

# e-Administration, e-Government, e-Governance and the Learning City: A typology of Citizenship management using ICTs.

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**Abstract:** Citizenship implies a certain model of relationship between citizens and their government. This type of relationship can be conceived in several ways. Citizenship can be presented in the form of an object to be governed in various ways. Using a two year research-action study in the town of Vandoeuve (France), we elaborated a typology of citizenship management using Information and Computer Technologies composed of four modes: E-administration, E-government, E-governance and "The Learning City". In the "e-administration" mode, the citizen is considered as a « consumer of rights » claiming personalized and efficient public services. It corresponds to a government « for the people » with a strategy of citizen satisfaction improvement. The second mode, that we call "e-government" reflects a vision of a relatively passive citizen-agent, who responds to his duties. Based on the need of quantifying and comparing solutions, this government of the people relies on regular consultations in order to improve the policy's acceptance. In this perspective, electronic voting is the most appropriate tool, because it facilitates the communication of citizens' opinions to government, while conserving a consultative characteristic. In the "e-governance" mode, the citizen is considered an active agent of local democracy. The citizen is now considered as a source of ideas and initiatives that provides a mutual enrichment. The e-governance model can launch a reflection on the local government's knowledge management capacity. This could then result in a fourth type of the citizen relationship management, which would not be a government of the people, for the people or by the people, but according to the people. We called this mode "the Learning City". The logic underlying this approach would be: "learn how to learn", defining a range of possible actions, choosing the decision corresponding to the criteria considered to be essential to the success. The citizens would at the same time be actors and determinants of the rules. The role of the local officials and the corresponding ICT tools remain to be imagined.

**Keywords:** e-Administration, e-Government, e-Governance, learning organization, Citizen Relationship Management, local government, ICT.

## 1. Introduction

Currently, we can note three tendencies:

- Increased involvement of the public in the decision-making process: Public decision makers try to involve citizens in decision-making process without excessive costs and loss of efficiency, but do not know how to do it (Farmer, 1995; Saul, 1992; Aydelotte and al, 2000; Callon, Barthe, Lascoumes, 2000; Reich 1998; Thomas, 1995).
- Development of Citizen Relationship Management: Public organizations seek to improve the services rendered to the citizen, by reducing the cost and time, and are looking for tools (Kotler, 1993; Berman, 1997; Cohen and Henry, 1997).
- Emergence of e-management: The emergence of e-management shows that the integration of ICTs in organizations makes it possible to generate new practices and services and to reduce the cost and the time of the services rendered (Kalika and al., 2002).

Public managers could then seek in ICT possibilities to generate new practices of

citizenship or to make the existing practices more effective, in order to increase the involvement of citizens in the decision-making process and to improve the services rendered by public organization. Telecommunication offers new perspectives for electronic citizenship through polls and e-voting. These tools seem particularly suitable for "citizen-consumers" who have gradually become accustomed to the quality of service offered by ICTs and more demanding and more critical of public organizations (Berman, 1997). Thus, we could then regard the citizens as "customers" of public services. The work then consists of studying a relationship to the citizen, and considering the impact of e-management on this relationship. The question is: How can a local government integrate the potential benefits of the ICTs in its interactions with the citizens? The aim is to give public organizations a model for positioning their strategies and choosing adequate tools. Citizenship defines the political design of organization (Chevallier, 1999). Citizenship implies a certain model of relationship between citizens and their government. This type of relationship can be conceived in several ways. Citizenship would then be presented in the form of an object to be governed in various ways. We will

limit the field of research to citizen-relationship management. We will analyze the literature, highlighting the contributions and limits. We will then propose a method and elaborate a new model.

## **2. The field of research: Interactions between citizens and local government**

### **2.1 Definition of citizenship in management**

Given that the notion of citizenship is ever-changing and constantly being debated, the definition that Leca gave in 1986 presents us with a kind of universal structure in the sense that it considers citizenship as a whole, composed of rights and duties, of a role and moral values. We will use this structure as the ground definition of our work. However, the notion of moral values will be first kept aside, as it would be difficult to integrate it into a public management approach at this stage of the study. The basis for our work will then be : Citizenship is composed of rights, duties and participation. Any definition of citizenship seems to make use of those three components even if one takes preference over the others. Each conception gives us a different vision of the citizen's role. The citizen can be considered as a consumer, a passive agent or an actor in local democracy. Thus, when the "Rights" component is given more weight in a definition, the citizen is considered as a consumer, whether it may be of rights or of public services. Whereas in a definition where the "Duties" component is given more importance, the citizen is considered as relatively passive, being subject to a number of restraints. Finally, in a definition where the word "Participation" is given ascendancy over the other words, it is taken for granted that the citizen is an actor who is totally engaged in local political life.

### **2.2 Citizen relationship management**

The 1958 French Constitution states that the very principle of the Republic consists of a "government of the people, by the people and for the people". Out of this founding principle, two ideas appear: first of all, that the citizens are manageable, which allows us to consider citizenship as "something to be governed". Secondly, there are different visions or modes for the management of citizenship. Thus when referring to a government "for the people", we refer to the first vision of citizenship, i.e. the citizen is a consumer of rights and public services. In this case, the underlying logic for the "government for the people" would be to improve services. "Government of the people" would refer to a

citizen as a passive agent. The representatives would then have to improve the chances of success for a policy by making the citizens' adherence easier. Finally, the "government by the people" emphasises the participation facet and considers the citizen as part and parcel of the processes of politics. The goal is then to encourage debate and their participation.

### **2.3 The local territory as a relevant scale**

Some authors have taken interest in a national vision, even a supra-national one, of citizenship (Chadwick and May, 2003; Laudon, 1977). As Assens and Phanuel (2001) or Vedel (2001) did, we want to underline the advantages of taking the local level as the reference. There are two main reasons for this: First of all, initiatives begin locally, where all pilot schemes are conducted and evaluated before being taken to larger scales. Secondly, the local level is the key level for the legitimation of any public action. One of the current political goals, when some perceive a crisis in the democratic system, is to rebuild the legitimacy of representatives' roles by means of equivalences: presence in the community=implication=participation=efficiency=legitimacy (Lefevre, 2001). The local level approach reinforces the representatives' legitimacy. The local level is thus represented as "the most relevant scale for recovering citizens' trust" (Lefevre, Nonjon, 2003). The local scale makes many strategies possible: "The easiest way to reach government of the people by the people is the city" (Voilin, 1929, cited by Paillart, 2003). Depending on the chosen strategy, the mayor's role will be different. In a "government for the people" perspective, the mayor would have to regulate and meet the requirements of the "new economy", provide quicker and more effective services to the citizens-consumers. When the chosen strategy is "the government of the people", the local representatives have to make citizens -considered as passive in this case- more confident. Finally, in a "government by the people" perspective, the mayor has to protect freedom of speech and regulate the structures in order to ensure good conditions for debate and participation of the citizens, who are then actors in the system.

### **2.4 The new tools**

We distinguish three types of tools. Each one corresponds to a local citizenship's management's mode. The first kind of tool aims to favour transparency, facilitate procedures and personalize services. For example: e-procedure, personalized account, on-line payment, file checking, etc. These tools are appreciated by the customer-citizen, who seeks outstanding services.

The second type of tool aims to consult with the “passive” agent-citizen, in order to improve the acceptance rate of a policy. E-voting is thus the most representative tool. The last kind of tool aims to favour the participation of the active citizen. It allows citizens to generate new ideas, to debate them and to develop constructive propositions.

We analyzed the models suggested by Laudon (1977), Assens and Phanuel (2001), Vedel (2003) and Chadwick and May (2003). We thus notice that there is no study fulfilling all the following criteria:

- a study modelling the interactions between government and citizen,
- a study completely taking into account the impact of the ICTs,
- a current study,
- a study that can be used in public management,
- a study which is applicable to the French context,
- a study applicable to the local level.

We thus propose to elaborate a new model fulfilling these criteria.

## 2.5 The empirical approach

The city of Vandoeuvre is composed of 32,000 inhabitants. Participation in the local democracy is encouraged. Vandoeuvre also follows a daring policy of development of the ICTs in the life of its citizens, but also in its relations with the citizens. For several years, the city has been seen as innovative in its use of the ICTs within the community, testing e-voting and consultation systems. We ran a two-year study in the town of Vandoeuvre-les-Nancy (France). The city launched two projects at the same time:

- The Daily Life Card: In 2003, the government wished to develop a card to simplify the life of citizens. The project of the "Democrats" card of the town of Vandoeuvre is based on the utilisation of the safe smart card, and offers two types of applications: Electronic consultation with citizens and a range of e-Administration services.
- The citizen website: With the help of associations, Vandoeuvre has developed a citizen website, offering new possibilities for participation. On the site, citizens can find: information (an online newspaper, reports updated by the local actors and in particular the inhabitants, etc.), description of local actions, a toolbox to create and support projects, etc.

To extract information from this two-year study,

we used an action-research approach. According to David (2000), the research-intervention aims to help the actors to define their strategies and to install adequate tools.

## 3. Results: A model of three types of citizen relationship management

We have defined three modes of local citizenship management using ICTs: e-Administration, e-Government and e-governance. Each of the three modes we describe presents distinctive characteristics. All three may intersect and overlap.

### 3.1 e-Administration

The city works with sector representatives. Each representative is in charge of collecting information and claims from the sector's inhabitants. This is generally done through a specific document to be filled in. This document is transmitted to the town hall where the administration processes it. In Vandoeuvre, the representatives will be given a card which enables them to identify themselves and to complete the online document. They can follow the evolution of each claim throughout the process. Employees will have all information at their disposal and can focus on the analysis phase and on the response to the claim. The elected officials will use this information as current indicators of local life, and use it to elaborate more appropriate decisions. In this model, that we call “e-Administration”, the citizen is considered as a « consumer of rights » claiming personalized and efficient public services. It corresponds to a government « for the people » with a strategy of citizen satisfaction improvement. For Tapscott (cited by Chadwick and May), ICTs allow a renewal of public organizations: Administrative renewal with faster and more efficient bureaucracies, digital access to government information, fostered information initiatives (to establish databanks of social information), tax filing, payment processing, etc. Tools offered by ICTs are mainly e-procedures and databanks. With the development of Customer Relationship Management in the private sector, we can foresee the necessity of developing Citizen Relationship Management in the public sector.

### 3.2 e-Government

The town would like to consult a panel of citizens regularly on different subjects dealing with local community life. This would increase the awareness of inhabitants' needs and wishes and would enable local officials to develop appropriate policies. Members of the panel would be given a

card with which they can be consulted anonymously via the Internet. If the experiment works, the project could be extended to the whole population of the town. The town foresees a system of general and regular consultation (such as the Swiss voting system). This management mode, that we call "e-Government" reflects a vision of a relatively passive citizen-agent, who responds to his duties. Based on the need of quantifying and comparing solutions, this government of the people relies on regular consultations in order to improve the policy's acceptance. In this perspective, electronic voting is the most appropriate tool, because it facilitates the communication of citizens' opinions to government, while conserving a consultative characteristic. In the same way as Chadwick and May, we consider this approach as a « pull » system where government seeks predefined information. This limits citizens' capacity to propose solutions and initiatives in a « technical democracy » (Barthe, Callon, Lascoumes, 2001).

### **3.3 e-Governance**

The town works in collaboration with the association « Place Publique » which has developed a website dedicated to citizens. This website is a place of discussion and debate for all the city's inhabitants. It is independent from the official city website. The editorial committee is composed of local representatives, associations and citizens. This website could be used to help citizens' propositions and initiatives to emerge. If a subject or a project generates a lot of interest in the community, it can be submitted for public consultation. The town could enter a dynamic movement where e-governance would feed into e-Government, where policies would be evaluated thanks to the key indicators developed by the e-Administration. In this mode that we call "e-governance", the citizen is considered an active agent of local democracy. « Participation (...) integrates a more active dimension. The citizens take part in a decision-making process. The aim is to enable inhabitants to express their opinions, then to collect these opinions (...) and to integrate them into the final decision » (Pailliant, 2003). The distinction between government and governance is important: « Governance stresses the way in which decisions are made, while government stresses the way in which these decisions are carried out » (Marche, Mc Niven, 2003). The « pull » system changes to a « push » system where information emerges from the ground. In the model of e-governance, interactions between citizens and government are necessary. "The participatory model contains a recognition that knowledge is discursive, contingent and changeable – that it emerges through interaction" (Chadwick and May, 2003). The citizen is no

longer perceived as a "layman" (unfamiliar) of public policy by the local elected. The citizen is now considered as a source of ideas and initiatives that provides a mutual enrichment. The e-governance model can launch a reflection on the local government's knowledge management capacity. To conclude this step, it seems that a town which enables the interactions of these three modes of local citizenship management is a town which takes into consideration the citizen in his diversity and complexity. The citizen can at the same time be a customer of public services, a « passive » agent obeying a policy he was consulted on, and an active actor taking part in the decision-making process.

### **4. The fourth type: The Learning City**

We consider that these modes of management are not isolated from each other. They can co-exist and interact together. However, in fact, there could be different steps in the city's strategies. It seems that a town starts by developing elements of E-Administration, then implements the E-governance and finally only considers the e-governance. The question is: what is the following stage that no city has reached, or even considered, for the moment? This new form of city, which does not exist yet, remains to be imagined. If we use the concept of learning organization to analyse this, we notice that e-governance seems to function on the principle of a single loop learning process. The next stage, the fourth mode of management could be based on a double loop learning process.

### **5. e-Governance or a single loop learning process**

In the e-governance model, citizens can make proposals and contribute to the decision-making process according to the rules defined by the local government. But, Argyris and Schön (1978) specify, when the rules don't allow the adaptation to the environment, the system breaks down because it tried to preserve a model of behavior which is no longer appropriate. For Morgan, the more complex cybernetic systems, such as the human brain or the computer, have the capacity to learn how to learn. They are often able to detect and correct errors in the standards of operation and thus influence the rules which guide their own operation. The ICTs would offer the city the opportunity to have a double loop learning process.

### 6. The integration of the « moral values » component of citizenship in the double loop learning process

The double loop learning process relies on the capacity of the organization to remain open to the changes which occur in the environment and on the capacity to redefine the standards of its projects. Here we have a radically new process of planning: whereas the traditional vision consisted of the production of a project with clear targets, cybernetics shows that it might be wiser, from the

systemic point of view, to concentrate on the definition of the constraints. Knowing the values of the group and their limits allows us to define a range of possible actions. An action chosen accordingly will not be necessarily the best, but it will fulfill the criteria considered to be essential to its success. The double loop learning process then consists of being able to consider the situation and to question the rules or standards of operation (Figure 1).

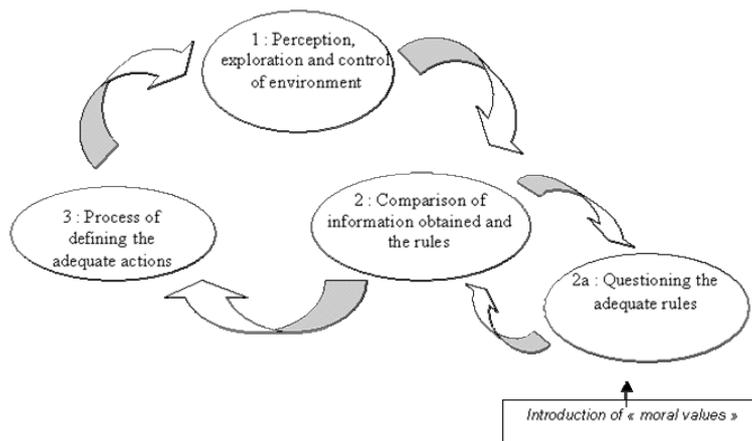


Figure 1: Double loop learning process (from Schön and Argyris, 1978)

Our model is based on the components of citizenship (right-duty-participation). The double loop learning process allows us to integrate the "moral values "component of citizenship: This could then result in a fourth type of the citizen relationship management (Table 1), which would not be a government of the people, for the people or by the people, but according to the people. Logic underlying this approach would be: "learn

how to learn", defining a range of possible actions, choosing the decision corresponding to the criteria considered to be essential to the success. The citizens would at the same time be actors and determinants of the rules. The role of the local officials and the corresponding ICT tools remain to be imagined.

Table 1: Four types Citizen Relationship Management using ICTs

	E-Administration	E-government	E-governance	The Learning City
French Republican principle	Government for the people	Government of the people	Government by the people	Government according to the people
Citizenship's component	Rights	Duties	Participation	Moral values
Role given to the citizen	Consumer	"Passive" agent	Actor "Active" agent	Defining the rules to follow
Underlying logic	Delivering services, improving satisfaction of citizens, presenting local government policy	Improving the chance of a policy's succes	Encouraging deliberation, participation and development of local democracy	Learn how to learn. Deciding according to mutally determined criteria
Role of local elected	Regulating, improving administration performance	Understand the opinion of the citizens using consultation. Improving acceptance of a policy by citizens.	Protecting free expression, regulating infrastructures	To be created

Corresponding ICTs tools	Online administrative services, E-Procedures ...	Electronic consultation, using e-voting methods and tools	Collaborative tools. Online Construction of collective propositions	To be created
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## 7. Conclusion

To conclude, this study offers a four types model of citizen relationship management: e-Administration, e-Government, e-governance and "The Learning City". Each mode is linked to strategies and tools, except "The Learning City" which remains to be imagined. It is however much more difficult to control the double loop learning process. Argyris (1995) specifies that this failure is found especially in the bureaucratic organizations since their essential principles of organization

make the learning process impossible. Our study has limits linked to the methodological and epistemological choices. The first limit concerns the difficulty of analysing the emergence of a collective creation, which offers a poor and uncomplete vision. The second limit is the lack of external validity of the model. In a constructivist approach, this model is a representation of reality, influenced by our own perception. To gain external validity, the model should be tested on other towns.

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