

Concept of E-Governance and Strategy for E-Governance in India

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Abstract:

The word 'electronic governance' is used as E-governance which is the application of Information and Communication Technology to the process of Government functioning in order to bring about 'Simple, Moral, Accountable, Responsive and Transparent' (SMART) governance. E-Governance is basically the application of Information and communication technology (ICT) to provide government services to the citizens through internet. This paper explains the concept of E-Governance, scope of E-Governance, stages, strategy of e-Governance in India and further highlight on the Benefits of E-Governance, and challenges of E-Governance.

Introduction:

The concept of E-Governance was came from the council of Europe. Government of India established the department of electronics in 1970's. The subsequently established the National Informatics Centres (NIC) in 1977, it was the first major step towards E- Governance. The main thrust for e-governance was provided by the launching of national satellite-based computer network (NICNET) in 1987 – the national satellite-based computer network. This was followed by the launch of the District Information System programme of the National Informatics Centre (DISNIC) to computerize all district offices in the country for which free hardware and software was offered to the State Governments.

E-Governance is defined as,

“E- Governance is the application of information and communication technology to transform the efficiency, effectiveness, transparency and accountability of information and transactional exchange within Government between Government and Government agencies of national, state, municipal and local level citizens and business and empower citizens through access and use of information.”

It is also called as Electronic Government, Online Government, E-govt., Digital Government and Transformational Government. E- Governance is the

modernization of public administration bringing it closer to civil society and business through the use of information and communication technology.

The major aim of E-Governance in the portal of www.indg.in is to support the ongoing E-Government movement in India by providing a one step information access to available online citizens services, to state specific, E-Governance applications and to build awareness about Online legal services, mobile Governance, Right to information , etc.

India has experienced in E-Governance and Information and communication technology initiatives has revealed significant success in improving accessibility, reducing cost, minimizing corruption, extending help and increased access to un-served groups, E-Governance application have reached millions of people belonging to these society.

The application of E-Governance in Maharashtra state is the co-operation of state government with private sector i.e. SETU, online compliant management system Mumbai. It is convenient and beneficial for business it serves the current information in few minutes and low cost which saves the Money, Time and Energy. It helps to simplify processes and make access to government information

more easily accessible for public sectors agencies and citizens.

In short E-Governance is nothing but adding electronic means in governance. E-Governance allows direct participation of constituents in government activities. The objective of E-Governance is to support and simplify governance for Government, Citizens and Business.

Objectives of the study:

- To explain the concept of E-governance.
- To know the scope of E-governance.
- To know the strategy of E-governance in India.
- To highlight the benefits and challenges of E-Governance.

Methods and material:

The information and data collection method is used as secondary i.e. published and unpublished sources like journals, Research papers, Books, and internet.

Scope of E-Governance:

Governance is all about flow of information between the Government and Citizens, citizen and Government, Government and Businesses and Government and Government. The scope of E-Governance is including different models that are G2C, C2G, G2G, and G2B. It is also known as applications of E-Governance.

A. Government to Citizen (G2C):

Government to Citizen Relationship is the most basic aspect of E-Governance. In modern times, Government deals with many aspects of the life of a citizen. The relation of a citizen with the Government starts with the birth and ends with the death of the citizen. A person transacts with the Government on every corner of his life. It may be birth registration, marriage registration, divorce and death registration? The G2C relation will include the services provided by the Government to the Citizens. These services include the public utility services i.e. Telecommunication,

Transportation, Post, Medical facilities, Electricity, Education and also some of the democratic services relating to the citizenship such as Certification, Registration, Licensing, Taxation, Passports, and ID Cards etc.

Therefore E-Governance in G2C relationship will involve flowing services from Government towards Citizens with the use of Information and Communications Technology (ICT).

1. E-Citizenship - E-Citizenship will include the implementation of ICT for aid of Government Services relating to citizenship of an individual. It may involve online transactions relating to issue and renewal of documents like Ration Cards, Passports, Election Cards, Identity Cards, etc.

2. E-Registration - An individual enters into several contracts during his life. E-Registration will cover the online registration of various contracts. Many of these contracts and transactions are require registration for giving it legality and enforceability. Such registration may also be made ICT enabled. E-registration will help to reduce a significant amount of paperwork and time.

3. E-Transportation - E-Transportation services would include services of Government relating to Transport by Road, Rail, Water or Air. This may involve online booking and cancellation of tickets, status of vehicles, railways, boats and flights, issue and renewal of Driving Licences, registration and renewal of vehicles, transfer of vehicles, payment of the fees of licences, payment of fees and taxes for vehicle registration.

4. E-Health - E-Health services would be ICT facilitated the health services of the Government. Under this interconnection of all hospitals may take place. A patient database may be created and A local pharmacy database may also be created. All this can be done by using internet

5. E-Education - E-Education would cover the implementation of ICT in imparting of education and conducting of Courses. Distant

as well as classroom education will be facilitated with the use of ICT. Use of internet can reduce the communication time required in Distance education; Internet may also help in conducting online classes. ICT in education makes the education interesting. Students are getting educational information from internet whenever they want. It is easy to use for getting knowledge of any educational stream.

6. E-Help - E-Help is very useful for citizens. It includes the use of technologies like internet, SMS; help line number, etc. for the purpose of reducing the response time of the Government agencies to the disasters. NGOs help the Government. Online information relating to disasters, warnings and calls for help can help the Government.

7. E-Taxation - E-Taxation will facilitate the taxing process by using ICT in the taxing process. E-governance is useful in filling income tax return form, online registration of e-returns, and online application for permanent account number; check status of PAN, online tax payment and deduction etc.

B. Citizen to Government (C2G):

Citizen to Government relationship will include the communication of citizens with the Government arising in the Democratic process like voting, campaigning, feedback, etc.

1. E-Democracy - The true concept of Democracy includes the participation of the citizens in the democratic and governing process. Today due to the increased population the active participation of the citizens in government process is not possible. But the uses of ICT in that make it possible. The ICT can help enable the true democratic process including voting, public opinion, feedback and Government accountability.

2. E-Feedback - E-Feedback includes the use of ICT for the purpose of giving feedback to the Government. Lobbying is pursuing the Government to take a certain decision. Use of ICT can enable online feedback to the Government online debates as to the

Government services.

C. Government to Government (G2G):

Government to government relationship would include the relationships between Central and State Government and also the relationship between two or more Government departments.

1. E-administration - E-administration would include the implementation of ICT in the functioning of the Government, internally and externally. Implementation of ICT can reduce the communication time between the Government Departments and Governments. Use of E-Governance reduce the paper work and save the stationary. E-administration makes the transparency in the government process.

2. E-police - The concept of E-police is little different from Cyber-Police. Cyber Police require technology experts to curb the electronic/cyber crimes. E-police refers to the use of ICT for the purpose of facilitating the work of the Police department in investigation and administration. The concept of E-police includes databases of Police Officers, their performances, Criminal databases – wanted as well as in custody, the trends in crimes and much more. ICT can help reduce the response time of the Police department and also reduce cost by reducing paperwork.

3. E-courts - The concept of E-Court will include the ICT enablement of the judicial process. Technology may help distant hearing, online summons and warrants and online publication of Judgments and Decrees.

D. Government to Business (G2B):

Government to Business relationship would include the relationships between Government and business. In government to business model e-Governance tools are used to aid the business community providers of goods and services to seamlessly interact with the government. The objective is to cut red tape, save time.

1. E-Taxation - Corporate sector pays many taxes, duties and dues to the Government.

Payment of these taxes and duties will be made easier by E-Taxation. Online taxing and online payment of taxes can help reduce cost and time required as compare to physical submission of taxes. ICT can also help crosscheck the frauds and deficiencies in payment, further bringing accuracy and revenue to the Government. It makes the process easier and time saving.

2. E-Licensing - Companies have to acquire various licences from the Government, similarly the companies have to acquire various registrations. The use of ICT reduces the cost and save the time for registration of any licence.

3. E-Tendering - E-Tendering will include the facilities of online tendering and procurement. It will online alerts as to new opportunities of business with the Government and also online submission of tenders and online allotment of work. It will reduce time and cost involved in the physical tendering system.

Stages of E-Governance:

(a) Computerisation: In the first phase, with the availability of personal computers, a large number of Government offices got equipped with computers. The use of computers began with word processing, quickly followed by data processing.

(b) Networking: In this phase, some units of a few government organizations got connected through a hub leading to sharing of information and flow of data between different government entities.

(c) On-line presence: With increasing internet connectivity, a need was felt for maintaining a presence on the web. This resulted in maintenance of websites by government departments and other entities. Generally, these web-pages/web-sites include information about the organizational structure, contact details, reports and publications, objectives and vision statements of the respective government entities.

(d) On-line interactivity: A natural effect of on-line presence was opening up of communication channels between government entities and the citizens, civil society

organizations etc. The main aim at this stage was to minimize the scope of personal interface with government entities by providing downloadable Forms, Instructions, Acts, and Rules etc. In some cases, this has already led to on-line submission of Forms. Most citizen-government transactions have the potential of being put on e-Governance mode.

Strategies for E-Governance in India:

1. To build technical infrastructure across India:

India lacks a fully fledged ICT framework for implementation of e-governance. Complete implementation of E-governance in India will include building technical Hardware and Software infrastructure. It will also include better and faster connectivity options. Newer connectivity options will include faster Broadband connections and faster wireless networks such as 3G and 4G. The infrastructure must be built by Government, Private Sector as well as individuals. Infrastructure will also include promotion of Internet Cafes and Information.

2. To build institutional capacity:

Apart from building technical infrastructure, the Government needs to build its institutional capacity. This will include training of Government employees, appointment of experts. Along with the Government has also to create an Expert database for better utilisation of intellectual resources with it. Apart from this, the Government has to equip the departments with hi-technology and has also to setup special investigating agency.

3. To build legal infrastructure:

For better implementation of e-governance, the Government will need to frame laws which will fully incorporate the established as well as emerging technology. Changing technology has changed many pre-established notions; similarly the technology is growing and changing rapidly. It is important, that the Government makes

laws which incorporate the current technology and has enough space to incorporate the changing future technology. These IT laws need to be flexible to adjust with the rapidly changing technology. Currently India has only the IT Act, 2000 which is mainly E-Commerce legislation. India has also modified many laws to include electronic technology; however it is not sufficient to cover e-governance completely.

4. To build judicial infrastructure:

Overall technological awareness in current Judges is very low. The judiciary as a whole needs to be trained in new technology, its benefits and drawbacks and the various usages. The judiciary may alternatively appoint new judges with new judges and setup special Courts to deal with the matters relating to ICT. The Government can also setup special tribunals to deal with matters relating with ICT.

5. To make all information available online:

The Government has to publish all the information online through websites. This can be facilitated through centralised storage of information, localisation of content and content management. The information of government is public information; therefore the citizens are entitled to know every piece of information of the Government, because the Government is of the People, by the People and for the People.

6. To popularise E-governance:

Literacy percentage in India is alarming. The whole world is moving towards e-governance, but India still lacks in the literacy department. The people need to be educated and made e-literate for e-governance to flourish. There are very few e-literate people in India is very low. The Government needs to campaign for e-governance, increase people's awareness towards e-governance. Government can

only encourage people to go online if it can make people feel comfortable with e-governance. This can be done through educating the people about the advantages of e-governance over physical governance.

7. Centre-State Partnership:

Indian setup is quasi-federal. Therefore Centre-State and inter-state cooperation is necessary for smooth functioning of the democratic process. This cooperation is also necessary for successful implementation of e-governance. This cooperation shall extend to Centre-state, inter-state and inter-department relationships. For the same the Government can setup a Central Hub like the current Government of India portal, for accessing the information of all the organs of the central government and also all the state government. The states can cooperate with the Centre to create a National Citizen Database.

8. To set standards:

Finally it is important to set various standards to bring e-governance to the quality and performance level of private corporate sector. The Government of India is currently working on standards management and has various drafts prepared for the same. These standards include following: Inter-operability standards, Security standards, Technical standards, Quality standards. Government websites in India currently have no uniform standard. Many Government of Maharashtra websites differ in standard within even two of its web pages. There is no set standard as to quality of the information, document, the formats, etc. It is very important for the Government to set uniform national standards to be followed by all the Governments and agencies.

Benefits of E-Governance:-

• **Reduction in cost:**

E-Governance saves the money of stationary; it reduces the cost of stationary

expenditure. Paper-based communication needs lots of stationary, printers, computers, etc. The expenditure of stationary and other materials are heavy for government. The expenditure of sending document to another department incurred cost but if we use the e-governance the cost of transferring document is saves. Internet and Phones makes communication cheaper saving valuable money for the Government.

- **Transparency:**

Use of information and communication technology makes government work transparent. The use of e-governance makes all the procedure of government is transparent. All the information of the Government would be made available easily on the internet. The citizens can see the information whenever they want to see. But this is only possible when each and every of information of the Government is uploaded on the internet and is available for the public. Information and communication technology helps make the information available online eliminating all the possibilities of concealing of information

- **Accountability:**

Once the governing procedure 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.

- **Speed:**

Use of information and communication technology and internet in E-Governance makes the procedure of work speedy and easy. The use of Information and communication technology and internet increases much more speed than the manual process. Uses of Internet, Phones and Cell Phones have reduced the time taken in normal communication.

- **Simplicity and efficiency:**

Use of information and communication technology to governance in makes the all procedure simple. The complexity of government process is eliminated with the use of e-governance. Simplifications in the structure and change in the statutes and regulations. The end result would be simplification of the functioning of government, enhanced decision making abilities and increased efficiency across government

- **Beneficial for agriculture:**

It is very beneficial for agricultural sectors for online distribution, price determination, checking agricultural daily market, market segmentation, market competition, online buying and selling, etc.

- **Beneficial for Rural development:**

Use of e-governance in rural area makes them the developed. In rural area the grampanchayat, panchyat samiti records the birth and death registration and other records in that e-governance is very useful.

- **Beneficial for income tax:**

E-governance is useful in filling income tax return form, online registration of e-return intermediary, online application for permanent account number; check status of PAN, online tax payment and deduction etc.

- **Beneficial to central excise:**

It is useful to central government for collection excise duty online registration for service tax payer, online registration for central excise assessee. It is also useful to our service tax tariff, service tax location code. Online fill up the central excise return etc.

Challenges of E-Governance:

- **Cyber Crime:**

This is a main drawback of E-Governance, consideration and potential implication of implementing and designing E-Governance including disintermediation of the government and citizen, impact on economic, social and political factor, vulnerability to cyber attack and disturbance to its area.

- **High internet cost:**

The development and implementation of E-Governance it has yielded only a mediocre product. It has spent become vary huge amount. Prodigious amount of money has been spent. The outcomes and effort of trial internet based government are often difficult to gauge unsatisfactory.

- **Corruption:**

It reflecting on the possible contribution of E-Governance to corruption and accountability areas we noted that it would have been important for a lot of our countries to develop some basis ethics infrastructure and deal with some of the fundamentals of the organisational arrangement in existence because we can't except e- government to solve these problems for us but we need to be able to deal with them and allow the technology to facilities our batter accountability and transparency mechanism.

- **Lack of knowledge of computer:**

India is a developing country, near about 70% people lived in rural area but new technology will not provide them. So they are illiterate of computer knowledge. They don't get this technology.

- **Slow internet service:**

In India vary few companies are providing the internet facilities. The internet penetration is relatively low compared to that of other developed countries. The speed of internet in India has been slow because there are only few commercial service providers. Moreover the internet users are small in number compared to that of developed

country. Net users in developing countries are highly educated group and high income young males.

- **Hyper-surveillance:**

Increased contact between government and its citizens goes both ways. Once e-government begins to develop and become more sophisticated, citizens will be forced to interact electronically with the government on a larger scale. This could potentially lead to a lack of privacy for civilians as their government obtains more and more information on them.

- **Lack of awareness about E-Governance:**

In Rural area and some of the urban area people are not aware about the use of E-Governance. Those who know about that they have a fair in their mind. It is a challenge for a government to aware the people about the E-governance.

- **Conclusion and Suggestions:**

E-governance plays an important role in government to citizen, citizen to government, government to business, and Government to government. The use of information and communication technology in E-governance makes all the work easily and accurately. It saves the lot of time, money and reduced the cost of paper and stationary. There are several challenges in using E-governance but they can be overcome by awareness. The strategy for E-governance is very important for making the India digital. The government should start the awareness programme and workshop in the rural and urban area it will help to increase the users of E- governance.

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