

Electronic Government as a Strategic Intervention in Organizational Change Processes

ROLAND K. YEO

College of Industrial Management, King Fahd University of Petroleum & Minerals, Dhahran, Saudi Arabia

ABSTRACT *The article explores electronic government as a change intervention initiative in the Sabah State public administration. It discusses its influence on organizational strategy, structure and performance, and argues that people are the active carriers of institutional meanings and actions that facilitate change. The study was conducted based on a qualitative research design involving indepth interviewing with 18 participants and data triangulation from other secondary sources. Findings suggest that electronic government was a transformative approach to organizational change and development. Taking the Sabah civil service to a globalized level, it added broader dimension to the organization's strategic direction with a focus on long-term goals. The transformation began with the creation of new social structures where power relations were distributed across employee levels. This had an impact on the notion of leadership as the introduction of electronic government had led to a decentralization of decision making and action taking. Electronic government created opportunities for work collaboration and knowledge co-construction through various communities of practices. It opened up new avenues for information to be used, disseminated and retained, improving work innovation and job satisfaction. The study offers implications for theory where the complex and dynamic interrelations between organizational strategy, structure and people are explored. The focus is not on technology; it hinges on the potential for cross-boundary collaboration and participation in the context of a developing country such as the Sabah State where there are rural areas to which the public administration needs to reach out. In such circumstances, electronic government can become as much a vision as a tool.*

KEY WORDS: Electronic government, organizational strategy, organizational structure, organizational performance, change implementation, Malaysia

Correspondence Address: Roland K. Yeo, PO Box 5074, Dhahran 31261, Saudi Arabia. Tel.: 966-3-860-7198; Fax: 966-3-860-2544; Email: yeokkr@yahoo.com

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