

UNIT-2

Models of E-Governance

⊗ Introduction:

Digital-Governance or E-Governance can be defined as the use of information and communication technology by the government to provide the quality information and services to citizens, businesses, voluntary organizations and other government agencies in an efficient, cost effective and convenient manner.

A model of an object is a physical representation that shows what it looks like or how it works. A model is a system that is being used and that people might want to copy in order to achieve similar results.

⊗ Models of Digital Governance:

E-Governance models keep growing and developing as new applications of information and communication technology (ICT) and to deal with new issues in the area of governance. Developing countries are experimenting on their own to find which models will work best to serve their needs. Some of these models may be technologically simple but are changing the way information is distributed and used in the society.

Few important models of e-governance have been identified, which can be used as a guide in designing e-government initiatives depending on the local situation and governance activities that are expected to be performed.

1. Broadcasting/Wider Dissemination Model.
2. Critical Flow Model
3. Comparative Analysis Model
4. Mobilization and Lobbying Model
5. Interactive-Service Model.

1) Broadcasting/Wider Dissemination Model:

Principle: The information which is already available in paper, and by using the ICT or other media to broadcast that information to the ~~cit~~ citizen is known as broadcasting or wider dissemination model. For example, if the government announced the new rules or regulation in the state or nation they organize press meet and the different medias broadcasting that news via television, radio, visual reports in online websites.

Broadcasting model is based on mass dissemination of governance-related information which is already available in the public domain into the wider public domain using ICTs. This raises awareness among the citizens about ongoing governance processes and government services that are available to them and how they benefit from them.

Applications:

- Provide governmental laws and rules online.
- Making available the names, contact addresses, emails, mobile numbers of local/regional/national government officials online.
- Make available information such as governmental plans, budgets, expenditures, and performance reports online.
- Putting key legal decisions which are of value to general citizens and create a precedence for future actions online, through key environmental decisions, state vs. citizen decisions etc.

Projects based on this model:

1) Nepal: Department of Information Technology <https://doit.gov.np/>

The goal is to provide all government services through automated system by maximizing the use of IT and Establish good governance, poverty alleviation and realize national development targets by utilizing the advantages of technology.

ii) Brazil:

Brazil's official national E-Government website: <http://www.brazil.gov.br>

The website provides comprehensive information on Brazilian government as well as links to integrated citizen services.

iii) India: Directory of official websites of Government of India:

<http://go3directory.nic.in/ministry.html>

National Informatics Centre (India) is the official website of Government of India. It makes available information on government ministries - its projects and schemes, Indian laws and rules etc.

iv) Global:

Earth Negotiations Bulletin: <http://www.iisd.ca/volto.html>

A reporting service that keeps citizens around the world informed about global environmental negotiations, processes and decisions. It has immense value for people and government officials alike in developing countries to keep track of global negotiations.

Evaluation:

- It is the first step to more evolved forms of digital governance models and flow of information to all segments of society.
- National Governments therefore need to aggressively adopt this model if they want to create an environment for enhanced participation of its citizens in the governmental processes.
- The model however loses its effectiveness where free-flow of information is not encouraged or is not objective.
- Tight governmental controls and bids to censor the content being transmitted through this model would be the bane of this model.
- The responsibility is therefore both on governmental organizations as well as civil society organizations to ensure such models continue to proliferate.

2) Critical Flow Model:

Principle: This model is based on channeling information of critical value to a targeted audience or spreading it in the wider public domain through the use of ICT and convergent media. It requires foresight to understand the significance of a particular information set and using it strategically. It may also involve locating users to whom the availability of a particular information set would make a critical difference in initiating good governance. The strength of critical-flow model is the inherent characteristic of ICT that makes the idea of distance and time redundant.

Applications:

- Making available corruption related data about a particular Ministry/Division/Officials online to the concerned regulatory body.
- Making available Research studies, Enquiry reports, Impact studies commissioned by the Government.
- Making available Human Rights violation and criminal charge records against government officials to NGOs and concerned citizens.
- Making available environment related information available to local communities.

Projects based on this model:

1) India: Central Vigilance Committee; <http://cvc.nic.in>

~~An initiative on e-vigilance.~~ The website provides free-access information to citizens about government officials who have been indicated on judicial charges relating to corruption and have been advised penalty. People can also file case complaints against any public servant who fall within the jurisdiction of the Commission.

2) Bangladesh: Human Rights Portal; <http://www.banglarights.net>
This actively promotes human rights reforms both within Bangladesh and across geographical and political boundaries, and supports women, childrens in resisting social abuse.

11) Global: Transparency International's Corruption News:

<http://www.transparency.org/pressroom.html>.

A trial service run by ~~International~~ Transparency International, called the "The Daily Corruption News" which reports on corruption from around the world.

Evaluation:

- It is more directed in terms of its information content.
- It exposes the weakest aspects of governance and decision-making mechanisms.
- It informs people about specific cases of state-failure and bad-governance to build up a case for concerted action.
- The model will not work in cases where government mechanisms do not promote public debates and criticize all information of critical nature.
- It will also fail where the government maintains a tight control over all information.

3) Comparative Analysis Model:

Principle: It is one of the least-used but a high potential e-governance model for developing countries. The model can be used to empower people by comparing cases of bad governance with those of good governance and how the situation can be improved. The model is based on using huge capacity of ICT and social media tools to explore given information sets with comparable information available in the public or private domain. The strength of this model lies in the infinite capacity of digital networks to store mixed information and retrieve and transmit it instantly across all geographical and hierarchical barriers.

Applications:

- To learn from past policies and actions and derive learning lessons for future policy-making.
- To evaluate the effectiveness of the current policies and identify key learning in terms of strengths and flaws in the policies.

- Enabling informed decision-making at all levels.
- Evaluating the performance record of a particular government official or ministry.

Projects based on this model:

1) India: Green Ratings Project: <http://www.oneworld.org/cse/html>

It is an attempt to provide an independent and fair evaluation of the comparative environmental performance of companies which supports poor performers to improve. Performance reports of companies are shared over Internet and people's opinion is taken.

2) Philippines: Vote.ph: <http://www.vote.ph>.

It is online directory and quick reference center on Philippine elected government officials and elections candidates for both national and the local levels.

3) Global: Human Development Indicators <http://www.undp.org/hdro/indicators.html>

It makes use of statistical information to literacy, health, national income etc. to know the progress made by different countries with regards to their Human Development Index.

Evaluation:

- Developing countries can effectively use this model to their advantage as ICT opens access to global and local knowledge products at a relatively low cost.
- Watch guard organizations and monitor-groups could use the model to track the performance records of electoral candidates and share them in their constituency.
- The model is reliant on the availability of comparative information sets and the ability of users to analyze and bring out strong arguments.
- The model becomes ineffective in absence of a strong civil society interest and short public memory.

4) Mobilisation and Lobbying Model:

Principle: This is two-ways or multiple-ways communication model, where particular group collect the information from the audience and modify the policy or required. For example we can build the online forum and collect the opinions from public and finalize the policy or decisions. This is most frequently used model and is based on setting-up a planned, directed flow of information to build strong virtual partners to complement actions in the real world. This model builds the momentum of real world processes by adding the opinions and concerns expressed by virtual communities.

Applications:

- This model could be applied in the following possible ways:
- Encouraging the public debates on issue of larger concerns, namely on the themes of upcoming conferences, agreements etc.
 - Formation of pressure groups on key issues to force decision-makers to take their concerns into awareness.
 - Making available opinions of a suppressed groups who are not involved in the decision-making process into wider public domain.
 - Catalyzing wider participation in decision-making processes.
 - Building up global expertise on a particular theme in absence of localized information to aid decision-making.

Projects based on this model:

i) India: Panchayats: <http://www.panchayats.org>

A discussion list run by Indian professionals to discuss policy issues and case-studies relating to local livelihood strategies and decentralized natural resources management.

ii) Global: Independent Media Centre: <http://www.indymedia.org/>
The Center was established by various independent and alternate media organizations to provide grassroots coverage of WTO-Seattle in 1999.

Evaluation:

- The model has grown tremendously since the onset of debates for the Seattle round of World Trade Organization (WTO) in 1999.
- It enhances the scope of participation of individual and communities in policy issues and debates.
- The model also creates an effective restriction for government bodies and individuals to be watchful in their actions in case they turn the opinion of local and global community against them.

5) Interactive-Service Model / Government to Citizen to Government Model (G2C2G) :

Principle: This is also two-ways or multiple-ways communities model. ~~Interact~~ Interactive-Service model is the action or process of making something stronger or more solid. This model establishes communication between government to ~~cit~~ citizen or consumers and citizens to government. For example, if the government built the web application about the income tax, public use that website to pay their tax and they will get the receipt. This established the relation between government to citizen to government.

Applications:

- This model could be applied in the following possible ways:
- To establish an interactive communication channels with key policy-makers and members of planning commissions.
 - To conduct electronic ballots for the election of government officials and other office bearers.
 - To conduct public debates on issues of wider concern before formulation of policies and laws frameworks.
 - Establishing decentralized forms of governance.
 - Carrying out video conferencing, and online discussion with policy makers.

Projects based on this model:

1) Philippine: Philippine Custom Reform:

The Philippine Customs Bureau has developed an online system to process clearance of imports, payment of duty, and delivery of release of orders for shipments to leave the docks.

2) India: Gyandoot:

Gyandoot is an intranet in Dhar district of Madhya Pradesh connecting rural cybercafes catering to everyday needs of the masses. The site offers several services to the local people such as providing copies of land-maps, online registration of applications etc.

Evaluation:

- This model is more embedded in developed countries and has often been proposed for replication in developing countries. Such forms of solution-transfers may not be very effective.
- The model is on the higher end of technology-reliance as compared to the other models, this makes it difficult to replicate in developing countries in absence of individual and secure ICT access.

3) Evolution in E-Governance and Maturity Models:

E-Governance is a evolutionary path, whose effective implementation requires a complete understanding of its various elements and at the same time taking a full view to stay focused on its overall objectives. E-governance journey encounters several milestones that need to be identified and modeled. The E-governance Maturity Model (EMM-version 1.0) proposes five levels of maturity, depending on the effectiveness.

Level 1: One way communication/Simple website/Information:

Initial stage and someone announced the rules and public must have to accept it. There is no any place for modify the statement by collecting feedback and reviews. Applications like static web sites are use on this kind of e-governance.

Level 2: Two ways interaction/Online Government/Interaction:

Requirements are increased and realized about two ways communication which is necessary for good government. Dynamic web applications are implemented, where public can able to fill online application and registrations with online payment system.

Level 3: Centralized system/Integrated Government/Transaction:

The concept of the portal is fulfilled on this stage. Information manipulated from central department, it means it save time, cost and be more efficiency. The transaction phase offers online operations like a driver's license renewal, a car registration etc.

Level 4: Transformed Government/Transformation:

In this level auto processing, report about online transition and refund process are the major activities.

⊗ A Maturity Model:

A maturity model is a method for judging the maturity of the working process of the organization. Identifying the weakness of the system and find out the solution to increase the maturity of the system and process.

The maturity model provides a mode to measure the methods and processes being used, against a clear set of external benchmarks.

A maturity level assessment may provide the following benefits:

- Ability to compare Maturity level with other government ministry/departments.
- A known Maturity level, with precise recommendations for improvement.
- An independently held set of "benchmarks".

⊗ Five Maturity Level of E-governance:

Many maturity models have been used to judge or rank e-government portals. In order to judge electronic services provided to the citizens, an appropriate e-government maturity model should be selected. Following are the five maturity level of e-governance:

Level 1: Closed

This is the stage when an organization does not use ICT as a driver for good governance and has no plans to do so in near future. This situation may arise due to lack of knowledge about ICT and associated benefits that again may depend upon a number of reasons. As a result, the organization is 'closed' in terms of connected and sharing of information in the context of e-governance.

Level 2: Initial

This level corresponds to the stage when an organization has initiated the automation of its processes but only for certain time till particular project is completed. No organized efforts are made to start the e-governance initiatives. Also, due to lack of direction many such e-governance efforts are uncontrolled at a subsequent date.

Level 3: Planned

This level involves systematic approaches with clearly defined vision, objectives and goals for e-governance. Judgements of need are made to prioritize the areas of implementation and measure the extent of e-readiness. Necessary input from judgements of need study are taken.

Level 4: Realized

This level corresponds to the stage when the organization actually realizes the complete e-governance plan. Therefore, an integrated system is established and organization starts delivering the services to its external as well as internal customers/users in an effective manner. This level has following sub-levels:

Retrospected: At this level, organization studies its business processes in view of its vision, overall e-governance objectives, and changes if any required.

E-ready: In this stage, e-readiness essentials, which are also the building blocks for e-governance, are ensured by the organization.

Partially open: At this stage some of the e-governance services are operationalized resulting in a partial information exchange among the entities both within and outside the organization.

Open: This implies complete deployment of e-governance services that ensure an integrated system that is open to information exchange.

Level 5: Institutionalized (established)

At this level the organization maintains the realized state over a period of time so that e-governance becomes part of its work culture. The e-governance services are effectively utilized and accepted by the users.

Following define e-readiness of an organization:

- Presence of strategic thinking, leadership and commitment among top-level decision makers.
- Institutional Infrastructure
- ICT Infrastructure
- Human Capacities
- Legal Infrastructure.

⊗ Characteristics of Maturity Levels:

Level 1: Closed

- Organization are closed to e-governance.
- No plans or vision is available.
- Continue with fully manual and conventional operation.

Level 2: Initial

- Organization lacks strategic thinking and direction for e-governance at top level.
- Unorganized and individual efforts of automation in some areas.
- Generally accumulate hardware without any planning and much of it goes unutilized or underutilized.

Level 3: Planned

- E-governance becomes a part of organization's agenda.
- Strategic thinking and leadership guide the e-governance initiatives.
- Clear understanding of e-governance needs as projected by the external and internal users.

Level 4: Realized

Retrospected:

- Business processes are altered with the vision and overall e-governance objective.
- There is awareness about e-governance among all concerned - the stakeholders as well as the users.

E-ready:

- The organization has a sound infrastructure in place.
- Users motivated to use e-governance services.

Partially Open:

- Such organization sometimes focus only on their internal processes, allowing information exchange confined to the organization. In such case G2E is visible where as G2C, G2G, G2B is not yet established.

Open:

- The organization has integrated system, reflective of smooth information exchange within and outside the organization.
- G2E, G2C, G2G, G2B are well established.

Level 5: Institutionalized

- E-governance becomes an effortless exercise for the organization and it becomes a way of life for the stakeholders and customers.
- The organization at this level is completely paperless.

⊗ Towards Good Governance through E-Governance Models:

E-Governance is the key to the Good Governance for the developing countries to minimize corruption, provides efficient and effective or quality services to their citizens. Over last fifty years, the world has been craving for more innovations in the field of governance. But later on various scams underscored the lack of transparency in the governance mechanism. Therefore there is need for "A Government which is responsive to the needs of people, whose transactions have clearly defined time bound accountability and whose decisions are readily available for public". In order to ensure good governance for the country, the E-governance system will have to follow various principles:

- i) Accountability: To manage complex tasks, clear accountability is required. The governance system must define the personal and the stakeholders who are accountable for the provision of services.
- ii) Daily Administration Problems: Common man in the society faces these problems. This ensures that the citizen is empowered to know whom to question and when to expect the service from the government.
- iii) Interdepartmental Problems: These problems would require greater amount of time, but E-governance systems can still fix the accountability if departmental jurisdictions are clearly defined.
- iv) Policy level issues: These are the most complex issues which arise with the changes coming up in the society and require thorough analysis. The solutions are of long-term.
- v) Transparency: E-governance systems should be intelligent enough to automate the decision making process so that the transactions are highly transparent.
- vi) Responsive: E-governance systems must ensure that the systems created by them are responsive to the requirement of the different sections of population.