



Corporate Governance: Initiatives & Challenges

KEYWORDS

E-governance, Development, Welfare

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ABSTRACT

E-governance is the continuous optimization of service delivery, constituency participation and governance. In recent times, the development of any country can be judged by the scope of E-Governance in that country. They also focus on initiatives adopted by the central government and states government. The purpose of this paper is to study the current status of e-governance in India and new initiatives taken by the government for e-governance. This paper also studies various challenges of e-governance which hamper the success of e-governance in India

Introduction

E-governance refers to the use of information and communication technology to carry out government operations such as delivering government information and services. E-governance is the continuous optimization of service delivery, constituency participation and governance by transforming internal and external relationships through technology like internet and new media.

In modern times, development of any country cannot be judged by only its progress rate but the scope of E-Governance in that country also plays a vital role in calculating the progress of country. India is a developing nation having democratic decentralization and it also needs to promote the E-Governance services. 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 by government organizations to achieve better public services.

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 extent 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 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, 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 separation. For a government to operate effectively, a government-community-citi-

zen infrastructure should be in place.

Models of E-governance

Normally, e-governance services can be shared between citizens, businessman, government and employees. So, following are some important models of e-governance:

- Government to Government (G2G)
- Government to Citizens (G2C)
- Government to Businessman (G2B)
- Government to Employees (G2E)

Initiatives of E-governance in India

India is one of the leading countries entering into e-governance. The Indian Government has also set the target of delivering at least 25 percent of its dealings and services through electronic mode. In this regard, the Indian Government's major policy measures have been defined in terms of computer density, connectivity, content and cyber law. The government has recently introduced various measures for e-governance which can be categorized into national and state level initiatives and institutions. The important measures taken by central government as well as various state governments related to e-governance are as follows:

- 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 such as tampering with computer source documents, breach of confidentiality and privacy, publication of false digital signatures, etc.
- The Government of India has also introduced a National Task Force on IT and Software Development, a Committee on Improving Efficiency in Government working conditions, a Ministry of Information Technology and a Centre for Electronic Governance in order to promote e-governance in the country.
- The Central Government has also decided to establish a National Institute of Smart Government in order to enhance capacity building in e-governance in all administra-

tive levels.

- Ministry of Internet Technology plays a crucial role in facilitating e-governance by reinforcing knowledge-based enterprises and encouraging coordination among users.
- 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, Madhya Pradesh government also follows the same path.
- Karnataka 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, play an important role in e-governance.

Basically, all the state governments take initiatives at their own level for improving the e-governance services in our state because 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 it is public or private sector, common man or businessman all is largely dependent on e-governance.

Challenges for E-governance in India

The e-governance challenge is to use of technologies or to improve the capacities of government institutions. Improving the quality of life of citizens is redefined by 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. There are also numbers of reasons for challenges in e-governance as follows:

- 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.
- Internet access is too expensive for the poor peoples in developing countries like India. Installing the necessary telephone lines needed for internet or email access is equally unaffordable in most poor countries.

- Another important challenge for e-governance in India is infrastructure, which is not up to the mark. Under such condition it becomes very difficult to provide government services to the people.
- There is general lack of education and technical literacy in countries like India, the correlation between education level and use of electronic means or Internet and other ICT means are quite insignificant.
- 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.
- Designing of any application requires a very close interaction between the government and the agency to developing the solutions. At present the users in government departments do not contribute enough to design the solution architecture.

Conclusion

With e-governance, the quality of services provided to citizens and businesses has improved significantly while attaining greater efficiency for all participants. The provision of 24/7 services has also improved the level of satisfaction among citizens and becomes resulted in significant cost savings to government and citizens. The 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 future India will be having e-governance completely which will impart an ideal democracy. Several e-governance projects have attempted to enhance the base of users, 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.

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