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Short Communication

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY IN PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION: BOOM OR BANE

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ABSTRACT

The inefficient state machineries have failed to reduce problem poverty and unemployment, economic inequalities, regional imbalance and unbalanced sector growth, malnutrition, trade deficit and fiscal deficit through various economic policy and planning models. The old work culture in public administration is set back to achieve vision of inclusive growth and hence, administrators, politicians, academics, citizens at large, and even businessmen are talking about issues like constitutional reforms, good governance, transparency, corruption, ethics, state in the market economy, new role of government under economic liberalization, electronic governance, etc. Also, the classical models of governance/administration with emphasis on division of work, rule orientation, and bureaucratic hierarchy with rule-book defined regulations and lines of authority is giving room to new ways of governance in the form of "New Public Management". The new public management paradigm seems to have born out of the frustration of a common man. The lack of efficiency, transparency and accountability and poor performance of central and state government are major hurdle to access quality service that he expects or pays for. . The in efficient state machineries have failed to create interaction between citizen and government. Increase gap between citizen and various level of government cause to poor performance of public sector. The Economic and Social development programming are found to be source of corruption As result, public expenditure increased and increase in excess public expenditure over revenue gave rise to problem of fiscal deficit, inflation and vicious circle of poverty and unemployment. Lack of interaction between or among various sub national government created problem of fiscal profligacy, political turbulence and weak fiscal trans per and those are major hurdle to remove economic inequality and un balanced regional growth. Therefore, India has to rethink and redesign government organisation with technological innovation in order to facilitate close interaction between citizen and democratic form of government. The direct human relation with government through telephone, common contact center at village, word wide web and e-mail facilities will enhance efficiency of public sector and reduce opportunities for corruption. In this context, this research paper attempts to evaluate positive and negative impact of ICT in public administration. It also suggest government to adopt alternative channel of communication in the initial stage of developing e-governance in order to reduce ill effects of digital divide.

KEYWORDS: Communication, Information, Public Management, Technology.

INTRODUCTION

The world over, people are talking more about "good governance" and "public management" and less about "public administration". In India, the process of reforms in administration began as early as 1949 with the setting up of the organisation and Management division in the Government of India. The recent decision to review the Indian Constitution is a landmark in Indian Administration. However, most of the 'reform' efforts have been on paper only. They have all talked about improving effectiveness, efficiency, responsiveness, record-keeping and filing systems, integrity in public service, right to information, and accountability, etc. Even the World Bank has identified a number of parameters of good governance, like political and bureaucratic accountability, independence of judiciary, participation of religious and social groups, and freedom of expression and information, etc. Phrases like, 'reinventing government', 'mission-driven government', 'market-oriented government', 'service-first', and 'empowering citizens', etc. have been used frequently in India also. At

best, they reveal some "good intentions" only. Even if some of these had been achieved to a reasonable level, there would not have been so much of a debate, so much of a crisis, so much of turbulence that there would be need for "redefinition" of the role of government itself. The disappointing fact is that we have not been able to convert promises into performance and agenda into action to any significant level. Remedies like across-the-board budget cuts, employment and salary freezes, reorganizations, endless task forces, and the like never address the systemic issues that create and sustain poor government "business" processes. Therefore, we have to be analyzing the governmental current business and making sure the business processes more accessible to their citizens. The pressure comes directly from the new legislatures and govt. policies to implement high-end technologies in governing the nations; but also indirectly and perhaps more intensely from citizens. The citizens now a days are not using govt. services in isolation, but are simultaneously making transactions and interacting with the corporate world.

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Therefore, Govt. leaders in India are starting to realize that e-governance is the key to drive today's economy with an increased participation from citizens. Indian Parliamentary democracy failed to create interaction between citizen and government till today. The gap between citizen and various level of government cause to reduce quality of public service. The weak performance of national and sub national government cause increase public spending, inflation, and poverty and unemployment. The functioning of the public sector gives rise to considerable debate. Not only the efficiency and efficacy of the sector are at stake, but also its legitimacy. At the same time we see that in the public sector all kinds of innovations are taking place. These innovations are not only technological, which enable the redesign of all kinds of processes, like service delivery. The emphasis can also be put on more organizational and conceptual innovations, many authors argued that in an era of rapid globalization, existing institutions of representative democracy such as parties and parliaments experienced a gradual loss of legitimacy, and that a modern highly educated citizenry had other expectations regarding government and democracy. Some even proclaimed a crisis of representative democracy which was reflected in decreasing memberships of political parties and a decreasing voter turnout during elections. With regard to the enabling characteristics of the Internet, it was pointed out that this new medium had particular characteristics which allowed new forms of communication (especially asynchronous and many-to-many communication) and that it therefore seemed a more ideal vehicle for democratic deliberation than existing mass media. Many scholars thus assumed that the new media would reduce existing barriers to democratic participation and that the Internet would facilitate an era in which democratic debate would be able to flourish. In this series we will try to understand the nature of a wide variety of innovations taking place in the public administration of the 21st century and try to evaluate their poor outcomes.

The respect for human rights and freedom of expression is essential to promote and maintain public participation in public consultation spaces. This implies that government's personnel have to learn to network and to place people in the Centre of the political process. So, the effectiveness of ICT in government is closely related with the capacity of governments to induce a culture of change placing networking within its institutions as instrumental to transparency and knowledge exchange and creation. It forces a rethinking of the way hierarchical structures are placed. The transition to a more horizontal government structure, where integration of functions plays a greater role, takes time since the main players need to change attitudes and behavior as they acquire new skills and knowledge that make them confident in the work culture.

According to recent data, there is a close relationship between levels of infrastructure development, education, democratization, political leadership and commitment to the principles of good governance and the level and quality of implanted in the countries. These are strong indicators of e-readiness and the opportunity cost of such endeavor. The resulting benefit can be less corruption, increased transparency, greater convenience, efficiency, revenue growth, and or cost reductions, as well as increased legitimacy. As a researcher, I try to evaluate positive and negative impact of implantation of ICT in Public Administration.

Information and Communication Technology in Public Administration: a Boom

In globalization era, the government has establish a path to create conducive interactive atmosphere between citizen and various government organisation. A consideration of citizen at micro level during policy making will surely resolve problem poverty and unemployment. Hence, today leaders of government used E-Governance as a means of establishing relation between citizen and various level of government consisting local to central government. The active direct public participation in democracy never allow members of parliament to make unproductive discussion. The effective and efficient way of public service delivery in education and health will improve quality of human resource in rural area. The productive human resource will reduce problem of starting point inequalities between rich and poor, and rural and urban area in country. An implantation of E-Service procedure would reduce opportunities for corruption in public work. The renovation of various government department will enables government to reduce public consumption [salaries]. The TINS in our country have reduced tax evasion, tax administration cost, and tax compliance. Meanwhile, use of information and communication technology in indirect tax collection will reduce circulation of black money. Governing Indian tropic rules reduces necessity of recruitment of tropic police force and limits room for corruption during issuing license and violation of tropic rules by citizen. A depusion of ICT in primary and higher education enables government to improve quality of education. An implantation of technology necessary to enhance quality of service and quality of citizens of nation. It also strengthen RTI. A periodical dissemination of expenditure on public work and social work program such as NREGP, Education and Health scheme provides enough room to question politician and civil servants. The on-line training program to government employees is essential to transform them from traditional work culture to new work culture. The electronic voting system uphold political equality and hope, effective use of ITC by election commission will facilitates way to improve transparency and accountability of expenditure made by political party. An effective tools of e-governance enhances efficiency of tax administration and public expenditure which helps government to reduce negative effects of fiscal deficit and trade deficit. E-governance creates enough room for periodical interaction between citizen and government and thereby, encourage participatory democracy. The participatory democracy will induce government formulate citizen friendly development policy and plan.

Information and Communication Technology in Public Administration: a Bane

Recent studies on e-government draw a different picture than the one communicated by many governments. Of the government websites around the world, less than 20 percent offer services that are fully executable online among them being the widely successful electronic filing of taxes by citizens. In the European Union, more business (77%) than

citizen (57%) services are online, and the evolution of fully available citizen services is slowing down. Similar findings have been presented by the United Nations. In a 2005 study it showed that 179 of the United Nations' 191 member states were online. However, the study concluded that "not many countries utilize the full potential of e-government to provide information and services to their citizens" Furthermore, "electronic systems have been large electronic reproductions of existing institutional patterns and relations" which remains an issue. Legislation and regulation often contain what is considered arcane and hard-to-read language, or references to highly specialized concepts which need to be adapted to the online environment. Notwithstanding the overall progress, only a quarter of all countries offer transactional services, and less than 10% have realized applications for online consultation. Accordingly, "most countries are still behind their potential in the provision of avenues for feedback and participation to the citizen, even among the more mature e-ready countries". E-democracy remains a rhetorical promise. therefore India need to evaluate how expectations and ideas have changed over time before initiating E-Governance. Today, there are roughly 2.2 billion mobile phone subscribers worldwide, and the number will probably reach 3 billion by the end of 2007 [31]. Although Internet users are estimated at 1.1 billon, there are far more users of mobile phones. In conclusion, for many citizens the phone has become an important channel for getting in contact with government. It offers the convenience of mobility as well as the human touch when interacting with government. It underlines the importance of the contact center as an access channel for citizens.

India is thickly populated country having 1.2 billion population and roughly 72% people lived in rural area. The literacy rate after six decade administration is just 75.4%. Almost all villages are escaped from basic infra-structure. The senior official mind set just adjust to old work culture. The politician are giving weightage documentary practice in administration. The citizen in rural area still not able to use of information and communication technology. Consequently, a mere implantation ICT in public administration divide nation in technological literate and technological illiterate section of society. This encourage a cross section people consisting young who good at computer usage will take maximum benefits. The active participation by a cross section of people in democracy create inequalities in another dimension. Therefore, experts argued that Integration electronic governance tools to deliver public service encourage corruption in easiest way to the person who can have knowledge to alter data. Given this condition India need to develop alternative model of public administration not by simply observing the methods of implementing E-Service delivery as means of good governance in developed country. According to one of the surveys conducted by a reputed agency, 75% of e-governance may fail because of poor planning Hence, without making extensive research work regarding challenges for initiating ICT in public management, the effort to implement "information technology and good governance found to be unproductive and putting democracy in hardship".

CONCLUSION
When we look into history of fiscal and political federalism, none of the political party has put effort to transform their documentary promise in real administrative practice. Hence, India still failed to achieve 1oo% literacy, reasonable infra-structure development, remove urban - rural divide, rich and poor, problem of unbalanced regional growth, poverty and unemployment. Without finding solution to fundamental problems, in the information age, India simply automate government organisation by defusing ICT without changing old administrative practice. Mere implanting ICT in administration may lead to divide India in technically literate and technically illiterate people. therefore, the vision of e-governance encourage a cross section of people consisting politicians, bearoucrates, industrialist, and technical sound people to participate in public debate. Consequently, the e-service facilities will be accessible to a cross section of people who are sound in technical knowledge resulting economic inequalities and unbalanced regional growth. Therefore, Initial stage in addition to inter net based service delivery India need to use multi channels such as public debates in rural area, common contact Centre at village Panchayats, telephone communication and personal contact as means to establish interface between citizen and government.

One should borne in mind, the diffusion of technology will transform Indian democracy from out dated administrative practice to new public management if, it fundamentally change how the government operates, and this implies a new set of responsibilities for the executive and politicians. It will require basic change in work culture and goal orientation, and simultaneous change in the existing processes. In addition to this, government has to take necessary steps to transmit old mind set of senior officer to adjust with new work culture. The subnational government should impart computer literacy to rural citizens encourage them to participate in parliamentary democracy. The success of e-governance lies on policies, infrastructure, Human resources, Technology, awareness campaigns, infrastructure and various projects. The collective efforts of politicians, civil servants, policy makers and citizens of nation is very essential to make e-governance as vehicle of parliamentary democracy.

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