New Mode of Governance: Governance through Technology

Bapukan Saikia

Abstract: *E-governance is the new as well as important form of governance in the twenty-first century. To be particular, in the system of e-governance Information and Communication Technology (ICT) is used to its processes as well as to the functioning of the government so that a kind of SMART governance can be brought which means 'Transparent, Accountable, Responsive, Simple and Moral' governance. In other words, it can be defined as the process of interaction between the government of a country and its citizens as well as internal governmental operations for effective implementation of different government policies with the application of ICT. It is believed that e-governance is a major weapon which is wielded to remove corruption and to make public delivery system clutter-free. The main purpose of this paper is to show the importance of the ICT in the processes of e-governance which will in turn ensure good governance.*

Keywords : Citizens, E-governance, Government, ICT, India

I. INTRODUCTION

-governance is the strong tool for ensuring corruption-free administration'.[1]
-Dr. A.P.J. Abdul Kalam

The information processing systems are based on digital computers. It takes information like a basic resource essential for individuals and organisation to survive and succeed in society. Development is closely related to social change and information has an important role in bringing about both. It has a profound impact on country's economy and the quality of human life. The IT revolution is of much greater significance than the Industrial Revolution. It has opened up new possibilities of economic and social transformation from which developed and developing nations can potentially benefit. That is why governments around the world, at all levels have woken up to the potential of IT in a variety of functions and activities.[2]

E-governance is governance online. In the system of e-governance Information and communication technology (ICT) is used in the process of governance for diverting government services, exchanging information, communication transactions and integrating various stand-alone systems and services between government-to-citizen (G2C), government-to-business (G2B), government-to-government (G2G) and government-to-employees (G2E) within the entire government framework.[3] The "e" which is used in the e-Governance stands for the term 'electronic'. Through e-governance, process of governance becomes more effective, efficient and transparent and all the government related services are made available and accessible to the citizens easily.[4]

The main motive of e-governance is to make use of the new technologies that can help both the government and to the citizens.[5] In addition to it, the main goal of the system of e-governance is to reach the people and to make sure that they have received all the government services without any errors. The system of e-governance has further cut down the unnecessary intervene of the unwanted layers in the process of the delivery of government services. Thus, the success of e-governance is also based on good infrastructural setup with the support of local processes and parameters for governments to reach the citizens who are the end beneficiaries.[6]

The ICT helps in efficient storing as well as retrieval of data, immediate information transfer, fast processing of data faster, speeding up governmental processes, increasing transparency and enforcing accountability.[7] Moreover, it provides the government to increase the reach both geographically and demographically. The induction of E-governance has started yielding results where the technological innovations are eliminating the dysfunctional procedures in administration.[8]

E-governance is an alternative and a new form of governance. E-governance is a system through which the services and information related to the government are delivered to the public through electronics means. The best part of e-governance is that with the use of these technologies, it has become possible on the part of the government to

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[1]Kalam, A.A.P.J. (2006). Inaugural Address. International Conference on e-governance. Delhi: IIT, 9th May.

[2] K. Agarwal, Information Technology and E-Governance in India

[3]Saugata, B., and Masud, R.R. (2007). Implementing E-Governance Using OECD Model(Modified) and Gartner Model (Modified) Upon Agriculture of Bangladesh. IEEE. 1-4244-1551-9/07.

[4]Garson, D.G. (2006). Public Information Technology and E-Governance. Sudbury, MA: Jones and Bartlett Publishers.

[5]Rossel, Pierre, and Matthias Finger. "Conceptualizing e-Governance." Management (2007): 399–407.

[6]E-governance, https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/E-governance

[7]E-Governance In India: Concept, Initiatives And Issues.

[8]Ibid

transform its relations with its other wings, citizens and business.[9]

II. ROLE OF ICT IN E-GOVERNANCE

The main and the basic aim of technological revolution is to enhance the standards of human life and transparency in the system which can be achieved by successfully using newest technological innovation and concept like, ICT and e-governance. As a result of technological changes, not only the human life, the governance has also undergone a drastic change. The fourth revolution in information technology is the result of the advent of ICT phenomenon. ICT gives manifold opportunities for improving governance. Employing ICT in governance has opened up new avenues for governments to manage certain things in a more efficient manner. Thus, the tools of ICT are gradually emerging as one of the most important instruments towards the goal of achieving 'good governance'.[10]

Governments are integrating ICTs into different domains for different reasons among them:

- ICT makes e-governance efficient and also effective by facilitating delivery of services better to the citizens in terms of time as well as quality;
- The use of ICT in governance lower down the cost of transaction not only for citizen but also in government operations. Thus, through ICT in governance, governmental services have been made easily accessible and affordable to the citizens;
- The ICT is a powerful tool used for citizen-centric governance which provides easy accessibility to public services by making it anytime anywhere;
- ICT has raised awareness among the citizens and has made citizens capable of demanding better services from the governments. Due to this, today the citizens have put the governments under pressure and has asked to deliver the services in a very economical, transparent, equitable, timely and in an efficient manner;
- ICT has a strong impact in delivering government services and in turn making the government accountable to its citizens. Transparency and accountability of government increased due to easy availability of information through websites and also reduced information monopoly.[11]

III. INDIA AND E-GOVERNANCE

Governance is a challenge in a vast, diverse and rapidly developing country like India. That's where new technologies intervene and enable large-scale transformation and help in the implementation of ambitious government plans.[12]

In India, the new form of governance that is the process of e-governance started with the launching of National Informatics Centre Network known as NICNET in the year 1987. The NICNET was followed by the introduction of the District Information System of the National Informatics Centre (DISNIC) program. It was launched to making all district offices in the country digitalized. Moreover, under the DISNIC program, free hardware, software etc was also provided to the governments of the state to attain the ultimate goal of E-governance. Thus, by the year 1990, these efforts led to extension of the NICNET to all district headquarters via the State capitals. Accordingly, both at the Centre as well as at the State levels, the establishment of a large number of e-governance services is made possible through the process of computerization or digitalization and internet connectivity.[13]

The main motive of National E-Governance Plan (NeGP) is to provide all public services easily accessible to the public in their area, with the help of common service delivery outlets and ensure transparency, efficiency and reliability of this services at minimum costs.[14] It is formed in the year 2006 by the Department of Electronics and Information Technology (DEITY) and Department of Administrative Reforms and Public Grievances (DARPG).[15]

With the help of ICT, the Indian government has launched several services which are made available online to its citizens.

IV. RESULT AND DISCUSSION

With the launch of e-governance services, though India has become successful to some extent but the extremely high population of India offers various challenges towards the successful operation of e-governance. As per the census report of 2011, more than 80% of Indian population does not know to read and write English. This becomes a big challenge not only to the citizens but also on part of the government because most of the applications in e-governance are given in English. India being a multilingual country, it becomes extremely difficult to use a common language. It is the reason because of which majority of the e-governance projects fail in India. With the goal to make the ultimate motive of e-governance successful, government of India is trying its best and thus e-governance website like 'vikaspedia.in' is now made available in 21 Indian languages. Moreover, to make e-governance effective in India, IT education is also highly needed.[16]

As per the reports of internet telecommunications union (ITU) 2011 it was revealed that only 10% of the total Indian populations have access to internet. This led to the fact that only a small portion of Indian people are aware of various public services whereas a large population remains unaware. Moreover lack of proper infrastructure along with low per capita income has worsen the situation which has led to the limited usage of e-governance services.[17]

As a part of the NeGP, a mission mode project (MMP) was launched by the central government which is an individual project within the NeGP.[18] The NeGP comprises of 31 MMPs. These are again divided as state and central or

[9]"Advances in Computing and Communications", Springer Science and Business Media LLC, 2011

[10]Kavitha D., "E-Governance and Public Service Delivery in Karnataka: With Special Reference to Bhoomi Project in Mysore District", University of Mysore, 2017, Thesis.

[11] Ibid

[12] E-Governance Empowering India, The Hindu, 7th March, 2018.

[13]Op. cit., E-Governance in India.

[14]Ibid

[15] Ibid

[16] Shilpi Sinha Ray, "Critical analysis of e-governance in India", 5th March,2017,

[17] Ibid

[18] https://www.quora.com/What-is-a-mission-mode-project-Indian-government

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integrated projects. The government of each state is also given the provision to determine five MMPs which is specific to the needs of its individuals.[19]

As a part of e-governance, the government has been spearheading radical digitization in its policies to induce economic inclusiveness and social transformation, through initiatives like, 'Digital India', 'Make in India' and Skill India where India, as a result, is gearing up for an era of increased digitization.[20]

V. ADVANTAGE OF E-GOVERNANCE

The use of the e-governance services has led to better delivery of government services to citizens and improved interactions and relations with business and industry. It has also empowered citizens through access to information. The resulting benefits of e-governance are thus, lesser corruption, more transparent, more convenience, growth of revenue and last but not the least cost reductions.

People are being replaced by technology and the organisation is able to downsize, which is the process of reducing the number of people, reduce time and increase customer satisfaction. These days technology has made faster communication. With the use of internet, phones etc. have decreased the time which was taken in normal communication. This also leads to the breakdown of hierarchy in administration and have made administration better and cheaper.[21]

Moreover, paper-based communication always calls for heavy government expenditure which requires lots of papers, printers etc. Communication through Internet and Phones has made the communication cheaper for the Government. The use of ICT in governance also makes government transparent. When the government information is made available online, the citizens can access it whenever they want to. Thus, by doing so the ICT helps in making the information available in internet by eliminating the possibilities of concealing information.[22]

The government which is transparent is automatically an accountable government. Accountability is nothing but the answerability of the government to the people and an accountable Government is thus, a responsible one.[23]

VI. DISADVANTAGES OF E-GOVERNANCE

Though there are so many reasons to like the services provided under the e-governance, it also not beyond disadvantages. Shifting the government services to an electronic system is one of the toughest task as well as also one of the disadvantages of e-governance. Because in such a system the direct person to person interaction is missing. and such interaction is valued by lots of people.

Apart from this, the major obstacle which comes in the way of the implementation of an e-governance service is that, if problems occur in technology-based services, while

delivering the services the employees often find it easy to make the excuses such as the server has gone down or the internet is not working.

In a country like India, where literacy is a factor, another problem regarding the e-governance is associated with the literacy of the citizens. The users who do not know how to read and write will either be unable to enjoy the services or they will need assistance. Thus, in case of rural people, illiterates and senior citizens, illiteracy provides opportunity to the literate middle man to do corruption in the name of help.[24]

VII. CONCLUSION

The concept of e-governance is gradually evolving in India and it is also necessary for transparency and accountability of the government. Moreover, e-governance has become a tool to increase policy making participation of the people by making them aware of the right information at right time. In India, the increase in the use of internet and telecommunication services of course give a ray of hope to the citizens of India. E-governance has restored people's faith on the government and has started believing that e-governance will put an end to the long persisting problems of corruption, regional disparity and unemployment.

However, it is also to be mentioned here that certain factors like slow pace of project completion, red-tape, lack of commitment from the side of the government employees have also obstruct the system of e-governance from giving the required and desired results. In order to avoid these obstacles, the government should bring a change its processes, its outlook, rules and regulations and also its way of interacting with the citizens. It would further require building capacity within the government and creating general awareness about the services of the e-governance among the citizens with emerging information and communication technologies. All these become possible with all new technologies the technological growth. However, in India, the creation of database, use of computers in banks, internet in secretariats and strict administration or election system or import-export documentation have to go a long way to harness their full results.

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[22] Ibid

[23] www.eprocureblog.com

[24] Ibid

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