Change Management as a Critical Success Factor In E-Government initiatives

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Abstract : In 2014, a UN survey stated that: "The greatest challenge to the adoption of whole-of government, which fundamentally rests on increased collaboration, is resistance to change among government actors". Change management has experienced both theoretically and practically many transformation over the years. When organizations have to implement radical changes, they have to encounter a plethora of issues which leads to ineffective or inefficient implementation of change in most cases. 70% of change projects fail because of human issues. It has been cited that" most studies still show a 60-70% failure rate for organizational change projects — a statistic that has stayed constant from the 1970's to the present.". E-government involves not just technical change but cultural, policy, social and organizational evolution. Managing change and overcoming resistance to change is seen as crucial in the success of E-government projects. Resistance can be from different levels in the organization (top management, middle management or employees at operational levels). There can be many reasons for resistance including fear of change and insecurity, lack of knowledge and absence of commitment from management to implement the change. The purpose of this study is to conduct in-depth research to understand the process of change and to identify the critical factors that have led to resistance from employees at different levels (top management, Middle management and operational employees) during e-government initiatives in the public sector in Saudi Arabia. The study is based on qualitative and empirical research methods conducted in the public sector in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia. This research will use triangulation in data method (interview, group discussion and document review). This research will contribute significantly to knowledge in this field and will identify the measures that can be taken to reduce resistance to change, Upon analysis recommendations or model will be offered which can enable decision makers in public sector in Saudi Arabia how to plan, implement and evaluate change in e-government initiatives via change management strategy.
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