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E-government research: Reviewing the literature, limitations, and ways forward

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Abstract

This article claims to be both a review and an agenda-setting piece. It is argued that e-government research suffers from definitional vagueness of the e-government concept, oversimplification of the e-government development processes within complex political and institutional environments, and various methodological limitations. In order to address these issues, the article reviews the limitations in the e-government literature, and it suggests ways forward. To do so, the study critically analyzes the development and various definitions of the e-government concept. After discussing the limitations of the concept, methodological and conceptual remedies such as (i) better examining and explaining the processes of “ and participation patterns in “ e-government projects within complex political environments, (ii) addressing the problem of under-specification in the e-government literature by the production of more grounded, empirical studies that would create new theoretical arguments and provide new concepts and categories

so as to enhance our understanding of e-government policy processes and actors, and (iii) tying the subject of e-government strongly to mainstream public administration research are suggested in the final part of the analysis.



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Keywords

E-government; Literature review; Public administration and management

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Mete Yildiz is an assistant professor at the Public Administration and Political Science Department of Hacettepe University in Ankara, Turkey. He worked as an associate instructor (2001–2003) and a visiting lecturer (2003–2004) at the School of Public and Environmental Affairs at Indiana University, Bloomington. His research focuses on the policy-making processes in government information and communication technology (ICT) projects, policy (social) networks, digital divide (especially the potential role of Internet cafes and cell phones in bridging it) and teaching ICT-related classes in public administration programs. Yildiz was the cofounder (with Jon Gant) and the organizer of E-government Workshop at Indiana University. During his stay at Indiana University, Yildiz attended the NSF-funded WebShop at the University of Maryland (Summer 2002), and worked as the managing editor of *The Information Society* journal (2001–2002). Yildiz holds a Master's degree in public administration from University of Southern California in Los Angeles, U.S.A., and Ph.D. in Public Affairs from Indiana University-Bloomington.

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