Chapter 14
Public Services Through Multi-Channel Issues and Challenges: A Case From India

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ABSTRACT

The objective of this chapter is 1) to understand multi-channel architecture, integration, and management; 2) to develop a framework for citizen relationship and grievance management system for a single view; 3) as a case study, to propose framework applied to find what types of channels are providing to the citizens get access to the public services at National, State, and Local level in India; 4) as a case study, to find out challenges and issues with implementation of multi-channel services delivery. The key findings of the case study are: 1) There is no declining in providing traditional channels after introducing modern channels. 2) The departments are offering mixed channels. 3) Usage of mobile-based applications, social media, and wi-fi are in pilot basis or at initial stage. 4) Multi-channel integration and management is not yet initiated. 5) Electricity and network coverage are main issues in implementation of modern channels. However, such initiatives have some issues and challenges to the developing countries like India.

INTRODUCTION

Many government departments across the world are providing services to the citizens. According to the Oui-Suk Uhm (2010), the evolution of government is classified into three categories namely a) Conventional Government (C-Government) also called Traditional government b) Electronic Government (E-Government) and c) Mobile Government (M-Government). An overview of Traditional, Electronic and mobile government [Source: Oui-Suk (2010)] given at Table 1. Different Countries are providing services by using different channels to interacting with their citizen (Nag Yeon Lee & Kwangsok Oh, 2011).

The Government can provide public services by using various channels in order to connect with the citizens (Brom & Marijn 2011; Vishanth, 2011). However, the majority of Countries are not proving
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services using Multichannel (UN, 2012). The Multichannel approach is necessary to ensure maximum citizens engagement, for example, the rural citizens are less likely to have access to electronic channels compared to urban citizens (WB, 2006). The channels such as the Internet, mobile devices, electronic kiosks, and telephone IVR are called self-service technologies, by which citizens can access public services without going to the concerned departments, this can save time and cost tremendously. The Self-service technologies are more widely used in private sector than in the government departments (Kenneth Kernaghan, 2012). However, the mobile based applications are still at an early stage in the government (Abramowicz et al., 2006) and the impact on the government mobile services as compared with e-government services is still unknown (infoDev, 2009). Some citizens want public services and information through their personal devices, but many governments are not equipped to meet the need of the citizens (Microsoft, 2013). The citizens’ services using mobile technologies are not yet a common practice (UN, 2016). Some Countries are proving public services using different channels, whereas other Countries have done relatively little beyond enabling basic Internet self-service (Kenneth Kernaghan, 2012).

The objective of this paper is 1) To understand Multichannel architecture, Integration, Management and its Strengths & Weakness 2) To develop a framework of Citizen Relationship and Grievance Management System (CiR & GMS) for a single view 3) To identify what type of channels are providing to access public services at National, State and Local level in Indian government departments as a case study 4) To find out gaps, challenges and issues with implementation of Multichannel services delivery. The paper is organized as follows: Section 2 presents the review of the literature on Multichannel. Section 3 provides an understanding architecture of Multichannel, Integration & Management and Strengths & Weakness. Section 4 defines Citizen Relationship and Grievance Management (CiR&GMS) followed by the framework for CiR&GMS. Section 5, by applying the proposed framework a case study on services provided through Multichannel by some State and Central Government departments in India discussed. Results and discussions are given in Section 6. Issues and challenges with CiR&GMS mentioned in Section 7. Section 8 present recommendations and conclusions.

LITERATURE REVIEW

The aim of any government is to provide public services to the citizens in a transparency and accountability manner. Citizens are demanding faster delivery of services from the government (Ongaro. E., 2004). The electronic government or E-government is for creating service delivery in a transparency and accountability manner to citizens (Curtin and al., 2004). The ICT may use for various new modes of information, intensive and collaboration governance (WEF, 2011; Leif et al. (2003). Across the world, many government departments are utilizing the ICT to improve service delivery to the citizens, employees, and business (Choudrie, J., and Dwivedi, Y., 2005; Mofleh, S., and Wanous, M., 2008). A study by Reddick and Turner (2012) highlighted that there is a need to provide public services through Multichannel depending upon citizen choice. The Channels used for stages of e-government (UN, 2016) given in Figure 1 M-government or mobile government is an application of mobile devices, to share information between citizens and government (Ignace Snellen and Marcel Thaens, 2008). M-government provides facilities such as anywhere, anytime, Internet access, text, location-based and personal level identity, voice calling mobility (Ghyasi and Kushchu, 2004; Hans, 2015; Mahatanankoon, et al., 2006; UN,
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