



# **CHAPTER I**

## **INTRODUCTION**

### **1.1 BACKGROUND**

Since the beginning of the world, humans have been striving to live a better life for themselves and their families, creating a sustainable living environment that not only helps them survive hardships but also improves their quality of life over time (Zandbergen, D., & Uitermark, J., 2020). Humans have tried various strategies and approaches to achieve this goal, but they have always been self-centric or selfish, focusing on their own needs and desires. This has led to a trust deficit among humans, who were hesitant to interact with others due to fear of harm and resource loss (Velassery et al.; R., 2013).

Over time, humans have learned that being dependent on themselves is not valid in every situation and that they need to work collectively and receive support from others (Pnuma., 1991). They have understood that in some conditions, they need to rely on the skills and resources of others to survive, whether it be about sharing knowledge, skill set, or resources. This realization opened the door for the development of a society where people started to live as a community and share resources with each other (Santamaria et al.; T., 2015).

Living as a community has given people numerous benefits, such as protection from external threats, division of labor, and social interaction (Philippon, D.J., 2012). Living together in society has allowed people to join forces and protect themselves from external threats, specialize in their work strength, and form social connections outside their families. This has allowed people to learn from each other's

experiences and wisdom, leading to more benefits that would have been impossible for people to act alone (Williams et al.; W., 2012).

However, as societies grew more prominent in numbers, it became more complex and challenging to maintain social order and resolve conflicts among people. In such a situation, people worked together to find possible solutions to the problems they were facing (Xing-ming, Z., 2005). They felt that a social contract was needed to ensure public safety, maintain law and order, and provide services to the society. Without a social contract, people on their own would lead the society towards chaos, anarchy, and instability, which could harm the existence of the society (Ghaedi et al.; M., 2014).

Social Contract refers to the system, processes, and structure through which a society will be organized, managed, and controlled. The evolution of the concept of the social contract has been a complex subject throughout history, with people practicing different methods and learning from their mistakes (Burnyeat et al.; M., 2022). Early notions of the social contract served as a theoretical framework designed to explain the shift from a primitive state of nature to a structured and organized community. Philosophers like Thomas Hobbes postulated that individuals in a state of nature were primarily motivated by their self-interest, leading to unpleasantness, brutality, and brevity (Reeve, A.F., 2003).

Lockean liberalism played a significant role in defining contemporary understanding of the social compact, positing that individuals in a hypothetical state of nature inherently possess fundamental rights about their lives, personal freedom, and property ownership (Lessnoff, M.H., 1990). Locke's theory introduced the concept that governments obtain their authority from the agreement of the governed,

emphasizing the importance of citizen involvement in constructing the social compact (Grant, R.W., 1987).

Jean-Jacques Rousseau's concept of the social compact posited that individuals should be subjugated to communal volition for genuine freedom, which established the foundations of democracy and citizenship (Cardullo et al.; R., 2019). Modern democracies and social contracts emerged during the Enlightenment, with theories such as individual rights, the rule of law, and representative government. The social contract has evolved over time, emphasizing individual rights and active participation in governance through the election of representatives (Froese, K., 2001). Contemporary challenges have arisen in the 20th and 21st centuries, with topics such as civil rights, gender equality, environmental sustainability, and technology influencing discourse on the essence of the social compact. Globalization has also prompted inquiries into the limitations of national social agreements within an interdependent global context (Denton et al.; B., 2017).

The way society governs citizens has evolved through phases, starting with Prehistoric Governance, which was informal and based on consensus and guidance from society elders (Shelton et al., T.J., 2018). Ancient Governance, which became more formalized and centralized, led to the rise of nation-based countries and the development of a democratic form of governance. Contemporary Governance, which introduced globalization and international organizations, led to the formation of international organizations to help countries fight challenges and help each other (D'Agostino, F., 2020). E-Governance began with the rise of technology, revolutionizing different sectors of a country, including governance. In the E-Governance era, every service and process of the government is automated to

provide ease and facility to citizens. The use of technology in governance has significantly shaped countries to achieve their goals faster (Wiesner, R., 2008).

Throughout history, the way people live in a country under a government has been influenced by factors like Economics, Social, Culture, Environment, and Technology (Hanson, W.S., 2022). Today, the most crucial factor in the present is Technology, and countries need to evolve for the future by adapting and molding their governance practices according to technological advancements (Singh, A., 2011).

## **1.2 FORMULATION OF THE PROBLEM**

Technology has significantly influenced the way countries are run by governments and provide facilities to citizens. The involvement of technology in governance began in the second half of the 19th century, and it accelerated with the invention of the Internet in 1990 (Naikoo et al.; A.A., 2018). The internet connected people worldwide and allowed them to share or access information that benefitted them. This led to the introduction of E-Government in 1992-93, which aimed to digitize the country and bring transparency in governance by decreasing manual interventions (Cohen-Almagor, R., 2011).

The Clinton Administration introduced the first e-government policy framework in the 90s, which accelerated its development in the 20th century (Bélanger et al., L.D., 2012). Many other countries followed suit, moving towards E-government and shifting from traditional government methods. The United Nations (UN) introduced the E-Government Development Index (EGDI) to track the e-government impact on countries, and every year, the UN collects data against the dimensions of EGDI to monitor progress and work on improvements (Fehér, K., 2018).

However, many countries, especially third-world countries, still face challenges in implementing E-government initiatives due to their belief that governance and technology are separate things (Halstuk et al., B.F., 2001). This ignorance and stubbornness can lead to issues in their countries, as people suffer due to their incompetence and corruption. Another reason for not adapting to E-governance practices is dishonesty, as they are aware of the benefits of e-governance but fear that their incompetence and corruption may be exposed, leading to delays in e-government implementation (Azoeva et al., G.A., 2022).

The problem with countries not doing well with E-government is that even those doing well are still unclear about the future of E-government and how to adapt their digitalized countries according to future requirements (Lucke, J.V., 2016). Researchers have coined the idea of a Smart government, which is the future of fully digitized countries to become a Smart country. However, no standard process or guideline for E-government implementation exists, making it difficult for countries to understand and follow (Domínguez et al., I.G., 2011). To ensure the survival of low-performer e-governments and high-performers, a clear future path should be present. Countries that are mistakenly or deliberately not digitizing should be aware of what they will lose in the future, while those that are doing great as digital nations should be proactively prepared for what's coming in the future and how they will adapt accordingly (Younus et al.; W., 2023).

In conclusion, the future of technology-driven governance will be crucial for both low-performer and high-performer countries (Haldenwang, C.V., 2004). By understanding the challenges and opportunities presented by E-government, countries can better navigate the challenges and improve their governance practices.

### **1.3 RESEARCH PURPOSES AND BENEFITS**

The research on "Conceptualizing a Sustainable Smart Country: Understanding the Role of Different Sectors in Building Its Structure" is critical, especially for developing countries facing multiple challenges. First and foremost, the investigation seeks to provide a comprehensive conceptual framework for incorporating smart technologies into these countries' development strategies. The research aims to lay the groundwork for a comprehensive approach that addresses the unique needs and constraints of developing countries by elucidating the intricate dynamics between sectors such as technology, governance, infrastructure, and the economy.

Furthermore, the study aims to identify and examine the specific roles that each sector plays in building a sustainable smart country. This includes looking into how technological advancements can be used to improve governance practices, optimize infrastructure development, and stimulate economic growth. Understanding these interdependencies is critical for developing policies and strategies that are consistent with the sustainable development goals of developing countries.

The implications of this study are far-reaching. First and foremost, it provides policymakers, government officials, and stakeholders with a road map for effectively leveraging smart technologies to address pressing issues such as poverty, inequality, and environmental degradation. The research seeks to unlock the potential for inclusive and sustainable development by tailoring strategies to the unique contexts of underdeveloped countries.

Furthermore, the study's findings can be used to spur international collaboration and investment in developing countries' technological infrastructure. As these

countries adopt smart solutions, they may attract global partnerships that promote economic growth and knowledge transfer. Finally, the research aims to enable developing countries to not only catch up with their more advanced counterparts, but also skip traditional development stages, resulting in a more equitable and sustainable future.