughlin (2004) suggested the partnership replaces ‘top-down’ approach with ‘bottom-up’ and governance is understood as ‘steering rather than directing’ to the extent it supplements or even replaces government. In the context of policy network, policy communities form around policy problems that ‘involve complex political, economic and technical task and resourced interdependencies’ (Kenis & Schneider, 1991). The various constellations of actors will ‘interact strategically, while engaging in exchanges involving the sharing of information, expertise, and political support’ (Coleman & Perl, 1999). The context of policy deliberations subsequently emerged as the outcome of different patterns of public-private relationships, known as “policy networks,” based on the sharing and distribution of resources among policy actors (Coleman & Skogstad, 1990; Atkinson & Coleman, 1992; Hendriks, 2010).

An early, wide ranging, and highly influential statement of a participatory model has been notably proposed by Yoneji Masuda back in 1980. This model basically stresses a more complex, horizontal, and multidirectional interactivity (Chadwick, et. al., 2003). It is contended that while states may facilitate political discussion and interaction, they are but one association among many with a presence in civil society. The opinion formulation and political action based on forums, groups, or new ‘virtual communities’ formed the development of civil society, the concept of interactivity is understood in the context of ‘how message are related closely together in a sequence of message exchange.’ What is important is that the model stresses the role of the state to protect liberal-democratic values of free speech and expression that might otherwise be disregarded, while also providing infrastructure and regulation (Masuda, 1980). So, rules (formal or informal), resource divisions and organised political action are treated as a complementary support to institutional setting. The concern on this model is basically on the view that the characteristic trends of post industrial democracies – fragmentation and single-issue politics – as being intensified under the weight of new information networks. It is the new and different ways by the Internet have opened up the possibility that even those without large, stable memberships of affiliation
with established institutions, be possibly heard as their views develop and move more quicker in the cycle of mobilisation in the increasing pool of publicly available information. Because of this, civil society – broadly defined as a political realm of ideas and actors separate from state influences or control, is now generally recognized by many scholars as a necessary condition for the democratization process (Kalathil, 2003; Brown, 2006; Hendriks, 2006).

Each of the models or approaches presented has their own merits. With the progressive development towards digital convergence, there has been considerable debate within the academic as well as practitioner community about the relevancy of these approaches when compared with the traditional hierarchical, top down command and control system of the past. One can notice easily that much of the current governance in the digital age literature is written in a way that acknowledges the tremendous policy, regulatory and institutional impact of digital convergence. Nevertheless, at the same breadth, mostly share the fact that governments are often trapped in the framework of the old regime which dampens many governance efforts.

Despite the argument of the merit of new governance, the basic concept of a new mode of governance remained contending issues in the information age agenda. Governance in principle continues to hold a serious place in the putative march towards information age society and this is primarily because the digital technologies is the driving force that affect each other sectoral policies. When the new regulatory framework was instituted, Government assumed that this will enhance the values of “transparency, reflexivity, efficiency and accountability” which is commonly being associated with the core ethos or values of good governance. These principles continue to hold a serious place in the value system of public policy and this is largely because ICT policy is having a pervasive impact to many economic sectors. Governance in the digital age is considered as a greater necessity than in a policy application and dictates normative as well as instrumental roles.

Governance through policy network forms an important component of the information age and digital convergence, as such, may promise a remedy to reduce the gap between the old and the new regime. A closer look at the characteristics of the governance system reveals that this model differs little from the ideas suggested by Castells (2005; 2007) when he formulated his concept of the network state (see Humphreys, 1994).

The variety of concepts offered in the literature lead to different options of the course of action. It is also interesting to note that despite massive international scholarly work, the network approach can hardly be considered as a widely accepted theory (Klijn & Koppenjan, 2000; Hendriks, 2010). Link to this, the contribution of this research is therefore, to point out with empirical evidences that explain the discrepancies between the role of network governance and the practical challenges in converging phenomenon. It could be interesting to point out any significant implications of digital convergence on new governance. Although other examples of relationship can be found in which advising and monitoring co-exist, the relationship between these two is particularly interesting because we can observe an attempt to separate the new Government roles with traditional ones. Further, particularly in Malaysia, there has been almost no formal serious research focus on this particular subject area. Thus, this may contribute to the debate on the relative effectiveness and of various governance patterns as well as shed some new understanding on yet unknown and unidentified deficiencies in achieving the governance within the process of convergence.
STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM SITUATION

Encroaching middle 2000s, with the convergent development of ICTs for service delivery in Malaysia, it was in 1998 the Government created two institutions to carry out policy and regulatory goals in telecommunications and multimedia – the Ministry of Energy, Communication and Multimedia (MECM) – as the executive body to implement laws and the Malaysian Communications and Multimedia Commission (MCMC) – a regulator for the CM sector (Ahmad, 2008). The Communication and Multimedia Act (CMA) 1998 was enacted based on these basic principles: transparency and clarity; more competition and less regulation; flexibility; bias towards generic rules; regulatory forbearance; emphasis on process rather than content; administrative and sector transparency; and industry self-regulation (MCMC, 2013). However, governance of ICT, which many observers found to be very complex and perplexing, often overshadow the role of the MCMC. Innovation agenda was very complicated - seats between these two institutional authorities (MCMC and Ministry). MCMC was then put under the ambit of MoSTI; currently under the newly rebranding Ministry of Communication and Multimedia (previously Ministry of Information, Communication and Culture), with the latest restructuring of the Ministerial Cabinet 2013. Corresponding to this, we can hypothesis that the latest policy and institutional propositions, as explicitly outlined in the post-General Election Ministerial Cabinet restructuring, are Malaysia’s latest response to the increasing demand arising from globalization era and the rapid changes in the ICT revolution.

The successful implementation of ICT agenda and governance motives is contingent upon many factors. The true value of the digital convergence scheme is viewed not only in the potential the technology offers but equally important also, the system as well as the enabling environments that advocate the proper governance of the process. Nowadays, with various strategic plans, and institutional mechanisms, the Government of Malaysia has demonstrated its commitment to provide necessary capacity to spearhead the country into the eWorld. The primary goal of the NITC Strategic Agenda is defined in this way: ‘to effectively facilitate the migration of Malaysians and institutional structures into the eWorld. This migration must be “ipso facto a people-driven transformation.” The key challenge is thus how to engender the requisite mindset in our people and institutions to successfully participate, develop and grow in this emerging networked global society of the 21st Century (NITC Website). At the outset, the emerging eWorld equates the rise of the network society, which is in correspondence with the outcome of the convergence of ICTs and has considerable impact on economic, social and political domains of people lives.

Yet, observers (Ramasamy, 2010; Hazman & Munirah, 2003; Sophiee, 2002; Azzman, 1998b) express their concern that while braving the future, Malaysia faces serious political and economic challenges. The economic challenges it faces is that its economy is driven mainly by production based, while the political challenge it face is the excessive concentration of authority in Government and the lack of meaningful political participation. Within the context of national competitiveness, Hazman and Munirah (2003, p.3):

*At the national level, however, despite many innovative changes to improve the quality of public service, many schemes to widen training and educational opportunities and many fiscal and financial incentives to stimulate the businesses to adopt new ways especially through increasing use of IT, innovation and creativity has not truly become a source of mark of national strength.*

Apart from the political and the economic challenges, there are serious worries that current public policy processes might lead to inef-
fective policy outcomes. In the context of ICT and convergence policy, what the country has now are sets of building blocks that do not fit together very well - if at all, i.e., infrastructure and service competition. Critiques argue about misalignments which are evident between broad policies, implementing strategies, and monitoring (Siddique, 2008). Furthermore in practice, delivering good governance has not been easy for public administrators in the country’s typical hierarchical and pluralistic society such as Malaysia as political decision-making has always the need to be sensitive to preserve peace and stability. The challenge for governance in Malaysia therefore is to primarily manage this global age transition whilst reconciling it with such a complex account of the local socio-political reality.

As debated elsewhere, dilemma of ICT governance in the era of digital convergence is not a new issue altogether. The Malaysian Government has become aware of this challenge. The earliest bold effort towards convergence of the telecommunications and broadcasting industries was indeed marked by the enactment of the CMA 1998 which have paved ways for a more substantive initiative thereafter, slowly but significantly emerged itself out of the old regime. At the beginning of the last decade, this new regime raised the major issue of how the NITC, together with the Ministry of Energy, Water and Communication (MEWC) and the Malaysian Communications and Multimedia Commission (MCMC), as the central ICT policy making body, authority and regulator, should be able to address the new challenges of the new reality.

The change, however, was overshadowed by tremendous regulatory complications as the general framework is still embodied by separate laws mostly caused the dilemmas between the cyber laws and the traditional laws. Edappagath (2004), an expert in cyber laws, argues that there is a challenge the government faces in terms of to reconcile between the old and the new legislations:

The existing legislations and statutes need to be reviewed to determine whether they can address the issues arising out of the new ICT era. If the current laws are inadequate to deal with the problems, national governments and/or appropriate regional and international bodies need to either revise the existing laws or enact new laws to provide individual, corporate and government users with maximum trust and security.

Government awareness of the need to create a new environment for policy process, in furtherance to the people-centred agenda of NITA has been reflected by the establishment of a NRR through self-regulatory and voluntary compliance. Of paramount importance, the recreation of the Ministry of Energy, Communication and Multimedia (MECM) to become Ministry of Energy, Water and Communication (MEWC), from previously Ministry of Energy, Telecommunications and Post (METP) as well as the Malaysian Communication and Multimedia Commission (MCMC) is also assigned with the mission of developing and recommending convergence policies to cope with new challenges.

The challenge that arose at the initial stage includes the creation of the NITA’s model of governance based on people. The National IT Framework which subsequently emerged is considered the most instrumental outcome in the governance development in modern Malaysia history. As transpired, the NITA devises broad aspects pointing out to what sort of governance model suitable for Malaysia’s eAgenda scheme. The contemporary Malaysian ICT policy framework is expected to fulfill with the spirits of NITA and to make sure its provision are reflected in the convergence policies and procedures, particularly those relevant to ensure the growth of the sector. However, the extent of consistency between the current practice and the demands of the new mode of governance as required by NITA is highly political and requires close examination.
In Malaysia, typical of any modern state, the policy process is constantly being challenged with the unprecedented change in digital technology, compared with much lesser pressure for growth in the early stage of development. One direct result of this pressure for development was that bureaucracy or policy makers were seldom caught off guard and driven by the technological changes without sufficient account of guarantees on what could be the possible outcomes. Often the case, the Government would put some breaks when they finally realised that some of decisions were too much politically risk to pursue.

As found later in this research, during the early years of ICT development, there was a state of clumsiness in the way the policy and project implementation being organised, particularly by the NITC. To some extent, the failure of some projects, e.g., Smart School, PC Ownership Campaign, were awarded to some individuals/contractors and they were through their link with political leaders rather than based on their qualities. Favouritism was the direct result of the too much power centralisation at the hand of political masters without formalised or transparent procedures. In Malaysia, as reported in Chapter I4, the Ministers commonly enjoy greater power by the law and the law itself has many provisional exemptions in the hand of the Minister.

The widening of political participation in the past was far less ideal than what it is today, though this is subjected to more debates (Johnston, 2010). The nature of digital technology propels new kind of relationship since cyber-spacer is no respecter of any boundaries, and if anything, this is even greater with the ‘killer applications’ afforded by digitalisation. Government may see this as a threat; however, with the impending march towards ‘globalisation and the convergence’*, there is always a constant pressure for the Government to secure the principles of governance to ensure that the system works for all. To be sure, digital convergence has put pressure on Government to explore the most effective mechanism to encourage even more proactive roles of the private sector in overcoming the digital divide issue, particularly the basic connectivity—which was the Government’s core business of the past.

Further, as the CMA1998 emerged, the obligation to enhance the value of new mode of governance is getting ever more prevalent and increasingly formidable. Unlike NITA which has no legal credentials, the CMA1998, by virtue of its existence, demands the review of administrative structures, policies and regulations which should be in conformity with the new mode of governance. Hence, combining NITA and CMA together, not only are the Government and its political institutions obliged to rule according to the requirements of the model, but the policy framework, regulatory structures, and institutional settings should be in conformity with this two overarching documents, as well.

Meantime, despite an exponential impact of technology and the Internet, there is very little field investigation to provide evidence on the determinants as well implications of policy networks and its constituents particularly in the case of Malaysia. Initially, there was a paucity of empirical reports devoted to categorising the influences of the “e” agenda development upon public administration and its services. As of current situation, much more research has been conducted mainly on eGovernment and eCommerce aspect, which falls short of concrete theoretical exposition particularly on the basis of detailed studies of digital convergence. While ad hoc actions have been initiated to adapt public administration with the values of network governance in correspondence with the eGovernment agenda, there seems to have been patchy effort directed at synthesising views of the implications for digital convergence or developing strategies for dealing with its implications. Almost certainly, this occurred against the midst of the call for better governance between the supporters of pro-governance development strategies and sceptic views on whether the NRR in Malaysia

*globalisation and the convergence
will ‘work’ to bring about the new image of government in the era of cyberspace.

While the principles of democracy were settled in many advanced countries decades ago, these are still a matter of great debate in developing countries, such as Malaysia. The Malaysian system relies heavily on the discretion of political masters and elite bureaucrats in public agencies to secure important policy decisions. Navaratnam (2003, p. 293), a distinguished Malaysian expert who served with the Malaysian Treasury for 27 years, opined:

*The civil service is generally far too centralised. Most major policies governing service and establishment of policies and principles are controlled by the Public Service Department (PSD). On the other hand, all major approvals of a financial nature are referred to the Treasury. Furthermore, economic development issues are invariably controlled by the Economic Planning Unit (EPU) in the Prime Minister’s Department.*

He argues that in such situation, plus many other factors, current framework may explain the reason why the civil service has become slower and less effective, and so too, directly or indirectly, being put under the power of a few individual Ministers. Navaratnam’s observation indeed gives a good reason for investigating the implications this institutional design has on digital convergence, and vice versa.

This is also very much related to the way the institutional policy making decision which is highly centralised especially when it is move towards the top. It might be useful in this chapter to quote what is written about the centralisation of power of the Prime Minister; BICA Report in 2002 (p. 153) states:

*Policy capacity parallels state capacity in Malaysia’s case. Much of the advice given to the Prime Minister emerges from his own office or from closely connected organisations and institutes. The dangers are parallel as well, in the high exposure to political risk and the dangers to the budget of the expensive bailouts following 1997.*

The topic becomes even more critical, bearing in mind that some published studies mentioned that nepotism and cronyism\(^\text{a}\) are considered peculiar in Malaysia.

**OBJECTIVES OF THE BOOK**

The broad aims of the book are. First, is to examine the impact of the ICT and digital convergence and second, to delve into theoretical underpinning of the ICT adoption that explains human reactions to technology. Third, is to empirically evaluate the extent to which Malaysia is capable of embracing the opportunity brought by digital convergence and effectively addressing the challenges associated with new ICTs drawing upon a convergent conclusion between theory and practice of ICT policy adoption in the public sector.

More specifically, the objectives of the book can be summarised as follows:

- To utilise related theories of policy networks as well as theories of ICT adoption in an analysis of the formation and subsequent evolution of a new regime as encapsulated by the overall Malaysian initiatives of ICT and digital convergence, seen in the context of NITA;
- To apply and extend all the theoretical frameworks utilising theories such as Technology Acceptance Behaviour (TPB), Theories of Reasoned Action, and Technology Acceptance Models (TAM) in the context of Malaysian public services’ ICT policy adoptions;
- To comprehend the Malaysian ICT agenda in the context of the application and practice of ICT in the country by explaining how such features affect the search of a
new mode of ICT governance and human behavioural reactions;

- To examine the extent to which the policies being adopted are practiced and influenced by the multiple network actors and how this process is related to digital convergence;
- To identify and build a framework explaining the determinants of ICT adoption in Malaysia, and to empirically evaluate the extent to which ICT values are transpired in the actual practices;
- To evaluate some generic issues pertaining to ICT and challenges from technology and human sides in the public sector;
- To suggest general policy recommendations that might lead to the improvement in the behaviour and strategic thinking towards harnessing the potential of ICTs for Malaysia in the digital age for public service delivery system.

Scope of this Section

In order to provide a comprehensive and detailed understanding of the issues outlined above, an analysis is made to a range of interrelated issues exponentially deliberated in the literature, together with a series of empirical studies. The former draws upon a wide range of academic literature, and the latter focuses on the Malaysian ICT environment, in which convergence policy as the nodes within larger setting of Malaysia’s agenda for ICT will be specifically analysed through detailed case studies.

The formation of a new regime as argued in the book has followed a strategy based on policy networks in view of network governance approach. The book looks at relevant network theories since they are modeled upon these practices and appear to be most relevant in describing the working of the system. Besides, the theories also bear significant elements of determining the extent to which Malaysia raised up to the opportunities and challenges through its implementation of NRR. This analysis will try to establish a linkage between the practices of governance and the issues or complications that lie beneath, that have not been addressed by other studies.

In consistent with the key focus explained earlier, this can be broken up into three major strands of inquiry, explained together with its theoretical rationales and assumptions.

People-Centred Governance Agenda

The first area of research was to concern with the rationale and reasons for the adoption of an innovation agenda centred on ‘people factor’ in Malaysia, as reflected in the formulation of Malaysia’s Vision for eWorld—such as the Vision 2020, NITA Framework and subsequent series of the five-year Malaysia Plan, which demonstrates broad national strategies in creating the quantum leap for governance change. Within NITA itself, the role of information is very instrumental, as a critical node that link between three key elements, namely, people, infrastructure, and application, with “people” as the most important feature of all.

The widening of political participation has become one of a dominant, and perhaps the most debated issue to determine the successfulness of governance agenda today. In the case of Malaysia, an overarching Vision 2020 was perhaps the radical impetus for change which paved the stimulus for the utilisation of ICT as it will lay down the gauntlet for future’s multimedia policy. Ultimately, this will spur the nation towards the creation of a civil society where Malaysian will have access to learning through “info structure for personal, organisational, and national advancement by the year 2020” (John, 1998, p. 5). In addition, the Eighth Malaysia Plan (8MP) is the guiding innovative policies to be implemented in line with the march towards the National Vision Policy. It was based on the notion that the ‘technology’ element provides impetus to improve and drive unparalleled productivity gains in the knowledge-based economy (‘K-economy’) as opposed to the production-based economy (‘P-economy’).
core of MSC flagship, in particular, eGovernment, 
there is a growing recognition that the of the social 
inclusion which is not merely an adoption of 'technology initiative' alone but seen as a major 
part of a wider Government-wide transformation service agenda which can radically transform the 
very nature of governance (Rais, 1999).

On another respect, however, the novel purpose 
of enhancing the legitimacy of political institutions 
through an increased accessibility, responsiveness, 
and comprehensibility will badly undermined 
if the shift to network governance reinforces a 
new 'digital divide' issues which can occur in 
various forms (Bellamy, 2003). The nature of 
society inclusion is analysed in order to attest 
how crucial the social agenda in promoting the 
good governance, measured through the principles 
of political participation (Masuda, 1980). The 
variation of societal dimension initiatives (so as to 
determine the relative and strengths and drawbacks 
of social inclusivity as against its intended NITA objectives) is compared with the convergence’s 
national objectives for C&M sector.

The national policy objectives, which envisages 
the concept of industry self-regulation imply a 
“certain degree of discipline, cultural and ethical 
norms,” is basically speak of a “civil society and 
national identity” (Lim, 2004). Of course, this in 
one of various differentiated views of a number of 
scholars over the nature of and the degree of political 
participation and its significance to governance 
motives. By studying the nature of convergence 
evolution, particularly the necessary strategies 
attempted, the book hopes to see the important role 
of political participation in determining the overall 
achievement of e Agenda.

**Legal and Regulatory Framework**

The second area of research was to evaluate the 
legal and regulatory mechanisms that have been derived to support and enhance the new mode of 
ICT governance model in the country in relation 
to digital convergence. This is to examine whether 
it was consistent with the development philos-
ophy of NITA policy, against the phenomenon of convergence. Such an analysis would be relevant 
to ascertain whether Government adopted a con-
sistent and dynamic regulatory mechanism to 
achieving its long term goals of eVision, thereby 
embracing new governance.

As argued, there was an increased tendency 
towards digital convergence since the end of 
1990s. It is found, historically distinct legal and 
regulatory frameworks was due to the separation 
of the technologies and infrastructure. With conver-
gence, there are calls for mechanisms established 
at an early stage which ensure much closer coop-
eration and the determination of common policy 
goals between distinct regulators, as well as the 
sharing of information and resources under “new 
frontiers” of representation (Urbinati & Warren, 
2008). Focus in this area included a review of 
the present situation, with the specific purpose 
of identifying the appropriate policies adopted in 
a timely manner to achieve its desired intention. 
The regulatory framework laid a foundation for 
the conducing governance in seemingly the most 
realistic manner. The advent of digital convergence 
is certainly contributing towards a higher capabil-
ity of new mode of governance and “through the 
Commission close working collaboration with the 
industry participants to develop or adopt relevant international, regional or industry standards for 
use by the industry” (Syed Hussein, 1999).

As such, digital convergence clearly sets forth 
the new barometer for ICT governance both in 
Malaysia and elsewhere in the world. What is 
important here is that it is being extended beyond 
the bigger scope which reveals the different bound-
aries of multiple levels of policy interactions for 
Malaysia. The study of the influence of legal and 
regulatory framework in determining the level 
of convergence evolution will provide us with 
an opportunity to understand the nature of a new 
regime, and most importantly, it will also enable 
us to see how the policy institutions transform
and adapt themselves to the new technological environment in Malaysia context.

**Institutional/Structural Framework**

The third area of research was to trace the institutional changes and their implications on new mode of ICT governance in the country. This included the various attempt made towards the formation of various institution of convergence, e.g., notably with the creation on the then MEWC to become MCMM and MCMC, in developing the new regime. This review is particularly important to compare and evaluate the approach taken before and after the convergence scheme takes place.

Institutional reforms are incomplete without considering ‘political’ factors such as federalism and decentralisation mechanisms for wider engagement and participation of different stakeholders and providers. This is important because such factors bear considerable impact in determining the propagation and sustenance of the ICT governance values. As argued that the transformation of innovation agenda towards the ultimatum point of convergence will be most likely possible with the incorporation of wider participation into the whole administrative structure, based on the active engagement of various network actors, reconciled with national and global conditions. Only from this kind of network governance model developed and expanded within the mutual political process resulting from the spirit of active engagement can provide an avenue which would trigger the governance paradigm the country aspires to be.

Studying the mechanisms and arrangement of institutional framework along those dimensions offers the opportunity to address the role played by network actors in deliberating policy networks, multimedia convergence, and widening political participation.

In sum, these theoretical models and assumptions are used as an anchor to further examine three substantial domains of the politics of digital convergence. They are; first, the extent through which the impending issues of social inclusion or political participation, and the dynamism of integration amongst different actors in the networks system has impact on overall setting of ICT agenda; second, the constitution of legislative and regulatory framework essential for new governing regime, against the backdrop of multimedia convergence towards the promotion of governance values; and, thirdly, the establishment of the necessary institutional or structural framework to support the national policies(12,24),(992,990) and strategic planning framework and to what extent policy goals and outcomes are shaped by the interactions between actors associated with each domain structural setting for the implementation and sustenance of the evolutionary stages of convergence.

Section 1 of the book focuses on adoption and governance models of implementation of ICT adoption in public sector. In this part some contextual background of ICT development in Malaysia are given, in relation to the general convergence-divergence and other related models, and snapshot of some impending issues facing the Malaysian ICT and digital initiatives, and a discussion of how they affect the overall Malaysian ICT agenda. The brief review to theories which are relevant to the study of network governance and related concepts are highlighted. This offers an introduction to the overall perspective of the Malaysian ICT agenda and digital convergence with brief overview on Malaysia’s changing landscape of governance impacted by the digital convergence. It focuses on the Malaysian national ICT initiatives in terms of its initial development, subsequent evolution, and overall governance scheme being impacted by the global trend of ICT and convergence. The discussion argues that Malaysian ICT evolution is fast shaped by the digital convergence phenomenon.

Section 2 focuses on theoretical explanation of people’s reactions to ICT adoption in public sector. In other words, Section 2 of this book is devoted to the theories which provide the ground to clarify the human reaction to adoption of ICT in public organizations where most of the tasks
assigned are obligatory in nature. This further helps advance the empirical analysis to underpin human characteristic behaviour to ICT acceptance by civil servants to accomplish tasks. These theories are broken down into Chapter 6: Theories of Reasoned Action (TRA) and its relations to ICT adoption and application; Chapter 7: Theories of Planned Behaviour (TPB) and its expansion in relations to ICT adoption and application; Chapter 8: Technology Acceptance Model (TAM) with its expansion in relation to ICT adoption and application.

Section 3 focuses on application and practice of ICT in Malaysian public sector to draw out empirical impact of human reaction to ICT adoption in accomplishing tasks and to pinpoint pertinent issues that were earlier highlighted in various theories discussed in Section 2 of the book. As such, Section 3 encapsulates the empirical chapters’ attempts to link various models and theories found in the chapters of Section 2 of the book with empirical findings from field research with new variables identified. This is an effort to build appropriate theoretical explanation incorporating various inputs that were found in Section 2 on awakening of a call for extension of models in tandem to research settings and cultural background of the participants. The lists of the chapters’ title in this section are as follow: Chapter 9: Empirical Investigation of ICT Usage in Malaysian public sector using Extension of Theory of Reasoned Action. Chapter 10: Empirical Investigation of ICT Usage in Malaysian public sector using Extension of Theory of Planned Behaviour. Chapter 11: Empirical Investigation of ICT Usage in Malaysian public sector using Extension of Technology Acceptance Model. Chapter 12: Empirical Investigation of ICT Usage in Malaysian public sector using Extension of Technology Acceptance Model with Trust in Technology System as Moderator. Chapter 13: Empirical Investigation of ICT Usage in Malaysian public sector using Unified Theory of Acceptance and Use of Technology. References for all these chapters are mainly from the primary materials such as interviews and surveys.

REFERENCES


**KEY TERMS AND DEFINITIONS**

**Civil Society**: A group of people in society coming together to agitate for rights and collective activities. It includes the non-governmental organizations (NGO).

**Computer Network**: A group of computer systems and other computing hardware devices that are linked together through the Internet for exchange of information among users from various parts of the globe.

**Governance Framework**: How the information technology infrastructure should be functioning to achieve the primary objective of ICT adoption.

**Healthy Competition**: As delivering of a quality services and products by public service providers or industrial players to the people with
continuous improvement that can achieve citizen satisfaction.

**Information and Communication Technology (ICT):** Integration of telecommunication devices and computers as well as other software, middleware, storage and audio-visual systems that help users gain access, store, and transmit information to others.

**Multimedia:** As the using of several forms of communication technologies such as combination of text, audio, still images, video, and animation contents.

**Political Party:** An organization of people who have similar political beliefs and ideas and who work together.

**Public Policy:** A course of actions taken by the government to tackle public socioeconomic and political matters in a country. The course of actions taken can be laws, regulatory measures, or funding priorities concerning a given topic promulgated by a governmental entity and/or its representatives.

**Public Sector:** One aspect of the national economy charged to provide the basic unit of life such as services that cannot be provided by the private sector.

**Regulation:** An official rule or law designed to control and govern how certain action must be done. In ICT adoption, it extends to monitoring and enforcement of the rules for operation.

**Telecommunication:** The exchange of information over significant distances by electronic means such as cable, telegraph, telephone, and/or broadcasting.

**Unilateral Policy:** A policy that has been formulated by one side or party to reach out the administration’s goals.

---

**ENDNOTES**

1. PIKOM objectives, among others, aimed to spearhead, promote, and coordinate development of resources, professional skills, and programmes in the IT industry in Malaysia; represent the local IT industry to the government and other organizations both local and foreign; provide a forum for discussion; promote the use of computers and foster high standards of conduct and service.

2. The Multimedia Super Corridor, which is the centerpiece of the country’s Vision 2020, intended as a vehicle for attracting technology-led companies and developing local industries. It is to be an exemplar, an island of excellence with multimedia-specific capabilities, technologies, infrastructure, legislation, and policies. It is to provide an ideal test site for new inventions and research. When fully developed, it will be a Multimedia Utopia, providing a productive and intelligent environment for the production of high value multimedia goods and services for delivery across the globe. The corridor will comprise of a global community of smart homes, smart cities, smart schools, smart cards, and smart partnerships - right on the cutting edge of a global information society.

3. Dai (2003) uses similar concept to describe the paradigm shift in European governance to describe changing scenario of governance in the information age, with particular reference to his research of two major transnational networks (i.e. eris® and TeleCities).

4. NII initiative found its root in the US, but more commonly known as the Information Society in the Europe, in Malaysia, it is known as National IT Agenda. The term ‘scheme’, ‘agenda’, ‘initiatives,’ and ‘policy’ are used interchangeably where relevant to provide a context of discussion in which the flow of discussions are deemed appropriate, within this book.

5. Digitalisation meant that “data, sound, and images could all be transmitted over the same networks”, a general phenomenon of which telecommunications liberalisation converge
with ‘information’ and ‘broadcasting’, and became a central feature of ‘global information society’ (Humphreys and Simpson, 2005, p. 93).

The phenomenal growth of digital technologies (statistical details with regard to Malaysia will appear in Chapter Four) and their consequent impact on information networks and systems over the last decade have led to unlimited enhancements to the human endeavour. This suggests that new technological convergence is not intended to be an end in itself. In other words, among others, it effects the way business is conducted, interaction between the Government and the public, and the operations of public utilities can be attributed to this phenomenon (Nuraizah, 2003b).

The concept of ‘globalisation’ is mentioned together with ‘convergence’ as there has been considerable research done on how the digital convergence was significantly impacted by the global political discourse (i.e. international arrangements) led to fundamental and constant refining of the latter. Cronyism can be regarded as the practice of associating closely with influential leaders and gaining undue concessions or favour of any kind (e.g., large contracts) privilege licenses which lead to monopolies and oligopolies often inordinately large profits, through the relationship. This subject, nonetheless, is insignificant to the book.

‘People factor’ or ‘people-based’ agenda serves as a guiding philosophy involving a complex and highly political interrelationship between technological convergence and ‘local’ adaptation for the impact of governing of the new age.

Innovation agenda is more general term used to include ICT and digital convergence policy initiatives.