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STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

OBJECTIVES

HYPOTHESES

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

RESULTS & DISCUSSION

FINDINGS

RECOMMENDATIONS/SUGGESTIONS

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CONTRIBUTIONS TO BOOKS

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●   Schemenner, R.W., Huber, J.C. and Cook, R.L. (1987), "Geographic Differences and the Location of New Manufacturing Facilities," Journal of Urban Economics, Vol. 21, No. 1, pp. 83-104.

CONFERENCE PAPERS

●   Garg, Sambhav (2011): "Business Ethics" Paper presented at the Annual International Conference for the All India Management Association, New Delhi, India, 19–22 June.

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E-GOVERNANCE: EXPLORING CITIZEN'S BEHAVIOR IN INDIA

KOMAL CHANDIRAMANI
ASST. PROFESSOR
KAMALA NEHRU COLLEGE
DELHI UNIVERSITY
NEW DELHI

MONIKA KHEMANI
ASST. PROFESSOR
SHYAM LAL COLLEGE
DELHI UNIVERSITY
NEW DELHI

ABSTRACT

Online working of a government or providing its services online to its citizens at their door step is known as E-Governance. Development of any country can be judge by the scope of E-Governance in that country. India is a developing nation having democratic decentralization and to enhance the participatory approach; e-governance was initiated in early seventies. The focus of this paper is at the current status of e-governance in India and some emerging areas where e-governance can play a vital role in betterment of the society. This paper also covers key challenges with possible remedial solutions and some strategies for successful implementation of e-governance. It also focused on initiatives adopted by the government at both national and state level. Finally an Indian citizen's behavior is explored that focused on maintaining trust in e-government, perceived risk and perceived behavioral control that are important in understanding a citizen's response to e-governance.

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citizen's behavior and e-governance.

INTRODUCTION

Technology is viewed as a tool that helps to monitor performance and thereby aids in instituting transparency and accountability. Electronic government has been viewed as the adoption of information and communication technology (ICT) by government organizations to achieve better public services. E-governance (Radl, & Chen, 2005) refers to the use of information and communication technology to carry out government operations such as delivering government information and services. Also, Jayaradha and Shanthakumar (2003) defined E-governance as the process of service delivery and information dissemination to citizens using electronic means providing the benefits such as increased efficiency in various governmental processes, transparency and anticorruption in all transactions and empowerment of citizens and encouragement of their participation in governance. So, e-governance is the continuous optimization of service delivery, constituency participation and governance by transforming internal and external relationships through technology, the internet and new media. E-Governance has come a long way since the late 80s and has now become an integral part of governance, be it at the center or the state level. Earlier, e-governance had more to do with facilitation rather than regulation, but now e-governance involves both facilitation and regulation. Basically, it is a step towards better administration by facilitating transparent, speedier, responsive and non-hierarchical system of governance. Better administration leads to effective management of delivery of governmental services and this comes from managing e-governance process.

Government cannot exist or function in isolation. For a government to operate effectively, a government-community-citizen infrastructure should be in place. A close-knit infrastructure would yield two fold benefits. First, citizens can enjoy faster, effective and timely government services. This would also evolve a culture of self-service wherein citizens can help themselves wherever and whenever required. Second, government can become more integrated into the community itself. Also government can focus its resources where they are needed the most.

In India, the government aims to make e-governance mandatory in the all government departments to reduce personal interaction of the public with government officials and minimizing such official and citizens interaction to a large extend will help in reducing corruption. Also, E-governance enables various departments to synchronize data. This will not only result in paperless administration but also help government provide services to citizens at their doorstep or, in some cases, even at the click of the mouse. As the number of servers will reduce, the cost incurred on hardware, machines and maintenance too would come down. This will help government in saving good amount of money.

E-GOVERNANCE MODELS

E-governance services can be shared between citizens, businessman, government and employees. These four models of e-governance are as:-

- **GOVERNMENT TO CITIZENS (G2C):-**This model of e-governance refers to the government services which are shared by citizens. Here, citizens visit to the link of services that they want to use. It enables a strong bond between government and its citizens. It provides services like payment of online bills such as electricity, water, telephone bills etc., online registration of applications, copies of land-records, online filling of complaints and availability of any kind of online information.

- **GOVERNMENT TO GOVERNMENT (G2G):-**This model refers to the services which are shared between the governments. There are lot of information that are needed to be shared between various government agencies, department and organizations. These types of services or information includes sharing of information between police departments of various states, government document exchanges like preparation, approval, distribution and storage of government documents.

- **GOVERNMENT TO BUSINESSMEN (G2B):-**Through this model, bond between private and government sector increases. They share information through this model like collection of taxes, rejection and approval of patent, payment of all kind of bills and penalty and complaints or any kind of dissatisfaction.

- **GOVERNMENT TO EMPLOYEES (G2E):-**This model increases the transparency between government and its employees. Here, employees can keep a check on the functioning and working of government and government can keep a check on its employees. Information that can be shared by this model includes all kind of data submission (attendance record, employee record etc) from various government offices, rule- regulation and information for employees, payment and working records.

E-GOVERNANCE IN INDIA: CURRENT POLICIES, INITIATIVES AND INSTITUTIONS

As previously mentioned, India is one of the leading countries venturing into e-governance. Recently, the Indian Government has set the target of delivering at least 25 percent of its dealings and services electronically (MIT, 2001a). In this regard, the Indian Government's major policy measures have been defined in terms of computer density, connectivity, content, cost and cyber laws (Vittal, 2000). The government has introduced various measures for e-governance, which can be categorized into national- and state-level initiatives and institutions.

INITIATIVES AND INSTITUTIONS AT THE NATIONAL LEVEL: One of the most important initiatives undertaken by the central government is the Information Technology Act (2000), which is to regulate cyberspace and define offences and penalties related to information technology (IT) such as tampering with computer source documents, breach of confidentiality and privacy, publication of false digital signatures (Vittal, 2000). Furthermore, it has introduced citizen's charters under which the ministries and departments at both national and state levels are required to adopt charters specifying their respective service provisions, time frames, service standards and channels for redressing grievances. In order to implement this vision, policy initiatives and legal measures related to e-governance, there has emerged a series of institutions and official positions in India. For instance, the Government has introduced a National Task Force on IT and Software Development, a Committee on Improving Efficiency in Government Through IT, a Ministry of Information Technology (MIT) and a Centre for Electronic Governance in order to promote it and e-governance in the country (Budhiraja, 2001; MIT, 2001a). In particular, the MIT plays a crucial role in facilitating e-governance by reinforcing knowledge-based enterprises, encouraging coordination among users, adopting procedures based on international standards, promoting the internet and introducing it education (Upadhyaya, 2000).

The Government has also decided to establish a National Institute of Smart Government in order to enhance capacity building in e-governance in all administrative levels (Government of India, 2001a). In addition, various ministries and departments have created Information and Facilitation Counters as one-stop shops to make varieties of information available to citizens through electronic links (MIT, 2001a). An essential institutional aspect of e-governance in India is also the government decision to appoint it managers in the ministries or departments (Agnihotri & Ramani, 2001)

INITIATIVES AND INSTITUTIONS AT THE STATE LEVEL: Several State Governments have taken various innovative steps to promote E-governance. At a recent conference on e-governance in Bangalore, IT Secretaries from 32 states and union territories expressed their strong commitment to e-governance (Centre for the Development of Advanced Computing, 2000). Andhra Pradesh Government took the initiative of e- governance known as the Andhra Pradesh State Wide Area Network, which is a network for data, voice and video communication (MIT, 2001c). Madhya Pradesh followed Andhra Pradesh's example by introducing its own e-governance with some modifications. In particular, the government in this state has introduced extensive computerization in dealing with payrolls, the budget, accounts, personnel, official communications, land records, public programmers and relief operations. It trains public servants in e-governance at the Academy of Administration. Karnataka is another state that has undertaken e-governance program. This state government has begun to computerize most departments, especially the education department. Its major city, Bangalore, is known as an IT hub attracting over 1500 IT companies from advanced industrial nations; and its Indian Institute of Information Technology has a very advanced infrastructure and IT facilities (Siliconindia, 2001).

Similarly, the Government of Tamil Nadu is strongly committed to transforming the state into an advanced system of e-governance by computerizing its major departments with the objective of restoring public confidence and creating an effective relationship between citizens and government (MIT, 2001c). In Kerala, however, the state government uses selected nodal officers in each department to accelerate the application of IT. In this regard, one unique feature of Kerala is its comprehensive program aimed at decentralizing e-governance to the district level — many district cooperative banks and credit societies have been networked (PC World, 2000)

Beyond these state-level initiatives, e-governance has been pursued at the local community level. It encompasses local information facilities, and thus, offers an expansive multilateral network connecting all information users and information providers (MIT, 2001c). A good example of local-level initiatives in e-governance is a rural intranet project known as Gyandoot, which was adopted by the district panchayat of Dhar district in Madhya Pradesh to extent IT services including e-governance to rural areas in a people-centered manner (Misra, Agarwal & Kumar, 2001).

EMERGING AREAS OF E-GOVERNANCE IN INDIA

Today area of e-governance is very wide. E-Governance is implemented by government in almost every field. From urban states to rural areas governance has spread its root everywhere. Either its public or private sector, common man or businessman all is largely dependent on e-governance. Some of the emerging areas of e-governance are:

- **E-GOVERNANCE PROJECTS IN URBAN AREAS:** These include transportation (provision of booking facility for Interstate transport, transportation improvement program), online payment of bills and taxes (online transaction, payment of bills and taxes), municipal services (house tax assessment, billing and collection, maintain records of land & property, issue of death certificates), roads and traffic management (network of roads & bridges, road construction and their maintenance, traffic management)
- **AREAS OF E-GOVERNANCE IN RURAL AREAS:** These include agriculture (projects like gyandoot, belle), local information (prices of seeds, fertilizers, loan rates), disaster management is a very big challenge for the government as these are natural phenomena and are unpredictable, panchayat (issue of birth/death certificate, application for inclusion of name in voter list, conducting various welfare schemes for the poor and needy sections of the society)
- **E-GOVERNANCE IN HEALTH:** Service provided by these projects are availability of medicines, special health camps, facilities at anganwadi canters
- **E-GOVERNANCE IN EDUCATION**: Providing basic education (elementary, primary, secondary) to children, providing computer education to children, results for 10th & 12thclasses, information on eligibility for "distribution of books" scheme

EXPLORING CITIZEN'S BEHAVIOUR TOWARDS E-GOVERNANCE IN INDIA

To adopt e-Government processes, citizens must have the intention to 'engage in e-Government', which encompasses the intentions to receive information, to provide information and to request e-Government services

TRUST IN E-GOVERNANCE: Trust is a central defining aspect of many economic and social interactions. It is the belief that the other party will behave as expected in a socially responsible manner, and in doing so, it will fulfil the trusting party's expectations (Gefen 2000, Lewis & Weigert, 1985, Luhmann 1979). Hence, trust reduces the social complexity that is the result of people being independent agents whose behaviour cannot always be controlled or anticipated (Gefen, 2000) and thus reduces the risk and uncertainty involved in interacting with them (Lewis & Weigert 1985, Luhmann 1979). Trust is crucial in economic transactions because it reduces the risk of falling victim to opportunistic behaviour (Fukuyama 1995). Presumably, the same should apply to tax payments, where the transaction is one sided especially in the favour of the government. Citizen trust positively influences intentions to engage in e-Government.

PERCEIVED RISK: When engaging in online transaction process consumers are rightfully alarmed about the different types of risks present (Jarvenpapa & Tractinsky 1999). Perceived risk is defined here as the citizen's subjective expectation of suffering a loss in pursuit of a desired outcome. Perceived risk is viewed as a belief that attenuates when trust is present. Risk is lack of behavioural control, involving in this case (1) economic risk, (2) exposure of personal information, and (3) imperfect monitoring. In e-commerce, perceived risk reduces intentions to exchange information and transact (Pavlou 2001). Perceived risk negatively influences intentions to engage in e-Government.

PERCEIVED BEHAVIOURAL CONTROL: The Theory of Planned Behaviour (TPB) (Ajzen 1985) suggests that since citizens do not have full control over their online government transactions, perceived behavioural control should become a critical component of e-Government adoption. There are two components of perceived behavioural control: self-efficacy (confidence in one's ability) and facilitating conditions that provide the resources to engage in behaviour (Triandis 1971). Applied to the e-Government context, behavioural control should facilitate information acquisition since citizens have the opportunity and resources to manage such behavioural activities. Similarly, in terms of providing information, a sense of control over how personal information will be managed and used is likely to encourage such behaviour. Finally, perceived behavioural control would also positively influence behavioural intent since citizens would not have fears of opportunistic behaviour if they perceived control over the situation.

AILING E-GOVERNANCE: There are multiple reasons of ailing e-governance in India. Firstly, there seems to be lack of insight among the policy-makers. The ICT polices and strategies of India are not covering the e-governance aspects at the national level. No political party ever considers e-governance as an important part of their political agenda before elections. Second, there is too much stress upon procurement as opposed to management. India has to accept that computerization of traditional governmental and public functions are not e-governance. We have to empower the citizens with the power of ICT. We have to make the governmental services user-friendly as well as productive and easy. Third, there is lack of transparency in governmental dealing and in the absence of the same -governance is just paperwork. In India, we have the Right to Information Act, 2005 but the same has been a failure in India. Fourth, accountability among governmental officers is missing. There is no mechanism through which we can punish a wrong doer for his violations and negligence. This results in a casual attitude towards public good and e-governance. If we fix accountability and time-bound progress requirements then a lot of problems can be solved. Fifth, public participation in both policy making and governmental decisions is missing. If we get the opinion of those who are somehow surviving at the grassroots level we can solve the majority of our problems. However, the fact is that grassroots level problems are never solved.

OPPORTUNITIES AND CHALLENGES OF E-GOVERNANCE IN INDIA

The e-governance challenge is not a technological one. Rather, the challenge is to use technologies to improve the capacities of government institutions, while improving the quality of life of citizens by redefining the relationship between citizens and their government. Initially, e-governance may seem like another option for communication with citizens. But in the face of rising demands from demographic, economic, social and global trends, it no longer appears to be a matter of choice, but a necessity for India to compete with the world.

With e-governance, the quality of services provided to citizens and businesses has been improved significantly while attaining greater efficiency for all participants. The provision of 24/7 services has improved the level of satisfaction among citizens (Stiftung, 2002). E-Governance has resulted in significant cost savings to governments and citizens alike (Eggers, 2004). It also offered a number of potential benefits to citizens like a more control on how and when they interact with the government. Instead of visiting a department at a particular location or calling the government personnel at a particular time specified by the government, citizens can choose to receive these services at the time and place of their choice. The accessibility of government services also increased, despite government's mammoth infrastructure, there are always a limited number of personnel interacting directly with the citizens and waiting times, even on the phone, can be long. The electronic delivery of government services, especially the availability of different forms and the option of electronically submitting them, provided a considerable saving of time and money for individuals. Technology now makes it possible to personalize a website to a point where delivery of services could be tailored to meet the specific needs of an individual, thereby increasing the satisfaction of citizens from government services. The adoption and usage of online government services has a special significance for developing countries like India. Unlike developed countries, the governments of developing countries have an incessant shortage of resources. They are always short of skilled personnel and facilities to provide adequate services to their citizens. The online delivery of government services could, therefore, tremendously increase accessibility and bring significant time and cost savings to citizens in developing countries. The element of transparency built in the online channel could also alleviate corruption, a serious problem in a number of developing countries. Therefore, e-governance could virtually revolutionize the provision of government services in developing countries. Access to the Internet by citizens is a serious issue but it could be dealt with by providing public access terminals (Government On-Line, 2004).

The infrastructure of India is not up to the mark. Under such condition it becomes very difficult to provide government services to the people. There are number of reasons for this. First, lack of awareness is the prime factor in the utilization of e-governance services. This can be improved by sensitizing the people through arranging several awareness camps or workshops at the local grass root levels. Second, internet access is too expensive for the poor in developing countries like India. Installing the necessary telephone lines needed for internet or email access is equally unaffordable in most poor countries. Third, there is general lack of technical literacy as well as literacy in countries like India, the correlation between education level and use of electronic means or Internet and other ICT means are quite significant. Fourth, the dominance of English on the internet constrains the access of non-English-speaking population. Due to such overwhelming dominance of English over these communication channels, computers and the internet are quite useless in Indian villages, and the use of local languages does little to alleviate the problem due to the poor literacy level mentioned earlier. Fifth, designing of any application requires a very close interaction between the govt. department and the agency developing the solutions. At present the users in govt. departments do not contribute enough to design the solution architecture and lastly, inequality in gaining access to public sector services between various sections of citizens, especially between urban and rural communities, between the educated and illiterate, and between the rich and poor.

CONCLUSION AND FUTURE DIRECTIONS

Although government of India has taken significant steps towards successful implementation of e-governance but despite of that, there are some factors which may affect in successful implementation. In spite of some reservations and potential negative implications of implementing and designing e-governance, including disintermediation of the government and its citizens, impacts on economic, social, and political factors, vulnerability to cyber attacks, and disturbances to the status quo in these areas, e-governance can radically change the face of governance. In future India will be having e-governance completely which will impart an ideal democracy. Several e-governance projects have attempted to enhance the base, minimize the processing costs and increase transparency. It has been claimed that e-governance has the potential to impact the livelihood of poor and economic backward India. It can radically change the face of governance, especially in a big country like India and provide its citizens, an interface to get better and more efficient government services. This can be done by strengthening trust between Government and citizens, regardless of their location in the country, provisioning of better quality e-services to the citizens–preferably in the style of one-window, improving government efficiency by reducing the time spent upon manual tasks and thus aiming for automation, cooperation and collaboration through IT when and where possible, providing better and timely nation-wide administrative control and securing inter-operability and communication within and among the government departments.

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