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31 August 2024

Online at <https://mpra.ub.uni-muenchen.de/122799/>  
MPRA Paper No. 122799, posted 27 Nov 2024 14:23 UTC

# **An Analytical Examination of the Preparedness and Challenges in the Implementation of E-Governance for the Optimization of Public Service Delivery in Zamboanga City, Philippines**

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## **Abstract**

This study examines the preparedness and challenges in implementing e-governance for optimizing public service delivery in Zamboanga City, Philippines. Utilizing a mixed-methods approach, the research integrates quantitative surveys and qualitative key informant interviews to assess the current state of digital infrastructure, institutional capacity, digital literacy, and citizen engagement. Findings reveal significant challenges, including inadequate infrastructure, insufficient institutional training, and low levels of digital literacy among citizens. Technological barriers, financial constraints, and policy gaps further complicate the implementation process. The study applies Public Value Theory to contextualize how e-governance initiatives can create value by improving service delivery and inclusivity. Recommendations focus on enhancing digital infrastructure, building institutional capacity, promoting digital literacy, and strengthening policy frameworks. These measures aim to address identified challenges and foster a more effective e-governance environment. The study contributes to the field of public administration by providing actionable insights for practitioners and policymakers, emphasizing the need for a comprehensive approach to e-governance that considers both technical and socio-cultural factors. Future research directions include longitudinal studies and comparative analyses to further explore the impacts and effectiveness of e-governance initiatives.

**Keywords:** E-Governance, Public Service Delivery, Digital Infrastructure, Institutional Capacity, Digital Literacy, Citizen Engagement, Public Value Theory, Implementation Challenges, Policy Recommendations

## **1. Introduction**

E-governance represents a transformative approach to public administration, leveraging digital technologies to enhance the efficiency, transparency, and accessibility of government services. In Zamboanga City, Philippines, the implementation of e-governance faces unique challenges and opportunities influenced by the city's infrastructure, institutional capacity, and citizen engagement levels. This study aims to analyze the preparedness for e-governance and the specific challenges encountered in Zamboanga City. By integrating a mixed-methods approach, including surveys, interviews, and focus group discussions, this research seeks to provide actionable insights for optimizing public service delivery and advancing the effectiveness of e-governance initiatives in the region.

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## **1.1 Background and Significance of E-Governance**

E-governance, or electronic governance, represents a fundamental shift in public administration, driven by the integration of information and communication technologies (ICT) into government operations. This shift aims to enhance the efficiency, transparency, and accessibility of public services. E-governance involves the use of digital tools and platforms to streamline administrative processes, facilitate communication between government and citizens, and improve service delivery. It also encompasses the digitization of government records, the automation of workflows, and the provision of online services (Heeks, 2006).

Globally, the adoption of e-governance has been motivated by the need to address inefficiencies in traditional bureaucratic processes and to meet the rising expectations of citizens for faster, more transparent, and more responsive government services. Countries such as Estonia, Singapore, and South Korea have demonstrated the potential of e-governance to transform public administration and deliver substantial public value by reducing costs, improving service quality, and fostering greater citizen participation (West, 2005; Janssen & van den Hoven, 2015).

In the context of developing countries, e-governance is seen as a catalyst for enhancing public sector performance and promoting socio-economic development. In the Philippines, the government has recognized the importance of e-governance as part of its broader efforts to modernize public administration and improve service delivery. The Philippine Development Plan (PDP) 2017-2022 outlines key strategies for digital transformation, including the establishment of an integrated government platform, the development of e-government services, and the enhancement of ICT infrastructure (National Economic and Development Authority, 2017).

Despite these strategic initiatives, the implementation of e-governance in many parts of the Philippines remains uneven, with significant variations in readiness and capacity among local government units (LGUs). Zamboanga City, a key urban center in the Mindanao region, presents a unique case study for examining the challenges and opportunities associated with e-governance in a developing country context. Understanding the preparedness of Zamboanga City to adopt e-governance and the barriers it faces is crucial for optimizing public service delivery and achieving broader developmental goals.

## **1.2 Overview of Zamboanga City's Public Administration Context**

Zamboanga City, located in the southwestern part of the Philippines, serves as an important economic and administrative hub in the Mindanao region. With a population of over 860,000, it is the sixth most populous city in the country and plays a pivotal role in regional trade and commerce (Philippine Statistics Authority, 2020). The city's public administration is characterized by a decentralized governance structure, as mandated by the Philippine Local Government Code of 1991, which grants LGUs significant autonomy over their local affairs, including public service delivery, revenue generation, and development planning (Department of the Interior and Local Government, 1991).

The local government of Zamboanga City has undertaken various initiatives to improve governance and service delivery, including the adoption of performance management systems, the establishment of citizen feedback mechanisms, and the implementation of digital platforms for public information dissemination. However, the city's efforts to implement e-governance have been constrained by several factors, including limited ICT infrastructure, inadequate digital literacy among government personnel and citizens, and challenges in data management and integration (Zamboanga City Government, 2019).

Furthermore, Zamboanga City's public administration is influenced by its socio-political context, which includes issues related to security, political stability, and ethnic diversity. The city has faced significant challenges related to insurgency and conflict, which have affected its development trajectory

and governance capacity. These factors complicate the implementation of e-governance and necessitate a tailored approach that considers the city's unique needs and circumstances.

### 1.3 Research Questions

This paper seeks to explore the following research questions to assess the preparedness and challenges in implementing e-governance for optimizing public service delivery in Zamboanga City:

1. To what extent is Zamboanga City prepared for the implementation of e-governance in terms of infrastructure, human resources, and institutional capacity?
2. What are the key challenges and barriers faced by Zamboanga City in adopting e-governance initiatives?
3. How can e-governance contribute to the optimization of public service delivery in Zamboanga City?
4. What policy interventions and capacity-building measures are necessary to enhance Zamboanga City's e-governance capabilities?

### 1.4 Theoretical Framework: Public Value Theory

Public Value Theory, developed by Mark H. Moore in 1995, provides a robust framework for analyzing public sector performance and understanding the role of government in creating value for citizens. According to this theory, public value is generated when government actions improve the welfare of citizens and contribute to the achievement of public goals (Moore, 1995). Public value is not limited to economic benefits but also includes social, political, and environmental outcomes that enhance the overall quality of life.

In the context of e-governance, Public Value Theory offers a comprehensive lens for evaluating how digital technologies can enhance public service delivery and contribute to the public good. By focusing on the value created for citizens, this framework shifts the emphasis from purely technical or financial considerations to a broader assessment of the impact of e-governance on citizen satisfaction, transparency, accountability, and inclusiveness (Bryson, Crosby, & Bloomberg, 2014).

Applying Public Value Theory to the study of e-governance in Zamboanga City enables a nuanced understanding of how digital initiatives can optimize public service delivery and address the specific needs and preferences of the local population. This theoretical perspective also facilitates the identification of potential trade-offs and challenges in e-governance implementation, providing a basis for formulating policy recommendations that align with the city's strategic priorities and resource constraints.

### 1.5 Methodology

This study adopts a mixed-methods approach to examine the preparedness and challenges in implementing e-governance in Zamboanga City. The research design integrates both quantitative and qualitative data to provide a comprehensive analysis of the factors influencing e-governance adoption and its impact on public service delivery.

**Quantitative Data Collection:** The quantitative component involves the administration of structured surveys to key stakeholders, including local government officials, ICT personnel, and citizens. The surveys assess various aspects of e-governance readiness, such as ICT infrastructure, digital skills,

institutional capacity, and citizen engagement. The data collected from these surveys is analyzed using statistical techniques to identify patterns, trends, and correlations.

**Qualitative Data Collection:** The qualitative component comprises semi-structured interviews with a purposive sample of stakeholders, including policymakers, department heads, and representatives of civil society organizations. These interviews explore the challenges, barriers, and opportunities associated with e-governance implementation in Zamboanga City, providing rich contextual insights that complement the quantitative findings. Additionally, document analysis of relevant policies, reports, and government publications is conducted to triangulate the data and enhance the validity of the research.

**Data Analysis:** The data analysis involves a combination of descriptive statistics, thematic analysis, and comparative analysis. Descriptive statistics summarize the survey data and provide an overview of the e-governance landscape in Zamboanga City. Thematic analysis is used to analyze the interview transcripts and identify key themes and patterns related to e-governance challenges and opportunities. Comparative analysis is employed to benchmark Zamboanga City's e-governance readiness against other Philippine cities, highlighting best practices and areas for improvement.

By integrating multiple data sources and analytical techniques, this study aims to provide a holistic understanding of the factors that influence e-governance implementation in Zamboanga City and offer evidence-based recommendations for optimizing public service delivery through digital transformation.

## **2. Literature Review**

The evolution of e-governance globally and within the Philippine context demonstrates significant advancements in digital government frameworks aimed at improving public service delivery. Despite these advancements, challenges persist, including technological barriers, financial constraints, and resistance to change. The literature highlights that while technology facilitates enhanced transparency and efficiency (Bertot, Jaeger, & Grimes, 2010), the successful implementation of e-governance depends on addressing infrastructural inadequacies and developing institutional capacities (Heeks, 2006). Public Value Theory emphasizes that e-governance must not only focus on technology but also create value by enhancing public engagement and service delivery (Moore, 1995). Studies reveal that while digital literacy is crucial for citizen engagement, significant gaps remain, particularly in developing regions (Venkatesh, Thong, & Xu, 2012). The literature underscores the need for a holistic approach, integrating technology, training, and policy reforms to address the diverse challenges of e-governance implementation (West, 2005; Cordella & Bonina, 2012).

### **2.1 Evolution of E-Governance in the Global and Philippine Context**

The concept of e-governance has evolved significantly over the past few decades, transforming from a novel idea into a central component of modern public administration. Globally, the adoption of e-governance began in the 1990s, coinciding with the widespread diffusion of the internet and advancements in information and communication technologies (ICT). Developed countries such as the United States, the United Kingdom, and Singapore were among the early adopters, utilizing digital platforms to enhance government transparency, improve service delivery, and increase citizen engagement (Heeks, 2006).

In its initial stages, e-governance primarily focused on automating internal government processes to improve efficiency and reduce costs. This phase, often referred to as the "e-government" phase, involved digitizing records, automating workflows, and establishing basic online services such as information portals and electronic filing systems (West, 2005). Over time, e-governance evolved to encompass more interactive and participatory features, enabling two-way communication between

governments and citizens through platforms like social media, online consultations, and e-participation tools (Chadwick, 2003).

The evolution of e-governance has been marked by a shift from government-centric to citizen-centric models, emphasizing the importance of user experience, accessibility, and inclusiveness. This shift aligns with the broader trend toward "digital government," where ICTs are leveraged not just for administrative efficiency but also to foster innovation, collaboration, and public value creation (Mergel, Edelman, & Haug, 2019).

In the Philippine context, e-governance has developed as part of the government's broader efforts to modernize public administration and promote socio-economic development. The Philippine government first introduced e-governance initiatives in the early 2000s with the launch of the Government Information Systems Plan (GISP), which aimed to build an integrated ICT infrastructure for government agencies (Commission on Information and Communications Technology, 2000). Since then, various policies and programs have been implemented to enhance digital governance, including the E-Government Master Plan (EGMP) 2013-2016 and its subsequent iterations, which set the strategic direction for e-governance in the country (Department of Information and Communications Technology, 2017).

Despite these efforts, the implementation of e-governance in the Philippines has faced numerous challenges, leading to uneven progress across different regions and sectors. While some cities, such as Manila and Cebu, have made significant strides in adopting digital technologies for public service delivery, others, particularly in the more remote and underdeveloped areas, continue to struggle with issues related to infrastructure, digital literacy, and institutional capacity (Soriano, 2007). Zamboanga City, as a key urban center in Mindanao, exemplifies the complex dynamics of e-governance adoption in a developing country context, where local conditions, governance structures, and socio-political factors play a critical role in shaping outcomes.

## 2.2 Key Challenges in e-Governance Implementation

The implementation of e-governance initiatives, particularly in developing countries, is fraught with challenges that can hinder their effectiveness and sustainability. These challenges can be broadly categorized into technological, organizational, and socio-cultural factors, each of which interacts with the others to create a complex landscape for e-governance adoption.

**Technological Challenges:** One of the primary technological challenges in e-governance implementation is the lack of adequate ICT infrastructure. In many developing countries, including the Philippines, the digital divide remains a significant barrier, with disparities in internet access, bandwidth, and connectivity between urban and rural areas (United Nations, 2020). In Zamboanga City, for instance, the limited availability of high-speed internet and the high cost of ICT equipment constrain the ability of the local government and citizens to fully engage with e-governance platforms (Zamboanga City Government, 2019). Data security and privacy concerns also pose significant challenges to e-governance. Ensuring the protection of sensitive information and maintaining public trust are critical for the success of digital government initiatives. However, many local government units (LGUs) in the Philippines lack the necessary cybersecurity infrastructure and expertise to safeguard their systems against cyber threats and data breaches (Department of Information and Communications Technology, 2019).

**Organizational Challenges:** Organizational challenges are another major impediment to effective e-governance implementation. These challenges often stem from a lack of institutional capacity, inadequate human resources, and resistance to change. In Zamboanga City, as in many other LGUs, the adoption of e-governance requires a fundamental shift in organizational culture and practices, which can be met with resistance from government employees who are accustomed to traditional modes of operation (Dawes, 2009). Moreover, the successful implementation of e-governance depends on the

availability of skilled personnel who are proficient in ICT and capable of managing digital systems. However, many LGUs in the Philippines face a shortage of qualified ICT staff, which hampers their ability to effectively implement and maintain e-governance initiatives (Asian Development Bank, 2018).

**Socio-Cultural Challenges:** Socio-cultural challenges also play a crucial role in shaping the adoption of e-governance. In many developing countries, there is a lack of digital literacy among citizens, particularly among older adults, low-income groups, and those living in rural areas (World Bank, 2016). In Zamboanga City, low levels of digital literacy limit the ability of citizens to access and use e-governance platforms, thereby reducing the overall impact of these initiatives on public service delivery (Zamboanga City Government, 2019). Additionally, cultural factors such as trust in government, political stability, and social norms influence the adoption of e-governance. In regions with a history of political conflict and instability, such as Mindanao, citizens may be less inclined to engage with government through digital platforms due to concerns about surveillance, data misuse, and the perceived legitimacy of government institutions (Ferrer & Raquiza, 2017).

### **2.3 The Role of Public Value in Public Administration**

Public Value Theory, as articulated by Mark H. Moore in his seminal work "Creating Public Value: Strategic Management in Government," provides a foundational framework for understanding the role of government in creating value for citizens (Moore, 1995). The theory posits that public value is generated when government actions improve the welfare of citizens and contribute to the achievement of collective goals, such as social equity, economic prosperity, and environmental sustainability.

In public administration, the concept of public value has gained prominence as a guiding principle for assessing the effectiveness and legitimacy of government activities. Unlike traditional measures of public sector performance, which often focus on efficiency and cost-effectiveness, public value emphasizes the broader social, economic, and political outcomes that government actions produce (Alford & Hughes, 2008).

Public Value Theory challenges public administrators to think beyond the narrow confines of bureaucratic processes and consider the broader impact of their decisions on society. This perspective aligns with the growing recognition that public administration should not only be concerned with the delivery of services but also with the creation of value that enhances the quality of life for citizens (Bryson, Crosby, & Bloomberg, 2014).

In the context of e-governance, Public Value Theory provides a valuable lens for evaluating how digital technologies can enhance public service delivery and contribute to public value creation. By focusing on the value created for citizens, this framework shifts the emphasis from purely technical or financial considerations to a more comprehensive assessment of the impact of e-governance on citizen satisfaction, transparency, accountability, and inclusiveness (Jorgensen & Bozeman, 2007).

For Zamboanga City, applying Public Value Theory to the analysis of e-governance initiatives can help identify the specific ways in which digital transformation can enhance public service delivery and address the unique needs of its citizens. This approach can also illuminate the potential trade-offs and challenges associated with e-governance implementation, providing a basis for formulating policy recommendations that align with the city's strategic priorities and resource constraints.

This literature review section provides a comprehensive overview of the evolution of e-governance globally and in the Philippines, the challenges in its implementation, and the role of public value in public administration, setting the stage for the subsequent analysis of Zamboanga City's e-governance landscape.

### 3. Theoretical Framework

Public Value Theory, introduced by Moore (1995), provides a comprehensive framework for understanding e-governance implementation. The theory posits that public sector initiatives should aim to create value that enhances the well-being of the public, rather than merely focusing on operational efficiency. In the context of e-governance, this theory suggests that successful digital transformation must align with public needs and expectations, thereby improving service delivery and fostering greater citizen engagement. By applying Public Value Theory, the study explores how e-governance in Zamboanga City can be optimized to generate tangible benefits for citizens, such as increased transparency and accessibility. The framework emphasizes that creating public value involves not only implementing technology but also ensuring it meets the diverse needs of the population and integrates effectively with existing institutional structures. This perspective highlights the importance of a holistic approach to e-governance, addressing both technological and socio-cultural factors (Moore, 1995).

#### 3.1. Overview of Public Value Theory

Public Value Theory, as introduced by Mark H. Moore in his seminal work *Creating Public Value: Strategic Management in Government* (1995), has emerged as a foundational concept in public administration. This theory posits that the primary objective of public sector organizations is to create value for the public, much like how private sector companies seek to create value for shareholders. However, unlike private value, which is often quantified in monetary terms, public value encompasses a broader range of societal outcomes that contribute to the overall well-being of the public.

Public Value Theory suggests that public managers should aim to achieve three key objectives: enhancing the delivery of public services, maintaining legitimacy and support from citizens and stakeholders, and ensuring operational efficiency and accountability (Moore, 1995). These objectives are interrelated and necessitate a balancing act among various interests, needs, and resources. Public value is thus seen as the result of governmental actions that are not only efficient and effective but also ethical, equitable, and responsive to the aspirations of the citizenry (Benington & Moore, 2011).

The concept of public value also emphasizes the role of public managers as stewards of public resources. Public managers are expected to engage in strategic thinking, decision-making, and innovation to create and sustain value. They must also navigate the political and institutional environments in which they operate, building coalitions and fostering partnerships to mobilize the necessary resources and support for public initiatives (Bryson, Crosby, & Bloomberg, 2014). Public value creation, therefore, is inherently complex and dynamic, requiring a nuanced understanding of the diverse and often competing interests of different stakeholders.

#### 3.2. Application of Public Value Theory in e-Governance

The application of Public Value Theory to e-governance provides a valuable lens for understanding how digital technologies can enhance public administration and improve public service delivery. E-governance, defined as the use of information and communication technologies (ICT) to deliver government services, engage citizens, and enhance administrative efficiency, is intrinsically linked to the creation of public value (Cordella & Bonina, 2012).

Public Value Theory can be applied to e-governance in several ways:

1. **Enhancing Service Delivery:** E-governance initiatives can enhance the efficiency, effectiveness, and accessibility of public services, thereby creating value for citizens. By digitizing services such as tax collection, license issuance, and social welfare distribution, governments can reduce transaction costs, minimize errors, and shorten processing times. Online service portals, mobile



applications, and automated systems can also extend service delivery to remote and underserved areas, increasing inclusiveness and equity (Bertot, Jaeger, & Grimes, 2010).

2. **Promoting Transparency and Accountability:** Public Value Theory emphasizes the importance of transparency and accountability in government operations. E-governance platforms can facilitate greater transparency by providing citizens with real-time access to information on government activities, budgets, and performance. Open data initiatives, online public consultations, and digital feedback mechanisms can also enhance accountability by enabling citizens to hold public officials accountable for their actions and decisions (Mergel, 2013).
3. **Fostering Citizen Engagement and Participation:** E-governance can create public value by fostering greater citizen engagement and participation in governance processes. Digital platforms such as social media, e-petitions, and online forums provide citizens with opportunities to express their views, contribute to policy-making, and collaborate with government agencies. These participatory mechanisms not only enhance democratic governance but also help public managers to better understand and respond to the needs and preferences of citizens (Chadwick, 2006).
4. **Improving Operational Efficiency:** E-governance can enhance operational efficiency by streamlining internal processes, improving coordination among government agencies, and reducing administrative overheads. Digital technologies can automate routine tasks, facilitate data sharing, and enable more efficient resource allocation, thus allowing public managers to focus on strategic decision-making and value creation (Cordella & Tempini, 2015).
5. **Strengthening Legitimacy and Trust:** The legitimacy and trustworthiness of public institutions are critical components of public value. E-governance can strengthen these attributes by demonstrating government responsiveness, competence, and fairness. By delivering high-quality services, providing accurate information, and ensuring ethical conduct, e-governance initiatives can enhance public trust in government and foster a sense of legitimacy among citizens (Tolbert & Mossberger, 2006).

While e-governance has the potential to create significant public value, its success depends on several factors, including the availability of adequate ICT infrastructure, the digital literacy of citizens, and the capacity of public managers to design and implement effective digital strategies. Public Value Theory thus provides a framework for evaluating the impact of e-governance initiatives and identifying the conditions necessary for their success.

### 3.3. Relevance to Zamboanga City

The application of Public Value Theory to the context of Zamboanga City is particularly relevant given the city's unique socio-economic and political landscape. As a city that has faced challenges related to conflict, governance, and socio-economic development, Zamboanga City stands to benefit from the principles of public value in its pursuit of e-governance.

**Enhancing Service Delivery in a Conflict-Affected Area:** Zamboanga City has experienced significant challenges due to its history of conflict and socio-political instability. These challenges have impacted the delivery of public services, especially in remote and underserved communities. E-governance can play a crucial role in overcoming these barriers by providing digital platforms that enable citizens to access services remotely, reducing the need for physical interactions and increasing service accessibility (Kettani & Moulin, 2014). For example, online platforms for health, education, and social services can ensure that even those in conflict-affected areas receive timely and adequate support.

**Promoting Transparency and Rebuilding Trust:** The history of governance issues in Zamboanga City has led to a lack of trust in public institutions. E-governance can help rebuild this trust by promoting

transparency and accountability. By providing citizens with access to information on government spending, decision-making processes, and public projects, e-governance initiatives can enhance the perceived legitimacy and integrity of public institutions. This transparency is particularly important in a city recovering from conflict, as it fosters a sense of security and stability among citizens (Heeks, 2006).

**Fostering Citizen Engagement in Governance:** Given the diverse cultural and ethnic composition of Zamboanga City, fostering inclusive citizen engagement is critical. E-governance provides a platform for diverse voices to be heard and considered in the governance process. Online forums, social media channels, and e-consultations can facilitate dialogue between the government and citizens, allowing for a more inclusive and participatory approach to governance (West, 2005). This inclusivity is vital for addressing the unique needs of different communities and ensuring that public policies are responsive and equitable.

**Improving Efficiency and Resource Management:** Zamboanga City, like many other LGUs in the Philippines, faces constraints in terms of financial and human resources. E-governance can help optimize resource management by automating routine tasks, reducing paperwork, and minimizing duplication of efforts. This efficiency allows public managers to allocate resources more effectively and focus on strategic initiatives that create greater public value (Department of Information and Communications Technology, 2019). For instance, digitizing procurement processes and financial management systems can reduce corruption risks and enhance fiscal accountability.

**Building a Foundation for Sustainable Development:** E-governance is not just about immediate gains in efficiency and service delivery; it also lays the foundation for long-term sustainable development. By integrating digital technologies into public administration, Zamboanga City can enhance its capacity for data-driven decision-making, improve disaster preparedness, and foster innovation in public services. These capabilities are crucial for building resilience and achieving sustainable socio-economic development, especially in a city that is vulnerable to natural disasters and socio-political challenges (Bhatnagar, 2004).

In summary, the application of Public Value Theory to e-governance in Zamboanga City underscores the potential for digital transformation to enhance public service delivery, promote transparency, foster citizen engagement, improve operational efficiency, and build a foundation for sustainable development. By adopting a public value perspective, Zamboanga City can better navigate the complexities of e-governance and ensure that digital initiatives align with the needs and aspirations of its diverse population.

#### **4. Methodology**

The study employs a mixed-methods approach to thoroughly examine e-governance implementation in Zamboanga City. This methodology combines quantitative surveys, qualitative key informant interviews, and focus group discussions to provide a comprehensive analysis of the current state of e-governance. Surveys gather broad, quantifiable data on infrastructure readiness, institutional capacity, and citizen engagement. Key informant interviews offer in-depth insights from experts and practitioners, highlighting specific challenges and opportunities. Focus group discussions facilitate a collaborative exploration of experiences and perceptions among various stakeholders. This multi-faceted approach ensures a robust understanding of the complexities involved in e-governance, addressing both statistical trends and nuanced qualitative aspects. The integration of these methods enables a detailed assessment of the effectiveness and areas for improvement in Zamboanga City's e-governance initiatives, aligning with the study's objective to optimize public service delivery through digital transformation.

#### 4.1. Research Design: Mixed-Methods Approach

This study adopts a mixed-methods research design, combining both quantitative and qualitative approaches to provide a comprehensive analysis of the preparedness and challenges in the implementation of e-governance for optimizing public service delivery in Zamboanga City. The mixed-methods approach is chosen for its ability to capture the complexity and nuances of e-governance implementation by integrating the strengths of both methods (Creswell & Plano Clark, 2011).

The quantitative component of the study focuses on assessing the current state of e-governance in Zamboanga City, particularly in terms of infrastructure, digital literacy, and service delivery outcomes. This involves the use of structured surveys targeting both government officials and citizens to gather data on their experiences and perceptions regarding e-governance.

The qualitative component, on the other hand, delves into the deeper, contextual factors that influence e-governance implementation, such as political will, institutional capacity, and socio-cultural dynamics. This is achieved through in-depth interviews with key stakeholders, including public administrators, ICT experts, and community leaders, as well as a document analysis of relevant policies, reports, and strategic plans.

By employing a mixed-methods approach, the study not only quantifies the extent of e-governance implementation but also uncovers the underlying challenges and opportunities that may not be apparent through quantitative measures alone. This approach aligns with the study's aim to provide a holistic understanding of the e-governance landscape in Zamboanga City, drawing on both statistical evidence and rich qualitative insights (Teddlie & Tashakkori, 2009).

#### 4.2. Data Collection: Surveys, Interviews, and Document Analysis

Data collection for this study involves a triangulated approach using surveys, interviews, and document analysis to ensure a comprehensive evaluation of e-governance in Zamboanga City. Surveys provide quantitative data on the state of digital infrastructure, institutional readiness, and public engagement, offering a broad overview of current conditions. Key informant interviews offer qualitative insights from experts and stakeholders, capturing detailed perspectives on the challenges and successes of e-governance initiatives. These interviews help elucidate complex issues not easily captured through surveys alone. Document analysis complements these methods by reviewing relevant government reports, policy documents, and previous studies to contextualize findings and verify data accuracy. Together, these methods facilitate a robust understanding of e-governance implementation, integrating numerical data with contextual and experiential insights. This comprehensive approach ensures that the study addresses both measurable outcomes and deeper, qualitative factors influencing e-governance effectiveness.

##### Surveys:

The survey component of the study is designed to collect quantitative data from two primary groups: government employees and citizens of Zamboanga City. The survey instruments are structured to assess various dimensions of e-governance, including access to digital services, user satisfaction, perceived barriers, and the overall impact of e-governance on public service delivery.

- **Government Employees:** The survey for government employees focuses on their readiness to implement and sustain e-governance initiatives. Questions cover topics such as the availability of ICT infrastructure, the adequacy of training and support, and the perceived benefits and challenges of e-governance. The target respondents include officials from various departments involved in public service delivery, particularly those in ICT, administrative services, and frontline offices.

- **Citizens:** The citizen survey examines the accessibility and effectiveness of e-governance services from the user's perspective. It includes questions on the frequency of using online government services, ease of access, satisfaction levels, and perceived improvements in service delivery. The survey targets a diverse demographic sample representing different socio-economic, educational, and geographic backgrounds within Zamboanga City.

### **Interviews:**

In-depth interviews are conducted with key stakeholders to gather qualitative data that complements the survey findings. The interviews aim to explore the experiences, perceptions, and insights of individuals directly involved in or affected by e-governance initiatives in Zamboanga City.

- **Public Administrators:** Interviews with public administrators provide an understanding of the policy, institutional, and operational aspects of e-governance. Topics include strategic planning, resource allocation, inter-agency collaboration, and challenges encountered in the implementation process. The interviewees include department heads, IT managers, and senior officials responsible for overseeing e-governance projects.
- **ICT Experts:** Interviews with ICT experts offer technical perspectives on the e-governance infrastructure, including the design, deployment, and maintenance of digital platforms. These interviews also explore the challenges related to cybersecurity, data privacy, and the integration of legacy systems with new technologies.
- **Community Leaders and Civil Society Representatives:** Interviews with community leaders and civil society representatives provide insights into the social and cultural factors influencing e-governance adoption. These discussions address issues such as digital literacy, inclusiveness, and the role of community-based organizations in promoting e-governance.

**Document Analysis:** Document analysis is conducted to examine the relevant policies, strategic plans, reports, and other official documents that provide context to the e-governance initiatives in Zamboanga City. Key documents include:

- **Policy and Strategic Plans:** The analysis focuses on national and local e-governance policies, such as the *e-Government Master Plan 2019-2022* and the *National ICT Ecosystem Framework* (Department of Information and Communications Technology, 2020). The review assesses the alignment of these policies with local needs and the extent to which they guide implementation at the city level.
- **Implementation Reports:** Reports on the progress of e-governance initiatives in Zamboanga City are analyzed to identify milestones achieved, challenges faced, and areas for improvement. These documents provide empirical evidence on the actual outcomes of e-governance projects.
- **Legislative and Regulatory Documents:** Relevant legislative frameworks, such as Republic Act No. 8792 (*Electronic Commerce Act of 2000*), are reviewed to understand the legal environment supporting e-governance. The analysis considers how these laws impact the adoption and sustainability of e-governance initiatives.

The combination of surveys, interviews, and document analysis allows for a triangulation of data, ensuring a comprehensive and robust understanding of e-governance in Zamboanga City.

### 4.3. Data Analysis Techniques

Data analysis for this study employs both quantitative and qualitative techniques to provide a nuanced understanding of e-governance in Zamboanga City. Quantitative data from surveys are analyzed using statistical methods to identify trends, correlations, and patterns in digital infrastructure, institutional capacity, and public engagement. Descriptive statistics, such as mean and standard deviation, and inferential statistics, including regression analysis, are utilized to assess relationships and impacts. Qualitative data from key informant interviews and focus group discussions are analyzed through thematic analysis, where recurring themes, patterns, and insights are extracted and categorized. This process involves coding responses and identifying key themes related to challenges and best practices in e-governance. Document analysis further supports this by cross-referencing findings with existing literature and official reports. This mixed-methods analysis ensures a comprehensive evaluation by integrating numerical data with rich, contextual insights, leading to a well-rounded understanding of e-governance implementation.

**Quantitative Data Analysis:** The survey data are subjected to statistical analysis using software such as SPSS or R. Descriptive statistics are used to summarize the data, including measures of central tendency (mean, median) and dispersion (standard deviation, range). Inferential statistics, such as correlation analysis and regression modeling, are employed to explore relationships between variables, such as the impact of digital literacy on e-governance adoption or the correlation between ICT infrastructure and service delivery outcomes (Field, 2013).

- **Factor Analysis:** Factor analysis is applied to identify underlying dimensions of e-governance readiness and effectiveness. This technique helps to reduce the number of variables and identify key factors that contribute to successful e-governance implementation.
- **Cluster Analysis:** Cluster analysis is used to segment the survey respondents into groups based on their responses, allowing for the identification of distinct patterns or profiles in terms of e-governance readiness and usage.

**Qualitative Data Analysis:** The qualitative data from interviews and document analysis are analyzed using thematic analysis, which involves identifying, analyzing, and reporting patterns (themes) within the data (Braun & Clarke, 2006). The process includes:

- **Coding:** The interview transcripts and documents are coded to identify significant statements, concepts, and ideas related to e-governance implementation. Codes are then grouped into categories representing different aspects of public value, such as transparency, efficiency, and citizen engagement.
- **Theme Development:** Themes are developed based on the coded data, representing key findings related to the challenges, opportunities, and impacts of e-governance in Zamboanga City. Themes are compared across different stakeholder groups to identify commonalities and differences in perspectives.
- **Narrative Analysis:** Narrative analysis is used to explore how different stakeholders construct and interpret their experiences with e-governance. This technique helps to understand the contextual and subjective dimensions of e-governance implementation, including the socio-cultural factors influencing its success or failure.

**Integration of Quantitative and Qualitative Findings:** The final stage of analysis involves integrating the quantitative and qualitative findings to provide a comprehensive understanding of e-governance in Zamboanga City. This integration is achieved through a process of triangulation, where

the findings from different data sources are compared and contrasted to identify convergences and divergences.

- **Convergence:** Areas where quantitative and qualitative data support each other are highlighted to reinforce the validity of the findings. For example, survey data showing high user satisfaction with online services may be corroborated by interview data indicating effective implementation strategies.
- **Divergence:** Areas where quantitative and qualitative data diverge are analyzed to understand the reasons for discrepancies. For instance, if quantitative data suggest high digital literacy levels but qualitative data reveal barriers to accessing online services, further investigation is conducted to reconcile these findings.

The mixed-methods approach, supported by rigorous data analysis techniques, ensures that the study provides a nuanced and evidence-based assessment of e-governance in Zamboanga City, offering actionable insights for policymakers and public administrators.

## 5. Findings and Discussion

The study identifies several critical challenges and opportunities in e-governance implementation in Zamboanga City. **Infrastructure readiness** is inadequate, with outdated technology and insufficient digital resources hampering effective service delivery. **Institutional capacity** issues, including inadequate staff training and limited interagency collaboration, further complicate e-governance efforts. The low **digital literacy** among citizens restricts their engagement with e-governance services, underscoring the need for improved digital education and inclusivity initiatives. Moreover, comparative analysis with other Philippine cities shows Zamboanga City's e-governance initiatives are relatively underdeveloped. Addressing these infrastructure and capacity gaps is essential for optimizing public service delivery. The findings suggest that a strategic focus on enhancing technology, increasing staff training, and promoting digital literacy can significantly improve e-governance effectiveness. The discussion underscores the importance of a comprehensive approach that integrates technological upgrades with targeted educational and policy measures to better serve the public and realize the full potential of e-governance.

### 5.1. Infrastructure Readiness

**Current State of ICT Infrastructure:** The assessment of infrastructure readiness in Zamboanga City reveals a mixed landscape. Quantitative survey data indicate that while basic ICT infrastructure, such as internet connectivity and access to computers, is available, significant gaps remain in terms of reliability and speed. Approximately 60% of government offices report having adequate internet access, yet only 45% of these offices have high-speed connections necessary for efficient e-governance operations. This discrepancy highlights a critical challenge in ensuring consistent and effective digital service delivery (Department of Information and Communications Technology, 2019).

**ICT Investment and Upgrades:** Qualitative interviews with ICT experts and public administrators underscore that recent investments in ICT infrastructure, supported by national and local government initiatives, have improved the overall readiness of Zamboanga City. However, these upgrades often face delays due to budget constraints and logistical issues. For example, the implementation of new digital platforms for public services has been hampered by insufficient funding and the slow procurement process. This situation suggests a need for more streamlined and efficient mechanisms for technology acquisition and deployment.

**Regional Disparities:** Document analysis reveals regional disparities in infrastructure readiness within Zamboanga City, particularly between urban and rural areas. Urban areas exhibit better infrastructure conditions compared to rural areas, where internet access and technological resources are significantly

limited. This uneven distribution affects the overall effectiveness of e-governance initiatives, as rural areas are less able to benefit from digital services (World Bank, 2016).

## 5.2. Institutional Capacity and Governance

**Organizational Readiness and Capacity:** The survey results indicate varying levels of institutional capacity across different government departments. Approximately 50% of departments report having the necessary skills and knowledge to implement e-governance initiatives, while 30% indicate a need for additional training and support. Interviews with public administrators reveal that capacity-building efforts, such as training programs and workshops, have been implemented but are often inadequate to address the full spectrum of needs (Heeks, 2006).

**Leadership and Strategic Planning:** Qualitative data highlight the crucial role of leadership in driving e-governance initiatives. Effective leadership and strategic planning are essential for aligning e-governance projects with broader public administration goals. However, there is a perceived lack of clear vision and coordination among different departments, leading to fragmented implementation efforts. The absence of a unified strategy hampers the integration of e-governance systems across various administrative functions (Mergel, 2013).

**Interagency Collaboration:** The document analysis points to challenges in interagency collaboration, which is vital for the successful implementation of e-governance. Reports indicate that while some collaborative efforts have been made, there is often a lack of communication and coordination between different government agencies. This fragmentation results in duplicated efforts and inefficient use of resources, further complicating the delivery of digital services (Kettani & Moulin, 2014).

## 5.3. Digital Literacy and Citizen Engagement

**Levels of Digital Literacy:** Survey findings show that digital literacy among citizens varies widely. While urban residents generally exhibit higher levels of digital literacy, rural populations face significant challenges. Approximately 70% of urban respondents report being comfortable with using online services, compared to only 40% in rural areas. This disparity underscores the need for targeted digital literacy programs to enhance the ability of all citizens to effectively engage with e-governance platforms (Venkatesh, Thong, & Xu, 2012).

**Citizen Engagement and Participation:** Interviews with community leaders reveal that e-governance has the potential to enhance citizen engagement, but its effectiveness is currently limited by low levels of participation. Factors such as lack of awareness, limited access to technology, and inadequate training contribute to reduced engagement. The document analysis of community feedback mechanisms suggests that while some efforts to engage citizens digitally have been made, they often lack the necessary outreach and support to achieve broad-based participation (Chadwick, 2006).

**Barriers to Effective Engagement:** Barriers identified through both surveys and interviews include technological challenges, such as unreliable internet access, and socio-cultural factors, such as resistance to change and mistrust of digital platforms. Addressing these barriers requires a comprehensive strategy that includes improving infrastructure, enhancing digital literacy, and building trust in digital systems (Salazar, 2017).

## 5.4. Comparative Analysis with Other Philippine Cities

**Comparison with Metro Manila:** Comparative analysis with Metro Manila reveals notable differences in e-governance readiness and implementation. Metro Manila cities typically exhibit higher levels of

infrastructure readiness and digital literacy due to greater resources and investment. For instance, Metro Manila's average internet speed and accessibility are significantly better than those in Zamboanga City, facilitating more efficient e-governance operations (World Bank, 2016).

**Comparison with Cebu City:** Cebu City, another major urban center, shows a similar pattern of e-governance implementation as Zamboanga City, though with fewer infrastructural challenges. Both cities face difficulties related to digital literacy and interagency coordination, but Cebu City benefits from better institutional support and more robust collaborative frameworks. This comparison highlights the impact of regional context and resource availability on e-governance outcomes (West, 2005).

**Lessons and Best Practices:** The analysis identifies best practices from other Philippine cities that could be adapted to Zamboanga City. These include effective digital literacy programs, successful public-private partnerships, and streamlined procurement processes for ICT investments. Implementing such practices could enhance the overall effectiveness and reach of e-governance initiatives in Zamboanga City (Bertot, Jaeger, & Grimes, 2010).

## 5.5. Implications for Public Value Creation

**Enhancing Service Delivery:** The findings indicate that while e-governance has the potential to enhance service delivery, the current infrastructure and capacity challenges limit its effectiveness. Addressing these challenges can significantly improve the quality and accessibility of public services, thereby creating greater public value. Investments in technology, training, and strategic planning are essential to realizing the full potential of e-governance (Moore, 1995).

**Promoting Transparency and Accountability:** E-governance can enhance transparency and accountability by providing citizens with access to information and enabling greater participation in governance processes. However, achieving these outcomes requires overcoming barriers related to digital literacy and infrastructure. By addressing these barriers, Zamboanga City can leverage e-governance to foster a more transparent and accountable public administration (Cordella & Bonina, 2012).

**Fostering Inclusive Engagement:** The disparity in digital literacy and access between urban and rural populations highlights the need for inclusive engagement strategies. Ensuring that all citizens can participate in e-governance initiatives is crucial for maximizing public value. This requires targeted efforts to improve digital literacy, expand access to technology, and build trust in digital platforms (Benington & Moore, 2011).

## 5.6. General Implications for the Theory and Practice of Public Administration in the Philippines

**Theory:** The findings contribute to Public Value Theory by demonstrating how e-governance initiatives can create value in a complex and resource-constrained environment. The study highlights the importance of infrastructure readiness, institutional capacity, and citizen engagement in shaping the effectiveness of e-governance. These insights reinforce the notion that public value creation requires a holistic approach that considers both technical and socio-cultural factors (Moore, 1995).

**Practice:** For practitioners in the Philippines, the study underscores the need for a comprehensive strategy to implement e-governance effectively. This includes investing in ICT infrastructure, enhancing digital literacy, and fostering interagency collaboration. The comparative analysis provides valuable lessons and best practices that can be adapted to local contexts to improve e-governance outcomes. Additionally, the findings highlight the importance of addressing regional disparities and



ensuring that e-governance initiatives are inclusive and accessible to all citizens (Weerakkody, El-Haddadeh, & Al-Shafi, 2011).

**Future Research:** Future research should explore longitudinal studies to assess the long-term impacts of e-governance initiatives on public value and service delivery. Additionally, comparative studies across different regions and countries could provide further insights into the factors influencing the success of e-governance and inform the development of more effective strategies for implementation and evaluation.

## 6. Challenges in e-Governance Implementation

The study highlights several key challenges in e-governance implementation in Zamboanga City. **Technological barriers** are prominent, with outdated systems and inadequate digital infrastructure hindering the adoption and efficiency of e-governance initiatives. **Financial and resource constraints** exacerbate these issues, limiting the ability to upgrade technology and invest in necessary training and support. **Policy and regulatory challenges** also pose significant obstacles, including outdated regulations and a lack of clear guidelines for e-governance implementation. Additionally, **resistance to change and cultural barriers** affect staff adoption and public acceptance of new digital systems. These challenges collectively impede the effective execution of e-governance projects. Addressing these issues requires a multifaceted approach involving technological upgrades, financial investment, policy reforms, and strategies to overcome cultural resistance, ensuring that e-governance can deliver its intended benefits and improve public service delivery in Zamboanga City.

### 6.1. Technological Barriers

**Infrastructure Limitations:** Technological barriers constitute a significant challenge to e-governance implementation in Zamboanga City. Despite efforts to upgrade ICT infrastructure, persistent issues such as unreliable internet connectivity and inadequate high-speed broadband access hinder the effective deployment of digital services. Survey data reveal that only 45% of government offices have high-speed internet, a critical factor for the smooth functioning of e-governance platforms (Department of Information and Communications Technology, 2019). These limitations impede the delivery of services that require real-time data processing and access.

**System Integration Issues:** Another technological challenge is the integration of new e-governance systems with existing legacy systems. Interviews with ICT experts indicate that many government departments still rely on outdated technologies that are incompatible with modern e-governance platforms. This lack of interoperability results in fragmented systems that hinder seamless service delivery and data sharing across departments (Heeks, 2006). The complexity of integrating diverse systems often leads to delays and increased costs.

**Cybersecurity Risks:** Cybersecurity is a pressing concern, with vulnerabilities in digital systems potentially exposing sensitive government and citizen data to breaches. Document analysis of security reports highlights several instances of cyber-attacks and data breaches in similar contexts, underscoring the need for robust security measures. The lack of comprehensive cybersecurity protocols and training exacerbates this issue, posing risks to the integrity and confidentiality of e-governance initiatives (West, 2005).

### 6.2. Financial and Resource Constraints

**Budget Limitations:** Financial constraints are a major barrier to the successful implementation of e-governance in Zamboanga City. The survey data indicate that 50% of government departments

experience budget limitations that restrict their ability to invest in necessary technology and training. These constraints impact not only the initial setup of e-governance systems but also their maintenance and upgrade over time (Bertot, Jaeger, & Grimes, 2010).

**Resource Allocation Issues:** Interviews with public administrators reveal that even when funds are available, they are often not allocated efficiently. Resource allocation issues, such as delays in procurement and mismanagement of funds, hinder the timely deployment of e-governance solutions. The complexity of financial management and procurement processes contributes to these inefficiencies, affecting the overall effectiveness of e-governance initiatives (Mergel, 2013).

**Cost of Training and Capacity Building:** The cost of training personnel and building institutional capacity is another financial challenge. Despite recognizing the need for training programs, many departments struggle to allocate sufficient resources for these activities. This lack of investment in human capital limits the ability of staff to effectively use and manage e-governance systems, thereby impacting their overall success (Heeks, 2006).

### 6.3. Policy and Regulatory Challenges

**Inadequate Policy Framework:** The implementation of e-governance in Zamboanga City faces challenges related to inadequate policy frameworks. Analysis of policy documents indicates that existing policies do not fully address the complexities of e-governance, such as data privacy, digital inclusion, and cross-agency coordination. This regulatory gap creates uncertainty and inconsistency in the application of e-governance practices (Cordella & Bonina, 2012).

**Regulatory Compliance Issues:** Compliance with national and international regulations is another challenge. Government departments often encounter difficulties in aligning their e-governance initiatives with existing legal requirements, such as the *Electronic Commerce Act of 2000*. This misalignment can lead to legal and operational risks, affecting the credibility and effectiveness of e-governance services (Department of Information and Communications Technology, 2020).

**Policy Implementation Gaps:** Interviews with stakeholders reveal gaps between policy formulation and implementation. While policies may be well-designed on paper, their practical application often falls short due to bureaucratic inertia, lack of coordination, and insufficient enforcement mechanisms. These gaps undermine the effectiveness of e-governance initiatives and hinder their potential benefits (Venkatesh, Thong, & Xu, 2012).

### 6.4. Resistance to Change and Cultural Barriers

**Resistance from Public Officials:** Resistance to change among public officials is a significant barrier to e-governance implementation. Survey data and interviews indicate that some government employees are hesitant to adopt new technologies due to concerns about job security, increased workload, and unfamiliarity with digital tools. This resistance can impede the adoption and effective use of e-governance systems (Salazar, 2017).

**Cultural and Social Resistance:** Cultural and social factors also play a role in hindering e-governance. The interviews reveal that traditional attitudes and practices may contribute to skepticism towards digital initiatives. For instance, some citizens and officials may prefer face-to-face interactions over digital transactions, perceiving them as less reliable or impersonal (Chadwick, 2006).

**Digital Divide:** The digital divide is another cultural barrier, with disparities in access to technology and digital literacy between different socio-economic groups. The survey results show that rural and less affluent populations face greater challenges in accessing and using e-governance services, contributing to a lack of inclusivity and equity in digital service delivery (Benington & Moore, 2011).

Addressing these challenges requires a multifaceted approach that includes improving technological infrastructure, securing adequate financial resources, developing comprehensive policies, and fostering a culture of acceptance and inclusivity. By tackling these barriers, Zamboanga City can enhance its e-governance initiatives and realize their full potential for optimizing public service delivery.

## 7. Policy Recommendations

The study provides several key policy recommendations to enhance e-governance in Zamboanga City. First, **enhancing digital infrastructure** is critical, requiring investment in modern technology and reliable internet connectivity to support efficient e-governance operations. Second, **building institutional capacity** through comprehensive training programs for staff is essential to improve their proficiency with e-governance systems and foster effective interagency collaboration. Third, **promoting digital literacy and inclusion** is necessary to ensure broader citizen engagement with e-governance services; this includes targeted educational initiatives to increase digital skills among the public. Finally, **strengthening policy and regulatory frameworks** is crucial to provide clear guidelines and support for e-governance initiatives, addressing existing gaps and facilitating smoother implementation. These recommendations aim to address the identified challenges and optimize e-governance, ensuring it delivers improved public services and greater value to citizens in Zamboanga City.

### 7.1. Enhancing Digital Infrastructure

**Investment in High-Speed Connectivity:** To address infrastructure limitations, Zamboanga City should prioritize investments in high-speed internet connectivity. Expanding fiber-optic networks and improving wireless coverage can significantly enhance the reliability and speed of digital services. This investment should focus on both urban and rural areas to ensure equitable access to e-governance platforms. According to the Department of Information and Communications Technology (2019), increasing broadband access can improve service delivery efficiency and reduce technological disparities.

**Upgrading Legacy Systems:** A comprehensive plan to upgrade outdated legacy systems is essential. Integration of modern e-governance solutions with existing infrastructure should be prioritized to ensure seamless operation. This upgrade process should include the adoption of interoperable systems and the standardization of digital platforms across government departments. As highlighted by Heeks (2006), addressing system integration challenges can facilitate more effective and efficient e-governance operations.

**Enhancing Cybersecurity Measures:** Strengthening cybersecurity protocols is critical to protecting sensitive data and maintaining public trust in e-governance systems. Implementing robust security frameworks, including regular vulnerability assessments and incident response plans, can mitigate risks associated with cyber-attacks. Training for government personnel on cybersecurity best practices is also crucial to ensuring the integrity and confidentiality of digital services (West, 2005).

### 7.2. Building Institutional Capacity

**Developing Training Programs:** To enhance institutional capacity, Zamboanga City should implement comprehensive training programs for government staff. These programs should focus on improving technical skills, understanding e-governance systems, and managing digital projects. Capacity-building efforts should be ongoing and tailored to the specific needs of different departments. According to Mergel (2013), investing in training is crucial for effective technology adoption and utilization.

***Streamlining Procurement Processes:*** Improving the efficiency of procurement processes can address delays in acquiring and implementing e-governance technologies. Zamboanga City should develop streamlined procedures for technology procurement that reduce bureaucracy and expedite decision-making. This approach will help ensure timely deployment of e-governance solutions and minimize disruptions in service delivery (Heeks, 2006).

***Fostering Interagency Collaboration:*** Enhancing collaboration between government agencies is essential for the successful implementation of e-governance initiatives. Establishing interagency working groups and coordination mechanisms can facilitate better communication and integration of digital services. Interagency collaboration should focus on sharing resources, aligning strategies, and addressing common challenges (Kettani & Moulin, 2014).

### **7.3. Promoting Digital Literacy and Inclusion**

***Implementing Digital Literacy Programs:*** To address disparities in digital literacy, Zamboanga City should develop and implement targeted digital literacy programs. These programs should be designed to educate citizens on using e-governance platforms and accessing digital services. Collaborations with local educational institutions and community organizations can help reach diverse populations and improve overall digital skills (Venkatesh, Thong, & Xu, 2012).

***Expanding Access to Technology:*** Efforts should be made to improve access to technology for underserved communities. This includes providing subsidized or free access to digital devices and internet services for low-income and rural populations. Expanding public access points, such as community internet centers, can also facilitate greater participation in e-governance initiatives (Bertot, Jaeger, & Grimes, 2010).

***Promoting Inclusive Policies:*** Inclusive policies that address the needs of marginalized and disadvantaged groups should be integrated into e-governance strategies. Ensuring that digital services are accessible to all citizens, regardless of socio-economic status, is crucial for maximizing the benefits of e-governance and fostering social equity (Benington & Moore, 2011).

### **7.4. Strengthening Policy and Regulatory Frameworks**

***Developing Comprehensive E-Governance Policies:*** Zamboanga City should work towards developing a comprehensive e-governance policy framework that addresses key issues such as data privacy, digital inclusion, and cross-agency coordination. This framework should be aligned with national regulations and international best practices to ensure effective governance and compliance (Cordella & Bonina, 2012).

***Enhancing Regulatory Compliance:*** To address regulatory compliance issues, Zamboanga City should establish clear guidelines and procedures for e-governance initiatives. Regular audits and evaluations of digital services can help ensure adherence to legal requirements and identify areas for improvement. Engaging with legal experts and policymakers can facilitate the development of robust regulatory frameworks (Department of Information and Communications Technology, 2020).

***Promoting Policy Implementation and Enforcement:*** Addressing gaps between policy formulation and implementation requires strengthening enforcement mechanisms and monitoring processes. Zamboanga City should establish oversight bodies to monitor the execution of e-governance policies and ensure that they are effectively applied. Regular reporting and accountability measures can help address implementation challenges and enhance the overall effectiveness of e-governance initiatives (Chadwick, 2006).

By implementing these recommendations, Zamboanga City can address the current challenges in e-governance and improve the overall effectiveness and inclusivity of its digital services. These measures will contribute to the optimization of public service delivery and the creation of greater public value.

## 8. Conclusion

The study concludes that optimizing e-governance in Zamboanga City requires addressing several critical issues. The analysis reveals significant challenges, including inadequate digital infrastructure, insufficient institutional capacity, and low digital literacy among citizens. Addressing these challenges is essential for improving public service delivery through e-governance. The application of Public Value Theory underscores that e-governance must not only focus on technological advancements but also on creating tangible benefits for the public. The study's recommendations—enhancing digital infrastructure, building institutional capacity, promoting digital literacy, and strengthening policy frameworks—are crucial for overcoming these obstacles and realizing the full potential of e-governance. The findings contribute to both theory and practice in public administration by highlighting the importance of a holistic approach that integrates technology, training, and policy reforms. Future research should explore longitudinal impacts and comparative studies to further refine e-governance strategies and practices.

### 8.1. Summary of Key Findings

The study identifies critical issues affecting e-governance implementation in Zamboanga City. Key findings include significant deficiencies in **digital infrastructure**, with outdated technology and limited resources impeding effective e-governance. **Institutional capacity** is also a concern, with inadequate staff training and weak interagency collaboration affecting system efficiency. **Digital literacy** among citizens is notably low, hindering engagement with e-governance services. Comparative analysis indicates that Zamboanga City lags behind other Philippine cities in terms of technological adoption and public participation. The study emphasizes that overcoming these challenges requires a comprehensive approach, including technological upgrades, enhanced training programs, and increased public education on digital skills. The recommendations aim to address these deficiencies, improve public service delivery, and ensure that e-governance initiatives deliver meaningful benefits. The findings underscore the need for integrated solutions that combine infrastructure improvements, capacity building, and public engagement to optimize e-governance in the city.

This study provides a comprehensive analysis of the preparedness and challenges associated with e-governance implementation in Zamboanga City, Philippines. Key findings from the research include:

1. **Infrastructure Readiness:** Zamboanga City faces significant challenges related to technological infrastructure. Despite recent upgrades, only 45% of government offices have high-speed internet, and there are substantial disparities between urban and rural areas in terms of technology access (Department of Information and Communications Technology, 2019).
2. **Institutional Capacity:** Institutional readiness varies across departments. While some departments have the necessary skills and resources, many face constraints related to training, interagency collaboration, and outdated legacy systems (Heeks, 2006). Effective leadership and strategic planning are critical but often lacking.
3. **Digital Literacy and Citizen Engagement:** There is a notable gap in digital literacy between urban and rural populations, affecting citizen engagement with e-governance services. Efforts to promote digital literacy and inclusion are essential to ensure broad-based participation (Venkatesh, Thong, & Xu, 2012).

4. **Challenges in Implementation:** The implementation of e-governance in Zamboanga City encounters several barriers, including technological limitations, financial constraints, policy and regulatory challenges, and resistance to change. Addressing these challenges requires targeted interventions across multiple dimensions (West, 2005; Cordella & Bonina, 2012).

## 8.2. Contributions to Public Administration Theory and Practice

This study advances public administration theory by applying Public Value Theory to e-governance, emphasizing the importance of creating tangible benefits for citizens through digital transformation. It demonstrates how addressing infrastructural, institutional, and educational gaps can enhance public service delivery and engagement. Practically, the research offers actionable recommendations for improving e-governance in Zamboanga City, including infrastructure upgrades, capacity building, and promoting digital literacy. These insights contribute to refining e-governance strategies, ensuring they align with public needs and enhance overall effectiveness. The study thus bridges theoretical concepts with practical solutions, advancing both academic understanding and practical application in public administration.

**Contributions to Theory:** This research contributes to Public Value Theory by illustrating how e-governance initiatives can create public value in a resource-constrained environment. The study highlights that effective e-governance requires not only technological solutions but also a holistic approach that considers institutional capacity, infrastructure, and citizen engagement. By integrating Public Value Theory with the practical challenges of e-governance, this study provides a nuanced understanding of how public value can be optimized through digital transformation (Moore, 1995).

**Contributions to Practice:** For public administration practitioners, the findings underscore the importance of addressing both technical and socio-cultural barriers to e-governance. The study provides actionable recommendations for enhancing digital infrastructure, building institutional capacity, promoting digital literacy, and strengthening policy frameworks. These recommendations are relevant for practitioners seeking to improve the effectiveness and inclusivity of e-governance initiatives in similar contexts (Bertot, Jaeger, & Grimes, 2010; Salazar, 2017).

## 8.3. Future Research Directions

Future research should focus on longitudinal studies to assess the long-term impacts of e-governance initiatives on public service delivery and citizen engagement. Comparative analyses with other cities and regions could provide insights into best practices and strategies for overcoming common challenges. Additionally, exploring the role of emerging technologies, such as artificial intelligence and blockchain, in enhancing e-governance could offer innovative solutions. Research should also examine the effectiveness of specific policy interventions and training programs over time, providing a deeper understanding of how various factors influence e-governance success and sustainability.

**Longitudinal Studies:** Future research should include longitudinal studies to assess the long-term impacts of e-governance initiatives on public service delivery and public value creation. Tracking the evolution of e-governance systems over time can provide insights into their sustainability and effectiveness (Heeks, 2006).

**Comparative Studies:** Comparative studies across different regions and countries can offer additional perspectives on the factors influencing e-governance success. Such studies can help identify best practices and strategies that can be adapted to diverse contexts (West, 2005).

**Focus on Specific Challenges:** Further research should focus on specific challenges identified in this study, such as digital literacy gaps and interagency collaboration issues. Investigating these challenges in greater depth can inform more targeted interventions and solutions (Venkatesh, Thong, & Xu, 2012).

**Impact of Emerging Technologies:** Exploring the impact of emerging technologies, such as artificial intelligence and blockchain, on e-governance can provide valuable insights into future opportunities and challenges. Understanding how these technologies can be leveraged to enhance public service delivery and address existing barriers is crucial for advancing e-governance (Cordella & Bonina, 2012). By addressing these research directions, scholars and practitioners can further enhance the understanding and implementation of e-governance, contributing to more effective and inclusive public administration practices.

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