

Full Length Research Paper

Comparison of E-readiness assessment models (measurement frameworks in electronic government quality management)

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This paper reviews several required developments in e-readiness assessment models with special attention to the issues of long term national e-readiness assessment models for monitoring and evaluation policy and practice and also different actions taken by evaluation and monitoring agencies and association (governmental and nongovernmental). In this paper attention is given to the questions of decentralization and independence of e-readiness assessment centers in terms of administrative, financial, employment, human resource management policies and organizational affairs which can facilitate the national trend of e-readiness assessment program. The recommendations in this paper focus on e-readiness project level monitoring. Epublic services should consider reviewing their governance arrangements in wider systems context to ensure that the organization is able to achieve e-readiness assessment governance based on a hierarchy of policy making to stipulate standards of roles, practice, e-readiness assessment manual to assign responsibilities and finally standing operation procedure to achieve uniformity of the performance of a specific function. By such methods, monitoring and evaluation agencies not only guide the development of innovative practices but they also serve to lend credibility to emerging forms of e-readiness assessment models innovation.

Key words: E-readiness, assessment, measurement, electronic services, electronic government.

INTRODUCTION

Efficiency and productivity of e-government based organizations is a result of training, preserving and maintaining its technological, e-readiness assessment models and service assets, e-readiness assessment models improvement, promotion of e-services regarding e-government principals development and finally its widespread sustainable development (OPSR, 2002). Therefore identifying and making contact and supporting this powerful stratum of the public organizations in order to make use of their cooperation and participation in various fields to produce content is a strategic trend for sustainable development based on a national e-readiness assessment models. To achieve this objective in line with the models must be approved to provide and direct e-readiness assessment modeless and appropriate organizations

for producing knowledge through directing e-readiness assessment models activities to achieve sustainable development of the country.

The objective of this program is offering assistance, financial and spiritual supporting services to the state e-readiness assessment models section including legal and real ones in order that e-readiness assessment models affairs bloom in accordance with production of knowledge and technology and public utilization of e-readiness assessment models results in the country.

Through the last two state e-readiness assessment models developments program, e-readiness assessment models centers, universities and governmental e-readiness assessment models agencies have raised new questions about the quality and relevance of their systems and approach for program evaluation of e-readiness assessment models.

This trend can be seen as a response to the increased size, complexity and diversity of the e-government centers

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in terms of administrative, financial, employment and organizational affairs.

It also reviews the effect and roles of monitoring and evaluation on the ways that e-readiness assessment centers do their e-readiness assessment models activities.

This paper reviews several new developments in e-readiness assessment models with special attention to the issues that accrediting state long term e-readiness assessment models for monitoring and evaluation policy and practice.

Context and issue

This study analyzes the monitoring and evaluation of state e-readiness assessment models, evaluation and monitoring procedures and standards, including the different actions taken by evaluation and monitoring agencies and association (governmental and non-governmental) (Vaezi, 2004).

In this paper attention is given to the questions of decentralization and independence of e-readiness assessment in terms of administrative, financial, employment, human resource management policies and organizational affairs which can facilitate the national trend of e-readiness assessment program (AEU, 1997).

The policy issues that these new approaches raise are challenging, but they can also be seen as variations as the long standing tensions that evaluation and monitoring agencies have faced. Significantly, the questions for evaluation activities still focus on the adequacy and appropriateness of e-readiness assessment practices and whether the practices are efficient and effective and achieve national e-readiness assessment program results (El-Khowes, 2001).

A critical element in evaluation and monitoring of the national e-readiness assessment program is the use of standards to evaluate and monitor the e-readiness assessment models. Four aspects of the development of programming accreditation are distinctive (Morris, 1999):

- 1.) Changes in out put of e-readiness assessment models:
 - i. Implementation of new strategies.
 - ii. Managing new executive programs.
 - iii. Designing new e-readiness assessment models, organizational structure and also financial assessment.
 - iv. Designing a functions evaluation system for all level of e-readiness assessment models.
 - v. Time limited monitoring and evaluation.
- 2.) Changes in out-put of e-readiness assessment models:
 - i. Optimum management of e-readiness assessment models financing.
 - ii. New definition of short term e-readiness assessment models programming.

iii. Define new tasks for liner e-readiness assessment models manager.

3.) Bureaucracy decreasing of e-readiness assessment models:

- i. Privatization of e-readiness assessment models activities.
- ii. E-readiness assessment models outsourcing.
- iii. Making new chances for e-readiness assessment models competencies.

4.) Defining interactional approach between e-readiness assessment models agencies:

- i. Making new links between bureaucracy and e-readiness assessment models leadership.
- ii. Pay attention to policy making for e-readiness assessment models activities.
- iii. Acceptance of the social and political character of e-readiness assessment models center.

For evaluation and monitoring focusing on input oriented approach there are four standards:

- i.) Standard 1: Defining structure purpose and e-readiness assessment models objectives.
- ii.) Standard 2: Defining the methods of achieving e-readiness assessment models objectives through core functions.
- iii.) Standard 3: Developing and applying resources and organizational structures to ensure sustainability.
- iv.) Standard 4: Creating a national commitment for e-readiness assessment models development.

In this case different views can be offered about the overall roles and impact of evaluating and monitoring systems in e-readiness assessment models especially based on the governmental monitoring agencies. There are five comprehensive roles: economics, business, end users oriented roles, governmental oriented roles and cultural ones.

Electronic readiness and competitive advantages

Knowledge is the new source of competitive advantage for businesses in the future as power belongs to the people with knowledge and information (Yeoh, 1998) as well to those who know how to manage it. This competitive advantage is similarly true in the public sector. Efficiency in policies and services offered by the government organizations are just some of the benefits of KM. Other benefits of KM correlate directly to bottom-line savings, while some are more difficult to quantify as these benefits include long-term and short-term benefits (Wiig, 2002). By managing knowledge, the government could gain numerous benefits (Syed-Ikhsan and Rowland, 2004), especially improved efficiency and better decision making as well as catering to customer needs. Increased business efficiency, especially in the public sector, was

considered to be a key benefit of knowledge management (McAdam and Reid, 2000).

According to Santosus and Surmacz (2001), an effective KM program should help Public sectors do one or more of the following (Zabeda, 2007).

- i.) Foster innovation by encouraging the free flow of ideas.
- ii.) Improve customer service by streamlining response time.
- iii.) Boost revenues by getting products and services to market faster.
- iv.) Enhance employee retention rates by recognizing the value of employees' Knowledge and rewarding them for it.
- v.) Streamline operations and reduce costs by eliminating redundant or unnecessary.

The advancement of information technology and the act of collecting, processing and disseminating information is a major trend to show the necessity of knowledge management in all levels of public sector management (Chung, 2007). In this process knowledge-based administration is a creative and systematic undertaking by the government to enhance policy quality and administrative services through knowledge activities. In contrast to the passive and methodological concept of knowledge management where the focus lies in the management of information resources, knowledge-based administration is an active and integrated concept emphasizing the purpose of enhancing the quality of policies and administrative services through knowledge-based administrative processes.

Sharing of information generates 'power', which in turn enhances speed. However, it is difficult to establish a culture for sharing information in a closed bureaucratic organizational culture. Having accurately pinpointed such changes in the administrative environment, in this process government innovation as one of the government's stop-priority agenda needed to change the government in a way adaptive to a knowledge based society (Chung, 2007). The two dimensions of government innovation are the enhancement of 'efficiency' and 'transparency'. Knowledge-based administration encompasses both dimensions in its pursuit of building an 'efficient and transparent government'.

The widespread sharing and utilization of quality knowledge enables better policies and services in a shorter period of time. The developmental stages of knowledge-based administration are:

- i.) Creation, where the KMS is established and the importance of knowledge management is recognized.
- ii.) Sharing and distribution, where a culture of knowledge sharing is developed and the quantitative amount of knowledge increases.
- iii.) Utilization, where operation-centered knowledge management is achieved and the quality of knowledge

are enhanced.

iv.) And finally realizing goals, which is the final stage in which knowledge is freely exchanged with outside organizations.

Knowledge transfer and governmental tasks

Innovation of government is an urgent demand and so knowledge transfer on successful e-government projects has attracted major attention. There is high interest in assessing model cases of projects, in using such good/best practice cases, in considering the feasibility of transfer, and in spurring an organizational learning process. Best/good practice became to an often used and well-known word with the aim to support building better e-government solutions on national and international level.

In this procedure five framing objectives can be considered as key methods (Rolland, 2007).

- i.) All citizens must be in consideration: advancing inclusion through e-government so that all citizens benefit from trusted, innovative services and easy access for all.
- ii.) Making efficiency and effectiveness a reality – significantly contributing, to high user satisfaction, transparency and accountability, a lighter administrative burden and efficiency gains.
- iii.) Implementing high-impact key services for citizens and businesses - with agreement on cooperation on further high-impact online citizen services.
- iv.) Putting key enablers in place - enabling citizens and businesses to benefit, from convenient, secure and interoperable authenticated access across Europe to public services.
- v.) Strengthening participation and democratic decision-making - demonstrating, by, tools for effective public debate and participation in democratic decision-making.

Although there are different views on the concept of e-government, the adoption of ICT by the public sector will almost consistently affect: (Wimmer, 2002; tranquiller, 2004).

- i.) Public service delivery (citizen-centric approach).
- ii.) Organizational settings.
- iii.) The social/political system.

The main four objectives of digital government are the following:

- i.) Satisfy social needs in the Information era, offering a new, entirely citizen centered approach to governing (e-governance).
- ii.) Convert the government into a competitive entity through innovation using ITC.
- iii.) Redefine relations with citizens and the private sector.
- iv.) Work together to create a 'Good Government'.

In this process institutional weakness, human resources, funding arrangements, local environment, and technology and information changes are factors stalling e-government (Barket, 2000).

The social benefit that is expected to derive from this initiative will translate into better public services, available from anywhere at any time, improved transparency and access to public information, improved accountability, increase in government efficiency, increase in citizen participation in public decision making and finally, general reduction of the government's operational costs.

Furthermore, each organization has a unique set of needs to be addressed by KM.

After identifying these needs, the strategy and KM projects for addressing them should be developed in the following categories:

- i.) Citizen care, participation and satisfaction.
- ii.) Citizen consultation for policy creation.

The best contribution of these elements is the KM based model with organizational, mandatory and technological aspects. Also is important the guidelines for software and other tools. Furthermore, some examples of KM applications are given in the following categories:

- a) To improve services for citizens.
- b) To take advantage of personal experiences.
- c) To provide access to knowledge accumulated.
- d) To make easy the organization of information and its recovery.
- e) To diffuse in a nimble and efficient manner the available information.

Knowledge application within e-governments based organization can be caused by two sets of elements: motivational factors and knowledge-related factors (Szulanski, 1996). The former is related to the motivation of involving knowledge workers to devote the necessary time and resources for transferring knowledge. The latter stems from the nature of knowledge that includes strategies and explicitness (Nonaka and Takeuchi, 1995; Polanyi, 1962; Simonin, 1999b; Szulanski, 2000), causal ambiguity (Simonin, 1999a; Szulanski, 1996; Szulanski, 2000), consciousness, collectiveness, objectiveness (Inkpen and Dinur, 1998), specificity (Reed and Defillippi, 1990; Simonin, 1999b), complexity (Simonin, 1999b; Zander and Kogut, 1995), codifiability, teachability, system dependence, and product observability (Zander and Kogut, 1995). Incentives and information technologies can effectively alleviate the "stickiness" of knowledge transfer caused by these two sets of factors. The adoption of information technology in knowledge transfer can be justified from the following four perspectives: support and guidance (Wilson and Snyder, 1999), process facilitation (Alavi and Leidner, 2001; Zack, 1999), explicit/tacit conversion, and functional enablement (CIO, 2000). On

the other hand, incentives have been identified as the third dimension in designing knowledge management systems to facilitate knowledge sharing and learning (Argote et al., 2003; Ba et al., 2001b).

There are two primary contemporary schools of thought on knowledge management e-government based organization: one that focuses on existing explicit knowledge, and one that focuses on the building or creation of knowledge. The first school focuses almost entirely upon information technology tools, whereas the second focuses on knowledge management as an internal disciplinary subject with major behavioral and organizational, as well as technology, concerns. Literature in the fields of computer science and artificial intelligence often focuses primarily on explicit knowledge and associated tools and technology. It is not uncommon in this school to have enterprise knowledge management defined as the formal management of resources to facilitate access and reuse of knowledge that is generally enabled by advanced information technology. Studies in the second school of thought generally focus on generation and creation of knowledge. There is a major environmental context associated with this knowledge. Knowledge is generally thought to be a powerful source of innovation. In this school, knowledge management is viewed from a holistic point of view that encompasses both tacit and implicit knowledge. The main challenge of governments is to take advantage of the opportunities provided by ICT and Knowledge management for improving the quality of life of the citizens, with efficiency, transparency and participation (Abraham, 2007).

The mission of any developing governments is to provide all types of stockholders an efficient, effective and economic way to understand and make practical use of what they must do (El-Khowas, 2001). The existing successful KM applications applied to the business environment re-assures that KM should achieve better performance to carry out this mission (Peters, 2001).

A critical element in evaluation and monitoring of the electronic government quality management is the use of standards to evaluate and monitor the e-government development program. Four aspects of the development of programming accreditation are distinctive.

- 1.) Changes in out put of administrative systems:
 - i. Implementation of new strategies.
 - ii. Managing new executive programs.
 - iii. Designing new organizational structure and also financial assessment.
 - iv. Designing a functions evaluation system for all level of public management.
 - v. Time limited monitoring and evaluation.
- 2.) Changes in in-put of government system:
 - i. Optimum management of financing.
 - ii. New definition of short term programming.
 - iii. Define new tasks for liner e-government manager.

3.) Bureaucracy decreasing of e-government system implementation:

- i. Privatization of e-government activities.
- ii. Capacity building to meet national needs.
- iii. Making new chances for competencies.

4.) Defining interdisciplinary approach between human resources, financial systems, infrastructure systems and administrative strategies:

- i. Making new links between bureaucracy structure and e-government management.
- ii. Pay attention to continues policy making for e-government activities.
- iii. Acceptance of the social and cultural character of different society and organization.

The structure of electronic government quality management focusing on input oriented approach can be done based on five following standards:

- i. Standard 1: Defining structure purpose and e-government objectives.
- ii. Standard 2: Defining the models of achieving e-government objectives through core functions.
- iii. Standard 3: Developing and applying resources and infrastructure to ensure sustainability.
- iv. Standard 4: establishment of a national commitment for e-government development.

Policies and programs

Monitoring agencies have played a steering role in the area that is helping e-readiness assessment models center to find methods that adapt to new demands without imposing restrictions or demands for immediate action. This view related to the central role of the overall structure of the national e-readiness assessment models. At the same time it can also be acknowledged that monitoring agencies have been very instrumental in spurring structural change and improvement within institutions of national e-readiness assessment models. This trend is based on development of strong internal systems of e-readiness assessment models and self-assessment. It relates to e-government's overall mission and services roles in shaping educationally useful innovation. The emphasis they place on developing good evidence has supported better decisions and better planning for new e-readiness assessment models challenges and programs.

To understand the full picture for e-readiness assessment models evaluation, it is necessary to look at a range of governmental roles in e-readiness assessment models. Government is responsible for the financial support of a large portion of the nation's e-readiness assessment models especially those carried on by public organizations. It is responsible too for the great majority of the e-readiness assessment models grants and loans

that support national level e-readiness assessment models. Notably, however despite this expansion of the central role, agencies have come to play in supporting the e-readiness assessment models programs while reserving significant oversight responsibilities to the governmental agencies itself.

The monitoring and evaluation role of government is technically a narrow one, which begins with the necessity that the government must determine whether an e-readiness assessment model is eligible to participate in national e-readiness assessment program especially development of e-government programs and if they can achieve the targets.

In an indirect process for determining the eligibility of e-readiness assessment models to participate in state development e-government programs it has directed that institutions are eligible for participation if they meet two fundamental conditions:

- 1.) Be able to evaluate, monitor, analyze and predict fundamental changes in knowledge and technology in order to keep abreast of the global fundamental changes in knowledge and technology.
- 2.) Be able to develop priorities plan to organize technological activities of the country to reengineer nationwide development of knowledge and technology and to provide a sustainable structure for e-readiness assessment models.

Some observers believe that this monitoring role of the states is gradually expanding. To understand another dimension of monitoring and evaluation role and its impact, it is necessary to look within e-readiness assessment models to the varied internal processes that support quality assurance and over time the maintenance and improvement of e-readiness assessment models quality.

Increasingly too, it has become normal practice for most state universities and e-readiness assessment models centers to employ strategic management procedures: identifying priorities, planning carefully to promote those priorities, monitoring operations more closely and establishing various benchmarks and indicators for their own use. This increased self-security extends not only to administration but also to e-readiness assessment models programs and is conducted wholly apart from monitoring.

It is necessary to consider that public and private e-readiness assessment models center have a significant role in innovation cycle of developing countries in the field of electronic government management.

Application of new public management paradigm as a comprehensive trend is a systematic approach for transferring from the hierocracy system to a flexible market based structure to achieve efficiency and effectiveness in the e-readiness assessment models (Vaezi, 2003).

In this process there is a consideration on the e-readiness assessment models management instead of

e-readiness assessment models career and the necessity of e-readiness assessment models functional evaluation and also distribution of responsibilities towards public services.

The need for evaluation

The implementation of an evaluation and monitoring plan thus entails a wide area of public and private activities. A systematic e-readiness assessment models evaluation of e-readiness assessment models both short term and long term is an essential means of plan implementation.

Evaluating the national e-readiness assessment models system for developing strategic priorities towards knowledge, e-readiness assessment models and technology emphasizing on decentralization and independence of universities and e-readiness assessment models centers in terms of administrative, financial, employment and organizational affairs. It is also devising a comprehensive assessment system for e-readiness assessment models and technological affairs in national level for improving information technology through supervision of e-readiness assessment models programs for promoting the role of scientific associations and e-readiness assessment models organizations through their involvement in the decision-makings and super-vision processes and also planning to boost the share of public and private e-readiness assessment models in the GDP and the state budget.

In this process supporting the implementation of state-run e-readiness assessment models projects by universities and e-readiness assessment models centers as a means to diversify their financial resources and also encourage faculty members to play more effective parts in national e-readiness assessment models activities are a strategic career.

E-readiness assessment policies

The e-readiness assessment models key finding involving strategic policies and roles stipulated in the national development plan in e-readiness assessment models:

- i.) Updating e-readiness assessment models in conformity with the diverse national needs and authorizing e- government leading centers and e-readiness assessment centers to develop their e-readiness assessment carrier and innovate approaches in order to present more skillful, innovative and independent e-readiness assessment models.
- ii.) Developing and strengthening the centers of excellence in the pioneer centers and e-readiness assessment organizations.
- iii.) Expanding international collaborations to make more efficient use of global e-readiness assessment achievements and to have easy access to the international

scientific achievements.

- iv.) Making a more efficacious internal and external assessment system.
- v.) Modifying the structure of national e-readiness assessment via authorizing e-readiness assessment centers in order to provide a more dynamic, flexible, and competitive and integrated assessment system.
- vi.) Providing secure financial resources for national e-readiness assessment models.
- vii.) Developing and strengthening the vision of e-government policies in the organization.
- viii.) Making regular and continued effort in order to respond to the present and future needs.
- ix.) Increasing the national sovereignty through the process of e-readiness assessment and technological development.
- x.) Organizing the e-readiness assessment models and development facilities in order to make connection between sources and e-readiness assessment models and also public services.
- xi.) Giving effective orientation to the electronic public services toward the e-readiness assessment models in needed majors.
- xii.) Planning and creating the suitable ground in order to make the results of e-readiness assessment models applicable and commercial.
- xiii.) Getting access to the latest information and technical knowledge in order to acquire and create superior technology in the area of international competition.
- xiv.) Disseminating culture and organizing the collective e-readiness assessment models activities and making use of the facilities.
- xv.) Giving suggestions about the suitable strategies for absorbing and transferring technical knowledge.
- xvi.) Creating balance between the e-readiness assessment plan and paying attention to societal needs, development ratio and e-readiness quality enhancement both in public and nonpublic center.
- xvii.) Multiplying the ways and fostering public cooperation to offer new paradigm national e-readiness assessment models to be responsive to the ever increasing needs in public services.

Recommendations

The recommendations in this paper focus on project level monitoring. Organization should consider reviewing their governance arrangements in wider systems context to ensure that the organization is able to achieve e-readiness assessment governance based on a hierarchy of policy making to stipulate standards of roles, practice, e-readiness assessment manual to assign responsibilities and finally standing operation procedure to achieve uniformity of the performance of a specific function (vaezi, 2005).

Thus monitoring organization should consider reviewing policies and procedures as well as governance prac-

tice, and also ensure that e-readiness assessment governance and e-readiness monitoring align closely and practically with other appropriate and procedures such human resource policies, finance policies, health and safety policies and complaints etc (Mierlo, 2000).

All e-readiness assessment models activity should be monitored routinely. In addition, a project might be audited if there is any suspicion of reduced e-readiness assessment systems and standards. Monitoring and auditing should link together within an organization and both provide vital e-readiness assessment models and safeguards.

By using a systems analysis approach based on role definitions, the problems of development and utilization of national e-readiness assessment models can be monitor in logical perspective. This perspective fall into two major categories:

- i.) Those relating o effectiveness oriented approach.
- ii.) Those relating to efficiency oriented approach.

The first set of roles can be verify by making some changes in the design and performance of agencies providing various kinds of e-readiness assessment models and also to provide effective bridge between the functional elements

In this process monitoring and evolution of e-readiness assessment models should be better balanced and more effectively geared to the national needs for national development.

Based on the state national a large proportion of resources must be devote to the e-readiness assessment models and it could be served best by improving the efficiency of the exiting evaluating system (SCCR, 2003).

The second set of categories can be alleviated by a major change in national development objectives which would give very high priority to e-readiness assessment models of rural transformation.

Operational aspects

This paper reviews the evaluation and monitoring and also applied experiences in the development of e-readiness assessment models in some detail. It emphasizes the choices made by monitoring and evaluation agencies at different times as how they would conduct evaluations and what standards they would use.

This issues and circumstances are surrounding the initial development of evaluation and monitoring and major changes in procedure and standards, respectively. Also attention is given to some of the challenges that presently are posing for evaluation procedures as growing complexity, globalization and advances in instructional uses of electronic technology allow new forms of e-readiness assessment models provision to emerge.

The exiting policies need to be re-examined, and new policies developed. While e-readiness assessment

models innovations must be recognized, it is also true that monitoring agencies have greatly assisted their career. In this process monitoring agencies serve as a public brain system to advocate changes that will improve e-readiness assessment models practice.

For national e-readiness assessment models monitoring and evaluation agencies need necessary process of innovation and ability of response to changing circumstances to move forward in a national oriented way. These centers may experiment with new approaches but must submit their plans to an outside review by other public or no-public evaluation agencies.

The recommended items for monitoring should be assessed alongside an organization's role for national project, including whether they are fulfilling the responsibilities including monitoring commercial e-readiness assessment models

By such methods, monitoring and evaluation agencies not only guide the development of innovative practices but they also serve to lend credibility to emerging forms of e-readiness assessment models innovation. They need to set certain terms of good practice and encourage certain types of practices, while other practices are discouraged or banned. This represents a soft approach for (Schiavo, 2000):

- i.) Achieving mechanisms for carrying out national development plan in e-readiness assessment models sector.
- ii.) Formulating a long term comprehensive plan to train specialized manpower at different levels of public and non-public e-readiness assessment models sectors to coordinate the E-readiness assessment models program with the needs of the country.
- iii.) Diversifying the development policies via drawing up separate and integrated plans for e-readiness assessment models process.
- iv.) Determining centers of excellence to encourage scientific innovations and to develop knowledge and technology.

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