The Tamil Nadu government has been greatly concerned with the implementation of their e-government program of Telematika, which by its nature is the utilization of all kinds of ICT in government administration, to support good governance, and to maximize both the quality of services and the participation of Chennai people in government processes, in order to accelerate the implementation of the democratic process.

Our study indicates that the users of the Chennai e-government come from different social backgrounds and different generations. They have different perceptions and satisfaction with the contents of the e-government websites. To improve the usability, accessibility and effectiveness of e-government services for citizens, it is necessary to gather the opinions of the e-government websites’ users through regular questionnaires on whether the websites offer an appropriate design and provide useful information. To make much clearer the current status of e-government development in Chennai and its impacts for the citizen, we consider that it is necessary to conduct other studies with different frameworks and parameters, such as the level of infrastructure, access speed, scale of database, category and type of contents released, web user interface and so on.

In addition, study and evaluation of the impact of e-government development in capacity building and in providing better quality of services are needed. It is also necessary to study the e-government at the province and district level of local government in Chennai.

This study has explored the role of ICT in facilitating service delivery in e-Governance projects in public sector. It has investigated the role of ICT access, awareness in Chennai division. All the three hypotheses in this study have been supported. There is a huge variance in the ICT access, awareness and perceptions of citizens regarding service delivery. E-governance should be seen as a means of improving services in the future. E-Governance Projects must be designed taking into consideration requirements of citizens’ and increase their confidence and trust in ICT usage for accessing e-Services.

It is evident from above discussion that objectives of achieving e-governance and transforming Chennai goes far beyond mere computerization of standalone back office operations. It means, to fundamentally change as to how the government operates, and this implies a new set of responsibilities for the executive and politicians. It will require basic change in work culture and goal orientation, and simultaneous change in the existing processes. Foremost of them is to create a culture of maintaining, processing and retrieving the information through an electronic system and use that information for decision making. It will require skilled navigation to ensure a smooth transition from old processes and manual operations to new
automated services without hampering the existing services. This can be achieved by initially moving ahead in smaller informed initiatives in a time bound manner and avoiding large and expensive steps without understanding the full social implications.

Every small step thus taken should be used to learn about hurdles and improve upon the next steps, both in terms of direction and magnitude. The proposed changes are likely to be met with a lot of inertia which cannot be overcome by lower and middle level officials with halfhearted attempts to diffuse the technology. The change in the mindset to develop and accept the distributed and flat structured e-governance system is required at the top level system to beat the inertia.

The benefits of ICTs to enhance governance are perhaps most strongly felt at the local level. ICT, and the Internet in particular, provide an opportunity for improving local government services, and a new way for ordinary citizens to participate more directly in the decisions that affect their environment.

Owing to their potential to integrate data in a more structured and comprehensive form, they contribute to a better knowledge management, improved information sharing and help to create conditions for an open and transparent society based on trust and accountability.

Decision-making can be strengthened through better sharing of information and increased involvement of all stakeholders to the political process. Another important benefit of using ICT is that it offers the possibility for reintegrating into political life minorities that have been marginalized in politics because of the exorbitant costs of running a campaign. The Internet offers the possibility for individuals or organizations, who would not otherwise be able to participate, to make much more of an impact on voters and at much lower cost.

Finally, ICTs can eventually transform the processes and structures of government by creating an administration that is less hierarchical and more responsive to the citizen’s needs.

However, many of ICT experiments aiming at enhancing citizen participation and engagement have not fulfilled the potential offered by new technologies, and many of them have manifested a regression towards improved information provision models of e-governance. This is mainly due to the lack of institutional and legal e-readiness, as well as the lack of political will to fully explore the potential offered by ICTs.
Another challenge lies in putting in place necessary infrastructure, creating conditions for capacity building and awareness raising, and in defining a clear vision and strategic goals of e-governance implementation.

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Since Internet Technology has evolved rapidly in the last few years, there is a need to think strategically about where we want to be in the future. As time goes on, new technologies will continue to develop at a rapid pace and we must be flexible enough by showing quick response to the technology explosion. The state that are faster in adopting the technology have
started reaping the benefits already. Process level changes are required before rushing to the web to launch the ‘Government Online’. At the same time the government managers should quickly learn to use technology fueled management tools for administrative efficiency and use them for a more value added service to the citizens.

To make the futuristic vision work, there is a need for collaboration among e-Governance virtual communities. This demand more political and organizational will take hard decisions, change themselves and learn to build capacities for e-Governance. ‘Outdated’ regulations and procedures are to be removed before launching the project. The above issues and challenges are not beyond our capacity to resolve, but they need immediate attention.

The word “electronic” in the term e-governance implies technology driven governance. E-governance is the application of information and communication technology (ICT) for delivering government services, exchange of information communication transactions, integration of various stand-alone systems and services between government-to-citizens (G2C), government-to-business (G2B), government-to-government (G2G) as well as back office processes and interactions within the entire government framework. Through e-governance, government services will be made available to citizens in a convenient, efficient and transparent manner. The three main target groups that can be distinguished in governance concepts are government, citizens and businesses/interest groups. In e-governance there are no distinct boundaries.

REFERENCES

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