

Urban Governance of Urban Local Bodies (ULBs) - Factual Scenario

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Abstract: At present cities of India face problems of infrastructure, healthy living conditions, availability of amenities and facilities, etc. due to the rapid population growth and expanding limits of the cities. Two levels of urban local bodies for the cities namely the municipality and Municipal Corporation are responsible to provide all different facilities to the citizens. In the process of service delivery, it has been observed that creating multiple departments has made the system simpler and more efficient but lack of coordination amongst the departments makes it worse to manage the cities. Also, as discussed earlier the central and state government have made many efforts to empower the local governments in order to achieve true democracy. This calls for a need to study a city to understand whether the decentralization of power is been practiced in its true spirit by the local bodies or there is still scope for improvement. The study of Navsari municipality and Bhavnagar Municipal Corporation is an attempt to understand the governance structure, its powers, functions, and responsibilities in terms of city management. Further key issues associated with management are identified and recommendations are given for better governance. The fundamental purpose of this research is to address the problems that arise in metropolitan municipal governments and infrastructures as a result of population expansion. The study's long-term goal is to help people comprehend if local governments are practicing decentralization in its genuine spirit or whether there is still room for improvement.

Keywords: Bhavnagar Municipal, Navsari Municipality, Public Participation, TP Scheme, Urban Governance.

1. INTRODUCTION

Amendments for the Urban Local Governance in India Since independence Government of India (GOI) and state governments have taken many initiatives to strengthen the local administrations in India. The constitution of India has provided power, authority, and responsibility of municipalities in Article 243W. As stated by this, the state's legislative body may, by regulation, invest districts with power and authority as self-government entities, as specified in the twelfth schedule. The 74th Constitutional Amendment Act (CAA) is also a significant help to local governments.

The Constitution (74th Amendment) Act, 1992 is an initiative in the field of reforms related to urban governance in India. The Amendment aims at providing constitutional status to the ULBs. The Act tries to bring uniformity in the structure and mandate for local governments in the country. It emphasizes the participation of people elected as representatives of the people in planning, management, and transfer of municipal services. The 74th Amendment Act is based on the idea of true democracy that total power should be in the hand of the people. It specifies that an election should be held within six months if any municipality is dissolved by the state Government. The Act also mandates the State Governments to constitute District and Metropolitan Planning Committees, along with principal representation given to the elected members of the Urban Local Bodies (ULBs).

The Twelfth Schedule of Constitution (Article 243 w) gives an expressive rundown of eighteen capacities, which might be shared with the ULBs. Notwithstanding the old center elements of ULBs, it additionally incorporates progressed capacities like Economic preparation and civil rights, Programs on metropolitan destitution easing, and advancement of instructive and social viewpoints [1].

The Gujarat Provincial Municipal Corporation Act was established in 1949 to provide municipalities with a clear guideline on their work and Jurisdiction area whereas The Gujarat municipality Act was established in 1963. The main criterion of the act was to provide for the management and system for municipal accounts. But the act also provides for the term of officers, containing municipal elections, functions, powers, and duties of the municipality, formulation of the committees and department [2].

Many nations, including India, have seen a technological revolution in recent decades. The use of communication and information technology (ICTs) for urban government has increased as a result of this[3]. India, specifically, has seen a flood in revenue in putting resources into nearby government organization innovation. An adjustment

of concentration from traditional government to e-administration is driving this interest, with the target of improved administration, smoothed out administration, straightforward administration, and, most fundamentally, resident driven administration. India has made huge interests in embracing different ICT in its public area, and e-administration is considered a basic advance toward managerial change.

The central government has offered incentives to urban local bodies (ULBs) via a number of measures that promote local government participation and a greater role for ULBs in decision-making. India has moved its thoughtfulness regarding metropolitan districts, where ULBs assume an imperative part, on account of huge financing assignments to projects like the Jawaharlal Nehru National Urban Renewal Mission (JNNURM). In India, public, state, and metropolitan government organizations have attempted a huge number of arranging drives under the e-administration standard over the course of the past ten years. Furthermore, these programs all have the same purpose of employing information technology to serve residents.

Over the years, SMC has progressively adapted technological change, remaining forefront of the computer technology culture. For Geographic information system (GIS) knowledge generation, it is critical to have the right infrastructure in place, such as reliable gear and software [4]. The availability of such technologies is even more vital in a non-Western culture, such as India, where ULBs lacks the most basic equipment, such as desktop computers. As a result, when India's e-governance revolution swept the country in the mid-2000s, most ULBs concentrated on developing basic Information Technology (IT) infrastructure, but SMC was well ahead of the pack. The Surat Municipal Corporation (SMC) has over 1500 desktop computers, and the ULB has invested in additional critical gear in recent years. In addition, SMC provides substantial networking services that span thousands of computers as well as 46 SMC locations. SMC's in-house application development and execution is another noteworthy feature.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

F. Mukherjee recommended that Governments in agricultural nations have been at the bleeding edge of proceeding with changes that have brought about the utilization of GIS and other data's and correspondences innovation for metropolitan organization. Be that as it may, barely any investigations of GIS spatial information development in non-Western settings have been directed. Specifically, amidst India's creating metropolitan administration culture, little is had some significant awareness of the rising and variable utilization of GIS and spatial relations by metropolitan neighbourhood bodies. This article looks at the Surat Municipal Corporation (SMC), one among India's biggest metropolitan civil state run administrations, as it embraces e-administration drives that incorporate the utilization of GIS and spatial information. This study examines SMC's GIS spatial knowledge production using an integrated methodology based on critical GIS literature as well as GIS implementation and dissemination research.

P. Sharma expresses that the reception of the 74th Constitutional Amendment Act (CAA) in 1992 is the main approach banter in India about metropolitan organization. This Act awards metropolitan nearby bodies in India, like civil enterprises, regions, and nagar panchayats, sacred authenticity and approves them to go about as self-overseeing foundations. Notwithstanding, the Act's execution has not been finished completely. The change for the most part helped major metropolitan nearby bodies including such civil specialists along with the issues on practical independence as well as accounts of minor metropolitan neighborhood bodies stayed dismissed. As a result, the current state of local governance system in medium and small urban local governments is highlighted in this research. This research looks at the capabilities of medium and small urban local governments in regulating, administering, and funding urban services for local development from a micro viewpoint.

T. Chatterji classified The underpinning of India's new metropolitan plan is the expansive utilization of data innovation (IT) answers for upgrade information foundation, administration conveyance, and resident communication in existing urban areas. These advanced metropolitan drives are being carried out by means of a multifaceted participation including government offices, companies, and worldwide associations. Due to a solid spatio-financial advanced hole and institutional limit deficiencies, this techno driven hierarchical metropolitan methodology faces execution obstacles. Years of neglect have left India's municipal organizations vulnerable, with a paucity of competent human resources in IT and e-governance. The article contends that unless elected municipal organizations absorb e-governance software, municipal administration will be gradually outsourced, reducing chances for public engagement in local government.

F. Mukherjee studied on that GIS innovation is socially made, and basic GIS focuses on the significance of socio-political and institutional conditions in deciding GIS utilization. This section analyses its utilization of GIS for e-administration by metropolitan neighborhood bodies (ULB) in India's southern state and evaluates the

undertaking's present condition. As of late, India's colossal reception of ICTs has brought about a shift from ordinary to electronic government. Under the umbrella of e-administration, various arranging drives have been begun. The hypothetical structure utilized in this examination depends on the Critical GIS writing, which advocates for an all-encompassing way to deal with GIS investigation by binds inward settings to the outside context oriented climate that shapes GIS use. To accomplish this reason, subjective request strategies are utilized to investigate a GIS-based metropolitan e-administration drive sent off by the Karnataka government to address metropolitan advancement challenges.

3. DISCUSSION

To understand the local Governance two levels of Local governing bodies are identified, which are the Municipal Corporation of Bhavnagar and Municipality of Navsari. The core idea for the selection of these cases was to take up the cities that present a threshold condition where they are progressing and are on the verge of getting into the next stage of Urbanization. The study of both the selected cases is generated based on the primary interviews conducted with the officials of the local bodies and recommendations are derived based on the understanding of the amendments made. The term "geographic information system" (GIS) has a lot of different connotations. GIS is defined as a collection of digital technologies or tools for collecting, manipulating, analyzing, and displaying geographic data, according to the traditional school of thinking.

GIS, then again, is perceived as something other than an information assortment designs, information constructions, equipment, and programming. It's additionally a bunch of socially made exercises, with an assortment of social, political, and institutional settings influencing geographic information and portrayal. The creation, advancement, and utilization of GIS spatial data is a powerful cycle that is consistently revamped through exchange and legislative issues. Looking at GIS spatial information development, along these lines, would incorporate uncovering the different inward as well as outer logical parts that the methodology is enmeshed in. This idea emerged from a collection of information known as Critical GI Science, which underlines non-quantitative and new parts of GIS. GIS academics have been encouraged by this corpus of information to dissect GIS methods using a variety of theoretical frameworks.

A tight integration of qualitative approaches has been demonstrated in one such study umbrella to uncover the complexity of GIS application. Besides, in the current Web 2.0 period, the boundless accessibility of straightforward electronic geo-perception devices and planning applications has empowered the catch and planning of an assortment of information material created using subjective techniques, for example, photographs, recordings, and stories, inside a GIS system Qualitative methodologies underline socially delivered information and are pivotal for understanding the power elements that clarifies how authoritative or cultural constructions, occasions, and people are assembled and depicted. They additionally give a voice to those whose voices have been quieted by winning talk. By including a scope of assets, geographers have utilized subjective GIS ways to deal with show such information manifestations and voices.

3.1. Bhavnagar Municipal Corporation:

Bhavnagar was the first princely state to merge with the democratic Indian Union in 1948. All the utilities of Bhavnagar state were transferred to the Municipality in 1948, which became a Municipal Corporation in 1982. It is now the headquarters of the district by the same name as shown in Table 1. The Brihanmumbai Municipal Corporation (BMC) was formed in 1982, and the members were appointed through the election [5]. The city has a population of 511,085 as per Census 2001 and is currently estimated to house ~560,000 people. The governance of Bhavnagar city is managed by various institutions which include BMC, BADA (Bhavnagar Area Development Authority), and GWSSB (Gujarat Water Supply and Sewerage Board). The management of solid waste and sewage treatment is taken care of by a separate department that works independently. The area under the jurisdiction of Bhavnagar Municipal Corporation is 53.30 sq. km. It is the duty of BMC to provide basic infrastructure related to roads, transport, social infrastructure, Educational and Healthcare infrastructure, etc., The Bhavnagar Municipal Corporation is divided into 17 wards for administrative purposes.

Table 1: Change in area of jurisdiction of Urban Development Agencies in Bhavnagar.

Agency	Year	Area coverage in Sq km
Bhavnagar Municipal Corporation	1948	20.71.

Bhavnagar Municipal Corporation	1951	23.51
Bhavnagar Municipal Corporation	1962	49.41
Bhavnagar Municipal Corporation	1965	53.30
BADA	1978	246.78

3.2. Navsari Municipality:

The story of Navsari Municipality started with its establishment in 1863 by Maharaja Khanderao Gaekwad as *sudharai*. The main function of the body was to clean the city, provide water to the citizens and provide the street lights on the main roads of the city along with its maintenance. This *sudharai* got its makeover in 1923, when the first election of the Municipality also took place. During the same time period, the Municipality developed drainage lines, water lines, street lights on all roads and open grounds, roads and stormwater drains.

For the purpose of management, the city is divided into 14 wards and for the purpose of water supply and drainage, the city is divided into 3 zones. The municipality has around 12 departments with a staff of 375 people on a permanent basis. Recently Navsari Municipality has launched e-governance and provides online services to the citizens. There are 42 councillors in the Municipality. The total area under the jurisdiction of Navsari Municipality is 18.04 sq. km. Navsari municipality has also received many awards during the year 2005 as shown below:

- Best Municipality Award – First position by Government of Gujarat.
- Best e-governance award – Second position by Government of Gujarat.
- Excellence in Municipal Initiatives Award by Crisil.

Today the Navsari Municipality works for various urban issues like water supply, drainage, roads, street lights, slum rehabilitation, public parks and gardens, parking, traffic management, water body cleaning, public health, solid waste collection, and management, maintenance, and operation for the same [6]. The growing challenge in front of the Municipality is the expected population growth in the city along with increasing housing demand, managed development of the city, and provision of the best services to the citizens as per their expectations [7]. To address all the challenges demands Navsari Municipality has to look after the management and governance which needs to be organized and well managed.

3.3. Identified key Issues of Governance:

The ULB as a single entity is responsible for effective, efficient, and sustainable municipal service delivery to its citizens. It is been observed that there are many issues that hinder bringing efficient governance to the city. It becomes necessary to identify issues and work on them to facilitate better and improved governance. Such issues are identified through a detailed primary study of both the ULBs. Parameters reviewed to identify the key issues include the study of Governing Structure, Inter-Departmental Structure, Functions of different departments, comparative analysis of functions being performed in response to 74th CAA and Municipal Acts, Reforms and their implementations, and accounts and record maintenance. While carrying out this study certain issues are identified as follows.

3.4. Lack of clarity in local functions:

The Constitution (74th Amendment) Act, 1992 imagines that the capacities recorded in the twelfth timetable be allocated to choose districts. This is to limit the covering of capacities between nearby bodies and different specialists. Nevertheless, in some cases, local bodies play no role as several agencies are responsible for these functions. Also, as the administration of the city is in hands of various departments, there are many administrators associated with city service delivery, infrastructure, and management. Such situations make management of the city multifaceted and problematic. Notwithstanding broad coordination among metropolitan and rustic neighbourhood specialists, there are a few coordination issues affecting the everyday organization of the city region at between departmental and between institutional levels. There is a need to talk these challenges to convey

great administration to the city. Except if such deterrents are eliminated, monetary improvement gets frustrated and proficient help conveyance becomes troublesome. This has antagonistic effects especially, on the unfortunate local area.

3.5. *Shortage of adequate staff:*

As claimed by BMC they have a shortage of staff and records show that there are a total of 3519 sanctioned vacancies in total in the departments of BMC, out of which only 2917 are filled leaving more than 900 vacant designations. Many of grade 1 and grade 2 officers have retired and the system does not allow to appoint grade 1 and 2 directly (a person is appointed for grade 4 first and then in the hierarchy, they are promoted to grades 3, 2, and 1) these posts are vacant. Also, the process of state government for the allotment of staff is slower than the requirement. This results in the work pressure on the existing staff reducing their work efficiency. Along with this, the present staffs are not very efficient with technology, which pulls back the e-governance part of the ULBs. On the other hand, the State tries to reduce down the staff and increase the efficiency of governance through the implementation of e-governance.

The data shows that the maximum numbers of vacancies are prevalent in the Health, Property Tax, Fire and Emergency Department, Construction (Roads & Buildings) Department, Street Lighting Department, Drainage Department, and Water Works Department. Apart from key positions in the department, there are vacancies in other categories as well. The structure itself is old and needs to be reviewed.

Thus, the major institutional constraint is the lack of adequate staff with the necessary combination of technical and social mobilization skills for planning and delivery of urban basic services. And so, care should be taken while taking new recruitments that the appointed employees are technically sound as well as the existing staff should be trained so that they are acquainted with the technology.

3.6. *Implementing TP scheme in 100% totality:*

Areas having potential for growth are identified and accordingly, sanctions are taken from Guardians of Governance' (GoG) for implementation of Town Planning (TP) schemes by both the ULBs to ensure the orderly development of land use and adequate infrastructure facilities in the upcoming areas. For example, out of the total of 17 TP Schemes, BMC has 9 schemes covering 547.82 Ha with 39% developed area and BADA has 8 schemes covering 729 Ha with only 32% developed area. This indicates that 65% of the total coverage area of 1277 ha is still to be developed and that outlines the future growth potential and direction.

BMC has planned nine TP Schemes, of which only three TP Schemes have been finalized till now, three are at a preliminary stage and three are drafts. Out of these, TP15 which is in the railway might be cancelled as it has received 80% opposition. Also, the city does not have a Sewage treatment plant to date. The above information shows a lack of thoughtfulness and groundwork before proposing a TP Scheme.

3.7. *Computerization of data:*

The Electronic Data Processing (EDP) Department plays an important role in administering the ULB's systems and procedures. As observed in the case of BMC, it initiated computerization in 1989 with the staff payroll system. Database on birth and death records is available since 1951. EDP (commonly referred to as the Computer Department) undertakes data processing and management, hardware and software procurement, and management.

At present, computerization of the following functions has taken place: (i) Octroi collection, (ii) property tax, (iii) water charges, (iv) shops and Establishment, and (v) Accounts. As claimed by the BMC, Software for online building plan approval is currently under preparation. Apart from this, under 'computerization', Desktop Computers have been given to ULB employees up to Executive Engineer level, but owing to the lack of a Data Base Management System (DBMS), computers are used for regular work e.g, information storage, letter writing, etc., for which data entry operators have been appointed. Thus, the effort to computerize operations has not been very successful – lack of adequate training to staff appears to be a key reason for this. Besides, only a few departments' works have been computerized.

Also, as observed in the case of Navsari Municipality, although 35% of the staff is given training for the utilization of new systems for the ease of governance and fast processing still a large number of staff utilize the old methods of governance and this results in the imbalance between new and old methods. Thus, the processing is done twice one with the old method and a few stages of the new method which takes more time and reduces the efficiency of the staff.

Although there is a school of thought within the ULB regarding the need for future enhancement, so far, there is no systematic plan or focus. The EDP Department has its own limitations: its personnel do not have the capacity to draw up plans for future development nor do they have staff that is adequately trained to undertake required changes to the presently inadequately functioning software programs or even to oversee change/implementation by a consultant.

3.8. *Established procedures for classification of records:*

There is a need for a common database across the ULBs. No availability of a common database currently results in duplication of record-keeping efforts and reduced reliability of the data recorded. Records are maintained without proper classification, regardless of importance. This renders retrieval of critical information difficult. At present, there is no established system for file classification, noting, and tendering (through municipal officials in the ULBs are aware of the need to introduce modern practices such as e-tendering). There have been frequent changes in the procedures of the ULBs, based on changes in management.

3.9. *Public participation:*

The planning of any city or area is done for the benefit of the public, so it becomes important to consider the views of the beneficiaries. BMC does not encourage the participation of people while making the development plans, town planning schemes, or any other projects. This may not be intentional but the required efforts are not taken to make the information reach the public. Another factor is the lack of awareness among the people of the importance of their participation. The major problem that Navsari municipality is facing is people of the city only demand services but do not participate in the management and maintenance of the services provided. Also, participation of people in the process of town planning is only limited to their own piece of property and a lack in thinking of overall development is observed. It is essential for people to understand that they are the major stakeholders in the city development and their active participation with the municipality can bring better governance to the city.

3.10. *Suggestions for better governance:*

To practice good governance within the Urban Local Bodies; there is a scope to follow the suggestions mentioned.

- Formulation of ward committees or another mechanism to increase the interaction between citizens and the elected members of the wards.
- Train the staff for new methods of governance and facilitate them to utilize the IT as much as possible.
- Improve the website by increasing the information available to bring transparency and ease of governance.
- Derive a system within the municipal body to bring balance between the administrative and elected wing so as to achieve fast approval of the projects.
- Increase use of Geographical Information System to manage the data of all different services provided and the properties of the city.
- Publish booklets in local languages on a yearly basis which can inform the citizens regarding their activities and growth of the city and generate a discussion forum between the citizens and the governing body.
- Implement reforms related to capacity building and city management.
- Derive new ways of project development through private partnership to reduce the reliance upon municipal loans.
- Encourage the private sector to participate in the service delivery with a view to reduce the load of the municipality in terms of development, operation, and maintenance of the services.
- Care should be taken while taking new recruitments that the appointed employees are technically sound as well as the existing staff should be trained so that they are acquainted with the technology.
- There is a need, to streamline the governance framework, and strengthen the lines of accountability.

4. CONCLUSION

Governments in developing countries have been at the forefront of continuing changes that have resulted in the adoption of GIS as well as other information and communications technology for urban administration. Nonetheless, hardly any investigations of GIS spatial creating information in non-Western settings have been led. Specifically, amidst India's creating metropolitan administration culture, little is had some significant awareness of the rising and variable utilization of GIS and spatial data by metropolitan neighborhood bodies. This article inspects the Surat Municipality Corporation (SMC), one of India's biggest metropolitan city legislatures, as it embraces e-administration drives that incorporate the utilization of GIS and spatial information. This study inspects SMC's GIS spatial information creation utilizing an incorporated philosophy in light of basic GIS writing as well as GIS execution and scattering research.

The exposition shows that, in the example of SMC, GIS information building is affected not simply by SMC's proactive inclusion in conforming to public government points as well as plans, yet additionally with the presence of compelling individuals who assume a vital part in starting change and advancement. This article is important for a more extensive examination that glances at the act of GIS spatial information working in current India. Furthermore, as previously stated, the federal and state governments have made several attempts to strengthen local governments in order to establish real democracy.

This necessitates a study of a city to see if decentralization of power is being implemented in its true spirit by local governments or whether there is still room for improvement. The study of the Navsari Municipal Corporation and the Bhavnagar Municipal Corporation is an effort to comprehend the governance structure, powers, duties, and responsibilities in terms of city administration. Further management-related difficulties are uncovered, and suggestions for enhanced governance are made. The fundamental purpose of this research is to address the problems that arise in metropolitan municipal governments and infrastructures as a result of population expansion. The study's long-term goal is to help people comprehend if local governments are practicing decentralization in its genuine spirit or whether there is still room for improvement.

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