

# Editorial Preface

Vishanth Weerakkody, Brunel Business School, Brunel University London, Uxbridge, UK

Welcome to Volume 12, Issue 4 of the International Journal of Electronic Government Research. This issue of IJEGR presents five papers focusing on different facets of electronic government. It covers research that capture the challenges around the institutionalization of digitally-enabled services in the public sector, to the influence of social media on voting and the evaluation of e-government services, to the impact of e-diplomacy and open government and how these concepts have evolved within the domain of e-government.

The first paper in this issue of IJEGR is by Amizan Omar, Ramzi El-Haddadeh and Vishanth Weerakkody and is entitled ‘Exploring Digitally Enabled Service Transformation in Public Sector: Would Institutional and Structuration Theory Concepts Keep The Research Talking?’ This paper aims to assess if the utilization of both Institutional and Structuration Theory concepts together when exploring issues around the institutionalisation of Digitally-Enabled Service Transformation (DEST) in Public Sector (PS) contexts offer meaningful insights into e-government research. The authors examine the nature of these two subliminal social theories by focusing on questions concerning their coherence and potential utility as a non-native analytical lens to explore DEST in the PS. The authors posit that there is no need for the domination of one approach over another in a large and diverse discipline dealing with equally diverse versions of government. The authors critique the fact that advocates of rational choice approaches are attempting to impose orthodoxy on the discipline of e-government.

The second paper is entitled ‘Attitudes of University Students Voters Towards Political Messages in Social Media: 2014 Turkey Local Elections’ and is authored by Murat Selim SELVİ. The aim of this paper is to determine, how, university students who vote, form attitudes towards political messages that run across different social media channels. Data obtained through questionnaire from Undergraduate students in Tekirdağ Central Campus of Namik Kemal University in Turkey is used to test several hypotheses. The study finds that messages with political content in social media had intensifier effects on present preferences of university student voters and had directive effects on indecisive students. Twitter users had more negative attitudes towards messages with political content in social media.

The third paper is authored by Karim Al-Yafi, Nitham Mohammed Hindi and Ibrahim Osman and is entitled ‘A User-Centric Evaluation of e-Government Services in the GCC Region: Case of State of Qatar’. The aim of this study is to explore users’ satisfaction towards the electronic services provided by governments in the GCC region represented by the State of Qatar. In order to examine the suitability of the e-Government service portal, a cross-sectional survey targeting the users of three common e-Government services in Qatar is used to evaluate users’ satisfaction based on the four dimensions of the previously published COBRA framework: Cost, Opportunity, Benefit and Risk.

The fourth paper is entitled ‘A Theoretical Perspective of an E-Diplomacy Maturity Framework’ and is authored by Hamad Al-Muftah and Uthayasankar Sivarajah. This paper outlines an innovative conceptual structure for examining the maturity and feasibility of e-diplomacy. The proposed e-diplomacy maturity framework is a derivative of literary analysis on e-government maturity models, ICT growth of stage theories, coupled with theoretical information and practical features of diplomacy.

The e-diplomacy maturity model constitutes variables like the degree of complexity and level of interactivity. Integration of the two variables results in varying phases of the framework. Challenges implicated in the e-diplomacy maturity framework include: sensitivity hence discretionary nature of diplomatic elements, setbacks in organizational structure, and communication impediments on the part of diplomats, as well as, politico-economic concerns and socio-cultural tendencies of various parties.

The final paper in this issue of IJEGR is by Taewoo Nam and is entitled 'Citizen Attitudes about Open Government and Government 2.0: A Path Analysis'. This study employs a path analysis based on standardized structural equation estimation, which decomposes the causal relationships among multiple variables into standardized direct and indirect effects. The analysis suggests some noteworthy findings. Heavy users of e-government services and those with trust in government are likely to have positive attitudes toward the new phase of e-government, Open Government and Government 2.0. Furthermore, the findings show that socio-demographic conditions have an indirect effect on citizens' attitudes through the mediating effect of e-government use.

I hope readers will find the research presented in this issue of IJEGR insightful and helpful in answering some of the burning questions that continue to emerge as the field of e-government evolves.

*Vishanth Weerakkody*  
*Editor-in-Chief*  
*IJEGR*

*Vishanth Weerakkody is a Chair in Digital Governance at the Business School at Brunel University London. His research expertise lies in the area of electronic service delivery, technology adoption, diffusion and evaluation in public sector context. He has published over 150 peer reviewed articles and guest-edited special issues of leading journals and books on these themes. He is currently an investigator in several European Commission Framework-7 and Horizon 2020 Programmes on ICT and Social Sciences covering themes such as smart cities, social innovation, participatory budgeting and policy making and life- long learning. He is also the Editor-in-Chief of the International Journal of Electronic Government Research. A Chartered IT professional and a Fellow of the UK Higher Education Academy, Professor Weerakkody combines over 25 years of practical industry-based knowhow with academic and teaching experience.*