RESEARCH DESIGN

Every government in the modern world is imparting changes in the administration in order to cope with the altering circumstances around. The traditional pattern and processes of administration have undergone critical analysis by this time. Its excessive dependence on bureaucracy, hierarchy, rules and regulations was proved to be ineffective in delivering proper services to the citizens. The twenty first century is characterised by the impact of globalization which has the potential to transform the social, cultural, economic and political arena worldwide in one way or another. The net effect is the need for change and innovation in the delivery of public service. Since 1990s, the concept and practice ‘reinventing government’ has been getting much attention among the advocacy for transforming the public administration. The concept of 'good governance' was emerged in 1989 through a World Bank Report and thereafter the objective of attaining 'good governance' through various ways of 're-inventing' government is gaining much consideration.

The introduction of Information and Communication Technologies (ICTs) has induced many changes in the way governments function and this paradigm shift in the information age has redefined the processes and mechanisms of service delivery. Many developed nations have already taken steps to enhance the effectiveness of interface between the citizens and administration while majority of the developing nations including India are in the path of re-inventing the public service through the implementation of Information and Communication Technologies.

Statement of the Problem

The 'information revolution' has far reaching impact on every dimension of human activity. The governments worldwide are facing the challenges of transformation and the necessities to re-invent the government system for
rendering efficient and cost effective services. Development of Information and Communication Technologies catalysed and resulted in the evolution of e-governance for the attainment of a good administrative system.

Almost all countries in the world are attaching importance to investment in ICTs and in India, many State Governments have adopted specific IT policies with a region's development. The major problem is to examine the nature and impact of e-governance in improving the administrative efficiency of Kerala. Conventionally, bureaucracy remained a closed unit lacking public accessibility and transparency. In this context, the concern of the study is to assess the citizen administration interface that can be achieved through the implementation of e-governance projects in the administrative set up of Kerala. The study seeks to estimate as how for e-governance can alter the conventional role of bureaucracy and the rigid procedure it had inherited since the colonial period.

Significance of the study

The administration worldwide has got qualitative and quantitative transformations through the implementation of ICTs. The impact of e-governance in reforming public administration has become a part of the academic discourse on 'good governance'. The device of e-governance now has become an accepted apparatus for improving the quality of the delivery of public service. Re-engineering of the government processes is essential for bringing about transparency, efficiency, productivity and reducing the bureaucratic controls. The pace and transparency associated with e-governance has the potential to make public administration responsive to ensure good governance.

The most literate Indian state, Kerala is highly adaptive to newer initiatives even though the civil society is very critical in its socio-economic and political outlook. As part of reform measures, the Kerala Government adopted IT policy to utilise the potential of Information and Communication Technologies (ICTs) to bring development in the society. Even though the
Kerala society is most literate, the number of people who are having e-literacy is less. Considering this circumstance, the government is trying to popularise the initiatives of e-governance including e-literacy also. It is quite relevant to study the impact of a new initiative like e-governance on Kerala civil society. Besides, e-governance is often hailed to be a panacea for the ailment of corruption. Even if Kerala is the least corrupt state in India, corruption is visible in the State also. In such a scenario, a study conducted in a society like Kerala is very much helpful in analysing the output of the application of ICTs in re-engineering public service.

Research Goals

1. To analyse the pace of the changing administrative environment in Kerala. This has to be viewed from the background of traditional administrative structure and the bureaucratic mind set in the State.

2. To study the impact of e-governance in the changing administrative scenario of Kerala. Selected departments will be thoroughly studied for this purpose.

3. To find out the success and failures of e-governance projects, especially the Akshaya project in Malappuram District.

4. To examine how far citizen-administration relationship could be improved through e-governance.

Hypotheses

1. E-governance has become a necessary tool in the context of reforming public administration. The changing character of administration in Kerala would necessitate qualitative shift in the structure and organisation.

2. The potentiality of ensuring citizen-administration partnership can be radically improved through e-governance.
3. Middle level bureaucracy has a negative attitude towards the implementation of e-governance policies. It may take considerable time for changing their conventional attitudes and values in the bureaucratic set up.

Defining major concepts

The major concepts need to be defined in this study are the following:

Governance

More generally still, governance can be used to refer to all patterns of rule, including the kind of hierarchic state that is often thought to have existed prior to the public sector reforms in 1980s and 1990s. The concept of governance has been used since the 14th century. It began with a range of meanings from the act or manner of governing the office of power, which made it synonymous with government. After the Treaty of Westphalia in 1648, it became fully synonymous with the government. This equilibrium remained till 1990s. It was in 1990s that the normative aspect of governance came into prominence owing to the political and economic changes happened in the decade.

Focusing on its normative quality as a framework for political and administrative system worldwide, Hyden gives a definition to government as “conscious management of regime structure with the express aim of increasing their legitimacy before the public”. To him, the study of governance involves identification of conditions that facilitate sound management and effective problem solving strategy. World Bank was one of the first international organizations to use the term governance. It defined governance as having three distinct aspects. (i) The form of a political regime (ii) the processes by which authority is exercised in the management of a country’s economic and social resources and (iii) the capacity of governments to design, formulate and implement policies. Webster's 'New Universal Unabridged Dictionary' defines governance as 'the act or process of governing, specifically authoritative direction and control.'
The Report of the Commission on Global Governance entitled 'Our Global Neighborhood' gives the definition as 'governance is the sum of the many ways individuals and institutions, public and private, manage their common affairs. It is a containing process through which conflicting or diverse interests may be accommodated and co-operative action may be taken. It includes formal institution and regimes empowered to enforce compliance, as well as informal arrangements that people and institutions, either have agreed to or perceive to be in their interests.'

The new concept of governance is linked with the neo-liberal economic theories and has its origin in (a) the new thrust towards neo-liberalist version on the 'state' along with emergence of 'market' as a competing social authority and bringing in 'civil society' as a provider of local level social services, (b) the concern of international funding agencies towards more accountable, transparent, open and participative rule and (c) the socio-economic integration of the world propelled by economic, technological and political consideration under globalisation.

**Good Governance**

The current rebirth of 'governance' in the form of good governance can be attributed to the concept used by the World Bank for the first time in "Sub-Saharan Africa: Crisis to Sustainable Growth" in 1989. In this report for highlighting the 'crisis of governance', the Bank identified certain factors like widespread corruption, excessive personalisation of political power, neglect of human rights and non-accountable governments as key hindrances to sustainable development and this crisis was said to be responsible for inefficient structural adjustment programmes.

The World Bank gradually elaborated the governance agenda by adding certain qualitative characteristics and terming it as 'good governance'. The Bank underlined that for attaining sound economic, human and institutional development, good governance is needed. Further, the Bank emphasised four key dimension of governance as (a) public sector management
(b) accountability (c) legal framework for development and (d) information and transparency. The World Bank has defined good governance as having six main characteristics such as (1) voice and accountability that include civil liberties and political stability (2) Government effectiveness, which comprises the quality of policy making and public service delivery (3) The quality of the regulatory framework (4) The rule of law which includes protection and property of rights (5) Independence of judiciary (6) Curbs on corruption. The qualitative line of governance which ensures participation, transparency, responsiveness and accountability can be considered to be good or effective. Good governance thus is a blending of efficiency dimension of public management and the accountability dimension of governance.

The phrase 'good governance' was epitomized by the World Bank in 1997 as 'predictable, open and enlightened policy making, a bureaucracy imbued with professional ethos, acting in furtherance of public good, the rule of law, transparent process and a strong civil society participating in public affairs. Poor governance on the other hand is characterised by arbitrary policy making, unaccountable bureaucracies, unenforced or unjust legal systems, abuse of executive power, a civil society unengaged in public life and widespread corruption. Good governance fosters a strong state capable of sustained economic and social development as well as institutional growth. Poor governance undermines all efforts to improve policy making and create durable institutions.

Mallock Brown states that "good governance refers to enhancing the quality of governance through empowerment, participation, accountability, equity and justice. Without transparent and accountable institutions, and the capacity to develop the policies and laws to enable a country to manage its markets and its political life is, open, but just way, development is not sustainable". According to Richard Jeffries, good governance is equivalent to purposive and development oriented administration, which is committed to
improvement of quality of life of the people without being necessarily
democratic in style.

Good governance is articulated by the UNDP (1997) in terms of eight
characteristics, which include

*Participation*: Participation by both men and women is the cornerstone of
good governance. This could be either direct or through legitimate
intermediate institutions or representatives. Participation needs to be informed
and organised. This should incorporate the freedom of association and
expression on the one hand, and an organised civil society on the other hand.

*Rule of law*: Good governance requires fair legal frameworks that are enforced
impartially. It also requires full protection of human rights, particularly those
of minorities. Impartial enforcement of laws requires an independent judiciary
and impartial and incorruptible police force.

*Transparency*: Transparency means that decision taken and their enforcement
are done in a manner that follows rules and regulations. It also means that
information is freely available and directly accessible to those who will be
affected by such decision and their enforcement. It also means that enough
information is provided and that is provided in easily understandable forms
and media.

*Responsiveness*: Good governance requires that institutions and processes try
to serve all stake holders within a reasonable time frame. By being responsive,
governmental institutions gain legitimacy in the public sphere, which will
automatically ensure their wider acceptance and thus effectiveness in
governance. Apart from well- designed structural devices, responsiveness of
public institutions can be meaningfully ascertained only if there is a serious
civil society engagement in public affairs.

*Consensus oriented*: There are many actors and viewpoints in a society. Good
governance needs a mediation of the different interests in a society to reach a
broad consensus on what is the best interest of the whole community and how
this can be achieved. It also needs a broad and long term perspective on what is needed for sustainable human development and how to achieve the goals of such development. This can only result from an understanding of the historical, cultural and social contexts of a given society.

*Equity and Inclusiveness:* The well being of a society depends on ensuring that all its members feel that they have a stake in it and do not feel excluded from mainstream society. This requires that all groups, particularly the most vulnerable have opportunities to improve or maintain their well-being.

*Effectiveness and Efficiency:* Good governance means that process and institutions produce results that meet the needs of society, while making the best use of resources at their disposal. The concept of efficiency in the context of good governance also covers the sustainable use of natural resources and protection of the environment.

*Accountability:* Accountability is inevitable for good governance. Not only governmental institutions but also the private sector and civil society organizations must be accountable to the public and to their institutional stakeholders. Who is accountable to whom varies depending on whether decisions or actions taken are internal or external to an organization or institution. In general, an organization or an institution is accountable to those who will be affected by its decisions or actions. Accountability cannot be enforced without transparency and the rule of law.

Good governance can therefore be viewed as a three dimensional concept. First, it highlights certain exposed principles of public administration like accountability, transparency and participation. Second, it also looks into the processes in which political power is articulated and exercised. It suggests the importance of interactions between state, market and society. Third, fruitful application of governance, as both principles and process is contingent on the regulatory potential of the state.
E-governance

The term e-governance has been defined in many ways. According to the World Bank, “E-government refers to the use by government agencies of information technologies that have the ability to transform relations with citizens, businesses, and other arms of government. These technologies can serve a variety of different ends: better delivery of government services to citizens, improved interactions with business and industry, citizen empowerment through access to information, or more efficient government management. The resulting benefits can be less corruption, increased transparency, greater convenience, revenue growth and / or cost relations.”

This definition concentrates on the use of information technologies in improving citizen-government interactions, cost-cutting, generation of revenue and transparency.

The UNESCO defines the concept of e-governance as follows- “Governance refers to the exercise of political, economic and administrative authority in the management of a country’s affairs including citizen’s articulation of their interests and exercise of their legal rights and obligations. E-governance may be understood as the performance of this governance in the electronic medium in order to facilitate an efficient, speedy and transparent process of disseminating information to the public, and other agencies, and for performing government administration activities”.

This definition emphasises the utilisation of electronic medium in the background of new governance.

According to Richard Heeks, “the term ‘e-government’ is not merely confined to use of the web and / or internet based applications in government. Instead, it encompasses all use of digital information, technology (primarily computers and networks) in the public sector”. This definition gives a simplified version of e-governance as the incorporation of digital information technology in the public sector. The UN E-Government survey 2008, describes e-governance as “in the current era of technological advancement that is taking
place all over the world, a new kind of rationalization has been introduced in the public sector by the use of modern information and communication technologies (ICTs). Increasingly the use of ICT tools and associations are leading to transformational shifts in public policy, processes and functions. E-government is being deployed not only to provide citizen services but for public sector efficiency purposes, improving transparency and accountability in government functions and allowing for cost savings in government administration. ICTs are changing the way the government does business for the people. In this context, e-government is seen to be a lever for the transformation of government.”

The Report of the Working Group Convergence and E-Governance for the Tenth Five Year Plan (2002-2007) of the Planning Commission in India envisions that “e-Governance or electronic governance’ is basically the application of Information and Communication Technology to the process of Government functioning in order to bring about ‘Simple, Moral, Accountable, Responsive and Transparent’ (SMART) governance.”

The acronym SMART has become synonymous for e-governance in India. The Government machinery often makes a reference of this definition to present the benefits of e-governance implementation. In all sense, this definition of e-governance, conveys the comprehensive meaning and objectives underlying the concept of e-government in a simple way.

While the US E-government Act of 2002 defines electronic government to mean “the use by the Government of web-based Internet application and other information technologies, confined with processes that implement these technologies to

(A) enhance the access to and delivery of government information and services to the public, other agencies and other government entities; or

(B) bring about improvements in government operation that may include effectiveness, efficiency, service quality or transformation."
This definition encompasses the strategy of US Government in e-governance for improving government operations on the one hand and enhancing the access and delivery of information and services to citizens and government on the other.

The Council of Europe has viewed e-governance to mean

“the use of electronic technologies in three areas of public sector:
- relations between public authorities and civil society.
- functioning of the public authorities at all stages of the democratic process (electronic democracy)
- the provision of public services (electronic public services)”

This definition clearly focusses on the potentiality of e-governance in improving democracy, public services and interactions in civil society.

The former President of India Dr. A.P.J. Abdul Kalam has a vision on e-governance in the Indian context to mean:

“A transparent smart e-Governance with seamless access, secure and authentic flow of information crossing the inter departmental barrier and providing a fair and unbiased service to citizen.” This definition emphasizes on Government to Government and Government to Citizen interaction with much focus on transparency.

This study focuses on the role of e-governance in improving the administrative efficiency in Kerala. Efficiency, in this study is a dependent variable which needs to be defined clearly.

**Efficiency**

Efficiency is a natural and favourite objective of both organisations and administrations and thereby efficiency claims are regularly submitted in many policy debates. Efficiency is often perceived as limiting the input required to achieve an unspecified output. A system that uses few resources to achieve its goal is considered to be efficient, in contrast to one that wastes much of its
input. Obviously, there is a fundamental disciplinary debate about the likelihood of efficiency in organizations. Economists often believe that organizations are efficient: they rationally allocate resources and optimally respond to their environments. On the other hand, sociologists often believe that organizations are merely effective: they aim for survival and often use suboptimal arrangements that satisfy the social needs of participants and surrounding institutions.

In an economic interpretation, measuring efficiency means asking whether the monetary assessment of the inputs used to produce same goal are the minimal possible costs associated with achieving that goal. If it seems to be inefficient, it means that goal could have been reached with less cost or that the goal could have been better achieved with the same costs. The Cost-Benefit Analysis (CBA) is the primary method for measuring efficiency impacts. According to Aidan R. Vining and David L. Weimer (2006), briefly, the CBA comprises the following steps. First, identify the set of alternative policies, including the status quo policy, to be assessed (alternatives are often assessed relative to the status quo policy in order to net out the common effects). Second, decide who has standing (Whittington and MacRae, 1991) and this involves choosing a jurisdictional scope. Besides, it may involve deciding who within the jurisdiction (citizens, legal residents, illegal aliens) has their costs and benefits counted or whether all preferences are counted. Third, comprehensively identify the impact and consequences of alternatives, select units of measure, and project the impacts into the future. Fourth, monetize all impacts. Fifth, discount costs and benefits to take account of the preference of people to consume sooner rather than later. Sixth, algebraically sum the discounted costs and benefits to obtain a present value of net benefits, which provides the basis for ranking policies in terms of their efficiency. Seventh, taking account of uncertainties in projecting and monetizing effects, select the policy with the largest present value of net benefits.
In the present context of governance, the realistic question arises is that whether society would be better off using CBA as a decision rule in those areas of governance where efficiency is legitimately the dominant goal and the full range of impacts can reasonably be monetized? A major weakness of representative democracy is that it tends to favour concentrated and organized interests over diffuse and unorganized interests. As a result many implemented policies are inefficient and inequitable because it aggregates costs and benefits over the entire population. The information provided by CBA usually provides a voice for diffuse interest. In this scenario, the information provided by CBA helps compensate for an inherent structured weakness of representative democracy. The proper measurement and interpretation of efficiency will not be possible sometimes in the social conduct of administration since the factors like health, education, relief measures and the like are not profit oriented. So public administration being it out under service orientation rather than profit orientation, usually cannot expect efficiency in quantitative terms. But governance under neo-liberal reforms adopts many techniques from private sector for advancing efficiency. The developing nations at this state are not in a position to bring efficiency quantitatively through CBA for they are still addressing issues of diverse nature which need services rather than techniques. The present study examines the efficiency of E-Governance in Kerala in a social context.

**Towards a Theoretical Framework**

Even though recent developments in governance owe much to public sector reforms of the late twentieth century, it is significant to recognize that the meaning of governance varies not only in relation to the level of generality but also the theoretical contexts in which it is often used.

According to neo-liberals, the state is inherently inefficient when compared to markets. They argue that the postwar Keynesian welfare state is in crisis and has become too large to be manageable. It is diminishing under the burden of excessive taxation, and is generating ever- higher rates of
cyclical inflation. Hence the post-war state cannot be sustained any longer in a world that is now characterised by highly mobile capital and by extreme economic competition between states. Owing to this situation, they advocate to roll-back the state by concentrating on making policy decisions rather than on delivering services. They suggest replacement of state provision of public services with an entrepreneurial system based on competition and market mechanisms and thereby establishing an “entrepreneurial government”.

The neo-liberal perception of governance somewhat overlaps with rational choice theory. Both of them draw on micro-economic analysis with its endeavor to impact social life in terms of individual actions as well as to explain individual actions in terms of rationality conceived as utility-maximizing actions. When neoliberals conceived such analysis to promote marketization and the New Public Management, rational choice theorists were often more interested in exploring cases where institutions or norms were honored even in the absence of a higher authority. It uncovers social facts, institutions and patterns of rule dominantly by analyses of individuals acting and reflects individuals acting on the assumption that they adopt the course of action most in accordance with their preference. Rational choice theorists argue that institutions structure people's strategic interactions with one another: stable institutions influence individuals' actions by giving them reasonable expectations about the outcome of the varied courses of action that the individuals might choose. Another particular issue is to model weakly institutionalized environments in which the absence of a higher authority leads people to break agreements and thereby create instability. This theory of governance explores self-enforcing agreements, the costs and outcomes associated with them and the circumstance in which they are broken.

The institutional approach which dominated the study of public administration and politics around 1940s focused on formal rules, procedures and organizations including constitutions, electoral systems and political parties. Even though they sometimes focused on the formal rules that governed
such institutions, they also considered the behaviour of actors within them. This approach was challenged in the latter half of the twentieth century by a series of attempts to formulate universal theories: behaviouralists, rational choice theorists and others attempted to explain social action with somewhat limited concentration to specific institutional settings. But the 1980s witnessed a resurgence of interest in institutions and the emergence of New Institutionalism. The New Institutionalism adopts a broader concept of institution that includes norms, habits and cultural customs alongside formal rules, procedures and organisations. The various types of new institutional approach possess different dimensions. Rational choice institutionalists analyze how institutions shape the behaviour of rational actors by creating expectations about the probable consequences of given courses of action. Historical institutionalists examine the way in which past institutional arrangements shape response to political pressures. They concentrate on comparative studies of welfare and administrative reforms in which the variety of such reforms is explicable in terms of path dependency. The focus of sociological institutionalists is on values, identities, and the ways in which they shape actors’ perceptions of their interests. They adopt a more constructivist approach to governance and concentrate on studies of the ways in which norms and values shape what are often competing policy agendas of welfare and administrative reform measures.

The systems theory views governance as a socio-cybernetic system which highlights the limits to governing by the state. It has an implication that there is no single sovereign authority. Rather, there is a self-organizing system composed of interdependent actors and institutions. Besides, the new governance has arisen because we live in a centreless society or a society with multiple centres. Here order arises from the interactions of these multiple centres or organizations and hence in this context, the role of the state is not to create order but to facilitate socio-political interactions for better distribution of services.
The regulation theory locates the new governance in relation to a broader socio-economic shift from Fordism to post-Fordism. Fordism refers to a blending of intensive accumulation and monopolistic regulation— a combination associated with the mass production pioneered by Henry Ford in 1920s. Monopolistic regulation possessed monopoly pricing, the recognition of trade unions, the indexing of wages to productivity along with corporatist tendencies in government and monetary policies to manage the demand for commodities. Regulation theory asserts that intensive accumulation and monopolistic regulation temporarily created a virtuous cycle i.e., mass production created economies of scale thereby leading to a rise in productivity; increased productivity led to increased wages and so greater consumer demand; the growth in demand raised profits due to the full utilization of capacity: and the rising profits were used to improve the technology of mass production, creating further economies of scale, and so starting the whole circle going on. Regulation theorists analyse the ways in which different varieties of capitalism attempt to manage these instabilities. They focus on the forms of governance in relation to changes in the ways these instabilities are covered.

Social constructivism presents that social reality is constructed out of human knowledge, beliefs or meanings. It emphasises the positive role played by social traditions and cultural conventions in determining the context of our experiences. Constructivist theories of governance stress the role of tradition, discourse and culture in constructing contemporary patterns of rule. Thereby they highlight the contingency and contestability of governance in contrast to those who see it as inevitable, rational or explicable by reference to natural or social processes. They suggest that contemporary governance is a social construction. It arose out of particular traditions or particular regimes of knowledge.

The concept and theories associated with the word 'governance' are increasingly important for scholars of public administration. Of course,
governance is centered on the need to account for the changing relationship between government and society. The line between the public and private sector becomes increasingly blurred and the roles and processes of traditional policy making are rearranged under the concept of governance. The present work draws its theoretical background from neo-liberal approach of governance under which numerous measures were induced to attain good governance. A close look at the good governance programmes reveal that they are making the government efficient along with shrinking the state in favour of establishing and maintaining market dynamics.

Methodology

This explorative study is mainly empirical and analytical in nature. The data for this study were collected from both primary and secondary sources. We have identified five categories of respondents, ie, the middle level bureaucrats, civil society, beneficiaries of Akshaya Project, entrepreneurs of Akshya project and selected elite respondents. The questionnaires and the schedules covered different aspects of e-governance implementation including the way in which citizens and bureaucrats are perceiving and utilizing the benefits of e-governance. Besides, it included the questions regarding the major drawbacks of e-governance projects.

Sample of Respondents

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<th>Sample of Respondents</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Beneficiaries of Akshaya</td>
<td>180</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Entrepreneurs of Akshaya</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Civil society respondents</td>
<td>250</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Middle level bureaucrats</td>
<td>100</td>
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<tr>
<td>Elite interviewees</td>
<td>20</td>
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<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>580</td>
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It was decided to have samples from all the five categories of respondents. Altogether 580 samples were selected using random and accidental sampling techniques. In the survey related to Akshaya project in Malappuram, random sampling method was applied for locating Akshaya centres and for selecting the entrepreneurs. The beneficiaries of the project were selected on the basis of accidental sampling. For finding out the perceptions of civil society on e-governance applications in selected departments, accidental sampling method was applied. Middle level bureaucrats were selected on the basis of random sampling technique. The schedule applied to higher bureaucrats, policy makers and professionals sought mainly the strategies, policy issues, progress evaluation and anticipation regarding e-governance activities in Kerala. This set constituted 20 respondents.

Besides, secondary data constituted books, journals, articles, newspaper clippings and internet sources relevant to the topic of the work.

**Plan of Work**

The study has been divided into five chapters excluding the introduction and conclusion. The first chapter titled 'Emergence and Growth of Good Governance in India' looks into the evolutionary background of good governance in India including the implementation of e-governance. It examines the administrative reform measures from the views of Kautilya, innovations in pre-independent and post-independent India. A brief attempt on the position of e-governance at the international level is also made.

The second chapter 'E-governance Initiatives in Kerala' deals with a description of e-governance projects in Kerala and how they are facilitating the delivery of services in a better way. It provides a detailed presentation of many innovative e-governance programmes.

The third chapter is entitled as 'An Enquiry into the Perceptions of Civil Society on the Impact of E-governance.' This chapter mainly
concentrates on citizen-administration interaction and the degree of acceptance of e-governance activities by the civil society in Kerala. This chapter is intended to find out the success and failures of e-governance from a popular perception rather than depending on the version of government.

The fourth chapter 'Akshaya Project and the Popularisation of Computer Literacy' provides a discussion about the implementation of an e-literacy oriented e-governance project, Akshaya, in Malappuram District. This chapter analyses how far Akshaya project could make the people e-literate to receive the changing governance process and how far the project could impart entrepreneurial development skill among the entrepreneurs of Akshaya. This chapter further sheds light on the grey areas prevailed in the implementation of Akshaya project in Malappuram.

The fifth chapter 'E-governance: A Socio-Economic Cost Analysis' focuses on the socio-economic implications of ICTs in governance. This is analysed through the factors such as e-inclusion, corruption, growth in Tax revenue, e-reforms in land, labour displacement and finally measuring the efficiency of e-governance in Kerala.

The findings and suggestions regarding the study are included in the concluding chapter. Over all, the chapters in the work are examining the implementation and effectiveness of e-governance in Kerala in a critical way with empirical evidences.

**Review of Literature**

Richard Heeks (2006) through the book *Implementing and Managing e-Government* provides a comprehensive coverage of e-government issues faced by public officials managers and consultants. The work is divided into two sections, the first draws on international examples to guide readers through crucial e-government management issues such as the management of strategy and projects; data security, quality people, money and policies and deals with political and ethical challenges. The second section gives emphasis to the implementation of e-government systems. This book specifically and
exclusively addresses information systems in the public sector and provides tremendous informations about e-government.

**Modernising Democracy: Innovations in Citizen Participation** edited by Terry.F.Buss, F.Stevens Redburn and Kristina Guo (2007) depicts the innovative practices from hands-on community learning and focus groups to high-tech information systems and decision support technologies. It suggests the various roles that public administrators and leaders can play in fostering constructive, meaningful citizen involvement in shaping public decisions at all stages of the policy process. Besides, the book describes the role of advancement of technology coupled with the emergence of free access to vast volumes of information and opinion in transforming the ways and means of communication between citizens and their government.

Ali Farazmand and Jack Pinkowski (2007) through the **Handbook of Globalisation, Governance and Public Administration** demonstrate in broad terms how globalization presents new threats to national sovereignty, the environment and public health, tends to increase worldwide inequality and produces global insecurity. It analyses eroding sense of public identity, the influence of electronic communication on public opinion and the responsibility of government as increased privatization is associated with a decline of accountability. The role bureaucracy and market orientation are put under examination through cross-cultural studies.

Donald F Norris (2007) through his book **Current Issues and Trends in E-Government Research** presents a complete synopsis of the latest technologies in information policy, security, privacy and access as well as the best practices in e-governance applications and measurement. Besides, it looks the most current issues in e-government hardware and software technology, adoption and diffusion, planning and management and philosophy through a wide range of research studies about a variety of aspects of e-government. It highlights various dimensions of contemporary e-governance research to provide information for conducting research in this area.
Mark Bevir (2009) through the book entitled *Key Concepts in Governance* gives a clear introduction to the technical concepts and policies of contemporary governance. This book addresses the concepts of governance from multi disciplinary contexts. The selected concepts cover not only changing policy instruments but also theoretical debates about patterns of rule and how they are changing.

David Osborne and Ted Gaebler (1992) through their book *Reinventing Government* laid foundation of New Public Management. This book highlights the need for reinvention as a fundamental change in the functioning of the government with focus on how the entrepreneurial spirit is transforming the public sector. They suggest that we don’t need more government rather we need better government. For better governance they illustrate the role of government as catalytic, community owned, competitive, mission driven, results oriented, customer driven, enterprising, anticipating, decentralized and market oriented. In fact this approach paved the way for New Public Management in order to meet the challenges of globalization, liberalization and privatization. Osborne and Gaebler present a detailed analysis regarding the requisite pattern of governance in the globalized era through “Reinventing Government”.

Barry N. Hague and Brian D. Loader (1999) through their edited book *Digital Democracy Discourse and Decision Making in the Information Age* highlights the potentials of Information and Communication Technologies in facilitating the electronic democracy. The initiatives of ICTs from the Western countries are the major areas of discussion. The work uncovers the areas such as tools of e-governance, public sphere, citizen participation in e-governance, social exclusion, and digital democratization. The book further presents the ways and possibilities of internet in enhancing democracy and thereby the book sheds light on e-democracy in the age of Information Technology.

The book is giving a look into the civil networking movement and its technological component. The book examines various e-democracy initiatives like Amsterdam Digital City, Bologna’s E-Democracy, Public Electronic Network (PEN) and the like. In addition, the book discusses on the potential of media in establishing and enhancing civil networks.

**Unlocking E-Government Potential: Concepts, Cases and Practical Insights** by Subhash Bhatnagar (2009) presents a conceptualization and analysis of implementation of e-governance at the local, state and national levels along with presenting an overview of the international experience of e-governance. Besides it covers an empirical analysis of nearly fifty government projects during 2006-08. This work also looks into the strategies, success and drawbacks of e-governance in a comparative perspective. The case studies cover the application context, new approaches in e-governance and challenges which can be considered for an in depth e-governance research.

**Civil Services in Kerala : Past, Present and Future** by V.Ramachandran (2010) in *Social Science in Perspective*, Vol.2, No.2 discusses the role of civil services in Kerala during the last five decades and in future through analyzing the context of changes that are taking place in the society and economy. The article points out that the progress and changes in technology, society and economy pose challenges as well as opportunities. The issue before civil servants is to rise to the occasion and proactively participate in the transformation from the traditional system to a modern one.

**E-Governance in Developing Nations** edited by Santap Sahari Mishra and Amrita Mukherjee (2007) endeavors to highlight some issues and challenges in e-governance in the context of developing nations. This work makes an attempt to find out the gaps in formulating and implementing e-governance projects in developing nations in comparison with developed countries. With this purpose cases and examples from developing nations are accommodated as country experiences to corroborate the gaps in e-governance initiatives between developing and developed nations.
Uma Medury (2010) through *Public Administration in the Globalization Era: the New Public Management Perspective* unfolds the transformative effect of globalization on the theory and practice of public administration in the twenty-first century. It narrates the multiple dimensions of worldwide changes including the reformulation of the fundamental premises of the discipline, restructuring actual administrative models and rapid technological advancement with accompanying changes in socio-cultural scenario. The emphasis was given to the New Public Management and its impact on the global administrative pattern. However, this book lacks empirical presentations.

*E-Governance and Indian Society: With Case Studies* by Y. Pardhasaradhi, Rakesh Chetal and Namita Gupta (2009) presents a detailed analysis of technological impact on society, equal access to ICTs on the part of men and women, ICTs in education, health, land records administration, agriculture, property registration and automation of district administration in the South Indian states of Andhra Pradesh, Karnataka and Kerala. The work also concentrates on institutional/personnel adaptation of technology in administration, technical competency among the staff, leadership in governance and notion of ownership of e-governance systems. This book lacks an approach emphasizing the changing pattern of governance.

Goran Hyden, Julius Court and Kenneth Mease (2005) through the book *Making Sense of Governance: Empirical Evidence from 16 Developing Countries* look into the dynamic nature of governance and what extend it correlates with socio-economic variables. They present a comprehensive framework on governance collected in sixteen developing countries and the book highlights the value of research on governance. The authors further examine the governance aspects in six main areas i.e. civil, political and economic society and the government, bureaucracy and judiciary. In addition the work discusses the implications for future research on governance.
Bata K. Dey (2000) through the article *E-Governance in India: Problems, Challenges and Opportunities-A Futures Vision* in *The Indian Journal of Public Administration*, Vol. XLVI No. 3, focuses on the status and future potential of e-governance in India and examines some of the serious problems and challenges that may retard the implementation of e-governance in India. He gives special attention to the possibilities of e-governance in transforming the administration in India.

**The Governance Discourse: A Reader** edited by Bidyut Chakrabarti and Mohit Bhattacharya (2008) seeks to examine ‘governance’ as the dominant mode of collective societal problem-solving. They focus on the role of market, people, information and communication technology and the like in the transition of traditional bureaucracy-centric public administration into new paradigm of governance. Even though the book provides an insight into many dimensions of governance through different articles written by eminent scholars, the book is lacking much empirical analyses.

**Good Governance: an Integral Approach** by S. L. Goel (2007) through the issues of good governance which are vital and essential for our country. This book looks into role of legislature, executive and judiciary in bringing out a good governance in Indian scenario. Goel has discussed the concept of good governance in a wider perspective. The book give particular attention as to how the concept of good governance can be really operationalized and made effective in both rural and urban areas of our country. It further analysis the issues of people’s participation dealing with the wide spread and much talked about problem of corruption, the issues relating to reform and development of ethical dimensions to all administrative and public activities.

**Globalization, Governance Reforms and Development in India** edited by Kameshwar Choudhary (2007) tries to present an overview of social, cultural, political and state level reforms under globalization. The work demonstrates that ‘good governance’ reform is not confined to the traditional
notion of governance but basically is just another conceptualization of the neo-liberal agenda of reforms meant for firmly reorganizing developing countries like India along the path of global capitalism. The book emphasizes the need for an alternative development model and policies to promote a democratic, egalitarian and sustainable development in India rather than clutching to the largely dependent development paradigm of globalization and reforms.

Indira Koneru (2007) through the article *e-Governance : Empowering Citizens through e-Inclusion* in *The Icfai Journal of Governance and Public Policy*, Vol. 2 No. 3 reflects the potential of e-governance in empowering the citizens through an inclusive way of participation. She emphasizes on the necessity for the adoption of technology on the basis of “needs analysis” and its possibilities in making a difference in the lives of people. Through the article she presents a comparative study of e-governance in India and China and examines the indicators for evaluating e-governance.

Sumit Roy (2005) through his book *Globalization, ICT and Developing Nations: Challenges in the Information Age* presents the concepts and policies underscoring the shift from state to non-state institutions in furthering the impetus of globalization and also its implications for development. In addition, the book seeks to analyse the scope of different developing regions to participate in globalization based on a comparison of their experience of growth and development. Further, the book examines the ways in which policies on ICT can be both a challenge and a unique opportunity for paving the way for development.

Kiran Bedi, Parminder Jeet Singh and Sandeep Srivastava (2001) through *Government @ net: New Governance Opportunities for India* present the power of electronic governance in transforming the lives of citizens. The authors integrate the new thinking on democracy, community living, rural structures, and innovative participation by the private sector and new revenue opportunities for governments. The book presents a detailed narration of how governments can go about their tasks using the internet. The
book also describes the challenges faced by the Indian society in adopting new technology.

**Good Governance, Globalization and Civil Society** edited by B. M. Sharma and Roop Singh Bareth (2004) analyses the reflections of good governance, globalization and civil society in developing countries particularly in India and the challenges forthcoming in the twenty-first century. The volume explores a wide range of subjects and the sub-areas that fall under the jurisdiction of the new concepts relevant to twenty-first-century political systems and their governance. However, the volume lacks in-depth empirical analysis of efforts taken by governments which are in the path of achieving good governance.

C. S. R. Prabhu (2004) through his book **E-Governance: Concepts and Case Studies** examines the principles and the provision of a number of case studies on e-governance by going through the various e-governance models, infrastructure and manpower facilities. The book includes 22 case studies – 18 Indian and 4 International case studies. The book has its content more in a technical way than in a social context. More social issues and challenges of the implementation of e-governance are needed to be included in the book.

**IT and Administrative Culture in India** written by Asok Mukhopadhyay (2000) in *The Indian Journal of Public Administration*, Vol. XLVI No. 3, examines the transformations brought about by Information Technology. He then looks into the outcomes of technological developments in various aspects of administrative culture, functions, and patterns. The author seeks to analyse the potential of technology in bringing transparency for the attainment of good governance.

B. Mohanan and K. Sridhar (2002) through the article *India in the E-World Application of E-Tools for Governance in Comparative Perspectives* in *ISDA Journal*, Vol. 12 No. 3 discuss comprehensively about the information revolution and e-governance. The authors narrate the importance of legislation
and Action Plans while implementing Information and Communication Technologies. Along with providing the technological and developmental contexts of e-governance, they give a vision on the governance in developing nations with a focus on Indian experiences across various States.

Limitations of the Study

The study is not without limitations. Since the e-governance is in an evolving stage, the output can be measured only from those offices which have higher degree of e-governance interaction. Hence the researcher had to select the universe of the study only to limited offices. Due to the infancy of the theme, the researcher took much more time for receiving a reasonable output. In addition, the Kerala State IT mission and IT Department of Kerala Government are lacking centralised data regarding the progress of e-governance implementation at the field level. According to the officials, partial implementation of Kerala State Wide Area Network is the major bottleneck in providing such a dissemination of information.

The researcher took too much effort in finding out the actual beneficiaries of Akshaya project in Malappuram district since the survey on Akshaya project was conducted after the completion of the first phase, ie, e-literacy programme.

In addition, the researcher faced the inadequacy of literature on e-governance specifically addressed to Kerala since the work is explorative and the topic is innovative and relatively young. The technicality of the problem constrained the researcher in dwelling deep into theoretical discourses as usually done in conventional social science studies.

Major findings

1. E-governance has paved the way for a radical progress in the speedy delivery of services compared to previous years.
2. Implementation disparities among various departments are very visible in the e-governance activities of Kerala.
3. For improving citizen-administration relationship, maximum effort for e-inclusion is necessary.
4. Corruption has not yet changed even after the implementation of e-governance.
5. Since land issue is very critical in Kerala, government should take immediate steps for the effective implementation of e-governance in every office, especially Revenue, Registration and Local Self Government departments.