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E-Governance and its Impact on Society

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Abstract:
The Development of Digitalization and Information and Communication Technology (ICT) have advanced more rapidly than any innovation in our history- reaching nearly around 50% of the developing world's population in only 2 decades. The New Technologies are giving rise to New Business Models within Organizations including the Newly emerging E- Governance Models. E-Governance today is an absolute requirement which is concerned with Reforms in Government System and its Services as well as enhancing technological-based Public Delivery Systems (PDS). Over the Years, a Large number of Initiatives have been undertaken by the Central and Various State Governments to usher in an Era of E-Government. Sustained Efforts have been made at multiple levels to Improve the Delivery of Public Services and Simplify the Process of Accessing them. E-Governance in India has steadily evolved from Computerization of Government Departments to Initiatives that encapsulate the Finer Points of Governance such as Citizen Centricity, Service Orientation and Transparency. Lessons From Previous E-governance Initiatives have played an Important Role in Shaping the Progressive E-Governance Strategy of the Country. However, E-governance is Challenged by Various Barriers and Factors such as: Lack of Public Awareness, Digital Divide, Less Availability of High Speed Internet, High Rate of Expenditure and Operational Cost, Threat to Data Security and Privacy of the Citizens, Huge Maintenance Cost, Frequent Crash of Government Website and Portals, Language Barriers etc. But still, the E-Governance and it's Development is the Need of the Hour and that's why Governments all over the Globe are Trying their best in Developing, Improving, Innovating and Providing E-Governance Services to its Citizens. Therefore, the main objective of this paper is to explain the objectives, challenges, scope, opportunities and development of E-GOVERNANCE so as to aware the readers to explore about E-Governance Services in a new way towards excellence and also to discover the Impacts of E-Governance Services on the Society.

Keywords: E-Governance, Information and Communication Technology (ICT), Digital India, Public Delivery Systems (PDS), Digital Divide, Data Security, Digital Empowerment, Transparency, Responsiveness, Accountability.

Introduction: What is E-Governance?

E-Governance can be defined as the application of Information and Communication Technology (ICT) for providing Government Services, Exchange of Information, Transactions, Integration of previously existing Services and Information Portals. According to the World Bank, "E-Government refers to the use by government agencies of information technologies (such as Wide Area Networks, the Internet and Mobile Computing) that have the ability to transform relations with citizens, businesses and other arms of Government. These technologies can serve a variety of different ends: better delivery of government services to citizens, improved interactions with business and industry, citizen empowerment through

access to information or more efficient government management. The resulting benefits can be less corruption, increased transparency, greater convenience, revenue growth and or cost reductions."
The 'E' in E-Governance stands for "ELECTRONIC".

Hence, E-Governance is a Movement or Shift towards "SMART" Governance which implies:

SIMPLE- Simplification of Governmental rules and regulations with the help of ICT tools in order to provide a Simple and user-friendly environment to the citizens.

MORAL- The adoption of a New Administrative System with the help of Technology to improve the efficiency of various government agencies and their machinery.

ACCOUNTABLE- The development of Effective Information Management Systems so as to facilitate the accountability of public service functionaries.

RESPONSIVE- Speeding up the Government processes in order to make the system as responsive as possible.

TRANSPARENT- Providing information through open platforms such as the Government Websites or Portals so as to make the Government and it's functions transparent.

Interactions in E-Governance:

There are 4 Kinds of Interactions in E-Governance:

G2C- It involves the Interaction between the Government and the Citizens. It enables the citizens to benefit from the efficient delivery of public services and expands the availability and accessibility of Government services and also improves its quality.

G2B- It enables the Business community to interact with the Government by using E-Governance Tools. Its objective is to save time and reduce the operational costs in providing the services.

INTERACTIONS

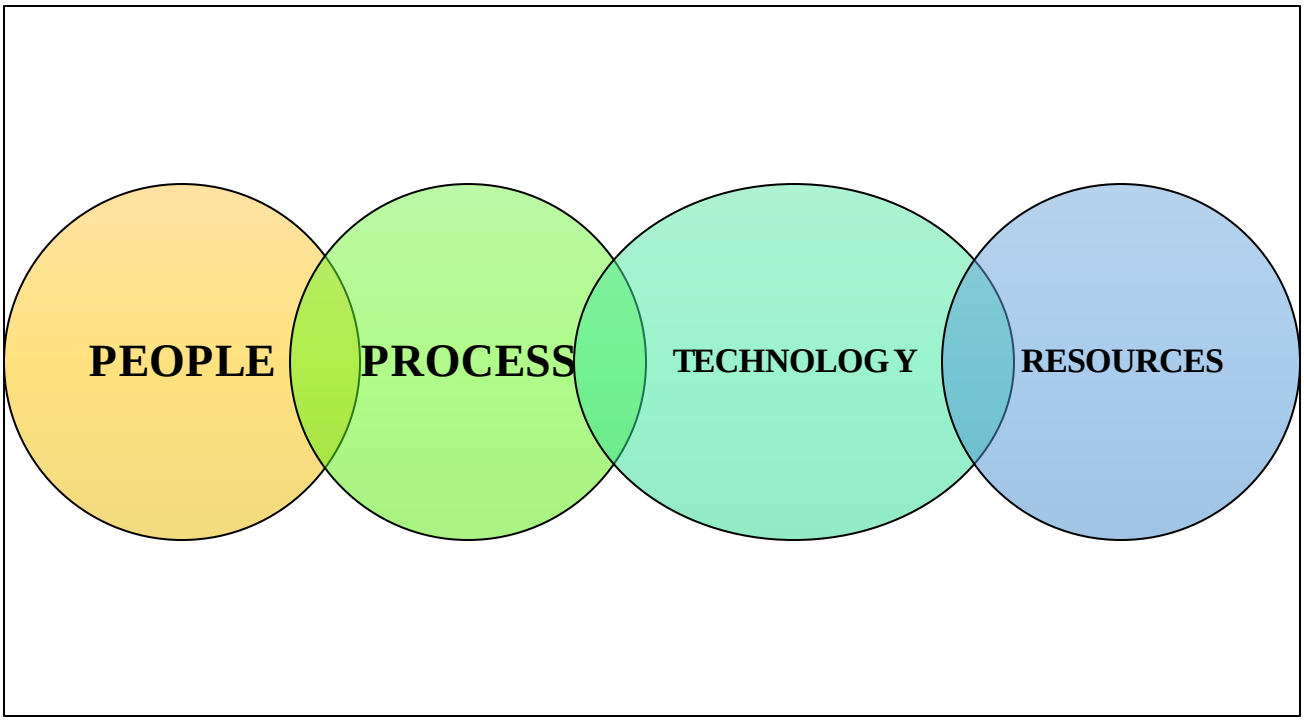
G2G- It enables seamless interaction between the various Government entities. It can be between 2 governments like the Union and the State Governments or between the State Governments. Its main aim is to increase efficiency, performance and output delivery.

G2E- It is between the Government and its employees. The ICT tools helps in making these interactions fast and efficient and thus, increases the satisfaction levels of employees.

Aims, Objectives and Goals of E-Governance:

1. To ensure Well-being of the Citizens of the Country as a well as Safeguarding their Rights.
2. To Facilitate Efficient and Easy availability of Public Services to everyone.
3. To ensure Transparency and Accountability in the Government System.
4. To ensure Saving of Time along with Reduction in Operational Costs.
5. To Aware Citizens about E-Governance Systems such as Government Websites, Portals and Apps.
6. To Create a Co-operative Structure between the Government and its Citizens.
7. To Strengthen the Country's Economy with the help of ICT tools in order to keep up pace with the other countries in the world.

Pillars of E-Governance:



Beginning of E-Governance in India:

- The First Step towards E-governance in India was the Establishment of **Department of Electronics in 1970.**
- Later in **1977**, the **National Informatics Centre (NIC)** was Setup that launched the 'District Information System Program' to computerize All District Offices in the Country.
- The main thrust for E-Governance was provided by the **NICNET- The National Satellite-based Computer Network launched in 1987**.
- A **National Task Dorce on IT and Software Development was Setup in 1998.**
- The **Ministry of Information Technology was Created in 1998**.
- The **Information Technology Act (IT ACT) Was Enacted in 2000.**
- The Government Approved the **National e-Governance Plan (NeGP) in 2006** comprising of 27 Mission Mode Projects, making it 31 in 2011 after adding 4 New Projects- Health, Education, PDS and Posts.

- **Digital India Mission was launched in 2015** to Ensure that the Government's Services are made available to citizens Electronically through Improved Online Infrastructure and by increasing Internet Connectivity or Making the Country Digitally Empowered in the Field of Technology.

E-Governance and It's Initiatives in India:

The application of ICT tools for Governance is covered the Umbrella of the term 'E-Governance'. Over the years, a large number of initiatives have been undertaken by the Union as well as the State Governments in India to provide E-Governance of E-Government to its citizens. Sustained efforts have been made at multiple levels to improve the Public Delivery Services Systems and to simplify the process of accessing them. E-Governance in India has steadily evolved from computerization of Government Departments to initiatives that encapsulate the finer points of Governance, such as citizen centricity, service orientation and transparency. Lessons from previous e-Governance initiatives have played an important role in shaping the progressive e-Governance strategy of the country.

In India, Some of the Major Initiatives related to Public Service Delivery under Digital India are as follows:

COMMON SERVICES CENTRES (CSC)	**OFFERING GOVT. AND BUSINESS SERVICES IN DIGITAL MODE IN RURAL AREAS THROUGH VILLAGE LEVEL ENTREPRENEURS (VLE's).**
DIGILOCKER	TO FACILITATE PAPERLESS AVAILABILITY OF PUBLIC DOCUMENTS.
UNIFIED PAYMENT INTERFACE (UPI)	THE LEADING DIGITAL PAYMENT PLATFORM.
CO-WIN	AN OPEN PLATFORM FOR MANAGEMENT OF REGISTRATION, APPOINTMENT AND MANAGING VACCINATION CERTIFICATES FOR COVID-19.
MyGOV	A CITIZEN ENGAGEMENT PLATFORM TO FACILITATE PARTICIPATORY GOVERNANCE.
DIRECT BENEFIT TRANSFERS (DBT)	315 SCHEMES ACROSS 53 MINISTRIES ARE OFFERING AADHAR ENABLED DBT TO CITIZENS.
e-HOSPITAL ONLINE REGISTRATION FRAMEWORK (ORF)	TO FACILITATE THE PATIENTS TO TAKE ONLINE OPD APPOINTEMNTS WITH GOVERNMENT HOSPITALS.
NATIONAL SCHOLARSHIPS PORTAL (NSP)	PROVIDES A CENTALIZED PLATFORM FOR APPLICATION AND DISBURSEMENT OF SCHOLARSHIP TO STUDENTS UNDER ANY SCHOLARSHIP SCHEME.
MOBILE SEVA	PROVIDES GOVERNMENT SERVICES TO THE PEOPLE THROUGH MOBILE PHONES.
e-KRANTI	APPROVED IN 2015 WITH THE VISION OF "TRANSFORMING e-GOVERNANCE FOR TRANSFORMING GOVERNANCE".

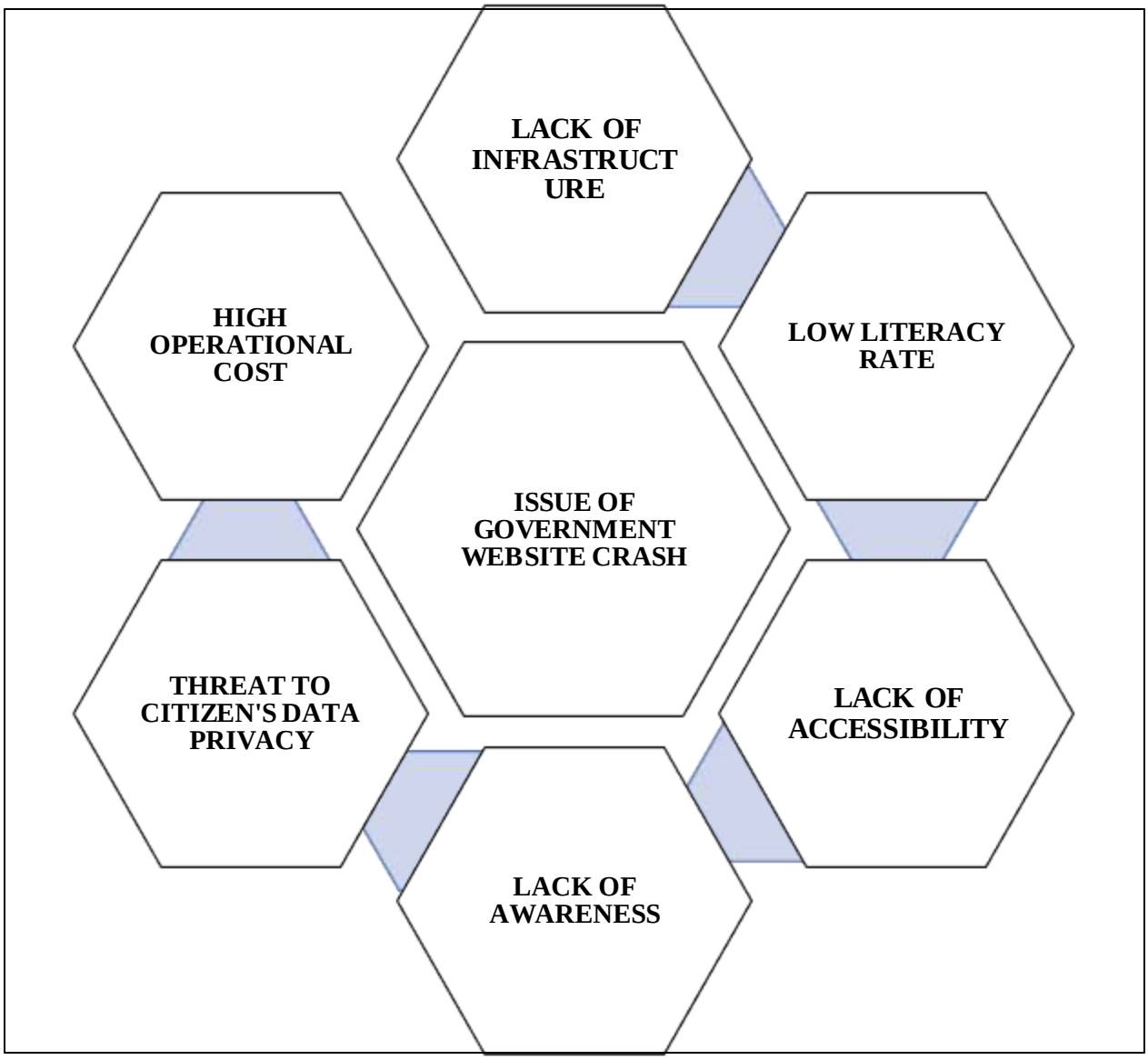
MERIPEHCHAAN	A NATIONAL SINGLE SIGN-ON PLATFORM TO FACILITATE CITIZENS EASE OF ACCESS TO GOVERNMENT PORTALS.
MYSCHEME	A PLATFORM TO FACILITATE CITIZENS TO AVAIL ELEGIBILITY-BASED SERVICES.
e-DISTRICT MISSION MODE PROJECT (MMP)	IMPLEMENTED AT DISTRICT AND SUB-DISTRICT LEVELS OF ALL STATES/UT's BENEFITTING ALL THE CITIZENS BY DELIVERING VARIOUS e-SERVICES SUCH AS: ALL KINDS OF CERTIFICATES, PENSION, LAND RECORDS etc.
e-NAM	TO CREATE ONLINE TRANSPARENT COMPETITIVE BIDDING SYSTEM TO FACILTATE FARMERS WITH RENUMERATIVE PRICES FOR THEIR PRODUCE.

(SOURCE: pib.gov.in)

Advantages and Disadvantages of E-Governance:

ADVANTAGES	DISADVANTAGES
Improves Delivery and Efficiency of Government Services.	It Leads to Digital Divide among citizens.
Citizen Empowerment through Access to Information.	It has increased the Cyber attacks risk, website crashes, bugs, hacking in the system.
Less Corruption in Government System.	Citizens with Disabilities, Elderly Citizens etc. may face barriers in accessing E-governance initiatives.
Increased Accountability and Transparency in Administration and System.	Low Literacy Rate makes it impossible to make it available for everyone.
Saves Time and Reduce Cost of Operations.	
Facilitates Paperless Environment in The Government Administration.	
Facilitates Re-structuring of Administrative Processes.	

Challenges to E-Governance:



Impact of E-Governance on Society:

E-Governance of E-Government has emerged as the Presiding Medium for Connecting, Managing and Servicing Citizens. E-Governance promotes citizens' participation in public administration, enhances awareness of citizens towards the Government Schemes and Programs, improves the Transparency of Public Decisions and Reduces Corruption to an extent. As a result, Governments all over the world have been working hard to adopt different E-Government initiatives for E-Governance Development. E-Governance is also helping in citizens' getting secured and timely information regarding Government Schemes and Policies, thus, reducing the illegal practices of middlemen who exploit the poor. Thus, in order to provide access and benefits of Government Schemes to every section of the society, it is essential that the Governments should work in every aspect to make E-Governance a Grand Success.

Conclusion and Recommendations:

21st Century is the Century of Revolution and the Most Important among them is the Emergence of Infor-

mation and Communication Technology (ICT) that is widely agreed to transform and accelerate the development process in the world. From the analysis, it can be concluded that the Rapid Development of ICT especially the High Speed Internet has enabled Governments around the world to accelerate the Growth of E-governance even in the local and backward regions. However, there is a Need to adopt certain measures in order to improve the E-governance system and for it, Some of the Recommendations are as follows:

Inclusion of Local people or Citizens in Government Policies and Schemes will bridge the Communication Gap between the Government and the People.

E-Governance needs to transform all levels of Government but the Focus should be on Local Governments since Local Governments are the closest to Citizens.

Special attention should be given to improve Digital Infrastructure especially in rural areas along with Better Internet Connectivity.

There is a Need to Review the ongoing Government Schemes and Projects and Feedback should be taken from the Citizens regarding changing and updation in the schemes as per the need of the hour.

However, the E-Government is an Innovative Mode of Governance and is the Need of the Hour for the Whole World..

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