Role of E-Governance and E-Government in Improving the Society to drive Vision into Reality

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Abstract

Electronic governance or e-governance is the application of information and communication technology (ICT) for delivering government services, exchange of information communication transactions, integration of various stand-alone systems .Through e-governance, government services will be made available to citizens in a convenient, efficient and transparent manner[1]. E-governance is an application of ICT. E-Governance provides citizens to access government services and information by electronics means.

Keywords: E-governance, Information Technology (IT), ICT (Information Communications Technology)

1. Introduction

A. Digital India is an initiative by the Government of India to ensure that Government services are made available to citizens electronically by improving online infrastructure, reducing paperwork and by increasing Internet connectivity. This will help to integrate the government departments and the people of India. The initiative also includes plan to connect the rural with high speed internet networks. It was launched on July 1, 2015 by Prime Minister Narendra Modi. The initiative includes plans to connect rural areas with high-speed internet networks

The project is expected to complete by 2019. A two-way platform will be created where both the service providers and the consumers stand to benefit. The scheme will be monitored and controlled by the Digital India Advisory group which will be chaired by the Ministry of Communications and IT[2].

Several people have changed their Facebook profile pictures after CEO Mark Zuckerberg and Prime Minister Narendra Modi did so and urged other to follow suit to support the Digital India initiative. In fact the tenets that define the Digital India initiative are **Infrastructure, Governance and services and Digital empowerment of citizens.**

B. Concept of e-government and e-governance: The topic of e-government and e-governance has become increasingly acknowledged over the last few years. E-governance can be defined as "a government structure which is efficient and effective and is duly controlled by citizens" Within the same context, e-governance aims to promote policy making, however e-government requires the use of e-democracy.

On the other hand, *e-government* means "exploiting the power of information and communications technology to help transform the accessibility, quality and cost-effectiveness of public services". E-government also relates to the relationship between citizens and those in power. To increase accountability and empowerment, the use of e-government is vital, in order to achieve citizen participation **[3].**

C. IT vs ICT: IT (Information Technology) refers to an entire industry that uses computers, networking, software and other equipment to manage information. ICT (Information Communications Technology) can be seen as an extended synonym for IT. Therefore, ICT can be seen as an integration of IT with media broadcasting technologies, audio/ video processing and transmission and telephony. ICT provides communication faster and accurate, and further provides adequate storage with the use of computer, electronics devices and software application. The term ICT first came in to picture in 1997. **[4]**

2. Objectives of Study

The aim of this article is to analyse the use of information technology. The future of e-governance is very bright. With the help of information technology, the daily matters can be effectively taken care of irrespective of the field covered by it. The main objectives this study are:

1. *To study the role of e-governance in improving* the society.
2. To know the role of e-governance in delivering the services to society.
3. To know how the society gets benefits from e-governance.

3. Key Factors to Drive Vision into Reality

The Digital India initiative aims to provide thrust to nine pillars identified as growth areas. **These pillars include – broadband highways, everywhere**

mobile connectivity, public internet access program, e-Governance, e-Kranti, information for all, electronics manufacturing, IT for Jobs, and early harvest programs. Let's have a look at some of the initiatives planned and the role of IT in their success**[5].**

4. Overview

• *Delivery models*

The Government of India has initiated a giant leap forward to transform the country into a digitally empowered knowledge economy. DI will help in leveraging India's Globally acclaimed IT competence for the benefit of 120 billion Indians.It will help in reducing corruption ,getting things done quickly and will help in reducing paper work.. It has radically defined the way a government provides service to citizens, businesses and other arms of the government using the following *various stand-alone systems or delivery models[6]*:

• Government-to-Citizen (G2C)

• Government-to-Business (G2B)

• Government-to-Government (G2G)

• Government-to-Employees (G2E)

• **Status of digital India**

Digital India is in the progress mode till the month of November 2015. The Apex Committee is going to analyse its progress

very soon.Media reports have also hinted at development of policies for Digital India very soon.As a part of digital India Modi appointed ms Kruti Kumari as brand ambassador of Digital India**[5].**

• **Critical Success factors of Digitization**

While the government agencies open their doors for myriad forms of Digitization platforms and solutions, it is important to bear a few of these aspects in mind:

a. Ensuring Quality of Digitization output

b. Ensuring Authenticity of Important Documents

c. Adherence & Compliance with open standards for long term archival

d. Scalable & Manageable Archive of documents through efficient Document Management System**[5].**

• **Advantages of E-Governance**

Following are the advantages of E-Governance:

1. Speed – The Technology makes the communication speedier. Internet, Phones, Cell Phones have reduced the time taken in normal communication.

2. Cost Reduction – Most of the Government expenditure is appropriated

towards the cost of stationary. Paper-based communication needs lots of stationary, printers, computers, etc. which calls for continuous heavy expenditure. Internet and Phones makes communication cheaper saving valuable money for the Government.

3. Transparency – Use of ICT makes governing profess transparent. All the information of the Government would be made available on the internet. The citizens can see the information whenever they want to see. But this is only possible when every piece of information of the Government is uploaded on the internet and is available for the public to peruse.

4. Accountability – Once the governing process is made transparent the Government is automatically made accountable. Accountability is answerability of the Government to the people. It is the answerability for the deeds of the Government. **An accountable Government is a responsible Government [7].**

5. Role of E-Governance in Improving the Society

Information technology is utilizing computers along with the telecommunication equipment for the retrieval, storage, transmission and manipulation of data, which are aimed to improve the efficiency of different sectors. Some of the facilities which would be available through this initiative are Digital Locker, e-education, e-health, Digital Signature and national scholarship portal. Some of the main roles of E-Governance in improving the society are:

A. Centralized Information - E-Governance has provided electronic information infrastructure to simplify service delivery, reduce duplication, and improve the level and speed of service at a lower cost. The centralized information approach of e-Governance keeps all information at one place in electronic form. This approach of making information secure prevents it against any theft or leakage **[8].**

B. Benefits of Information Technology in Agriculture sector

Now days, Information technology is playing a vital role in agriculture sector. Farmers, researchers and users get many benefits from this. Some benefits are following :

a. **Improve in decision making**– Information technology is very useful for farmers, researchers and other person to take any decision regarding

future. From having necessary information any farmers can make decision concerning their agricultural activities as what should be growing and where should be selling. From the exchange of knowledge from various areas and various territory farmers be more conscious before decision making.

b. **Agriculture breakthrough**-Scientists are developing new and improve grains or techniques to help winter crops become strong against the cold.

c. **Suitable planning**- Information technology has provided farming software which can keep better track of agriculture and predict yields. By using of modern farming technology and methodology, farmers can better control on their crops.

d. **Prediction of weather**–Information technology is also very help to make prediction about weather. Through satellites and other technology farmers get the knowledge about future weather condition, it will be starvation, dry, hailstorm, rainfall and other natural conditions.

e. **Better selling opportunity**- Information technology also provide the knowledge about what and where is suitable market for better

opportunity of selling product on fair value.

f. **SMS based weather information, disaster alerts:** SMS based weather information and disaster alerts would be provided. DeitY's Mobile Seva Platform has been made available for this purpose. Ministry of Earth Sciences (MoES) (India Meteorological Department - IMD)/ Ministry of Home Affairs (MHA) (National Disaster Management Authority - NDMA) would be the nodal organizations for implementing this scheme**[9].**

C. **Customer service:** Key benefits of E-Government for citizens include convenience, improved quality of customer service, and access to more, higher quality information, adhar card, online public grievance system and business:

- *Convenience -- E-Government brings public services to citizens on their schedule and their venue.* Citizens gain access to government services in their homes and offices, without having to work within the confines of limited office hours in sometimes distant locations. Wage earners do not have to forego a half a day's pay to visit a government office.

- ***Improved Customer Service*** - E-Government allows the Commonwealth to redeploy resources from back-end processing to the front line of customer service. For example, reducing effort on routine simple tasks allows more time for complicated tasks. The Department of Revenue (DOR) provides a good example of how this has been done in the past. DOR embraced the electronic filing of taxes, aggressively promoting this new application. As a result personal income tax returns filed electronically almost quadrupled in five years **[10]**

- **Adhar Card** -It is worth talking about Aadhar—the new Unique Identification (UID) project which aims at providing a 16-digit identification number to all citizens of India. With this project, India will be the first country to implement a biometric-based unique ID system for its residents on such a large scale **[11].**

- **Online public grievance system** - Imagine a situation where you are going to a government organization for a specific work. But employees are not helping to pass your file without bribe. Now you are helpless

and don't know to whom you should complaint. In this article, information about online complaint filing process against government organizations is provided. The Department of Administrative Reforms and Public Grievances operates an online platform i.e PG portal (Public Grievance portal) to enable the citizens to file complaints in a hassle free manner.

- ***Increased access to information*** - *E-Government improves the accessibility of government information to citizens allowing it become an important resource in the making the decisions that affect daily life* **[10].**

- **Businesses-** Key benefits of E-Government for businesses include lower cost of doing business and increased access to information.

  a. ***Lower cost of doing business*** - *E-Government lowers the cost to a business of conducting all of its interaction with government.* Electronic transactions save time compared to conducting business in person. There is no driving to a government office, no waiting in line.

And if a transaction is not completed right away, the return trip can be made with a mouse click rather than a drive to the office.

b. ***Improved access to information*** - *E-Government provides a greater amount of information to businesses and provides it in a more organized and accessible manner.* **[10]**

D. GPS System

Global Positioning System is a navigational aid, funded and controlled by the U.S. Department of Defense. What this does is give the average consumer the power to find any place on earth at any time day or night. Just think of the benefits this provides for a wide variety of the public. Some of the benefits we might receive from GPS are: To maximize your fuel economy, Utilizing a GPS system will give you accurate directions for travel. GPS Tracking is of vital use if you run a courier business, rental business, or just plain delivery service, and need to keep track of several vehicles, then GPS is what you need. The GPS device can track the presence of stray animals near the fields**. [12]**

E. E-governance and the justice delivery system

The concept of justice requires that:

i. it must firstly be done in a just, fair and reasonable manner,

ii. it must be seemed to be done, and

iii. it must be "felt" to be done.

Thus, unless this third element of "felt to be done" is satisfied, the concept of justice is not complete because this third element is the most important component of justice delivery system. The following are the benefits of e-governance for judicial purposes:

- **Legal Recognition of E-Records** - This arrangement is definitely hassle free and more transparent as compared to traditional methods of record keeping. Further, it is not prone to tampering unlike paper-based record, which is difficult to maintain and has its own limitations.

- **Legal Recognition of Digital Signatures**- The type of digital signature that shall be used to authenticate an e-record shall be as per the rules that may be framed by the Central Government.

- **Electronic-Gazette**-Publication of official gazette in e-form is permitted where any law requires publication of rule, regulation,

order, byelaw, notification. If such publication is made in the e-form, the requirement of publication in the official gazette is deemed to have been fulfilled. **[13]**

F. Role of e-Governance to strengthen higher education system in India

Higher education system in India has declined somewhat over the past three decades due to remarkable increase in the number of colleges and universities and their privatization. It has become very important for the government to keep track of their functioning.

The benefits of e-governance in an educational sector are improved efficiency, increase in transparency and accountability of educational administrative activities convenient and faster access to services, and lower costs for administrative services. The multi-faceted benefits of e-governance can be described as under these points:

- Benefit to university
(i) Centralized information access from anywhere
(ii) Increase in student enrollment ratio.
(iii) Provide quality e-services, e-participation,
(iv) Increase clearness
(v) Improved decision making, Private Public Participation

- Benefits to students
(i) Increase participation in education affairs
(ii) Personalized login for each students
(iii) Extensive saving in time cost & efforts
(iv) Information & transaction services
(v) Job opportunities
(vi) Students can access virtual lectures & Seminars.
(vii) Students can solve their problems like-examination queries, result verification etc.
(ix) Students can submit feedback to university.

- Benefits to colleges
(i) Data can access easily
(ii) Electronic data exchange with university
(iii)Saving of hidden operational cost

- Overall education system
(i) Long term impact on organization goals
(ii) Improve education system
(iii)Empowerment of faculties, students & encouragement of their participation in governance.**[14]**

6. Challenges in Implementing e-Governance

India's efforts towards bridging the urban-rural divide as well as digital divide are yet to yield substantial results so far. A recent United Nations report, which tracks the status of e-Governance preparedness across countries, has placed India at 118th position in the list of 193 countries. The

report also revealed that there's a strong correlation between the e-Government Development Index and the national income of a country.

In the absence of privacy law and data protection law, implementation of a majority of e-governance initiatives in India has witnessed failure. Another challenge that the government of India can't deny for long is the poor cyber security in the country. According to the experts, e-governance without cyber security is meaningless. **[15]**

7. Conclusion

Simply stated, the use of Information and Communication Technology in governance may be termed as E-Governance.The e-governance which is one of the nine pillars of digital india programme needs security for smooth information flow, best practice database and enhanced capacity for information analysis etc. Government should support by enacting favorable legislations and updated amendments for maintaining standards in the educational process and improvements in the related field. It requires completely new infrastructure, procedures, policies and working skills for producing and collecting online

information. With the advent of ICT, electronic governance is an emerging trend to re-invent the way the government works, becoming a new model of governance. Such a comprehensive and integrated system can also enable authorities to analyze the performance.

It can be concluded that e-governance has achieved its main objectives viz:

i. Ensuring that landowners get computerized copies of ownership, crop and tenancy and updated copies of Records of Rights (RoRs) on demand.

ii. Realizing low-cost and easily-reproducible basic land record data through reliable and durable preservation of old records.

iii. Ensuring accuracy, transparency and speedy dispute resolution.

iv. Facilitating fast and efficient retrieval of information for decision making.

The best example is : The Union Government has ranked **e-governance project of Punjab** as number 1 among all states in the country. The quarterly ranking released by the Union Department of Electronics and Information Technology (DEIT) on October 31 has rated the e-district (Zila Suvidha Center) Punjab project as the best in the country for its effective pilot project implementation, backend

computerisation of maximum number of services among all states, on-time selection of system integrator, delivery of hardware and connectivity in more than 1,000 field offices, robust governance structure in the form of district e-governance society and other best features**.[16]**

"An accountable Government is a responsible Government."

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