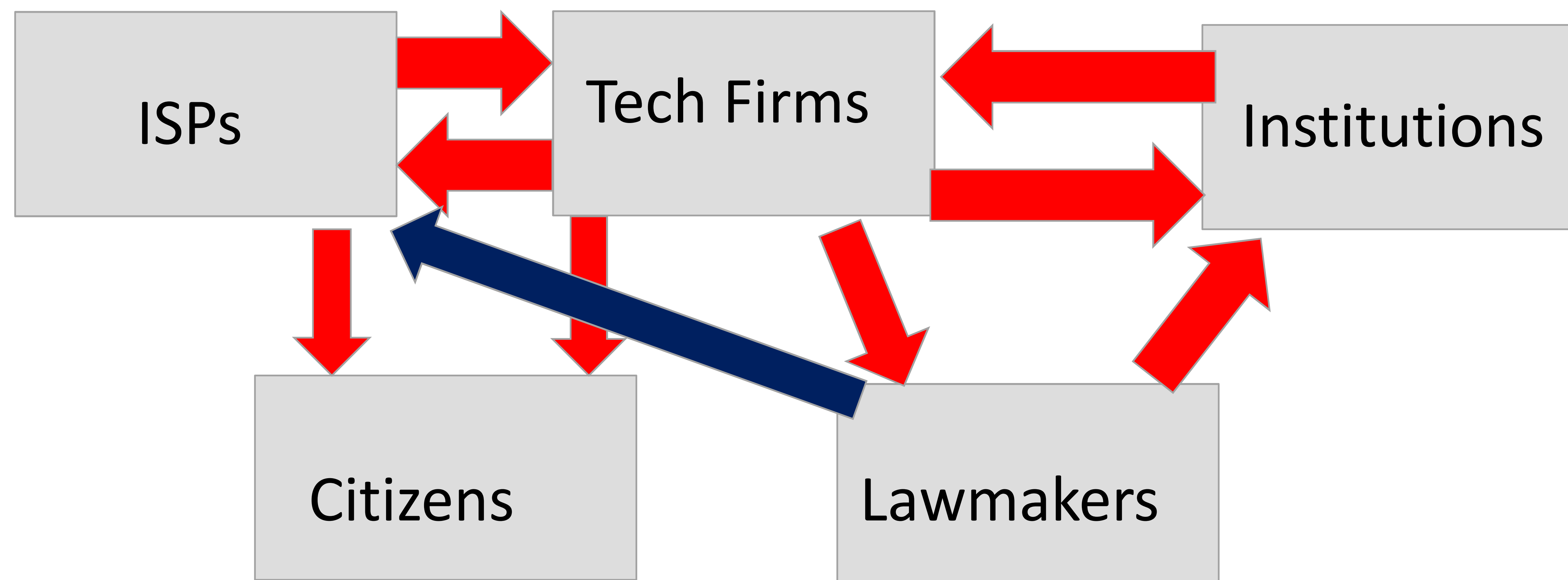


Minding our ISPs and ICTs: A Model of the Policy Challenges to Alleviate the Digital Divide

Michael R. Brownstein, Purdue University Political Science



PROBLEM: The digital divide is still a problem that must be addressed in E-governance and web security problems. The policy process currently provides a forum where the ISPs and Tech firms can create their own regulations and barriers to entry for other firms [1]. Because of this, ISPs and tech firms can drive up prices for the Internet and Computer Technologies (ICTs), and often leave policy implications unclear with e-governance. Additionally, there is too much reliance on the private sector for charitable donations [2].

ACTORS: The major actors are the tech firms (companies that make and implement ICTs), Internet Service Providers (ISPs), institutions seeking e-governance reform, lawmakers, and the citizens who benefit from these services when fully implemented.

POLICY PROCESS: In the figure above, the red arrows indicate a one-way relationship, which indicates an inequality between tech production and those using the technology. The rest of the policy process is generally left at the mercy of the ICTs and ISPs that are produced by the private sector. The current process has little room for the public sector to intervene.

POLICY SUGGESTIONS: My recommendation is that the lawmakers work with ISPs and Tech firms to lower costs of services and ICTs. (blue arrow) If we are to think that Internet Access is a fundamental right and service, then we must make it accessible to 100 percent of the people. In order to provide a smooth transition to e-governance in institutions, there must be inclusive policy to make ICTs available. Bidirectional relationships between tech firms and ISPs with the general public would result in cheaper and more available ICTs with the help of lawmakers.. This would ensure that individuals that are unemployed could still be on equal footing in finding employment, and would not need to cut costs by unsubscribing from Internet service from ISPs. This is not to say that ISPs should not turn a profit, but if the Internet is going to be a necessity, there needs to be a way for ISPs to provide these goods at lower costs to all citizens.

REFERENCES

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 [2] Van Dijk, A.G.M. 2005. *The Deepening Divide: Inequality in the Information Society*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Russel Sage Foundation.