

E- Governance – Issues and Challenges in Indian Context

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Introduction:-

The concept of governance is as old as organized society. No system can function without a right method of administration. Administration works to regulate, monitor and streamline a system. As such, the purpose of governance is to regulate, systematized and monitor the procedures to achieve set goals. A failure in this system results in deviation from the set goals. Good governance is often equated with achievement of objectives in a prescribed manner. It ensures sanctity of ends and means.

However, if one carefully looks into the history of administration and administrative systems, one can notice a large number of failures and flaws in the administrative system. The distortions, deviations and drawbacks in the system have resulted in not only bad governance but also loss of trust of people in the system. The true test of governance is the satisfaction of the citizens i.e. the people for whom the system functions. Therefore, having a systematic, efficient and planned governance system is a need of every society. Transparent procedures, well defined objectives and result orientations are thus the representative features of quality governance.

Concept of e governance-

Till 20th century, administration and administrative systems were equated with a long chain of procedures and time consuming activities. It is presumed that an administrative system can't function unless it has a long set up and prolonged structure. This has resulted into development of a paper raj where the purpose of the system is lost in jungle of procedures. The administrative systems were working only to satisfy the requirement of procedures and fulfill the compliances of regulations and various clauses governing a particular set up. Bringing in efficiency in the system require a more elastic, flexible and a prompt administrative machinery. Efforts and researches to develop such machinery were conducted many times with limited success. However, till the systems were manually controlled, a permanent and definitive solution was almost beyond reach.

In order to enhance the efficiency and to improve the quality of administration, it was required that a fast information processing and data analysis systems should be established. However, processing of information requires mechanism that can convert information into data and data into decision making inputs. System analysts were unable to define and design a very fast data processing mechanism.

With the development of computers, however, the situation changed and now we are witnessing a very efficient, transparent data processing system in the form of mechanized and computerized data systems. Computers have become a useful assistance in processing of data

as per the users requirement. The most important application of this change can be seen in the form of electronic governance popularly called as e governance. The whole concept of administration is now changing because of e governance which is crucial in bringing transparency, efficiency and authenticity of the work procedures. The term e governance is defined by many experts as follows:-

“The use of IT to improve the ability of government to address the need of society. It includes the publishing of policy and programme related information to transact with citizens.”

Emergence of e governance:-

E governance has emerged as a result of lethargies systems, procedural flaws and growing discontent amongst the users .the organization whether public or private when fails to deliver justice in an efficient manner, the users lose their faith in the system. The triad of good governance is reliability, efficiency and transparency. However, all these factors depend of clarity, accuracy and timeliness of data. In a manual system, bringing clarity of information is very difficult. Maintenance of transparency is often not practical and reliability of data processing devices cannot be ensured because of which bureaucratic systems in a conventional system works against users of interest.

The major points of distinction between the conventional bureaucratic systems and electronically driven administrative systems can be highlighted as follows:-

The significant features of e governance systems:- the e governance system works to bring in transparency, efficiency and clarity of procedures. However, the real purpose is to change the attitude and mindset of the users of the systems. Those who install, implement and execute must understand the purpose for which the system is established and what the effects of the system are. From this point of view the components of e governance can be enlisted as follows:-

Objectives of the present paper:-

The present paper tries to examine various aspect and issues related to e governance in India. The system, being new and of recent origin, there are many potential threats and flaws in its establishment and execution. The present paper attempts to examine how e governance shall help in improving the quality of administration. The major objectives of the paper are as follows:-

1. To understand the scope of electronically driven administrative systems in Indian context.
2. To find out what are the areas where such systems can work effectively
3. To examine the potentials for growth and development of e governance in India

To understand the scope of electronically driven administrative systems in Indian context:-

India is a country with a huge population and large landmass. This makes it difficult to administer this country unless and until an efficient and prompt system which can provide timely solutions to administrative problems is designed the country cannot function efficiently. Failure of administration often results into failure of faith of people in the system of governance. The major threat to any country is never external but internal. Dissatisfaction is the father of unrest hence satisfying the expectation of the people by offering timely and need based services is very important. This service becomes vital for improving the quality of administrative systems.

E governance offers an assurance that prompt, timely and efficient service to all the concerned can be provided without making any compromise in terms of accuracy, reliability and quality of information. The development of e governance in India need to have certain basic components which are explained below:-

To find out what are the areas where such systems can work effectively:-

E governance is pro people and people centric method of administration implemented through electronic systems. It is empowerment through sharing, involvement through participation and development through proactive approach. The areas where e governance can work to bring in efficiency are enlisted below:-

- Strengthen the critical points where interaction between the users and the service providers is very high.
- To bring the realities of the administration to the notice of citizens and users so as to avoid likely conflicts arising out of disgust, disbelief and disillusion.
- To develop a stakeholder friendly administration that solves the problems by offering solutions and not by creating new problems.
- Improvement of service and process efficiency to satisfy the expectations of a particular user segment.
- To develop people public partnership to improve administrative systems
- To enhance the level of collaboration between various government agencies so as to minimize cost of administration and service delivery
- To recognize citizens as most important users of administrative systems and offer them right service in the right manner

Thus there is change in the administration system from the conventional approach to new e governance approach should be taken into account. The paradigm shift from old bureaucratic approach to new electronic approach can be explained as follows:-

Past	Present
Department centric approach	Citizen / user centric approach
Process orientation	Service orientation
Output based evaluation	Outcome based evaluation
Restricted approach	Broad approach

To examine the potentials for growth and development of e governance in India:-

E governance has enormous potential for growth and development of quality administration and inculcating a sense of responsiveness. A list of areas where e -governance can help in improving the quality of administration is worth understanding:-

1. Reduction of hierarchies – e-governance develops a flat matrix form of organization. This shall result in developing promptness in reporting of information and action to be taken on various issues
2. Cost effectiveness – the main purpose of good governance is to offer prompt service at least cost. Due to reduction in paper work and processing time, administrative cost can be minimized significantly.
3. Developing empowerment – the feeling of being free, independent and empowered is very useful to develop responsive citizens. It also creates a pro people administrative system.
4. Enforcing accountability:- good governance usually reflects its accountability in various forms. It ensures results and accepts responsibility for delay. Deficiency, defaults and failures. This actually works as a system correction device.
5. Team culture_ e governance leads to develop a team spirit and feeling of belongingness among the people who work in a particular unit to achieve set objectives. The growth of transparent system cultivates faith, unity and feeling of togetherness.

Conclusions:-

The above paper thus deals with various facets of e governance and application of mechanized administrative system to improve quality of administration and work culture in government organizations. The author is of the opinion that in order to develop a more responsive user friendly and pro people administrative system, it is necessary to introduce e-governance systems in India.
