Jordan E-Government: The Obstacle

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Abstract

E-government is considered as hot topic tackled by many researchers as it is considered as future fact especially for the developing countries. There are different definitions of e-readiness and the successes factors and many different tools of assessment used depending on the results and goals. It very important to gauge the e-readiness state especially in developing countries, as many barriers would be considered as a big challenge. This research introduces a case study of developing countries to explore and discover the success factors that would make the e-government project viable.

The results show that it is necessary to enhance community awareness about e-literacy. Moreover the problem of professional shortage should be taken into consideration.

Keywords: e-government, e-readiness, e-government successes factor

1. Introduction

E-government services are supposed to be presented electronically [1]. Most researches had proven the importance of E-government and the most important factors that should be considered.

E-Government presents a new and innovative approach to addressing traditional problems of government services utilizing the Internet and World-Wide-Web.
Government services are provided through a variety of channels including retailers, banks and post offices. It is critical that the technology solutions which sit on top of an e-Government infrastructure are within the reach of all citizens [20].

E-Government is much more than building a web site, it is the infrastructure that governments today are building to transform the way they complete their missions. Direct effects of e-Government include cost effectiveness in government and public operations, significant savings in areas such as public procurement, tax collection and customs operations, with better and continuous contact with citizens, especially those living in remote or less densely populated areas.
This study addresses the challenges that need to be taken into account to facilitate the complex relationships between government and its constituencies to enable success interaction, transaction and delivery of government services.
The paper is organized as following: in section 2, previous studies are reviewed. In section 3, story of Jordan is discussed. In section 4, hypotheses and analysis are discussed. Section 5 presents conclusion and recommendations.

2. Previous Studies

One of the local studies [1], that discuss e-government perspectives in Jordan, studied the effect of e-government on quality of the services, which are supposed to be presented electronically. It focused the need of e-government then discussed the e-government goals, the situation and barriers of e-government in Jordan. The study concluded that there is a relation between e-government and quality of the electronic services. However some studies tried to tackle e-government problem to discover whether the public sector realizes the meaning of e-government [7]. Furthermore the study listed the barriers that might face the e-government implementation then it suggested solutions to make it work successfully. On other hand, e-government would affect the strategic position of the business organization [20] .

Azam [4] studied the possibility of applying e-government. He concluded that e-government is very important to support the democracy principles. The results showed that it is possible to have an e-government if the laws and legislations are found.

The recommendations of e-government conference (that held in Dubai) focused on [20]:
- The role of public sectors to aware their employees about the importance of e-government.
- Training employees to be qualified enough to used new technologies.
- The importance of public and private sectors co-operations to get the benefit of the other countries experiment.

Wescott [20] focused on the efficiency of e-government principles and its effect in monitoring, making government processes easier, questioning and reducing the managerial corruption in public sectors. These can be applied if employees participate in both decisions making and accessing information.

Another study [20] was carried out to cover all aspects of e-government. 250 organizations from 5 countries US, Australia, Canada and UK were conducted. The study introduced vision of the strategic management level and their ambitions and plans to face e-government modern principles. The study found that the strategic management succeeded in to have service in easier way, increasing the productivity level and reducing the number of compliments and shining picture of the organization.

Two studies [20][7] that can be classified as Jordanian studies tried to present an assessment model and analysis. Both aforementioned studies are alike in both assessment models and recommendations.

In [5] authors present a general framework model for e-government readiness assessment. The model consists of six factors: organizational, governance and leadership, customer, competency, technology and legal readiness. The paper concluded that e-service does not need special legislation as it requires assurance of written instructions by the authority. Also the paper suggested improving the legal system to support e-government.

Paper [6] overviewed worldwide experiences such as USA, UK, Singapore, UAE, Egypt and e-government in Jordan. It presented a model of e-government and overviewed the e-readiness in Jordan focusing on infrastructure back office management, policy and legal, community and education and how they could be built. The paper discussed the challenges facing e-government in Jordan such as shortcomings in internet infrastructure, digital geography, privacy, and security, limit IT, legal system and awareness.

Another Arab study [4] viewed Sudan experience as Sudan started applying e-government. The project is supervised by National Information Center (NIC) and ministry of Science and Technology. Author thinks that e-government main problems can be stated in culture and legal system. The most important challenge that faces the conversion from bureaucratic to e-government is employees conversion acceptance.
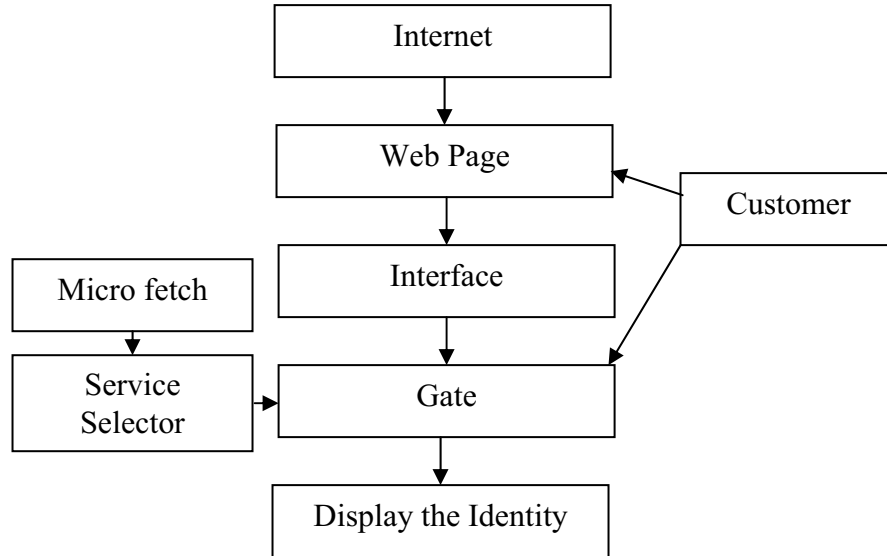
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Figure 1. E-Government model [11]

Success factors:
We can summarize the success factors as following:
- Most citizens should be familiar with internet [20] as in Dubai and Jordan case.
- Re-engineering management and process and hierarchy.
- Providing essential infrastructure.
- Providing technical support.
- Providing security.
- Providing suitable budget.
- Educating the community.
- Government leadership
- Comprehensive e-government promotion.

Paper [6] recommended the following points to grantee successful conversion:
- E-government implementation should cover all activities and departments to grantee successful conversion.
- Strong support for the conversion via authority.
- Citizens should be involved in the conversion (awareness).
- Strong infrastructure preparation especially national network
- Control by government authority.
- Legal system should be updated to meet the new security requirements.
- Cooperation with other countries that have experience in this field.
- Studies and conferences should be held to over elaborating discussion.

3. The Story of Jordan

Jordan would need to apply e-government to take advantage of the opportunities offered by all trade agreements; Jordan would need a more efficient, market-oriented customs regime in compliance with world trade organization (WTO) requirements, capable of handling increased traffic at the borders while at the same time preventing the entry of pirated software[20]. The following subsections will demonstrate the

Jordan Software Industry
Many research papers have been carried out to overview the software aspects in Jordan to give an indication for the growing state of software industry in developing countries [7] and [4]. Many aspects can be considered as vital points that should be highlighted such as factors of strength, weaknesses, the difficulties and challenges Jordanian companies suffered from. In addition, it clarified the "hopes" that Jordanian companies dream to achieve with comparison to their limited capability. A questionnaire was distributed to Jordanian companies and data was collected and analyzed [3] and [7]. However other researches focus on outsourcing and how could Jordan compete in the international market [12] and[7].

As a result of increasing the number of companies that invest in the software development sector, an amendment to the Copyright Law was introduced to acknowledge that copyright ownership of all works created by employees shall rest with the employer provided that such works are related to the business of the employer and provided that employees are utilizing the knowledge, tools, and resources made available by the employer [7].

In 1999, Jordan's parliament amended the country's 1992 Copyright Law and passed various regulations to better protect intellectual properties [7] & [4]. Two years later, King Abdullah received a special award from the Business Software Alliance (BSA) for his efforts to enforce the country's copyright and trademark laws. Largely due to these efforts, software piracy in Jordan has seen a steady decline since 1994, when rates reached 87%. By 2002, piracy rates had dropped to 64%, although the total losses of the software industry had risen, from US$2.2 million in 1994 to US$3.5 million in 2002[7].

4. The Sample Descriptive Analysis and Hypotheses Testing

Data for this research have been collected using a questionnaire and observation on e-government success factors, conducted for three different groups: The public sector employee, citizen and University instructors

4.1 The Sample Descriptive analysis And Hypotheses Testing
The sample descriptive

Table1. The sample distribution according to gender

Gender	Frequency	Percent
Male	211	54.5
Female	176	45.5
Total	387	100.0

From the table 1 above the sample of study contain 211 male with percent 54.5% and 176 Female with percent 45.5%.
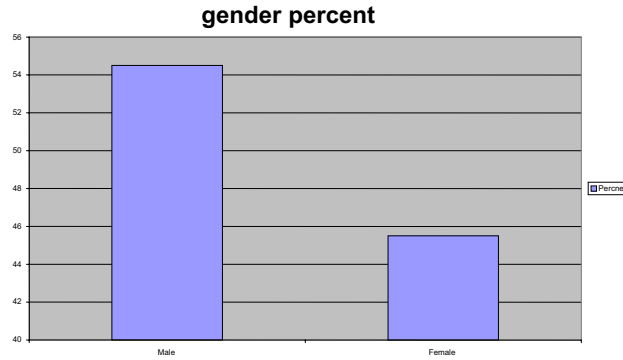
gender percent

Figure 2. The sample distribution according to gender

Table 2. The sample distribution according to Experience

Experience	Frequency	Percent
Less than 5 year	124	32.0
From 10-5	208	53.7
From 11-15	28	7.2
More than 15	27	7.0
Total	387	100.0

From the table 2 above the sample of study contain 124 individuals theirs Experience is Less than 5 year with percent 32% and 208 between 5 – 10 year with percent 53.7 and 28 between 11 – 15 with percent 7.2% and 27 individuals have Experience more than 15 year with percent 7%.
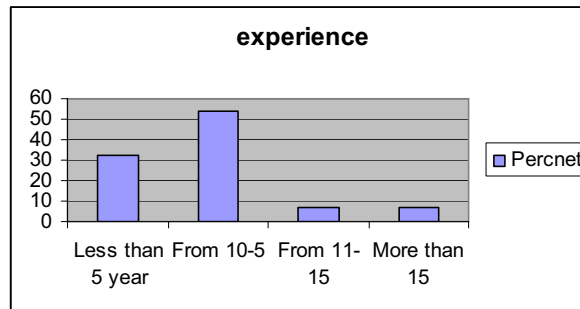
experience

Figure 3. Sample distribution according to Experience

Table 3. The sample distribution according to Social status

Social Status	Frequency	Percent
Single	142	36.7
Married	222	57.4
Widow	6	1.6
divorced	17	4.4
Total	387	100.0

From the table above the sample of study contain 148 individuals are single with percent 36.7% and 222 are married with percent 57.4 and 6 individuals are widow   with percent 1.6 and 17 individuals are with percent 4.4.
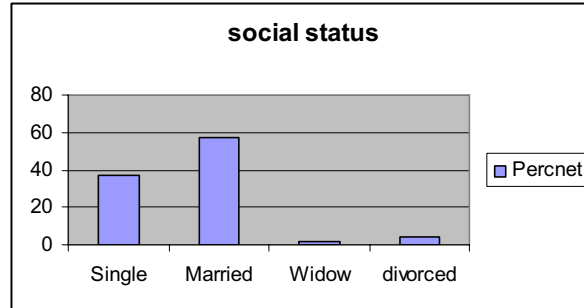
Figure 4. The sample distribution according to Social status

Table 4. The sample distribution according to age

Age	Frequency	Percent
Less than 30	219	56.6
30 – 39	98	25.3
40 – 49	43	11.1
More than 50	27	7.0
Total	387	100.0

From the table above the sample of study contain 219 individuals theirs age is Less than 30 year with percent 56.6 and 98 between 30 – 39 years with percent 25.3 and 43 individuals between 40 – 49 with percent 11.1% and 27 individuals are more than 50 year with percent 7%.
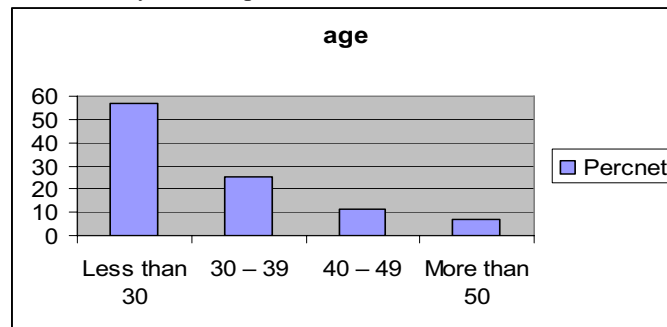

Figure 5. The sample distribution according to age

Table 5. The sample distribution according to Job Description

Job description	Frequency	Percent
High level	43	11.1%
Meddle level	78	20.2%
Low level	266	68.7

From the table above the sample of study contain sample distribution according to the job description 43 high level with percent 11.1 , meddle level 78 with percent 202 and low level 266 with percent 68.7 .

Table 6. The sample distribution according to the needed to accomplish any governmental transactions

Answer	Frequency	Percent
Yes	387	100.0
No	0	0
Total	387	100.0

From the table above the sample of study contain sample distribution according to the need to accomplish any governmental transactions, the sample answers yes.
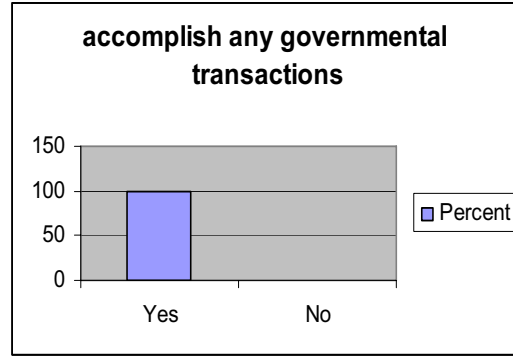
Figure 6. Governmental transactions

Table 7. Evaluation for the governmental service provided

Answer	Frequency	Percent
Very Excellent	20	5.2
Excellent	85	22.0
No opinion	112	28.9
Bad	153	39.5
Very Bad	17	4.4
Total	387	100.0

From the table above the sample of study contain 20 individuals answer very excellent with percent 5.2% and 85 individuals answer excellent with percent 22.0% and 112 individuals answer bad with percent 28.9% and 17 individuals answer very bad with percent 4.4% and 153 individuals answer no opinion with percent 39.5%
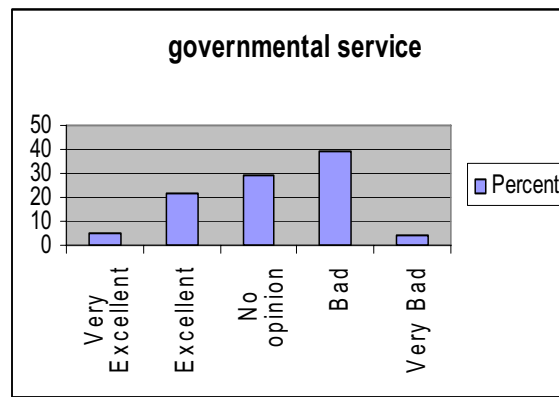

Figure 7. Governmental service provided

Table 8. Use of the internet in accomplishing any governmental papers?

Answer	Frequency	Percent
Yes	7	1.8
No	380	98.2
Total	387	100.0

From the table above the sample of study contain 7 individuals who use of the internet in accomplishing any governmental papers with percent 1.8% and 380 whom did not use of the internet in accomplishing any governmental papers with percent 98.2%.
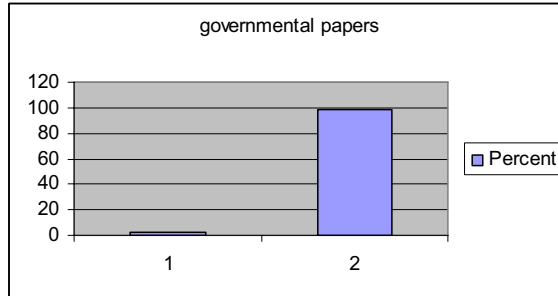
Figure 8: governmental papers

Table 9. The sample distribution according to the household income?

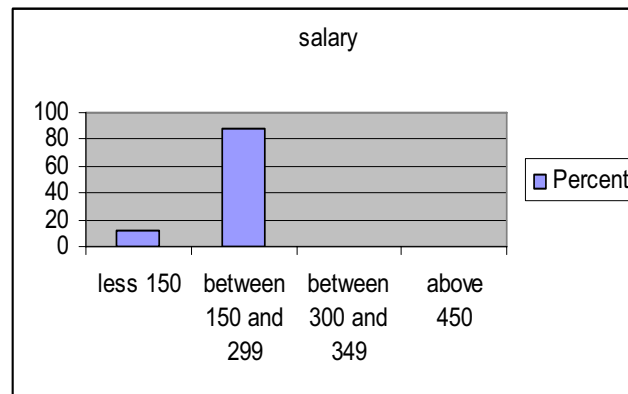| Answer	Frequency	Percent
Less 150	45	11.6
Between 150 and 299	288	88.27
Between 300 and 349	24	0.06
Above 450	30	0.07

Figure 9. Salary

From the table above the sample of study contain 45 individuals their salary is less than 150 JD with percent 11.6% , 288 individuals their salary is between 150 and 299 JD with percent 88.27%,24 individuals their salary is between 300 and 349 JD with percent 0.06% and 30 individuals their salary is more above 450 JD with percent 0.07%

Hypotheses Testing

The First hypothesis: citizens' awareness
Ho: There is No awareness from the citizens of the electronic government existence

Table 10. Hypotheses 1 test

Variable	Mean	S.D	T. Value	Sig
Awareness	2.5116	0.88555	-10.849	0.000

From table 10 the mean of attitude about the role of e-government in improving the Jordanian government service equals to 2.5116 with S.D equals to .88555 to test this hypotheses we use one sample T. test that compare between the actual mean with 5 likert scale (3). From the table above the T value equals to 10.849 with Sig equals to 0.000 so we reject the hypotheses H1 and accept the hypotheses H0. There is No awareness from the citizens of the electronic government existence.

The second hypothesis: Internet usage

Ho: Internet usage is not considered as obstacle of implementing e-government

Table 11. Hypothesis 2 test

Variable	Mean	S.D	T. Value	Sig
Internet usage	3.666	0.785	16.690	0.000

From table 11, the mean of attitude about the role of e-government in improving the Jordanian government service equals to 3.666 with S.D equals to .785 to test this hypotheses we use one sample T. test that compare between the actual mean with 5 likert scale (3). From the table above   the T value equals to 16.690 with Sig equals to 0.000 so we reject the null hypothesis H0 and accept the alternative hypotheses that Internet usage consider as obstacle of implementing e-government.

The Third Hypothesis: Communication Cost

The Eigen values equals to 1.097 with percentage of Variance 8.436 of this study which contain the following statement :

The high cost of the telecommunications through the internet reduces the desire in using the electronic government, the degree of loading (0.929) and degree of extraction equals to (0.870).

The Fourth Hypothesis: Lack of Professional People

H0: There is no Lack of professional people

Table 12. Hypothesis 4 test

Variable	Mean	S.D	T. Value	Sig
difficulties	3.254	.3712	51.24	0.00

From the table above the mean of attitude about the role of e-government in improving the Jordanian government service equals to 3.254 with S.D equals to .3712 to test this hypotheses we use one sample T. test that compare between the actual mean with 5 likert scale (3). From the table above the T value equals to 52.24 with Sig equals to 0.000 so we reject the null hypotheses H0 and accept the alternative hypotheses there is Lack of professional people.

5. Conclusion

The transition to a successful e-Government requires visionary Executive leadership, Broad vision with a tactical plan , Culture change , Partnerships , A supportive public policy environment, strong infrastructure, financial resources, skilled human element, Deliver electronic and integrated public services, Bridge the digital divide, Achieve lifelong learning , Rebuild government-customer relationship , Foster economic development and Create a more participate form of government .

This study showed that the Jordan e-government is on the way and has gained clear recognition of its achievements in doing so.

Nonetheless there were several obstacles that still need to be dealt with in the near future, these include:
- The Jordanian Community suffers from e-literacy.
- There is no sufficient awareness by the citizens in applying the electronic government
- There is a concern of citizens' privacy.
- There is   Lack of professional people

Recommendations

The main areas of further study directly relevant to this work and recommendations for the implementation of successful e-government   are the following:

- Re-enforce the national training capacity to boost the ICT sector with guarantee Quality of the training (standards) and Accessibility (affordable fees).
- Expand the number of free public Internet access points.
- Provide aides at access points who can train citizens in basic computer skills.
- Create programs that include traditional media, like radio programs or newspaper columns, where citizens can   learn about e-Government.
- These should be timely and when someone sends government an e-mail message, that message should be promptly acknowledged and responded to in a timely manner.
- Professional workers should remain in Jordan or ensure their resources and successes help benefit Jordan Incentives need to be in place to retain them, and to identify and attract those Jordanians living abroad
- Liberalize telecommunications industry this will effect on Lowered costs, enabled IT industry; increased company competitiveness; increased foreign investment.
- Legalize voice over Internet protocol (VOIP) by private telecommunications providers this will effect on Lower cost telecommunications

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