ISSN No:-2456-2165

The Impact of Digitalization on Government Services: A Case Study Of Benin

Jules M. Honnon

Abstract:- Digitalization is transforming the way governments deliver services to their citizens. In Benin, the government has launched a number of digitalization initiatives, such as online tax filing, online passport applications, and online business registration. These initiatives have the potential to make it easier and more convenient for citizens to access government services. This study examines the impact of digitalization on government services in Benin. The study aims to understand the benefits and challenges of digitalization, and to identify best practices for implementing digitalization initiatives. The study uses a qualitative research approach. Data is collected through surveys and case studies. The surveys are conducted with citizens and government employees to understand their experiences with digitalization. The case studies focus on specific digitalization initiatives, such as online tax filing and online passport applications. The study adheres to ethical guidelines for research involving human subjects. Informed consent is obtained from all participants, and their confidentiality is protected. Digitalization has the potential to transform the way governments deliver services to their citizens. However, it is important to carefully consider the benefits and challenges of digitalization before implementing digitalization initiatives. Governments should also focus on making digitalization initiatives accessible to all citizens and providing training and support to citizens and government employees.

Keywords:- *Digitalization, Government, services, Citizen, access, Best practices, Implementation, Policy.*

I. INTRODUCTION

Digitalization is the process of converting information into a digital format. Government services are any services that are provided by the government to its citizens. Digitalization of government services refers to the use of digital technologies to improve the efficiency, effectiveness, transparency, and accountability of government services. Benin is a country in West Africa that has made significant progress in the digitalization of its government services. In 2020, the government launched its national public services portal, service-public.bj, which provides access to over 70 transactional services, such as passport applications and building permit applications. The portal also provides information on over 500 other public services. In addition, the government has launched a number of other e-government initiatives, such as an e-learning platform for public university students and a website with the results of national public exams. The digitalization of government services is important for a number of reasons. First, it can help to improve the efficiency of government services by automating tasks and reducing paperwork. Second, it can make government services more accessible to citizens by allowing them to access services online or through mobile apps. Third, it can make government services more transparent and accountable by making it easier for citizens to track and report on government activities. The rationale for this study is to assess the impact of digitalization on government services in Benin. The specific research questions and objectives are:What is the current state of digitalization in Benin?What are the key challenges and barriers to the implementation of digital government initiatives? What is the impact of digitalization on citizen engagement and service delivery? What are the policy implications of the findings? The significance of this study is that it will provide insights into the impact of digitalization on government services in a developing country context. The findings will be useful for policymakers and practitioners in Benin and other African countries. The scope of the study is limited to the Republic of Benin. The study will focus on the following government services: tax filing, passport applications, and business registration online citizen participation etc.

II. LITERATURE REVIEW

- Definition and Concepts of E-governance: E-governance encompasses a range of technological tools and platforms that enable digital interactions between government bodies, citizens, businesses, and other stakeholders. Key features include online service delivery, electronic communication channels, open data initiatives, digital identification systems, and participatory decision-making mechanisms (Holness et al., 2022). By leveraging ICTs for governance purposes, e-governance can streamline administrative processes, reduce corruption risks through increased transparency, promote accountability among public officials, enhance service quality for citizens through greater accessibility and convenience.
- Historical Evolution of E-governance: The historical evolution of e-governance can be traced back to the 1960s with the emergence of computer systems in government operations. However, it was not until the 1990s that e-governance gained momentum with the widespread adoption of internet-based technologies. Countries like Singapore were pioneers in implementing innovative e-government initiatives aimed at enhancing service delivery through online platforms. Since then, there has been a global trend towards embracing digital solutions in public administration. For instance, India launched its ambitious Digital India program in 2015 with the aim of transforming governance through increased connectivity and digitization of services. Similarly, Estonia became known for its advanced e-government system which allows citizens to access most public services online.

ISSN No:-2456-2165

- **We can classify e-government into 3(Three) models such as:** Government-to-Citizen (G2C) model, Government-to-Business (G2B) model, Government-to-Government (G2G), model**.**

A. e-government1: Government-to-Citizen (G2C) model

Fig. 1: Government-to-Citizen (G2C) model

The Government-to-Citizen (G2C) model is a framework for delivering government services to citizens through online channels. The goal of the G2C model is to make it easier and more convenient for citizens to interact with the government and to access the services they need.

The G2C model can be used to deliver a wide range of government services, including:

- Applying for passports and visas
- Paying taxes
- Registering businesses
- Filing court documents
- Accessing medical records
- Reporting crimes
- Receiving social benefits

The G2C model has a number of advantages over traditional methods of delivering government services. For example, the G2C model can:

- Reduce costs: The G2C model can help to reduce the costs of government service delivery by streamlining processes and eliminating the need for intermediaries.
- Increase transparency: The G2C model can help to increase transparency in government service delivery by making it easier for citizens to track the status of their requests and to provide feedback.
- Improve efficiency: The G2C model can help to improve the efficiency of government service delivery by automating tasks and reducing paperwork.
- Enhance convenience: The G2C model makes it more convenient for citizens to access government services by allowing them to do so online, from anywhere and at any time.

The G2C model is becoming increasingly popular around the world. Many countries have implemented G2C portals that provide citizens with access to a wide range of government services online.

Here are some examples of G2C model applications:

- A citizen can apply for a passport online through the government's website.
- A citizen can pay their taxes online through the government's tax portal.
- A citizen can register their business online through the government's business registration portal.
- A citizen can file court documents online through the government's court system website.
- A citizen can access their medical records online through the government's healthcare portal.
- A citizen can report a crime online through the government's police website.
- A citizen can receive social benefits online through the government's social welfare portal.

The G2C model is a valuable tool for improving the delivery of government services to citizens. By adopting the G2C model, governments can make it easier and more convenient for citizens to access the services they need.

B. e-government2: Government-to-Business (G2B) model

Fig. 2: Government-to-Business (G2B) model

Government-to-Business (G2B) e-commerce refers to the process of government agencies purchasing goods or services from businesses through the internet. In a G2B transaction, the government agency is the buyer and the business is the seller.

G2B e-commerce has a number of advantages over traditional government procurement methods. For example, G2B e-commerce can:

- **Reduce costs:** G2B e-commerce can help to reduce the costs of government procurement by streamlining processes and eliminating the need for intermediaries.
- **Increase transparency:** G2B e-commerce can help to increase transparency in government procurement by making it easier for businesses to participate and by providing more information about bidding opportunities.
- **Improve efficiency:** G2B e-commerce can help to improve the efficiency of government procurement by automating tasks and reducing paperwork.

G2B e-commerce is becoming increasingly popular around the world. In 2022, the global G2B e-commerce market was valued at $2.5 trillion, and it is expected to grow to $3.5 trillion by 2027.

Here are some examples of G2B e-commerce transactions:

- government agency purchases medical supplies from a healthcare company through an online procurement portal.
- construction company submits a bid for a government contract to build a new road through an online bidding system.

G2B e-commerce is a rapidly growing market with a number of potential benefits for both government agencies and businesses. By adopting G2B e-commerce, government agencies can reduce costs, increase transparency, and improve efficiency. Businesses can also benefit from G2B e-commerce by gaining access to new markets and by streamlining their sales processes.

C. e-government 3: Government-to-Business (G2G) model

Fig. 3: Government-to-Business (G2G) model

The Government-to-Government (G2G) model refers to the interaction and cooperation between governments at the national level. This can take a variety of forms, such as diplomatic relations, economic cooperation, military alliances, and so on.

G2G interactions are important for a number of reasons. First, they can help to promote peace and stability between countries. Second, they can help to improve economic cooperation and trade. Third, they can help to address global challenges, such as climate change and terrorism.

Here are some examples of G2G interactions:

- Two countries sign a trade agreement that reduces tariffs and other barriers to trade.
- Two countries form a military alliance to defend each other from attack.
- Two countries cooperate on a research project to develop a new technology to address climate change.
- Two countries share intelligence and collaborate on law enforcement operations to combat terrorism.

The G2G model is an important tool for promoting cooperation and understanding between countries. By working together, governments can address global challenges and improve the lives of their citizens.

In addition to the examples above, G2G interactions can also take the form of:

- Sharing best practices on public policy and administration
- Providing technical assistance and capacity building
- Jointly developing and implementing programs and projects
- Engaging in dialogue and consultation on a range of issues

G2G interactions can play a vital role in promoting sustainable development and inclusive growth. By working together, governments can create a more just and equitable world for all.

III. THE ADVANTAGES OF DIGITALIZATION ON GOVERNMENTIN GENERAL

E-governance has emerged as a significant concept in public administration, transforming the way governments interact with citizens and provide services. By leveraging technology and digital platforms, e-governance aims to improve service delivery, enhance transparency and accountability, promote citizen engagement, increase efficiency, and achieve cost savings. This essay will explore the impact of e-governance on public administration by examining its role in improving service delivery and accessibility, promoting transparency and accountability, encouraging citizen engagement and participation, enhancing efficiency and cost savings. Through a comparative analysis between countries or regions that have embraced e-governance versus those that have not, we can assess the differences in governance practices.

- **Improved Service Delivery and Accessibility**: One of the key impacts of e-governance is improved service delivery to citizens through streamlined processes (Ruhago et al. 2022). Digital platforms facilitate quicker response times to citizen requests by automating administrative tasks such as application processing or document verification. Moreover, e-government services are accessible around-the-clock from any location with internet connectivity (Kelly 2014). This eliminates geographical barriers that may hinder citizen's access to physical government offices. E-government advocates envision a future in which citizens have 24 hours, 7 days a week interactive access to all important government bureaus; where online transactions with government can be conducted from the comfort of home; where government officials make all purchases online; where there are one-stop web portals for businesses seeking to deal with regulatory requirements, students seeking assistance.
- **Transparency and Accountability**: E-governance plays a crucial role in promoting transparency in government operations by providing easy access to information for citizens (Ziemba&Oblak 2014). Government websites and online portals serve as repositories of public information, including policies, laws, budgets, and reports. This enables citizens to hold government officials accountable for their actions by providing them with the means to monitor government activities. Furthermore, e-governance facilitates accountability mechanisms through features such as digital signatures and audit trails that ensure traceability in decision-making processes.
- **Citizen Engagement and Participation**: E-governance encourages citizen engagement in decision-making processes by providing platforms for feedback and participation (Kelly 2014). Online forums, social media platforms, and interactive websites enable citizens to voice their opinions on policies or proposed projects. This input can inform the decision-making process and lead to more inclusive governance practices (Ziemba&Oblak 2014). Additionally, e-governance allows for direct communication between citizens and government officials or representatives through online channels.E-governance can be used to promote government-citizen interactions on proposed regulations, policy changes, and laws. Proponents envision everything from online suggestion boxes to online national voting for president and everything in between. Numerous federal agencies are experimenting with participative e-rulemaking and the Office of Management and Budget is poised to mandate such initiatives, institutionalizing a new form of citizen participation. Political leaders like Senator Joseph Lieberman (D,CT) have launched online policy discussion forums to explore new methods of political engagement. (Digital Government: Principles and Best Practices by Alexei Pavlichev, G. David Garson)
- **Efficiency and Cost Savings**: The implementation of e-governance initiatives has led to increased efficiency in publicadministration processes (Ruhago et al. 2022). By automating administrative tasks such as data entry or record-keeping using digital systems, governments can streamline operations while reducing human error rates. Furthermore, e-governance enables cost savings by eliminating the need for physical infrastructure or personnel for certain services (Kelly 2014). E-government improved and transformed governmental processes and cut transaction costs, thereby reducing the expense of government. E-government advocates cite as a model the 90% transaction cost savings of the financial industry's implementation of online banking (Atkinson and Ulevich, 2001). For example, online tax filing

ISSN No:-2456-2165

reduces paperwork and processing costs associated with traditional methods.

In Conclusion, E-governance has had a significant impact on public administration by improving service delivery and accessibility, promoting transparency and accountability, encouraging citizen engagement and participation, while also enhancing efficiency and achieving cost savings.

IV. THE ADVANTAGES OF DIGITALIZATION ON GOVERNMENT IN BENIN REPUBLIC

A. The impact of digitalization on transparency and accountability in government services:

Digitalization has also made government services more transparent and accountable in Benin. For example, it has made it easier for citizens to access information about government services and to track how their tax money is being spent.

One example of how digitalization has improved transparency is the publication of government budgets online. Previously, government budgets were only available in print form. However, now citizens can access government budgets online through the "Service-Public.bj" portal. This makes it much easier for citizens to see how their tax money is being spent.

Another example is the publication of government procurement information online. Previously, government procurement information was not publicly available. However, now citizens can access government procurement information online through the "Service-Public.bj" portal. This makes it much easier for citizens to track how government contracts are being awarded and to ensure that the government is getting the best value for money.

B. The impact of digitalization on the efficiency and effectiveness of government services:

Digitalization has improved the efficiency and effectiveness of government services in Benin in a number of ways. For example, it has reduced the amount of paperwork required to access government services. It has also made it easier for citizens to track the status of their applications and to get help if they have any problems.

One example of a government service that has been digitized is the process of applying for a passport. Previously, citizens had to go to a passport office in person to submit their application. However, now citizens can apply for a passport online through the "Service-Public.bj" portal. This has made the process much faster and more convenient for citizens.Another example is the process of paying taxes. Previously, citizens had to go to a tax office in person to pay their taxes. However, now citizens can pay their taxes online through the "Service-Public.bj" portal. This has made the process much faster and easier for citizens.

C. Case Studiesof successful digitalization projects

➢ *Case study 1: successful digitalization projects in the world: Estonia*

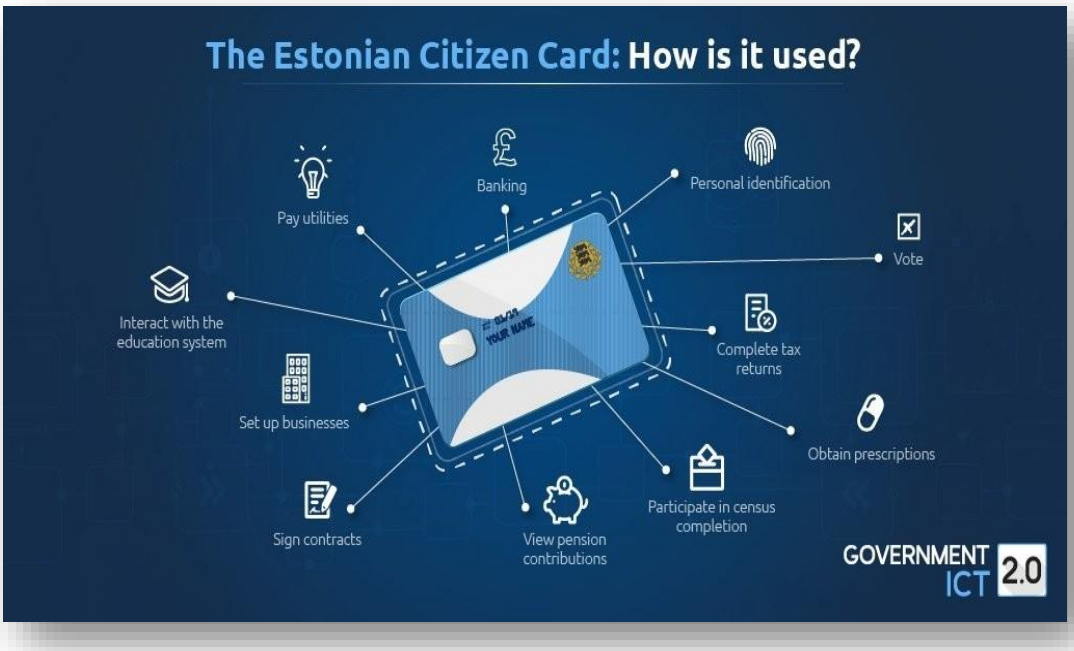

Fig. 4: successful digitalization projects in the world: Estonia

One notable example of a successful e-governance initiative is Estonia's digital governance system known as "e-Estonia." The objective was to create an efficient and transparent government that provides seamless online services to its citizens. Key features include mandatory digital identification cards for all residents that allow secure

access to various government services such as voting or tax filing. The implementation process involved building robust technological infrastructure combined with comprehensive legal frameworks that protect data privacy while enabling efficient information exchange across different government agencies. Challenges faced included concerns regarding data security and privacy breaches; however, through continuous improvements in technology safeguards and citizen education programs on data protection measures, these challenges were successfully addressed. As a result of this initiative, Estonia has become one of the most advanced digital societies globally, with high levels of public satisfaction due to streamlined service delivery processes.

➢ *Case study 2: successful digitalization projects in the world: south Korea*

Fig. 5: successful digitalization projects in the world: south Korea

South Korea is a world leader in e-governance, with a number of successful digitalization projects that have made it easier and more convenient for citizens and businesses to interact with the government.

One of the most successful digitalization projects in South Korea is the Unified Government Portal. This portal provides citizens and businesses with access to a wide range of government services online, including tax filing, business registration, and applying for passports and visas. The portal is easy to use and navigate, and it is available in multiple languages.

Another successful digitalization project in South Korea is the e-Government Mobile Platform. This platform allows citizens and businesses to access government services on their smartphones and tablets. The platform is available in both Korean and English, and it offers a variety of features, such as the ability to apply for government services, check the status of applications, and pay fees.

The SmartWork System is a South Korean government initiative that aims to promote remote work and flexible work arrangements. The system provides a variety of resources and support services to both public and private sector employees, including:

- Access to a network of co-working spaces and remote work centers
- Information and guidance on remote work policies and procedures.
- Training and development programs on remote work skills
- Technical support and assistance

The SmartWork System has been successful in increasing the adoption of remote work in South Korea. According to a 2022 survey by the Ministry of Personnel Management, the number of public sector employees working remotely increased from 2.5% in 2019 to 12.3% in 2022. The number of private sector employees working remotely also increased significantly during the same period.

The COVID-19 pandemic has brought about a fundamental transformation in the way South Koreans work. During the pandemic, many companies gradually introduced various forms of flexible work programs, such as working from home, remote work, and hybrid work models. The government further encouraged employers to allow their employees to work from home, in part through financial subsidies and incentives. This can be seen as a major shift in what is commonly perceived as a rigid Korean corporate

ISSN No:-2456-2165

culture. In fact, flexible work arrangements were introduced in South Korea as early as 1997 to reduce long working hours, but with little success. Just until recently, the number of South Korean employees working under flexible work arrangements was less than one million. By August 2021, this number had more than quadrupled.

D. Working from home in South Korea

Flexible work arrangements in South Korea include various work options such as selective working hours, flextime, remote work (telework), and working from home. In recent years, the use of remote work and working from home have particularly seen a sharp rise. Between 2015 and 2021, the number of employees who worked from home or remotely increased from about 66 thousand to 1.1 million – a 17-fold increase that occurred mainly in 2020 and 2021. While just 4.3 percent of employees who used flexible work arrangements worked from home in 2018, this share increased more than sevenfold by August 2021. Working from home was most prevalent in the finance and insurance as well as arts, sports, and recreation-related industries. According to a survey, most of the respondents worked from home between 10 and 99 days in 2020.

E. Productivity and challenges

In a survey from 2020, around 85 percent of office workers reported being satisfied with working from home. Many of them particularly liked the fact that they do not have to worry about how they are perceived by others when working from home – an indirect pressure to conform to social norms, also called "nunchi" in Korean. Furthermore, both employers and employees seemed to find this form of work productive. However, communication difficulties or stress, such as the feeling of being constantly at work, were often perceived as disadvantages. It remains to be seen to what extent this trend will continue, as working from home is not yet as widespread in small and medium-sized enterprises as it is in large companies. Some companies have nevertheless already shown their willingness to make this trend the new normal. This text provides general information. Statista assumes no liability for the information given being complete or correct. Due to varying update cycles, statistics can display more up-to-date data than referenced in the text.

The SmartWork System has had a number of benefits for both employers and employees. For employers, the system has helped to reduce costs and improve employee productivity. For employees, the system has made it possible for them to work more flexibly and to achieve a better work-life balance.

The SmartWork System is an example of a successful digitalization project that has helped to improve the way that people work in South Korea. The system is also a model for other countries that are looking to promote remote work and flexible work arrangements.

In addition to the benefits mentioned above, the SmartWork System has also helped to reduce traffic congestion and air pollution in South Korea. By enabling more people to work remotely, the system has helped to reduce the number of people commuting to and from work each day.

The SmartWork System is a good example of how digitalization can be used to improve the lives of citizens and businesses. The system is also a model for other countries that are looking to promote remote work and flexible work arrangements.

In addition to the Unified Government Portal and the e-Government Mobile Platform, South Korea has also implemented a number of other successful digitalization projects, including:

- **e-Tax Filing:** This system allows taxpayers to file their taxes online, without having to go to a tax office.
- **e-Business Registration:** This system allows businesses to register online, without having to go to a business registration office.
- **e-Courts:** This system allows citizens to file court documents and track the progress of their cases online.
- **e-Police:** This system allows citizens to report crimes and check the status of their reports online.
- **e-Medical Records:** This system allows patients to access their medical records online.

These digitalization projects have had a number of positive impacts on South Korea. For example, they have made it easier and more convenient for citizens and businesses to interact with the government. They have also helped to reduce corruption and improve transparency.

South Korea's success in e-governance is due to a number of factors, including:

- **Strong government commitment:** The South Korean government has made e-governance a priority, and it has invested heavily in developing and implementing digitalization projects.
- **Public support:** The South Korean public is supportive of e-governance, and there is a high level of internet penetration in the country.
- **Technological innovation:** South Korea is a leader in technological innovation, and it has developed a number of innovative e-governance solutions.

South Korea's experience in e-governance provides valuable lessons for other countries that are looking to improve their own e-governance programs.

Table 1: Countries in Africa with the highest EGDI value

Country	Rating class	EGDI rank	Subregion	OSI value	HCI value	TII value	EGDI (2022)	EGDI (2020)
South Africa	HV	65	Southern Africa	0.7487	0.7733	0.6850	0.7357	0.6891
Mauritius	HV	75	Eastern Africa	0.6282	0.7733	0.7588	0.7201	0.7196
Seychelles	H3	85	Eastern Africa	0.4424	0.7758	0.8198	0.6793	0.6920
Tunisia	H3	88	Northern Africa	0.6031	0.6911	0.6646	0.6530	0.6526
Morocco	H2	101	Northern Africa	0.4721	0.6350	0.6676	0.5915	0.5729
Egypt	H2	103	Northern Africa	0.5730	0.6375	0.5579	0.5895	0.5527
Ghana	H2	106	Western Africa	0.5361	0.6176	0.5934	0.5824	0.5960
Cabo Verde	H2	110	Western Africa	0.4965	0.6507	0.5507	0.5660	0.5604
Algeria	H2	112	Northern Africa	0.3743	0.6956	0.6133	0.5611	0.5173
Kenya	H2	113	Eastern Africa	0.6821	0.5641	0.4305	0.5589	0.5326
Gabon	H2	116	Middle Africa	0.3578	0.6706	0.6279	0.5521	0.5401
Botswana	H1	118	Southern Africa	0.2740	0.6932	0.6814	0.5495	0.5383
*Rwanda**	H1	119	Eastern Africa	0.7935	0.5322	0.3209	0.5489	0.4789
*Côte d'Ivoire**	H1	120	Western Africa	0.5467	0.5748	0.5186	0.5467	0.4457
Namibia	H1	121	Southern Africa	0.4316	0.6516	0.5133	0.5322	0.5747
*Zambia**	H1	131	Eastern Africa	0.4414	0.6744	0.3909	0.5022	0.4242

Sources: 2020 and 2022 United Nations E-Government Surveys.

Note: Countries in italics are LDCs, LLDCs or SIDS.

* Countries that moved from the middle to the high EGDI group in 2022.

Digitalization trends in Africa are positive overall. Fixed (wired) broadband subscriptions have jumped 48 per cent since 2020, rising from 1.80 to 2.67 per 100 inhabitants. Survey results for 2022 indicate that 33 per cent of the region's residents use the Internet, 42.8 per cent are active mobile broadband subscribers, and 83.7 per cent have mobile cellular telephone subscriptions (see chapter 1 for more details). Nevertheless, the values for these indicators remain below the corresponding global averages, and the cost of mobile broadband subscriptions as a percentage of gross national income per capita remains significantly higher in Africa than in other parts of the world, contributing to the digital divide.

Africa faces persistent challenges linked to inadequate investment in e-government development. Low-income and lower-middle-income countries make up 85 per cent of the regional total, and two thirds of these countries are LDCs, LLDCs and/or SIDS. Africa is home to 39 of the 91 countries in special situations worldwide. The lowest EGDI and sub-index values are found among the LDCs, including those that are also LLDCs and SIDS (see figure 2.13); the average EGDI value for this group is 0.3233. Among the LLDCs, Botswana has the highest TII value (0.6814) but the lowest OSI value (0.2740). The SIDS in Africa have an average EGDI value of 0.3872; Mauritius has the highest OSI value, and Seychelles has the top TII value. As noted previously, the regional average EGDI value for Africa is 0.4054, which is well below the global average of 0.6102. Almost two thirds of the countries in Africa (59 per cent) have middle EGDI values, and close to a third (30 per cent) have high EGDI values. While there are no countries in Africa in the very high EGDI group, the declining trend in African representation in low and middle EGDI groups is encouraging.

F. Current Status of E-Governance in Mauritius

The current status of e-governance in Mauritius is very positive. The government has made significant progress in recent years in digitizing its services and operations, and it is now considered to be one of the leading countries in Africa in terms of e-governance.

The government's Digital Mauritius 2030 Strategic Plan has been instrumental in driving the development of e-governance in Mauritius. The plan aims to position Mauritius as a leading digital economy in Africa and the world by 2030.

As part of the Digital Mauritius 2030 Strategic Plan, the government has launched a number of initiatives to digitize its services and operations. These initiatives include:

- The development and launch of the MoKloud platform,

ISSN No:-2456-2165

which provides access to electronic government services, such as birth and marriage certificates, and digital vaccination passes.
- The development and launch of the Mauritius Government Online Portal, a one-stop shop for government services, such as tax payments, passport applications, and business registration.
- The development and launch of the Citizen Support Portal, a portal where citizens can submit complaints, track the status of their applications, and provide feedback on government services.
- The implementation of a number of e-government solutions, such as electronic document management systems and electronic workflow systems.
- The investment in digital infrastructure, such as broadband internet and data centers.

The government's digitalization efforts are having a positive impact on the economy and society. For example, they are helping to create jobs, attract foreign investment, and improve the delivery of government services.

A recent survey by the United Nations found that Mauritius is ranked first in Africa in terms of e-government readiness. The survey also found that Mauritius is ranked 47th in the world in terms of e-government readiness.

The Mauritius government is committed to digital transformation and is making significant progress in digitizing its services and operations. These efforts are having a positive impact on the economy and society and are helping to position Mauritius as a leading digital economy in Africa and the world.

G. Current Status of E-Governance in South Africa

South Africa is one of the leading countries in Africa in terms of e-governance development. The country has a relatively high internet penetration rate, and the government has been proactive in promoting e-governance initiatives.

Some of the key e-governance initiatives in South Africa include:
- **The South African Government Online (SAGO) portal:** This portal provides citizens and businesses with access to a variety of government services online, such as applying for passports, business registration, and driver's licenses.
- **The South African Revenue Service (SARS) eFiling platform:** This platform allows taxpayers to file and pay taxes online.
- **The South African Social Security Agency (SASSA) SASSA Grant application platform:** This platform allows citizens to apply for social grants online.
- **The South African Police Service (SAPS) Online Crime Reporting portal:** This portal allows citizens to report crimes online.
- **The South African Judiciary CaseTrac system:** This system allows citizens to track the progress of their court cases online.

These e-governance initiatives have had a number of positive impacts on South Africa. For example, the SAGO portal has made it easier and more convenient for citizens and businesses to access government services. The SARS eFiling platform has enhanced efficiency and transparency in tax administration. The SASSA Grant application platform has made it easier for citizens to apply for social grants. The SAPS Online Crime Reporting portal has made it easier for citizens to report crimes. And the South African Judiciary CaseTrac system has made the justice system more transparent and accessible to citizens.

Despite the progress that has been made, there are still some challenges that need to be addressed in order to further develop e-governance in South Africa. For example, there is a need to improve internet penetration and access, particularly in rural areas. There is also a need to raise awareness of e-governance services and to build capacity in the public sector to deliver e-governance services effectively. Overall, the current status of e-governance in South Africa is promising. The country has made significant progress in implementing e-governance initiatives, and is now considered to be one of the leading countries in Africa in terms of e-governance development.

H. Current Status of E-Governance in Seychelles

The current status of e-governance in Seychelles is very good. The government has made significant progress in recent years in digitizing its services and operations, and it is now considered to be one of the leading countries in Africa in terms of e-governance.

The government's e-government strategy is based on the following four pillars:
- **Access:** Ensuring that all citizens have access to government services, regardless of their location or income level.
- **Efficiency:** Making government services more efficient and timely.
- **Transparency:** Increasing transparency and accountability in government operations.
- **Participation:** Empowering citizens to participate more actively in government decision-making.

The government has implemented a number of initiatives to achieve its e-government goals. These initiatives include:
- The development and launch of the Seychelles Government Portal, a one-stop shop for government services.
- The development and launch of the Seychelles Electronic Border System, which allows travelers to complete their immigration formalities online.
- The implementation of a number of e-government solutions, such as electronic document management systems and electronic workflow systems.
- The investment in digital infrastructure, such as broadband internet and data centers.

The government's e-government efforts are having a positive impact on the economy and society. For example, they are helping to reduce corruption, improve the efficiency of government operations, and make it easier for businesses

ISSN No:-2456-2165

to start and operate.

A recent survey by the United Nations found that Seychelles is ranked fifth in Africa in terms of e-government readiness. The survey also found that Seychelles is ranked 61st in the world in terms of e-government readiness.

The Seychelles government is committed to digital transformation and is making significant progress in digitizing its services and operations. These efforts are having a positive impact on the economy and society and are helping to position Seychelles as a leading digital economy in Africa and the world.

Here are some specific examples of the Seychelles government's current digitalization initiatives:

- The government is developing a National Digital Identity System, which will provide citizens with a single digital identity that can be used to access all government services.
- The government is also developing a Digital Land Registry System, which will make it easier and more efficient to register and transfer land titles.
- The government is working with the private sector to develop a Smart City project on Mahé, the main island of Seychelles. The Smart City will use digital technologies to improve transportation, energy efficiency, and environmental management.

The Seychelles government is committed to digital transformation and is making significant progress in digitizing its services and operations. These efforts are having a positive impact on the economy and society and are helping to position Seychelles as a leading digital economy in Africa and the world.

I. Current Status of E-Governance in Rwanda

The current status of e-governance in Rwanda is very positive. Rwanda is one of the leading countries in Africa in terms of e-governance, and it is ranked 74th in the world in terms of e-government readiness according to the United Nations E-Government Survey 2020.

The Rwandan government has made significant progress in recent years in digitizing its services and operations. This progress has been driven by the government's Smart Rwanda Master Plan, which aims to position Rwanda as a global hub for innovation and technology.

As part of the Smart Rwanda Master Plan, the government has launched a number of e-governance initiatives, including:

- The development and launch of the Irembo one-stop shop for government services. Irembo provides citizens and businesses with access to a wide range of government services, such as tax payments, passport applications, and business registration.
- The development and launch of the RURApay mobile money platform. RURApay allows citizens to pay for government services and other goods and services using their mobile phones.
- The implementation of a number of e-government solutions, such as electronic document management systems and electronic workflow systems.
- The investment in digital infrastructure, such as broadband internet and data centers.

The government's e-governance efforts are having a positive impact on the economy and society. For example, they are helping to reduce corruption, improve the efficiency of government operations, and make it easier for businesses to start and operate.

Here are some specific examples of the Rwandan government's current digitalization initiatives:

- The government is developing a National Digital Identity System, which will provide citizens with a single digital identity that can be used to access all government services.
- The government is also developing a Digital Land Registry System, which will make it easier and more efficient to register and transfer land titles.
- The government is working with the private sector to develop Smart City projects in Kigali, the capital city, and other major cities in Rwanda. The Smart City projects will use digital technologies to improve transportation, energy efficiency, and environmental management.

The Rwandan government is committed to digital transformation and is making significant progress in digitizing its services and operations. These efforts are having a positive impact on the economy and society and are helping to position Rwanda as a leading digital economy in Africa and the world.

J. Current Status of E-Governance in Kenya

Kenya has made strides in leveraging technology to enhance governance practicesThe Huduma Kenya initiative is a flagship program aimed at providing citizens with easy access to government services. It involves the establishment of Huduma Centers across the country where citizens can access a wide range of services in one location.

The services offered through Huduma Centers include identity card registration, issuance of birth and death certificates, application for passports, business registration, and various permits and licenses.The initiative incorporates technology through mobile applications and online portals, making it easier for citizens to access government services digitally.

➢ *Integrated Financial Management Information System (IFMIS):*

IFMIS is a system implemented by the Kenyan Government to automate financial management processes. It covers budgeting, procurement, accounting, and reporting functions across various ministries and government agencies. The system aims to reduce manual intervention, enhance efficiency, and improve transparency in financial transactions. By automating financial processes, IFMIS helps in minimizing errors and irregularities that may occur in manual financial management.

➢ *E-Citizen Platform:*

The E-Citizen platform is an online portal that serves as a gateway for Kenyan citizens to access various government services. It offers a range of services, including applying for

ISSN No:-2456-2165

government-issued documents, paying for services, and accessing information. Through E-Citizen, citizens can apply for services such as passports, driving licenses, national identity cards, and business registration.

- *Kenya Revenue Authority (KRA) Online Services:*

The Kenya Revenue Authority provides online services for tax-related matters. Taxpayers can file tax returns, make payments, and access their tax compliance status through the KRA online platform. This digitized platform has streamlined tax administration processes and made it more convenient for individuals and businesses to fulfill their tax obligations.

- *Digital Land Registry:*

Kenya has made efforts to digitize land records and establish an electronic land registry system. This initiative aims to enhance land administration, reduce land-related disputes, and improve the ease of doing business in the real estate sector.

- *E-Government Procurement (e-GP) System:*

The Kenyan government has implemented an e-GP system to streamline the procurement process. This digital platform allows for transparent and efficient procurement of goods, works, and services by public entities.

- *Cyber security and Data Protection:*

As e-governance initiatives expand, there is an increasing emphasis on cybersecurity and data protection. The government of Kenya is working to establish robust cybersecurity frameworks and regulations to safeguard citizens' data and critical government systems.

K. Current Status of E-Governance in African Countries (Ghana)

The current status of e-governance in Ghana is promising. The country has made significant progress in implementing e-governance initiatives in recent years, and is now considered to be one of the leading countries in Africa in terms of e-governance development.

Some of the key e-governance initiatives that have been implemented in Ghana include:

- *The Ghana Online Portal:* This is a centralized platform that provides citizens and businesses with access to a variety of public services online, including applying for passports, business registration, and driver's licenses.
- *The National Digital Property Addressing System:* This system provides unique addresses for every location in the country, enabling better service delivery and property identification.
- *The Ghana Mobile Money Platform:* This platform allows users to make mobile payments and transfers, as well as access other financial services.
- *The Ghana e-Procurement System:* This system streamlines the public procurement process by making it more transparent and efficient.
- *The Ghana e-Justice System:* This system automates many of the processes involved in the justice system, making it more efficient and accessible to citizens.

These e-governance initiatives have had a number of positive impacts on Ghana. For example, the Ghana Online Portal has made it easier and more convenient for citizens and businesses to access public services. The National Digital Property Addressing System has improved service delivery and property identification. The Ghana Mobile Money Platform has increased financial inclusion and made it easier for people to make payments and transfers. The Ghana e-Procurement System has made the public procurement process more transparent and efficient. And the Ghana e-Justice System has made the justice system more efficient and accessible to citizens.

Despite the progress that has been made, there are still some challenges that need to be addressed in order to further develop e-governance in Ghana. For example, there is a need to improve internet penetration and access, particularly in rural areas. There is also a need to raise awareness of e-governance services and to build capacity in the public sector to deliver e-governance services effectively.

Overall, the current status of e-governance in Ghana is promising. The country has made significant progress in implementing e-governance initiatives, and is now considered to be one of the leading countries in Africa in terms of e-governance development.

L. Current Status of E-Governance in Nigeria

The current status of e-governance in Nigeria is gradually improving. The Nigerian government has launched a number of e-governance initiatives in recent years, and there has been notable progress in some areas.

One example is the Nigeria Police Service Commission Portal, which provides an accessible system where Nigerians can apply for police clearance certificates. This has made it easier and more convenient for Nigerians to obtain police clearance certificates, which are required for a variety of purposes, such as job applications and visa applications.

Another example is the Federal Inland Revenue Service (FIRS) e-Filing platform, which enables taxpayers to file and pay taxes online. This has enhanced efficiency and transparency in tax administration, and has made it easier for businesses to comply with their tax obligations.

Other notable e-governance initiatives in Nigeria include:

- The National Identity Management Commission (NIMC) National Identity Number (NIN) project, which is a unique identity number that is assigned to every Nigerian citizen and resident. The NIN is used to access a variety of government services, and is also used for electronic transactions.
- The Central Bank of Nigeria (CBN) e-Naira project, which is a central bank digital currency (CBDC) that is being developed by the CBN. The e-Naira is expected to promote financial inclusion and make it easier for Nigerians to make payments and transfers.
- The Nigerian government's Smart Nigeria project, which is a national initiative to promote the adoption of digital technologies in all sectors of the economy. The Smart Nigeria project includes a number of e-governance

ISSN No:-2456-2165

initiatives, such as the development of a national e-government platform and the deployment of e-government services in rural areas.

Despite the progress that has been made, there are still some challenges that need to be addressed in order to further develop e-governance in Nigeria. For example, there is a need to improve internet penetration and access, particularly in rural areas. There is also a need to raise awareness of e-governance services and to build capacity in the public sector to deliver e-governance services effectively.

Overall, the current status of e-governance in Nigeria is gradually improving. The Nigerian government has launched a number of e-governance initiatives in recent years, and there has been notable progress in some areas. However, there are still some challenges that need to be addressed in order to further develop e-governance in Nigeria.

M. Case study of The republic of Benin.

Why is the government digitalization in the republic of Benin is so crucial and necessary?

Government digitalization in the Republic of Benin is crucial and necessary for a number of reasons.

First, digitalization can help to improve the efficiency of government service delivery. By automating tasks and streamlining processes, digitalization can reduce the time and cost it takes for citizens and businesses to interact with the government. For example, the online tax filing system in Benin has made it much easier and faster for businesses to pay their taxes.

Second, digitalization can help to increase transparency and accountability in government. By making information and data more accessible to the public, digitalization can help to reduce corruption and improve governance. For example, the online passport application system in Benin has made it more transparent and accountable for the government to issue passports.

Third, digitalization can help to improve the accessibility of government services to all citizens. By providing online and mobile services, digitalization can reach citizens in rural areas and those with disabilities. For example, the online business registration system in Benin has made it easier for businesses to register in rural areas.

Overall, government digitalization is crucial and necessary in the Republic of Benin because it can help to improve the efficiency, transparency, and accessibility of government services.

Here are some additional benefits of government digitalization in Benin:

- Increased citizen satisfaction with government services
- Reduced administrative costs for the government
- Improved coordination and collaboration between government agencies
- Enhanced innovation and creativity in government service delivery
- Increased economic growth and development

The government of Benin has recognized the importance of digitalization and has launched a number of initiatives to promote the digitalization of government services. However, there are still a number of challenges that need to be addressed, such as limited access to the internet and digital literacy skills among citizens.

Despite the challenges, the government of Benin is committed to the digitalization of government services. By doing so, the government hopes to improve the lives of its citizens and build a more prosperous and equitable Benin.

Fig. 6: Successful digitalization projects in Benin

The Beninese government initiated the online tax filing system in 2020. The primary goal of this project was to streamline and simplify the process of tax filing for businesses, reducing the administrative burden on both

taxpayers and government agencies.

A. Success Factors:

Time and Cost Reduction: The online tax filing system significantly reduced the time and costs associated with the tax filing process for businesses. This not only made compliance easier but also improved the government's revenue collection efficiency. Increased Transparency: The digital platform improved transparency in tax reporting, reducing the likelihood of tax evasion and fraud. Convenience: Businesses were able to file their taxes from the comfort of their offices, eliminating the need for physical visits to tax offices.

B. Online Passport Application System (2016):

The online passport application system was introduced by the Beninese government in 2016. This project aimed to simplify and expedite the process of obtaining passports for citizens.

C. Success Factors:

- **Accessibility:** Citizens could submit passport applications online, making the process more accessible, especially for those living in remote areas.
- **Convenience:** The online system eliminated the need for citizens to physically visit passport offices, reducing wait times and simplifying the application process.
- **Efficiency:** Processing passport applications digitally allowed for faster and more accurate data entry, ultimately reducing application processing times.

D. Online Business Registration System (2018):

The online business registration system was introduced by the Beninese government in 2018. This initiative aimed to modernize and simplify the process of business registration in Benin.

E. Success Factors:

- **Speed and Efficiency:** The digital registration system expedited the business registration process, making it faster and more efficient. This encouraged entrepreneurship and contributed to economic growth.
- **Transparency and Accountability:** The online system enhanced transparency and accountability in the business registration process, reducing opportunities for corruption.
- **Cost Reduction:** Online registration reduced the costs associated with paper-based registration, both for businesses and government authorities.

These successful digitalization projects in Benin demonstrate the government's commitment to leveraging technology to improve the ease of doing business, enhance citizen services, and promote transparency in government operations. The implementation of these systems has had a positive impact on both businesses and citizens in the country.

N. Analysis of e-government on citizen engagement and service delivery in Benin:

The digitalization of government services in Benin has had a number of positive impacts on citizen engagement and service delivery. For example, the online tax filing system has made it easier and more convenient for businesses to file their taxes. This has led to a decrease in the time and cost of tax compliance. The online passport application system has also made it easier and more convenient for citizens to apply for passports. This has reduced the time and cost of obtaining a passport. The online business registration system has also made it easier and faster for businesses to register in Benin. This has reduced the time and cost of starting a business.

In addition, E-government can improve citizen engagement by making it easier for citizens to participate in government processes. For example, citizens can use online services to vote, express their opinions on public policies, or report problems.

- E-government can improve service delivery by making government services more accessible and efficient. For example, citizens can use online services to apply for permits, renew documents, or pay taxes.
- E-government can reduce costs for citizens and governments. For example, citizens can avoid traveling to government offices to conduct transactions.
- E-government can improve government transparency and accountability. Citizens can more easily access government information and data.
- E-government can promote social inclusion. Online services can be accessible to people with disabilities and people living in rural areas.
- E-government can contribute to economic development. Online services can facilitate business transactions and access to markets.
- E-government can foster collaboration between citizens and governments. Citizens can use online services to share their ideas and feedback.

V. THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

- **A Case Study of Benin" is grounded in two key theories:** The Diffusion of Innovation Theory and the Technology Acceptance Model. These theories provide a comprehensive foundation for understanding how digitalization affects government services and how individuals and organizations in Benin might accept and adapt to these innovations.

A. Diffusion of Innovation Theory:

The Diffusion of Innovation Theory, proposed by Everett Rogers in 1962, provides a comprehensive framework for understanding how new technologies are adopted and spread within a society. This theory posits that the adoption of innovations follows a predictable pattern, characterized by different adopter categories based on their innovativeness. These categories include innovators, early adopters, early majority, late majority, and laggards. The theory emphasizes the role of communication channels, social networks, perceived benefits, and the relative advantage of the innovation in influencing adoption decisions. In the context of this study, the Diffusion of Innovation Theory will be instrumental in examining the adoption and spread of digital government services in Benin, shedding light on the factors that facilitate or hinder their uptake among different segments of the population.

B. Technology Acceptance Model (TAM):

The Technology Acceptance Model, developed by Fred Davis in 1986, is a widely used framework for explaining and predicting users' acceptance and utilization of information technology. TAM suggests that an individual's intention to use a technology is determined by two primary factors: perceived usefulness and perceived ease of use. Perceived usefulness refers to the extent to which a person believes that using a particular technology will enhance their job performance or effectiveness, while perceived ease of use pertains to the degree to which an individual believes that using the technology will be free from effort. TAM posits that these two factors directly influence an individual's attitude towards using the technology, which, in turn, impacts their actual usage behavior. In the context of this study, the TAM will provide valuable insights into the factors influencing citizens' acceptance and adoption of digital government services in Benin, thus contributing to a comprehensive understanding of the impact of digitalization on government services.

By integrating the Diffusion of Innovation Theory and the Technology Acceptance Model, this study aims to provide a holistic framework for analyzing the adoption and impact of digital government services in Benin. The Diffusion of Innovation Theory will enable us to explore the broader societal trends and patterns of technology adoption, while the Technology Acceptance Model will offer a more user-centric perspective, focusing on individual attitudes and behaviors towards digital government services. Together, these theories will facilitate a comprehensive assessment of the transformative effects of digitalization on government services in the context of Benin, ultimately contributing to a deeper understanding of the evolving relationship between technology and governance in the modern era.

VI. CHALLENGES AND BARRIERS TO IMPLEMENTING DIGITALIZATION IN GOVERNMENT SERVICES IN GENERAL

This essay aims to explore some of these challenges, including the digital divide, inclusivity, privacy and security concerns, legal and regulatory obstacles, as well as organizational and cultural resistance. By addressing these issues head-on, public administrators can strive towards creating a more inclusive and secure environment for their constituents.

- **Digital Divide**: The digital divide refers to the gap between individuals or communities who have access to information technologies and those who do not. Factors contributing to this divide include socioeconomic status, geographical location, age demographics, education levels, and infrastructure availability (Digital Technologies and Transformation of Governance Processes: A Study of Syddanmark Regional Council in Denmark). The impact of the digital divide on public administration is significant as it limits access to government services provided online. Citizens without internet access are unable to benefit from e-governance initiatives such as online public service delivery or participation in decision-making processes.
- **Inclusivity:** Inclusivity plays a crucial role in public administration by ensuring equal opportunities for all citizens irrespective of their backgrounds or circumstances (Yi). However, achieving inclusivity poses its own set of challenges. One challenge is reaching marginalized communities that may lack awareness or resources necessary for participation in administrative processes (Acquisti et al.). Language barriers also hinder inclusiveness particularly when governmental websites or communication channels are only available in certain languages. To promote inclusivity in public administration practices requires proactive measures such as targeted outreach programs tailored to underserved populations (Weydner-Volkmann & Feiten). Furthermore, implementing multilingual options within communication channels can help overcome language barriers faced by diverse groups.
- **Privacy and Security Concerns**: Privacy breaches and security threats pose significant risks in public administration. In an era of increasing digitalization, protecting citizens' personal information and maintaining the integrity of government systems are paramount (Acquisti et al.). Privacy breaches can lead to identity theft, financial loss, or unauthorized access to sensitive data. Security threats may result in disruptions of critical public services or compromise the trust citizens have in their governments.
- **Legal and Regulatory Challenges**: Public administrators face various legal and regulatory challenges that influence decision-making processes. These challenges encompass navigating complex legislative frameworks, complying with data protection regulations, streamlining bureaucratic procedures, and managing transparency requirements (Digital Technologies and Transformation of Governance Processes: A Study of Syddanmark Regional Council in Denmark). The impact on decision-making is significant since adhering to legal obligations often requires additional resources or time-consuming processes.
- **Cultural Resistance:** Cultural resistance within public administration environments can impede the implementation of new practices or technologies. Cultural factors such as hierarchical structures, risk aversion, and a preference for traditional methods often hinder innovation and obstruct necessary adaptations (Weydner-Volkmann &Feiten). Overcoming cultural resistance requires developing strategies that foster a culture that embraces change, encourages experimentation, and rewards innovative thinking.

In conclusion, addressing the challenges and barriers in public administration is crucial for effective governance in today's rapidly changing technological landscape. The digital divide limits equal access to government services, while inclusivity remains challenging due to various barriers faced by marginalized communities. By understanding these challenges holistically, public administrators can develop targeted strategies that create an inclusive, secure, legally compliant environment conducive to successful governance in the 21st century.

ISSN No:-2456-2165

VII. CHALLENGES OF DIGITALIZING GOVERNMENT SERVICES IN BENIN

Benin has faced a number of challenges in digitizing its government services. One challenge is the lack of resources. Benin is a developing country with limited financial resources. This makes it difficult for the government to invest in the necessary infrastructure and technology to digitize its government services.

Another challenge is the lack of skilled personnel. Benin has a shortage of skilled IT professionals. This makes it difficult for the government to recruit and retain the staff it needs to digitize its government services.

Finally, digital illiteracy is a challenge in Benin. Many citizens do not have the necessary skills to use digital technologies. This makes it difficult for them to access and use digital government services.

However, the government of Benin is committed to developing e-government and has made significant progress in recent years. For example, the government has launched a number of e-government initiatives, such as the Benin Government Online Portal and the e-Citizen platform.

In conclusion E-government has the potential to significantly improve citizen engagement and service delivery in the Republic of Benin. The government of Benin is committed to developing e-government and has made significant progress in recent years. However, there are a number of challenges to e-government in Benin, such as limited access to the internet and low levels of digital literacy. The government of Benin needs to continue to invest in e-government and address these challenges in order to reap the full benefits of e-government.

VIII. METHODOLOGY

The study employed a qualitative research approach following by data collection methods such as:Case studies, Interviews, surveys, documentations etc.

A. Case Studies:

The research involved some case studies examining successful digitalization projects, both on a global scale (South Korea, Estonia), Ghana, Kenya, Rwanda, Namibia, Seychelles, South Africa and within Benin. These case studies concentrated on specific government services such as tax filing, online citizen's participation, online voting, passport applications, and business registration etc.

B. Interviews:

Interviews was conducted online, primarily through video calls, with key stakeholders including government officials, representatives from the private sector, civil society representatives, activists, and university students. This approach allows for diverse perspectives to be included in the study.

C. Surveys:

I ensured the respondents that their personal information was going to be administered. Anonymity is crucial, especially considering potential concerns about government repression that might deter individuals from expressing their honest opinions. Ethical principles were followed to conduct well the study.

D. Measures to Ensure Confidentiality and Anonymity:

Participants were provided with detailed information about the study's purpose, and their informed consent was obtained before their participation. I also ensured them that all data collected will be treated as confidential and will not be shared with any third parties. In any reports or publications stemming from the study, participants will remain anonymous to protect their identities and perspectives. Additionally, many written documents about this topic were studied and many things were learned from them.

IX. ANALYSIS AND CRITIQUES

Through my research on the impact of the digitalization of governance services, focusing on the case study of Benin, I discovered that the Beninese government is putting in significant efforts to bring Benin to its current level. For example, before 2021, e-services did not exist. However, since 2021, the Benin government has invested financially in electronic systems to facilitate the online delivery of many services. Previously, procedures such as obtaining a passport, a national identity card, a criminal record, or business registration required weeks or even months of visits to offices, which was quite stressful. But today, thanks to the digitalization of services, the Beninese population can breathe easier.

Nevertheless, despite the multiple advantages resulting from the government's efforts, the population, including the authorities, faces significant challenges. For instance, cybercrime in Benin has become a considerable concern. The government, in turn, is making efforts to put an end to this scourge that afflicts our country. This effectively demonstrates how digitalization can be a double-edged sword due to malicious individuals.

After substantial efforts, as of April 21, 2023, Benin had approximately 1188 cybercriminals in its prisons. Among them, 1074 individuals have already been convicted, while others await their trials, according to Mario Metonou, a special prosecutor near the Court for the Repression of Economic Offenses and Terrorism (CRIET), the jurisdiction handling frauds involving digital means. "During the judicial year 2020-2021, we had 360 convictions related to cybercrime. The following judicial year, we had 451, and currently, during this ongoing judicial year 2022-2023, we are at 263 convictions."

The number of convictions may evolve in the coming days. The Central Office for the Repression of Cybercrime (OCRC) reports the arrest of 251 individuals in October 2022, 36 in January 2023, 108 in February, and 133 in March. Early April 2023, 132 cybercriminals were apprehended, as stated by Commissioner Donatien Sokou during a televised broadcast on ORTB last Friday.

Donatien Sokou states that "the fight has resumed and has taken a different form." This justifies this significant wave of cybercriminal arrests. It is, in fact, a first since the creation of the OCRC a special police unit established in

ISSN No:-2456-2165

2013 to combat cybercrime in Benin. Over two billion was extorted in 2021. The OCRC claims to have received 2831 complaints, resulting in damages estimated at 1 billion 546 million 436 thousand 228 CFA francs. Commissioner Donatien Sokou adds that in 2022, the OCRC registered 2188 complaints still related to cyber fraud. The total amount stolen from complainants in 2022 amounted to 663 million 544 thousand 225 CFA francs.

After considerable efforts in recent years, Benin has made significant strides in combating cybercrime. Several specialized structures have been created to ensure cybersecurity. In addition to the OCRC and CRIET, the country has established the Agency for Information Systems and Digital (AISD). This agency works in collaboration with the OCRC to identify and apprehend perpetrators of cyber fraud following victims' complaints. In 2023, the hunt for cyber fraudsters has taken a different turn in the country, with enhanced means to combat cybercrime. The country aims for a high ranking in the global index of nations with improved cybersecurity.

Seeing this large number of individuals, especially young people, involved in these affairs raises many questions. Is it the government's fault? Is it the fault of the population? Following my research, I also understand that many are young people who sometimes do not want to do anything and who make an effort to engage in illicit activities. On the other hand, some young people believe that the government has hindered their lucrative rural activities, such as selling second-hand clothes and marketing products like adulterated fuel, by breaking down sheds and arresting women along the roadsides.

Personally, I also condemn cybercrime because it is not at all commendable. It only benefits the criminal, while on the other hand, it is the victims who suffer. However, the government's action of arresting young people who use one or more mobile phones or computers without concrete evidence, convicting them, and throwing them in prison, does not seem fair to me. Because owning one or two mobile phones or computers does not necessarily mean being a cybercriminal. Therefore, I believe that for an effective fight, the government must first understand the real causes that drive these individuals to engage in such activities in order to find appropriate solutions to this problem.

X. POLICY RECOMMENDATION AND CONCLUSION

A. Strengthening Digital Infrastructure:

The government of Benin should invest in expanding broadband coverage, reducing the cost of internet access, and providing affordable devices. This will make it easier for citizens and businesses to access digital government services.

B. Capacity Building and Digital Skills Development:

The government of Benin should invest in training government employees on how to use ICTs and providing digital literacy training to citizens. This will build the capacity of both government and citizens to use digital government services effectively. To effectively leverage e-governance tools, governments need a skilled workforce proficient in ICTs. Therefore, policy recommendations should prioritize capacity building programs aimed at training government officials in utilizing e-governance tools effectively (Mallaye&Yogo, 2012). These programs can include workshops, seminars, or online courses tailored to specific job roles within public administration. Moreover, promoting digital literacy among citizens is crucial for their active participation in e-governance initiatives. Policies should focus on marginalized communities by offering training programs that empower individuals with the necessary skills to navigate online platforms and engage with government services (Nachega et al., 2022). By prioritizing digital skills development as part of education curricula or adult learning initiatives, governments can bridge the digital divide further.

C. Legal Frameworks and Data Protection:

The government of Benin should develop legal frameworks and data protection mechanisms to govern the use of ICTs in the public sector and to protect the privacy of citizens' data. This will create a safe and secure environment for the delivery of digital government services. Also, to ensure responsible and ethical use of data collected through e-governance platforms, policies should establish robust legal frameworks governing data protection and privacy rights. These frameworks must strike a balance between enabling the efficient delivery of e-governance services and safeguarding citizens' personal information (Asongu et al., 2017). International best practices in data governance can serve as a valuable reference point for the republic of Benin. Moreover, addressing challenges related to cross-border data flow is essential. As governments collaborate on regional or international levels, ensuring compliance with international standards while protecting national interests becomes crucial. Policymakers should work towards harmonizing regulations on cross-border data flows to facilitate seamless cooperation while maintaining control over sensitive data (Nachega et al., 2022).

D. Collaboration with Private Sector and Civil Society:

The government of Benin should collaborate with the private sector and civil society to support the implementation of digital government initiatives. The private sector can provide expertise and resources, while civil society can help to ensure that digital government initiatives are inclusive and responsive to the needs of citizens. Partnerships between governments, private sector entities, and civil society organizations can accelerate the implementation of effective e-governance initiatives in Africa and foster as well Benin e-government services. Governments can leverage their expertise and resources to develop robust digital platforms, while the private sector can contribute technical know-how and innovation (Mallaye&Yogo, 2012). Civil society organizations play an essential role in advocating for citizen-centric policies that address societal needs. By involving all stakeholders in transparent decision-making processes, governments can ensure inclusive governance practices that consider diverse perspectives and foster public trust (Juma et al., 2021). Collaborative efforts have yielded positive results

in other countries or regions; hence Africa should embrace similar partnerships to maximize the potential impact of e-governance initiatives.

The digitalization of government services in Benin has the potential to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of government service delivery, reduce costs, increase transparency and accountability, and enhance citizen engagement and participation. However, there are a number of challenges and barriers to the implementation of digital government initiatives. The government of Benin needs to address these challenges and barriers in order to realize the full potential of digital government.

The policy recommendations outlined above provide a starting point for the government of Benin to address the challenges and barriers to digital government implementation. By implementing these recommendations, the government of Benin can create a more efficient, effective, and transparent government that is more responsive to the needs of its citizens.

XI. CONCLUSION

The digitalization of government services in Benin has the potential to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of government service delivery, reduce costs, increase transparency and accountability, and enhance citizen engagement and participation. However, there are a number of challenges and barriers to the implementation of digital government initiatives. The government of Benin needs to address these challenges and barriers in order to realize the full potential of digital government. The policy recommendations outlined above provide a starting point for the government of Benin to address the challenges and barriers to digital government implementation. By implementing these recommendations, the government of Benin can create a more efficient, effective, and transparent government that is more responsive to the needs of its citizens.

REFERENCES

[1.] Chapter 2.pdf (un.org) Cybercriminalité au Bénin : l'inquiétant bilan chiffré de la traque - ORTB What are the B2C, B2B, & B2G, C2C, C2B, G2B & G2C, B2G & C2G Business types of E-commerce? Explanation with Examples | by Rodoljub Rakić | Medium

[2.] Transparency and Accountability in Local Governance: The Nexus Between Democracy and Public Service Delivery in the Philippines. (2019). Public Policy and Administration Research. Retrieved from https://doi.org/10.7176/ppar/9-7-04

[3.] Influence of Devolved Financial Resource Governance Structure on Service Delivery in Public Health Sector in Kenya. (2021). Public Policy and Administration Research. Retrieved from https://doi.org/10.7176/ppar/11-1-03

[4.] Influence of Devolved Human Resource Governance Structure on Service Delivery in the Public Health Sector in Kenya. (2021). Public Policy and Administration Research. Retrieved from https://doi.org/10.7176/ppar/11-1-02.

[5.] Overton, M., Larson, S., Carlson, L. J., &Kleinschmit, S. (2022). Public data primacy: the changing landscape of public service delivery as big data gets bigger. Global Public Policy and Governance, 2(4), 381–399. https://doi.org/10.1007/s43508-022-00052-z

[6.] Bertot, J., Jaeger, P., &Nahon, K. "Introduction to the Minitrack on Challenged Democracies: The Impact of Digital Government on Democracy and Democratic Institutions." Proceedings of the Annual Hawaii International Conference on System Sciences, Hawaii International Conference on System Sciences, 2020, https://doi.org/10.24251/hicss.2020.221.

[7.] Zaikowski, L., Friedrich, J. M., &Eldredge, N. "Preface, Preamble." ACS Symposium Series, American Chemical Society, 2008, pp. xiii–xviii. https://doi.org/10.1021/bk-2008-0981.pr001.

[8.] Al Azzawy, D. S. "Review on Challenges in Building Knowledge based Societies through E-Governance Framework: Technology and Management Issues from Global Perspective." Indian Journal of Science and Technology, vol. 10, no. 28, 2017, pp. 1–7. https://doi.org/10.17485/ijst/2017/v10i28/113707.

[9.] Sheoran, S., &Vij, S. "A Review of E-Government Assessment Frameworks: E-Readiness, Adoption, Citizen Engagement and Quality." JeDEM - eJournal of eDemocracy and Open Government, vol. 14, no. 2, 2022, pp. 197–213. https://doi.org/10.29379/jedem.v14i2.717.

[10.] Yi, Y. "Application of Blockchain Technology Based on Privacy Data Protection in RMB Internationalization Path." Mobile Information Systems, vol. 2022, 2022, pp. 1–10. doi:10.1155/2022/1904593.

[11.] Acquisti, A., Dinev, T., &Keil, M. "Editorial: Special issue on cyber security, privacy and ethics of information systems." Information Systems Frontiers, vol. 21, no. 6, 2019, pp. 1203–1205. doi:10.1007/s10796-019-09971-5.

[12.] Weydner-Volkmann, S., &Feiten, L. "Trust in technology: interlocking trust concepts for privacy respecting video surveillance." Journal of Information, Communication and Ethics in Society, vol. 19, no. 4, 2021, pp. 506–520. doi:10.1108/jices-12-2020-0128.

[13.] "Digital Technologies and Transformation of Governance Processes: A Study of Syddanmark Regional Council in Denmark." Journal of Public Policy and Governance, vol. 7, no. 3, 2023, pp. 13–22. doi:10.53819/81018102t5224.

[14.] Khan, M. "Lessons from Adaptive Programming." Institute of Development Studies, 2022, https://doi.org/10.19088/k4d.2022.142.

[15.] Dulal, H. B., Shah, K. U., and Sapkota, C. "Reducing emissions from deforestation and forest degradation (REDD) projects: lessons for future policy design and implementation." International Journal of Sustainable Development & World Ecology, vol. 19, no. 2, 2012, pp. 116-129. https://doi.org/10.1080/13504509.2012.654410.

[16.] Quinlan, M., et al. "Implementing integrated care – lessons from the national implementation of general

ISSN No:-2456-2165

eReferrals in Ireland." International Journal of Integrated Care, vol. 17, no. 5, 2017, p. 232. https://doi.org/10.5334/ijic.3542.

[17.] Asongu, S., Tchamyou, V., Asongu, N., &Tchamyou, N. "Fighting terrorism in Africa: evidence from bundling and unbundling institutions." Empirical Economics, vol. 56, no. 3, 2017, pp. 883–933. DOI: 10.1007/s00181-017-1378-3.

[18.] Mallaye, D., &Yogo, U. T. "Health Aid and Health Improvement in Sub Saharan Africa." SSRN Electronic Journal, 2012. DOI: 10.2139/ssrn.2047219.

[19.] Nachega, J. B., Sam-Agudu, N. A., Machekano, R. N., Rabie, H., van der Zalm, M. M., Redfern, A., Dramowski, A., O'Connell, N., Pipo, M. T., Tshilanda, M. B., Byamungu, L. N., Masekela, R., Jeena, P. M., Pillay, A., Gachuno, O. W., Kinuthia, J., Ishoso, D. K., Amoako, E., Agyare, E., ... Adirieje, C. "Assessment of Clinical Outcomes Among Children and Adolescents Hospitalized With COVID-19 in 6 Sub-Saharan African Countries." JAMA Pediatrics, vol. 176, no. 3, 2022, e216436. DOI: 10.1001/jamapediatrics.2021.6436.

[20.] Juma, P. A., Jones, C. M., Mijumbi-Deve, R., Wenham, C., Masupe, T., Sobngwi-Tambekou, J., Biemba, G., Mtombo, N., & Parkhurst, J. "Governance of health research in four eastern and southern African countries." Health Research Policy and Systems, vol. 19, no. 1, 2021. DOI: 10.1186/s12961-021-00781-3.

[21.] Magge, H., et al. "The Ethiopia healthcare quality initiative: design and initial lessons learned." International Journal for Quality in Health Care, vol. 31, no. 10, 2019, pp. G180-G186. https://doi.org/10.1093/intqhc/mzz127.

[22.] Holness, J. L., van der Westhuizen, D. J., Davids, M. R., & Warwick, J. M. "Measurement of glomerular filtration rate and its current status in African countries GFR measurement and its status in Africa." African Journal of Nephrology, vol. 25, no. 1, 2022, https://doi.org/10.21804/25-1-5110.

[23.] Ogunleye, O., Godman, B., Fadare, J., Mudenda, S., Adeoti, A., Yinka-Ogunleye, A., Ogundele, S., Oyawole, M., Schönfeldt, M., Rashed, W., Galal, A., Masuka, N., Zaranyika, T., Kalungia, A., Malande, O., Kibuule, D., Massele, A., Chikowe, I., Khuluza, F., ... Meyer, J. "Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19) Pandemic across Africa: Current Status of Vaccinations and Implications for the Future." Vaccines, vol. 10, no. 9, 2022, pp. 1553, https://doi.org/10.3390/vaccines10091553.

[24.] Sreeramareddy, C. T., & Acharya, K. "Trends in Prevalence of Tobacco Use by Sex and Socioeconomic Status in 22 Sub-Saharan African Countries, 2003-2019." JAMA Network Open, vol. 4, no. 12, 2021, pp. e2137820, https://doi.org/10.1001/jamanetworkopen.2021.37820.

[25.] Kamere, N., Garwe, S. T., Akinwotu, O. O., Tuck, C., Krockow, E. M., Yadav, S., Olawale, A. G., Diyaolu, A. H., Munkombwe, D., Muringu, E., Muro, E. P., Kaminyoghe, F., Ayotunde, H. T., Omoniyei, L., Lawal, M. O., Barlatt, S. H. A., Makole, T. J., Nambatya W., Esseku, Y., Ashiru-Oredope, D. "Scoping Review of National Antimicrobial.