India’s E-Governance Initiatives and It’s Impact

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Abstract- With the rapid advancement of technology in all spheres in general and ICT in particular, the importance and need of E-Governance is also growing very fast. "EGovernment" has become one of the most important issues in the transformation of the public sectors in many countries and the developments in the field of ICT have impacted all aspects of life globally. It has facilitated better interface between the public and the Government and has got an unprecedented opportunity for us to change the way the country is governed. Recognized as the best effort to diminish the digital divide and the rural-urban divide, especially in the developing countries the aim of EGovernance is to ensure transparent, smart, seamless, secure and authentic flow of information, thus extending fair and unbiased services to general public at remote and inconvenient geographical locations crossing the inter-departmental barriers. The Authors in this paper study the various applications of ICT in India, the challenges faced in enhancing and sustaining Egovernance initiatives and the innovative solutions to the existing problems.

Keywords- E-Governance, ICT, Implementation, India

I. INTRODUCTION

In recent years, a number of developing countries have launched E-government programs and several development agencies and governments have identified E-government implementations as a key policy priority. Driven by the success of a few projects in improving delivery of services to citizens and businesses, an increasing number of governments are making ICT investments in the public sector. The outlined mission of the ICT is the new technologies that are changing our world. They create jobs they are transforming education, health care, commerce, politics and more. They can help in the delivery of Humanitarian assistance and even contribute to peace and security. One of most pressing challenges in the new century is to harness this extraordinary force, spread it throughout the world, and make its benefits accessible and meaningful for all humanity, in particular the poor. The principal mission of this is to tell us how we might accomplish this ambitious goal. The theoretical underpinning of e-governance come from United Kingdom, Australia and New Zealand, and has swept across other countries since. It seeks to reinvent government through metamorphosis into an entrepreneurial, business-like, mission and vision- driven state, which changes its role
from rowing to steering. India has been harnessing the benefits provided by the Information & Communication Technologies (ICT) to provide integrated governance, reach to the citizens faster, and provide efficient services and citizen empowerment through access to information. The aim is to redefine governance in the ICT age to provide SMART GOVERNANCE.

II. E-GOVERNANCE IN INDIA

Successive governments have committed to addressing the inequalities that exist in India. The government of India sees E-Governance as an important vehicle for introducing administrative reforms to improve the quality of life for underserved sections of society and provide more equitable access to economic opportunities across the nation.

In recent years, most governments in India have undertaken a variety of e-Governance projects. India's experience in e-Governance and ICT initiatives, in what can be described as a 'phase of experimentation' has shown that significant benefits can be derived from improving accessibility, tackling corruption and giving assistance to deserving groups. Several significant initiatives have been taken at the Centre and the State level in this direction.

- The Indian Government at the central level has extensively promoted the use of IT in managing its internal processes and has drawn up a 'Minimum Agenda of e-Governance'.
- Further Ministries / departments have provision of 2 to 3 percent of their annual budgets to be spent on IT related activities.
- The Government has enacted IT Act 2000 which provides legal status to the information and transactions carried on the net.
- Several State Governments have also taken various innovative steps to promote e-Governance and have drawn up a roadmap for IT implementation and delivery of services to the citizens online. The applications that have been implemented are targeted towards providing G2B, G2C and B2C services with emphasis on use of local language.
- The Government approved the National e-Governance Plan (NeGP), comprising of 27 Mission Mode Projects (MMPs) and 10 components, on May 18, 2006 (Ministry of Communication and Information Technology, Government of India).
- The National Action Plan on e-governance has an ambitious outlay of over Rs.23,000 Crores involving public and private investments over the next four years (Ministry of Communication and Information Technology, 2006).
- Eleventh Five Year Plan (2007 – 2012): Over the next five years, domestic spending on outsourced IT services is projected to more than double, from Rs. 103 billion in 2004 to over Rs. 238 billion in 2009 (Planning Commission, Government of India, 2007).

III. INDIA’S POSITION ON E-READINESS

E-Readiness is the ability to use Information and Communication Technologies (ICT) to develop one's economy and to foster one's welfare. Each year, the Economist Intelligence Unit produces a ranking of e-readiness across countries, based on six pillars of e-readiness: connectivity & technology infrastructure, business environment, social & cultural environment, legal environment, government policy & vision and consumer & business adoption. United states is at 1st position with e-readiness score 8.95 out of 10 followed by Australia and United Kingdom (Table 1). India is at 58th position with e-readiness score of 4.17.
Implementation of e-government has changed the way of living of the people in many countries. However, in India the implementation of e-government is little difficult because of its developing status. The government agencies find lot of difficulties in the smooth implementation of e-government in India because of low literacy, low per capita income, insufficient infrastructure and limited financial resource.

A. Low literacy

Literacy is defined as the ability to read and write with understanding in any language. A person who can merely read but cannot write is not classified as literate. Any formal education or minimum educational standard is not necessary to be considered literate. Georgia is the country having 100% literacy rate and at 1st rank in the list of literacy (Table: 2). Literacy level of India is 66% and ranked 149 in the list of and Mali is having literacy level 26.2% , is the lowest level in literacy level (180).

B. Low per capita income

Per capita income means how much each individual receives, in monetary terms, of the yearly income generated in the country. This is what each citizen is to receive if the yearly national income is divided equally among everyone. Per capita income is usually reported in units of currency per year. Globally Bermuda have the highest per capita income followed by Luxembourg. India is at 160th rank in with 530 US$ average per capita income (Table 3).
TABLE 3
GDP OF SELECT COUNTRIES IN 2007 GIVEN BY INTERNATIONAL MONETARY FUND.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sl. No</th>
<th>Country</th>
<th>GDP (Million US $)</th>
<th>Rank</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>United States</td>
<td>3,843,825</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Japan</td>
<td>3,383,762</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Germany</td>
<td>3,222,147</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>China (PBC)</td>
<td>3,259,827</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>United Kingdom</td>
<td>3,772,570</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>France</td>
<td>2,509,255</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>Canada</td>
<td>1,452,140</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>Brazil</td>
<td>1,313,590</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>Russia</td>
<td>1,289,382</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>India</td>
<td>1,098,945</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>Australia</td>
<td>908,826</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>Switzerland</td>
<td>423,938</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13</td>
<td>Pakistan</td>
<td>143,756</td>
<td>47</td>
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<tr>
<td>14</td>
<td>Sri Lanka</td>
<td>101,012</td>
<td>78</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15</td>
<td>Abdul</td>
<td></td>
<td>179</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

C. Administrative and Political Problems:-

E-governance in India is in its infancy stage. The National EGovernance Plan (NEGP) is the umbrella under which all egovernance initiatives are taking place. However, there are very few successful and completed e-governance initiatives like MCA21 in India. Whether it is e-courts, e-readiness, legal enablement of ICT systems, e-gazette, e-commerce etc. none are even close to success. So where lies the problem?

Firstly, there seems to be lack of insight among the policymakers. The ICT polices and strategies of India are not covering the e-governance aspects at the national level. No political party ever considers e-governance as an important part of their political agenda before elections. Even commodities like onion and potatoes find place in national debates but not e-governance.

Secondly, there is too much stress upon procurement as opposed to management. India has to accept that computerization of traditional governmental and public functions are not e-governance. We have to empower the citizens with the power of ICT. We have to make the governmental services user-friendly as well as productive and easy.

Thirdly, there is lack of transparency in governmental dealing and in the absence of the same e-governance is just paperwork. In India, we have the Right to Information Act, 2005 but the same has been a failure in India. The public information officers keep on denying the relevant information on flimsy grounds.

In exceptional cases, citizens may get some information but by and large very few people get the information.

Fourthly, accountability among governmental officers is missing. There is no mechanism through which we can punish a wrong doer for his violations and negligence. This results in a casual attitude towards public good and e-governance. If we fix accountability and time-bound progress requirements then a lot of problems can be solved.

Fifthly, public participation in both policy making and governmental decisions is missing. If we get the opinion of those who are somehow surviving at the grassroots level we can solve the majority of our problems. However, the fact is that grassroots level problems are never solved.

V. A STRATEGIC FRAMEWORK FOR IMPLEMENTATION OF EGOVERNMENT

MAY BE HELPFUL

On the basis of the study of e-readiness in India and the challenges for implementation of e-government in India a conceptual framework for the effective implementation of egovernment in India is suggested. This conceptual framework is divided into five stages:

A. Vision for e-government implementation

In the first stage the vision for the effective implementation of e-government has to be determined. In this level it is
planned that to what extend the e-government can be implemented.

**B. Assessment of e-readiness**

To fulfill the vision the e-readiness of India should be assessed. It is compared with respect to other countries. The e-readiness reveals the position of India with respect to the other countries.

**C. Overcoming challenges of e-government**

In the assessment process the challenges for effective implementation of e-government will be exposed. These challenges are low literacy levels, low per capita income and limited financial resource in India. The challenges should be overcome for the effective implementation of e-government.

**D. Developing the environment for e-government**

The positive environment needs to be developed to meet the vision of e-government implementation. This environment is internal environment and external environment.

**E. Implementation of e-government**

Then finally the e-government should be implemented. This is the final step of the conceptual framework. These steps are summarized in a conceptual framework, which is shown in figure 1. This is a conceptual framework and can be validated in the real life situation.

![](fig1.png)

**VI. CONCLUDING REMARKS**

E-governance will be successful only if we start to undertake due efforts to implement it in all blocks. Being the largest democratic country, India must show an example to other in this context. But in last many years we have not seen the efficiency of public servants, who are supposed to be the some of the best brain of India. For attaining developed status our public service system must work in a better way. Citizen must participate in various activities, if we really want to see India as a developed nation. Public service must be strengthened in India in true spirit, if we want to become a developed nation in near future. There is a need to: (1) Collects and analyzes available government agency architecture information with an eye toward identifying new e-Government initiatives. (2) Assess the state of enterprise architecture management maturity across the government, more specifically the agencies involved with implementation of the NeGP initiatives; (3) promote the role of enterprise architectures in the successful
implementation of e-Government initiatives; (4) develop a national e-Governance enterprise architecture framework in line with the NeGP mission of service orientation and cross governmental collaboration; (5) develop strong leadership in helping the maturity of enterprise architecture management for both individual agencies and e-Government initiatives. Strong leadership is especially pivotal to ensuring that both government agency-specific investments and governmentwide investments in IT and e-Government are made within the context of enterprise architectures. To do less jeopardizes realizing the full potential and benefits of these investments.

To meet the vision of implementing e-governance in India the challenges in the implementation of e-government should be overcome. Then the environment needs to be developed for the effective implementation of e-government in India. A conceptual framework is developed for the effective implementation of e-government in India. This conceptual framework and can be further validated in the real life situation.

REFERENCES