
E-government and E-governance: Various or Multifarious Concepts

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Abstract

E-government and E-governance (as terms and as concepts) are often treated as synonymous and used interchangeably in the academic literature or formal documents. There is no universally accepted definition of both terms / or abstractions. Such conceptual uncertainty has a negative impact on the development of digital democracy. The research objective of this article is to provide a deeper understanding of e-government and e-governance concepts through empirical studies and scatter the existing ambiguity in differences between these two concepts as this variety is not just questions of academic nuance. Based on a comparative analysis of e-government and e-governance definitions and conceptual meanings, this article offers an approach according to which e-government and e-governance represents two closely related and co-existing various concepts.

Keywords: Electronic Government; Electronic Governance; Digital Governance; Digital Democracy; Digital Government.

1. Introduction

Numerous factors have impacted and contributed to the growth and institutionalisation of social phenomenon digital governance and its particular institutional components as followings e-government and e-governance. Generally, it is attributable to the need to respond to the particular pressures or challenges (including increasing budgetary pressures, rising expectations, growing inequality and declining public trust, e-commerce and etc.) facing governments in developed and developing countries (Hannah, 2010). The growth of e-government in developing countries has mainly been driven by external forces, notably the international financial institutions (such as the World Bank and the IMF) (infoDev, 2002; OECD, 2003; Heeks, 2002) and internal issues, primarily the demands for public safety and security within national borders have necessitated re-thinking on the role of digital facilities in the delivery of services to the public.

Notwithstanding, a unified conceptual or grand vision, regarding e-government and e-governance, has not been achieved yet and the conceptual boundaries of both phenomenon are unclear. Moreover, it is uncertain whether e-government includes both internal and external aspects of public service, such as governance.

Some scholars contend that e-government constitutes only a subset (though a major one) of e-

governance - e-governance is a broader concept and includes the use of ICT by government and civil society to promote greater participation of citizens in the governance of political institutions, e.g., use of the Internet by politicians and political parties to elicit views from their constituencies in an efficient manner, or the publicizing of views by civil society organizations which are in conflict with the ruling powers (Howard, 2001; Bannister and Walsh, 2002).

Cook et al. (2002) and Snellen (2006) think that e-government encompasses all aspects of public service delivery and governance. Accordingly, e-governance is a much broader concept, as it encompasses the use of information communication technologies (ICT) in a state's institutional arrangements, decision-making processes, and the implementation of all kinds of changes in relationships between the government and the public; e-government, on the other hand, seems to be essentially a subset of e-governance. Pina eí/i/ (2006) suggests that e-governance includes e-government (UNESCO 2011).

According to Sheridan and Riley (2006), e-governance is a broader concept that deals with the whole spectrum of the relationship and networks within government regarding the usage and application of ICTs whereas e-government is limited to the development of online services).

Other scholars, such as Anttiroik (2007) describes e-government and e-governance as two completely different concepts. E-governance is a broader term comprising a range of relationships and networks in the government, related to the use and application of ICT. E-government is a more restricted area associated with the development of direct (online) services to citizens, paying greater attention to such government services as e-taxes, e-education or e-health. E-governance is a concept that defines the impact of technology on governance practices, the relationship between the government and the public, NGOs and private sector entities. E-governance covers the entire range of government steps develop and administrate, and to ensure successful implementation of e-government services offered to the public. The original idea of e-government has been attributed to the public's need for access to the government decisions and documents via electronic means, later appeared the need of public electronic services, and finally – a search of opportunities to participate in the decision making process, to consult with the government institutions.

Roy (2007) considers that a distinction must be made between e-governance and e-government, with the former referring to the process of sharing and reorganizing of power across all stakeholders and the citizenry while the latter is more focused on public service delivery. It is possible to perceive the concept of e-government and e-governance very differently depending on their focus (Yildiz, 2007).

Existing conceptual uncertainty is illustrated by Yildiz (2007). According to which some digital interaction tools (G2G, G2C, G2B, G2SC, C2C) is discussed as of e-government or e-governance or e-administration: Government -to-Government (G2G) – belongs to definition of e-administration (example: establishing and using a common data warehouse; Government-to-Citizen (G2C) – belongs to definition of e-government (example: government organization Web Sites, E-mail communication between citizens and government officials); Government-to-Business (G2B) – belongs to definition of e-government, e-commerce, e--collaboration) (example: Posting government bids on the Web, e-procurement, e-partnerships); Government-to-Civil Society Organisations (G2SC) – belongs to definition of e-governance (example:

electronic communications and coordination efforts after disaster); Citizen-to-Citizen (C2C) - belongs to definition of e-governance (example: electronic discussion groups on civic issues).

It is clear that considerable confusion exists in explaining e-government and e-governance domains. Follow this, we attempt to resolve such ambiguity and come up with non-overlapping understanding of both phenomenon by reviewing and analyzing existing conceptual framework that provides details and establishes relationships of key variables or similarities.

2. Results and Discussions

2.1 E-government: Conceptual Visions

There is not any universally accepted definition of the e-government concept (Halchin, 2004).

Examination of official documents, analytical or scientific literature shows that “e-government” continues to evolve, depending on the context. As Homburg (2008) outlines that e-government is hence multifaceted and has been implemented in a variety of forms and shapes, further complicating the process of trying to determine a single, universal meaning.

E-government, characterised as a multifaced concept (Tab. 1), has a different meaning to different constituents (Gauld and Goldfinch, 2006): for politicians e-government plays role an engine for reform and to meet the aspirations of new public management; for the general public, e-government is viewed as a source of greater information and influence on government; for the bureaucrats, e-government is viewed as a managerial tool to improve their service delivery.

E-government has been discussed in different aspects: in the context of technology (Zhiyuan, 2002); from a service delivery perspective (Norris and Moon 2005); from a citizen-centric perspective (Roy, 2007); from a functional perspective (Selfert and Petersen, 2002); from a social fabric perspective (Brown, 2005); and from a radical change perspective (Kraemer and King 2008).

Table 1: Definitions/Conceptual Meanings of Term E-government

Authors	Definitions / Conceptual Meanings
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United Nations	<p>“E-government has been employed to mean everything from ‘online government services’ to ‘exchange of information and services electronically with citizens, businesses, and other arms of government. E-government can thus be defined as the use of ICTs to more effectively and efficiently deliver government services to citizens and businesses. It is the application of ICT in government operations, achieving public ends by digital means. The underlying principle of e-government, supported by an effective e-governance institutional framework, is to improve the internal workings of the public sector by reducing financial costs and transaction times so as to better integrate work flows and processes and enable effective resource utilization across the various public sector agencies aiming for sustainable solutions. Through innovation and e-government, governments around the world can be more efficient, provide better services, respond to the demands of citizens for transparency and accountability, be more inclusive and thus restore the trust of citizens in their governments.”</p>
United Nations (AOEMA report)	<p>“E-government is defined as utilizing the Internet and the world-wide-web for delivering government information and services to citizens.”</p>
World Bank	<p>“E-Government” refers to the use by government agencies of information technologies (such as Wide Area Networks, the Internet, and mobile computing) that have the ability to transform relations with citizens, businesses, and other arms of government. These technologies can serve a variety of different ends: better delivery of government services to citizens, improved interactions with business and industry, citizen empowerment through access to information, or more efficient government management. The resulting benefits can be less corruption, increased transparency, greater convenience, revenue growth, and/or cost reductions.”</p>
EU Parliament	<p>“e-Government refers to efforts by public authorities to use information and communication technologies (ICTs) to improve public services and increase democratic participation. E-Government aims to improve government efficiency through the reduced cost of electronic information management and communications, the reorganization of government agencies and the reduction of administrative silos of information.”</p>
OECD	<p>“The term “e-government” focuses on the use of new information and communication technologies (ICTs) by governments as applied to the full range of government functions. In particular, the networking potential offered by the Internet and related technologies has the potential to transform the structures and operation of government.”</p>

Working Group on E-government in the Developing World	“E-government is the use of information and communication technologies (ICTs) to promote more efficient and effective government, facilitate more accessible government services, allow greater public access to information, and make government more accountable to citizens. E-government might involve delivering services via the Internet, telephone, community centers (self-service or facilitated by others), wireless devices or other communications systems.”
United States of America	...“electronic Government’ means the use by the Government of web-based Internet applications and other information technologies, combined with processes that implement these technologies, to - “(A) enhance the access to and delivery of Government information and services to the public, other agencies, and other Government entities; or “(B) bring about improvements in Government operations that may include effectiveness, efficiency, service quality, or transformation; information and services to the public, other agencies, and other Government entities.”
IGI Global	“This term can be defined as the use of ICTs to more effectively and efficiently deliver government services to citizens and businesses. It is the application of ICT in government operations, achieving public ends by digital means. The use of or application of information technologies (such as Internet and intranet systems) to government activities and processes in order to facilitate the flow of information from government to its citizens, from citizens to government and within government. Refers to the use of new information and communication technologies (ICTs) by governments as applied to the full range of government functions.”
Gartner Group (2000)	...“the continuous optimization of service delivery, constituency participation, and governance by transforming internal and external relationships through technology, the Internet and new media.”
GBDe definition cited from Bashar, Rezaul and Grout (2011)	“Electronic government (hereafter e-Government) refers to a situation in which administrative, legislative and judicial agencies (including both central and local governments) digitize their internal and external operations and utilize networked systems efficiently to realize better quality in the provision of public services.”

Key references	<p>“e-Government implies the implementation of information and communication technology like internet, to improve government activities and process, with the aim of increasing efficiency, transparency, and citizen involvement. On the other hand. e-Government may be defined as the integration of information and communication technology, in public administration, i.e. to various government processes, operations, and structures with the purpose of enhancing transparency, efficiency, accountability and citizen participation. It facilitates: Greater level of efficiency and effectiveness in government activities and process. Enhances quality of public services; Simplifies administrative processes; Improves access to information; Increases communication between various government agencies; Strengthen support to public policy; Enables seamless government.”</p>
Norris and Moon (2005)	“The electronic provision of information and services by governments, 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.”
Kraemer and King, (2003)	“The use of information technology within government to achieve more efficient operations, better quality of service, and easy public access to government information and services.”
Brown (2005)	“The entire range of government roles and activities, shaped by and making use of information and communications technologies.”
Cook, Lavigne, Pagano, Dawes and Pardo (2002)	“The uses of information technology to support operations, engage citizens, and provide government services.”
Fang (2002)	“...”is defined e-government as a way for governments to use the most innovative information and communication technologies, particularly web-based Internet applications, to provide citizens and businesses with more convenient access to government information and services, to improve the quality of the services and to provide greater opportunities to participate in democratic institutions and processes.”
Fraga (2002)	“...”e-government involves the use of ICTs to support government operations and provide government services.”
Leitner (2003)	“...”e-government goes even further and aims to fundamentally transform the production processes in which public services are generated and delivered, thereby transforming the entire range of relationships of public bodies with citizens, businesses and other governments.”

E-government is also perceived differently in connection with its theoretical background. According to Garson (1999), there are four theoretical frameworks within which e-government is conceptualised. The first framework involves the potential of IT in decentralization and democratization. The second normative/ dystopian framework underlines the limitations and

contradictions of technology. Third, the sociotechnical systems approach emphasizes the continuous and two-way interaction of the technology and the organizational–institutional environment. The fourth framework places e-government within theories of global integration.

2.2 E-governance: Conceptual Visions

Just as there are many conceptual views of governance, there are many conceptual approaches of e-governance (Godse and Garg, 2011). Although they do not always run inline, generally e-governance refers to the use of information and communication technologies to transform and support the processes and structures of a governance system. In order to cover the variety of uses and the nuances sufficiently, several definitions / meanings are presented in the (Tab. 2).

Table 2: Definitions / Conceptual Meanings of E-governance

Authors	Definitions / Conceptual Meanings
Council of Europe	“E-governance is about the use of information technology to raise the quality of the services governments deliver to citizens and businesses. It is hoped that it will also reinforce the connection between public officials and communities thereby leading to a stronger, more accountable and inclusive democracy.”
UNESCO	“E-governance is the public sector’s use of information and communication technologies with the aim of improving information and service delivery, encouraging citizen participation in the decision-making process and making government more accountable, transparent and effective. E-governance involves new styles of leadership, new ways of debating and deciding policy and investment, new ways of accessing education, new ways of listening to citizens and new ways of organizing and delivering information and services. E-governance is generally considered as a wider concept than e-government, since it can bring about a change in the way citizens relate to governments and to each other. E-governance can bring forth new concepts of citizenship, both in terms of citizen needs and responsibilities. Its objective is to engage, enable and empower the citizen.”
ÖKTEM, DEMİRHAN (2004)	“Electronic governance (e-governance) applications are related to both the usage of technology and citizen participation in politics. “Electronic” indicates the technological capacities of our age and “governance” is a new perspective in government paradigm. Innovations in both technology and perspective create new understandings for governing such as “governing with people.”
Bedi, Singh and Srivastava (2001) Holmes (2001) Okot-Uma (2000)	...“meaning ‘electronic governance’ is using information and communication technologies (ICTs) at various levels of the government and the public sector and beyond, for the purpose of enhancing Governance.”

Keohane and Nye (2000)	“Governance implies the processes and institutions, both formal and informal, that guide and restrain the collective activities of a group. Government is the subset that acts with authority and creates formal obligations. Governance need not necessarily be conducted exclusively by governments. Private firms, associations of firms, nongovernmental organizations (NGOs), and associations of NGOs all engage in it, often in association with governmental bodies, to create governance; sometimes without governmental authority.”
Clift (2003)	“E-democracy builds on e-governance and focuses on the actions and innovations enabled by ICTs combined with higher levels of democratic motivation and intent.”
Backus (2001)	“E-governance is defined as the, “application of electronic means in (1) the interaction between government and citizens and government and businesses, as well as (2) in internal government operations to simplify and improve democratic, government and business aspects of Governance.”
IGI Global	“Electronic Governance is the application of Information and Communication Technologies (ICTs) for delivering government services through integration of various stand-alone systems between Government-to-Citizens (G2C), Government-to-Business (G2B), and Government-to-Government (G2G) services. It is often linked with back office processes and interactions within the entire government framework. Through e-Governance, the government services are made available to the citizens in a convenient, efficient, and transparent manner.”
Oakley (2002)	“A technology mediated service that facilitates a transformation in the relationship between government and citizen.”
Riley (2001) cited by Saxena (2003)	The commitment to utilize appropriate technology for a variety of ends including greater democracy and fair and efficient services.
Palvia and Sharma (2007)	“Propose a framework for differentiating between e-government and e-governance. In their model, e-governance is concerned with internally focused use of ICT to manage organizational resources and administer policies and procedures; e-government is outward and citizen directed.”
Sheridan and Riley (2010)	“... deals with the whole spectrum of the relationship and networks within government regarding the usage and application of ICTs.”
Chen and Hsish (2009)	“The use of ICT to improve the quality of services and governance (cf UNESCO).”
Marche and McNiven (2003)	... " a technology-mediated relationship between citizens and their governments from the perspective of potential electronic deliberation over civic communication, over policy evolution and in democratic
Dawes (2008) Potnis (2009)	“ICTs provide interactive communication channels, which are important in the transformation of the current governing process to a governing process that is open to the collaboration and deliberation of

	different actors in the processes of service provision and information delivery.”
Pina et al., (2007) Sandoval-Almazan and Gil-Garcia (2012)	“E-governance refers to the use of ICTs to reach the aims related to governance. Governance can be explained in terms of its main components. These components are participation, transparency and accountability, information and service delivery, and communication and interaction in governing processes.”
Lean, Zailani, Ramayah, and Fernando (2009)	“E-governance is related to the use of information and communication technologies in policymaking, legitimating, auditing, accounting of government application, providing transparency and accountability of
OECD (2001)	... “means “preparing for greater and faster interactions with citizens and ensure better knowledge management.”
Prabha (2004)	“A form of e-business in governance comprising of process and structures involved in deliverance of electronic service to the public, viz. citizens.”
Kettl (2002)	“The impact [from e-government interactions] on government, public service and citizens throughout the political process, policy development, program design and service delivery.”
Oakley (2002)	“A technology mediated service that facilitates a transformation in the relationship between government and citizen.”
Gordon (2002) Signore et al.(,2005)	...” defines e-government as the use of ICT to improve the process of government. In a narrow sense it is sometimes defined as citizen’s services, re-engineering with technology, or procurement over Internet.”
Spremić et al. (2009)	...“e-government denotes the use of information technologies and the Internet for better delivery government services to citizens. It denotes also a more efficient management and improvement of interactions between government and citizens.”
Marthandan and Tang (2010)	...” interactions between economic, political and social actors. Indeed e-government allows businesses to transact with each other more efficiently (B2B) and brings customers closer to businesses (B2C). Also, e-government enable links between government and citizens (G2C), government and businesses enterprises (G2B) and interagency relationships (G2G).”
Signore et al. (2005)	“E-governance is a concept larger than the concept of e-government since it can bring about a change in the way how citizens relate to government and to each other.”
Key differences (2017)	“e-Governance means governing or administering a country/state or organization, with the help of information and communication technology. Electronic governance, shortly known as e-governance refers to the utilization of information and communication technology (ICT) for

	<p>providing government services, disseminating information, communication activities, and incorporation of miscellaneous stand alone system and services between different models, processes and interaction within the overall structure.</p> <p>E-governance is a tool, that makes available various government services to citizens in a convenient way, such as: Better provision of government services; Improved interaction with different groups; Citizen empowerment through access to information; Efficient government management.”</p>
Margolis and Moreno-Riano (2010)	...”e-governance is focused on the democratic processes.”
Budd and Harris (2009) UNESCO (2005)	"e-governance is the use of information and communication technologies in public administration in order to improve the information and public service, encouraging the citizens’ participation in the decision-making processes and making the government more accountable, transparent and effective."

Depending on the particular conditions and governance requirements or activities, Halachmi (2007) suggests five important models of e-governance: (i) The Broadcasting Model of dissemination of useful governance information to have informed citizenry; (ii) The Critical Flow Model of routing information of critical value to the targeted audience; (iii) The Comparative Analysis Model of assimilation of best practices in the field of governance for developing countries to empower their people; (IV) The E-Advocacy/ Mobilisation and Lobbying Model of adding the opinions of virtual communities so that the global civil society can have an impact on global decision-making processes; (v) The Interactive-Service Model of individuals’ direct participation in governance processes to bring in greater objectivity and transparency in decision-making processes.

2.3 E-government and E-governance Terms Components

The “E” part of both e-government and e-governance stands for the electronic platform or infrastructure that enables and supports the networking of public policy development and deployment (Sheridan and Riley, 2006)

Government is an institutional superstructure that society uses to translate politics into policies and legislation. Governments are specialised institutions that contribute to governance. Governments are bureaucratically organized and constitutionally legitimated. They serve as both the highest forum for policy making within their jurisdictions, and as the final court of appeal within their jurisdictions for dissenters to those policies. Most of the work of governments consists of actually implementing policies through service delivering programs. Individuals and groups assess governmental performance in terms of their own perception. Governments often face the need to rationalize discrepancies amongst people's desires to achieve their own ends (Godse and Garg, 2011).

Governance is the outcome of the interaction of government, the public service, and citizens throughout the political process, policy development, program design, and service delivery. The institution of government involves a narrower range of considerations than the wider functions of governance. Governance is distinct from government as it concerns longer-term processes rather than immediate decisions. Governance is a set of continuous processes that usually evolve slowly with use unlike government. The governance focuses on processes instead of decisions. Governance takes the larger view of social objectives, so it involves the coordination of efforts rather than the implementation of specific programs. This is the systemic perspective as opposed to a focus on the individual practice, or player, or process. The "bottom line" for governance is outcomes rather than the outputs of government (Godse and Garg, 2011).

3. Conclusion

A comparative analysis of e-government and e-governance reveals that discussed concepts have to be considered as two distinct abstractions (Sheridan and Riley, 2010):

- (a) E-government is an institutional approach to jurisdictional political operations and a narrower discipline dealing with the development of online services to the citizen, more the e on any particular government service – such as e-tax, e-transportation or e-health, such as not for profits organizations, NGOs or private sector corporate entities.
- (b) E-governance is a procedural approach to co-operative administrative relations, i.e. the encompassing of basic and standard procedures within the confines of public administration. It is the latter that acts as the lynchpin that will ensure success of the delivery of e-services. E-governance is a broader topic that deals with the whole spectrum of the relationship and networks within government regarding the usage and application of ICTs. E-governance is a wider concept that defines and assesses the impacts technologies are having on the practice and administration of governments and the relationships between public servants and the wider society, such as dealings with the elected bodies or outside groups. E-governance encompasses a series of necessary steps for government agencies to develop and administer to ensure successful implementation of e-government services to the public at large. The differences between these two important constructs are explored further in this essay.

Based on the results of the study conceptual frameworks of e-government and e-governance are based on following main strategic pillars: e-government is a system whereas e-governance is a functionality, e-government is a one-way communication protocol. On the contrary, e-governance is a two-way communication protocol (Kafle, 2018).

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