



ICTS IN GOVERNANCE: A CASE STUDY ON e-SEVA SERVICES IN HYDERABAD

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ABSTRACT

An e-Governance initiative by the Government of Andhra Pradesh, especially in the G2C services, the e-Seva project is chosen as a topic for the study. The case study method is employed for the study considering the governance project being vast and ever changing services provided by the e-Seva. Broadly the ICT led governance initiative could help bring about improvements in the “effectiveness”, “efficiency”, and transparency” aspects of the governance process, and consumers satisfaction in utilizing the e-Seva services. This Study focuses more on the concept and less on tracing its origins in order to concentrate on implementation issues, and gives a view of Andhra Pradesh experiences with e-governance, in context with the G2C services in the twin cities of Hyderabad and Secunderabad. This Study does not only intend to present the most successful and awarded e governance projects like e-Seva, but also examines some other projects like Card, e-cops, RTA etc so as to give a comprehensive view about e-governance efforts in Andhra Pradesh. The results of the study might be useful in gaining an understanding with respect to G2C services specially the e-Seva and bringing out the shortcomings if any and suggesting improvements for a better service of the e-Seva.

Keywords: Governance, e-Governance, e-Services, e-Projects, e-Seva

INTRODUCTION

The last decade of the 20th century has witnessed sweeping changes in the running of the governments. Governments around the world were under remarkable pressure as citizens were demanding smaller, effective and efficient governments. The developing nations sought to create social and economic systems that could compete effectively in the globalizing economy. The functioning of governments has changed under the influence of the information revolution. The information revolution promises to change the world like never

before. Computer and Internet use, has expanded rapidly in recent years, and the information super highways are bringing about profound changes in the way people work, learn and live, especially in the developed countries. The changes pose a serious threat of governance based on the classical Weberian model with its major emphasis on structure, hierarchy, rules, differentiation, distribution of graded authority and several functional features.

According to Kooiman, Jan, throughout the world, the work of government is being reshaped by different trends. The governments are slowly but surely moving away from centralized, vertical and hierarchical mechanism towards polycentric networks of governance based upon horizontal interactions between diverse actors within complex, dynamic and multi-layered societies. Citizens demand for reinvention of the government operations and the relationship between government and citizens forced the governments everywhere to launch major innovations.

According to Gurucharan Das, e-government is not a tool limited to the richer countries. Some of the most innovative uses of the internet in governance are appearing in the developing world, ICTs are being used to streamline government and connect it more closely with the people it is supposed to serve.

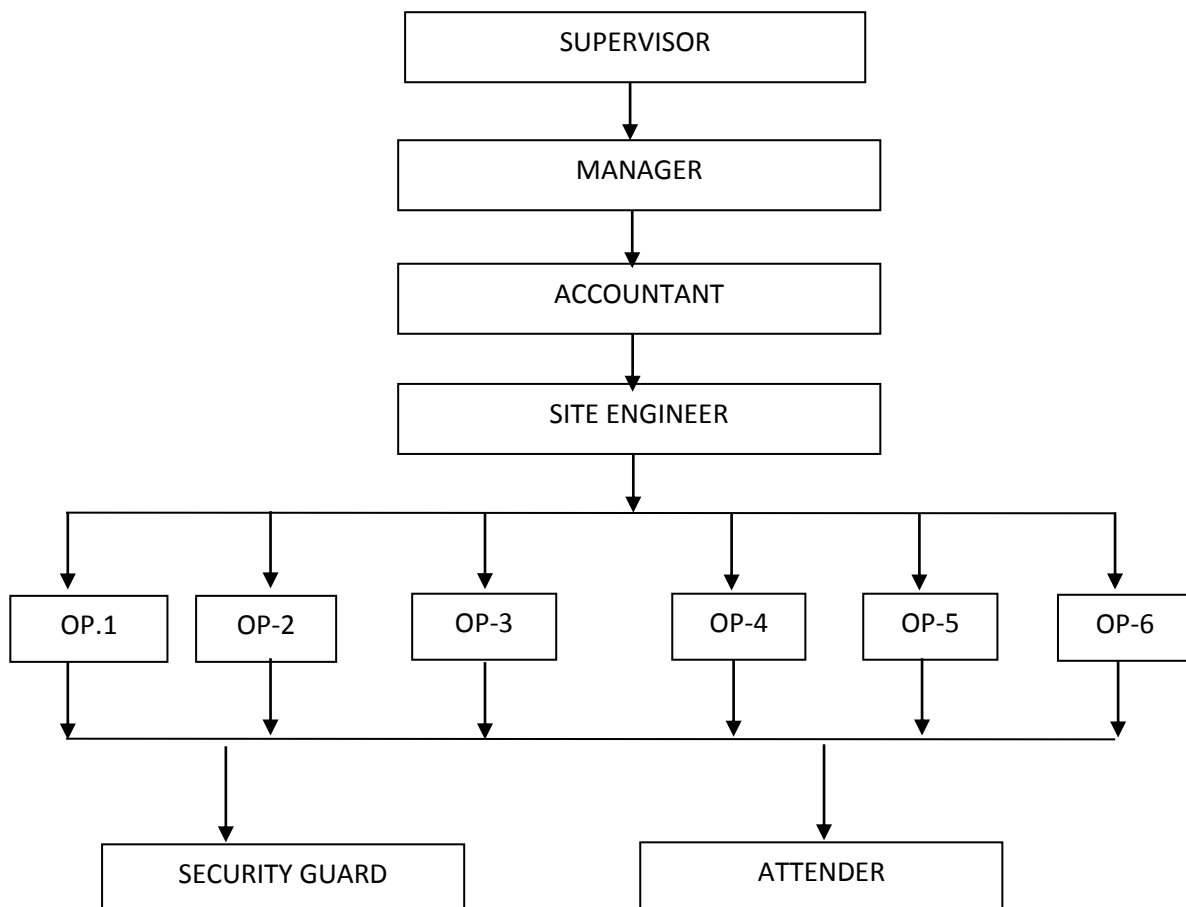
According to Dhameja and Meduray (2004) Good governance and a vibrant democracy are critical to human development. In the recent years, one of the most conspicuous means of bringing about good governance has been the information and Communication Technology (ICT) influx. The various applications of ICT in governance can be applicable in three distinct areas namely 1. G2G, 2. G2B, 3. G2C.

G2G: The G2G (Government to Government) applications constitute the maximum chunk of the e-governance. There are two levels of Government-to-Government (G2G) services the local or domestic level and the international level. G2G services are transactions between the central/national and local governments, and between department-level and attached agencies and bureaus. This involves various services between the different departments of the government and the employees of the departments with the government. At the same time, G2G services are transactions between governments, which can be used as an instrument of international relations and diplomacy.

G2B: Government –to-Business (G2B) or A to B (administration to business) transactions include various types of services exchanged between government and the business community. Business services offered include, obtaining current business information, downloading application forms, renewing licenses, registering businesses, obtaining permits and payment of taxes. G2B services also focus on procurement activities.

G2C: The third e-Government sector is Government-to-citizen (G2C). Finally it's from A to C. or Administration to citizen (also known as G2C or Government to citizen). G2C initiatives are designed to facilitate citizen interaction with government, which is considered to be the primary goal of e-governance. G2C includes information dissemination to the public, basic citizen services such as license renewals, ordering of birth / death / marriage certificates and filing of income taxes, as well as citizen assistance for such basic services as education, health care, hospital information, libraries, and applying for benefits.

ORGANISATION STRUCTURE OF e-Seva Centre



NEED FOR THE STUDY

The use of information communication Technologies (ICTs) in governance in Andhra Pradesh, as well as in the rest of India, is still in the emerging and experimental stage. Hence there is an urgent need to evaluate the use of ICTs in Governance. The base of government police and programs have been the neglect of lack of importance attached to the end users and then inputs about government schemes and polices. It is in the context, the researcher deemed it fit to undertake an exploratory study which could ascertain the user's perspective and provide actual inputs to planning amending and implementing the e-Seva project in the state.

The present study titled "Use of ICTs in governance – A case study of e-Seva services in Hyderabad" is based on earlier and present scenario of use of ICTs in providing citizens services, especially the G2C services with its major emphasis on the perceptions of users of e Seva. The study of ICTs in governance is carried out in the context of empowering citizens by providing quality G2C services.

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

The specific objectives of the present study include

- To examine e-Seva project as a part of ICTs in governance.
- To review and study the organizational structure of e-Seva centre.
- To ascertain and analyze "users perceptions" relating to e-Seva.

SCOPE OF THE STUDY

As the user perceptive has been assessed, the finding and suggestions made, may be incorporated to enhance the functioning of the e-Seva and make the services more acceptable and user friendly.

METHODOLOY

The Case Study method was adopted which involved direct observation of the phenomena through field study to know the organization structure and functions of e-Seva. The case

study method provides a systematic way of looking at events, collecting data, analyzing information, and reporting the results. Above all the case study Method offers scope for using different methods including survey, observations, studying documents and interviews etc.

Sample: The sample for the study consists of 627 randomly selected consumers of e-Seva centres of Alwal and Habsiguda in twin cities of Hyderabad and Secunderabad.

Date Collection: 1. interviewing the officers and collecting data 2. Administered the questionnaire to the consumers or citizens

DATA PRESENTATION AND ANALYSIS

TABLE: 1 Age – Frequency and percentage distribution of the respondents by age

AGE IN YEARS	NO. OF RESPONDENTS	PERCENTAGE
<20	22	3.6
21-30	91	14.5
31-40	249	39.7
41-50	167	26.5
>50	98	15.6
TOTAL	627	100

Table No 1: indicates various age groups of respondents availing the e-Seva services. The respondents' age was ranged from below 20 and above 50 years age group. the data explains that 39.7 percent of the total respondents are in the age group of 31-40 years, whereas 26.5-percent are in the age group of 41-50. The percentage of respondent sin the age group of 2-30 years and the group above 50 years was 14.5 percent and 15.6 percent respectively. The data of respondents in respect of age in years revealed. That only a meager percentage of 3.6% were below the age group of 20 years. A major Percent of users of e-Seva Project are in the age group of 31 to 40 years.

Table-2 frequency and percentage depth of respondents by gender

SEX	NO.OF RESPONDENTS	PERCENTAGE
MALE	498	79.5
FEMALE	129	20.5
TOTAL	627	100

Table 2: indicates the gender of the respondents availing the e-Seva services. The table reveals that, out of the total sample of 627 people, a very high majority of male members i.e. 79.5% are availing the services of e Seva project, while a small percentage of female members is 20.5 visit e Seva centres.

LIMITATIONS:

The present study has certain limitations that need to be taken into account when considering the study and its contributions. Some of the limitations of this study include.

- The selection of the single case study design naturally brings forth limitations as far as the generalization of the results.
- Though the rural e-Seva centres are functional the study is only limited to the twin cities of Hyderabad and Secunderabad.
- Only two e-Seva centres in Hyderabad and Secunderabad area were selected for the study randomly selected from three varied zones

CONCLUSION

The present study reveals that, a high majority of people I.e. 95 % of the total respondents agrees that at the departmental counters. It has revealed that, almost all the customers (98.9%) of the e-Seva centres endorse that the services offered are better than that at the conventional departmental counters. The customers of e-Seva concurred that, the staff at the integrated service centers are courteous and time taken to avail the services is less when compared to that taken to avail the same services at the departmental counters and with regard to the basic facilities provided at the e-Seva centres. The majority of customers (96%) expressed their satisfaction. However, a meager number of people (3.61%) are of the opinion that basic facilities are not extended at the e-Seva centres. From the above observations, it can be stated that, people preferred the e-Seva Centres to conventional departmental counter to avail the services. This was mainly because in the conventional departmental counters the citizen used to go to each and every department for any service, and stand outside the counter without shelter in long queues. Overall, ICTs offer many potential benefits for governments and their constituencies. Although, ICT can be a tool for decentralization, integration across



departments, reeducation in work load, efficiency and effective in service delivery, it cannot be the sole instrument of change.

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