Electronic governance platform: towards overcoming the challenges of non-inclusion of citizens in public policy formulation and implementation in Nigeria

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Abstract: This paper examined electronic governance platform's ability to mitigate the hitherto non-inclusion of citizens in policy formulation and implementation in Nigeria. To achieve the objective of the study, secondary data collected from books, journals and government websites of 20 states were analysed to ascertain whether there are avenues for citizens to interact with governments in policy formulation as a way of promoting participatory governance. The study revealed that while electronic governance is a possible solution to overcoming the challenges of non-inclusion of citizens in the formulation of public policy; but its adoption is yet to be achieved due to the low level of literacy rate and government inability to provide the necessary infrastructure. It, therefore, recommends the need for the Federal Government

of Nigeria to involve a sound and clear guideline on how to adopt electronic governance in policy formulation through an increase in budgetary allocation towards infrastructural development and mass education of citizens.

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1 Introduction

It is generally accepted that government all over the world exists among others to formulate and implement policies and programs for the enhancement of the living standard of its citizens. However, the mode of accomplishing these goals is largely dependent on the administrative system and the political framework within which it operates (Gberevbie et al., 2015a). According to Jinadu (2000, p.15), "the policy process is inherently and inevitably a political and indeed a politicised process." He noted further that:

> "Politics, so properly understood, is quintessentially about the formulation and execution of public policy to resolve scarcity and choice problems in the structure and organisation of the state. Politics is about power and specifically, the power to control the policy process." (pp.15–16)

This assertion negates the view of Woodrow Wilson regarding the dichotomy between policy and administration, when he argued that "administration lies outside the proper sphere of politics and that administrative questions are not political questions" (cited in Shafritz and Hyde, 1997, p.14).

Today, what is known as Nigeria's public administrative system is a prototype of the British administrative system. This is so because Nigeria was a former colony of Britain. The system operational then was the Weberian public administrative system of managing public affairs which were handed over and accepted by the public administrators after independence on 1st October, 1960 as a model to work with, geared towards enhancing good governance and providing social services in the society among others (Gberevbie et al., 2015a, 2015b; Anjorin, 2015).

In line with the above, recent studies on public administration in Nigeria reveal that; for the government to improve and enhance its administrative capacity to offer quality services and improve on the living standard of the people, there is need for a shift from the Weberian public administrative style (which is characterised by hierarchical patterns of authority, a division of labour and specialisation of task and an impersonal relationship) to a new paradigm of electronic governance premised on change among others (Sapru, 2009; Abasilim and Edet, 2015; Anjorin, 2015; Oni and Gberevbie, 2015).

The adoption of electronic governance in Nigeria is traceable to the Nigerian National Information Technology (NNIT) policy of the year 2000. The essence of the policy was to make Nigeria an Information Technology (IT) friendly country in Africa and a key player in the information society; thereby using IT for education, creation of wealth, poverty alleviation, job creation, governance, health, and agriculture (NITP, 2000; Abasilim and Edet, 2015, p.30). By implication, electronic governance is seen as a reform tool that harnesses the potentialities of ICT to reduce to the barest minimum the bureaucratic bottleneck that attends to government operations thereby transforming the public sector for enhanced performance (Nkwe, 2012; Fatile, 2012; Ojo, 2014; Blake et al., 2015; Rislana et al., 2015).

Recent studies have shown that citizens' participation in governmental affairs is enhanced through electronic governance. This is because it aids the people to understand and appreciate government activities, promote transparency in the governing process, saves time due to provision of services via a single window, better record management, provide ease to electoral activity and also, for the government to obtain feedback from citizens in order to enhance its policy making capability for development (Michel, 2005; Monga, 2008; Nkwe, 2012; Eneanya, 2015; Oni and Oluwole, 2015). On the other hand, "the presence of ineffective citizen participation leads to inequalities across the policy-makers' divide (Mwesigwa and Mubangizi, 2015, p.24)

It has however, been observed that there are structures that must be put in place before electronic governance can realise the possibility for improved service delivery in any country such as the ability to overcome the erratic electricity power supply challenges, inaccessibility to the internet and reduction in the high illiteracy level of citizens (Ayo, 2014; Abasilim and Edet, 2015; Gberevbie et al., 2015a). In this regard, some countries like South Africa, Mauritius, Mozambique, Botswana and Namibia have put in place structures, institutional and regulatory frameworks solely dedicated to the

adoption, use and advancement of electronic governance for improved social services and societal development (United Nations e-Government Survey, 2008; Nkwe, 2012).

In Nigeria, the structures, institutional and regulatory frameworks for effective implementation of electronic governance are also desirable but for the constraint of adequate budget provision. The inadequate budgetary allocation to the ICT sector by the Nigerian Federal Government was so pronounced under the past administration of President Goodluck Jonathan (2011–2015), to the extent that experts in the ICT sector and members of the press cried out thus: "2012 Budget: Nigeria's ICT Sector and Ministry of Science and Technology Get 'Paltry' Budget Allocations". This was based on the fact that the Communications Technology sector's national budget in 2012 saw a decrease of 12.08 Billion Naira from 30.39 Billion Naira and the Ministry of Science and Technology also saw a decrease of 17.89 Billion Naira from 48.73 Billion Naira in the 2011 national budget (Okezie, 2011).

Furthermore, the only two government Information Technology (IT) parastatals allocated funds in the 2011 budget – National Information Development Agency (NITDA) and the Nigeria Communication Satellite Limited (NIGCOMSAT) saw their budgets up by 50% in the 2011 budget. In the same year, NITDA's budget allocation dropped by almost 31 million from the initial 363.8 million received in 2010 down to 333.70 million Naira in the 2011 national budget (Okezie, 2011).

In the four years (2012–2015) preceding the coming in of the present administration of President Muhamadu Buhari on 29th May, 2015, the budget provision for the Communication and Technology sector of which ICT is a subset, recorded negative growth as can be seen in Table 1.

Table 1   Budget allocation to the ministry of communication and technology (₦B)

Year	Budgetary allocation ₦	% Change (Year on Year)
2012	19,609,022,621.00	
2013	15,742,880,079.00	–20%
2014	14,691,964,599.00	–7%
2015	11,592,048,380.00	–21%
2016	15,997,128,516.00	38%
2017	18,750,951,876.00	17%

Source: Federal Government of Nigeria (2012, 2013, 2014, 2015, 2016, 2017) Appropriation Bill and Act. Abuja, Nigeria

The details in Table 1 indicate that the budgetary allocation to the Ministry of Communication and Technology was dwindling until the year 2016 when a reversal was indicated. If this trend continues, there might be hope that the ICT subsector would receive the needed attention for electronic governance to effectively take root in Nigeria. If otherwise, the concept of open government, which Al-Jamal and Abu-Shanab (2016) refer to as "opening government's data to the public and leaving a room for participation, transparency and collaboration", might continue to be elusive in Nigeria.

One of the major criticisms against the Weberian model of public administration, which has continued to be in operation by public administrative systems of most developing countries including Nigeria is the requirement that issues affecting the public, no matter how urgent they seem, should be formally documented and procedurally

attended to by hierarchical officials without due consideration to time and needs of the people. This situation which requires most of the time, the physical presence of citizens before the issues could be attended to have created moments of apprehension and hence contributed to delay in the implementations of government policies (Fajonyomi, 1999; Ojo, 2014). This has been aptly captured in the words of Monga (2008, p.53):

> "Public administration, governed by bureaucratic structures built on rationale principles, that dominated the twentieth century, has failed to respond to the changing requirements of the present times. It is so because it tended to be rigid, laid too much emphasis on red-tapism, sap creativity, thwarted initiative, wore out dynamism and denied justice as of resultant delays. In addition, the focus was more on following procedures."

The above argument points out the challenges faced by the ideal type of bureaucracy, delays and lack of initiative for performance on the part of public officials, which is due to bureaucratic bottlenecks to the detriment of development in societies. In this regard, scholars have argued that the failure to realise that the same factor that enhances the efficiency of bureaucracy in one respect often threatens it in another. This is because it may have both functional and dysfunctional consequences (Blau, 1962; Sapru, 2009). Hence, there is need for a shift from the traditional way of organising government (Weberian bureaucratic system of public administration) to a new paradigm of e-governance that encourages speedy dissemination of information and policy making and feedback on issues affecting the citizens.

Ojo (2014, p.77) posits that "the discovery of Information Communication Technology has made the activities of government more accessible to the governed, while the traditional barrier of distance becomes surmountable through the modern approach of communication". It is, however, on this premise that this paper seeks to investigate whether the adoption of electronic governance in the context of Nigeria would mitigate the hitherto non-inclusion of citizens in the formulation and implementation of government policies aimed at enhanced provision of social services for development and provide answers to the following research questions:

- What is the relevance of e-governance in mitigating the non-inclusion of citizens in policy making for development?

- Has the adoption and implementation of e-governance for improved social services taken place in Nigeria?

- Are there likely barriers to the successful adoption and implementation of e-governance for development in Nigeria?

In addition, the paper is segmented into six sections. Section 1 is the introduction, Section 2 contains the literature review, Section 3 looks at the methodology, Section 4 deals with the presentation and analysis of the state of web presence of e-governance adoption by state governments in Nigeria, findings and discussion are contained in Section 5, while Section 6 is the conclusion.

2 Literature review

2.1 Concept of e-Governance

The concept of electronic governance originates from governance, which refers to "the exercise of political, economic and administrative authority in the management of a country's affairs, including citizen articulation of their interests and exercise of their legal rights and obligations" (Hassan, 2013, p.5). The implication of this definition is that governance could only be regarded as good when the rights of the citizens are considered in terms of giving proper consideration to their inputs into the policy formulation process of government (Gberevbie et al., 2015a; Nchuchuwe and Akhakpe, 2015). This implies that all stakeholders (including the citizens) in the policy process should operate within the ambit of the law and manage efficiently and effectively the resources of the state at their disposal as a means of promoting societal development.

On the other hand, e-governance in simple term means governance through electronic means. Ojo (2014, p.79) defines e-governance as "the application of information communication technology (ICT) by the government to enhance accountability, create awareness and ensures transparency in the management of the governmental business". While Ayo (2014, p.76) sees e-governance as "the governing of a country/state, using ICT. It, therefore, means that the application of ICT to transform the efficiency, effectiveness, transparency and accountability of exchange of information and transaction". In the same vein, Abasilim and Edet (2015, p.32) see "e-governance simply as the use of ICTs in the operations of government businesses, thereby causing a shift from the traditional method of carrying out government activities which is usually hierarchical, linear, and one-way in nature to the use of Internet which enables the public seek information at their own convenience and not really having to visit the office in person or when government office is open".

The foregoing implies that e-governance has to do with the application of ICT for assisting the government in the efficient and effective exercise of political, economic, social and administrative management of public affairs through the involvement of citizens in the policy making process. The caveat here is that e-governance "is not only the computerisation of a government system, but a belief in the ability of technology to achieve high levels of improvement in various areas of government, thus transforming the nature of politics and the relations between governments and citizens" (Dada, 2006, p.1).

E-governance can also be understood by differentiating it from e-government. Most often various scholars use the concepts of e-government and e-governance interchangeably (Kabir and Baniamin, 2011). According to Ayo (2014, pp.76–77), e-governance is "the application of ICT to transform the efficiency, effectiveness, transparency and accountability of exchange of information and transaction; with the objective of providing an SMARRT Government. The acronym SMARRT refers to Simple, Moral, Accountable, Responsive, Responsible and Transparent government". On the other hand, Grant and Chau (2006) see e-government as broad-based initiatives that leverage on the capabilities of ICT to deliver high quality, seamless and integrated public services, enable effective constituent relationship management, and support the economic and social development goals of citizens, business, and civil society at local, state, national and international levels.

In addition, e-governance refers to the application of electronic means in the day-to-day activities between government and citizens, government and businesses, as well as internal government operations to simplify and improve democratic government and business aspects of governance (Backus, 2003). The electronic government simply has to do with the transformation, delivering services effectively and seamlessly developing new forms of communication between government and the governed, and enhancing the quality of lives through economic development and enhancing civil society (Worrall, 2011). These distinctions show that e-governance is broader, while e-government is a subset of e-governance (UNESCO, 2007). It is noteworthy that whether scholars have used the concept interchangeably or not, the deployment of the initiative is growing around the world both in implementation and in research (Al-Hujran, 2012).

However, studies have shown that the adoption of e-governance in a country helps to engage citizens in the public policy making process that facilitates smooth implementation for improved service delivery (Fatile, 2012; Nkwe, 2012; Ayo, 2014). Also, research shows that the adoption of e-governance reduces government spending and increases interest earning because of its ability to reduce the number of people in contact with governmental agencies, easy access to public services, reduction of negative attitude individuals has toward public agencies and easy access to public information at any given time (Fatile, 2012).

Emphasising the importance of the adoption and implementation of e-governance for improved living condition in developing nations, Chowdhury and Satter (2013, p.43) assert that, "In developing countries, service at doorsteps through ICT is vital not only to establish a democratic and transparent government, but also to fight against poverty, promote economic growth and serve as a great engine for driving good governance". It has been argued that "the exponential growth of Internet-related technologies and the emergence of the so-called knowledge society introduced new forms of exchanges and collaboration between citizenry and governments worldwide" (Sithole and van der Waldt, 2016, p.137). In the same vein, Monga (2008) and Nkwe (2012) identified the benefits derivable from the adoption of e-governance in a country to include:

- quality service delivery

- increase in organisation's transparency and ability to manage information faster

- better office and record management

- simplified office procedures

- facilitate better policy making

- saving of time and cost in the management of public affairs

- promote the use of ICT in other sectors of the society

- promote accountability in government

It should be noted that as much as a lot of benefits are derivable from the implementation of e-governance, it has not been without some challenges. According to Muller and Skau (2015), e-government services have evolved and become more complex and so 'the challenges of implementing them have become more extensive as well'. This is, however, to be expected as it is with every new technology. The challenges could be easily

overcome with the appropriate infrastructure in place coupled with meaningful implementation.

2.2 Concept of public policy

The concept of public policy has divergent views; which connotes that there is no single generally accepted meaning. However, it is central to the well-being of an organisation, community or a nation as a whole for the realisation of desired goals. A policy refers to a statement of what an organisation wants to do, what it is doing, what it is not doing and what would not be done for the realisation of a specified goal of either a community or nation for improved profitability or the enhancement of the living standard of the people (Ikelegbe, 2006). Policy can also be seen as "a statement of the goals and objectives of the organisation in relation to a particular subject and the description of the strategies by which the goals and objectives are to be archived" (Eminue, 2009, p.72). A policy, therefore, acts as a road map to achieving specified goals of an organisation or nation which has both the means and end embedded in it.

On the other hand, Eyestone (1971, p.18), described policy as "the relationship of a government unit to its environment". Although, this definition could be considered relevant to the proper understanding of public policy, but it is rather too broad. In this regard, Anderson (1975, p.3) sees public policy as "a purposive course of action followed by an actor or set of actors in dealing with a problem or matter of concern". Heidenheimer et al. (1990, p.3) sees public policy as "how, why and to what effect governments pursue particular courses of action and inaction". But Dye (2004, p.1), in his own contribution, conceptualises public policy as "what governments do, why they do it, and what differences it make". This implies that a policy of government focuses attention more on what is actually done as against what is intended (Egonmwan, 1991). The main goal of public policies is "to resolve societal problems particularly those considered to require public or collective action" (Ikelegbe, 2006, p.4). Also, it aimed "to make the response of the agency or body in charge predictable and fair to all affected citizens" (Edwards, 2004, p.331).

In the main, public policies have been categorised into several typologies. According to Lowi (1972, pp.298–310), these are "distributive, redistributive and regulatory, and that each type of policy is associated with a particular political process". *Distributive policies* are concerned with the allocation of new resources, benefits, favour or patronage to individuals, segments of the population, institutions, associations or organisations (Eminue, 2009, p.32). The main aim of this type of policy is to ensure that every form of discrimination, bias and prejudice is avoided. Some examples of distributive policies are free education, rural electrification program and water scheme. This description underlies Easton (1953, p.129) definition of politics "as the authoritative allocation of values for the whole society" and Lasswell's definition of "who gets what, when and how" (Lasswell, 1936, p.264).

Redistributive policies have to do with "changing the distribution of existing resources and with the rearrangement of policies which are related to bringing about basic social and economic changes in the economy and society" (Sapru, 2011, p.33). They include those actions that can be considered discriminatory in nature. That is, it is to the advantage or disadvantage of some categories of people. For instance, the progressive tax system is a typical example of a redistributive policy. This is so because it is all about Pay as You Earn (PAYE), thereby taking a large percentage of money from the rich and a

smaller percentage from those whose pay is not as high as the rich. *Regulatory Policies* pertains to "laws or policy outputs that regulate distribution, behaviours, practices, activities and actions" (Ikelegbe, 2006, p.7). That is, it has to do with the alteration of human behaviour or actions of groups or organisations in order to achieve expected end.

Other types of policies are the extractive: theses type of policies take or extract services from individuals such as compulsory military or National Youth Service Corp in the case of Nigeria, jury duties, as well as conscription into armed forces during war, the payment of taxes, rates and development levy and loyalty or patriotism (Agagu, 2010; Eminue, 2009). Symbolic policies "are directly or explicitly designed to foster, inculcate or celebrate values, beliefs, sentiment or attitudes of national consciousness and loyalty" (Suberu, 1999, p.55). Special mention of this kind of policies can be seen in what is now known as "Armed Forces Remembrance Day and "Children Day" celebrations in Nigeria.

However, Agagu (2010) argues that in the case of Nigeria, "whether in terms of policy formulation, implementation or service delivery, the level of participation is very low as government employs top-down approach, plans for the people and not with the people". He further points that the policies that emanate from the government are not usually based on consensus. In the same vein, Ajakaiye and Akinbinu (2000, p.218), argue that "the record of political participation and political freedom in Nigeria has been dismal".

It is observed from the foregoing that participation of the people in policy making in Nigeria is lacking and this is key to the responsiveness of the citizens to the policies formulated and the institutions that implement such policies. Buttressing this notion, Gberevbie et al. (2015a) emphasise that, "where such policies of the government are formulated without the inputs of the people to whom the policy is meant to care for, there is bound to be a problem at implementation. Hence, there is need to involve the people at both the formation and implementation stage".

In the same vein, Egonmwan (1991) argues that policies fail to achieve their intended goals in developing countries because governments do not engage the public at policy formation, thereby facing opposition from the people at the implementation stage; no matter how laudable they seem to be. According to Jimoh (2007), for public policies to achieve its intended goals, there is need to involve the stakeholders – people to whom the policies are set to affect. In fact, some scholars have argued that involving the people in the formulation of public policies particularly on issues affecting them is the hallmark of good governance in a society (Oladoyin, 2006; Babawale, 2006; Ekpe, 2008). According to Fourie (2016:32) "giving effect to or implementing government policies implies the authoritative allocation of values and resources through a political system to individuals in society, and a purposive course of action followed by an actor or set of actors in dealing with a problem or matter of concern". This implies that there is a relationship between involvement of citizens in the formulation of government policies and successful implementation of such policies for development.

2.3   Challenges of public policy making and e-Governance implementation in Nigeria

Nigerians have witnessed different policies over the years geared towards development. These policies include privatisation, commercialisation and e-governance. The policies are aimed at bringing about effective public service delivery. However, despite the numerous policies put in place by successive governments; the citizens are yet to benefit

from them both in terms of their inputs into the formulation and desired outcome at implementation. In buttressing this point, Effiong (2013, p.29) posits that:

> "Despite the lofty and painstaking policies usually formulated in Nigeria, little or no tangible outcomes have been achieved as they always tend to fall by the wayside. This is because the critical elements in both the internal and external environments and the implementation process account for the gap between goals and achievements. Nigeria has never lacked in planning, but the problem has always been achieving results."

Also, Echikwonye and Beetseh (2011) argue that the challenges faced in the country in the area of public policies are due to the fact that most policies of government in Nigeria are made by the leadership that most often take hasty decisions without the inputs of the people and hence do not reflect the policy demand of the citizens. They argued further that:

> "The political leadership that we have is inexperienced in the art of policy making. Their inexperience leads to half-baked policy statements. Another problem area is the frequent policy changes arising from the change of government or regime type." (Echikwonye and Beetseh, 2011, p.53)

In the same vein, Eminue (2009, p.307) postulates that the 'Top-Down' rather than 'Bottom-Up' approach is one of the reasons why policy fails in developing countries and Nigeria inclusive. From the foregoing views, it can be deduced that the inputs of leaders, citizens and policy consistency are some of the major factors that come to play in the inability of a nation to successfully formulate and implement sound public policies for development. In this regard, examining the challenges facing e-governance adoption in Nigeria becomes so crucial for national development. Although, despite the introduction of e-governance in governmental activities and the benefits that it has to offer in terms of transparency, efficiency and effectiveness of resource utilisation based on citizens' inputs; the challenges have been enormous (Tanushree et al., 2010; Sharma et al., 2011; Fatile, 2012; Oye, 2013; Ojo, 2014).

Studies have identified some obstacles to the unsuccessful adoption and implementation of e-governance in Nigeria to include: lack of infrastructure such as regular electricity power supply and limited access to the Internet, in addition to low rate of literacy level in the country (Fatile, 2012; Ayo, 2014; Ojo, 2014; Akhakpe and Ajumjum, 2015; Nchuchuwe and Akhakpe, 2015). Of the obstacles listed above, low literacy level and the problem of electricity supply seem to be the foremost challenges hindering the successful adoption and implementation of e-governance in Nigeria. Buttressing this position, UNDP Human Development Report puts Nigeria's illiteracy rate for an adult (both sexes) at 61.3% (UNDP, 2011). No doubt, such a high illiteracy rate creates a digital lock-out.

In the case of electricity power supply, its generation has been inconsistent over the years. For instance, the electricity generation capacity in 1998 that was 4548.5 MW rose to 6130 MW in 2004, and declined in 2005 to 2687.1 MW. This, nonetheless, increased to 8644 MW in 2013, but by 2014 power generation and distribution capacity declined to 3000 MW, which insufficiently caters for the electricity need of over 160 million people in Nigeria due to poor maintenance culture (CBN, 2005; CBN Online, 2006; Ayanruoh, 2013; Abiodun, 2014).

The reason for this has been policy failure, lack of technical know-how, sabotage, theft of electrical appliances and lack of political will to achieve the targets government

sets for itself in this sector (Nchuchuwe and Akhakpe, 2015). Comparatively, it has been observed that "South Africa with a population of 52 million has an installed electricity generation capacity of over 52,000 MW. On a per capita consumption basis, Nigeria is ranked a distant 178th with 106.21 kWh per head, and a capacity electricity generation of 8644 MW, but only produces 3718 MW – well behind Gabon (900.00); Ghana (283.65); Cameroun (176.01; and Kenya (124.68)" (Ayanruoh, 2013, p.1).

The above statistics stated to go to show that the adoption and successful implementation of e-governance in Nigeria would require the establishment of the needed infrastructure in electricity power supply, ICT and increase in literacy level in the society to achieve the desired goals. This implies that there is a strong relationship between the availability of adequate infrastructure, high rate of literacy level and successful adoption and implementation of e-governance in a society (Abasilim and Edet, 2015; Akhakpe and Ajumjum, 2015; Gberevbie et al., 2015a; Nchuchuwe and Akhakpe, 2015).

In addition, Akhakpe and Ajumjum (2015) noted that the nature of Nigeria's demography in terms of land mass is a major obstacle to the application of e-governance and Information Technology strategies in the public sector. They argue that "most towns and villages, particularly in the northern part of the country, are far from each other, thereby making connectivity between them difficult. This is typical of towns and villages in the northern fringes and riverine communities in the northern and southern parts of the country respectively". The implication of this is that it will require a lot from the government to ensure that some of these areas are connected with other parts of the country. As a result, e-governance adoption for societal development will require time, money and advanced technology to provide for its benefits to be realised in Nigeria (Akhakpe and Ajumjum, 2015, p.140).

3   Research method

This paper adopts the descriptive approach to address the following research questions:

- What is the relevance of e-governance adoption as a possible means of mitigating the non-inclusion of citizens in the policy process in Nigeria?

- Has the adoption and implementation of e-governance for improved social services taken place in Nigeria?

- Are there likely barriers to the successful adoption and implementation of e-governance for development in Nigeria?

To answer theses research questions, data were sourced mainly by examining the websites of 20 state governments in Nigeria to ascertain if there is an avenue for citizens to interact with government in the policy making process and feedback on government actions as a strategy for promoting participatory governance in Nigeria. To make the sample representative, 20 state governments' websites were chosen out of the 36 states of the Nigerian federation. From the six geo-political zones of the country; at least 2 states were chosen per zone, though some zones like the Southeast and North Central have more states because of the level of competition in the use of ICT.

4 Analysis of the state of web presence of e-Governance adoption by state governments in Nigeria

In a bid to implement e-governance, various state governments in Nigeria have established official websites to among other things interact with citizens, showcase their activities and identify with the new trend of managing public affairs for development, otherwise known as e-governance. Below is a table showing the web presence of the sampled 20 state governments in the Nigerian federation in their bid to implement e-governance. The states considered in this study are: Southeast: Abia, Anambra, Ebonyi, Enugu, Imo; South West: Lagos, Oyo; South- South: Akwa Ibom, Delta, Edo; North West: Kaduna, Kano, Kebbi, Jigawa; North East: Gombe, Bauchi; North Central: Benue, Kogi, Kwara, Niger.

Table 2 shows the web presence, the level of government interaction with citizens, adoption and implementation of e-governance by state governments in Nigeria. Below is a legend showing what A-I represent.

Table 2 Websites of 20 state governments for e-governance adoption and implementation in Nigeria

S. No.	State government	Official website	Level of interaction
1	Abia State (South East)	http://www.abiastate.gov.ng/	a, b, c, e, j
2	Akwa Ibom State (South South)	http://www.akwaibomstate.gov.ng/	a, b, c, f, g,
3	Anambra State (South East)	http://www.anambrastate.gov.ng/	a, b, c, d, e, f, g, h, i, j
4	Bauchi State (North East)	http://www.bauchistate.gov.ng/	a, b, e, f, g, h
5	Benue State (North Central)	http://www.nigeria.gov.ng/	a, b, c, e
6	Delta State (South South)	http://www.deltastate.gov.ng/	a, b, c, e, f
7	Ebonyi State (South East)	http://www.ebonyionline.com/ebonyi-state-government/	a, b, e
8	Edo State (South South)	http://www.edostate.gov.ng/	a, b, c, e f
9	Enugu State (South East)	http://www.enugustate.gov.ng/	a, b, c, e
10	Gombe State (North East)	http://www.gombestate.gov.ng/	a, b, c, d, e, g, j
11	Imo State (South East)	http://www.imostateblog.com/category/government-house-updates/	a, b, c, e
12	Jigawa State (North East)	http://www.jigawastate.gov.ng/	a, b, c, e
13	Kaduna State (North West)	http://www.kadunastate.gov.ng/	a, b, c, e, g, h
14	Kano State (North East)	http://www.kano.gov.ng/kanogov/	a, b, c, e, g, h

Table 2   Websites of 20 state governments for e-governance adoption and implementation
               in Nigeria (continued)

S. No.	State government	Official website	Level of interaction
15	Kebbi State (North West)	http://www.kebbistate.gov.ng	a, b, c, e
16.	Kogi State (North Central)	http://www.kogistate.gov.ng/	a, b, c, e, h
17	Kwara State (North Central)	http://www.kwarastate.gov.ng/	a, b, c, e, g, k
18	Lagos State (South West)	http://www.lagosstate.gov.ng/	a, b, c, d, e, g, j
19	Niger State (North Central)	http://www.nigerstate.gov.ng/	a, b, c, e, g
20	Oyo State (South West)	http://www.oyostate.gov.ng/	a, b, c, e, g

       Source: Official Websites of 20 States in Nigerian federation;
                    Gberevbie et al. (2015a)

Legend

- structure of the state government

- overview of the entire state

- photograph of the state governor

- provision of official email to contact government officials

- space showcasing monthly events in the state

- regular newsletters about government activities

- space for announcing the completion of new infrastructure completed by the state government

- provision for tax collection by the government and payment by citizens

- provision of social network links to contact government officials

- information on business opportunities in the state

- emergency dials.

5   Findings and discussion

It has been established in this study that e-governance enhances citizens' involvement in policy making and facilitates proper implementation of such policies for development (Fatile, 2012; Ojo, 2014; Akhakpe and Ajumjum, 2015). In this study, 20 sampled states were used, out of the 36 state government's websites in the Nigerian federation visited only one state (Anambra) or 5% of the sample size has a semblance of a move towards e-governance adoption and implementation in Nigeria. This is so because on the website of Anambra State government, the following were noticed: structure of government and

overview of the state, emergency phone numbers for citizens to interact with government officials, provision of official e-mail address to contact government officials, provision of social network links to contact government officials, space showcasing monthly events in the state, regular newsletters about government activities, space for announcing completion of new infrastructure by the state government, provision for tax collection by the government and the modality for tax payment by citizens.

However, going through the other 19 state governments' websites or 95% of the sample size revealed what is commonly displayed on the websites to include: structure of government and overview of the state and provision of the e-mail address to contact government officials, in addition to the display of the photograph of State Governors. There is little or no room for citizens to interact with government either on what they are expected to know and do or available avenues for citizens to contribute towards the formulation of government policies. The implication of the foregoing is that state governments in Nigeria still rely heavily on the traditional public administrative system practised in most developing nations that give little or no room for citizens' involvement in the policy-making. As a result, provision of social services is more likely to be affected negatively to the detriment of the citizens. This is so because it has been established in this study that there is a relationship between quality of government websites, citizens' involvement in policy making, support for such policies at implementation and development. This implies that policies of the government are more likely to receive support from the people at implementation when they are involved in their formulation through their access to government quality websites. This implies that, where government fails to put in place required measures to enable citizens to gain access into the policy making process due to lack of infrastructure, low rate of literacy and government inability to create the needed avenue by way of quality web presence for citizens to interact with government officials on issues affecting them; the attempt to adopt and implement e-governance is likely not to succeed. This study is in line with the findings of Banerjee and Katare (2016) that improved government websites equal meaningful interaction of citizens with government.

6 Conclusion

This paper has examined the relevance of electronic governance in mitigating the non-inclusion of citizens in policy making for development, interrogated the extent to which the adoption and implementation of e-governance for improved social services have taken place in Nigeria and also identified some of the barriers to the successful implementation of e-governance for development in Nigeria. Based on the findings from the examination of the 20 state governments' websites, the results showed that the adoption and implementation of e-governance in the country and resolution of doubts about government actions, as a way of promoting participatory governance in Nigeria are yet to fully take place. This is due to lack of infrastructure in the area of electricity and ICT development, low level of literacy rate and government inability to make provision for the process of e-governance to materialise in the area of quality web presence.

Based on the foregoing, the paper recommends that if Nigerians are to enjoy the benefits of e-governance as currently being experienced in the developed nations and some African countries, there is need for the Federal Government of Nigeria to involve a sound and clear guideline on how to go about the adoption and implementation of

e-governance both at the federal, state and local government levels. This is possible through the deliberate effort at increasing budgetary allocation towards infrastructural development in electricity and ICT and mass education of citizens about the benefits associated with the adoption and implementation of e-governance for societal development.

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