CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION
1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 INTRODUCTION OF THE TOPIC:

The eminent concern of the nation today is to facilitate the services provided to the citizen of India with efficiency and effectiveness. This is a challenge for any public service organization as well as the researchers to find out the underlying cause. Questions that have caught the attention of researchers over last decade are: Does knowledge or knowledge Management has a role to play in smooth functioning of any public service organization. Knowledge has become a precious property and knowledge management has been widely practiced by many organizations as one of the most promising ways of achieving success in the information age. All organization is overloaded with data and when this data is managed information is created through the collation of data, and thereby this information tends to formulate the knowledge and management of this knowledge is the practise called knowledge management. There is lots of research on private industries to see the vitality of KM in their organization, but there is little research to find out the importance of KM in e-governance delivery in a public service organization or the local municipal corporations. This research aims to empirically study the relationship between KM and effectiveness of e-governance in Pune Municipal Corporation’s (PMC) various departments.

According to Fowler & Pryke 2003, KM is well-known management advancement that has been effectively used by varied corporate sectors by systematically creating, preserving and optimally using the widespread knowledge available in the organisations.

Knowledge in organizations has been stored in many ways including in human minds, documents, notes, manuals, reports; and it has also been shared among individuals through several communication channels such as conferences, seminars, training program, and forums. These have been applied for many years and although they are still being used, the emergence of new computer based communication has not only complimented the traditional storage and delivery method but has also improved the efficiency and effectiveness of overall knowledge delivery mechanism. A hypothesis that KM initiatives facilitate the smooth flow of e-governance activities in a public sector organization (here PMC) was promulgated.
Marwick (2001) suggested that for well organized knowledge in an organization KM requires appropriate blend of organizational, social and administrative initiatives along with the usage of appropriate technology. Thus the main objective of the study is to evaluate the application of Knowledge management towards enhancing the performance of e-governance activities in a public service organization (here taken as PMC) in delivering their core businesses.

1.2 NEED FOR RESEARCH – WHY THIS SUBJECT?

The need of the study begins here with the dire need to improve the quality of citizen service delivery system and offering these services with transparency. Somehow researcher felt that for smooth functioning and transparency in e- governance activities it is vital to allow data sharing across different departments, thus bringing about the efficiency in administrative functions. Also to facilitate decision making process at top management by furnishing the right information at the right time, so that citizen does not spend most of their time moving around from department to department for getting his/her work done. An answer to it could be right knowledge at right time by a robust knowledge management in delivering its services to the citizen. After doing lots of brain storming and reading lots of articles of KM it was concluded that if right knowledge is availed at the right time at the right place, e- governance activities could be improved nationwide. This research is a step towards contributing the importance and significance of KM for e- governance in a public service organization, taken here as PMC which depicts the usage of KM at the grass root level in Pune, which could thereby be applied all across the nation. If all the government agencies are connected properly with which aggregation of knowledge and sharing of knowledge at right place and right time can take place many of our queries will get solved in fraction of seconds. Few questions reoccurred again & again in the mind, if sharing of knowledge within & between government employees becomes a routine practise, can we make the citizen happy by providing better and efficient e- governance services? Do organizational barriers prevent the transfer & acceptance of critical knowledge from one government department to another? Is KM practices helping efficient work of e- governance in the country starting from the bottom of the pyramid and is this the first step towards better governance?
The age of technology where knowledge and information serve as key strategic tools in the organizational context, creates the opportunity for local government organizations to adopt the role of knowledge-based organizations that thrive on the competence of knowledge workers. Through the implementation of KM practices, local governments could be in a position to deliver the best possible services, function effectively and operate in an environment characterized by transparency and accountability.

The time has come where each individual has to be trained not only for the need to know but also towards the need to share what you know specially for the government employees as in this era of globalization government administration depends on the effective use of resources, elimination of redundancy, and aggressive automation of administrative processes in order to meet government goals. It is also clear that web-based e-government has become a key force in today’s government operations. Indeed, one of the major challenges growing out of the popularity of e-government is that strives to react to citizens demands and high expectations. This challenge has forced government executives to recognize that they must move in a timely manner to implement an effective e-government strategy that enhances citizenry’s satisfaction while improving government efficiency and effectiveness. One key is effective utilization of knowledge. The effective use of knowledge is a key component in every successful organization no matter what field or business function they may be in or what services the organization provides. Effective knowledge management (KM) enhances managements, improves governance efficiency, speeds deployment, increases and creates citizen satisfaction. The KM market is highly competitive, and it has developed considerable uncertainty and risk because of the contradictory nature of its enabling technologies and the inherent organizational and cultural difficulties embedded in its applications. KM is perhaps 95% focused on people, processes, and culture, rather than on technology. Since the biggest challenges of KM are not technological but human-based or behavioural, it is important to conduct extensive research into how governments can successfully implement knowledge management programs to realize government goals and objectives and thereby ultimately providing better governance to the citizen.
1.3 PROBLEM AREA OF THE STUDY:

Many studies reveal that the efforts put-in the KM initiative goes down the drain and the KM fails due to inability of the performing companies to resolve certain key issues. A government institution seeking to adopt a KM model should consider some key requirements. Most of the amount spent on the KM systems at higher levels is in loss due to lack of proper guidance regarding the preparedness and implementation issues. However, while the importance of the KM is recognized and interest is high, there is also a great deal of confusion regarding how effective KM strategies can be developed. E-Governance is picking up pace day by day in our country which helps citizen satisfaction which is the ultimate duty of the government.

Survey of literature reveals that there is a very meagre research done in this field and lots of potential is there for research to be done in this area. The role played by the KM in e-governance activities had to get examined at grass root level. Evaluation of the right variable for designing a conceptual model is the need of the hour. The need is also to find a method which can evaluate the different criterions of the KM processes & functions for the e-Governance systems. There are problems as there are no standard methods or model, no agreed upon metrics, not much research is done in this field, and who are the right people in organization to evaluate the performance is also difficult to analyze (details of survey of literature have been given in chapter-3). Keeping in view this gap in research and its importance, the following problem has been undertaken for the purpose of this study: “The Role of Knowledge Management for e-Governance in a Public Service Organization with respect to Pune city” with the following objectives and hypothesis in mind.

1.4 OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

Broadly, the present study has been undertaken to study and evaluate the role of Knowledge Management for e-Governance in a public service organization. Since the study of different public service organizations were done which included a qualitative research at Pimpri Chinchwad Municipal Corporation (PCMC) where it was found that KM for e- governance was in nascent stage at PCMC and this was the reason for going
for a quantitative research for Pune Municipal Corporation which is the second largest municipal corporation in India serving a huge population and PMC also had KM for e-governance practised through various names. The specific objectives of the study were as follows:

1. To study the role of Knowledge Management in e-Governance in a Public Service Organization (Here PMC).
2. To design a general model or framework of Knowledge Management as a tool to assist e-governance in a Public Service Organization (Here PMC).
3. To explore the critical success factors in implementation Knowledge Management for e-governance.

1.5 HYPOTHESIS OF THE STUDY

**H1a:** Practices of Knowledge Management in e-governance in a public service organization (PMC) enhances performance of the organization.

**H1b:** Practices of Knowledge Management in e-governance in a public service organization (PMC) enhances the productivity of the organization.

**H2a:** Practices of Knowledge Management in e-governance in a public service organization (PMC) enhances the decision making process in the organization.

**H2b:** Practices of Knowledge Management in e-governance in a public service organization (PMC) leads to faster decision making process in the organization.

1.6 SCOPE OF THE STUDY

To make the study meaningful and applicable this study was confined to various departments of PMC. Since the title of the research represents a single public service organization “Pune Municipal Corporation” was chosen for the study. PMC is the oldest and second largest municipal corporation nationwide.

The study includes:
1. The application of Knowledge Management for e-Governance in a Public service organization such as: Qualitative & Quantitative Study of Pune Municipal Corporation.

2. The Class I and Class II employees working at Pune Municipal Corporation were selected for the study.

3. The role of the Knowledge Management for e-governance is studied from the user’s perspective.

4. For the Knowledge Management model designing, executives working in the different departments of the PMC were selected.

United Nations Survey Report of 2012 shows that presently in global economic downturn phase it is imperative to persist with service delivery, governments ought to give a second thought in terms of e-government – and e-governance – placing better prominence on institutional tie-ups with the inter and intra government agencies in a proposition to form synergy for complete sustainable development. An important aspect of this approach is to widen the scope of e-government for a transformative role of the government towards cohesive, coordinated, and integrated processes and institutions through which such sustainable development takes place. The Public Service Organization is therefore selected for the study as compared to the other services sectors; Municipal Corporation is one of the public service sectors where knowledge management is of crucial importance for smooth functioning of the e-governance. KM systems implementation requires lots of effort and time, so the investment of these variables is very important to know what they are gaining out of whole initiative as studies show that most of the organizations are failing with their KM initiative.

The success of KM in e-governance can be witnessed only when there are evaluated variables for the conceptual model of KM in e-governance and the evaluated outcomes at ground root level. Also it is very important to study the other success & hindrance factors which directly or indirectly affect the success of KM systems.

1.7 CHAPTER PLAN AND LAYOUT OF THE THESIS

The ensuing chapters will throw light on survey of literature, research methodology, evaluation of effectiveness model for Knowledge Management, application of the proposed model, success factors for KM systems and related issues, and conclusions &
suggestions including the limitations of the present study along with the future scope of the study. Chapter plan of the thesis is given as below:

Chapter-1       Introduction
Chapter-2       Theoretical Background
Chapter-3       Literature Review
Chapter-4       Research Design and Methodology
Chapter-5       Data Analysis and Hypothesis Testing
Chapter-6       Findings and Recommendations
Chapter-7       Scope and Limitations of the Study