



E-Participation: Bridging the Gap for Better Governance

Jana Katarina D. Guzman *, Racquel Anne C. Zaplan, Delson Charles I. Austria,
Justin Ryan O. Siy
Center for ICT for Development (CITe4D), College of Computer Studies, De La Salle University – Manila
*jkdg530@gmail.com
zaplan.racquel@gmail.com , siy.justin@yahoo.com; delsoncharles@gmail.com

Abstract: The Philippine government is constantly considering innovative means to provide enhanced services to their constituents with the increasing demand for better governance. This entails all stakeholders to engage in active participation. Developments in Information and Communications Technology (ICT) enabled utilization of various tools by the government to easily connect with the Filipino community. However these tools are not sufficient enough to attain the goal of increasing citizen participation for better governance and improving the relationship between the Philippine administration and its constituents. Various initiatives done on the use of ICT for better governance over the years paved the way for e-Participation. The objective of the study is to explore the concept of e-Participation suitable to the legislative process of local government units in the Philippines. The researchers used San Juan City as the domain of the study to gather information on the legislation process, public participation efforts, problems being experienced and future plans for increasing citizen participation. The proponents were able to identify problem areas on information dissemination, information aggregation, transparency and accountability, and scope. With the use of the E-Participation concept, Ann Macintosh's E-Participation Model, the Local Government Unit (San Juan City)'s Legislative Process, the following results were achieved: the "Your Say, Juan!" E-Participation System was initiated; Ann Macintosh's E-Participation Model was used as the guiding theoretical framework in the designing of the system, and its levels (e-Enabling, e-Engaging, e-Empowering) were translated into the three modules of the system: Information Repository, Policy Management and Virtual Community. These modules each included various e-Participatory tools to enhance participation from the stakeholders. Democracy is traditionally a top-down initiative by the government but with e-Participation, the citizens are given the power to start their own initiatives with its bottom-up approach.

Key Words: participation; information and communications technology; legislation; governance; local government units