

E-GOVERNANCE AND TRANSPARENCY IN PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION IN INDIA

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ABSTRACT

E-Governance has emerged as an important instrument for improving transparency, accountability, and efficiency in public administration. The use of information and communication technology (ICT) in governance enables governments to provide services effectively, reduce corruption, and strengthen citizen participation. This paper examines the concept of e-governance, its role in promoting transparency in public administration, major initiatives undertaken in India, challenges faced in implementation, and suggestions for improvement. The study concludes that effective implementation of e-governance can strengthen democratic governance and improve public trust in administration.

Keywords: *E-Governance, Transparency, Public Administration, Digital Governance, Accountability and ICT*

INTRODUCTION:

Public administration plays a vital role in implementing government policies and delivering public services. Traditionally, administrative systems were often criticized for delays, corruption, lack of transparency, and bureaucratic inefficiency. With the advancement of technology, governments across the world have adopted electronic governance or e-governance to modernize administration.

E-Governance refers to the application of information and communication technology (ICT) in government functioning to provide efficient, transparent, and citizen-friendly services. In India, e-governance has become an essential component of administrative reforms. Various digital initiatives have improved access to information, enhanced accountability, and reduced administrative corruption.

MEANING AND CONCEPT OF E-GOVERNANCE:

E-Governance means the use of digital technology, especially the internet, to conduct government activities and deliver services to citizens, businesses, and other stakeholders.

The major objectives of e-governance are: Improving government efficiency, Ensuring transparency and accountability, Reducing corruption, Enhancing citizen participation, Providing faster public services and Strengthening democratic governance.

REVIEW OF LITERATURE:

For this present study reviewed both theoretical and empirical literature as following;

Frank Bannister and Regina Connolly (2011), In their study titled “The Trouble with Transparency: A Critical Review of Openness in E-Government,” the authors examined the relationship between e-governance and transparency. They argued that e-governance improves openness and accountability in public administration by making government information accessible to citizens. However, the study also highlighted challenges such as privacy concerns and information overload.

M. P. Sebastian and K. K. Supriya (2013), Their research focused on India's preparedness for e-governance implementation. The study identified major obstacles such as poor infrastructure, low digital literacy, and administrative resistance to technological reforms. The authors concluded that institutional support and employee training are essential for successful e-governance.

Madhu Bala and Deepak Verma (2018), in their work on governance and e-governance in India, the authors explained how digital governance contributes to transparency, accountability, and efficiency in administration. They observed that e-governance reduces corruption and improves service delivery, but challenges such as lack of awareness and weak infrastructure continue to affect implementation.

Sumathy M (2021), conducted a literature review on citizens' perceptions toward e-governance. The study found that factors such as digital literacy, awareness, trust, and user-friendly platforms influence the effectiveness of e-governance services. The research also emphasized that rural populations face difficulties due to limited internet access and technical knowledge.

Khushi Mandowara and Vineeth Thomas (2023), Their comparative study on the digitalisation of the Right to Information (RTI) Act examined how online RTI systems promote transparency and accountability. The authors concluded that digital RTI portals improve citizens' access to information and strengthen democratic governance in India.

Debobrata Das (2024), Debobrata Das reviewed the issues and challenges of e-governance in India. The study highlighted that e-governance enhances administrative speed, accessibility, and transparency. However, cyber security threats, digital divide, and lack of public trust remain major barriers to effective implementation.

Sheedhal K Reji, B. Moulya and P. S. Rajeswari (2025), In the study "E-governance Evolution: India's Digital Leap from Files to Cloud," the authors examined the transformation of Indian administration through digital governance. The study noted that initiatives like Digital India, online public services, and cloud governance have improved transparency, reduced delays, and increased efficiency in public administration.

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY:

The present study is based on following specific objectives;

1. To examine the concept and significance of e-governance in public administration.
2. To analyze the role of e-governance in promoting transparency, accountability, and efficient service delivery in administration.
3. To identify the major challenges and suggest measures for improving the effectiveness of e-governance in India.

E-governance includes: Government to Citizen (G2C) – Online services for citizens. Government to Business (G2B) – Digital interaction with businesses. Government to Government (G2G) – Coordination among government departments. Government to Employee (G2E) – Digital administration for government employees.

Transparency in Public Administration:

Transparency refers to openness, accessibility of information, and accountability in governmental activities. A transparent administration allows citizens to access information regarding government policies, expenditures, decisions, and services.

Transparency helps: Reduce corruption, Improve accountability, Increase public trust, Promote citizen participation and Ensure effective governance.

The introduction of digital platforms has significantly improved transparency by making government information easily accessible to the public.

Role of E-Governance in Promoting Transparency:

1. Easy Access to Information: Government websites and online portals provide citizens with access to official documents, schemes, policies, and public records. This reduces secrecy in administration. Example: Online land records, RTI portals and Digital grievance systems.

2. Reduction of Corruption: Digital transactions minimize direct interaction between officials and citizens, thereby reducing opportunities for bribery and corruption. Example: Online payment systems, Digital tax filing and E-procurement systems.

3. Faster Service Delivery: E-governance ensures timely delivery of public services such as certificates, licenses, and welfare benefits. Example: Online passport services, Aadhaar-linked services and Digital banking.

4. Accountability in Administration: Digital records create accountability because administrative actions can be tracked and monitored. Example: Public monitoring dashboards and Online tracking systems.

5. Citizen Participation: E-governance encourages citizens to participate in governance through online feedback systems, complaint portals, and social media interaction.

MAJOR E-GOVERNANCE INITIATIVES IN INDIA:

Digital India Programme Launched in 2015, the Digital India programme aims to transform India into a digitally empowered society and knowledge economy. Its objectives include: Digital infrastructure, Digital service delivery and Digital literacy.

- 1. Right to Information (RTI) Online Portal:** The RTI portal enables citizens to file RTI applications online, promoting transparency and accountability.
- 2. UMANG App:** The Unified Mobile Application for New-age Governance (UMANG) provides access to multiple government services through a single platform.
- 3. E-Courts Project:** The E-Courts initiative improves judicial transparency through online case tracking and digital records.
- 4. Government e-Marketplace (GeM):** GeM provides an online procurement platform that enhances transparency in government purchasing.
- 5. Bhoomi Project:** The Bhoomi project in Karnataka digitized land records, reducing corruption and improving accessibility.

Data Analysis:

E-Governance has transformed public administration by increasing transparency, accountability, and efficiency.

Table -1: Growth of E-Services in India

Year	Number of Online Government Services
2023	11,61
2025	23,919

Source: Economicstimes.com

India recorded a 105% increase in online public services within two and a half years under the National e-Governance Service Delivery Assessment (NeSDA).

Table -2: Total E-Services Available in India (2025)

Sector	Number of E-Services
Local Governance & Utility Services	7,800
Social Welfare Services	Large Share
Finance-related Services	Large Share
Total E-Services Across India	22,478

Source: iaspoint

The Local Governance and Utility Services sector provides the highest number of digital services in India.

Table -3: Mandatory E-Service Saturation

Indicator	Data
Mandatory E-Services Identified	2,124
Operational E-Services	1,677
Saturation Level	79%

Source: Economictimes.com

This shows that a large percentage of essential public services are now digitally available.

Table -4: Unified Digital Governance Portals

State/UT	Unified Portal
Karnataka	Seva Sindhu
Kerala	e-Sevanam
Odisha	Odisha One
Assam	Sewa Setu
Uttarakhand	Apuni Sarkar
Jammu & Kashmir	e-UNNAT

Source: The Policy Edge

Several Indian states have achieved nearly complete digital governance through unified portals. These portals improve transparency and simplify citizen access to government services. The available data clearly shows that e-governance has transformed public administration in India by increasing transparency, accessibility, and efficiency. The rapid expansion of online services, digital portals, and paperless administration demonstrates the growing importance of digital governance in strengthening democratic administration and public trust.

CHALLENGES OF E-GOVERNANCE:

1. Digital Divide: Many rural and economically weaker sections lack internet access and digital literacy.
2. Cyber Security Issues: Data privacy and cyber threats pose major challenges to digital governance.

3. Resistance to Change: Traditional bureaucratic systems sometimes resist technological reforms.
4. Lack of Infrastructure: Poor internet connectivity and inadequate technical infrastructure affect implementation.
5. Technical Illiteracy: Many citizens and government employees lack the skills needed to use digital systems effectively.

Findings of the Study:

1. E-governance has significantly increased transparency in public administration.
2. Online services reduce corruption by minimizing direct contact between officials and citizens.
3. Digital platforms improve accountability through online monitoring systems.
4. India has rapidly expanded its e-governance infrastructure after the Digital India initiative.
5. Challenges such as cyber security, digital divide, and technical illiteracy still affect implementation.

Suggestions for Improvement:

1. Improve digital literacy among citizens
2. Strengthen cyber security measures
3. Expand internet access in rural areas
4. Conduct regular training for government employees
5. Promote awareness about digital services
6. Ensure user-friendly digital platforms
7. Increase transparency through open data initiatives

CONCLUSION:

E-Governance has transformed public administration by increasing transparency, accountability, and efficiency. It has reduced corruption, improved service delivery, and strengthened citizen participation in governance. Despite challenges such as digital divide and cyber security concerns, e-governance remains a powerful tool for democratic and transparent administration. Effective implementation of digital governance policies can help build a more responsive and citizen-centric government in India.

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