

Chapter 10

Study of Electronic Governance Practices: Controllershship Instrument for Decision–Making in the Management of the Brazilian States

Gilmar Ribeiro de Mello

State University of West of Paraná, Brazil

Valmor Slomski

University of São Paulo, Brazil

Edson Luiz Riccio

University of São Paulo, Brazil

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, we first used bibliographic research to build the theoretical platform about electronic governance and controllershship in public management and the identification of electronic governance practices; next, we propose the measuring and monitoring index for the electronic governance development; and at last, we perform Pearson's correlation test to verify the correlation between electronic governance and the indexes of both economic and social development. When comparing the results of the correlation and the percentage of the implemented practices, we conclude that the State with the highest GDP, the highest HDI and the lowest Gini, are the ones with the highest number of implemented electronic governance practices.

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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

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