

# Ecology of E-Governance

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## INTRODUCTION

The concept of e-governance in the modern times re-focuses on the fundamental role of government as the institution of transformation of society. To understand the intricacies of e-governance it will be pertinent to examine the concept from an ecological perspective. The system of governance in order to meet the challenges must equip itself with the mechanisms of managing the pressures generated from different subsystems. The interrelationship and interdependence of these subsystems explain the operational reality of bureaucratic systems in relation to societal transformation. In last few decades, the history of humankind has seen the enormous growth of technology and its utilization for creating a better global society, by disseminating the knowledge down to common person and transcending the geographical boundaries. The accessibility of knowledge is not confined to any nation. Thus, the whole world has to acquire a bigger vision of coexistence with divergent societal patterns in future, because it is the source of developing shared visions. The present analysis focuses on the normative aspects of e-connectivity, specifically,

1. It proposes a conceptual framework to understand the futuristic operational dynamics of ecology of e-governance;
2. It proposes how the interactions of various components of e-governance, can help in evolving a universal society with ethical axis to create a better world;
3. It suggests that the whole world eventually has to move in the direction of evolving a global society by inculcating universal values of coexistence with divergent ethos. Hence, the need to transform the society cannot be subdued; and
4. It focuses on striving a balance between technological and human aspects by bringing out philosophical core at the centre to evolve global society.

## BACKGROUND

The era of information technology has opened many vistas of understanding human dynamics from different perspectives. The thinkers have shown a great concern to

view the repercussions of electronic connectivity on society, culture, polity, and economy. To name a few, for instance, Daniel Bell explores the dimension of knowledge and technology in relation to the emergence of the new class structure of postindustrial society (Bell, 1996). Manuel Castells has discussed the formation of Network Society, which elaborates the economic, social, and cultural changes that are occurring around the world due to computerization (Castells, 1996, 1997, 1998). An interesting aspect related to changing relationship is also examined by Mark Poster, who is keen on constructing correlation of human-machine imbrications due to exposition of communication machines (Poster, 2000). Raising the question of evolving alternative theories, Frank Webster questions the technological determinism by evolving the theories of Information Society looking closely at the different approaches to informational development (Webster, 2002). Maintaining the continuity of the discussion, futuristic social transformations can also be viewed from ecological perspective. This needs identifying various components of e-governance and interplay to shape future society with universal areas of normative structuring.

## ECOLOGICAL PERSPECTIVE OF E-GOVERNANCE

The concept of ecology in governances refers to the understanding of the interrelationship and interdependence of bureaucracy with its environment. To understand its ecology, it would be pertinent to identify various components, substantiated by elaborations regarding how these components interact with each other to deliver the output in to society: (1) technological component focuses on electronic dimension, (2) social component focuses on egalitarian dimension, (3) cultural component focuses on ethical dimension, (4) political component focuses on enactment dimension, (5) psychological component focuses on extensional dimension, (6) service component focuses on empowerment dimension, (7) administrative component focuses on enforcement dimension.

The "E" in the aforementioned dimensions emphasizes the role that can be played by e-connectivity that metamorphoses into respective components.

- **Technological Component:** This relates to educating people who are in the bureaucracy or outside its periphery regarding the use of electronic means to develop better connectivity within and with the system. It requires use of technology (a) in developing the database, (b) in networking to facilitate the communication, and (c) in creating e-knowledge workers to increase the potentiality. This focuses on the “e” of electronic knowledge and its proper utilization.
- **Social Component:** The fundamental duty of any government is to educe a society, based on the principles of equality and justice. A society, which is classless having no distinction between haves and have-nots, where nobody is marginalized from the main stream, and is committed to provide a respectful essence of life to its people without any discrimination of caste or race, must be set up. This is possible only when people are aware of their rights and duties on the one hand, and know about the governmental policies made for them on related issues on the other, hence a vigilant society can be evolved where they can raise their voices by questioning the governmental decisions. This would help in attaining the “e” of egalitarian society with thrust on equality.
- **Cultural Component:** With the advent of the era of knowledge explosion there is a need to reorient some of the value patterns without eroding the fundamental normative structure of any social system. The need to create value patterns conducive for e-governance to operate focusing on work ethos therefore cannot be denied. Thus to work out the ethical framework is the key to move further by discarding obsolete sets of values that come in the way of potential utilization. Thus, “e” of ethical framework has to be the focal point in constructing a morality-based system.
- **Political Component:** The political system is essential aspect of governance. It holds responsibility of rationalizing various operative frameworks by enacting laws. This helps to maintain and sustain the cohesive force that is required by society to integrate its people and abide them to follow a uniform policy to fulfill their targets. This refers to the importance of “e” of enactment of laws to stop society from disintegration.
- **Psychological Component:** Evolving balanced society requires psyche to facilitate formation and inculcation of right type of attitudes in the people. It is prerequisite for efficiency. Apart from this, readiness to connect to people, to listen to their queries, to look for solutions, to improve communicative skills, and so forth, will be necessary ele-

ments for behavioral modifications. Hence, personality adjustments must be carried out to cater to the needs of common people. This specifically relates to “e” of extension of self to have constructive collaborative social relationships.

- **Service Component:** The ultimate function of any welfare government is to serve. As a provider of good services to its people, it has to assimilate the basic needs and expectations of common person in to the documentation of policy, which then has to be implemented in the right spirit. This develops a constant pressure on the government to respond to public demands as this leads to the realization of power they can exercise on government to maintain impartiality, integrity and transparency in its functioning. This explains “e” of empowerment of people in any system.
- **Administrative Component:** Administrative component is inevitable because it is through this component that policies are translated into action. How to enforce decisions effectively need to be worked out keeping in view, the modifications and adaptations required. Thus, a responsive system can only be there when system is open to respond to the changes, this explains the “e” of enforcement of carrying out its decisions.

To get an insight into the mechanism of functioning of various components there is a need to identify at least two parameters each, so that variations can be measured and recycled into society.

- Political parameters
  1. Identifying areas for which integrated cyber laws are needed
  2. The contents of laws
- Administrative parameters
  1. Evolving unified machinery connected with networks
  2. Registering and solving people centered problems
- Social parameters
  1. Ensuring people’s participation in governmental policies
  2. Enlarging the domains of making choices by people.
- Cultural parameters
  1. Designing universal value systems and
  2. Inculcating the designed values at various levels of operations.
- Psychological parameter
  1. Restructuring the attitudes of individuals and
  2. Readiness to connect to people

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