

Challenges and Opportunities for M-Government Implementation in Saudi Arabia

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Abstract : Mobile government (m-government) is one of the promising technologies for developing the governance of developing countries. While developing countries often have less advanced internet infrastructure compared to the developed world, mobile phone penetration is very high in the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) countries and mobile internet use offers a means to transcend traditional logistical barriers to accessing government services. The study explores the challenges and opportunities of the mobile government in Saudi Arabia. Semi-structured interviews were conducted with a diverse cohort of Saudi mobile users. A total of 77 semi-structured interviews were collected and subsequently analysed using open, axial, and selective coding. The participants' responses revealed that many opportunities exist for the development of m-government in Saudi Arabia, including high popular awareness of government initiatives in e-government, and willingness to use such services, largely due to the time-saving and convenience aspects it offers compared with traditional bureaucratic services. However, numerous barriers were identified, including the low quality and speed of the internet, service customization, and concerns about privacy data security. It was also felt that in addition to infrastructure challenges, the traditional bureaucratic attitude of government department would itself hinder the effective deployment and utilization of m-government services.

Keywords : awareness, barriers, challenges, government services, mobile government, m-government, opportunities

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