

Preface

Despite certain challenges, the positive impact that Information and Communication Technologies (ICTs) have on worldwide public administration systems is now well accepted by all the stakeholders of e-governance. It is also recognized that, in the paradigm shift “from government to e-governance,” ICTs play the major role, among others, in transforming public administration systems from hierarchic, command-and-control-oriented to a non-hierarchic, citizen- and-stakeholder-oriented one. These revolutionary changes also enhance the interests of researchers culminating in increased numbers of research works and consequent publications on this subject area. This volume is also a product of that trend. With fast-paced developments in the field of e-governance, it is always essential to disseminate new knowledge to the wider audience for expanding the horizon of the field. With that objective in mind, this project was initiated quite some time ago. At the end of the day, with the efforts of everyone involved, this book largely deals with the current practices, potentials, and challenges of ICT-enabled public administration systems in understanding what e-governance broadly entails along with its effects on all the stakeholders. In doing so, this book not only deals with aspects of public administration systems but also covers the business sector, academia, and many other relevant factors (e.g., citizens and community engagement) that come into play in the smooth functioning of e-governance, be it in the developed or developing world.

Drawn from different backgrounds, disciplines, and experiences from different parts of the world, the authors in this volume offer a wide range of issues relevant to the digital transformation of governance and public administration. All the contributors in this book, however, agree and subtly conclude that e-governance indeed brings a paradigm shift in public administration. Given that the application of ICTs and the pace of e-governance maturity are not the same across nations, the experiences and challenges to adapting to the new governance regimes are also essentially different in these countries in their efforts of digital transformation. With the mix of cases from the developed and developing countries, this book is thus suitable for a wider audience aspiring to bring citizen-centred changes through e-governance. Though the book is not divided into different sub-sections, it covers areas that are visibly separated and thus can be distinctly grouped. Forming such a group, the first five chapters shed light on the theoretical issues, the transformative journey from e-government to e-governance, the challenges of e-governance in a politically driven environment, as well as ICTs’ applications in public administration systems. The focuses of the next three chapters are citizens, their engagement in the non-hierarchic e-governance regime, and the broader area of community value, as well as the virtual community under which the prospect of Web 2.0 and other social media applications are discussed.

The subject matter of the third group of chapters includes the business-IT alignment in cross-governmental partnerships, as well as the ever-increasing significance of the impact of e-governance and its measurement and evaluation. Starting with the dialogue on the transition from e-government to e-

governance in the context of Europe, the fourth segment covers the selective country cases with focuses on core values, anti-corruption, ICT policy, and e-governance's prospects and challenges in the context of developing countries. Specific countries that are covered include Bangladesh, Brunei, India, and Ghana. Examples from other countries, such as the USA, are also made in the earlier chapters. The second to last chapter brings in the issue of e-governance savvy global knowledge enterprise and academics' role in it. The book concludes with excellent arguments made in favor of how to successfully introduce and sustain e-governance in any country context.

From Government to E-Governance: Public Administration in the Digital Age offers an up-to-date and comprehensive account of the concepts, developments, challenges, and prospects of the field of digital or e-governance. It does not only have contributors from around the world, but also covers different aspects of e-governance from different areas of the world as they differ in their status quo, challenges, and prospects. In this way, this book contributes to the better understanding of e-governance and helps the readers in understanding the issue from diverse perspectives. Though the application of ICTs in governance is not without pitfalls and challenges, it is our hope that this publication, with the latest information on those challenges and new knowledge on innovation, would assist students, researchers, academics, experts, and civil society groups around the world in their understanding of this fascinating area of study.

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