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ABSTRACT

The general objective of this work is to identify a set of electronic governance practices for the executive power of the Brazilian States and Federal District, to measure and relate them to the economic and social development of the respective States and Federal District. In order to achieve this objective, the authors first used bibliographic research to build the theoretical platform about electronic governance and controllership in public management and the identification of electronic governance practices; next, a measurement and monitoring index of the development of electronic governance – 2013 is proposed. The Pearson correlation test was performed in order to verify the correlation between electronic governance and economic and social development indexes – GDP and GDP per capita – and HDI and Gini, respectively. Lastly, the 2009 electronic governance index was used for comparison purposes. By comparing the results of the correlation and the percentage of the implemented practices, it was then concluded that the States with the highest GDP, the highest HDI and the lowest Gini are those which have the highest number of implemented electronic governance practices.

Keywords: Brazil, Brazilian States, Controllership, Electronic Governance, Internet

INTRODUCTION

Governments operate in a complex world and they need to adapt to new realities, such as globalization, the knowledge age, which shape the information society. In this context, information and communication technologies (ICTs) have a crucial role in the way the State performs its main duties. These technologies change the public management approach, considering that citizens, companies and other organizations want to increasingly have access to the government in
a fast and easy way, expecting that government programs are focused on their needs. Some possible ways to improve the general perception of the public service would include new ways of providing services and new governance styles, such as electronic governance.

The evolution in the use of computers and means of communication, and specially, the Internet infrastructure, have caused new models of Government-Society relationship to be more and more defined on ICTs. Therefore, new technologies would have the potential to build a new relationship between government and its citizens since they make it possible for a public administration to be more efficient, democratic and transparent. (Medeiros & Guimarães, 2004).

Thus, the awareness of the citizens’ involvement in the governance and the appearing of a knowledge society have played an important role in the transformation of the government’s nature. The access to opportunity has become an element of good governance, specifically with the use of ICTs, instruments that have changed the relationship between the public sector and other actors in the society.

It is into this context that electronic governance is inserted, which, according to (Silva & Correa, 2006) focuses on the use of new ICTs amenities, applied to a wide range of government duties in search of a better social performance.

The interest in the study of electronic governance got stronger at the beginning of 2000, but before that, many governments had already discussed and implemented the electronic government, mainly the use of the Internet for the provision of services. Such an interest emerged, in part, because of the increase in the Internet access geometric progression.

Electronic governance is important because it is considered to be an instrument that promotes good governance, improves the relationship among government, citizen and company, mainly, with more transparency, accountability, reduces transaction and citizen participation costs. Furthermore, it can facilitate the optimization of internal processes and generate more information to the managers, and it is a way to take advantage of the Internet potential and its amenities.

In the Brazilian public administration context, due to the fact that electronic governance is little known and researched, it is necessary to present its definition and structure and also to demonstrate ways of implementing and testing it, and ways of identifying its benefits.

Considering this, the general objective of this work is to identify a set of electronic governance practices for the executive power of the Brazilian States and Distrito Federal (Federal District), to measure and relate them to economic and social development of the respective States and Distrito Federal (Federal District).

BACKGROUND

Governance in Public Management

The governance must be related to the government’s ability and capacity to: develop efficiently and responsibly the management of its resources and public policies; to promote mechanisms that allow society participation in planning, decision and control of the actions that lead to the common good.

Therefore, the term governance is quite broad and its use varies according to its focus and which area it is applied to. There is no doubt about its importance. Good governance is a source of competitive advantage and it plays an important role for economic and social development (Streit & Klering, 2004).

To Stoker (1998), governance value relies on its capacity to provide a structure to understand the changes in the processes of governing. Thus, governance is called “good” when it allocates and generates resources to address collective problems; in other words, when an efficient State provides quality public assets which are necessary to its citizens (Mimicopoulos et al., 2007). Thus, the States must be evaluated by the quality and quantity of its public assets that are available to its citizens (Rotberg, 2004-05).
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