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SAIMAS is a non-profit organisation and one of the main objectives of our institute is: "To collect and to publish articles on modern technology and techniques for the benefit of its members in order to promote excellent professional performance ".

We have indicated before, that we endeavour to collect articles from our members to provide them with an opportunity to share their expertise with other members and to provide a platform for the publishing of research papers in our and related fields.

Publishing a paper or an article in the journal provides exposure to quite a broad spectrum of audience. The SAIMAS journal is sent to universities in South Africa and there is even international exposure through membership by international organisations.

This is an invitation to our members to share their articles and papers with other members and the public. Articles can be related to investigations conducted in the organisation that you work in. The articles can be related to organisational structure investigations; procedure and method studies including technology upgrades; change management interventions and operations management. Here are some pointers to keep in mind when preparing your article or paper:
Articles/papers can range from 2-4 pages (1000-2000 words). If your article is a series of papers, please ensure that each paper can be published as a whole and will not be affected if the rest of the series is not published later.

Research must be must be referenced correctly and listed where appropriate.
The heading should include your name or your title if preferred. Please also provide your contact details to ensure that SAIMAS can contact you if necessary. Articles can be sent at any time and the article will be published in the issue following the date received. Articles can be sent to the SAIMAS office: **saimas@global.co.za** / or to the editor: **forssmal@dot.gov.za** . We are looking forward to receive your articles!

ELECTRONIC GOVERNMENT IN THE ETHEKWINI MUNICIPAL AREA: SYNTHESISING TWO RESEARCH STUDIES

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Introduction

Information and communications technologies (ICT) do not exist for their own sake in an organisation – ICT is there to ensure that organisations (such as local government or municipalities) achieve sustainable success through the use of their ICT. ICT should be seen as a tool to achieve a particular desired objective - it is not the objective.

One of the main objectives and resultant challenges faced by municipalities is their ability to effectively utilise ICT for everyday performance so that services offered electronically are achieved in a meaningful way. Electronic Government (eGovernment) refers to the practice of leveraging ICT to deliver services. The objective of eGovernment is to improve service delivery to its citizens and in doing so improve the efficiency of its service delivery activities. There has been considerable transformation in the ways government and the government interacts with one another (Worrall, 2012: i). eGovernment holds the promise of increasing the effectiveness of public service delivery and enhancing the ability of citizens to interact with their (local) government in meaningful ways.

Definitions of eGovernment vary. Grant and Chau (2006: 80) developed one which will be used for the purposes of this article. These researchers define eGovernment as a tool to develop and deliver high quality, seamless and integrated services, enable constituent management, and support the economic and social development goals of citizens, business and civil society. The former South African Minister for Public Service and Administration (PSA), Lindiwe Sisulu, stated that "eGovernment is an essential

component to improve service delivery for all", to build an inclusive information society (IS) and to integrate government information systems that provide optimised service delivery to government information and services (Sisulu, 2012). The Minister further noted that ICT had become critical to enriching citizen's lives and providing citizen-centred services. When such services are used, local government is responsible for the communication (in a secure way) between households, the private sector and civil society. Since the author resides in the eThekwini Municipal Area (EMA), two questions arise:

- to what extent (if any) is eGovernment evidenced in the EMA?; and
- what are possible research questions for eGovernment initiatives in the EMA?

The objective of this article is therefore to furnish a meaningful perspective on eGovernment in the EMA – and which may be useful as input towards a future research agenda.

Methods

The author adopted an expository research approach and used both inductive and deductive reasoning processes. The following methods were used:

- the author's earlier journal-published research "Linking Public Service Delivery and Technology in a Municipal Information Society in South Africa" (Averweg, 2012) was revisited;
- the findings from the study "Introducing ICT in the Public Sector: E-Government in eThekwini" by researcher Geesink (2013) was distilled; and
- the author then synthesised these two studies and suggests a possible future research agenda.

Results of two research studies

Landsbergen (2012: 153) suggests that effectively using and participating in networks of individuals, organisations and institutions offers promise in finding and mobilising ICT resources for the public good. Public good is a service that is provided without profit to all members of a society and in doing so may foster citizen participation. eGovernment has evolved from simple information provision to more complex forms of citizen communications engagement (Worrall, 2012: iv).

In Averweg's earlier research (Averweg, 2012), he proposed the concept of a Municipal Information Society (MIS) which is defined as "the use of ICT to improve the internal operation of a municipality for service delivery, communication and collaboration with households, the private sector and civil society in a municipal area". Averweg (2012: 7) argued that a MIS "may transform the ways government and the governed interact with one another and thereby aid improved service delivery" and thereby enable constituent management.

One of the intentions of Geesink's research (Geesink: 2013) was to "… understand how e-government affects the lives of low-income citizens" in the EMA. The research found that such citizens "… do not make great use of e-government because access to the Internet is limited …and e-government initiatives are not designed to enhance the lives of the poor". The researcher further concludes that "… ICT is not being used to increase citizen participation" and the only benefits for such citizens in the EMA "… regarding e-governments are related to more efficient service delivery, which is supported by the rationale of streamlining work processes (Geesink, 2013: 57).

Discussion and conclusion

eGovernment is about developing new forms [i.e. innovation] of communication between households, the private sector and civil society (Worrall, 2012: ii). While the concept of eGovernment involves using ICT (*e.g.* Internet and broadband services) to deliver public services, it is not a simple matter as an enabling environment will be required in the EMA – especially where there is a high density of low-income citizens. Furthermore, eThekwini Municipality's current eGovernment initiatives are viewed at being at an early developmental stage as eThekwini Municipality is focusing on only providing Internet connectivity (Geesink, 2013: 59). Internet access alone is insufficient to ensure usage of eGovernment by *all* citizens in the EMA.

Arising therefrom, two possible future research questions are posited:
- to what degree (if any) does eGovernment in EMA's low-income citizens density areas underscore the MIS concept?; and

- for improved and accelerated service delivery, what (if any) innovative eGovernment initiatives can be deployed meaningfully in the EMA?

eGovernment faces the challenge of adoption, getting eGovernment initiatives implemented and being used by the target audience (such as low-income citizens). Since eGovernment systems and solutions are not a 'one-size-fit-all' solution, each eGovernment initiative must take into account the variables influencing that application. It is important that the chosen eGovernment application strategy must utilise ICT as a tool for enhanced effective service delivery. It is argued by the author that by choosing the *right* strategy will positively impact local eGovernment initiatives for providing citizen-centred services, facilitate building an inclusive IS and specifically a MIS in the EMA.

Further reading

Averweg, U. R. (2012). Linking Public Service Delivery and Technology in a Municipal Information Society in South Africa. *Information Technology in Developing Countries*, A Newsletter of the IFIP Working Group 9.4 and Center for Electronic Governance, Indian Institute of Management, Ahmedabad, India, 22(3), pp. 8-13, November. Retrieved October 6, 2015 from http://www.iimahd.ernet.in/egov/ifip/nov2012/averweg.htm

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Sisulu, L. (2012, September 26). Minister for Public Service and Administration, South Africa. *Keynote address at Govtech 2012*, Durban, South Africa. Retrieved October 24, 2012 from http://www.info.gov.za/speech/DynamicAction?pageid=461&sid=30983&tid=85036

Worrall, L. (2012). Introduction to Leading Issues in e‑Government Research e-Government - Where is it taking us and our Governments? In L. Worrall (Ed.) *Leading Issues in e‑Government Research* (pp.i-x). Reading, United Kingdom: Good News Digital Books.

SAIMAS WORKSHOP PRESENTED IN MBOMBELA, MPUMALANGA PROVINCE

The Institute Council decided in 2015 to arrange a SAIMAS workshop in one of the provinces as part of the SAIMAS Strategic Plan. After long deliberations and consultation it was decided that the first workshop will be presented in the Mpumalanga Province as acknowledgement and reward for the support SAIMAS always receives from members and colleagues in the province.

Council Member, Futhi Kgwefane, was appointed by the SAIMAS Council to organise a workshop to take place early in 2016. She consulted with practitioners in the province and then decided on the topic – "**Determining time data for administrative business processes**". Futhi recruited two local co-organisers namely Vusi Ntimba from the Directorate: Organisational Development and Design, Department of Public Works, Roads and Transport and Tinyiko Qhibi, from the Mbombela Local Municipality to help with the local arrangements.

The workshop was held on Friday, 4 March 2016 at the Riverside Government Complex, with Eddie Morrison as workshop presenter. The topics covered during the hands-on practical workshop were:

- Introduction
- Process Modelling
- Steps to determine Time Data
- Work measurement techniques with special emphasis on MTM Office System as work measurement system
- Case study – a process was mapped and a time determined for performing the process
- Questions and answers

The workshop was attended by 17 members and colleagues in the province. They were from different government departments and municipalities. Municipalities which were present at the SAIMAS workshop were:

- Mbombela Local Municipality
- Ehlanzeni District Municipality
- Nkomazi Local Municipality

The attendees rated the workshop as well worth attending and the workshop presenter as excellent. There is a definite need for workshops in the province as attendees are keen to learn and to develop their skills. At the SAIMAS Council Meeting in May 2016 the SAIMAS workshop program and roll-out for 2016/17 will be discussed.

Participants at the SAIMAS workshop