



Exploring the Role of Social Networking Sites in e-Governance: An Indian Perspective

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Abstract

Millions of people are using social media platforms for varied reasons. They are using Social Networking Sites (SNS) for building and maintaining relationship, information search, exploring news or even for enhancing education and skills.

The digital revolution and emergence of SNS have given a new impetus for the government to explore new usage of Social Networking Sites to ensure a smooth planning execution and monitoring of government decisions. SNS are used to collect real time information, feedback and disseminate the information to the mass in no time. Beside the brighter part of SNS usage there are number of challenges that government faces in implementing e governance. Social media Network may be used to bridge the gap between increased citizen expectations & government's attempt to bring innovation in its functioning.

This research is based on secondary data to examine the prospects and problems in using SNS for smooth governance. The data has been collected by reviewing published literature, expert blogs, government publications, authentic news sources and articles.

Keywords- SNS, e-governance, governance 2.0

Literature Review-

Business organizations, Entrepreneurs, Celebrities and individual use social media to showcase and promote their offerings. It is also used to gather information, customer feedback, customer communication, e-learning, collaborative learning, experience sharing, network building. Politician, Businesses and Government across the world has shown the importance of social media in achieving their respective objectives.

Social network sites are more popular among growing generation but the literature has shown that there is an increasing trend and acceptance of social media usage among elder generation too (Susanto & Goodwia, 2010). Social media applications have developed new amplitudes for collaborative governance and it has also increased the reach of citizen to government and government to citizens. Online platforms have empowered the citizens to raise their voice and be heard on their concerns. So the emerging technology can be used by governments to establish, plan, implement and control the public driven policies and actions.

Cyber advocates suggest that advancement in interactive communication and technology, benefits reaped from digital technology will bring new channels of communication and efficiency gains from digital technology will improve the government functions in democracies, and establishing an authentic communication between citizen and government (Norris 2000). There has been a steady shift of computerization of government department to Information technology integration in government functions including citizen centricity, service driven approach, transparency and authenticity (Vishwanath & Madurai 2016). The Government systems across the world are continuously putting their efforts to develop better ways of rendering citizen services with better effectiveness and efficiency. Expectations from general citizens are continuously increasing in terms of receiving better administration and policies. (Charag & Mufeed, 2013). Information technology and communication improves the effectiveness of government functioning by ensuring real time actions & information, authenticity in public decisions, transparency in actions. With the emergence of ICT governance has come with a revolutionary outcome by using digital communication through computer, internet, mobile and other modes of communication (Danfulani 2013).

It is found that application of information and communication technology can enhance the participation of public in the process of any governance at every step by providing e platform for discussion and feedback (UNESCO, 2005).

The governments in advanced economies like US, UK, Australia and Canada are using social media very effectively in their government functions. The usage of social media brings a

better digital diplomacy in these countries. About 66% of government agencies in United State are using social media in one form or other (Human Capital Institute, 2012)

The technological advancement such as Artificial intelligence, Robotics, Machine learning and of course deep penetration of social media among public have created a public friendly ecosystem both in government and business. Web2.0 which includes emergence of internet, digital technology and social media is now creating a ecosystem that enables sharing of documents, pictures, videos & audios(Trudel, 2010).

e- Governance provides impactful opportunities for the people in rural areas also. Authors believes that e government initiatives are required more in rural areas as 70% of total population lives in villages. Proper use of information communication and technology can really improve the overall productivity of rural India (Nikam, 2011). Right to information has given the citizens a new weapon to explore the information and to know the facts (Shalini 2010). E-governance is the most prominent way to make the government's job more cost effective yet very useful (Dwivedi & Bharti 2010).

Due to numerous perceived benefits governments across the world are using social media as an important tool in their routine operations. The SNS is used as a toll for collaboration, participation and empowerment of citizen of the country (Pisso 2018). But there is a disparity among people when it comes to use social media as a tool to reach municipality and other government initiatives. Those who are educated and informed get better benefits of e governance in comparison to those who are less informed. The response of municipality to public complaints is also different. The effective users of social media get better mileage of being heard (Satatporn 2020)

Research Methodology-

Since the research needs to explore the impact and application of social media in e governance therefore qualitative research is being conducted which is based on secondary data. The data has been collected by reviewing about 50 research papers and articles, magazines, Websites and books.

E-Governance: An Indian context

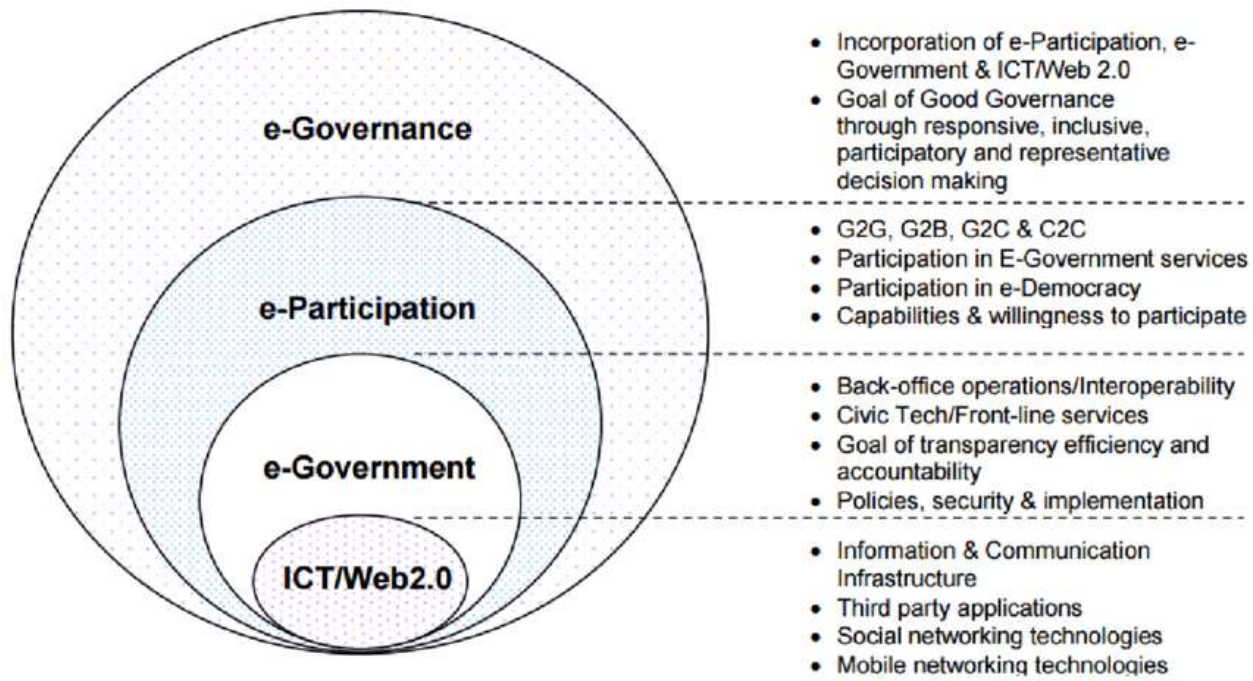
The national e-governance plan was developed by department of Admin reforms and E&IT. The prime objective of NeGP was to connect and facilitate a common man with government initiatives. Some of the major e government initiatives by government of India in recent past include-

E-Government Initiatives	Objectives
Aadhaar	Unique identity number issued by UIDAI. Helps in connecting the citizen with government initiatives
Digital India	In order to empower India digitally, Initiative was launched in 2015
Mygov.in	Great initiative to connect with citizen in government policy and decisions
E-Recrds	Computerized records of land and other properties
Digital Locker	People can store their important documents online
Umang	An application for central and state government to access the documents when needed

Beside above initiatives GOI has approved many other applications also which includes- Mobile Seva, E-Seva and Lokwani project in UP

There could be four major types of interaction where e governance can take place-

Types of interaction in e-Governance	Description
G2G- Government to Government	Interaction between governments (Central, State, Local)
G2C-Governant to Citizen	Citizen interact with government at various level
G2B- Government to Business	The business houses are able to interact with government
G2E- Government to Employee	Interaction between employees with its government

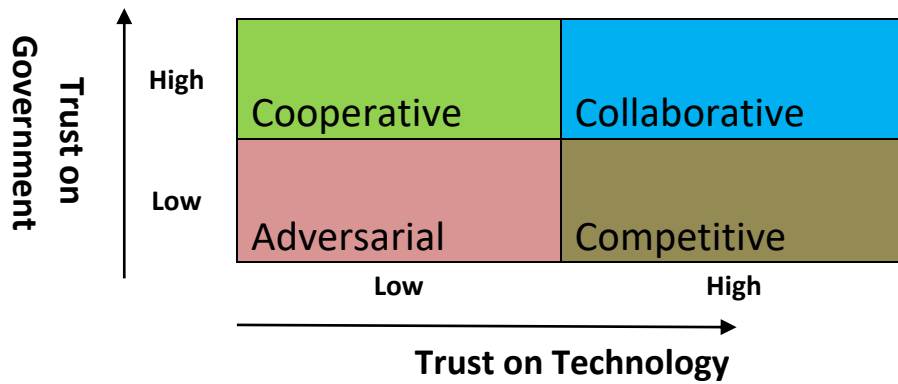


Source- Benjamin Haffmen-2017

Citizens & E-governance-

Relationship between public and e government initiatives can be understood by below given diagram. Following four categories can be observed based on public's trust on technology and e-government initiatives-

- (i) **Cooperative-** Citizens are cooperative with government initiatives if they have trust in government initiatives even though they do not trust technology.
- (ii) **Collaborative-** With high trust both in government & technology, the process become collaborative.
- (iii) **Adversarial** – If the citizens are not having trust in government & they do not trust the technology also than the outcome is adverse. It result in failure.
- (iv) **Competitive-** With high degree of trust in technology and low faith on government, the outcome is unpredictable and spurious.



Source: Srivatava & Teo (2009)

Conclusion-

E-Governance in India: Challenges ahead

Besides great advantages of adopting and implementing E-government initiatives there are various challenges that government of India has to encounter-

- Despite of rapid penetration internet and social media usage, there is still a large section of society which is still lacking computer literacy. This computer illiteracy is a big hindrance in executing e governance.
- Unavailability or poor connection of internet in major part is one of the disadvantages of E-governance.
- The process become more mechanics, less human interaction takes place among citizens
- Personal identity loss and data insecurity is a great challenge that government is facing
- Over technology dependence provide more space to excuses

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