

The Impact of E-Governance Services in Rural Areas of Erode District - Tamil Nadu

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Abstract- Return on investment is not the primary objective when e-government projects are conceived. They are mostly driven to achieve operational efficiency and effectiveness in service delivery. Governments run with tight budgets, hence there is an increasing demand to re-examine their spending priorities. Further, e-government programs are subjected to scrutiny to find out whether they are delivering the payoff as has been promised or not. Better Governance is high on the agenda of most Indian states .A few have managed to use technology toward that goal-but for too many states it's slow moving. It is not just sufficient to have an IT vision & budget to support the vision unless the budget is spent on appropriate initiatives that would benefit the state & citizens. E-government being a new phenomenon, at most places, e-government projects are still found to be in a nascent stage; hence proper information flow for calculating 'return on e-government' considering tangible and intangible benefits cannot be fully ascertained. This research survey analysis the impact of e-governance services in the Erode district, Tamil Nadu for rural population. There are around 151 respondents were selected from Erode district in Tamil Nadu. The analysis were done based on impact of various factors(performance expectancy, effort expectancy, social influence, facilitating conditional and behaviors intention adoption) for low participation of rural population in e-governance services. Hence the finding suggested that there should be improvement in transparency and efficiency in the field of e - governance in Erode district of Tamil Nadu.

Index terms-E-governance, E-government, Information and Communication Technologies (ICT)

INTRODUCTION

The government's intent towards collaborative computing can be traced back to the year 1987 when the Planning Commission launched its NICNET programme. Under the programme, the district and

state governments as well as central ministries were networked for sharing information in digital mode. However, practically the focus of IT applications continued to be on automation of internal government functions rather than on improving service delivery to citizens (ARC 2008, p. 106). While taking stock of the slow progress of e-governance in the midst of these isolated path-breaking initiatives, the government felt the need for a coordinated effort in mission mode at the national level by a central government department. This gave birth to National e-Governance Plan (NeGP) in May 2006, with the Department of Information Technology designated as the nodal coordinating organization. NeGP initially comprised 27 Mission Mode Projects (MMPs) and 8 support components to be implemented at the central, state and local government levels. The mission mode projects include services around road transport, land records, commercial taxes, employment exchanges, agriculture, civil supplies, treasuries, land registration, policy and education, insurance, excise, banking, income-tax, passport, etc. The MMP portfolio of projects was increased to 31 with the addition of four more projects, viz. Education, Health, Public Distribution System and Posts on 29 July 2011. The three important elements of the service delivery framework include: State-Wide Area Networks (SWANs), about 1.3 lakh Common Service Centres (CSCs) proposed initially as front-end outlets for the service and State Data Centres across 29 States and 6 Union Territories (DIT 2012, pp. 22–23).

E-governance/Information and Communication Technologies (ICT) has helped a lot to the common people and government. Due to presence of these technologies (e-governance/ computerizations services) in present generation people are getting services of various department facilities from the

single-window centers efficiently. Better Governance is high on the agenda of most Indian states .A few have managed to use technology toward that goal-but for too many states it's slow moving. It is not just sufficient to have an IT vision & budget to support the vision unless the budget is spent on appropriate initiatives that would benefit the state & citizens. Therefore, throughout the country with the introduction of e-governance the efficiency and effectiveness of government services are improved in huge scale.

OBJECTIVES OF THIS STUDY

1. To know the participation of e-governance projects among the rural people in Erode district.
2. To find out the expectancy of the rural people in Erode district.
3. To analyses the Social Influence, Facilitating Conditions and Behavioral Intention to Use of the rural people in Erode district.

METHODOLOGY

This study used to primary data was collected from 150 respondents using quota sampling techniques. The data were analyzed statistically using SPSS software package to summarize the relations among the variables assessed by this study. The Cronbach's coefficient alpha value was used to measuring the data. The four points of reliability are recommended excellent (0.90 and above), high (0.70 - 0.90), high moderate (0.50 – 0.70), and low (0.50 and below).The reliability values detailed in study should be equal to or above (0.70) for an affirmative study. Socio-Economic characteristics of the study area The age wise distribution of the respondents were explained in the following table: 1

Table 1: Age wise Distribution of the Respondents

Age Groups	Number	Percentage
19-30	31	20.67
31-45	97	64.67
46-60	22	14.67
Total	150	100

Source: Data collected from respondents
 From the above table:1 it is observed that 20.53% of the respondent were 19-30 years age group people, 64.90% of the respondents were 31-45 years age group people and remaining 14.57% of the

respondents were 46-60 years age group. The maximum number of the respondents were 31-45 years age group people and minimum number of the respondents were 46-60 years age group people.

The gender wise distribution of the respondents were explained in the following table: 2

Table 2: Gender wise Distribution of the Respondents

Gender	Number	Percentage
Male	95	63.33
Female	55	36.67
Total	150	100

Source: Data collected from respondents
 In the above table: 2 it is observed that 62.91% of the respondent were male and 37.09% of the respondents were female. The maximum number of the respondents was male population.

FINDINGS OF THE STUDY

The reliability for each construct is demonstrated in Table: 3. High Cronbach's value for all constructs involves that they are internally consistent and measure the same content of the construct.

Table 3: Reliability of Measurements Evaluate

Constructs	Sample size	Cronbach's Alpha (α)	Type
Performance expectancy	150	0.798	High Reliability
Effort Expectancy	150	0.828	High Reliability
Social influence	150	0.736	High Reliability
Facilitating Conditions	150	0.736	High Reliability
Behavioral intention to Use	150	0.704	High Reliability

Source: Data collected from respondents
 The above mentioned table: 3 illustrates Cronbach's coefficient alpha values that are estimated to test the internal consistency of the measure. Cronbach's results varied between (0.704) for the Behavioral Intention to adopt e-government and (0.828) for the Effort Expectancy constructs. Social Influence reveals a reliability of (0.712) and Facilitating Conditions possessed a reliability of (0.736). The remaining construct, namely Performance Expectancy had a Cronbach's score of (0.798). The findings prove that all the alpha values indicates the study's instrument is reliable and the higher the Cronbach's (α) value of construct, the higher the

reliability is of measuring the same construct. Following are the main finding of our study details.

Performance Expectancy

These are important to measure the degree to which individuals believe that using a system will help them to improve their job performance. There are various parameters to measure the performance expectancy for the good quality administration and governance and these were included after pretesting of the questionnaire. The 61.72 percent of the respondents favor corruption free services. The population expects (57 percent) people centric services in a responsive manner and 55 percent favor maintaining rules of law and applying the same rules to all, no VIP culture and freebie schemes. People expect good governance in responsive manner. The 51 percent of respondents emphasize on improvement in services like access to land records, registration and transfer of property, copies of other records, property tax and revenue related cases etc. through computerized ICT/use of e-governance.

Effort Expectancy

The degree of easiness related with the use of the system; effort expectancy is made up of; perceived easiness of use, complexity and actual easiness of use. The 72.42 percent of citizens have trust in online services. The result shows that the trust worthy e-governance services are the most important factor for citizens; which is followed by timely service delivery, transparency and 24x7 availability of e-governance services. There is mixed response from the respondents favoring services like downloading application forms and submitting application forms online and make fee payment through credit card/debit card. A very few respondents (those who are illiterate and aged) are in favor of manual systems. The maximum number of respondents and service providing staff is in favor necessary computer education (for free or at a nominal fee) for creating awareness of using computerized government services/e-governance services in the effective manner.

Social Influence

Social influence is the degree to which people react against the influence of the system be it positive or negative. The maximum number of respondents get

irritation from unreasonable delay, multiple visits even for small services as well as non-responsiveness of government staff to the needs of urgency of citizens and lack of information/guidance for the correct procedures, form, rules etc. are the most common reasons or difficulties that are being faced while getting the citizen services from various government departments. The results also prove the fact that respondents agree that the system need repairing as the problems are not identified and defined correctly in department(s) or service(s). There is need to upgrade the technology with time and apply strict rules to keep privacy of citizen information/transactions.

Facilitating Conditions

The degree to which an individual believes that an organization and technical infrastructure exist to support the system is facilitating conditions. These are involved of three roots: perceived behavioral control, facilitating conditions and compatibility. The maximum population is in favor of getting computerized citizens services in District office for nominal fee. The same number of respondents is in favor of online payment/online bank transfers through internet or by cash at the service counter. The respondents are comfortable if the services are improved within a period of one year for implementing efforts for effective e-governance services.

Behavioral Intention to Use

The behavioral intention of the public towards e-government services has parameters like how much percent of the respondents support the governmental efforts and due to this how much empowered the citizen becomes with the easiness of information availability. The respondents are in favor of these efforts and agree that this would bring in the radical change in the way government functions and would bring in real benefits to the citizens.

REASONS FOR LOW PARTICIPATION IN ADOPTION OF E-GOVERNANCE SERVICES

We observe various factors responsible for low participation of rural people in e-governance projects in Erode district. Following are main reasons for low participation in adoption of e-governance services.

Infrastructure

The success of ICT and e-governance projects lies in the availability of infrastructure by the government for public accessibility. The cost of computing tools and fees for internet access are still high for the most rural population. So, they cannot access these services. In addition to this there is digital divide between the information haves and information have-nots.

Poverty

Any individual living below poverty line does not afford a computer to harness the benefits of e-government and other online services. They are economically poor, socially background and illiterate. Even the segment of public that is educated, lack of basic knowledge of computer and internet operating skills. Sometimes there is lack of awareness among the people is an important factor.

Lack of Funding

Funding is the major barrier in implementing ICT and e-governance projects. The projects that are the part of the e-governance sustainable need huge investment. The state of Tamil Nadu is going through financial crisis since past few years. This has been a major factor for low participation of people in e-governance.

Literacy Rate

All of the people in Tamil Nadu are not literate and thus they do not have proper knowledge about the usage of ICT tools. So, low level of ICT literacy is a major hurdle for e-government adoption and acceptance the people. The e-government applications are written or published online in English language only and are not user-friendly. This is also one of the major reasons for the negligible acceptance and adoption of e-government projects.

Local Language Problem

The most important factor for the population is of language and there is dominance of English language on the internet. It is reported that most of the population in Tamil Nadu speak Tamil language.

The present study highlights to find out the some factors that are needed to be designing for implementation of e-governance in Erode district. So that there is increased in adoption of e-governance services among rural population in the Erode district. Governments should focus on improving services of e-governance based on citizen centric factors like infrastructure, poverty, lack of funding, literacy rate and local language problem etc. for sustainable development. They should be aware of what are the major expectations of the citizens like corruption free services, trustworthily services freebies or nominal fee and etc. The e-governance services are successful by only fulfillment of the public expectations about e-governance services in rural areas of Erode district.

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CONCLUSION

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