**Interview 1**

**Demographic Data**

* Gender: Male
* Age Group: 36-45
* Job Title: Director of e-services and channels development
* Department: e-services and channels development
* Experience: Started in 2006 (more than 10 years)
* Academic Qualification: Master of Business Administration (MBA)

**Questions and Answers**

1. **At the beginning, can you tell us more about your work responsibilities?**  
   In e-services and channel development, we are responsible for the digital transformation of government entities. We're serving more than 45 government entities within the Kingdom of Bahrain; we also have some private sectors within telecom companies. Our role is transforming services from manual procedures to immediate serving in our e-services. To do that, we have multiple channels presenting the services, like mobile applications and the official website “albahrain.bh.” Another administration is responsible for setting menus, adding features to these services, and proposing the future status. Our administration is responsible for applying this proposal and transforming it into an e-service.
2. **You know the public sector has some concerns about sharing data. What’s your opinion about this phenomenon?**  
   That’s correct. Some government information, if shared, could be used destructively. However, we have an open data portal in all services. We also have a department specialized in this matter, so the data types and their sensitivity are studied before being shared with the public through the website.
3. **What’s your opinion about the challenges facing Open Government Data in the Kingdom of Bahrain specifically?**  
   I see that the most difficult thing is changing people's mindset. They should know what the standard is to classify specific data as sensitive or not. We see that some data is considered sensitive; then after some years, it becomes not sensitive and can be shared with others. Another challenge is that some data cannot be displayed to the public in its current format. They will not understand it in the format stored in the databases unless it is transformed into an understandable shape.
4. **What about security? Is it a challenge for you?**  
   We have a Personal Data Protection law concerned with data protection and privacy. We also have a department responsible for reviewing data and classifying which data could be displayed to the public. Because, you know, some data shouldn’t be shared as it will provoke privacy, like personal data. On the other hand, some data about using the services, visiting services, and statistical data are always available.
5. **What about the domains that have opportunities to benefit from Open Government Data to contribute to the Kingdom of Bahrain's innovation?**  
   Data is a source of innovation in various sectors. For example, in the healthcare sector, you need demographic data for citizens and their health status. This data is very useful in improving the healthcare sector. In the education sector, data like citizens' qualifications and education levels will also be useful in improving the education sector. In the investment sector, the investor needs to know the financial status, buying capacity, and properties of the population. So, we can conclude that in all fields, wherever data is supporting these sectors, there is an opportunity to improve these fields.
6. **How do the public sector and private sector benefit from these opportunities?**  
   In the digital transformation sector, we develop our services according to the people's needs. These needs come from data we have from studies, meaning that market research is conducted to discover the people's needs. As a result, we specify the services that could be useful for people. So, we develop or make the service before it becomes a demand because we have the data support.
7. **What’s the technological innovation's role in supporting Open Government Data or data in general?**  
   Currently, various government institutions are responsible for adding AI as a useful tool to help us improve digital transformation. Another point to consider is that digital transformation now is not only about transforming services from manual procedures to electronic ones. Instead, we need the services to have an intelligent and proactive side. For example, sending a message to inform the person that their ID Card needs activation. So, AI and technology have a great contribution to facilitating the process of digitalization and presenting services to citizens.
8. **Besides AI, which technologies could boost serving services?**  
   We are investing in big data models and discovering their usage capabilities. Currently, we are unifying the source of gaining Open Government Data. Instead of visiting multiple government institutions’ websites, this unified website allows the user to enter their username and password and have access to all government services with ease and security.
9. **How does your department measure data performance and technology advancement? How do you know if your service is served in the targeted way?**  
   The measurement procedure is out of our scope. You can ask Dr. Khalid's group. But to know if the new service or developed service is successful, we have datasets with statistics, like the number of visits, numeric electronic transactions, and the amount of money received. So, we always compare the statistics before and after development to gain insights into whether the developed service is successful or not. We also conduct customer satisfaction surveys and use built-in tools on the website that allow users to provide feedback. In the end, we gather all this data, analyze it, and make a performance report for all the services. For sure, we develop the e-services based on citizens’ feedback.
10. **What are the future trends that you predict in the government e-services sector in the Kingdom of Bahrain?**  
    Currently, we are applying AI in our services and trying our best to reduce citizens' visits to government centers. Instead, we are trying to help them by removing the burden of visiting government centers by providing intelligent and proactive solutions to enhance the service experience.