

E-GOVERNANCE IN INDIA: OPPORTUNITIES AND CHALLENGES – A PARADIGM APPROACH

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Abstract

In the present scenario, information technology has added the impetus to the services provided by the government. This paper highlights the role and potential of information and communication technologies in supporting the “good governance” programs in developing countries. ICTs can make a significant contribution to the achievement of good governance goals. This ‘e-governance’ makes the governance more efficient and more effective, and also brings benefits the citizens. This paper deliberates the features which are accountable for good governance, e-government initiatives in different states of India, and also includes some current challenges for managing e-government projects in India. It also includes the current status of e-governance in India and future prospects of e-governance in India.

Key words: E-government, e-governance, public administration, etc.

1. Introduction

The term e-government derived into presence with the start of government websites in late 1990s. E-governance or ‘electronic governance’ refers to the use of information and communication technologies to provide citizens and organizations with more convenient access to the government’s services and information. In other words, e-governance involves ICTs, especially the internet, to improve the delivery of government services to citizens, business and government agencies. It is parallel to information technology, but focuses primarily on communication technologies. ICT having number of communication channels like wireless networks, cell phones, internet and other. The rapid development and implementation of the information and communication technology is transforming every aspect of human life. According to Robert E. Davis, developing and implementing IT governance design effectiveness and efficiency can be a multidirectional, interactive, iterative, and adaptive process. ICT has opened up new avenues and opportunities for growth and development around the world. ICT have a valuable prospective to help meet good governance goals in world. It spread information to the user for widen their choices for economic and social privileges. The e-governance is the application of information and communication technology. The word “govern” derives from the Latin word “gubernare” which means "to direct, rule, guide," originally "to steer".

2. E-governance

Government provides its services at the door step of businesses, business and other stakeholder. In e-governance, government makes best possible use of internet expertise to communicate and provide information to common people and businessman. Today, electricity, water, phone and all kinds of bills can be paid over the internet. All this is what government and citizens is using and doing. All are dependent on internet and when citizens depends on government internet services all that come is e-governance. There are four pillars of e-governance:

Connectivity: Connectivity is compulsory to connect the people to the services of the government. There should be a strong connectivity for an effective e-governance.

Knowledge: Here knowledge refers to IT knowledge. Government should employ skill full engineers who can handle the e-governance in an efficient way. These engineers also handle all kind of fault that may occur during the working of e-governance.

Data content: To share any kind of knowledge or information over the internet, there should be its database. This database should have the data content which is related to government services.

Capital: Capital can be on public or private partnership. It refers to money used by government to provide their services or to that sector of the economy based on its operation

3. E-governance in India: Emerging trends

E-government is organizing public management in order to increase efficiency, transparency, accessibility and responsiveness to citizens through the intensive and strategic use of information and communication technologies in the inner management of the public sector as well as in its daily relations with citizens and users of public services. E-governance is an ICT enabled tool to achieve good governance. We may think of it as integrated governance, since it integrates people, processes, information, and technology in the service of achieving the aim of good governance. Indian government has been using IT for more than 40 years.

4. New government – People connections

The old pattern used information technology for automating the internal workings of government by processing data. The new system utilizes information and communication technologies to support and transform the external workings of governance by processing and communicating data. E-governance encompasses all ICTs, but the key development is computer networks from intranets to the internet creating a platform for new digital connections: Connections within the government; connections between government and NGOs/citizens;

connections between government and business/citizens; connections within and between NGOs; and connections within and between communities. As a result, the focus shifts from simply automating the government to connect it with the larger community in the form of e-citizens, e-services and e-society.

5. E-governance models

Government to citizens: This model of e-governance refers to the government services which are shared by citizens. Here, citizens visit to the link of services that they want to use. This models strong the bond between government and its citizen. Type of services which are provided by this model includes: Payment of online bills such as electricity, water, telephone bills, etc; online registration of applications; copies of land-record; online filling of complaints; and availability of any kind of online information.

Government to government: This model refers to the services which are shared between the governments. There is lots of information that need to be shared between various government agencies, department and organizations. These types of services are: sharing of information between police department of various state; government document exchange which includes preparation, approval, distribution, and storage of all governmental documents is also done through e-governance; and most of the finance and budget work are also done through e-governance.

Government to businessmen: Through this model, bond between private sector and government increase and businessmen use to communicate. They share information through this model like: collection of taxes; rejection and approval of patent is also done by this model; payment of all kind of bills and penalty; sharing of all kind of information, rules and data; and complaints or any kind of dissatisfaction can be shown by this.

Government to employees: This model increases the transparency between government and its employee. Here, employee can keeps a check on the functioning and working of government and government can keeps on its employees. Information that can be shared by this model: All kind of data submission from various government offices is done by this model; employee can file all kinds of complaints and dissatisfaction by this model; all kind of rule, regulation and information for employees can be shared by this; employees can check their payment and working record; and employees can register all kind of working forms online.

6. E-governance: Major challenges

Poor people and poor infrastructure are major challenges in countries like India. It poses a major challenge in reaping the full benefits of service provision under e-governance. The various barriers can be enumerated as follows:

Poverty: Accessing internet is a costly affair for the poor who struggle for their livelihood in developing countries like India. Required infrastructure in the form of installing the necessary telephone lines needed for internet or email access is equally unaffordable in most poor countries.

Technical illiteracy: There is general lack of technical literacy as well as literacy in countries like India.

Language dominance: The dominance of English on the internet constrains the access of non-English speaking population. In the case of India, 95 per cent of the population does not speak English. Due to such overwhelming dominance of English over these communication channels, computers and the internet are quite useless in Indian villages.

Unawareness: There is general lack of awareness regarding benefits of e-governance as well as the process involved in implementing successful projects.

Inequality: Inequality in gaining access to public sector services between various sections of citizens, especially between urban and rural communities, between the educated and illiterate, and between the rich and poor.

Infrastructure: Lack of infrastructure like electricity, internet, technology and ways of communications will affect the speed which delays the implementation.

Impediments for the reengineering process: Implementation of e-governance projects requires lots of restructuring in administrative processes, redefining of administrative procedures and formats which finds the resistance in almost all the departments at all the levels.

7. Conclusion

E-governance not only provides information about various activities of a government but also involves citizens to participate in government's decision making process. During the last few years, many initiatives have been taken by different state governments in India for using IT as a tool in the functioning of government so as to provide better services to citizens. E-governance along with a list e-governance projects run by state and central governments. It proposed future technology for e-governance with pictorial representation of working of e-governance with new technology. There are number of reasons which make cloud and open source technology so famous in e-governance. These technologies not only provide organization, technical benefits but

also provide economical benefits. E-governance with open source is very popular in west countries but in India it is still an emerging technology. NIC is providing the network backbone and a wide range of ICT services to government organizations throughout India. Several drafts have been passed by IT department to implement e-governance with these technologies so that working, efficiency, transparency and security can be increased in e-governance.

8. Reference

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