Process Alignment, End User Participation for E-Government Programs: Key Stakeholders View

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ABSTRACT

In recent years, a number of developing countries have identified e-government implementation as a key policy priority and have launched various e-government programs. While there has been a lot of success in these endeavors, evidence of failed programs has drawn attention to the risk involved in implementation and role of four key stakeholders play vital role of success of e-government programs. Based on the literature study, multiple factors have come up which influence the success of e-government programs. Among these factors, alignment of the departmental processes and end user participation are two critical parameters for success of e-government programs. The study of the perception of different stakeholders on these factors is important to understand the improvements which can be made on these variables. Hence the objective of this paper is to; (1) to understand the criticality of these factors in the success of e-government programs. (2) To understand difference in the perception of key stakeholders on these factors. Literature review followed by questionnaire based survey methodology has been followed to achieve the desired objectives. The study was carried out in northern states of India.

Keywords: E-government, End User Participation, Information Technology Vendor, Information Technology Nodal Agency, Internal Department, Leadership, Process Alignment

INTRODUCTION

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 applications is leading to transformational shifts in public policy, processes and functions. E-government is being deployed not only to provide citizen services but also for improving public sector efficiency, increasing transparency...
and accountability in government functions and enabling for cost saving in government administration. ICTs are changing the way the government does business for people. In this context, e-governance is seen to be a lever for the transformation of governments.

E-government is the way to serve the citizen and empower citizen for development of the society. This can be done by using Information technology, such as Wide Area Network (WAN), Internet and mobile computing that have the ability to transform the relationship with citizens, businesses and other arms of government. These technologies could 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. (Basu, 2004).

E-government applications enable interaction amongst government departments, citizens, and businesses. Benefits of e-government include encouraging social inclusion (citizens are able to participate in various socio-economic activities such as decision-making), e-participation (facilitate e-democracy/e-voting), enacting effectiveness of public service delivery by allowing seamless integration of government departments and so forth (Bwalya, 2009).

While there has been a lot of success in these endeavors, evidence of failed programs has drawn attention to the level of risk involved in implementation. A failure rate of more than 50% is widely cited in this context (Heeks, 2008). A report by the United Nations (2008) laments the fact that documented research on the social or economic impact of e-governance is virtually non-existent. A World Bank report (2010) notes that the largest, yet least monitored investments are ICT components of programs in different sectors, highlighting the need to systematic assessment of factors impacting success of these programs. Yildiz (2007) calls for more in-depth studies to examine e-government and these should be placed in broader context. He calls for research with greater focus on examining and explaining the policy processes of e-government so that government decision makers can use research findings to make better plans regarding e-government initiatives.

Based on literature review, we get to understand multiple challenges in successful implementation of e-government initiatives. Aligning the processes with computerization and involvement of end users in this has come out strongly in the literature. Weerakkodya et al (2012) in their paper, comparing implementation strategies of e-government program between developed and transition economies has highlighted that one of the major reasons for success of e-government programs in United Kingdom was because of combining business process engineering and service oriented architecture to improve existing processes. P. K. Suri (2005) in his paper on “Strategic Insights into an E-government Program” identifies process reengineering as one of key challenges for e-government programs. Aikins (2012) identified lack of sufficient administrative reforms as one of key factors for failure of the e-government programs. Woodroof and Burg (2003) showed that there is a significant relationship between a user’s predisposition and satisfaction level. Similarly, Aladwani (2002) showed that users’ attitudes towards computers have a direct influence on end-user satisfaction.

Actors oriented approach need to be understood for making a significant impact on these parameters. To explore the e-government program implementation from the perspective of the stakeholders, the structure followed is: review of the literature on the criticality of process alignment and end user participation in this and role and perception of stakeholders on these variables. The methodology followed for this research is questionnaire based survey. The focus on this research is limited to the northern states of India. India has been making lot of investment on e-government program. Even after these investments, India ranking in UN e-government readiness report has been continuously dropping (87 in 2005 to 125 in 2012). We reached out to the stakeholders identified through the literature survey through a structured questionnaire on these critical factors for successful implementation of e-government
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