E-GOVERNMENT ELEMENTS IN THE SECTORAL PUBLIC POLICIES: A CASE STUDY REGARDING THE ADMINISTRATIVE AND EDUCATIONAL SECTOR

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Abstract:
This article aims to identify the role of the e-government elements at the sectoral public policies level, also at the local level, namely in the case of the educational public policy.

The article is based on a quantitative analysis of the institutional system of local public space: the educational sistem - namely "Alexandru Ioan Cuza" High School from Iași - based on questionnaires, trying to identify whether the elements of e-government are present at this level, and as well what is the role and their necessity on the public-administrative level. The present study uses the questionnaire as tool which has as its theme the use of new technologies applied to a sample of 107 respondents - students of the Romanian High Scool.

Key words: public policies, e-guvernment, public space, sectoral public policies, educational policies

JEL classification: Z18, Q58, M15, J38, H11

1. INTRODUCTION: FROM PUBLIC POLICIES TO E-GOVERNMENT

The development of the society is closely linked to the commitment of its members that any individual to reap the benefits of incremental development and survival. "The implementation of these commitments on the welfare of the members of the society is done through the public policies" (Bondar, 2007, 20).

James Anderson defines the public policies as "a course of action followed by an actor or more political actors, with a purpose, trying to solve a problem" (Anderson, 1994); and for Adrian Miroiu "a public policy is a network of interrelated decisions concerning the choice of the objectives, of the means and of the resources used to achieve their specific situations" (Miroiu, 2001, 9).

In our view, the public policies are those formulas of the public space found by the Government (through Government understanding both central governments, regional, local, over the state, but also the partnerships of the government institutions with other actors working in public space as well: groups of interest, lobby, pressure, NGOs, etc.) to try to resolve a number of issues from the communities from which the actors come.

From this point of view, besides the number and the complexity of the actors involved, the public policies suppose other elements, such as: the decisions making process, the decisions, the decision-making mechanisms and techniques and effective mechanisms and techniques attracted and activated from the perspective of the technological change.

Beeing in an era of the technological development governing the human activities, implicitly the public space, the public policies - as products of the humans - are influenced by what is known as e-government and e-governance, in the sense of using the new technologies and the technology of the information in the decision making process of public administrative space.

The role of the electronic government (or e-government) can be defined at this point in the present analysis to implement "the information technology to provide administrative services, the information exchange, the transaction of the communications, the integration of various systems and services independent from government and citizen (G2C), government and business (G2B),

government and government (G2G) and for the interactions of the administrative personnel across the infrastructure of the administration" (Saugata and Masud, 2007).

From this perspective, there is the issue of using the new technologies and of the analyse for their use and how they will influence the sectoral public policies – the educational ones, in this case study - in terms of an empirical vision, that is based on a sample of 107 respondents, students on the Romanian High School system.

2. CHARACTERISTICS OF E/GOVERNMENT IN THE SECTOROF THE PUBLIC POLICIES PROCESS

The characteristics of e-government in public policy - including sectoral public policies - derive from the definitions and the meanings of the term "e-government".

Electronic government refers "to government's use of technology, particularly web-based Internet applications to enhance the access to and delivery of government information and service to citizens, business partners, employees, other agencies, and government entities. It has the potential to help build better relationships between government and the public by making interaction with citizens smoother, easier, and more efficient" (Layne and Lee, 2001, 123).

For Darrell M. West "E-government refers to the delivery of government information and services online through the Interet or other digital means" (West, 2004, 16). Mark Howard defines e-government as "the application of the tools and techniques of e-Commerce to the work of government. These tools and techniques are intended to serve both the government and its citizens" (Howard, 2001, 6).

Starting from here, the characteristics of e-government in the public- administrative space and at public policies level as products of the public space, aime improving the public services, increasing the efficiency and effectiveness of public policies - like products - improving the access to information covering those policies, the time management in terms of access to information substantiating the policies of the citizens, but also of the administrative actors involved in the actual process of making of public policies, or the integration through the technology of the specific services that underpin a public policy, namely a sectoral public policy.

Theresa A. Pardo outlined its functions as follows:

- "*Citizen access to governmentinformation*. Providing access to government information is the most common digitalgovernment initiative.
- *Facilitating general compliance*. Egovernment can also mean providing electronic access to services that facilitate compliance with a set of rules or regulations.
- *Citizen access to personal benefits*. Electronic benefits transfer and online application for public assistance and worker's compensation are examples of services that provide the citizen with electronic access to personal benefits.
- *Procurement including bidding, purchasing, and payment*. Procurement applications allow government agencies to reap the benefits being realized in the private sector through electronic commerce applications. Electronic vendor cataloging, bid submissions and tabulations, electronic purchasing, and payment are government-togovernment and government-to-business transactions that serve both the needs of government agencies as well as their private trading partners.
- *Government-to-government information and service integration*. Integrating service delivery programs across government agencies and between levels of government requires electronic information sharing and integration.
- *Citizen participation*. Online democracy includes access to elected officials, discussion forums, "town meetings," voter registration, and ultimately online voting" (Pardo, 2000).

According to the model developed by Layne şi Lee (Layne and Lee, 2001, 128-133), the e-government involves the following stages, starting from a minimum level to a higher level activation: starting from the catalogue, the transaction, to the vertical integration and to the horizontal integration (what is called the Public Sector Process Rebuilding (PPR) model) (see Figure no. 1).
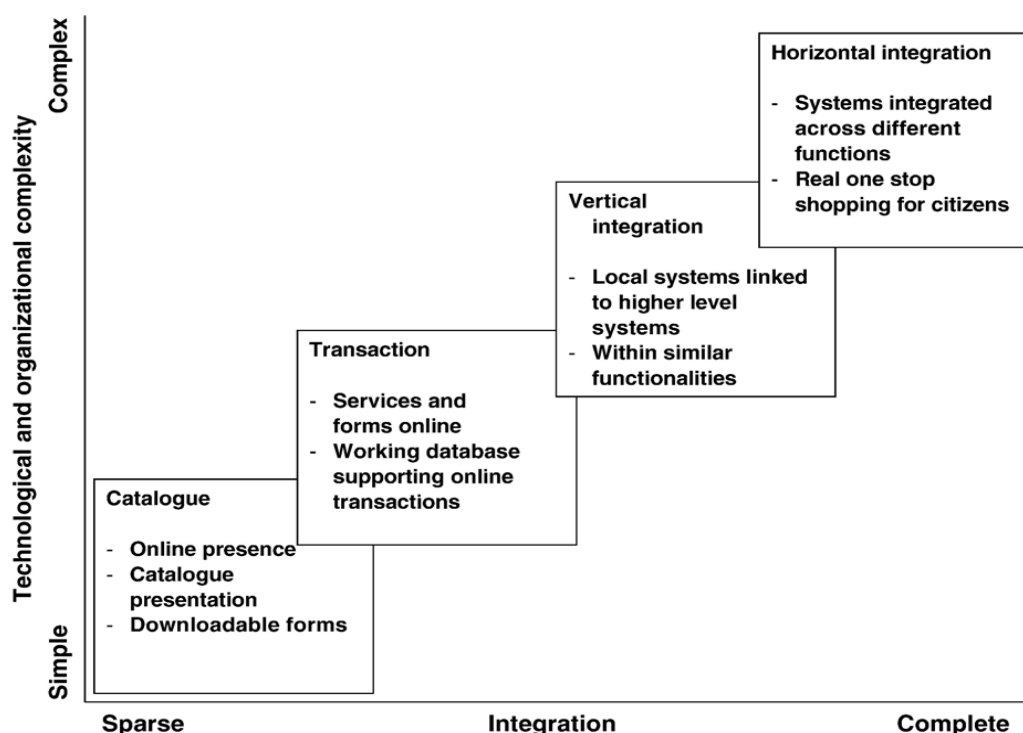
Figure no. 1
Source: Kim Normann Andersen, Helle Zinner Henriksen, e-Government Maturity Models: Extension of the Layne and Lee Model, Government Information Quarterly 23 (2006) 236–248, p. 241.

From here on, in relation to the sector public policies – the educational policy in the present analysis – the features of the eGovernment assume both functions by virtue of its general processes e-government (as described above), and also features that the sectoral educational policy prints them and their state of activation. The E-government in public educational space is considering applying the technology of the information in order to facilitate the specific educational services: the access to educational databases, to information on education, the educational curricula, linking the profile databases with other databases available on the Internet (Wikipedia), search engines (Google, etc.) or the correlation with other devices (smartphone)(etc.).

All these specific dimensions correlate with the way that the public policy decision is taken (the educational one, in this analysis), both in terms of the actors directly involved in the decision making process, and also in terms of the beneficiaries of the educational service: the parents, the students, etc.

Based on the previous analytical frameworks, this study aim to answer to some problematical questions: what is the use/utility of the educational applications? What is the degree of the satisfaction of the users? What features of e-government can be activated in the educational policy in terms of beneficiaries (students)?

3. METHODOLOGY AND SAMPLE

This analysis aim to identify some characteristics of e-government in the educational sector policy, at the local level. This analysis is based on a case study of the public - administrative space from Iasi, namely from "Alexandru Ioan Cuza" High School, conducted in year 2017, using a questionnaire applied to the students on the use of certain applications on the mobile phone for learning and deepening the information from the educational curricula.

The research sample consists of 107 respondents, students of "Alexandru Ioan Cuza" High School. The construction technique of the sample was the "snowball" technique and the instrument used is questionnaire (Miftode, 2003, 256).

4. RESULTS

In relation to the degree of the respondents to use the new technologies, the smartphone, as a method of managing public educational services, 55.1% of respondents stated that they use the mobile device very often; 28% - use it often; 11.2% - rare; 5.6% - very rare or never (see Table no. 1).

Table no. 1

How often do you use your mobile device?		Frequency	Valid Percent
Valid	very often	59	55,1
	often	30	28,0
	rare	12	11,2
	very rare	3	2,8
	never	3	2,8
	Total	107	100,0

From the perspective of the use of the new technologies by the respondents / students, of the smartphone and of the apps on the phone for the generation of the specific educational informations, 48.6% of respondents declare their "agreement" and "strongly agreed" to the situation in which they use on the mobile device of more than 10 applications; 13.1% are undecided; 29.9% - for disagreed, and 8.4% - for strong disagreement (see Table no. 2).

Table no. 2

On the mobile device, I frequently use numerous (more than 10) applications.		Frequency	Valid Percent
Valid	Strong disagreement	9	8,4
	disagreement	32	29,9
	undecided	14	13,1
	agree	26	24,3
	strong agree	26	24,3
	Total	107	100,0

From the perspective of the communication through modern technology, of the Internet connectivity and other social networks like Facebook, Instagram, Twiter, 27.1% of respondents present their "strongly agreed" on the use of these methods of communication; 19.6% - is obtained for "agreement"; 19.6% are undecided; 18.7% - presents their "disagreement"; and 15% - "strong disagreement" (see Table no. 3).

Table no. 3

Any application should be linked to a social network like: Facebook, Instagram, Twiter etc.		Frequency	Valid Percent
Valid	Strong disagreement	16	15,0
	disagreement	20	18,7
	undecided	21	19,6
	agree	21	19,6
	strong agree	29	27,1
	Total	107	100,0

Beyond the need to connect to the internet and social networks (according to the Table no. 3), the respondents identified with the title of wish the opportunity to communicate with other users through this type of technology (see Table no. 4): 60.7% of respondents show their "strong agreement" for bidirectional communication with other users.

Table no. 4

I wish to communicate with other users through this kind of technology.		Frequency	Valid Percent
Valid	Strong disagreement	6	5,6
	disagreement	16	15,0
	undecided	20	18,7
	agree	33	30,8
	strong agree	32	29,9
	Total	107	100,0

5. CONCLUSIONS

From the perspective of using of the elements of e-government in the public space, of the characteristics and of the degree of activation of e-government elements, there are different levels in which they are present starting from the data presented above under the quantitative study. In terms of the literature, we believe that the results presented in the present analysis leads to an activation of the Public Sector Process Rebuilding (PPR) model, the levels of activation beeing: the catalogue and the transaction levels.

The characteristics of the elements of the e-governance identified in the quantitative study involve the use of the technologies, of the smartphone in order to obtain specific information, the presence of the specific applications, of an online presence of the beneficiaries of the educational public services, of a certain forms of online tradings that becomes the formula of the elements of interpersonal communication.

Obviously, beyond the identified features, there are also other levels of activation of the e-government in public space, in the public policies processes, but the activation with a greater degree of complexity of them may involve a development of a tradition in this way and may be determined by it. Given that the organic evolution of the behavior of the people in public space is increasingly driven by the evolution and by the specialization of e-government, the public policies process is more than likely influenced in this direction and the future analysis have to take this into account.

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