

“E-Governance in Gujarat – Problem and Potential.”

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ABSTRACT: It is very clear that Information and Communication Technology (ICT) establish very easy and cost-efficient structure between any kinds of two or more medium to communicate with each other in present time, here medium can be any institute, organization or Government. Good Governance often refer to that government is committed to making decisions which are effective, inclusive, accountability and transparent for providing very effective and quick service to citizen. E-Governance is one of the most excellent approaches to establish good governance and it is also a significant part of ICT. This document specially discussed about Gujarat state’s potential and problems in favor of E-governance.

Keywords: ICT, Good Governance, E-Governance, accountability, inclusive.

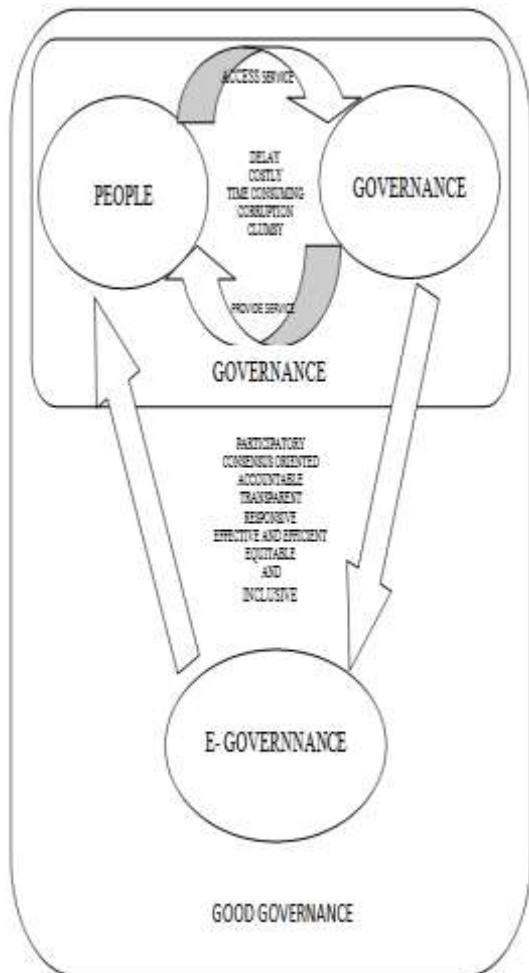
I. INTRODUCTION.

The process of governing any family, tribe, society, territory, formal or informal organization or country by any person, group or government through the rules, laws and norms or power is called “Governance”. It is related with decision-making and the processes by which decisions are implemented [1]. The affluence of civilization of any nations is dependent of their “Governance” and it also inflected nation’s wealth, peace and wellbeing. If “Governance” always takes all decision and processes to improve nation’s social, geographical, environmental and economical status then it is called “Good Governance”. Good governance has 8 foremost characteristics. It is participatory, consensus oriented, accountable, transparent, responsive, effective and efficient, equitable and inclusive and follows the rule of law. It assures that corruption is minimized, the views of minorities are taken into account and that the voices of the most vulnerable in society are heard in decision-making. It is also responsive to the present and future needs of society [2].

The process of converting “Governance” in “God Governance” is very difficult task for any nation without using technology specially Information and Communication Technologies (ICTs). ICT introduce an incredible term which is referring as an “E-Governance” in late 1990s. ICT is the study or business of developing and using technology to process information and aid communications. ICT includes any communication device or application like radio, television, cellular phone, computer and network, hardware and software, satellite systems and much more. The Government will be able to make structure to provide its all services to citizen without any kind of obstacles and also can strengthen its executive system by using of ICT.

“E-Governance” or “Electrical-Governance” play very crucial and bi-directional role between citizens and government. It provides more handy and comfy access to the government’s services and information and straightforward structure to know need of citizens very rapidly.

“E-Governance” makes sure that all 8 foremost characteristics of “Good Governance” are satisfied or not. Simply says that “E-Governance” which significant part of ICT is facilitate to convert “Governance” into “Good Governance”.



[Figure 1: Conceptual Model of E-Governance]

A conceptual model for E-Governance is shown in figure-1 which explain about how to people or citizen accessed service by Governance and which kind of problem they are facing. We can show very clearly in fig. that how to improve governance by adopting E-Governance which is major function of information and communication technology (ICT) and try to achieved major characteristics of Good Governance.

In this literature we are discussed about Gujarat state's policy and processes to establish E-governance and also discussed potential and problems regarding this.

II. E-GOVERNANCE: MAJOR PROBLEM IN GUJARAT.

Today Gujarat is one of the fastest developing state in India. Gujarat State is also considered as a role model or growth engine of India. Gujarat is not only famous for its economical development but also for social inclusive growth. But this state has

not yet achieved as much progress in E-Governance. It faces many problems which are describes as under.

2.1 Poverty :

Internet access is excessively costly for the poor in Gujarat like other state in India. In Gujarat 57.4% population are living in rural area. For the citizens living in the rural area of Gujarat state, it is unaffordable to create the necessary infrastructure to use internet. This situation is not more different for the citizens living in urban area. It is also very expensive to gain internet access in India: it may cost about Rs. 25/- per hour in cities and Rs. 150-200/- per hour in rural areas [3].

2.2 Infrastructure :

Infrastructure is also one of the barriers to making effective E-Governance in Gujarat. Lack of fundamental infrastructure like Computers, Internet, Data centre, technology, ICT related instrument and way of communication etc.

2.3 Digital illiteracy :

Digital illiteracy is also one of the major problem in the context of E-Governance in Gujarat like other state in India. Digital literacy is non-existent among more than 90% of India's population. Gujarat state has over 18000 villages and 14070 panchayats which are represented by 34,694,609 panchayat members. Approx 38% population is living below poverty line, illiteracy rate is more than 25-30% and digital literacy is almost no-existent among more than 90% of India's population and this is a biggest challenge [4][5].

2.4 Language Dominance :

Language Dominance is one of the considerable problem to set up effective E-Governance in Gujarat. at present, most computer-related operations are being done in the English language. It found that of all the web pages in the world, about 84% are in English followed by 4.5% in German, 3.1 % in Japanese, 1.8% in French, 1.2% in Spanish, 1.1% in Swedish, 1% in Italian and less than 1% in all other languages[6]. Due to such stupendous control of English over these communication channels, computers and the internet are quite useless in Gujarat villages, and the use of local languages does little to alleviate the problem due to the poor literacy level mentioned earlier.

2.5 Inequality :

Inequality is also one of the most major issues in Gujarat. There is clearly looks inequality to gaining access in public sector services between different sections of citizens particularly, between urban and rural communities, between the educated and illiterate and between the rich and poor.

2.6 Lack of reconciliation between Society and Public, Private Sectors :

It is necessary to proper interaction between Govt. department and developing agency to Designing of any citizen oriented application. At present the users in Govt. departments do not contribute enough to design the solution architecture. Consequently the solution developed and implemented does not meet the requirements of an E-Governance project and hence does not get implemented.

2.7 Disregard of Public Sector's Employee :

The mindset of Public Sector's employee is relatively different from private sector's employee. At present, Govt. servants have not been able to get out of their old traditional mode of work. They are not fully ready to accept mode of work done by ICT related instrument and way of communication. Thus any attempt to execute Documents Management and workflow technologies or bringing out the change in the system is met with resistance from the government servants.

III. E-GOVERNANCE: POTENTIAL IN GUJARAT.

Gujarat is one of the state where ICT infrastructure are mounting very impressively. State Wide Area Network (SWAN), State Data Centre (SDC) and eGRAM – Common Service Centers (CSCs), Sachinvalaya Integrated Communication Network (SICN), Bharatnet / National Optical Fiber Network (NOFN) are considerable example of that. The State of Gujarat has adopted an innovative, constructive and result oriented policy to increase the coverage of ICT. It is also reflects in Gujarat State eGovernance Policy for the State of Gujarat (2014-19) and IT/ITeS Policy (2016-21).

Gujarat is an aspiring leader with e-readiness Initiatives with the IT Policy. Gujarat has been position at L2 Stage in Information Communication Technologies (ICTs) which is categorized based on Environment, Readiness and Usage Applications. Awarded for Best e-Governance, Gujarat is a frontline State in the implementation of e-governance policies &

projects and setting up of key infrastructure for E Governance [7].

Here we are illustrating on few successful stories of e-Governance in Gujarat State.

3.1 GSWAN.

Gujarat State Wide Area Network is referring as a GSWAN which is highly developed communication infrastructure in Gujarat State. It is using for exchange of Data, Voice & Video information between two or more locations, separated by considerable geographical distances.

The primary motivating factor for GSWAN is for the modernization of the intra-governmental communication setup that would improve administrative effectiveness and efficiency and to bring reliability and accountability in overall system of Government-to-Government (G2G) functioning. GSWAN has leveraged ICT to provide a robust communication backbone and effective support for e-Governance for State Government other Government bodies. It offers a wide range of ICT services. Over 340 + Websites of various government departments/offices/ Boards / Corporations/ HoDs etc. have already hosted on GSWAN server and more than 22000 + E-mail IDs created for Government officers all over the state[8].

GSWAN providing facility of continuous and easy Internet Protocol based Video Conferencing between various offices of Government of Gujarat.

3.2 Digital Gujarat.

Digital Gujarat is one of the most attractive initiatives of Government of Gujarat. It is Common Service Portal (CSP) for citizens. It provides basic and essential services to citizen. It offers 33 online services to citizen like Ration Card, Domicile Certificate, Senior Citizen Certificate, Character Certificate, Widow Certificate, EBC Certificate, Non – Creamy layer Certificate, Cast Certificate etc.



Digital Gujarat Mobile Application will give additional facility to get all above mention services. This is the incredible steps of Government of Gujarat to making Good Governance through E - Governance.

3.3 SWAGAT Online.

“People’s voice is the key driver of a democracy and listening to that Voice is key test of Good Governance.”

SWAGAT is referred as a State Wide Attention on Grievances through Application of Technology which is justly provides voice to citizen. Citizens do have grievances of all kinds. Genuine expectations from the Government, not duly met, become grievances. Grievance redressal is the key to Good Governance; more so in a democracy. Efficiency, transparency and the speed in redressal is the key to citizen satisfaction.

On the 4th Thursday of every month applicants arrive at the Chief Minister’s Office in the morning. Grievances are scrutinized, registered and instantly transmitted online to the concerned authorities at the Secretariat level, District level and Sub-District level, whereupon the authorities input their replies by afternoon on the same day. From 3.00pm on the same day, the Chief Minister personally listens to the applicants one-by-one. The grievances as well as the replies of the concerned authorities are available through the system on a screen. The concerned secretaries are present along with the Chief Minister, for direct interaction with the aggrieved citizen, and district authorities are connected through video-conferencing.

After listening to all the aspects of the case from all sides, necessary instructions are given for resolving the grievance. A record is maintained in the SWAGAT database and a separate log is maintained for each case. There is a focus on monitoring the cases to ensure solutions are made according to instructions given by the Chief Minister. Citizens can view the status of their application online, using their allotted password and login at local Government Offices and at any internet access point.

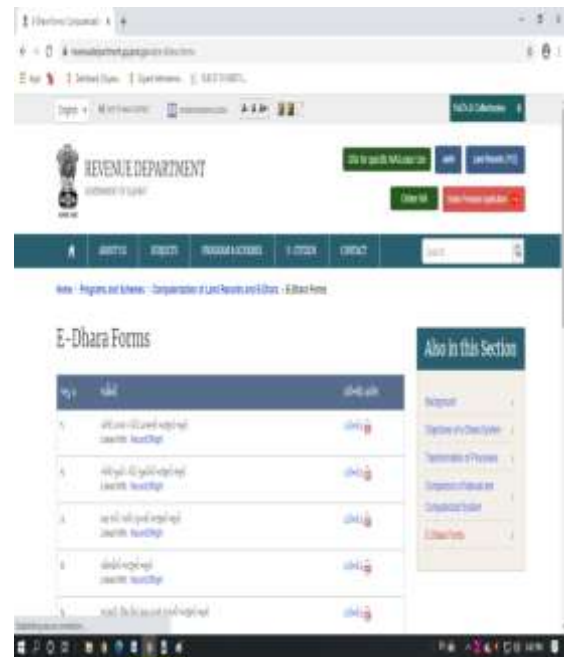
Grievances are only eligible if they have already been presented to the appropriate authorities (such as the Sub-District Officer or the District Officer), and have not been resolved at this level. Cases for attention of the Chief Minister are selected as those that are long-standing, acute humanitarian issues, difficult to resolve at other levels of Government and those that have policy implications.

The positive impacts realized by the State level SWAGAT gave drive to expand the system to 225 Sub-District offices in 2008, for greater accessibility to the public. Thus the geographical scope covers all of the 55 million citizens and 225 Sub-District of the State. At the District level SWAGAT session, the district authorities hear the public grievances on the same day. Sub-District level SWAGAT is held on every fourth Wednesday, i.e. one day prior to District and State SWAGAT. The software application also enables an online review of Sub-District SWAGAT, District SWAGAT and State SWAGAT outcomes [9].

3.4 OJAS.

OJAS refers as an Online Job Application System, is an interface to provide the complete solution to the departments of Government of Gujarat for quick, transparent and effety recruitment process.

Government of Gujarat has directive all major departments like GPSC, GSSSB, GPSSB, GSRTC etc. to set off the recruitment process of class I, II and III cadre through OJAS only.



OJAS Mobile Application will give additional facility to get detailed information related to live and upcoming advertisements and examinations. Features like Notice Board and Alerts/Notifications will let you updated with the latest vacancies of state Govt.

3.5 E – Dhara.

E – Dhara is an Online Land Record project of Gujarat State which eliminates all manually process of lands record of Gujarat State and keeping all records digitized.

Gujarat has led the way when it comes to infrastructure and economic development. Its online land record system is also winning accolades from the government of India. Also known as E - Dhara, the land record digitization system has won the award for best e-governance project.

The system enables the user to access land records instantly online and update it as and when required, be it for obtaining crop loan or for getting electrical connection or subsidies. In fact, all 7/12 documents of 1.5 crore land records have been digitized. Landowners can access these land records from a dedicated counter in Taluka office by paying a nominal fee [10].

IV. CONCLUSION

In this paper we are discussing various barriers to makes Good Governance through E-Governance. Poverty, Infrastructure, Digital illiteracy, Language dominance etc.. are that issues. State Government is still much more dependent on Center Government in case of ICT infrastructure and application development. State Government still has a long way to go.

In spite of all Obstacles State are doing impressively on the subject of E-Governance. The State Government is implementing various effective policies to provide essential facilities to the citizen through ICT. There are vast potential for development of E-Governance in various sectors. Gujarat has occupied the top slot in SKOCH State of Governance 2019 while it was on 13th placed in 2017. It is not possible without E-Governance.

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