STRATEGIES FOR MANAGING DIVERSITY IN GOVERNANCE - A CASE STUDY OF MULTICULTURAL INDIAN E-GOVERNANCE

Kumar D
Ph.D Research Scholar in Management, Karpagam University, India.

Dr. N. Panchanatham
Professor, Department of Business Administration, Annamalai University, India.

Abstract
The essence of e-Government is to be able to seamlessly integrate the disparate Information and Communication Technology initiatives of government agencies to provide integrated services to all the objects targeted like the citizens, businesses and even the Government itself. It is the unification of back-ends of agencies on the one hand and the front-end delivery channels on the other. The process of governance has been and is continuously impacted by the developments in various technologies. It brings down the cost, improves the process quality and makes a speedy reach to all the objects targeted. It considers social, economic and environmental aspects in the decision making of its policies. The Digital India initiative by Indian Government for E-Governance will have to overcome many challenges like multicultural, diverged factors and economic situations to become fruitful to the public. This paper stretches its objectives for a conceptual framework to be implemented grouping the Governance with Information and Communication Technology which is the E-Governance and examines the multicultural and diversity in the Indian perspective. The main goal of this paper is to bring out the concerns related to management in E-Governance and application of the framework in them.

Keywords: Diversity, Multicultural, E-Governance Management, Indian E-Government, Digital India, Information and Communication Technology.

Strategies for Managing Diversity in Governance - A case study of Multicultural Indian E-Governance
Modern administrative systems have become more and more information-based. This has profoundly altered the environment in which governments, citizens and other organizations operate. It has also impacted the way in which new systems are being designed. E-Governance is the outgrowth of the efforts made by the governments to improve relations with their citizens. With its ingrained transparency and openness, given the principles of Internet, E-Governance brings governments more closely to their citizens. Therefore, E-Governance has a larger social angle, as it ensures a more wide and representative democracy.

Governments have also embraced Information and Communication Technology (ICT) in the form of E-Governance for better service delivery and information dissemination to citizens (G-2-C) and for intra-government transactions (G-2-G). With technological revolution, it is easier for the governments to maintain consistent and cordial relationship with citizens and other government departments. It is a strategic opportunity for the governments to harness Information Technology to provide service excellence by increasing the efficiency of service and information delivery to citizens; build and strengthen the links and cooperation between government; its citizens and stakeholders; realize operational and financial efficiencies; assist in community building and outreach; and build an environment which encourages innovation.

New technologies demand new types of implementation models. In the conventional approach of e-governance, the project ownership lies with the public sector itself along with the responsibility for funding it and bearing the entire risk. E-Governance has several dimensions and that implementation of a comprehensive programme of e-government involves a multi-sectored approach. The successful use and adoption of E-Governance initiatives is largely dependent on relevant standards, best practices, tools and technologies. India being a Multicultural, Multilingual country with 22 scheduled languages it becomes utmost crucial to provide the citizen services in the locality and in regional language. This paper mainly focuses on the strategies for effective Multicultural E-Governance in Indian perspective as a case study methodology.
Conceptual Framework

Electronic Governance is the application of technology by government to transform itself and its interactions with customers, in order to create impact on the society. According to Dawes (2008), E-Governance comprises the use of Information and Communication Technologies (ICTs) to support public services, government administration, democratic processes, and relationships among citizens, civil society, the private sector, and the state.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>GOVERNMENT</th>
<th>TECHNOLOGY</th>
<th>INTERACTION</th>
<th>CUSTOMERS</th>
<th>SOCIETY</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Mission</td>
<td>Equipment</td>
<td>Channels</td>
<td>Information needs</td>
<td>Demography</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Role</td>
<td>Infrastructure</td>
<td>Channel Strategy</td>
<td>Service needs</td>
<td>Digital Inclusion</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Value</td>
<td>Data</td>
<td>Interoperability</td>
<td>Producer roles</td>
<td>Institutional change</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Operation</td>
<td>Social Media</td>
<td>Partnerships</td>
<td>Consumer roles</td>
<td>Social tension</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Service</td>
<td>Services</td>
<td>Goals</td>
<td>Accessibility</td>
<td>Participation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Institution</td>
<td>Applications</td>
<td>Governance</td>
<td>Change</td>
<td>Globalization</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Inspection</td>
<td>Transctions</td>
<td>Trust</td>
<td>Migration</td>
<td>Public value</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

E-Governance for sustainable development is the use of ICT to support public services, public administration, and the interaction between government and the public, while making possible public participation in government decision-making, promoting social equity and socioeconomic development, and protecting natural resources for future generations.

Managing E-Governance therefore means managing a large portfolio of divergent responsibilities in a coherent manner. Policy areas are thus here conceptualized as ‘belief systems’ which consist of certain shared basic assumptions that guide policy choices. From this perspective, values are essential - they are the deeply embedded and underlying structures which provide a basis for judgments of situations, actions, objects or individuals. Some beliefs and values are, however, more deeply embedded than others as shown below.

The protection of cultural diversity from a political and economic point of view in fact became pressing with globalization, which is characterized by the liberalization on a large scale of economic and commercial exchange, and thus, what has been called the commodification of culture. It has been noted, for instance, that over the past
20 years, trade in cultural goods has quadrupled and the new international rules (WTO, OECD) on trade are increasingly removing State support and protection measures in favour of national goods and services in the name of market freedom and free trade. The Webersian principles of bureaucratic governance are being replaced with the trends of horizontal, linear, dynamic and networked governance. In this belief system, specific local democratic core values have been prominent. Next we will turn to analyzing what characterizes these local democratic values and how they have been related to the implementation of public e-services.

**Discussion**

There are various models globally to implement the Electronic Governance in each sector. The above framework or model reveals that there are differing perspectives on the usefulness and credibility of the existent tools. It is necessary to look at challenges described below.

1. Identification of diversity of users (Citizens, stakeholders, etc)
2. Personalization of services
3. User Interface requirements and constraints
4. Community organization
5. User experience

We are already seeing changes. There is no magic wand to enable this transition overnight. We are progressing fast. In a country, as complex as India, when something becomes a movement, it develops very fast. We are seeing the beginning of that movement. We have already seen e-governance go from being supply-driven to demand-driven. The target by Indian Government of connecting 2.5 lakh villages by 2019 and to make 10 lakh people digitally literate by end-2015 may the globe’s major e-initiative in short span.

The process of developing Public E-Services involves various steps as shown below.

- Institutionalizing One-stop Government Offices
- The Local Legitimization of Public e-Services
- MIS and Web Integration System
- Transaction Systems
- The Local Definition of Public e-Services
- Archiving and electronic records management
- Intuitive decision support tools for public officials

The findings also show that the E-Governance management related research pursues a clear multi-disciplinary approach. According to Kajikawa (2008), the challenge ahead is to explore if such research could become inter or trans-disciplinary. To this end, despite the maturity of many disciplines contributing to the E-Governance management related research, there is a clear need to strengthen theoretical foundations.

**Applicability**

It is useful for any state embarking on a large E-Governance initiative to have an idea of where each of the components and sub-components would be relevant and what management structures would be best suited to deliver results at each level. As far as procedures are concerned, they are all laid out. It is a public process. Transparency is an area in which we have taken best practices from across the world. In this respect all governments have the same kind of issues. Local core values are used to reinforce e-services but also vice versa; e-services are used for reinforcing local core values. Rather than renegotiating the core values of why e-services are carried out, implementing activities of how to carry out the organization and provision of services are being negotiated with e-service developments. Compared to one-stop government offices, the development of e-services has not been driven to the same extent by the specific needs of the local community.

We need to ensure Indian languages access through internet and user databases for the characteristics of the user, like the visually impaired to get automatic access to the e-services through speech interface. Also security features will bring in the confidence and trust with the user community. In an effort to create citizen-focused government, government should create a virtual organizational structure for government services. Furthermore, by analyzing the interplay between e-services and core values, we have illustrated the significance of viewing the
implementation of e-services as part of a process. E-services are not implemented into a vacuum. This also means viewing change as a process: public e-services are incrementally joined and developed in conjunction with past policy processes.

According to Bridges.org (2001), each tool has its own impact, benefits and limitations and therefore to be carefully selected in order to fulfill the required goals. In large implementation, the models may be lacking and hence every model should require redesigning in order to be a comprehensive assessment tool.

Conclusion
The success of e-government lies in applying the principles in a coherent and holistic way by infinite people across agencies, states consistently over a period. E-Government has already occupied a significant place in the global economy. The various agencies of United Nations Organization (UNO) and the World Bank provide huge support in e-government initiatives. As many arguments for Electronic Governance planning prove, Electronic Governance project implementation is a complex exercise and more research is needed to identify challenges, good practice and solutions for successful implementation. In order to fulfill this need, this paper presented a conceptual framework for managing Electronic Governance implementation. The framework identified the complexity of Indian E-Governance which has been more culturally and ethnically heterogeneous. This places greater demands on public organizations to handle this increased heterogeneity in order to adhere to the constitutional rights of equity and equality. As stated above, there is multidimensionality in citizenship which is not yet accounted for in public e-service provisions. Thus, public e-services may to a greater extent have to target issues such as citizenship, equality and competences in order to create a legitimate public administration and a truly "responsive" and "citizen oriented" government. The main contribution of the paper is to build a good understanding of the nature and state of the E-Governance management related research domain with Indian perspective, and to overcome the challenges for implementation of effective E-Governance in India.

References