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ORIGINAL RESEARCH PAPER

Management

ADMINISTRATIVE REFORMS IN ODISHA

KEY WORDS: Administration, Reform, Planning, Implementation, Governance.

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ABSTRACT

With the changing environment, demands, needs and aspirations of people, it's becoming very much necessary on the part of government both central and states to meet the new challenges imposed in our society. To tackle those problems and to find out effective solutions, government needs to reform its administrative apparatus from time to time. Odisha, which has ranked 14th in Good Governance Index, has been playing impressive role in reforming and managing its whole gamut of administration by formulating and implementing various administrative reforms with continuous efforts and remarkable actions, soon after the establishment of Administrative Reforms cell under the General Administrative Department in 2002.

Introduction:

The first and foremost question faced by India, soon after it got independence, was how to change the administrative apparatus to meet the new challenges of development as it inherited colonial legacy which was suited only to the needs of maintaining law and order and collection of revenue in our India. So the focus was shifted to the overall development of the nation. However, with old methods and practices, it could not be achieved. Therefore, the government of India has undertaken large numbers of administrative reforms to meet those dynamic and diversified challenges with having the aim of good governance, for which different committees and commissions were established from time to time. Some of the important administrative reforms committees and commissions of India are A.D. Gorwala Committee, Paul H. Appleby Committee, K. Santhanam Committee, Administrative Reform Commission headed by Morarji Desai, Sarkaria Commission, Second Administrative Reform Commission headed by M. Virappa Moily etc. In Odisha, the subject of administrative reforms was started soon after the establishment of administrative reform cell under general administration department.

Historical Background of Administrative Reforms in Odisha:

The General Administration Department of government of Odisha was first dealt with the subject of Administrative Reforms. In 1999 by an Amendment to the Rules of Business, the subject of Administrative Reforms was transferred to Public Grievances & Pension Administration Department. In 2000 Finance Department initiated the Fiscal and Governance Reform Programme. Under this programme a Task Force on Governance and Civil Services Reforms was set up on 1st November, 2000 by the Finance Department. Basing on the report of the Task Force, on 17th October, 2001 Finance Department set up a Fiscal and Civil Services Reforms Cell for the implementation of the Fiscal and Governance Reforms Programme. On 16th March, 2002, Finance Department requested General Administration Department for the constitution of the Administrative Reforms Department. On 17th April, 2002 General Administration Department set up an Administrative Reforms Cell that was headed by a Special Secretary (Administrative Reforms). The Cell was also proposed to have one Joint Secretary/Deputy Secretary/ Under Secretary and some staff. On 29th August, 2002 the Rules of Business was amended for the creation and allocation of business of Administrative Reforms Cell in General Administration Department .

Areas in which the Government of Odisha has undertaken Administrative Reforms:

Since the establishment of Administrative Reforms Cell under General Administration Department (Administrative Reforms) , the Government of Odisha has introduced many measures on Administrative Reforms in different areas of governance. They are following below:

3.1 Odisha Modernizing Government Initiatives (OMGI):

Orissa Modernizing Government Initiatives represents a range of change and development plans for the better delivery of public services across different departments of government of Odisha. It's not only limited to all governmental departments but also is open to all. Even district administration and other field offices may take advantage of this. It adopts modern tools of management and information and communication technology for effective and efficient use of available resources. Odisha Modernizing Government Initiatives aims at four pronged approaches to modernization for the better delivery of public services and good governance i.e. technology, employees, government process and policy awareness. It focuses on effectiveness, accountability and transparency in all governmental policies, projects and programmes. It supports departmental reforms which aim at the better delivery of public service.

3.2 e- Governance:

e-Governance aims at creating and developing the infrastructural capacity of government as well as enhancing the access methods of the citizens to the public services rendered by the Government . A network of Community Information and Service Centre has been set up for improving the implementations of the different schemes of the government of Odisha. These centres are provided with necessary support of the different government offices so that the citizens can avail the services of various departments easily. So, it creates easy way for citizens to get various services provided by government like obtaining ration cards ,birth and death certificates , income , residence , caste and other certificates without even going to any particular office anytime and anywhere.

3.3 Human Resources Management Information System:

Human resources management system is one of the innovative ideas in the area of administrative reforms. Under this system the real data of government employees are updated by using information and communication technology. By this system an employee's life cycle approach is adopted i.e. data and information of an employee like their name, address, salary, performance reviews etc are collected and stored from the date of joining of employees to the date of their retirement. So the basic aim of human resource management information system is to manage and modernize human resource so it would enhance the capacity of government to achieve broader organizational goals. The optimal personal strength would in turn lead to reduction in the salary cost of the Government of Odisha . This would make the system more efficient and effective which would lead to the better management of finances of the

government of Odisha.

3.4 e- Procurement:

Every year government of Odisha undertakes large procurement of goods which is made according to the rules and regulations formulated by the government. Thereafter government publishes notification asking for tender for supply of goods at appropriate rates on a specified time and date. After receiving all tenders, government evaluates those tenders to choose the best one. Earlier the whole process was done manually on paper. But after the introduction of e-procurement, the entire process of procurement like publication of notice for tender, evaluation and selection of tender became so much easy on the part of government so it can use those extra time on some other purposes.

3.5 Best practices:

Best practices represent those forms of organizational procedures and methods that aim at achieving organizational goals in a best possible way in terms of using minimum cost, time and resources (including human resource). It leads to the satisfaction of both service providers and service seekers. By implementing best practices also, the government can use extra time, money and resources in some other public services. Best practices constitute an important element of Government Process Reengineering (GPR).

3.6 Transparency and Accountability:

Transparency and accountability is one of the area in which government of Odisha has undertaken administrative reform. It is developed by modernizing the management of database by the application of information and communication technology which aims at improving overall process of formulation, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of the programmes of various departments. The database also contains the details of the implementing agencies and beneficiaries of all policies of government, estimated cost, the expected time of completion, location, present status etc of all policies and programmes.

3.7 Civil Service Census:

Civil service census is one of the important initiations on the part of the government of Odisha towards administrative reform. The aim of civil service census is to analyze all details regarding personnel working under state government. For which a detailed and systematic analysis is very much necessary. Each department prepares an Annul Establishment Review in which data like size, structure, distribution and growth of personnel are stored and maintained. Thereafter, each department submits the aggregated reports to the finance department. The data are collected from the finance department and organized suitably to facilitate the analysis of the personnel under the state government.

3.8 Litigation management:

Litigation Management system is one of the tool of government of Odisha which records information of legal cases and also monitors the progress of litigation of the government. Litigation Management System includes a mail messaging system with workflow model for effective communication among government officials and with government advocates.

3.9 Anti-corruption action Plan:

At present days, there is no such ministry and department of government which is completely free from corruption. The tentacles of corruption have spread everywhere whether it's a private organization or government one. So to check and control corruption the government of Odisha has adopted anti- corruption action plan for strengthening of anti-corruption measures. For this purpose, vigilance organization has been strengthened. Even in some departments internal vigilance unit are being set up to monitor corrupted activities.

3.10 e-Gazette:

Government of Odisha has launched e-gazette system as another important step towards administrative reforms . Earlier, all departments used to maintain their Guard Files as per Orissa Secretariat Instruction Manual. But after the introduction of e-gazette, it's becoming very easy on the part of all government departments to submit and publish all gazette notifications on weekly and daily basis by using electronic media. The objective of e-Gazette is to publish gazette notifications for general public usage under the directorate of Printing, Stationary and Publication, government of Odisha.

3.11 Codification of Administrative units and GIS (Geographic Information System) Database Development:

Development of GIS database and codification of all administrative units i.e. village/ Panchayat /Revenue Inspector Circle/ Tehsils/ Thana/Block/ Sub-Division/ District etc. is one of the important initiatives towards Administrative Reforms by the Government of Odisha. The objective of codification of administrative units and GIS database development is to have a unique code for each administrative system with having GIS database for providing information regarding geographical location of any administrative unit. It can also be used by all users like district, block, division etc for planning, monitoring and evaluation of activities.

3.12 Training and Development:

Training should be an integral part of government employees to enhance their skills and knowledge for the better organizational performance and development. So it is important on the part of the government to provide them necessary training from time to time. Therefore, the government of Odisha has introduced many new methods and procedures with an aim of achieving efficiency, effectiveness and economy in doing any activities. Training also prepares employees to tackle and face new challenges of present time with confidence.

3.13 Improving public service delivery:

Improving Public service delivery is one of the most important areas of administrative reforms. Achieving high citizen's satisfaction through delivery of public services within reasonable time and cost is the central objective of governance . For which there must be an efficient and citizen-centric Government office require for ensuring proper delivery of public services to the citizens. Most Government offices, however , have a design and appearance that make the citizen feel like an unwanted element in the system. Common people face many problems to get different services provided by government. They faces problems like where to go, which desk to go, who is the officer, documents required, methods and procedures to follow, forms to fill up etc. Therefore, to avoid such difficulties, they go through middleman to get the required services. Thus public service delivery system aims at eradicating those problems for citizen for the better delivery of public services with minimum time and cost used.

3.14 Redeployment:

The redeployment of surplus personnel is another important area of government of Odisha which requires rational allocation of the human resources within different departments. For this purpose the departments having surplus staff report the details to the general administration department. The general administration department puts up the detail of surplus staffs in the website with all required information so the user agencies can get information regarding the same to fill up their vacant positions.

Important Projects of government of Odisha on Administrative reforms:

The government of Odisha has undertaken some of the

important projects on administrative reforms with having the aim of good governance which are following below:

4.1 Human Resource Management System:

General Administration Department, Government of Odisha through its reform programme Orissa Modernizing Government Initiative (OMGI) , with collaboration of Department for International Development, Odisha Computer Application Centre and National Informatics Centre have developed Human Resources Management System. It is a database and web application software developed to carry out all human resource management activities by using internet. It aims at efficient utilization of government resources by accurately accounting and monitoring revenue expenditure. HRMS stores service records of all government employees, which enable the government of Odisha to provide different services easily to all government employees. HRMS is a platform through which government employees can apply for leave, loan and can send their reports, requests and grievances. It also helps retired government employee to prepare their pension papers easily and quickly. Therefore, human resource management system binds government and employees in a single thread.

4.2 e-Abhijoga:

e-Abhijoga is one of the project of government of Odisha, which is developed by National Informatics Centre with the help of Department of Administrative Reforms and Public Grievances, Government of India Department of Administrative Reforms , Chief Minister's Office , Public Grievance and Pension Administration Department government of Odisha. It is a web application system through which any aggrieved citizen can submit his/her grievance anytime and anywhere, which helps government of Odisha to redress grievances of beneficiaries and makes it more citizen-centric.

4.3 Litigation Management System:

Litigation Management system has been developed by the Centre for Modernizing Government initiatives (CMGI), a governance reform programme of the general administration department, government of Odisha. It is a smart monitoring system to manage court cases effectively where government is a party. It also provides end to end solution to monitor court cases right from its inception till the post judgement processes.

4.4 Revenue Court Cases Monitoring System:

Revenue Court Cases Monitoring System is one of the important reform project of Government of Odisha , in collaboration with the General Administration Department, Revenue & Disaster Management Department and Centre for Modernizing Government Initiative(CMGI). It is a web application software that allows the users to do case filing, scrutiny, case allocation, recording of daily proceedings, allows generation of causes , sequence editing of cause list, pending list, recording of interim order, judgements etc.

4.5 Odisha Education Resource Portal (OERP):

Odisha Education Resource Portal is also one of the important initiative of Centre for Modernizing Government Initiatives (CMGI) and General Administration (Administrative Reform) Department , Government of Odisha . It is an interactive portal for teachers, students and parents. This portal is mainly for Odia medium school students.

4.6 Integrated Asset Management System:

In order to ensure smooth management of residential land conversion within Bhubaneswar Municipal Corporation area from "leasehold" status to "freehold" status, government of Odisha has introduced Integrated Asset Management System which is developed by the Centre for

Modernizing Government Initiative(CMGI). Some important features of Integrated Asset Management system are like online application for conversion from leasehold to freehold, receipt of acknowledgement through SMS, online tracking of application and intimation for deposition of conversion fees through SMS.

4.7 Odisha Right to Public Service Act, 2012:

Odisha Right to Public Service Act, 2012 is an initiation of Government of Odisha towards administrative reforms. The state government of Odisha on 5th September 2012 in the State Assembly introduced Odisha Right to Public Service Act, that provides guaranteed delivery of various specified services within a limited period of time. Under this Act, citizen would be able to get their electricity and water connections bills, driving licenses, their land records and other services within a stipulated time.

So, from above discussion on administrative reforms in Odisha , it is cleared that Navin Patnaik's government since the establishment of administrative reforms cell under General Administration Department (Administrative Reforms) in 2002 has been doing wonderful job in implementing administrative reforms in Odisha. Though the Government of Odisha is doing very well in formulation and implementation of various administrative reforms, still there are various problems and difficulties that are acting as obstacles to achieve the aim to fully implement administrative reforms in Odisha .They are:-

1. Shortage of officers having knowledge of computers :

With the change of time, so many advanced and modern technologies are developed to make life more comfortable and easy . Out of those technologies , the invention of computer is a milestone , which makes most of our work easier than before. For example accounting, storing data, retrieve information from Internet etc. In this age of 21st Century , having the knowledge to operate computer is very much essential to adapt ourselves with changing time. Now we can see the use of Computers in all most all areas whether it is education , economy , business or anything .To make most of the governmental work easier the government of Odisha is also using computers . Thus to have Officers having the knowledge of computer is very much essential for speedy disposal of works . But due to lack of officers having the knowledge of operating computer is creating many problems in fuller implementation of administrative reforms in Odisha .

2. Manpower are not trained :

Another shortcoming which is hindering in the way of achieving the fuller implementation of administrative reforms in Odisha is that the manpower is not trained to do all work relating to the implementation of administrative reforms in our state. Training is an essential part of every governmental work. Without proper training to do a particular work , many problems may be faced by a person like what to do , how to do and when to do a specific kind of job etc with better precision .This is the reason for which training of government personnel is very much essential . Training makes a person more comfortable and satisfied with his/her job. It enhances the interest of a person to do his/her work with zeal . Due to lack of trained manpower who are involved in the process of implementation of administrative reforms , most of the implementation are now half on the way . If all employees involved in the process of implementation of administrative reforms from top to bottom would have been trained , the government of Odisha might have gained more success in implementing all administrative reforms in Odisha .

3. Slow speed of Internet :

Slow speed of the Internet is one of the most important

shortcoming of administrative reforms in Odisha . As we know the Government of Odisha has launched numbers of web application programmes like e-Abhijoga , Odisha Education Resource Portal , e-procurement etc . which need speed in internet for speedy disposal of services rendered by the government . Due to slow in internet speed, many governmental decisions , data and notifications get delayed to reach to the citizens of Odisha. Thus it is also creating problem in implementing many administrative programmes and projects in Odisha .

4. Lack of literate employees :

One of the major problem of administrative reforms in Odisha is lack of literate employees involved in the implementation of various administrative reforms projects. About fifty percent of employees who are engaged in the implementation of various administrative reforms projects are having only the qualification of Matriculation (Class – 4 employees) . They don't know how to do a particular work in a correct manner . Even they don't know how to verify the work done , to know whether it has done in a correct way or not . Thus it is creating many problems in the implementation of reforms projects in a proper way .

5. Reluctance to change by the government employees :

Another important problem of administrative reforms in Odisha is the reluctance to change by government employees . As we all know change is the only constant thing in this World, any reform project needs to adopt new changes according to change in time for its better implementation . There is a huge resistance found in government employees to accept new changes in their way of doing their job . Even they want to do their work in their own traditional and habituated way , which makes most of the work of implementing administrative reforms more complicated .

To be honest, these are serious concerns but they are no such problems who don't have solutions. Impossible itself says I am possible. Administrative reform is very much necessary for the government of Odisha to make itself more responsive , transparent and citizen-friendly to meet the challenges of change. Due to above mentioned problems in the way of implementation of administrative reforms, the target aimed by the government of Odisha could not be achieved fully. Following are some suggestions to improve implementation of administrative reforms in Odisha :-

1. The first and foremost important thing is that any serious administrative reform advocacy must be based on clear thinking, sensible and targeted goals and rational analysis.

2. A vivacious and informed civil society, media exposure and political will to enforce all administrative reforms are very much essential .

3. Government employees should make up and change their mind to accept and adopt new ways of doing their job in a more efficient way by eliminating their old procedures of doing governmental works .

4. Government of Odisha should take actions to implement its various administrative reform projects within a stipulated period of time . This will in turn save the time of government and also help the government to work on other important projects and programmes of importance .

5. Training should be the integral part of any government recruitment. Because trained employees can do a work more accurately and precisely than non-trained employees.

6. There should be the provision of computers to all

government departments, agencies and organizations from macro level to micro level Government. That means from central government to local-self government.

7. As the government of Odisha is providing many services to citizen by launching e-Governance, it should take actions to improve speed of internet for the speedy delivery of governmental services to the common people of Odisha.

So without just talking about the administrative reforms , if the above mentioned suggestions are taken into consideration and the solutions to the problems are made the prime focus of reforms , then it can lead the Odisha Government and thus the public of Odisha to a better , improved and efficient system of governance.

Conclusion:

If one makes a point on the administrative reforms in Odisha, from beginning to the date , it may be concluded that , the government of Odisha has been playing a pro active role in administrative reforms although there are areas where administrative reforms is yet to make a mark. Since the establishment of administrative reforms cell under general administration department (Administrative Reforms), the government of Odisha has introduced many measures on administrative reforms whether it is structural, procedural or behavioural reforms in various concern areas of administration, to make it better and to fulfill efficiently the rising demands , needs and aspiration of the citizen of Odisha according to the changing situation and also trying its best to restore the faith of the people in fairness and capacity of administration. It has devised better ways to develop the administrative capabilities of the state by formulating numbers of administrative reforms in different areas of concern and implementing the same according to the order of priority.

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