

IMPACT OF INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY ON INDIAN GOVERNANCE

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ABSTRACT

The Government of India is transcending from traditional modus operandi of governance towards technological involvement in the process of governance. By many measures, the problem of poverty is no more severe anywhere else than it is in Indian economy, which still has the world's largest number of poor people in a single country. Thirty-five percent of its billion plus population lives on less than US\$ 1 per day and around 86 percent of Indians, more than 900 million people, manage to survive on incomes of less than US\$ 2 a day. Public administration, governed by bureaucratic structures built on rationale principles, that dominated the twentieth century, has failed to respond to the changing requirements of the present times. India has Secured 96th Position in UN 'e-Government Survey-2018' which made a massive leap in the performance of digital governance. E-governance is the use of ICT by the government, civil society and political institutions to engage citizens through dialogue and feedback to promote their greater participation in the process of governance of these institutions. Thus, e-government can be viewed as a subset off e-governance, and its focus is largely on improving administrative efficiency and reducing administrative corruption. In developing countries like India, where literacy level is very low and even most of the people are living below poverty line, people are not even aware about the benefits of e-Governance activities and people do not use Information and Communication technologies to a much extent, there exist a number of problems to implement e-Governance activities.

Keywords: E-Governance, Information and Communication Technology (ICT)

INTRODUCTION

Information and communication technology (ICT) is a tool in the functioning of government activities to provide better services to the citizens. E-governance promotes the efficiency, enforces accountability, brings transparency in the working of the government system and reduces time delays; all important government policies are useful to people, e-governance also beneficial to the citizens. It involves technology, policies and infrastructure. This paper examines the impact of e-governance on Indian economy in the context of its role in public policies of Agriculture sector, rural development and promoting social welfare. The two terms E-government and E-governance are independent and synonym of each other, but are at times used alternatively, there by the major distinction between E-government and E-governance. E-government is understood as the use of ICT to promote more efficient and cost effective government, facilitate more convenient government services and permits greater public access to information, and ensures government more accountable to citizens, where as governance is a wider term which covers the state's institutional arrangements, decision making processes, implementation capacity and the relationship between government officials and the public.

ICT on Efficient Administration

The U.S. e-government Act, 2002 delineates e-government as "The use by the Government of web-based Internet applications and other information technologies, combined with processes that implement these technologies, to enhance the access to and delivery of Government information and services to the public, other agencies, and other Government entities or bring about improvements in

Government operations that may include effectiveness, efficiency, service quality, or transformation;”. Whereas the European Union defines it as “E-Government is the use of Information and Communication Technologies in public administrations combined with organisational change and new skills in order to improve public services and democratic processes”. In the current era e-government has transformed from being “just another office tool” to a powerful utility for innovation, change and a tool for rejuvenating public sector. It is pertinently mentioned that e-governance and e-government are being used as a synonym in Indian perspective. E-Governance can be defined as; use of ICT in government in ways that either alters governance structures or processes in ways that are not feasible without ICT and create new governance structures or processes that were heretofore not possible without ICT and reify heretofore theoretical ideas or issues in normative governance. Nevertheless, normative governance means ideology of governance which encompasses transparency, accountability, integrity, honesty, impartiality, efficiency etc. in terms of possessing, delivering and enabling.

E-Governance as SMART Governance

E-Governance was started in India by AKSHAYA in Kerala. This project involves setting up around 5000 multipurpose community technology centers called AKSHAYA E-Kendra’s across Kerala. Owing to e-governance there is improvement in the internal organizational processes of Government, increased openness in government’s functioning and enhanced political credibility & accountability in governance. The acronym SMRAT can expand as follows;

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

E-Governance should lead to SMART government, where SMART stands for Simple, Moral, Accountable, Responsive, and Transparent government. Notwithstanding failures, there will be great successes also which will towards realizing its imagination. (Singla, 2002, pp. 65-75) In Hisar, Haryana Information and Communication technology was adopted efficiently to change the traditional process of the election into digital mode. With the use of high speed lease line and video capturing devices live web cast was done to have a worldwide demo of the election process. (Agarwal, 2011)

Objectives of the Study

- 3) To identify the performance of E-Governance in the different Sectors through ICT.
- 4) To measure the impact of E-Governance in the Indian Economy.

Information and Communication Technology on Indian Governance

a) Reduction of Cost in Service Delivery

Although many applications in developing countries have shown significant benefits, in general, cost reduction has not taken place. In most cases E-Government becomes an additional channel to offer services. Even in developed countries where internet penetration is high, the proportion of citizens using portal for services is low. Until this proportion reaches a level that there can be some cut back in the number of personnel employed in delivering services through the traditional departmental channel or telephone, there will be little reduction in costs. In fact initially the costs will rise on account of investments in organizing electronic delivery. In the developed countries, privacy and security issues seem to be holding the citizens back. In the developing countries the Internet penetrations are very low.

b) Control of Government Expenditure

Many countries have implemented integrate financial management systems to track and control payments made out of Government treasuries. For example the state of Karnataka has connected all its 215 treasuries through a satellite based net. Every payment is now centrally authenticated to ensure that a budget provision exists for the payment and that it is not exceeded. Such systems focus on expenditure control, not exploiting the full potential of the system to combat corruption and improve service delivery. Experience suggests that it is difficult to implement IFIMIS as they are complex and need to be comprehensive in their scope to deliver concrete benefits. Another strategy to control expenditure is to introduce paper less offices in large Government departments (see eSAT in Mexico, Smartgov in Andhra Pradesh). A few of such applications have been implemented.

c) Growth of tax Revenue

The inefficient collection of taxes in many developing countries has led to cash-strapped governments that are incapable of enforcing tax payments. Moreover, corruption in the collection process leads to less money going to the government and lack of public confidence in the system. Modernizing Tax Systems through E-Government applications has been a priority for many countries. Through online tax filing and processing system, governments aim to reduce the corruption and enhance transparency to create more public trust. Computerized interstate check posts in Gujarat, India, have resulted in three-fold increase in tax collection over 2 years. Revenue increased from \$12 million to \$50 million, paying back the total project costs of \$34 million in just 6 months (Vijayalaxmi & Padma, 2003).

f) The National E-Governance Plan

The National E-Governance Plan (NeGP) is an initiative of the Government of India to make all government services available to the citizens of India via electronic media. NeGP was formulated by the Department of Electronics and Information Technology (DeitY) and Department of Administrative Reforms and Public Grievances (DARPG). The Government approved the National e-Governance Plan, consisting of 27 "Mission Mode Projects" (MMPs) and Ten components, on 18 May 2006. This is an enabler of Digital India initiative, and UMANG (Unified Mobile Application for New-age Governance) in turn is an enabler of NeGP. Table 1.1 depicts the online services provided under the (NeGP).

Suggestions and Conclusion

As the usage of Information Technology is growing very fast, Indian government is making many efforts to provide services to its citizens through e-Governance. Although Indian government is spending a lot of money on e-Governance projects but still these projects are not successful in all parts of India.

A. A hybrid approach needs to be adopted for enhancing interoperability among e-governance applications which will encompass centralized approach for document management, knowledge management, file management grievance management etc. and distributed approach for land registration, building plans, vehicle registration, criminal and crime information etcetera.

B. The Cloud computing is also becoming a big force to enhance delivery of services related to e-governance. The cloud computing is not only a tool for cost reduction but also it helps in; enabling new services, improving education system and creating new jobs and opportunities. The paper also affirms the usage of cloud for e-governance applications to exaggerate the availability of information, diminish the cost of ICT infrastructure and enhancing interoperability between applications. The government of Japan has established "Kasumigaseki Cloud" to deliver public services to its citizens and according to government of Singapore; it is a major source of economic development.

C. The e-governance initiatives in the rural areas should be taken by identifying and analysing the grass root realities. The states that the strategy devised for the implementation of e-governance should be comprehensive; an approach should be citizen centric and should follow multiple channels of communication for dissemination of e-services.

Government must take some actions to make the people aware about the e-Governance activities so that people may take full advantage of these activities and e-Governance projects can be implemented successfully.

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