

EFFECTIVENESS OF E-GOVERNANCE SERVICES AT PANCHAYAT LEVEL IN TAMILNADU

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Abstract

We cannot ignore the fact that Information Technology has emerged and developed in to a key dominant segment in the Indian economy. The fundamental motivation for the implementation of e-governance in India is to provide an efficient government, the government which is simple, accountable, responsive and transparent. A demand driven 'citizen interface' e-governance implemented in India would enhance the success of ICT ventures, especially in rural areas. Although e-governance is of main concern for all state governments, some have taken a front and developed successful models from which others can take a lead. The study assesses the significant project implemented by Tamilnadu state government at panchayat level. In order to analyze the objectives of the study, statistical technique simple ranking technique was applied. Shortage of staff as well as deputation of the staff for other purposes makes the problem more severe, and results in the ineffectiveness of modern administration tools for serving the community better. In the Panchayat, past data related to birth/death and marriage registration that was entered under the Akshaya initiatives could not be verified so far due to the above reasons. As a result, the website has missing data for many years. A review of the impact of e-Governance on public service delivery, digital divide, cost of service, corruption, etc. has reveals that the potential of e-Governance projects to contribute to development has been unquestionably accepted across countries.

Index Terms- E-governance, Citizen interface, Panchayat

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INTRODUCTION

According to national e-Governance survey, the state has emerged among the top five e-governed states in India in 2008-09. The state has climbed three spots over their last year's ranking to emerge as the first as per the survey conducted for the year 2008-09(Asia Pacific Future eGov, 2009). TN e-Governance Mission, is formed which will explore the best e-Governance practices world over for adoption in the e-Governance project initiatives of the Government to provide electronic delivery of services to the citizen at a reasonable cost and for improvement of Government - Citizen Interface. There will be a State e-Governance. The SeG will function as a permanent advisory body to develop and implement processes for management of programmes like conflict management, audits, knowledge management, financial management, risk management, and project planning and monitoring, besides institutionalizing e-Governance processes and tools. Some of the important e-Governance projects in Tamil Nadu includes: TamilNadu InfoSystem on Land Administration and Management (Tamil NILAM): This is an important e-Governance initiative of Government of TamilNadu. All the taluk offices in TamilNadu have been provided with computers under this programme. The major applications on these systems include Land Records, Old Age Pension, Management Certificates, Public Grievances etc. At present twenty nine taluks were provided with the touch screen for the public use. The services offered by it mainly include: (i) Land owners can view their own Land ownership and can also obtain a copy of Chitta Exact. (ii) Birth and Death certificate particulars can be viewed and a copy of the certificate can also be obtained. (iii) Old age pension details can also be maintained in it. (iv) The welfare Scheme of the Revenue Department are explained with the details for availing these services and the benefits. Simplified and Transparent Administration of Registration (STAR): Simplified and Transparent Administration of Registration is a Citizen-centric application which has been implemented at 300 sub registrar office in TamilNadu. With the computerized system the issue of Encumbrance certificate has become quicker and easier. The documents are scanned and archived. The Data will be maintained in Tamil. The Daily transaction is captured in batch mode at sub treasuries and consolidated at the district treasuries. The monthly account prepared using the system by the district treasuries, pay and accounts department are submitted to the AG's office. Treasury Computerization : The Treasury computerization is one of the earliest e-Governance projects developed for the Government of TamilNadu. Now the system is used in 29 District treasuries,

205 sub treasuries, 7 pay and accounts office and Chennai Pension Pay office. Computer Assisted Learning Centre (CALC): This was undertaken in Tamil Nadu with the objective of attracting more children to schools, simplifying difficult concepts thereby making learning exciting and creating sound foundation of IT literacy. The efforts in Tamil Nadu have been quite effective in creating scalable models significantly improving the quality of learning in the schools and in ensuring satisfactory ownership by the community in the management of the schools (Indrajit Bhattacharya & Kunal Sharma, 2007).

PROBLEM STATEMENT

E-Governance helps simplify processes and makes access to government information easier. The other anticipated benefits of e-governance include efficiency in services, improvement in service delivery, standardization of services, better accessibility of services, and more transparency and accountability. It is convenient and cost-effective for the Government also in terms of data storage and access to the stored data. The government benefits from reduced duplication of work. In addition, the processes of data collection, analysis and audit are simplified, and become less tedious. Another cherished goal of e-governance is greater citizen participation in the governance of the country. In the context of the statement, a government may theoretically move more towards a true democracy with the proper application of e-governance. With increasing concern about the environment, e-governance has an important benefit. Online government services would lessen the need for hard copy forms and thus produce significant savings in paper, contributing to a greener planet! At this juncture the study has been undertaken to determine the effect of e-governance activities at panchayat raj.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

100 respondents (member, president, secretary, vice president) from 50 panchayat raj have been selected as sample respondents by using convenience sampling. Interview schedule has been used as instrument to conduct this research. The secondary data were sourced from various

research agencies both official and unofficial newspapers to find out the e-governance functions implemented by Tamilnadu state government. The study period has extended to 3 months from October 2014 to December 2014. In order to analyze the objectives of the study, statistical technique simple ranking technique was applied.

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Review can cover a wide range of subject matter at various levels of completeness and comprehensiveness based on analyses of literature that may include research findings. The review that may include research findings. The review may reflect the state of the art. It also includes reviews as a literary form. The aim of a literature review is to show that the researcher has studied existing works in the field with insight. A good literature review presents a clear case and context for the project that takes up the rest of the dissertation. so a good literature review raises questions and identifies areas to be explored. The researcher has identified research papers published in renowned journals and conference proceedings along with articles published in newspapers on various topics such as implementation of e-governance, impact of e-governance services on citizens etc.

Bhattacharyya Rabindranath has published his article on “e-governance in rural West Bengal (India): impact and implications”^[1] The objective of this research paper is to explore the impact of IT as an enabling force in its efforts to meet the present and emerging challenges of a digital age on the rural people in West Bengal (WB). In WB, Burdwan (Bardhaman) district has been selected for implementing the country's first rural e-governance pilot project. This paper wants to argue that introduction of rural e-governance in Burdwan, is likely to generate development gains only when it is closely adapted to the needs and capacities of the Panchayats. The primary focus of this study was on the executive authorities responsible for implementing e-governance at the rural level. The researcher went to 30 people below the poverty line of three villages with a structured questionnaire that provided ample opportunity to measure the socio-economic needs of the local people and to correlate those needs with the gains of e-governance. The sample size is relatively small. Replication of this study with additional blocks and gram panchayats in the sample will allow stronger validation of the main argument.

Mohini singh, alemayehu molla, Stan karanasios and jason sargen, (2008) on their paper entitled "Exploring the impact of government ICT initiatives on the livelihood of Australian rural communities", stated that it is apparent that in Australia a number of E-learning and E-Government initiatives have been put in place to improve the livelihood of rural citizens^[2].

[1] Bhattacharyya Rabindranath The University of Burdwan, Golapbag, Burdwan, West Bengal, 713104, India , ,Electronic Government, an International Journal 2008 – 15th Oct. 2004 Volume 5, No.4 pp.390 - 402 , 10.1504/EG.2008.019524. (3/1/2010)

[2] Mohini singh, alemayehu molla, Stan karanasios and jason sargen, (2008) on their paper entitled "Exploring the impact of government ICT initiatives on the livelihood of Australian rural communities", paper presented at 21 st Bled econference ecollaboration : Overcoming Boundaries through Multi-channel interaction june 15-18, 2008 ; Bled, Slovenia

Mahajan Preeti has published her article on "E-Governance Initiatives in India with Special Reference to Punjab" [3] According to the researcher, in the era of modernization and globalization, electronic dependency and utilization has been emerging as one of the driving forces towards economic growth and development. This research highlights the importance of IT in the implementation of a SMART government in the State of Punjab. It focuses on various e-governance initiatives undertaken by the state of Punjab and suggests various measures for their better implementation. e-governance enhances the relationships between G2G, G2C, C2G, government to private sector and NGOs to government using ICT. The initiatives of Punjab state are important. e-governance has eventually started to gain popularity in most cities of Punjab. Efforts are on to revolutionize every village in Punjab, providing them with IT-enabled service centers. Villagers here now do not need to travel miles to deposit their telephone, electricity or water bills, or register their grievances anymore. According to the researcher certain points are still to be taken care of by the state government, which includes: a mandatory review of the progress of all the ongoing IT projects, sustainability of already started

initiatives, compulsory computer education from class 6th to 12th in government schools, and the use of local languages in the IT implementation process. It is essential that local level databases be maintained in Punjabi, since most of the rural poor would like to get information in their regional language. It's important to educate people at all levels about the benefits of e-governance by highlighting how it can save their precious time and effort.

OBJECTIVES

- 1.To find out various E-governance functions performed in Panchayat Raj.To assess the transparency,accountability,efficiency of e-governance project implemented by Tamilnadu state government .
- 2.To know about the major reasons for Non adoption of e-Governance in panchayats.

ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION

E-GOVERNANCE FUNCTIONS AT PANCHAYAT RAJ IN TAMILNADU(Source : Secondary data)

1.National Spatial Database (NSDB) The National Spatial Database (NSDB) project aims at creation of Spatial Database up to the village level and is being carried out to bring together many existing Geospatial datasets. It was created and maintained to define common standards. The National Geospatial Framework, consisting of referencing system, is built around the Standard datasets with appropriate Institutional arrangements and information developed for administrative boundaries viz. State, District, up to Village locations.

2.MGNREGASoft- MIS for Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme : A transaction level work flow-based system for the NREGA is being implemented at Block/Gram Panchayat level across the country except in Andhra Pradesh.

3. Panchayat Directory is a database of summary report on different Panchayats across the country: Online Monitoring of Monthly Progress Report of Ministry of Rural DevelopmentThe online monitoring system is helpful in tracking Monthly Progress Report for different rural

development projects. It is also provide data by State and District wise. State and District level Vigilance Monitoring system is also available.

4. Online Submission of Proposal: Online Submission of Proposal schemes like NREGA, Rural Housing by District level authorities. 5. Watershed Programmes Monitoring Information System: Fund release information, District-wise, State-wise, Zilla Parishad-wise status report for Watershed Programmes Monitoring Information System

6. Online Monitoring of water supply and rural sanitation Online Monitoring of water supply and rural sanitation is a web based system for capturing the water supply sources and systems in the rural habitations of the country. It also enables entry of urban water supply schemes which supply water to rural habitations. The endeavor is to generate a database of all water supply sources along with their locations and water quality parameter test reports.

[3] Mahajan Preeti , Professor, Department of Library & Information Science Punjab University, Chandigarh, INDIA, e-journal on Asia-Pacific journal of Science, ISSN : 0975-5942, Volume1 , Jan-June 2009, pp. 142-155 , <http://www.socialsciences-ejournal.org/> (27/6/2010)

7. Online Monitoring System for NGP (Nirmal Gram Puraskar): Every year the Nirmal Gram Puraskar awards are given to those Gram Panchayats which have achieved 100% sanitation coverage and can be taken as ideal. This prestigious award is given away by His/Her Excellency, the President of India to these Panchayats. This has gone a long way in promoting sanitation and hygiene practices among the rural people by bringing about changes in the cultural practices. The online system for NGP is a web based system for capturing the complete workflow right from the acceptance of applications, the various stages of processing of these applications and the awarding of the Panchayats.

8. Web-Based Concession Scheme Monitoring System for fertilizer: Web-Based Concession Scheme Monitoring System for fertilizer is used for processing the monthly claims for timely disbursement of subsidy to the fertilizer suppliers. The software provides information support for

monitoring various activities pertaining to the payment of subsidy by generating periodic reports as well as query retrieval.

REASONS FOR NON-ADOPTION OF E-GOVERNANCE AT PANCHAYAT RAJ

Table 1: Major Reasons for Non-Adoption of e-Governance in Panchayats(Source : Primary data)

S.No	Major Problems	Total Score	Mean Score	Rank
1	No printer	390	39	X
2	No networking	515	51.5	V
3	Limited use of service by citizen	643	64.3	IV
4	No networking points	695	69.5	III
5	No server/server-related issues	501	50.1	VI
6	No wiring/electrical issues	425	42.25	IX
7	No front office	467	46.7	VII
8	Computer shortage	705	70.5	II
9	Shortage of staff	733	73.3	I
10	High implementation cost	428	42.8	VIII

From the Table 1, it was found that shortage of staff as first reason and computer shortage as second reason for non adoption of e-Governance in Panchayats. No networking points, limited use of service by citizen, no networking and No server are ranked as third, fourth , fifth and sixth respectively.

RESEARCH IMPLICATION AND CONCLUSION

The Panchayat has a well functioning front office. It acknowledges applications submitted through it and helps in tracking the status of the applications at any time. The governing body has an open mind towards e-Governance applications in its day-to-day functioning. However, as Rajagopalan (2007) states, the poor computer literacy among the governing body members is one

of the major blocking factors in implementing such programmes effectively. Unless they are convinced about the utility of e-Governance in every matter of its operation, implementation of such schemes cannot progress. Similarly, the skills of the office staff also need to be improved. Shortage of staff as well as deputation of the staff for other purposes makes the problem more severe, and results in the ineffectiveness of modern administration tools for serving the community better. In the Panchayat, past data related to birth/death and marriage registration that was entered under the Akshaya initiatives could not be verified so far due to the above reasons. As a result, the website has missing data for many years. A review of the impact of e-Governance on public service delivery, digital divide, cost of service, corruption, etc. has reveals that the potential of e-Governance projects to contribute to development has been unquestionably accepted across countries. The Indian experiments are also not very different. The Government of India has consciously been involving e-Governance in its national policy. State governments are also involved in suitably revitalizing the activities of the government using ICT tools which result in increasing use of e-governance.

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