

Chapter 6

E–Government Citizen Centric Framework at District Level in India: A Case Study

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ABSTRACT

This chapter evaluates service quality, and suggests E-Government Citizen Centric Framework for Citizen Service Centers (CSC) of Haryana State in India. Citizen Centric framework is suggested by using responses collected from 300 users of five (5) E-Government citizen service centers. This framework can be used in other similar E-Government citizen service centers to evaluate service quality.

INTRODUCTION

It is widely acknowledged that Information and Communication Technologies (ICTs) are effective tools in bridging service quality gaps and can play important role in accelerating economic growth. Specifically, to realize tangible advantages, E-Government offers big opportunity for government

to provide services efficiently, empowerment of people, and to usher in knowledge-based economy. It offers the scope for transformation of apparatus of Government. In the last one decade, E-Government has heralded a new chapter in the public service delivery. Several E-Government projects have been initiated by the state governments across the country in India. The launch of

National e-Governance Programme (NeGP), with a specific objective to add one Lakh Common Service Centers (CSCs) in rural areas has provided a fillip to the efforts under E-Government.

Haryana is one of the most progressive states in India. The capital of Haryana is Chandigarh, which is administered as a union territory and is also the capital of Punjab state in India. It has an area of 44,212 Sq. Kms. The state is divided into four divisions for administrative purposes - Ambala, Rohtak, Gurgaon, and Hisar. There are 20 districts, 47 sub-divisions, 67 tehsils, 45 sub-tehsils, and 116 blocks in Haryana. (<http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Haryana>). More than 70% of the population is dependent on agriculture for their livelihood. People speak several similar sounding dialects of Hindi. The tele-density registered in urban areas was 16.5 as compared to rural areas (2.3) as on 31 March, 2003 (BIH, n.d.).

The information technology policy of the state government provides for improvement in the quality of delivery of public services. It proposes to establish electronic delivery of services in the public domain in its departments, boards and corporations using state-of-the-art technology. The state government is committed to provide better services to its citizens through E-Government, which is efficient, speedy, simple and cost effective. Such delivery of services has been planned and being implemented through e-DISHA, which includes information kiosks, interactive voice response systems, etc.

The government has established e-DISHA Citizen Service Centers (CSC) in 8 out of 20 districts of Haryana (<http://haryana.gov.in/e-disha.htm>) under the preview of New Agent of Information—District Level Integrated E-Government Services of Haryana for All (NAI-DISHA). The E-Government services provided at these Centers include forms & procedures, birth & death certificates, house tax collection, water billing, social welfare schemes, caste & residence certificates, passport applications, arms license, learner &

permanent driving license, vehicle registrations, pension distribution, complaints, and revenue records, etc. (<http://gurgaon.nic.in/edisha.htm>).

The objectives of these e-DISHA centers are to provide longer hours of service delivery, easy, improved quality of service, transparent, efficient & effective delivery at the citizens doorsteps, reliable & real-time services, effective dissemination under single roof, reduced delivery and opportunity costs, elimination of 'touts' and exploitation, citizen friendly environment, quick redressal of citizen grievances, strengthening the back office operations for timely availability of information, consolidated information for effective decision making, integration of databases of government departments and organizations, and creation of knowledge based jobs in the district. These centers have been established as front-end interfaces of Haryana government departments to provide E-Government services.

The feed back of citizens in terms of evaluating quality of services received at citizen service centers from the Government is important. An understanding of citizens' perspective of service quality helps the governments to plan and execute E-Government services efficiently and effectively. The objective of this chapter is to develop E-Government service quality framework for Citizen Service Centers named as e-DISHA in Haryana as a case study.

BACKGROUND

Undoubtedly, E-Government offers big opportunity for the government to transform, and the scale of transformation is huge. It can be immensely useful in raising the efficiency of government functioning and improving public service delivery, as also in bridging geographical divide. However, it is widely acknowledged that e-governance projects are usually complex, people-oriented, and have long gestation period. Several studies

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