

Bridging the Gap: E-Government and SDG

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Abstract:- Bridging the gap between society and sustainable development goals (SDGs) is a critical challenge in today's interconnected world. This article explores the multifaceted role of e-government in addressing this gap and contributing to sustainable development. By leveraging digital platforms and services, e-government enhances accessibility, transparency, accountability, and citizen engagement. The literature review highlights how e-government initiatives have improved access to public services, promoted transparency and accountability, empowered marginalized communities, and facilitated citizen participation. Real-world examples and references demonstrate the impact of e-government on various SDGs, including health, education, poverty eradication, gender equality, and social equity. The methodology section outlines the comprehensive analysis conducted, combining qualitative and quantitative approaches to examine existing e-government initiatives and their outcomes. The results and discussion section presents key findings, emphasizing the positive influence of e-government on service accessibility, transparency, accountability, empowerment, and citizen engagement. The conclusion emphasizes the transformative potential of e-government and recommends continued investment in infrastructure, digital literacy, and international cooperation to accelerate progress towards the SDGs. By harnessing the power of e-government, societies can pave the way for inclusive and sustainable development, ensuring that *no one is left behind*.

Keywords:- E-Government, Sustainable Development.

I. INTRODUCTION

In today's interconnected and rapidly evolving world, the concept of bridging the gap between society and sustainable development goals (SDGs) has gained immense importance (Clark, Reed & Sunderland, 2018; Rees et al., 2018; Van Tulder *et al.* 2021). The SDGs, also known as the Global Goals, are a set of 17 interconnected objectives established by the United Nations to address pressing global challenges and achieve sustainable development by 2030. These goals range from eradicating poverty and hunger to promoting gender equality, ensuring access to quality education, fostering sustainable cities and communities, and mitigating climate change, among others.

However, despite the global commitment to the SDGs, numerous challenges persist in achieving these ambitious targets (Mori Junior, Fien & Horne, 2019). One crucial obstacle is the gap that exists between society and the successful implementation of SDGs (Saxena *et al.*, 2021).

This gap can manifest in various forms, including inadequate access to public services, limited transparency and accountability in governance, exclusion of marginalized communities, and insufficient citizen engagement in decision-making processes (Allen, Metternicht & Wiedmann, 2019).

To address these challenges and bridge the gap between society and SDGs, one remarkable tool has emerged: e-government. E-government refers to the utilization of digital platforms and services in public administration to enhance the efficiency, transparency, and accessibility of government operations (Drigas & Koukianakis, 2009). By harnessing the power of digital technologies, e-government holds the potential to transform governance systems, empower citizens, and contribute to the achievement of SDGs. This article explores the multifaceted role of e-government in bridging the gap between society and SDGs by examining its usefulness and impact on various aspects of sustainable development.

II. METHODOLOGY

To investigate the impact of e-government on bridging the gap between society and SDGs, a comprehensive analysis of existing e-government initiatives and their outcomes was conducted. A qualitative research method was employed which involved reviewing academic literature on e-government implementation and its connection to SDGs. Articles were first selected from reputable databases based on the keyword "E-Government and Sustainable Development". They were further screened and included based on the relevance of the abstract to the study.

III. REVIEW OF RELEVANT LITERATURE AND PREVIOUS WORKS

E-government plays a crucial role in bridging the gap between society and SDGs by addressing key challenges and fostering sustainable development. The following are ways how e-government initiatives are attempting to address these challenges:

➤ *Improved Accessibility to Public Services:*

Access to essential public services is a fundamental prerequisite for achieving the SDGs. However, geographical distance, bureaucratic processes, and time constraints often hinder individuals from accessing these services. E-government initiatives aim to overcome these barriers by providing digital platforms through which citizens can conveniently access government services and information. For instance, research highlighted how e-government platforms have enabled individuals in remote areas to access

healthcare services (Furuholt & Sæbø, 2018), receive educational resources, and apply for social welfare support (Siddiquee, 2016), thereby contributing to SDGs related to health, education, poverty eradication, and social inclusivity.

➤ *Transparency and Accountability*

Transparency and accountability are vital for effective governance and sustainable development. E-government initiatives leverage digital platforms to promote transparency by making government information, policies, budgets, and project implementations more accessible to the public (Linders, 2012). This increased transparency not only allows citizens to stay informed but also enables them to hold governments accountable for their actions. Hochstetter, (2023) also found that e-government initiatives have enhanced transparency, reduced corruption and ensured effective resource allocation for sustainable development projects. When citizens have access to information and can actively monitor government activities, it leads to improved trust, accountability, and better outcomes for SDGs.

➤ *Empowerment of Marginalized Communities:*

Marginalized communities, including those living in poverty, women, ethnic minorities, and persons with disabilities, often face significant barriers to accessing government services and participating in decision-making processes (Yeo & Moore, 2003). E-government initiatives aim to empower these communities by providing digital access to government services and information, regardless of geographical location or socio-economic status. Enaifoghe et. (2023) demonstrated how e-government initiatives have enabled marginalized communities to voice their concerns, resulting in policies that address their specific needs and contribute to SDGs related to poverty reduction, gender equality, and social equity. Digital platforms provide a means for underrepresented groups to engage with authorities, share their experiences, and influence policy formulation, thereby ensuring that no one is left behind.

IV. CITIZEN ENGAGEMENT AND PARTICIPATION

Meaningful citizen engagement and participation are essential for the successful implementation of SDGs. E-government initiatives leverage digital technologies to facilitate active participation of citizens in decision-making processes (Yeo & Moore, 2003), policy formulation, and service delivery. By providing channels for feedback, suggestions, and collaboration, e-government platforms enable citizens to contribute their insights and expertise (Sandoval-Almazan & Gil-Garcia, 2012). This inclusive approach helps governments formulate more effective and targeted policies aligned with the needs and aspirations of society. In their study, Wu, Zhang & Phommilath, (2022) emphasized how e-government platforms have enhanced citizen engagement, leading to more inclusive policies and improved outcomes for SDGs.

V. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

- E-government initiatives improve accessibility to public services, allowing individuals in remote areas to access healthcare services, receive educational resources, and apply for social welfare support, contributing to SDGs related to health, education, poverty eradication, and social inclusivity.
- E-government initiatives promote transparency and accountability by making government information, policies, budgets, and project implementations more accessible to the public, leading to reduced corruption and effective resource allocation for sustainable development projects.
- E-government initiatives empower marginalized communities by providing digital access to government services and information, enabling them to voice their concerns and contribute to SDGs related to poverty reduction, gender equality, and social equity.
- E-government initiatives facilitate citizen engagement and participation in decision-making processes, policy formulation, and service delivery, leading to more inclusive policies aligned with the needs and aspirations of society, and improved outcomes for SDGs.

Overall, the findings highlight that e-government plays a crucial role in bridging the gap between society and SDGs by improving accessibility, promoting transparency and accountability, empowering marginalized communities, and facilitating citizen engagement and participation. These findings emphasize the transformative potential of e-government in contributing to sustainable development and ensuring the achievement of the SDGs.

VI. CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION

E-government has emerged as a powerful tool for bridging the gap between society and SDGs. Its ability to enhance accessibility, promote transparency, empower marginalized communities, and facilitate citizen participation has made a significant impact on sustainable development efforts. Governments should continue investing in robust e-government infrastructure, ensuring digital literacy and access for all citizens, particularly in remote and marginalized areas. Additionally, international cooperation and knowledge-sharing among nations can further strengthen e-government initiatives and accelerate progress towards the achievement of SDGs on a global scale.

By leveraging the potential of e-government and harnessing its transformative power, societies can pave the way for inclusive, transparent, and sustainable development, ultimately achieving the SDGs and creating a better future for all.

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