

# THE IMPACT OF E-ADMINISTRATION IN PROMOTING LOCAL PUBLIC SERVICE IN ALGERIA: (CASE STUDY BOUIRA PREFECTURE)

تأثير الإدارة الإلكترونية في ترقية الخدمة العمومية المحلية في  
الجزائر:  
(دراسة حالة ولاية البويرة)

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**Submission date:** 08/02/2020

**Date of acceptance:** 18/11/2020

## ABSTRACT:

*This article aims to examine the impact of Algerian Electronic Administration strategy in promoting local public service in Algeria and will concentrate on a case study Bouira's prefecture. The study will also highlight the challenges of implementing the E-Administration in local public service in Algeria and make some recommendations.*

**Keywords:** E-Administration, Local Public Service, Information Technology (ICT), Algeria, Bouira Prefecture.

## ملخص باللغة العربية:

يهدف هذا المقال إلى دراسة تأثير استراتيجية الإدارة الإلكترونية الجزائرية في ترقية الخدمة العمومية المحلية في الجزائر وسيركز على دراسة حالة الخدمة العمومية المحلية على مستوى ولاية البويرة. وستسلط الدراسة الضوء على تحديات تنفيذ الإدارة الإلكترونية على المستوى المحلي وتقديم بعض التوصيات. **كلمات مفتاحية:** الإدارة الإلكترونية، الخدمة العمومية المحلية، الجزائر، ولاية البويرة.

## **Introduction:**

The world today is witnessing excessive and various challenges that have created more pressure for many governments. They have been forced to change their traditional methods of management and adopted modern concepts to achieve their objectives efficiently and effectively.

Like many of the developing countries in the world, Algeria faces many challenges in the quest to achieve its development goals. The Ministry of Interior, Local Collectivities and Territory Planning in Algeria has not deviated from this logic by the implementation of significant changes during the reform process. This change aimed to modernize the services provided for the welfare of the citizen, the community and adapt to the new environment, which was increasingly digitalized day after day.

This research seeks to study the measures taken by the Algerian government in this area, also highlight challenges facing the Algerian government in the accomplishment of this policy.

From the above, we formulated the Research Question as below: "What is the impact of E-administration on Local Public Service in Algeria ?"

About the methodology; this study applied an exploratory and descriptive methodology to figure out the causal connection between the E-administration and promoting the local public service in Algeria. Through using a mixed method qualitative and quantitative; also the study used primary data and secondary data. More, the researcher focused his study on one case study by concentrating in one prefecture from 58 prefectures in Algeria "Bouira Prefecture."

The article plan is distributed in three axes, whereby the first axe provides a theoretical background about the concepts of the study. The second axe discusses the strategy of E-administration in Algeria by concentrating on local public service and Bouira prefecture as case study. The final axe consists on the conclusion and recommendations.

## **THE FIRST TOPIC THEORETICAL BACKGROUND**

Before examining the reality of local public service in Algeria, it is essential to address the pivotal terms of the topic like E-Government – E-Administration and public service. The theoretical study lies in providing the most important definitions related to the study. First, before beginning to define the concept of E- Administration; it is necessary to address a concept that has a direct relationship with it. It's e-government.

### **First Requirement : E-Government definition:**

Several scholars and organizations defined e-government in many ways in this part the researcher chose some of the most current ones, SHARMA and his ally defined E-Government as *"a general term for web-based services from companies of provincial, state and federal governments. In e-government, the government uses information technology and especially the Internet to maintain government services, involve citizens, and provide government assistance. The interaction may be in the form of getting information, filings, or making payments and a host of other activities via the World Wide Web"*<sup>1</sup>

Also the World Bank has defined e-government as referring to *"the use by government agencies of information*

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1 Sushil K. Sharm, *Encyclopedia of E-Commerce, E-Government, and Mobile Commerce*, Information Resources Management Association, USA 2006.P; 37.

*technologies [...] that can change relations with citizens, businesses, and other branches of government"*<sup>1</sup>.

Lastly, the researchers abstract the concept of e-government in two central concepts e-administration and e-democracy; it means e-administration and e-democracy are components of the e-government; in other words, the concept of e-government is broader than the concept e-administration.<sup>2</sup>



<sup>3</sup> The component of e-governance

### **Second Requirement :E- Administration definition:**

From the definition of e-governance above we conclude that e-administration is a device of e-government. So in this section we will look at the concept of electronic administration.

E-administration, or electronic administration, applies to any number of mechanisms which convert what in a traditional office are paper processes into electronic processes, in order to create a paperless office. It is an ICT's <sup>4</sup> mechanism employed to increase productivity and performance of the employees. The implementation of any e-administration solution should be concentrated on the suppliant appearance rather than on

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1 Roberto Panzardi and ally, *New-Economy Sector Study Electronic Government and Governance: Lessons for Argentina* Paper Prepared by Washington, DC–July 2002 on:

<https://go.worldbank.org/6WT3UPVG80>[Accessed 15 02 2019-16h].

2 Netchaeva, Irina, *E-Government and E-Democracy*, Gazette, N° 64, 2002, P; 467-477.

3 Made by the researcher.

4 ICT's Information Communication Technologies

organization; it should eliminate dependency on particular individuals and should introduce transparent systems of managing. E-administration can combine both intra-office and inter-office communication for any institution.<sup>1</sup>

The principal aim for the creation and development of electronic public administration was to improve the effectiveness of institutional operation first and consequently of governance, as a result. In recent years, e-administration, which mostly worked the goal of efficiency, has converted to an economic and socio-political instrument, which facilitated the creation of the service provider state and, at the same time, planned the system of requirements of the development of modern government regulations for EU states.<sup>2</sup>

### **Third Requirement : Public Service definition:**

In this article we will examine the strategy of e-administration applied on local public service in Algeria; especially on the prefecture of Bouira as case study. Since then we need to provide a definition of public service.

The first meaning of “public service” in the function of a *public utility*, i.e., a technical-economic understanding of the concept that associates to the kind of services governments generally provide – mail service, roads, railroads, etc. – where the prime

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1 Michel, H., e-Administration, e-Government, e-Governance, and the Learning City: A typology of Citizenship management using ICTs. 2005. [Online] Available at: [https://www.researchgate.net/publication/228693642\\_e-Administration\\_e-Government\\_e-Governance\\_and\\_the\\_Learning\\_City\\_A\\_typology\\_of\\_Citizenship\\_management\\_using\\_ICTs](https://www.researchgate.net/publication/228693642_e-Administration_e-Government_e-Governance_and_the_Learning_City_A_typology_of_Citizenship_management_using_ICTs) [Accessed 04 01 2019-22h].

2 Mark Robinson, *From Old Public Administration to the New Public Service Implications for Public Sector Reform in Developing Countries*, UNDP, Global Center For Public Service Excellence, SINGAPOR, 2015, P;10.

criteria of progress are signal quality, the efficacy of operations and a distribution network that provides general access.<sup>1</sup>

The second principal meaning of "public service" issues out of the circumstance that "public" may refer to the "public sphere" or "the commons." In this thought, "public service" may be revealed as broadcasting in the service of the public sphere, i.e., a meaning in which content and values figure slightly more explicitly.<sup>2</sup>

The third interpretation of "public service" takes its starting point in the equation of "public" with "audience," which refers to a conception of the public as individual consumers of the media. In this usage, "public service" may be interpreted as broadcasting in the service of the listener/viewer, that is to say, broadcasting whose prime objective is to please the interests and choices of individual users rather than the demands of the collective, the citizenry.<sup>3</sup>

As for Grout and Stevens<sup>4</sup> defined public service as any service provided for high numbers of citizens. In the provision of assistance to the community, there is a probably important market failure (broadly defined to encompass equality and performance) justifying state responsibility in production, finance, or regulation.<sup>5</sup>

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1 Stevens, Paul A. Grout Margaret, *"The Assessment: Financing and Managing Public Services."* Oxford, Review of Economic Policy, 2003, 1-June :P.;215-234.

2 Ibid .

3 Ibid.

4 Ibid .

5 Calabrò, A., *Governance Structures and Mechanisms in Public Service Organizations Theories*, Evidence and Future Direction. Rome, 2011; P71.

## **THE SECOND TOPIC :THE STRATEGY OF E-ADMINISTRATION IN LOCAL PUBLIC SERVICE IN ALGERIA**

Since independence in 1962, Algeria has known many political, economic, and social challenges. However, the Algerian Governments had adopted various reform policies to keep up-to-date on the progress in the modern world.

The Algerian program of electronic government begins in 2008. It is organized around thirteen major axes. For each axis, a portfolio was developed, followed by a definition of a list of specific objectives to be achieved by 2013.<sup>1</sup> It was under the direct responsibility of the Prime Minister. Also, the Ministry of Post and Communication Technology was assigned to supervise all project.

### **First Requirement: The Program of the Ministry of Interior, Local Collectivities and Territory Planning in Terms of E-Administration: case study Bouira prefecture:**

As for the local public service in Algeria, successive governments have been engaged in improving the situation of the local public services; being the main motor for local development and then the national development. The local public services have known several reforms in the 1980's and 1990's on promoting public service by using traditional management principles.

Though, in 2011 the Ministry of Interior, Local Collectivities and Territory Planning adopted a comprehensive reform policy for local public service through the umbrella E-Government.

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1 People's Democratic Republic of Algeria, e-COMMISSION, E-Algeria 2013. December 2008; P6.

However, the subject of this article focuses in particular on the Algerian local public sector and is represented by provinces and municipalities and it under the responsibility of the Ministry of Interior, Local Collectivities, and Territory Planning.

We will talk over the most important measures that have been taken by Algerian government in the direction of promoting local public service like province, sub provinces and municipalities.

▪ **Realization of The National High-Flow Network At The Local Public Service**

The stage of linking administrative bodies to local public service is the first step to achieve the electronic administration program. The National High Flow Network of the Ministry of the Interior is the vertebrae of the transfer of data for all the systems adopted by the Ministry of interior in the framework of modernization of the local public service.

About this procedure Bouira Province linked all its Sub-Prefectures and Municipalities through fiber-optic "high-flow network" to the Ministry of Interior, furthermore the Province still working to link up all the administrative annexes of the Municipalities in this network.

Wherever the total number of administrative annexes at the Bouira's Province is estimated at 86 administrative annexes, only 45 of them have been linked to fiber optics pending the continuation of the process of linking all administrative annexes with fiber optics.<sup>1</sup>

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1 Interview with head of the movement of persons department in Bouira province on 15/02/2019.



## ▪ Digitalization of The Civil Status:

The second step in the application of the e-administration program was the digitalization of all the document of civil status. This stage consists on scanning all civil status documents. It was initiated in 2009 as a first stage. It started gradually by selecting two municipalities in Algiers province as a pilot sample.<sup>1</sup>

The process of digitizing the civil situation began in Bouira province on the 18th of January 2010 and passed many steps<sup>2</sup>:

- **First:** the process of scanning the civil status documents.
- **Second:** the process of registering data for civil status documents.
- **Third:** the creation of the National electronic Registry; it is an application based on a central database located at the Ministry of the Interior. It is updated periodically through the accumulation of databases for all municipalities to the province and then transferred to the central server of the National electronic Registry.

The province authorities have proceeded to consolidate data about the civil status documents (the birth -death- marriage) certificates, as well as consolidating data related to the card numbering of vehicles and driving licenses. That facilitates the activation of procedures to ease administrative procedures and facilitate citizens' access to these documents. During the process of digitizing of the civil status documents, **1.016.636** civil

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<sup>1</sup> Interview with head of the movement of persons department in Bouira province on 15/02/2019.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid

status documents (Birth-Marriage-Death) was scanned at the prefecture of Bouira.<sup>1</sup>

This process included the development of the national civil registry, as well as the national registry of the vehicle numbering card and the driving licenses.

▪ **Modernization and Alleviation of Administrative Procedures:**

The third step in the process of e-administration implementation in local public service was the upgrading and easing of administrative procedures to the public service users'. Within the framework of reducing the administrative procedures; and making the administration closer to the citizen. The first stride taken by the ministry of interior was the decentralization of delivery of all the documents related to identity and travel (national identification card - passport); as well as the vehicle's movement documents (driver's license, vehicle numbering card, control automobile card ...etc.).

The promotions of the public service at the level of the province of Bouira also included measures related to improving the reception of citizens and guaranteeing their concern. Plus a call center was set on the 31 of December 2014 in Bouira's Province as a way to receive the citizen's complaints by using the green number "1100". In the same framework, a body has been set up to deal with citizen complaints.<sup>2</sup>

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1 Ibid

2 Algerian Radio, Ministry of Interior: "Call Center" with a green number (11 00) to facilitate the arrival of the information to the citizen, 31/12/2014 - 15:30 Online <http://www.radioalgerie.dz/news/ar/article/20141231/24751.html> [Accessed 30 03 2019-14h].

Following the various ministerial directives related to improving the local public service and lightening administrative procedures, the following measures have been taken at the Bouira province and its departments and municipalities:

- Implementing the one-stop window in each municipality to permit the citizens to extract civil status documents from one window, beginning from the 10th of September 2014.<sup>1</sup>
- Exemption of citizens from submitting civil status documents available in the National Civil Registry.<sup>2</sup>
- Ending of the certifying copies of documents delivered by public administrations.<sup>3</sup>
- Extending the validity of the birth certificate to ten years instead of one year.
- Expedite the issuance of identity documents and travel.
- Ease the components of the application file for identity and travel documents; many of the documents that were included in the application file have been canceled.
- Contact citizens to inform them to recover their documents.

### **Conclusion:**

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1 B. Bazai, *The standard window entering the service*, Al-Masaa newspaper, 16/09/2014. Online <https://www.el-massa.com/dz> [Accessed 28 03 2019-10h].

2 Zineddine Zadigha, *canceling civil status documents from administrative files*, Al-Mehwar daily newspaper, 19/07/2015-21:36. Online on <http://elmihwar.com/ar/index.php/30524/.html> [Accessed 28 03 2019-11h].

3 Executive Decree No. 14-363 of December 15, 2014 regarding the elimination of regulatory provisions relating to certification of copies of documents delivered by public administrations. The Official Gazette No. 16 Dated March 23, 2014 Page 4.

In conclusion, E-Administration is no longer a future project that must be pursued. It has become an imperative that must be implemented effectively by all the governments. It has left the Algerian Government accelerating for the adoption of E-Administration since 2009. The process of implementation of this policy is not easy; it requires enormous financial resources, besides providing a legal and technical framework in order to achieve the desired goals.

That why it is evident for us that E-Administration is a pivotal strategy that can bring positive result in promoting local public service. Moreover, we can use it as a policy to make the local administration more effective and efficient. When the local public service proposes a good quality of services to the citizen's; that lead to increase in his confidence toward administration even though the electronic administration permits transparency in the process of administrative work and ensures better equality of services in favor of citizens in local public service.

However, from what we have discussed before is that the Algerian experience in applying electronic administration still medium and far from achieving the desired objectives. Even with the efforts made by the Government in this regard; especially with look upon to digitizing civil status documents and generalizing the use of electronic and biometric national identification card and biometric and electronic passport. The Algerian administration has achieved a significant step in this regard. The Algerian citizen has a passport with a world-class secure passport. In addition to that nowadays, any Algerian citizens can ask the identity document directly in the municipality of his residence without going to sub-prefecture to do it or going to the municipality of birth to get it. Also, he or she can track the process of producing the passport or the ID card by opening an account on the official website of the

Ministry of the Interior, and when the document is ready, they will receive a message in their phone or e-mail that it ready.

However, there are many shortcomings still facing the Algerian electronic administration to achieve the desired objectives. Especially concerning the weak electronic readiness of the Algerian administration.

In light of the above, the researcher made a bunch of recommendations in order to promote better implementation of the E-Administration project in Algeria as follows:

**First**, the government should create a robust electronic infrastructure for the success of the electronic local public service. This goal can be accomplished through the provision of effective communication systems for the transfer of data and information flow, from local public service departments to the public, customers or citizens and business enterprises as well as civil society organizations.

**Second**, the government should adopt more rationale policy and make a legal framework, for the reason that in numerous cases of implementing E-administration applications faced juridical constraints or may divergence with existing public policies, so laws and legislation must be updated by legalizing the electronic documents and transactions.

**Third**, the government should establish a confidence spirit between administration and citizens. In this regard, the e-administration project should be supportive of the people without preferential treatment or favored treatment, except in exceptional cases.

*Forth*, the administration should watch over the strengthening transparency of information. Any Lack of a transparency factor associated with the design of ICT systems toward prevents citizens who are expected to deal with e-administration from actively participating in the process. By giving the citizens all the opportunities to follow up on their transactions and introduce them online, step-by-step real-time actions. (Tsihrintzis, 2012)

*Fifth*, the administration should work on a supply framework for the management and continuously update the electronic documents since it are the main nerve and primary source for obtaining real-time data and information for e-administration.

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