Role of E-Governance in Pakistan's Administration in Maintaining Public Trust

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Abstract

The study was based on the analysis of e-governance for administration in Pakistan related to public trust. The study was based on a quantitative approach and a literature review from a theoretical perspective. The quantitative approach was based on the survey from purposive sampling. The survey questionnaire was based on different variables based on the theoretical framework of public trust and the role of e-governance. The results from the survey have shown that e-governance is an emerging platform in Pakistan. However, it needs to work on accountability, responsiveness, clarity, transparency, laws, and regulations to become effective in maintaining public trust in maintaining Pakistan administration.

Keywords: E-Governance, administration, public trust, accountability and transparency

1   Introduction

E-governance is a key tool to check the performance of the government and to increase the trust of people in the administration and bureaucracy of Pakistan. Different terms are used to explain e-governance. This is often called digital government, e-governance, and also the smart government. Open government and paper government are also used for these technologies. The concept of e-governance was emerged due to the increase of these technological influences (Ali, 2020). This e-governance technology has changed the concept and pattern of governance. These technological advancements were incorporated for the utilization of useful communication in profitable and non-profitable sectors. These communication sources are very accessible and easily available to make communications very easy between the government and people.

These electronic ways have made an easy interaction between government and people. The e-governance has involved people in government to play their part for better implementations of laws. E-governance is positively influencing the nation of Pakistan. It is embraced to give effective results. This e-governance is helpful to build a long-lasting trust relationship between people and government. The availability of e-governance has reduced the consumption of time and travel of long-distance by increasing the efficiency of processes. In previous times word e-governance was not present in the dictionary but now it has made revolutionary advances (Ali, 2020).

This e-governance is used to increase the efficiency of the government. It has improved the methods of accountability and decision-making abilities of the government to

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make things transparent. This tool is also provided to the people for increasing the involvement of people in different sectors of government and to build their trust about the government decisions (Shaikh, 2016). The outdated versions of governance are excluded to provide good quality governance with efficiency and transparent decisions. This e-governance has increased the stability of society by providing them a platform for getting involved in government issues. This e-governance has enabled the citizen to present their opinions and valuable advice to make necessary changes in the bureaucracy of Pakistan. There are very few studies about the impact of e-governance in Pakistan. This implementation of e-governance has greatly influenced the government sectors of Pakistan. This study is an attempt to emphasize the impact of e-governance in the Pakistan system.

Different applications have been installed to cover the issues around the country and to provide on-time assistance and help to the people (Shaikh, 2016). The government administration has digitalized its policies and system to make it easily assessable for the citizen and to allow their participation. It has increased the trust of citizens in the government of Pakistan and people have started noticing democratic issues. E-governance is found to be very useful for the administration and execution of democratic policies and accountability. This e-governance would bring remarkable changes in the administration and accountability sectors of government.

2   Theoretical Discussion

Governance is defined as practice, customers, value, and organization by which power is executed in a state. It also involves government regarding the selection of procedures for accountability, governance, rights, and obligation of citizens. The governance can be good or bad. The goodness of governance is linked to the accountability that can denote the participation of people in choosing their governance because they have freedom of speech, association, media, and political consistency (Keping, 2018). The regularity quality is linked to devising application of regulatory and controlling strategies to ensure the rule of law. This is directly linked to the community's belief in the laws and policies.

In democratic governments like Pakistan, people's participation is necessary for the government election which is the key precondition for any democracy. Impartiality and neutrality must be the rule of the laws and policies to ensure uniformity in the actions. Accountability is the external control under which one is considered responsible for his actions to a higher authority, public, and officials (Keping, 2018). Responsiveness is based on the time frame in which organizations respond to queries and required services. Theoretical research model of public trust related to e-governance is given below:
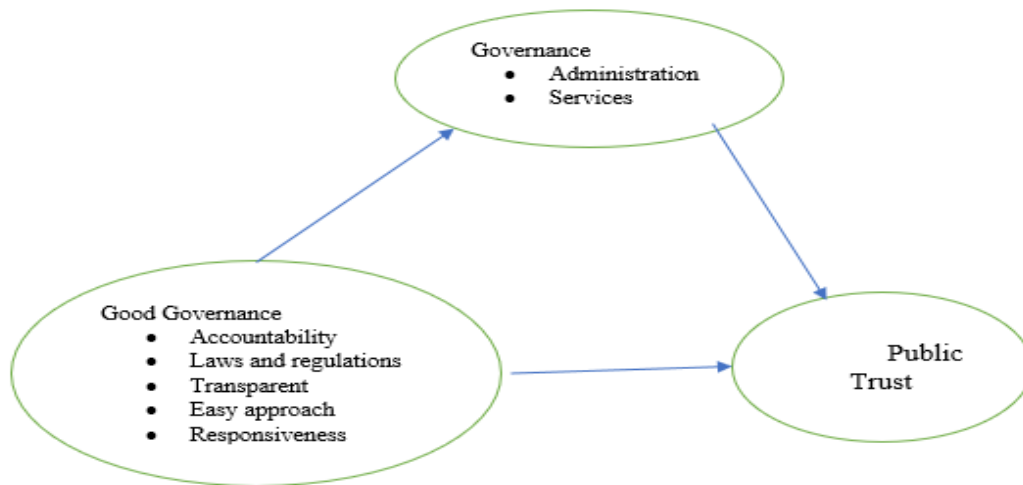
Figure 1:Theoretical Framework

HI: E-governance is trustable for the public if it is based on accountability.

H2: E-governance is trustable for the public if it is based on rules, laws, and policies.

H3: E-governance is trustable for the public if it is based on transparency.

H4: Public trust is based on responsiveness and an easy approach to the e-governance system.

H5: Pakistani E-governance is ensuring responsiveness, transparency and it is easily approachable based on the rules, regulations, and policies.

2.1   Contextual studies

E-governance is a very difficult term to explain with precision. There is no available definition for governance, but e-governance has gained a lot of importance in recent times. It can be defined as an advanced source of communication and information technology. It helps to facilitate the different processes of government and administrations of the public to give transparent, simple, and accountable governance which is known as the smart governance in Pakistan. This e-governance delivers government-related information to the people by using different electronic means and increasing the trust of citizens (Khan, 2020). The use of e-governance at different levels enhances the functions and performances of government in Pakistan. E-governance in Pakistan helps people to move forward for the better quality and effectiveness of the government performance. The interaction between government and citizens has greatly influenced the governance system of Pakistan (Khan, 2020).

People are now much aware of the rules and regulations. The trust level of the citizens is increased when they become aware of the government activities and are sure about equal accountabilities. E-governance in Pakistan has reduced the flaws of the government and citizens have found a way to directly communicate with the government to file their complaints and to inquire about different issues. The participation of people in decision makings and accountability has increased their level of trust. People of Pakistan are now supporting their government by contributing their part to different issues (Khan, 2020). E-governance has made accountability very easy which encourages them to participate in

government decisions. The digital interaction between government and different agencies of government, citizens, and employees has made it easy to administer rules and regulations. This governance system has made the government accountable, effective, and transparent. It provides better services to the people, increases transparency to avoid corruption, makes the government reliable and accountable, and promotes democratic activities by involving the participation of people. E-governance has been proved as a bridge for building a trustable relationship between the government and citizens (Rafique, 2020).

3   Methodology

It is important to note that e-governance in Pakistan is effective or not. The best option which can be applied is the deductive approach of research. The deduction approach can use the quantitative method to collect data from the relative person which can help in answering the research question (Sarker, Wu, Liu, & Ma, 2018). The research experiment is based on policy research, and it can determine the goals and be effective in testing the hypothesis of the research that how e-governance is playing its role in maintaining the public trust in the administration and Pakistani governance.

The data is collected from the public. The selection criteria were based on the people who have been in contact with the e-governance procedure of Pakistan to make the data valid and accurate. Selective sampling was taken to make the data an accurate representation of the whole population (Sarker, Wu, Liu, & Ma, 2018). The deductive approach was used based on the research design. The descriptive research was selected to make the study describe the finding based on the test conducted from the collected data.

The questionnaire was developed based on the close-ended question to cope with the time constraints. The questionnaire was based on multiple questions including various variables that from the main hypothesis to make the findings highly relevant to the research purpose. The data was analyzed by using digital software named, SPSS. This software has helped in removing the human error implications. It has also provided statistical results and graphs which has made the results effective and credible.

The demographic questions were asked in the first part of the questionnaire to make sure that respondents were credible to include the research or not. The second part of the questionnaire was important because it has helped the researcher to make derivations that how the Pakistani public is being treated by the e-governance administration. This part was significant because the hypothesis of the research is treated from this part's results. E-governance is the emerging form of governance all over the world. Therefore, it is necessary for the governmental institutions to be effective in managing this part of the administration to ensure the public trust in them to fulfill their primary purpose. The last of the questionnaire is complying with this approach so that effective derivations can be made, and findings implications can be linked to practical life.

4   Findings

The findings have shown that there were 46% males and 54% females in the participants' sample. The age of the participants varies; however, the major component was

from 36 to 45 years old. The education level is also similar, but 33% of them were graduated. The major question that asked about the effectiveness of e-governance of Pakistan, the responses vary accordingly. A major chunk said that the role was ineffective and less effective. The ratings have also shown almost similar responses where 64% of respondents have argued that the role is less effective and ineffective. The ICT is an important part of e-governance.

Table 1
Laws are strong to rule e-governance in Pakistan to regulate it for any complications to resolve. (1= Agree , 2= Highly Agree, 3 = Neutral, 4 = Disagree, 5. = Highly Disagree)

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	1	9	8.9	9.0	9.0
	2	11	10.9	11.0	20.0
	3	25	24.8	25.0	45.0
	4	35	34.7	35.0	80.0
	5	20	19.8	20.0	100.0
	Total	100	99.0	100.0	
System Missing		1	1.0		
	Total	101	100.0		

Table 2
E-governance projects are successful in transparency. (1= Agree, 2= Highly Agree, 3 = Neutral, 4 = Disagree, 5. = Highly Disagree)

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	2	23	22.8	23.0	23.0
	3	19	18.8	19.0	42.0
	4	34	33.7	34.0	76.0
	5	24	23.8	24.0	100.0
	Total	100	99.0	100.0	
System Missing		1	1.0		
	Total	101	100.0		

Table 3
E-governance projects are successful in processes and procedures. (1= Agree , 2= Highly Agree, 3 = Neutral, 4 = Disagree, 5. = Highly Disagree)

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	1	12	11.9	12.0	12.0
	2	32	31.7	32.0	44.0
	3	28	27.7	28.0	72.0
	4	20	19.8	20.0	92.0
	5	8	7.9	8.0	100.0
	Total	100	99.0	100.0	
System Missing		1	1.0		
	Total	101	100.0		

Table 4
E-governance include strict rules, privacy laws, and policies. (1= Agree , 2= Highly Agree, 3 = Neutral, 4 = Disagree, 5. = Highly Disagree)

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	1	12	11.9	12.0	12.0
	2	14	13.9	14.0	26.0
	3	28	27.7	28.0	54.0
	4	27	26.7	27.0	81.0
	5	19	18.8	19.0	100.0
	Total	100	99.0	100.0	
	System Missing	1	1.0		
	Total	101	100.0		

Table 5
E-governance has increased the quality of service. (1= Agree , 2= Highly Agree, 3 = Neutral, 4 = Disagree, 5. = Highly Disagree)

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	1	14	13.9	13.9	13.9
	2	13	12.9	12.9	26.7
	3	25	24.8	24.8	51.5
	4	29	28.7	28.7	80.2
	5	20	19.8	19.8	100.0
	Total	101	100.0	100.0	

Table 6
E-governance portals are easily accessed. (1= Agree , 2= Highly Agree, 3 = Neutral, 4 = Disagree, 5. = Highly Disagree)

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	1	14	13.9	13.9	13.9
	2	25	24.8	24.8	38.6
	3	32	31.7	31.7	70.3
	4	23	22.8	22.8	93.1
	5	7	6.9	6.9	100.0
	Total	101	100.0	100.0	

However, the commitment of ICT is also important for communication purposes. Participants have rated it on a neutral basis. The 25% of participants show neutral responses, while 38% were highly agreed to it. The efficiency is also rated on a similar basis, where 26% of participants said that they have a neutral response to the statement. The efficiency of the e-government is important to understand how the public thinks about it. The results have shown that 20% of participants agreed to the statement, while 35% were unsure about it, while the rest disagreed with the statement. The laws and regulations in Pakistan are important to

consider. The 34% of participants highly disagreed that Pakistan laws and regulations are strong enough to encompass e-governance.

The role has two dimensions to analyze: positive and negative. The participants have rated the positive role of e-governance in Pakistan, and 45% were on the side of e-governance, while the rest were against it. The paper is reduced because of e-governance. The results have shown a highly positive response where 95% were agreed that e-governance has decreased the paperwork. The communication values are also negative because 53% of participants were against the statement that communication has improved.

For living standard improvisation, 35% were highly disagreed. The payment received in e-governance is rated as 33% for the high disagree statement. The cost is reduced by e-governance as participants have shown in the survey. The survey results have shown that e-governance is including citizens and the response was highly negative. The e-government projects are effective because 60% percent of people were on the side of this statement. However, the rating has shown that e-governance is effective in planning. The transparency rating is also neutral because half of the ratings were in the favor and half were against it. However, e-governance is important in saving public confidential data.

The validity of the e-governance is considered positive in public because it got an almost positive rating in the survey. Its procedures and processes are not clear and easy to follow. 28% of participants were against the clarity claim of the procedures and process of e-governance. The survey results have shown that laws and regulations are not strong because more than 50% of participants were against the statement. E-governance service quality is not enough good to get a 100% rating in the public survey. The access to the e-governance portal rating has shown a positive response. Only 6% of participants showed negative results.

5   Discussion

The findings have suggested that there is a need to assess e-governance in Pakistan. It is important to analyze that e-governance must be more than effective because of its main agenda of working effectively for the purpose of collaborating with the public for the good of the public. Therefore, the survey analysis has also shown this perspective. Based on the results from the survey, it can be analyzed that participants' responses were poles apart. The responses have shown that e-governance can maintain public trust if works on multiple discussed in the findings.

The hypothesis states that public trust is linked to the transparency and clarity of the procedures and processes based on the laws, rules, and regulations. However, the respondent's response frequency and the percentage have demonstrated that e-governance is linked to multiple aspects, but it needs more work (Khan, Lee, & Bae, 2019). Based on the percentage and responses from participants, e-governance in Pakistan is not efficient in maintaining public trust in its policies and working style. However, the approaches and perspectives are clear.

It is possible that working on certain things will work effectively in maintaining public trust as it has been shown in survey results that some of them have high faith in e-governance which can result in something better for the future of Pakistan e-governance and e-administration. To work on these aspects, it is important to work on accountability and transparency (Ali, 2020). The procedures and actions should include everything written under the rules and regulations which have been used to develop policies for these actions. Therefore, administration and services under the e-governance can ensure the eligibility to maintain public trust by ensuring these variables.

6   Conclusion

To conclude, it can be stated that e-governance is important in Pakistan. It is an emerging opportunity for the Pakistani public that they can trust in the processes and procedures. Therefore, this article has focused on certain variables including transparency, accountability, responsiveness, clarity in the processes, laws, and regulations of policies for assessing the role of e-governance in maintaining the public trust in its policies. The results have shown that e-governance has performed its role effectively, but it is not efficient to the extent that it can maintain public trust.

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