

THE VIABILITY OF E-TECHNIQUES TOWARDS SERVICE DELIVERY IN THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT SECTOR



**Presenters: Prof. John Mafunisa, Dr. E.N.
Mathebula, Dr. L. Nkondo & N. Muleya**

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Problem Statement

- Failure to deliver services in the RSA leads to increasing violent community protests
- Failure to provide services linked to shortage of skills in municipalities
- Lack of poor utilization of e-government is another cause of poor service delivery
- The poor and the illiterate are sidelined now that e-service delivery is introduced

Research Objectives of the Study

The research objectives of this study are to:

- Develop a concept document on the e-service delivery in the LG sector that should also entail stakeholders in the ICT sector
- Explore the impact of e-service delivery in the LG sector
- Examine the challenges faced by the LG sector in the implementation of the e-service delivery
- Unpack the skills essential in the carrying out of the effective and efficient e-service delivery in municipalities
- Propose the best model of e-service delivery tapping in the international and regional experiences
- Prepare a research article to be published by the LGSETA in the recognized journal or magazine that has a national footprint on LG matters.

Project Deliverables

- The deliverables of this project are:
 - A final research report responding to the research objectives, incorporating feedback from the LGSETA.
 - This has also included the executive summary and a full bibliography.
 - A research article

Research Methodology

- Structured questionnaire was used
- Questionnaire drafted after extensive consultation with ICT specialists in LG sector
- ICT managers or corporate managers in municipalities were the target group
- 100 questionnaires were distributed to both inland and coastal municipalities through e-mails
- Follow-up made through telephones
- 17 completed questionnaires were received back

Limitations of the Study

- The weaknesses linked to this study were:
 - 1st limitation: the study is exploratory in nature and therefore the findings are indicative.
Thakur and Singh (2013) are of the opinion that it is not the intention of exploratory research of this nature to be generalised.
 - 2nd limitation: owing to the objectives of the study we were not able to interview all the stakeholders of e-service delivery
 - 3rd limitation: because of the Covid-19 pandemic most of the research respondents informed us that they prefer to receive the questionnaires by e-mail instead of personal visit
 - This disadvantaged the study as we were unable to follow-up on some of their responses.

Significance of the Study

- Environmental pressures and business drivers necessitate transformation to the electronic model of service delivery
- In this regard, the impact of the electronic model has confronted governments with an “adapt or die” scenario.
- For the RSA, to fall behind in technology and innovation would increase the gap between it and wealthier and more advanced economies.
- The world of electronic technology demands that the South African government rethink its role as catalysts for economic and social growth
- Governing is too costly and expensive
- Governing is inconvenient
- Governments are not transparent
- E-government is a common way of conducting government across the globe
- It could also deliver cost savings to people and companies, too.

Purpose and Benefits of E-service Delivery

- The purpose of e-service delivery is to use ICT to transform the way services are delivered
- This helps LG to overcome challenges of poor service delivery
- E-government development aims to improve public service delivery capability, as well as public administration governance, transparency, and accountability through the development of e-government service delivery capability
- ICT have become a critical component of municipalities in many developed countries around the world
- E-service delivery reduces the wide gap in public interaction with the government and shortens the application process for varied licences, permits and approvals
- E-government provides citizens with services and alternative modes of access to information and communication such as the internet, call centres, fax, and kiosks.

- E-government allows for transformation of the public sector which in-turn changes government business conduct decreasing inefficiency and increasing effectiveness
- E-government allows the government to increase transparency with citizens by allowing them access to information about government rules and policies
- E-government creates an environment where citizens can hold government accountable for their action
- Placing government services online allows government and citizens to communicate and deliver certain services around the clock and with minimal time and money expended.

- In addition e-government will reduce cost and levels of organisational processes by streamlining and re-organising operating procedures
- It improves the performance of government agencies and that it will deliver the public service effectively and efficiently for customers
- E-government has great benefits regarding economizing and improving of governments service operations, including efficiency and reduced transactional costs
- E-governments result in less corruption, increased transparency, greater convenience, revenue growth and cost reduction

Policy and legislative frameworks underpinning e-service delivery

- Following are some of the policies and legislative frameworks that can assist in proper implementation of e-service delivery:
 - The Public Service Act, 1994 (Proclamation 103 of 1994)
 - Public Service Corporate Governance of Information and Communication Technology Policy Framework, 2012
 - Public Service Regulations (2001) as Amended
 - State Information Technology Agency Act, 1998
 - Electronic Communications and Transactions Act, 2002
 - Electronic Communications Amendment Act, 2014
 - Minimum Information Security Standards

Types of E-government Approaches

Government-to-Citizen e-Government Approach

- Government-to-citizen e-government approach focuses on making information accessible to citizens online.
- This is referred to as a citizen-centric e-Government when governments take further steps to provide online services organized around citizen needs
- **Government-to-Business e-Government Approach**
- Government-to-business e-government approach focuses on strategies using ICTs to facilitate government interactions with the private sector to procure goods and services and to coordinate transactions from private companies

Government-to-Employee and Government-to-Government e-Government Approaches

- Government-to-employee e-government approach focuses on relationships within government among employees to coordinate internal operations and improve the internal efficiency of business processes

African and International Experiences on E-service Delivery

- An African Perspective on E-Service Delivery
 - Nigeria
 - Burkina Faso
 - Zimbabwe
 - Mali
 - Kenya
 - South Africa
- E-governance and e-Service Delivery Experiences from a BRICS Partner
- International Perspective on E-service Delivery

Stakeholders in the ICT Sector

Four key stakeholders who are involved in the successful e-governance programme are:

- Leadership
- Internal officials
- Information Technology Service Providers
- Information Technology Department / National Informatics Centre

Prerequisites for E-service Delivery

- Various prerequisites for e-service delivery exist. These prerequisites are:
 - Need for a management sponsor
 - Motivated officials
 - Team building
 - Infrastructure

Barriers to Implementing E-government

- Barriers that hinder the implementation of e-government include:
 - Privacy and security risk barriers
 - Technical issues
 - Technical issues
 - Financial issues
 - Legislative barriers
 - Administrative barriers
 - Cultural barriers

Essential Skills for Effective E-service Delivery

- For the proper implementation of e-service delivery, there needs to be skills that need to be developed and nurtured within LG in the RSA
- These skills include:
 - Interaction skills
 - Management skills and capabilities
 - Organizational design
 - Technological skills
 - Content knowledge
 - Teamwork skills

Impact and Opportunities for Public E-service Delivery

- Below, we outline the impact and opportunities of e-service delivery.
 - Reduction and efficiency gains
 - Quality of service delivery to business and customers
 - Transparency and accountability
 - Increase the capacity of government
 - Improve the quality of decision making

Evaluation of E-service Delivery

- The requirements of e-service delivery evaluation are classified as follows:
 - Facilitation of the use of e-services
 - Facilitation of document submission
 - User informing
 - Integration facilitation
 - Security provision
 - Presence of administrative regulation
 - Payments for e-service
 - Use of e-signature

Features for Measuring E-government Services

- Features to be used as scales for measuring e-government services include:
 - Systems
 - Privacy/security
 - Efficiency
 - Fulfilment
 - Reliability
 - Information
 - Ease of use
 - Website Design
 - Interactivity
 - Responsiveness

The 4IR, E-governance and E-service Delivery

- Contextualization of the Fourth Industrial Revolution
- Drivers of the Fourth Industrial Revolution:
 - Information Communication Technology Infrastructure
 - Education and Training Dispensation
 - Policy Paradigm and Innovation
 - Responsiveness and Strategies

Challenges Confronting the 4IR

- The 4IR presents some of the challenges that government must grapple with and resolve before swimming into an ocean and era of disruptive technology
- Some of such challenges are identified and explained hereunder.
 - Job Losses and Unemployment
 - Skills deficiency
 - Infrastructure Backlog
 - Security and Privacy

Conclusions and Recommendations

- From the research findings the following recommendations can be ventured:
 - Research established that citizens do not get the necessary lessons from their municipality about how e-services work, and the municipality does not try to get feedback from citizens on whether e-services are working better
 - It is recommended that municipalities should provide lessons to community members on how they can access municipal services online. Various mass media can be used in this regard
 - Most of the research respondents (about 53%) indicated that their municipalities have no audit finding on ICT
 - It must therefore, be recommended that an ICT policy in municipal governance needs to be audited annually or frequently in order to keep up-to-date with the demands of community members and other stakeholders
 - Research established that most municipalities have challenges in information security

- This is supported by De Lange, Von Solms and Gerber (2015) who argue that the general management of the security aspects of information and related technologies is generally not addressed properly in most SA municipalities
- It is recommended that an effective municipal information security policy and good supporting policies, as two of the most crucial aspects of a good ISMS should be developed and implemented by all municipalities
- These policies should be directives that come from the municipal council; and a proper monitoring process should accompany these policies.
- Research findings showed that municipalities are understaffed with the personnel responsible for ICT matters
- Therefore, municipalities should be capacitated with experienced and qualified people for them to provide e-services effectively and efficiently to community members.
- The analysis indicated that many of the respondents were male (70.6%) compared to females 29.4% (n=5)

- It is recommended that the issue of gender be addressed in terms of the Employment Equity Act, 1998 and relevant municipal laws
- The idea is to redress the imbalances of the past in terms of gender, especially because women are the majority in most institutions in our country, including municipalities
- Research revealed that some municipalities have challenges in relation to resources, especially finance
- It can therefore, be recommended that municipalities must budget for adequate resources, especially financial resources to ensure effective and efficient e-service delivery
- Research established that some municipalities do not have proper server rooms.
- It can therefore, be recommended that municipalities, through the ICT manager, should take reasonable steps to protect all ICT hardware from natural and man-made disasters to avoid loss and ensure reliable ICT service delivery.

- ICT hardware under control of the ICT function should be hosted in server rooms or lockable cabinets. Server rooms should be of solid construction and locked at all times
- The ICT department should retain an access control list for the server room
- Access should be reviewed quarterly by the ICT Manager
- All server rooms should be equipped with air-conditioning and fire detection and suppression

• **THANK YOU !!**