



“Concept of E-Governance and Its Issues and Challenges in Assam”

Dr. Rantu Sarmah

Assistant Professor

Dept. of Political Science

Barpathar College

Abstract: E-Governance is defined as the application of Information and Communication Technology (ICT) to transform the efficiency, effectiveness, transparency and accountability of exchange of information and transaction between government, between government agencies, between government and citizens, between government and business. E-governance is getting momentous in India and Assam Government also not exception to it. Before introducing E-governance there were so many problems but gradually we found that on account of E-governance India's economy has been progressive. Assam has been trying to make Government simple, moral, accountable, responsive, and transparent (SMART) governance in reality. As Assam have been facing so many problems such as divide between urban and rural, poverty, illiteracy, security and cost of implementation etc. This paper is an attempt to examine general meaning of E-governance, features and also try to find out the issues and challenges in the state of Assam.

Keywords: *E-Governance, Government, Information, Communication and Technology, Assam.*

Introduction: Over the years, a large numbers of initiatives have been taken up at the centre as well as state government levels in India. Massive budgetary allocations were made for the National E-governance Plan (NeGP) in India this NeGP was approved by cabinet in 2006 with a vision “To make all Government services accessible to the common man in his locality, through common service delivery outlets and to ensure efficiency, transparency & reliability of such services at affordable costs to realize the basic needs of the common man”. Assam has been trying to make Government simple, moral, accountable, responsive, and transparent (SMART) governance in reality. E-Governance is defined as the application of Information and Communication Technology (ICT) to transform the efficiency, effectiveness, transparency and accountability of exchange of information and transaction between government, between government agencies, between government and citizens, between

government and business. The use of technology has not only improved the quality of public services, but it has also made government process more open and accountable. This paper to examine the general meaning of E-governance and issues and challenges in the state of Assam

Objectives:

- I) To understand the general meaning of E-governance.
- II) To analyze E-governance steps that has been made by Assam so far.
- III) To find out the issues and challenges of E governance in Assam

Methodology:

This paper is based on secondary data mainly books, Journal Newspaper, Government Website and other. This study is purely descriptive and qualitative in nature.

General Meaning of E-Governance: it is popularly known as the phenomenon of E-governance or E-government and it has been coined to re-brand it alongside the emerging technological developments. Some of the buzzwords in this context are joined up government, whole-of government, one stop government, connected government and open government and latest digital government.

Digital governance refers to carrying out governance process in a digital way to deliver digital services. Digital governance is also known as electronic governance, internet governance, online governance, transformational governance and connected governance. E-Governance refers to the use of information and communication technologies by government or public agencies for public governance. E-Governance is the application of information and communications technology by government agencies to their functioning in order to make simple, moral, accountable, responsive and transparent (SMART) governance a reality. The ultimate objective of E-governance is to improve performance of government agencies by fulfilling aspirations, expectations and needs of citizens.¹

E-government is not about 'e' but about 'government'; it is not about computers and websites, but about services to citizens and businessman.

E government is also not about translating processes, it is about transforming them. E-government is concerned with the transformation of government, modernization of government processes and functions and better public service delivery mechanisms through technology so that government can be put on an auto-pilot mode. The four pillars of E-government are people, process, technology and resources.²

¹ Basak Dipankar, Nath Ranjit, Das Deepen in E-Governance In India in 2024, Banalata, New Market, Dibrugarh, Assam.

² Ibid

Objectives of E-Governance:

1. To make every information of the Government available to all in the public Interest.
2. To create cooperative structure between the Government and the people and to seek help and advice from the people, to make the Government aware of the problems of the people.
3. To Increase and encourage peoples participation in the governance process.
4. To established transparency and accountability in the governance process.
5. To reduce government spending on information and service.

Features of E-Governance:

It has proven from the concept of E-governance that it is a powerful means of public service in the present era. Some of its features as under

1. De-bureaucratization: due to e-governance, the gap between the people and the government in all the services of the government is narrowing and the dependence of the people on the bureaucracy is also greatly reduced
2. E-Services: its main feature is the provision of services through the internet. As a result, we get Government to citizen (G2C), Government to Business (G2B), Government to Employee (G2E) etc. Services.
3. International services: through e-governance, all the essential services can be delivered to the citizens who are living outside of their country for job purposes or any other reasons.
4. Economic Development: with the introduction of e-governance, various information like import-export, registration of companies, investment situations,etc. are available through the internet. As a result, time is saved, procrastination decreases, economic dynamism increases.
5. Result Inequality: Using e-governance tools everyone can gather information and empower themselves. In this globalised world, knowledge is power, and means of e-governance empower us by providing relevant information at minimal cost, efdfort, and time.³

E-governance in Assam:

Assam is a state where development is occurring very slowly and lately Assam government has been trying to make effort on industrial development in the 21st century. Assam Government has been taken various initiatives on E-governance for the benefit of the People of Assam and has implemented many e-governance initiatives so far. State government has adopted a strategy for the citizens of Assam and that is IT and providing services to citizens online. All the initiatives can be analyzed as under,

Digital Assam Programme:

³ Ibid

This is a programme which aims to harness technology for efficient governance and service delivery. Through these citizens of Assam can access a wide range of online services, here people can apply for certificates, tax payments and can avail government schemes. This is a process which can reduce difficulties that has been faced by the people in the offices of Assam governments where there are so many bureaucratic hurdles.

Sewa Setu Portal: this is launched under the Assam Citizen Centric Service delivery project. The Sewa Setu portal serves as a unified platform for government to citizen, government to business and other service deliveries.

Mission Bosundhara: under this mission try to modernize the record system relating to land right. Through this people can access land records and pay revenue online.

Sadbhavana Portal: The Sadbhavana Portal aims to digitize official files and streamline administrative processes within the Assam Secretariat. It is a process where to create paperless environment and enhance administrative efficiency.⁴

Kritagyata Portal: It is for pension process for retirees form service and payment tracking.

There has been new scheme and initiatives also taken time to time by the government of Assam

Issues and challenges of E-governance: there are various issues and challenges of E-governance in Assam that can be analyzed as under

1. Huge population: Assam there are various cultures and languages can be found therefore it is a big problem for state Government to make an unique identification for everyone.
2. Law literacy rate: it is a problem where people are still not up to the mark as per rate with the E- Governance.
3. Internet reach and awareness: there are areas where tower is not planned by the government mainly Assam Nagaland and Auronachal border.
4. Security: people still not believe about the online process they still believe in manual process. Cyber security is a big challenge for all.
5. Inadequate powersupply: there are areas where power supply is still pending.
6. Lack of integration among governmental departments: there is a significant lack of communication among the various departments and their projects
7. Lack of limited knowledge on computer and internet: there is a big problem notice that most of the employees are lack of proper knowledge of computer and whatever we seen are limited.
8. Insufficiency funds: government must look in to this mater for future.
9. Attitudes of the officials: officials are some time showing their attitudes in away that sometime incidents are placed in the news channels.

⁴ Choudhury Tahmeen Sarah, in Journal of Management & Public Policy, Vol 14, no1, December 2022 Pp32-46

Suggestions:

Improve digital literacy: It is one of the main causes for challenges in Assam therefore government has to take a look into it and take for more plan and training programme for rural citizens of Assam.

Ensure connectivity: Connectivity is still far cry to Assam as some of the areas where network is very poor and outside the home people can connect easily but inside the home the connection is lost. So, It is a big problem and government has to install more mobile tower in such areas.

Conclusion: E-governance means to the maximum use of electronic tools in governmental activities for collecting data and sending information to the day to day activities of administration. Simply government offers a process where people can easily access all the governmental information at their end. This makes all the administrative process convenient, accountable, and effective. Though Assam government has been taken various plans for the E-governance its success rate is very poor in Assam due to various reasons. Therefore government must manage sufficient fund for the proper utilization of the entire plan and also proper training is necessary for the employees for effective governmental works. Government must take some strict rules and regulations for effective execution all the policies for e-governance.

Acknowledgement:

I thank all the individuals for their expertise and assistance throughout all aspects that I referred in the study and help me to write the article.

Reference:

1. Basak Dipankar, Nath Ranjit, Das Deepen, in E-Governance In India in 2024, Banalata, New Market, Dibrugarh, Assam.
2. Choudhury Tahmeen Sarah, in Journal of Management & Public Policy, Vol 14, no1, December 2022 Pp32-46.
3. Ahmed, S and Hussain, M (2021). E-governance: A comprehensive tool for good governance. International Journal of Innovative Science and Research Technology, 551-555.
4. Borah, K (2013) Implementation of citizen-centric e-governance projects in Assam. IOSR journal of Humanities and Social Science. 27-34
5. Assam Government, Rural Website (<https://rural.assam.gov.in/information-services/egovernance>)