



E-GOVERNANCE: A DIGITAL INDIA INITIATIVE TO REFORM GOVERNMENT THROUGH TECHNOLOGY

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Abstract

An initiative called "Digital India" aims to make India into a knowledge-based society and economy. The goal of Digital India is to get India ready for a knowledge-based future. Making technology the driving force behind change is the main goal. It is a program that serves as an umbrella for various departments. It combines a wide range of concepts and ideas into a unified, all-encompassing vision, making each one appear to be a component of a bigger objective. One of the pillars of the Digital India initiatives is e-governance, which is the use of information and communication technologies in government operations and transactions to improve public services, give citizens access to free information, and make government operations as efficient as possible. Better services and information are available to the public, which would improve interactions between the government and its constituents. E-governance enables a greater interface between the government and the people. The foundation of electronic governance is information technology (IT). This essay's goal is to draw attention to the Central Government's Digital India Initiative and the Andhra Pradesh government's experience using the digital revolution to transform governance.

Key words: *Digital, E governance, Information Technology, Issues of E-Governance.*

Introduction

E-governance, good governance, economic growth, and democracy are all interconnected. E-governance can enhance governance, and better governance can support both democratic and economic development (due to accountability, transparency, efficiency, responsiveness, and better services), as well as better evaluation, monitoring, and implementation of policies. Because it promotes efficiency, accountability, openness, dependability, and responsiveness in government through interface, e-governance is a tool for good governance. To better comprehend e-governance, it would be helpful to define governance and good governance. In general, governance refers to the use of power to manage public affairs (resolving disputes, delivering services, upholding law and order, etc.) in accordance with established norms and procedures. The World Bank has described governance as the way that authority is used to manage a nation's economic and social resources for development while keeping in mind economic liberalization. In order for a government to be considered legitimate, it should be democratic; political leaders should be held accountable for their decisions; the bureaucracy should be effective and able to adapt to shifting social needs; decision-making processes should be open and transparent; the rule of law should be upheld; basic rights and property rights should be protected; and women, minorities, and disadvantaged groups should receive extra protection.

Definition of e-governance

E-governance is the use of information and communication technology (ICT) for back-office operations and interactions within the entire government framework, as well as for the delivery of government

services, the exchange of information and communication transactions, and the integration of various stand-alone systems and services.

E-Governance v/s E-Government

'Governance' has a broader definition than 'Government'. E-governance may also involve governing a country, organization, company, or household, but with the aid of information and communication technology (ICT). Governance may be an activity of governing/controlling a country by its government, an organization or a company by its CEO or Board of Directors, or a house holds by the head of the house. However, when we use the term "e-government" in everyday speech, we only mean the use of ICT to run a country or state. Therefore, e-governance is the application of ICT to modify the efficacy, accountability, transparency, and efficiency of information flow and transaction:

- between Governments,
- between Government agencies,
- between Government and Citizens
- between Government and businesses
- E-governance also aims to empower people through giving them access to information.

The use of information and communications technology (ICT) to manage or carry out a country's government's operations is known as "e-government," or "electronic government." However, the phrase "e-government" is deceptive because it suggests an electronic replacement for the traditional form of governance. A government cannot be replaced electronically since it is made up of individuals who work together to run a nation.

A Government is a collection of persons in charge of running and controlling a nation or state. It involves individuals like ministers, government employees, and heads of state, among others. Additionally, the general public is involved. Therefore, it is not possible to replace a government electronically. Thus, the term "e-government" may only apply to a government's use of technology to manage its operations.

Objectives of E-Governance

- Improvements in delivery of essential services to the citizens;
- Empowerment of people through the dissemination of information;
- Ensuring transparency in government business and transactions and right to information in governmental activities;
- Elimination of undesirable practices such as touts, speed money, deliberate delays, harassment, bogus document and corruption;
- Encouraging broad based public awareness and participation in key areas of developmental efforts;

E-Governance reform in India

Self-government and decentralization (including strengthening Panchayati Raj institutions), right to information (RTI), community involvement, and monitoring of development activity are currently the main focus areas of governance reforms in India. Additionally, social inclusion is a top political concern, and improving government institutions requires reaching out to the public in order to participate and provide services.- to the socially marginalized groups who, it is thought, may be excluded from the current economic boom that a sizable portion of India is presently experiencing. Governance changes

aimed at fostering greater social inclusion are likely to focus on expanding the capacity and reach of serving underserved groups while also finding ways to improve their involvement and responsibility. Though, unlike some of the other reform areas mentioned above, a greater shift towards citizen-centric orientation and structures has also been a priority in governance reforms, in this case, very few necessary institutional or any other significant structural changes have been made to lead the necessary changes. The NPM philosophy is consistent with some of the priorities of governance reforms in India, such as citizen-centricity (particularly in terms of the citizen's identity as a customer of government services), emphasis on performance measurement, increased internal efficiencies, private sector-like management practices - using public-private partnerships whenever appropriate and feasible, and cost-cutting. It is crucial to remember that NPM thinking just represents a portion of India's aspirations for governance reform, which principally center on the aforementioned customer identification of the citizen and internal government system efficiencies. The majority of the aforementioned goals and thrust areas for governance reform in India relate to the idea that the citizen is the 'owner' of governance systems and, as a result, address difficulties with processes for participation (self-governance) and accountability (RTI and community monitoring). In India's current governance changes, equity and citizens' engagement and ownership are just as important as efficiency, and building e-governance strategies and frameworks should place a strong emphasis on these concerns. However, in the existing e-governance frameworks, these all-important factors are largely ignored or underemphasized.

Advantages of E-Governance

- The democratic system works better because e-governance makes it easier for citizens and the government to interact directly;
- The government regularly gathers and stores a vast amount of information about the people it serves as well as information about the services it offers to the people. A lot of information is also produced by the government's sponsorship of numerous related studies and reviews about its effectiveness and the effectiveness of public services. The government keeps track of its operations, public policies, programs, etc. Access to this data had historically been restricted. The cheapest, quickest, and easiest way to access government information is now through e-governance. This data can be used by the government for internal administrative, development, and welfare purposes. Information technology also makes it possible to reuse data kept by the government repeatedly in many application contexts without incurring appreciable additional costs.
- The innovative use of information held by the government in the design and execution of welfare activities and programs has some special opportunities and scope thanks to information technology. It gives the government chances to improve educational systems,
- It has been discovered that e-governance helps the public and development administration system make well-informed decisions, increasing the system's efficacy and efficiency in providing services to the general public. It improves the public and development administration system's analytical capabilities, fostering thorough monitoring and evaluation of the effectiveness of development and welfare initiatives. It also makes it easier for the government to use information in novel ways, sharing it with all levels of government and creating inventive and imaginative information links.
- E-governance offers an immediate package of effectiveness, timeliness, and cost-effectiveness; in addition, it promotes openness, eliminates discretion and arbitrariness, and, above all, is customer- and citizen-focused.
- It aids in the creation and maintenance of an open, stable, and conducive economic and regulatory environment (such as the price system, trade and exchange regimes, and banking systems and their

associated rules). Additionally, it assists with treasury institutional reforms, budget preparation and approval processes, tax administration, accounting and auditing systems, central banking activities, and official statistical functions;

Issues of E-Governance

- The cooperation of several state governments and the various ministries within a state government is a crucial issue in interoperability. The key issue is data integration, namely how to transport data in a standard format for processing and sharing and how to capture it in web-based form.
- Privacy: Any transaction or information submitted by a citizen to an administrative body must be kept private. If not, private companies or rivals can misuse the information, making people reluctant to use the services offered.
- Security: Another significant issue with e-governance is transaction security. Tax, fee, and bill payments must be safeguarded, and the system should be completely impenetrable in its architecture.
- Authentication: Prior to access or usage of the requested services, citizens' identities must be confirmed. The validity is provided in large part by the digital signature, but this is expensive and needs periodic upkeep.

Suggestions for Success

The government organization must prioritize the entire citizen experience if it hopes to implement e-governance successfully and deliver improved services. Information from all sites of citizen integration must be incorporated by the government organization. The successful e-governance platforms that are emerging must be interoperable. The suggestions for a successful transformation are listed below.

- Develop high levels of literacy and dedication to self-government: The most crucial necessity for e-governance is that decision-makers, politicians, and IT task force members receive training. The training schedule needs to be tailored to the demands of the highest-ranking policymakers.
- Conduct usability tests to evaluate ongoing e-government projects: The different states have different levels of e-governance development. While some states have jumped forward into the digital age, others have yet to launch any initiatives. All state government agencies should therefore conduct an e-awareness exercise to determine their level of e-governance acceptance.

Conclusion

E-governance refers to the use of information and communication technologies in official business and transactions in order to improve government services, inform the public, and make the government more effective at carrying out its duties. Better citizen-government interaction is made possible through governance. Government may enhance government, and better government (good government) can promote democracy and progress. One of the main goals of the government of Tamilnadu IT strategy is e-governance, which is also a component of the continuing administrative reform effort to achieve good governance. Through e-governance, the government hopes to build SMART (Simple, Moral, Accountable, Responsive, and Transparent) government. The following are some prerequisites for successfully establishing e-governance across the country. The nation's e-governance system has enough capacity to serve a billion people. The establishment of alternate service delivery channels, such as e-governance kiosks in local languages, or the creation of a connectivity architecture to enable services to reach remote areas of the nation. The main source of data for both vertical and horizontal applications of governance in both the state and federal administrations is the national citizen's database.



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