## Research Article
## Factors That Influence the Citizens' Participation in E-Government Decision

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**Abstract:** This study aims to improve the model of decision-making in Iraq e-government using positive factors from the citizens' self-knowledge. This study is intended to discuss the results and findings from the pilot study to identify the positive factors that effect on decision making model in Iraqi e-government by employing citizens' self-knowledge characteristics. The advanced and continuous development of new technologies have made possible for electronic services to be adopted and applied in e-government initiatives. Implementation of e-government has increased in number of nations but the rate of adoption varies from country to country. Success rate also differs between countries and regions. In general, developing countries have been lagging behind in e-government use as compared to developed countries. This is also evident in many Middle East countries. There are various variables that are needed to support such initiatives. For the past twenty years, local governments throughout Europe and America along with some parts of the Middle East and Asia have maximized the use of Information Technology (IT) to provide support for their respective work. New technological tools have been developed to alleviate the tediousness of paper work, maladministration, inefficiency and bureaucratic bottle necks in various strata of the government. Most notably this has involved the area of decision making. The pilot study results supported the study hypotheses because all the constructs of this study indicated acceptable Cronbach's alpha which were larger than 0.6.

**Keywords:** Citizens' participation, citizens' self-knowledge, decision making, electronic government

### INTRODUCTION

The study on citizens' behaviors and thinking is quite often impacted by the citizens various levels of education, culture, nature of job, experience and environment. These characteristics form the idiom of Citizens' Self-Knowledge (Nonaka and Takeuchi, 2011; Yusof and Abdulraheem, 2015). There have been previous studies on self- knowledge which have been pursued; nevertheless, the gap in this study which is outlined by lack of citizens' participation in e-government has given the motivation of this proposed study. Evidently, there are various areas moving forward towards e-government that need attention and changes. The local governments in the target country like Iraq need to improve the political, social and cultural structures and communion between governments and citizens (Allahawiah and Alsaraireh, 2014; Siskos et al., 2014). The major challenges in applying e-government in Iraq includes: trustworthiness, training and know-how, issues of transparency and accountability, citizens' poor participation in government operation within the democratic institutions, etc. All these contribute to the lacking of knowledge in e-government and all the required processes and knowledge to help propel the government to implement successful e-government initiatives (Allahawiah and Alsaraireh, 2014; Abdulraheem and Mohd Yusof, 2016; Rana and Dwivedi, 2015). In summation, there are various issues that need attention and addressing in order to have any change in policy system, processes, visions, missions, etc. This is also true for any government attempting to introduce and improve decision-making through e-government initiatives that is intended to improve performance to achieve better citizens' participation and administration in the communities. Evidently, a decision making operation that is untrustworthy, unstructured and has not attained the citizen or public trust on e-government initiatives will not be successful or sustainable (Abdulraheem, 2012; Charalabidis et al., 2012). In turn, currently the Iraq government in collaboration with the Ministry of Higher Education and the Ministry of Science and Technology are working collaboratively to develop effective and efficient e-government initiatives with citizen participatory.

There is no guarantee that every leader or workers are also great decision makers. Some leaders are great leaders adored by many and some are naturally bad leaders with poor decision making skills and leadership. They have powers granted by statutes or delegations.

Discretionary powers do not impose an obligation on a decision-maker to exercise them or to exercise them in a particular manner. The reason for granting discretionary power to administrative agencies is because they possess experience and specialisation in a particular area to help them make various decisions. Ideally, such experiences and area specialisation helps agencies and organisations to make decisions and solve problems within their capacity respectively (Moon *et al.*, 2014). The emphasis on citizens' participation in e-government initiatives and the e-participation is to establish the importance of citizens' participation in e-government platform and initiatives. The citizens' participation increases the effectiveness of the e-government. Previous researches have studied citizens' participation in e-government to elicit its importance. This study focuses on citizens participation by employing the citizens' self-knowledge characteristics such as (levels of education, culture, nature of job, experience and environment) to develop a decision making model in planning of the Iraqi e-government (Abdulraheem *et al.*, 2016).

## DECISION MAKING PROCESS

The empirical and conceptual findings provided by the literature given thus far, are possible evident of possible change that may take place in the future. Our world is continuously changing. It is strongly contemplated that the event of prosperity of an organization's procedures relies not just on understanding the financial factors, technological, support and pressure but fundamentally important is the profound understanding of the behaviours and persons' attitudes and the way people make decisions (the type and the nature of the decisions) within an organisation. Decision-making is considered an important area of research in cognitive social behavior. How decision is arrived and what constitute good decision are fundamental knowledge to understand human's cognitive and thinking ability. More than that, for future research, a recommendation is required to study and analyse the data of the factors. This may support the top management and enhance the decision making operation for adopting information communication technology in the government. There is a need to work on the development of knowledge not just for the development of technology and financial support. There is a need to study the behaviour of citizens and how they make decision. Kamal and his partners' study confirmed that this study is pertinent to understudy how citizen make decision and the processes involved. Kamal and his partners' research contributed the motivation for this study to develop a model of decision-making through the participation of citizens' self-knowledge characteristics in e-government (Kamal *et al.*, 2015).

## CULTURES AND LOCATION OF IRAQ

The geography and location of Iraq is various with a region of 168,754 mi² (437,072 km²) and population of 33.42 millions (2013). It contains four main districts: First the northern highlands of Kurdistan in Iraq, the desert (west of the Euphrates), top Mesopotamia (between the top of the Euphrates rivers and Tigris) and the down Mesopotamia (the alluvial plain which extends from the Persian Gulf to Tikrit),

The indigenous empires of Sumeria, Akkadia, Babylonia and Assyria ruled Iraq. Islamic religion, that is come by 97% of Iraqis is the main religion in Iraq. Mandaeians, Christianity, Yazidism and other religions in Iraq form the other 3%. Iraq is home to many Muslim people and full of various heritage with a broad spectrum of religion and culture creating which made Iraq rich in cultures.

## METHODOLOGY OF RESEARCH

The methodology of study will debate six points, the first is the variables of the study which is the citizen' involvement in decision making would contribute positive factors. The second is the study hypotheses which depend on the positive factors, the third point explains the factors, the fourth is the tools of survey, the fifth is the sample size and sampling frame and last is the design of questionnaire.

**Variables:** Dependent variables are affected or may be altered by independent variables; for example, value A effects on value B, so value B is the dependent and value A is the independent. Many measures can be used to measure the dependent variables by using the categorical or continuous scores. All studies aimed to explain and develop the dependent variables in the research, research questions, test purpose statements and hypotheses (Creswell, 2014; Saunders *et al.*, 2011). The dependent variable of this study was employing the citizens' self-knowledge in decision making.

The independent variables impact on the result or the dependent variables and may have caused a change in the result of the study. These factors were called independent variables, predictors, treatments, antecedent variables or determinants. All these names had the same act (independently). They impacted on the dependent variables (Creswell, 2014). The independent variables of this study are positive factors that influence on involving self-knowledge characteristics of citizens in decision making model of Iraqi electronic government. Citizen' involvement in decision making would contribute positive factors.

**Study hypotheses:** Testing of hypothesis is a shape of statistical conclusion that employs information from a sample to draw outcomes about a population probability distribution or a population parameter. First,

Table 1: Hypotheses and variables

| Hypo. | I.V. | D.V. |
|---|---|---|
| H1 | Citizen' involvement in decision making would contribute positive factors | Employing citizens' self-knowledge characteristics in decision making of Iraqi e-government |
| H1.1 | Political factors: improve the political process | |
| H1.2 | Economic factors: improve the economic process | |
| H1.3 | Technical factors: improve the managerial information technology | |
| H1.4 | Workers factors: improve the employee participation | |

a tentative supposition is made about the parameter or distribution. Past literature assured hypotheses and used them (Belanche *et al.*, 2012).

Today social media is just not a media but a tool that serve many purposes. Citizens should be encouraged to participate in the public sector using social media or social network which can provide government an opportunity to be more accessible and receptive to public participation and awareness (Khan *et al.*, 2014). The open government will be more active to anti-corruption because of the citizens' right to participate (Oye, 2014). In the literature review of the research, UN made a study on various e-governments in the world to develop the e-government of UN member states. The survey related to the tools of decision making in order to determine the challenges in e-government initiatives. As a result, strategies and policies surfaced and were used for implementation. The citizens must be encouraged to participate in policy-making. Increase participation will make government services more transparent and this may help to lessen corruption in government. Most important of all, such approach increases the trust and collaboration between the two primary stakeholders in government services (namely the government and the public as end users) (UN, 2014; Yusof and Abdulraheem, 2015). Following are the hypotheses that were tested: Table 1 summaries the hypotheses

Factors that influence the use of citizens' self-knowledge in decision making:

**H 1.0:** Citizen' involvement in decision making would contribute positive factors in Iraqi e-government model.

**H 1.1:** Political group's involvement in decision making would contribute positive interpretive and design flexibility factors in Iraqi e-government model which will improve the political process.

**H 1.2:** Economic group's involvement in decision making would contribute positive interpretive and design flexibility factors in Iraqi e-government model which will improve the economical process.

**H 1.3:** Technology group's involvement in decision making would contribute positive interpretive and design flexibility factors in Iraqi e-government model which will improve the Technological process.

**H 1.4:** Worker group's involvement in decision making would contribute positive interpretive

and design flexibility factors in Iraqi e-government model which will improve the employee participation.

**Survey tools:** Fact-finding methodology is a formal process used in sampling and data collection. Research methodologies are selected to acquire and gather as much data needed for research purpose. Research, observations, questionnaires, sampling requirements, preferences and other techniques are used to collect data of interest. It is imperative that the right or must suitable methodology is chosen to ensure that it provided the best data type and analysis. The survey research was convenient for this study as it was thought to be the best approach to attain information and knowledge on Iraq citizen's participation on decision making and its relevance to e-government initiatives in the country. Sampling must be chosen with great care because the respondents of this research were diverse in background and experiences there was an extreme need to establish the decision making with the citizens' participation in e-government so as to achieve good research outcomes. In this study will explain two tools (Creswell, 2014).

**Manual distribution:** These ways indicate to perform the survey of study manually to the respondents and gather once the individual respondents complete the manual surveys. So this tool indicated is utilized in this study.

**Sampling frame and sample size:** In general, the group of respondents who have the same culture and characteristics will consist the population of a research (Zikmund *et al.*, 2012). The province contained: political group, the total of the council province members 27 respondents. In addition, each province has an ICT departmental, the total of IT employees 40 respondents. The members of commerce chamber 80 respondents. The members of general federation of Iraq trade unions 200 respondents. The total of all respondents on this study was 347.

**Questionnaire:** The survey depended immediate collecting of data from the citizens. The types of data which was collected from citizens contained different levels of beliefs, attitude, knowledge, personalities, or preferences. Questionnaires are widely employed to collect such data. The questionnaire was designed to

supply the study valuable data which was good for quantifiable and systematic analyses. The construction of the questionnaire design for this study included three parts of information collection: The first part formed the demographic data, the second part is related to the hypothesis data and third part is related to the feedback of responders.

Citizen' involvement in decision making would contribute positive factors:

**Q1:** Citizens' involvement in decision making model of e-government will improve the political process.
**Q2:** Citizens' involvement in decision making model of e-government will improve the economic process.
**Q3:** Citizens' involvement in decision making model of e-government will improve managerial information technology.

**Q4:** Citizens' involvement in decision making model of e-government will improve the employee participation in e-government.

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSING

For the internal regulation of the elements, each variable in the study was inspected using reliability information analysis of test by Cronbach's alpha. This study, depended the Cronbach's alpha value 0.6 and larger than 0.6 was reliability (Zikmund *et al.*, 2012). For reliability analysing the study take by 37 respondents to reach the Cronbach's alpha value 0.6 and large than 0.6. Study used version (21) the Statistical Package for Social Science (SPSS) was utilized to test the reliability and pilot test.

**Demographic outcome:** The pilot analysis research was managed between 37 respondents for all groups,

Table 2: Demographic results

| Category | Min. | Max. | Frequency | Percent % |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Sample | | | 335 | 100.0 |
| Respondents Groups | 1 | 4 | | |
| Political | | | 7 | 18.9% |
| Economists | | | 10 | 27.0% |
| Technology | | | 10 | 27.0% |
| Workers | | | 10 | 27.0% |
| Total | | | 37 | 100.0 |
| Respondents' Gender | 0 | 1 | | |
| Female | | | 12 | 32.4% |
| Male | | | 25 | 67.6% |
| Total | | | 37 | 100.0 |
| Respondents' Age | 0 | 6 | | |
| 18-25 | | | 3 | 8.1% |
| 25-32 | | | 7 | 18.9% |
| 32-39 | | | 4 | 10.8% |
| 39-46 | | | 6 | 16.2% |
| 46-53 | | | 11 | 29.7% |
| 53-60 | | | 5 | 13.5% |
| 60-67 | | | 1 | 2.7% |
| Total | | | 37 | 100.0 |
| Respondents' Education Level | 0 | 6 | | |
| Primary school | | | 4 | 10.8% |
| High school | | | 9 | 24.3% |
| Vocational/Technical | | | 5 | 13.5% |
| school | | | 17 | 45.9% |
| Bachelors | | | 1 | 2.7% |
| Master | | | 1 | 2.7% |
| Total | | | 37 | 100.0 |
| Respondents' Working | 0 | 2 | | |
| Private | | | 2 | 5.4% |
| Public | | | 21 | 56.8% |
| Own | | | 14 | 37.8% |
| Total | | | 37 | 100.0 |
| Respondents' Income | 0 | 3 | | |
| 150-350 IQD | | | 6 | 16.2% |
| 350-550 IQD | | | 7 | 18.9% |
| 550-750 IQD | | | 3 | 8.1% |
| 750-950 IQD | | | 21 | 56.8% |
| Total | | | 37 | 100.0 |
| Respondents' Ethnicity | 0 | 2 | | |
| Arab | | | 33 | 89.2% |
| Kurdish | | | 1 | 2.7% |
| Turkmen | | | 3 | 8.1% |
| Total | | | 37 | 100.0 |
| Respondents' Religion | 0 | 0 | | |
| Muslim | | | 37 | 100% |
| Total | | | 37 | 100.0 |

Min.: Minimum; Max.: Maximum

Table 3: Construction analysis results

| Construct | Coding | Number of questions | Cronbach's alpha |
|---|---|---|---|
| Political group Factors: Improve the political process. | PQ1 | 3 | 0.911 |
| Economic group Factors: Improve the economic process. | EQ2 | 3 | 0.602 |
| Technical group Factors: Improve managerial information technology. | TQ3 | 3 | 0.865 |
| Workers group Factors: Improve the employee participation. | WQ4 | 3 | 0.917 |

where there were questions consolidated for all groups to response on these questions. The outcomes of demographic test were offered in Table 2.

**Reliability analysis outcome:** A pilot research analysis was run to measure the regularity between the items of the research constructs; it was located from the pilot outcome. All the constructs had Cronbach's alpha of 0.6 and larger than, as refer above. The outcome the pilot research in Table 3, displayed all the Cronbach's alpha acceptable.

This section relates the independent variables and the depended variable above to the practical instance. The section 3.1 variables was clarified, there is independent variable. After utilizing the Cronbach's alpha to test the items were PQ.1, EQ.2, TQ.3 and WQ.4. The main of the respondents, with various culture, Internet skills, experiences they displayed positive perspective. By the outcome of every group the politcans group the outcome of the hypothesis H1-1 was found to be accepted and supported. The relationship among the politicans group and the decision making is accepted and positive was the Cronbach's alpha 0.911. The economists' group outcome the hypothesis H1-2 was found to be accepted and supported. The relationship between economists group and decision making is accepted and positive was the Cronbach's alpha 0.602. The technicians group the outcomes of the hypothesis H1-3 was found to be accepted and supported. The relationship between technicians group and decision making is accepted and positive was the Cronbach's alpha 0.865. The workers group outcomes of the hypothesis H1-4 was found to be accepted and supported. The relationship between the worker group and decision making is accepted and positive was the Cronbach's alpha 0.917.

This study made mix between all the experiences, this study made mix among all the experiences and skills of the players from the all the groups above to improve the decision making with employing the citizens' self-knowledge characteristic. From the outcomes of the Cronbach's alpha, the study defined the best factors from four groups. The political groups: Factors: improve the political process, economists groups: Factors: improve the economic process, technical groups: Factors: improve managerial information technology and workers groups: Factors: improve the employee participation. The factors that were tested using analysis of Kruskal Wallis technic, then test the strength of relation among the factors through the Correlation analysis, finally checking the

model through the analysis of multiple regression, for these analyses selecting the seven Likert will offer the researcher to analysis with better option. The relation between citizens' self-knowledge and decision making was accepted and positive. The relation has the ability to realize better outcomes through involving additional groups.

**CONCLUSION**

The objective of this study is to provide proof regarding the characteristics of citizens' self-knowledge in decision making model that effect on decision making model in Iraqi electronic government. For this reason, this research is purposed to improve a decision making by employing the public to improve the decision making model in the Iraqi electronic government. The goal of the positive factors is to display the effectiveness and productiveness of the proposed model in develop the decision making, these factors above were effect on decision making positively. This study explained the results of these factors for each groups in this study and discussed with details the importance of each group, these factors creation from the citizens' self-knowledge characteristics. Despite the reality that the sizes of sample for the pilot analysis was small but the study can generalise or consider this result accepted. Although, it is a great idea to employ the public in decision making, but the research has to focus on how it takes good information from the public.

Future research identifies in citizens' intention of citizens' participation in decision making in e-government offered through government agencies.

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