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E – GOVERNANCE: AN INITIATIVE TO PUBLIC DEVELOPMENT IN INDIA WITH SPECIAL REFERENCE TO ODISHA

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ABSTRACT

In countries like India major chunk of the people are living in rural part of the country. Most of these people are not sufficiently aware about the governmental initiative for the betterment of citizen. These people are cheated mostly by so called mediators (Dalals) of different objectives. Now a day government has taken a large step to help these people along with the educated mass through e – governance approach. The development of ICT and telecommunication technology helps a lot to modernize the public sector. The government in collaboration with states and NGOs has under taken various projects to help the citizen of India in their day to day activities and with the objective of right to information. Establishing e – governance there require good and updated IT infrastructure and change in the process of information sharing. There are lot many projects lunched by the government in state wise and country wise to make the information available and minimize the gap between governmental approach and citizen of the country.

KEYWORDS

e – governance, e – governance in India, e – governance approach in Odisha.

INTRODUCTION

We are all experienced of availing governmental services through different objective of our day to day life or for different means. Let us consider as example of filing income tax return before 5 years or availing financial services benefits through equity market or to apply for our passport. At that time, it was a huge tasks ahead us. Now the time has been changed and time is now much costlier for every individual. There initiated some major steps to minimize the process time in the day to day public affaires and public awareness to the government plan and process. The basic objective is to educate the public who are unaware of the government benefits so that they should not be cheated or misguided or harassed by so called Babus (Government Official). The e – governance is a suitable step initiated in several countries to help the public and aware them about government plans and process for common man. The examples we focused up became very easy and quick due to the initiative of e - governance. The basics of such changes are mostly based on information availability, decentralization mechanism in process and mostly vital transparency and processing speed. In the future we will find e-governance in a better presentable and suitable format around the world in the next few years. As per the history of e – governance, such a good initiative has been started in Europe, USA and in other developed countries such as Australia and Singapore. Over the coming years, developing countries like India and their citizens can also accrue benefits from e – governance projects. This paper focus on e – governance, its objective and effectiveness, its scope and implementation process, challenges to e – governance, e – governance in India and e – governance steps for developing ‘state of heritage Odisha’.

E – GOVERNANCE: A BRIEF DESCRIPTION

Before starting the discussion, let us just focus on a simple and common example which we all might be experienced at least once in our life. Let us recall what the process, if we want to withdraw some money from our account in a bank and our mindset for the day. The common procedure we were experienced with

1. Go to the bank where we are having our account.
2. Find the right kind of withdrawal form.
3. Fill the form with proper information.
4. Wait in a long serpentine queue.
5. The executive of the bank need to pull a tray where there is bunch of files containing the form which a customer had filled at the time of opening the account and given his / her signature at the first time.
6. The executive will verify the signature and then it takes the cash, count it three or four times.
7. Finally we had received our money.

These above mention activities may take minimum 10 minutes and if it covered within the expected time we feel pretty relaxed and never forget to praise the executive for its smartness of doing the task. But today if the same executive will take 5 minutes even we will be impatience, because we have the advantage of e –commerce system and electronics fund transfer system, use of debit or credit cards with us which is irrespective of bank type (Depending upon the clearing house like VISA, Master and Maestro type) of location and we know how to use it.

Now a day, the time is precious to us and to make us update, we need to have many documents with us for different purpose. Some the basic documents which mostly required by every one like

1. The registration paper (Dalil / PATA) of our land.
2. Birth certificate.
3. Marriage certificate.
4. Death certificate.
5. Identity Card issued by Government etc.

We can also find many small important and updated governmental activities / services which need to be done in a periodical basis. As example there are payment of electric bill, municipality tax, water bill payment, holding bill payment, registration of vehicle and many more like this. In early days we are partially devoting a day or two to finish some of above activities.

All these were taking a long time because unawareness among the people or unavailability of information. Now with the development of ICT (Information Communication Technology) structure, we are all experienced that these entire tasks are very simple and easy one. We can get our land registration in online, we can pay our taxes online, we can apply birth certificate, marriage certificate in online process with 24X7 availability. Instead of a long queue or waiting for so called ‘BABUs’ of government offices, we finished it on a lick of mouse by staying our home even. These all process is possible now due to the initiative taken by government by decentralizing the responsibility and process. In case of any support we need from the government there are quick and easy customer service with whom we can interact and gather our required information or process at any time any where we need. Through the use of internet or email process, the citizen can have direct access to there problems or required aspects by using the governmental websites.

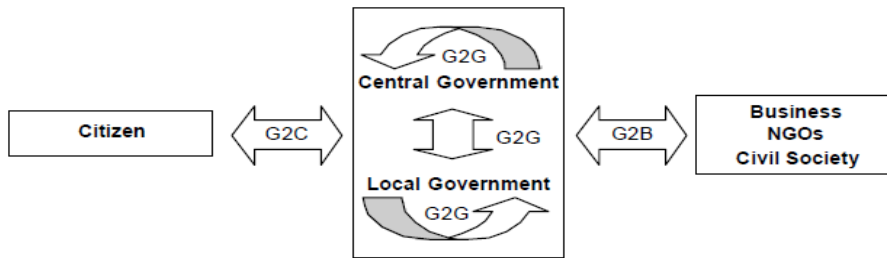
To make this possible and practicable the government should take some initiative and effective steps to support and help to its customers like the common citizen, business houses or self help group for the betterment of common people. As we know the government is a collector and source of information, it should try to adopt the trend and help its customers. In the other way the government can save cost and manpower by making its internal process clear, effective,

faster and adaptive one. As per some author and research person, the process of E – Governance can be represented as use of ICT (Information Communication Technique) to support good governance. So that the e – governance objective will be matched with the objective of a good governance. Good governance can be observed as exercise of economic, political, and administrative authority to better manage affairs of a country at all levels. If we want to see this representation is effective and properly working then there should a proper and strong relationship between government, government operation, e – democracy and e – governance.

E-GOVERNANCE FRAME

As we have discussed earlier, that the e – governance concentrate around three basic groups like the citizen, business house and the Government. For implementing the e – governance its not only the Government who need to focus on its internal objective but also there should be a strategic bonding and focus between the business house and the common people of the country. By focusing the international e-business research consultancy firm Gartner, and the research report of E – Governance and developing country by Michiel Backus (*Research report No. 3 April 2001*), the basic E – Governance communication between the three major groups are represented as

FIG – 1: E – GOVERNANCE FRAMEWORK



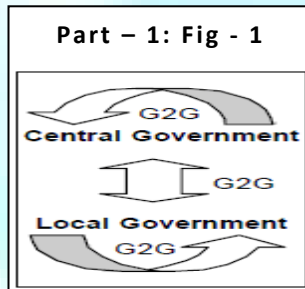
Source: *E – Governance and Developing Country, Research Report April 2001 by Michiel Backus*

OBSERVATION FROM FIG – 1

For the better understanding of the e – governance process methodology, let us divide the above figure in to three parts.

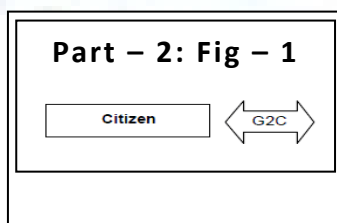
PART – 1

Let us focus on the center part of the model; we can find there is a strong relationship between the Central Government of the country and the Local Government (We can assume the state Government/local Government). The coordination between the state and central government is essential for implementing e –governance and it will be helpful to the common people of the locality. The operation processes in between the two governments are technically represented as G2G (Government to Government) communication. The basic design focus on the G2G communication lies on smooth and seamless function of the entire internal system. There should be new rules and regulations for a paperless transaction and most of all these paperless activities should be legally certified for the government and other associates. With such process we shall be able to save a lot of resource and time. Now we are having example of lot many government processes which are going online and paperless method. Some examples are like the e – tender, e – auction, e – secretariat, e – police and e – court process etc.



PART – 2

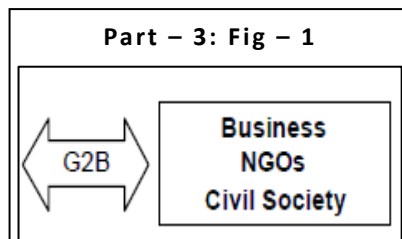
Now let us talk about the one of the most sensitive and concern area of e – Governance implementation, which is present on the left side of the Fig – 1. That is the Government to Citizen (G2C) communication or vice versa. The basic concern of this establishment is the communication from Government to Citizen and defining the accountability through various processes like accepting the citizen objective through improved public service process. There can be applied different mechanism like (a) The e – Citizen, whose basic service can be issuing Ration Cards, passport, payment water tax, Holding tax and other taxes etc. with the basic objective to provide a single window service to the governmental services. (b) The e – Transport, for providing services like motor vehicle registration, providing driving license, payment of toll tax and providing vehicle permit etc. (c) The e – Education, services like online application and fees payment to the education institutes, online course for educating the common citizen and many more these like services. The whole mechanism is only successful if there present sufficient information to all citizen and the access to these information need to be easy and quick enough. For a better maintenance and security it should provide proper security of the information for both Governmental information and public information, proper feedback system for better and improved services are required.



PART – 3

Now let us move to the last part of the Fig -1, to the other vital e – governance service like Government to Business (G2B) communication. As we know India is a great international market hubs consisting of international business giants and the Indian business giants are present, more over to support some of the large business houses, there also present some mediocre business houses. Apart from all these there are different businesses groups are present along with some

NGOs (Non Government Organization) are also functioning for various objectives. The G2B initiative will reduce many huddle and paper work required for these business house operation and Government monitoring process. Some of the common processes required by all these groups are like getting licenses for their firms by e - license, procurement process for both Business house and government by e – procurement, tendering process by e – tendering, standardize payment process through e – Commerce for enabling the payment procedure in an electronic way, generating Public Key Infrastructure for authentic and secured transaction, publication of standard information for common citizen, information receiving process from citizen to the business house or NGOs etc.



CHALLENGES TO E – GOVERNANCE IMPLEMENTATION IN INDIA

By looking into such a large decentralized advanced process and good technical infrastructure, there also present some basic problems for the implementation of e – governance. Some of the basic challenges can be stated as

- 1. Awareness:** As most of the people in Indian are not through about the language English, accessing the on – line service will be a great problem for them. So we need to focus the basics need of the people that is use of local language in the e – governance portal. There are present some technology which can convert English language into the other language. By such implementation the people can be aware about the service and information provided by e – governance and will feel comfortable to use the portal. In India the e – governance application is available in 22 different local languages. Moreover there nee to develop the e – readingness awareness in between the people for a successful and effective use of e – governance.
- 2. Infrastructure:** The e – governance implementation procedure initiate a complete re – engineering of the existing process. For initiating the re – engineering there need to aware the process designer and the process holder about the benefits of re – engineering and effectiveness. Because adoptability by the process holder and their interest is the key factor for developing infrastructure for e – governance. Apart from this there also need to have updated and efficient system, proper communication channel, proper supervision to the problem area, decentralization and maintenance of infrastructure need much effort for the success of e – governance.
- 3. Standardization and Delivery of Services:** As there is a huge practical difference between e – governance process design and service approach, the focus need to be there for balancing both the facts. The fundamental governmental process needs to be standardizing in the context of their objective irrespective of geographical, cultural and lingual difference. There should be followed unique technological process for all e – governance approach and their utilization. In to provide a better service there should be a balanced focus within the internal technological development and automation with the serviceable aspect to the citizen. As country like India where still PC and Internet is far away from the common citizen, there should be some proper plan for developing ICT infrastructure through out the country so that every body should be able to access the web information provided or meant for them.
- 4. Security and privacy of Information:** As e – governance is for all that is to the government and common people, there should be a proper security methods and reliable channel to be maintain to the information along with the proper method for authorizing and authenticating the user for accessing those information. Apart from these the information of the common citizen should be treated and maintain with proper security so that no violation or tampering can be avoided.

E – GOVERNANCE IN INDIA

“India” a country of verity, diversified and where mixed of people and culture stay together. It has stepped itself to a developing country with developing economic scenario but still a major chunk of citizens are in the blanket of ignorance and under developed. These people are basically the rural and semi urban people. Reaching to those people and making them aware of Governmental process and initiative is mostly required. With a good and strong initiative supported by Internet and Communication Technology (ICT) will help to let aware those people about the developing scenario of the country right to citizen principle. The e – governance initiative has been taken place by government of India in early 2000 and till now it has much developed in the regards of providing and supporting the citizen with their objective and helping them in many ways. Let us focus on some of these initiatives and their development in context of Central Government benefits.

CUSTOMS AND EXCISE (GOVERNMENT OF INDIA)

- 98% of export and 90-95% of import documentation computerized
- Electronic filing through ICEGATE at 3 locations (Mumbai, Delhi, Chennai)
- 80% of Service Tax returns electronically processed

Indian Railways (Government of India)

- Anywhere to Anywhere reservation from Anywhere
- Electronic Booking of tickets on select sectors
- Online Information on Railway reservation on Internet

Postal Department (Government of India)

- Direct e-credit of Monthly Income Scheme returns into the investors accounts
- Dematerialization of National Savings Certificate (NSC) and Kishan Vikas Patras (KVP), offering full portability

Passport / Visa (Government of India)

- 100% passport information computerized
- All 33 Regional Passport Offices covered
- Machine readable passports at some locations

Apart from these services there are too many e – governance project running in India at state level. Some of the major e – governance initiatives with respect to public development and benefits are:

- 1. Land / Property Related Services:** Some of these projects are running for the benefit of common public by helping then a quick and efficient result without corruption and too much unnecessary involvement of third party services. In some state these projects are also providing information about the market standard and pricing to the rural people so that the farmer can get their real cost of the labor they have given for earning their living hood. Project running under this segment are **Bhoomi** (State Government of Karnataka), **CARD** (State Government of Andhra Pradesh), **SARITA** (State Government of Maharashtra) **STAR** (State Government of Tamil Nadu).
- 2. Market Related Service:** In country like India, the food market is the rural India. There we can find the farmers are selling their complete production and the total of their labor of one year in the near by market usually called “Mandi”. There they sold it in very low price because of ignorance of current market

price and the pressure of local vendors. There are lot many initiatives are taken to provide them assistance for getting their real cost for their labor. Some of the initiatives are **ITC e – Choupal** and **Gyandoot** (State Government of Madhya Pradesh), **LOKMITRA** (State Government of Himachal Pradesh).

3. **Integrated Citizen Services Center:** Services like payment of electricity, water, telephone bills, payment of taxes, ticket reservations, filing of passport applications, registration of birth/death, payment by cash/cheque/ credit card through **e – mitra**.

INITIATIVES IN ODISHA

In the state of Odisha, the e – governance initiative has been taken placed and there are too many projects are running for the public development in the state. Through the ICT development and implementation and Unicode “Bhasah”, some of the e – governance projects of Odisha and there service objective are given below:

1. **Bhulekha:** The project has been taken care for computerization of land record and related issues through out the state of Odisha.
2. **Treasury Automation:** This project is focusing on automating processes at District Treasuries and Special Treasuries. The activity includes Bills payment, Pension Bills, Challans receipt etc.
3. **Odisha Telemedicine:** This particular service is very much helpful for providing medical service in rural Odisha. The project has been initiated with the help of ISRO and connected with some good medical colleges across the state and in India for providing health care solution to remote places through VSAT service.
4. **E - Shishu:** There is a unique e – governance project has been initiated in Odisha in the whole country with the support of OPEPA (**Orissa Primary Education Program Authority**). The basic objective is to keep the detail of child database within the year range of 14 including their socio economic status through Child Tracking system (CTS) and Intervention monitoring & information system (IMIS) to monitor Sarva Shiksha Aabhiyan in an online mode.
5. **Integrated Transport Information Management System (ITIMS):** This project is functioning for computerizing the driving license, vehicle registration, providing motor vehicle permit (project called **Vaahan**), collection of motor vehicle taxes etc.
6. **PRIASOFT, RURALSOFT & PAMIS:** E – governance project for monitoring accounts, funds flow, project and schemes for developing rural Odisha through the Gram Panchayat, blocks and DRDA (District Rural development Authority).
7. **e-Procurement:** With the support of NIC (New Delhi) the process of e – procurement has been implemented in departments like IT, RD, Works & Water Resources)
8. **E-Gram:** It’s an again unique project on itself first time in the district Ganjam with active initiation of District Collector and DRDA for keeping information regarding the status and development of farmers, SHOs, new initiatives and schemes of government etc.

CONCLUSION

The process objective of e – governance is very majorly initiated for the benefits of common people interest and helping them to aware about the various governmental process and activities for their betterment. In country like India where most of the people stays is rural part and hardly getting any support and awareness about the governmental plan for their development, this initiative will help them a lot for the betterment of their lifestyle. To make the e – governance a successful project a lot changes and adoptability is required between the existing process methodology and its adoptability in between the citizen and governmental plan. Awareness and educating the citizen with respect to the ICT requirement for e – governance acceptance need lot many focus and initiative by the process holders and process users. In state like Odisha which is going to be turned into a huge industrial hub need much effort to make the people aware about the governmental project and plans for the development of state. There are many e – governance projects are already started and functioning successfully in the state with matching steps to the other developing states within India.

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Academically yours

Sd/-

Co-ordinator