

An Introduction of E-Governance Trends

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Abstract : E-Governance is the application of information and communication technology (ICT) for providing government services, exchange of information, transactions, integration of previously existing services and information portals. Hence e-Governance is basically a move towards SMART governance implying: simple, moral, accountable, responsive and transparent governance. The “e” in e-Governance stands for ‘electronic’. E-Governance originated in India during the 1970s with a focus on in-house government applications in the areas of defence, economic monitoring, planning and deployment of ICT to manage data intensive functions related to elections, census, tax administration etc. Development of any country can be judge by the scope of E – Governance in that country. E – Governance can eradicate poverty, reduces inequality and safety basic human needs. In India literacy level below poverty line and people are not even aware about the benefits of E – Governance. E-governance involves new styles of leadership, ways of debating and deciding policy and investment, ways of accessing education, ways of listening to citizens, and ways of organising and delivering information and service. E-governance is a conceptually wider connotation than e-Government though most of the times they are used assynonym only. E-Government is the modernization of processes & function of Government using the tools of ICT so as to transform the way it serves its constituents. E-governance on the other hand goes beyond the service delivery aspects and is seen as a decisional process. It is about the use of ICTs in the system of governance i.e. using ICT to involve multi-stockholders in decision making and in making governments more open & accountable.

Pillars of e-Governance-

- People
- Process
- Technology
- Resources

Keywords: E-governance, E-government, ICT, Information and Communication technology

What is SMART Governance?

- **Simple** — implies simplification of rules and regulations of the government and avoiding complex processes with the application of ICTs and therefore, providing a user-friendly government.
- **Moral** — meaning the emergence of a new system in the administrative and political machinery with technology interventions to improve the efficiency of various government agencies.
- **Accountable** — develop effective information management systems and other performance measurement mechanisms to ensure the accountability of public service functionaries.
- **Responsive** — Speed up processes by streamlining them, hence making the system more responsive.
- **Transparent** — providing information in the public domain like websites or various portals hence making functions and processes of the government transparent.

Types of Interaction in e-Governance: There are 4 kinds of interactions in e-governance, namely:

1. **G2C (Government to Citizens)** — Interaction between the government and the citizens.
 - This enables citizens to benefit from the efficient delivery of a large range of public services.
 - Expands the accessibility and availability of government services and also improves the quality of services
 - The primary aim is to make the government citizen-friendly.

G2B (Government to Business):

- It enables the business community to interact with the government by using e-governance tools.
- The objective is to cut red-tapism which will save time and reduce operational costs. This will also create a more transparent business environment when dealing with the government.
- The G2B initiatives help in services such as licensing, procurement, permits and revenue collection.

G2G (Government to Government)

- Enables seamless interaction between various government entities.
- This kind of interaction can be between various departments and agencies within government or between two governments like the union and state governments or between state governments.
- The primary aim is to increase efficiency, performance and output.

G2E (Government to Employees)

- This kind of interaction is between the government and its employees.
- ICT tools help in making these interactions fast and efficient and thus increases the satisfaction levels of employees.

Advantages of e-Governance:

- Improves delivery and efficiency of government services
- Improved government interactions with business and industry
- Citizen empowerment through access to information
- More efficient government management Less corruption in the administration
- Increased transparency in administration
- Greater convenience to citizens and businesses
- Cost reductions and revenue growth
- Increased legitimacy of government
- Flattens organisational structure (less hierarchic)
- Reduces paperwork and red-tapism in the administrative process which results in better planning and coordination between different levels of government
- Improved relations between the public authorities and civil society
- Re-structuring of administrative processes

Significance of e-Governance:

- **Post COVID era:** The government stressed the need for right and optimum use of e-governance initiatives especially in the post COVID era.
 - It has provided flexible timings and helped people especially employees during COVID pandemic.
- **Ease of life:** The purpose of e- governance is to bring ease of life for common citizens.
- **One nation-one portal:** Over grievances and redressed, the linking of the Centralized Public Grievance Redress and Monitoring System with that of the states is almost done realizing Prime Minister's vision for one nation-one portal.
- **Simplification:** To support and simplify governance for government, citizens, and businesses.
- **Transparent and accountable:** To make government administration more transparent and accountable while addressing the society's needs and expectations through efficient public services and effective interaction between the people, businesses, and government.
- **Corruption:** To reduce corruption in the government.
- **Speedy delivery:** To ensure speedy administration of services and information.
- **To reduce difficulties:** for business, provide immediate information and enable digital communication by e-business.

Issues/ Challenges of e-Governance:

- **Lack of computer literacy:** India is still a developing country and a vast majority of the citizens lack computer literacy which hinders the effectiveness of e-governance.
- **Lack of accessibility:** to the internet or even computers in some parts of the country is a disadvantage to e-governance.
- **E-Governance results in a loss of human interaction:** As the system becomes more mechanized, lesser interaction takes place among people.
- **Risk:** It gives rise to the risk of personal data theft and leakage.
- **E-Governance leads to a lax administration:** The service provider can easily provide excuses for not providing the service on technical grounds such as “server is down” or “internet is not working”, etc.

Various initiatives by the Government towards E-governance:

- **Aadhaar** is a unique identification number issued by UIDAI that serves as proof of identity and address on the basis of biometric data. It is being used to provide many benefits to the members of the society. One can e-sign documents using Aadhaar.
- **MyGov.in** is a national citizen engagement platform where people can share ideas and be involved with matters of policy and governance.
- **UMANG** is a Unified Mobile Application which provides access to central and state government services including Aadhaar, Digital Locker, PAN, Employee Provident Fund services, etc.
- **Digital Locker** helps citizens digitally store important documents like mark sheets, PAN, Aadhaar, and degree certificates. This reduces the need for physical documents and facilitates easy sharing of documents.
- **PayGov** facilitates online payments to all public and private banks.
- **Mobile Seva** aims at providing government services through mobile phones and tablets. The m-App store has over 200 live applications which can be used to access various government services.
- **Computerisation of Land Records** ensures that landowners get digital and updated copies of documents relating to their property.
- **DigiSevak** platform connects interested citizens with the government to volunteer for various Digital India activities by Ministries and agencies of government.
- **Online Registration System (ORS)** is an online portal where citizens having Aadhaar can enrol for appointments in hospitals across various States and Union Territories of India.
- **IndiaStack** is a set of APIs that allows governments, businesses, startups and developers to utilize a unique digital Infrastructure to solve India’s hard problems towards presence-less, paperless, and cashless service delivery.
- **PRAGATI (Pro-Active Governance and Timely Implementation)** is aimed at starting a culture of Pro-Active Governance and Timely Implementation. It is also a robust system for bringing e-transparency and e-accountability with real-time presence and exchange among the key stakeholders.

The National e-Governance Plan (NeGP):

- The National e-Governance Plan (NeGP), provides a holistic view of e-Governance initiatives across the country.
- Around this idea, a massive countrywide infrastructure reaching down to the remotest of villages is evolving, and large-scale digitization of records is taking place to enable easy, reliable access to the internet.
- The Government has proposed to implement “e-Kranti: National e-Governance Plan (NeGP) 2.0” under the Digital India programme.

e-Kranti – Electronic Delivery of Services:

- e-Kranti is an essential pillar of the [Digital India initiative](#).
- Considering the critical need for e-Governance, mobile governance and good governance in the country, the approach and key components of e-Kranti have been approved by the government.
- The e-Kranti framework addresses the electronic delivery of services through a portfolio of mission mode projects that cut across several government departments.

National Conference on e-Governance:

- The Department of Administrative Reforms and Public Grievances (DARPG) along with the Department of Information Technology, in association with one of the state governments, has been organising the National Conference on e-Governance every year.
- This Conference provides a platform to the senior officers of the Government including IT Secretaries of state governments to discuss, exchange views and experiences relating to various e-governance initiatives.
- Every year, the Department of Administrative Reforms and Public Grievances recognises and promotes excellence in e-Governance by awarding government organisations/institutions which have implemented e-Governance initiatives in an exemplary manner.

Conclusion : E-Governance is getting momentum in India, but public awareness and the digital divide are important issues to be addressed. The success of e-Governance measures largely depends on the availability of high-speed internet, and the nation-wide roll-out of 5G technology in the near future will strengthen our resolve. E-Governance with open source is very popular in west countries but in India it is still an emerging technology. NIC is providing the network backbone and a wide range of ICT (Information and Communication Technologies) services to government organizations throughout India. Several drafts have also been passed by IT department to implement E-Governance with these technologies so that working, efficiency, transparency and security can be increased in E-Governance.

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