Strategic framework for e-democracy development and sustainability

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Abstract

Purpose – Information and communication technology has been identified as a viable tool to proffer solution to the societal problem of disconnect between democratic actors. The issue of sustainability and citizens' acceptance of online public participation, however, remains a major issue of concern requiring adequate attention. This study therefore aims to develop a strategic framework for e-democracy implementation and sustainability.

Design/methodology/approach – Systematic qualitative review using Grounded Theory Method was adopted to develop the e-democracy strategic framework.

Findings – The strategic framework is generic and has the potential to serve as a spring board for e-democracy implementation. It abstracts existing strategies and best practice that can be adopted to add value to e-democracy implementation. Using this framework, developing nations can take advantage of their present level of technological development to give voice to the voiceless and improve their democratic system.

Practical implications – E-democracy implementation should be backed up with policy framework which explicitly states the vision, objectives, policies guiding e-democracy implementation and the oversight bodies responsible for monitoring and evaluation. The implementation plan should clearly identify the implementation approach, levels of engagement, roles of various stakeholders and tools and technology to be involved. Government willingness to harness citizens input and commit resource to e-participation is of paramount importance.

Originality/value – The framework developed is useful for the e-democracy research community and government in executing successful e-democracy implementation and evaluating its impact on democratic outcomes.

Keywords E-democracy, E-participation, Delphi technique, Grounded theory, Strategic framework, Best practice

Paper type Research paper