E-Governance programmes in Karnataka

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Abstract:
Information Technology has brought revolutionary changes in every walk of life. It has accelerated the pace of globalization. Use of Internet and computers for different purposes is increasing rapidly. Internet has facilitated an efficient, speedy and transparent process for disseminating information to the public and other agencies working in different fields. The governments formulate the policies and implement them through their administrative machinery. In this process, there has to be downward, up-ward, horizontal, vertical communication between different departments of the government and the citizens. The electronic Medias of communication and computers have eased the process of administration. So, E-Governance has become a big buzzword today in government circles.
E-Governance is an instrument of the Information Society in the form of governance principles, strategies, systems and tools that enable the use of Information and Communication Technologies in mutual interactions between and among the key members of the society; state, citizens, and businesses. As part of strengthening e-governance initiative, Karnataka government launched the Karnataka State Wide Area Network that seeks to establish a state information highway connecting its 2300 offices across the state. The purpose of this paper is to give an insight into some successful e-governance programmes in Karnataka

Introduction:

E-Governance is the application of information and communication technology (ICT) for delivering Government services, exchange of information, communication transactions, integration of various stand-alone systems and services between Government to-Customer, Government-to Business, Government-to-Government as well as back office processes and interactions within the entire Government framework. Through e-Governance, Government services are made available to citizens in a convenient, efficient and transparent manner. A host of government services are now being made available to all sections of citizens to their doorstop on e-governance platform. E-Governance is a mechanism of the Information Society in the form of governance principles, strategies, systems and tools that enable the use of ICTs (Information and Communication Technologies) in mutual interactions between and among the key members of the society; state, citizens, and businesses. The characteristics of good governance laid down by UNDP are as follows. 1. Participation, 2. Rule of Law, 3. Transparency, 4. Responsiveness, 5. Consensus Orientation, 6. Equity, 7. Effectiveness and Efficiency 8. Accountability and 9.Strategic Vision.

Necessitate of E-Governance:

Karnataka state is attempting to rejuvenate their public management and make it more proactive, efficient and transparent and especially more service oriented. In this context, the appropriate use of ICT plays a crucial role in advancing the goals of the public sector and in contributing towards an environment of social and economic growth. E-Governance can shore up considerably the process of transformation of the government towards a leaner, more costeffective government. It can facilitate communication and improve the coordination of authorities at different layers of government, within organizations and even at the departmental level. Further, e-Government can enhance the speed and

efficiency of operations by streamlining processes, lowering costs, improving research capabilities and improving documentation and record-keeping.

Objectives:

The main objectives of the study are as follows

1. To appreciate the concept e-Governance
2. To understand the initiatives and Implementation of E-Governance Programmes in Karnataka
3. To know the challenges of implementation of E-Governance Programmes in the state.

E-Governance Programmes of Karnataka: The Government of Karnataka and several State Governments have taken several steps to adopt e-governance in many areas of Public Administration such as Public Services. Agriculture, commercial, Rural services, Social services, Public Information, Revenue and Police Administration, and Municipal Services, etc. The IT initiative of Karnataka aims to provide direct citizen interface, perk up human capital and connectivity and improve the efficiency of government officials. As IT has been applied in the following areas.

Secretariat Local Area Network (LAN): This Programme envisages computerization of all secretariat departments. It enables citizens to know the status of their file and the number of days they took to be cleared at various stages. It is a significant step in delivering good governance to the masses.

Khajane: Khajane is software designed and developed by the CMS, a company belonging to TATA. The treasury department deals with managing accounts and on the remittances submitted to the government. They also consider the payments made on behalf of the Karnataka Government. The application deals with payments, receipts, stamps, pensions, deposits etc. The major benefit of the project is the instantaneous reconciliation of government accounts. In addition the system displays the money spent on all government schemes in every village. This enhances transparency and improves quality.

Kaveri (Karnataka Valuation and e-registration Project): It is the state's first public Private e-Governance initiative. It envisages zero spending for the government. Its aim is to computerize and more than 200 sub-registries in the state online, enabling property registration within 30 minutes of document submission from the present 45day time period. In October 2002, it received the gold medal for the approach paper at the 6th national conference on e-governance.

Bhoomi : Bhoomi is the state's computerized land records project. It aims to cover all farmers in 175 talks. to digitize the paper land records and create a software mechanism to control changes to the land registry in Karnataka. The project was designed to eliminate the long-standing problem of inefficiency and corruption in the maintenance of land records at dispersed and poorly supervised and audited block-level officers. The project development and implementation was done by NIC.

Nemmadi Kendras: Bhoomi Project despite significantly improving the delivery of land records to the citizens. In the earlier, the citizens could get the land records at Village, but after implementation Bhoomi Project they had to travel to the taluk headquarters to get records. Therefore the state government understood this problem and implement nemmadi kendras for delivering land records and other e-governance services.

Yava.com: This programme envisages 225 training centers all over the state run by prestigious firms like Aptech, NIIT, and SSI etc. The fees in the center are already reduced. The government gives subsidy of Rs.1500 for a three month course. A maximum subsidy of Rs.4500 is offered for a six month course. The programme aims to train over 1, 00,000 rural youths in a year. Over 100 centres are operational at present.

Mukhya Vahini: This is the Chief Ministers decision support system. Presently it tracks the C.M.S. instructions, the projects sanctioned under the Global Investor meet, the constituency management

system, summarized data on major projects in health, housing, and other social sector schemes. Many modules are already in use.

Common Entrance Test: Karnataka has numerous institutions of higher education and attracts students from other Karnataka states and countries. Every year the state conducts the common entrance test. Over 2,50,000 students take the exams and around 50 percent are from outside the state. The entire admission process is absolutely transparent. The fact that students from outside the state participate in large number shows their confidence in the local administration. Before computerization, the process attracted many questions from elected representatives and a lot of litigation. Now the system is so transparent that it has rid itself of both.

Smart School Project: In 2002 the government decided to set up within a year "Smart School Project" in five divisions of the state in collaboration with the Microsoft Company. It will provide software solutions, teacher training and IT curriculum. The Karnataka government received accolades from Bill Gates, the chairman of the Microsoft Company for its performance in-governance.

Bangalore One: The State government has signed two agreements in November 2002 with the Microsoft Company for setting up "Bangalore One"-an online portal where bill for government utilities such as water supply and power distribution could be paid. Citizens can access the portal to check status, pay bills, and get information. Taking technology to the doors of Bangalore citizens is the aim of this project.

Online Text Books: A downloadable format for text book of class 1 to 12 published by department of school education, Government of Karnataka.

Sahakara Darpana: This programme is focusing on the computerization of directorate of co-operative audit. This gateway exhibits the financial position of nearly 30,000 cooperative institutions, showing their strengths, grading of cooperative societies and validating the irregularities in financial, administrative, and maintenance of records.

Other Initiatives the Commercial Tax Department tracks goods using check post entries. Information about the movement of goods is automatically put in the dealers assessment file. In terms of tax collection per GDP, the state is one of the best in Karnataka The Insurance Department uses computers to track all the government vehicle insurance details. Police salary bills are computerized. The irrigation department has a major project on e-tendering and e-procurement. Silk trading exchange in Karnataka has been computerized since 1985.

E-Governance in Karnataka: Prospects and Challenges

Governments all over the world have been using ICTs such as internet, websites, computers and mobile phones to provide various government services in an efficient, equitable and transparent manner with less corruption. The purpose of this paper is to examine the challenges encountered in e-government as well as the potential opportunities available in the context of Karnataka society. The study reveal India is still lagging behind in utilizing information and communication technologies for delivering government services online.

E-Governance in Karnataka

Information Technology has brought revolutionary changes in every walk of life. It has accelerated the pace of globalization. Use of Internet and computers for different purposes is increasing rapidly. Internet has facilitated an efficient, speedy and transparent process for disseminating information to the public and other agencies working in different fields. The governments formulate the policies and implement them through their administrative machinery. In this process, there has to be downward, up-ward, horizontal, vertical communication between different departments of the government and the citizens. The electronic Medias of communication and computers have eased the process of administration. So, E-Governance has become a big buzzword today in government circles.

Application & Issues related to E-Governance in Karnataka**:**

It is broadly believed that information and communication technology (ICT) empowers organizations to reduce costs and expand competences. Information and communication technology in the structure of the government is for the benefit of the society. Information and communication technology provides way out for e-Governance implementation and government process issues. Information and communication technology is an important part of E-governance. Use of Information and communication technology in E-Governance domain is the recent trend in the governance development all over the world including Karnataka . E-Governance is defined as —use of information and communication technology with the aim of improving information and provides services to the citizen and helps them in decision making process to make

Conclusion:

E-governance has been responsible for the progression in technology of developing countries and in this context Karnataka has implemented some good projects in the state. The goal of E-governance is the ability to access and interact with the world on an even plain. No state should be left behind when it comes to being able to communicate with one another. Without E-governance, developing countries will be left behind when it comes to technology because almost every day, ICT technologies are advancing and changing. Developing countries now have the opportunity to better themselves through electronics and make their society be more advanced and more efficient than ever before. Some of these core principles of e-Governance include a clear understanding and appreciation of the objectives to be achieved, making governance reforms rather than ICT the key focus for these projects, a step-bystep approach to maximum outcomes and benefits, complete re-engineering of government systems and procedures, constant monitoring and evaluation, and use of local languages for ensuring citizen-friendly interface.

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