Smart governance research

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Smart City Project Objectives

Main Objective

To establish the role of stakeholders, citizens and community engagement in smart governance and their interaction with data and information in fostering good decision making.

Specific Objectives

1. To determine the role of stakeholders, citizens and community engagement in smart governance.

2. To establish how data and information in smart cities fosters good decision making

3. To determine the factors hindering sound decision-making in smart governance.

Research Questions

1. What is the role of stakeholders, citizens and community engagement in smart governance?

2. How do data and information foster good decision making in smart cities?

3. What are the factors hindering sound decision making in smart governance?

Limitation of the Study

Even though the study aims to provide great insights and practice-based experience, the study is also bound to experience some limitation. For instance, the study will only focus on a single country. At such, the study will lack external validity to allow for generalization of the findings. The study will also experience time restriction, and at such, the number of people interviews or who will be able to participate in the online survey might be limiting to the study.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Smart Cities

Smart City Concept

So many researchers have delved into the novel city ideal known as a smart city (Castelnovo, Misuraca & Savoldelli, 2015, 1; Jucevicius & Jucevicius, 2014, 511; Paskaleva, 2011, 155; Deakin & Al Waer, 2011, 142). As Tachizawa, Alvarez-Gil and Montes-Sancho put it, smart cities emanated from the premise of intelligent cities (2015: 238). Intelligent cities are the physical settings that have embedded information and communication

technology (ICT) into the urban areas and physical objects. In intelligent cities, ICT has substituted most bureaucratic roles and fosters new forms of organization that focuses more on the process than the function (Deakin & Al Waer, 2011, 141).

After the launch of technology and its excellent capability of changing cities, the whole idea of moving towards smart cities was born. The concept of smart cities has been so popular because of its nation-wide and international competitiveness and strategies used to restructure the current landscape (Kwast, 2016, 1). In the scientific literature, the concept of smart cities has been approached from different viewpoints. For instance, the Triple-Helix framework demonstrates that smart cities as a process of cultural re-establishment reinforced by academic leadership, policy, human capital as the most vital component, corporate strategy, academic leadership, and the modern information technology as the a core component of an smart city (Jucevicius & Jucevicius, 2014, 512). Some scholars consider a smart city is a knowledgeable town while others recognize it as a city that employs novel machinery to make them more practical, livable, modern and competitive and promote management of knowledge and innovation.

The smart city model assists in providing a better guideline for the future as it helps solves the primary issues that cities encounter and minimizes new glitches that are likely to occur such as population-related problems, energy problems, environmental issues and mobility (Kwast, 2016, 3). Ideally, the definition of smart cities highlights that there is an integrative and holistic approach based on human actions and desires to improve the quality of living. At such, each city that that aims to become a smart city has its

individual vision. Because cities face unique challenges and are characteristically distinct, it is imperative that the action plan is custom-made for each city. However, one of the core focuses of the vision is on the integration of technology to ensure proper flow of data and information and the other is a citizen-centered approach to ensure that they are included in the procedure of making intelligent decisions (Van den Ber & Viane, 2016, 7).

Smart Governance Concept

The six dimensions of the smart cities include people, economy, governance, mobility, environment and living with ' smartness' (Anthopoulos & Reddick, 2016, 351). Each of the six-dimensional model has played a significant role in achievement ' smartness' of the city (Walters, 2011, 203). This paper delves into the smart governance dimension. Any city needs to have a smart government to be considered smart. Governance links all the dimensions since most of the city affairs are regulated and managed by the governmental agencies, for instance, water supply and guidelines on where new houses should be built. At such, government branches need to adopt the digital technologies to add ' smartness' in their operations (Kwast, 2016, 3). Digital smartness entails incorporating technologies that allow for citizen participation and their active involvement in the process of decision making. Evidence has it that when citizen are not involved in the process of decision making, the projects are not all round and are bound to fail (Anttiko, Valakama & Bailey, 2013, 326). With smart governance, it is possible to connect so many branches that form the smart city thus more people are involved in the making of decisions.

Governance has experienced some changes over the years moving from s top-down approach to a bottom-up ascendency. Traditionally, the citizens were only involved when there was the need to validate a proposal. Ideally, their opinions were not warranted, and they were only required to ratify existing government plans (Scholl & Scholl, 2014, 167). Through the years, the importance of people input became more pronounced, and more studies concluded that any decisions made without the public participation were bound to be ineffective. At such, citizens were supposed to actively engage in all the activities of the government, since they are regarded as valuable sources of information, and their feedback is also put into consideration.

The public can participate either formally or informally. In the formal participation, the citizens are mostly involved through public bulletin boards, newspapers, the internet, and placards. Meetings are held where the citizens are allowed to comment against or for the plans. Some of the projects where citizens are included include environmental concerns projects, the building of public houses and land usage (Kwast, 2016, 5). On the other hand, informal participation is whereby the activities are voluntary and normally as an extension to the formal engagement. Ideally, the citizens exchange their views among themselves then reach out to the stakeholders involved in the same. Some of the informal settings include web polling, stakeholder workshops, focus groups, citizen juries, public conversations, study circles, participatory budgeting and collaborative policy making. The informal practices allow for more projects to find the perfect methods of incorporating the interests of various stakeholders. In the recent years, citizen participation has garnered more attention, and there has been the

development of more informal integration tools. The premise for smart cities governance is about having the appropriate information at the right time which will help citizen make the right decisions that will be used to enhance the quality of living and the general sustainability of the city.