Philosophy for Open Government

Miguel Angel Sanchez-Ramos

University Center UAEM Amecameca, Autonomous Mexico State University, Toluca, México

Email: masr35@hotmail.com

Abstract

Open government is a term that has been built socially for a long time; however it is from the promotion that the Obama administration from the United States realizes that it has achieved a high penetration in the political and public agenda of the various countries. The main concern of open government is to articulate efforts of government capacities and modernization of public administration, following the principles of transparency with high openness, participation and collaboration. The aim of this article is to analyze from philosophy the principles that should guide the model of governance and public administration to meet the ultimate goal of the state cosmos.

Keywords

Open Government, Governance, Philosophy of Government

1. Introduction

Public administration as the manifestation of government is a complex reality itself in its exercise requires a philosophy to support it, encourage and give direction. Gubernatorial task deserves the epistemological, axiological and ontological principles. This situation makes sense, meaning and reason to the practical work of the government.

In this logic and against the policy of open government, is necessary reflection from philosophy on the purpose, principles and aims of this strategy. In any strategy the government and its administration cannot nor should forget the ultimate goal, which is the temporary public good, peaceful coexistence, quality of life.

It is true, the dominant public administration emerged as a result of the French Revolution, is the liberal perspective which serves as guide and support, where freedom is a core value. Also the principle of political representation is presented at such point of view. Similarly, in the circumstances, the idea of man,

the citizen, is the reference axis for government and constitutional action.

The aim of this article is to analyze from philosophy the principles that should guide the model of governance and public administration to meet the ultimate goal of the state cosmos. The exhibition is presented in three sections, the first aimed at contextualizing the current problem; the second section has the function to specify the characteristics of previous forms of open government management; in the latter part of expose the principles of open government in the sense of a strategy to facilitate governance and contribute to the good of all.

2. Current Issue

The rule of law and democratic which currently operates within the underlying idea of politic representation, very typical of liberal democracy representation has become more complex in its expression and reality. The complexity becomes greater when considering the different areas where the administration has dabbled as government action, and the various interests citizens against government decisions.

Democracy is a process that gives rise to representation and political authority through elections; but the daily exercise of democracy requires accountable governments. This responsibility implies that governments are accountable to the exercise of their duties and to meet the expectations of citizens.

From the approach of Dahl (1997) there are three conditions for talk of a democratic government: 1) freedom to set preferences; 2) the freedom to publicly mention those preferences; and 3) be treated equally by the government. These three set the basis for a democratic relationship that implies the existence of a government that has maturity, capacity, quality, and dealing with its main real warmth.

Governments and society have traveled in time through relationships that have improved living conditions and remaining in the quest for better development stages. However, not all governments and not all of these areas, achieve quality interaction and cordiality.

A mechanism in the current complexity contextualized by a globalized world has come to bring the government to the citizen is the use of Information Technology and Communication (ICT). At the same time, the use of these ICT has led to a more demanding relationship, largely due to the immediate flow of information and the spread soon it.

The use of ICT is driven by different reasons, including the manifestation of limiting corruption, promote transparency, encourage participation, build partnerships, recognize the right of citizens to have governments of quality, the right of citizens know your government does and on the basis of what decision-making.

Some paradigms or approaches that encourage the use of ICT by governments lie in e-government, e-governance and open government, mainly. They seek to shorten the distance between government and citizen. These models recognize the citizen the right to know and evaluate the functions of government, recog-

nize that the citizen is the real master and sovereign state thing.

In the concert of nations there are agreements to boost these mechanisms of democratization and normalization of relations between government and citizens.

A considerable number of countries have made efforts in introducing ICT in their practices and relationships. Mechanisms have facilitated approaches, simplification of procedures, various interactions including different levels that can manifest ICT in government or administration: information, two-way communication, performing certain procedures, the possibility of even pay services, participate and collaborate in decision-making.

Current governments with democratic normality and are developed working their administrations with emphasis on the citizen, being put under the scrutiny of society through its results, its function is staffed by qualified and professional staff, they are characterized by their interest in transparency, use modern management approaches and promote the use of ICT to promote eGovernment, and even get excited to find an open government.

At the same time these same governments concerned citizens care treatment offered him to leave the latter satisfied in the service or production of goods. They are characterized by dignified, warm hospitality.

Open government is the clear expression of a form of governance where deliberation with citizens is the premise that allows the formulation of policies. Thus the open government involves collaboration, participation and transparency.

In this regard the establishment of procedures for measuring these developments and demonstrations to realize the conversation governments with citizens is important. In this line there are several developments in Mexico (Sandoval-Almazan, 2013; Sandoval-Almazan & Gil-Garcia, 2012; Sandoval-Almazan, 2011; Cejudo, Lopez, & Cazares, 2011; Pla & Bojorquez Pereznieto, 2015). The goodness of this research lies in the construction of these methodologies and even in their implementation; the limitation of these studies is that municipal governments have been poorly treated and analyzed in this respect are few studies that deal with the matter (Sandoval-Almazan & Gil-Garcia, 2012; Sanchez-Ramos & Martinez-Martinez, 2016).

Governance involves interaction between the various actors, where citizens have a fundamental role in the conversation and dialogue for building alternatives to the various problems faced at the local level, hence the proposed open government is a strategy which can facilitate and economize these actions.

Open government has its own principles that must be differentiated from other expressions and strategies. The following section discusses management and governance alternatives that predate open government.

3. Background of Open Government

It is relevant in this paragraph establish a conceptual precision between terms that are familiar but have vicissitudes that establish a difference. There is link

between e-government, e-governance, open data and open government but in turn each of these has particular elements that make it different. All these models use ICT with different intensity and purpose, a situation that can help defining the purpose of each.

E-government refers to the application of ICT in the public sector for the provision of services; therefore it can be said that e-government is the application of technology to improve communication skills and thus achieve more efficient government.

E-government does not mean a change in values and is based on:

1) No reconsiders the goals, objectives and principles underlying public administration and make things work.

2) Efficiency (as in the new public management) remains the predominant value.

3) A provision of faster, easier and cheaper public services sought.

4) Does not transform societies. Provision based on the use of ICT services is improved.

5) E-government is the modernization that promotes positive impacts on government institutions and citizens.

The use of technology is a guide to governance, e-governance by government services are made available to citizens in a convincing, efficient and transparent manner.

Cruz Rubio (2015) e-governance and e-governance is the application of information technology and communication (ICT) for public services, exchange of information transactions and communications, integration of various systems and independent services.

There are certain elements that make various e-government and e-governance:

a) E-governance operates in four areas: government support—citizen, government employees, government to government and government itself to businesses.

b) In the e-government or e-government dominates the application of ICT to improve public services while e-governance the focus is based on the use of ICT and its interaction with different social and economic actors.

c) E-government is a protocol for one-way communication and e-governance and e-governance is a two-way communication protocol.

The use of open data is crucial for governance as to combat corruption, citizen empowerment and transparency in government openness should be given to the data.

Open Data are data availability and access; they can be freely used, reused and distributed by anyone; It is a path or key to achieving open government, in which citizens are entitled to know what their government is doing piece. With the opening of the data citizens are enabled to be more directly informed and involved in decision-making, trying to make a society full of "read/write" not only to know what is happening in the governance process but being able to

contribute to it, which is why the opening data is considered a way to open government; the application of open data for both power and enables collaborative and informative transparency. Open data has its own principles: publish in open formats, freely accessible to allow reuse; use terms that are widely and publicly known to avoid technicalities; have open data sources that are linked; use friendly platforms; include quality information; allow its evaluation; and teach society about its use.

Information transparency is the basis of open government, with no information available to citizens is not possible deliberation and own participation (Christmas, 2011, Lindstedt & Naurin, 2010; Meijer, Curtin, & Hillebrandt, 2012). Information on government activities and decisions must be open, compressive, and available to the public, this should keep the citizens about their duties, administration and management, since otherwise any inequality or discretionary censorship available information reduces the formal right of participation. The government to disclose information to the optic allows citizens a more transparent and thus more democratic strengthening governance and improving the quality of democracy.

Quality government is one that effectively combines control mechanism including discretion both the institutional framework and practice routine bureaucracy.

The application ICT in the public sector aims to increase efficiency, transparency and citizen participation through an innovative approach to betting on the development of good governance.

Dutton (2009) argues that, in the eighteenth century, identified the media as a fourth estate. Radio, television and other media have been involved in the press in the fourth power in many liberal democratic societies. Today in the XXI century, a new public sphere is emerging with some similar to the fourth power characteristics, but with enough distinctive and important features that justify its recognition as a fifth power. This new power is being built on the growing use of the Internet and ICT, enabling people to networked access alternative information and other resources sources, different from traditional (media masses, libraries, catalogs of information, among others). Internet use can change the way of doing things, for example, how to get information, how to communicate with people, how to acquire services, among others, and its use can alter the results of these activities. Web 2.0, social web, is an enhancer for the citizen to be considered this as a reference axis in building public alternatives that are synergistic in improving living conditions.

This access to information makes it possible, says Dutton (2009), people networked use this virtual space to go beyond the limits of institutions, opening up new ways to increase the accountability of politicians, press, experts and other centers of power and influence. The network allows for public dialogue that produce deliberation on policy.

The succession of different technological tools applied to politics has made it

clear that the main interest is not in the tools themselves, but in the information and communication flows that they allow, with a view to increasing information transparency of government, accountability accounts, citizen participation to regain the trust of citizens (Campos & Corojan, 2012).

Thus governments are realizing that they, and individual members of the government, can use digital technologies to support greater engagement with citizens and their com-munities.

4. Peculiarities of Open Government

The words "electronic government", "e-government", "virtual government" were used in the 60 s of the last century by referring to the introduction of ICTs in politics and governance. Based on the early studies on e-government two main currents can be distinguished:

1) Jaeger (2003), Halchin (2004), Liikanen (2003), Parent, Vandebeek & Gemino (2005), and Doty & Erdelez (2002) refer to e-government as technical and instrumental improvement of administrative processes. That is, identify the e-government with the use of technology and the Internet to improve access to government information, the right of people to know, transparency and responsiveness, as well as to increase the quality of services.

2) On the other hand, authors like Coursey & Norris (2008), Löfstedt (2005), West (2004), Chen & Thurmaier (2008) refer to e-government as a deeper transformation from the presence in the initial web to supply information interactivity, fundamentally transforming the relationship between governments and citizens, government culture and way of governing. It is in this sense that the following authors will refer to open government.

The term open government first appeared officially in the British political arena in the late 70 s of last century. Chapman & Hunt (1987), referring to the secrecy of government and initiatives to open up the public sector to the public scrutiny in order to reduce bureaucratic opacity and the right of citizens to be informed about public issues. Open government involves debate on access and freedom of information, protection of personal data, reform and necessary official secrecy (Ramirez-Alujas, 2011).

On 21 January 2009 President Barack Obama on his first day in office he issued a memo on Transparency and Open Government (Obama, 2009) was when the term open government again resumed. In the memorandum the President calls on its ad-ministration to develop recommendations and instructing departments and agencies on specific actions and implement the system of transparency, public participation and collaboration: The purpose is the joint work between government and citizens to ensure public trust and establish a system of transparency, public participation and collaboration. Open data and government takes a turn to democracy, and promotes efficient and effective management (Mc Dermott, 2010).

In 2011 it was launched the Open Government Partnership (OGP) in order to

promote an international platform where governments of different countries commit themselves accountable, more open and improve their responsiveness to its citizens. Since then OGP has grown from 8 countries (United States, Brazil, Mexico, Norway, United Kingdom, Indonesia, Philippines and South Africa) to 64 countries, where, government and civil society work together to develop and implement ambitious re-forms around open government.

Open government allows the application of technology, the necessary tools for greater efficiency and effectiveness of procedures and services that public institutions make available to citizens and achieve new communication channels, which is why you can say that open government is the continuation of e-government.

Open government does not consider the citizen as a customer, subject contemplates a fundamental actor for the proper functioning of the entire system. Why open government is an expression of democracy and have to turn around several principles that strengthen your character.

Open government is a new form of government that allows implement the use of ICT to achieve better governance, a stronger democracy and more powerful citizens; is transforming the traditional system.

To empower citizens need to have knowledge of the facts that their government is doing. To be well informed, the public should have some access to the ongoing process, allowing decision-making not only what is done, but also why it is done and what alternatives were considered and rejected.

Article 15 of the Declaration of the Rights of Man and the Citizen (Declaración de los Derechos del Hombre y el Ciudadano, de agosto de 1789, 1953) is manifest that society has the right to hold accountable administration to any public official. Foundation of transparency, responsibility and accountability" (Guerrero, 2015).

Thus the contribution of open government takes as axes three pillars: information transparency, citizen participation and collaboration.

1) Some authors consider transparency as a principle of open government, as in the case of Montargil (2011), which proposes the advantages that this entails on e-government.

Governments should provide information to citizens about their administration and governance. That information must be complete and accessible to the entire political group must disclose the information management tasks and resources so that citizens can seek and easily manage it. It is intended that the government is as transparent for citizens and control of institutions increase and bring citizens closer to these, resulting in a better quality of democracy. Free access to information contributes to the evaluation of the actions, to the complaint, to inhibit corruption and make obvious errors and abuse policy. It is also an opportunity for recognition.

Open government allows interaction between citizens and government, transparency plays an important role as this exposes the government informa-

tion so that citizens have access to it. Some authors mention that transparency should be a constant and become a habit in government practices.

2) Citizen participation is the interaction between citizen-government and vice versa, this being the second step for open government, this interaction seeks to improve communication between citizens and their government towards governance, supporting the use of technology and innovation.

3) The collaboration means that citizens, civil society and government driven together in a participatory manner. Governments need to focus on citizen involvement and support to increase their ability to participate where citizens evaluate and make decisions and influence the work that his government using the tools of new technologies, methods and systems to achieve good government. Under these conditions, open government becomes a reality.

5. Conclusions

The philosophy of open government, inspired by the principles of transparency, participation and collaboration, supports governmental action with direction and certainty; the task of government and administration requires basic axioms that support and guide the various interventions with the purpose of making sense of it and not losing sight of the ultimate goal: public welfare. Open government encourages a new form of government that is based on dialogue and discussion of alternatives, thus promising to make consensual decisions.

Open government should become an opportunity to establish a dialogic strategy, an alternative for governance, be the space that promotes dialogue between the various actors; promotes transparency as a management mechanism honestly; encourages the participation of both citizens and government in the discussion of public problems; and is the arena of joint collaboration, where converge the government's political sphere, market and various actors of civil society to policy development that address current obstacles and expressions are the new consensus for improved living conditions.

In the open government the task is of rulers who have a high profile professional performance and experience of citizens who have the conviction of participation and collaboration of employees who are willing to channel an inclusive management and more democratic for the benefit of the public.

Being clear on philosophical principles helps realize a government with public transcendence.

Conflicts of Interest

The authors declare no conflicts of interest regarding the publication of this paper.

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