REVIEW ARTICLE

A SUCCESS STORY OF E-GOVERNANCE IN HIGHER EDUCATION

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ARTICLE INFO	ABSTRACT
	Education is a key for national development in general and individual development in particular. The aim of higher education is changing from character development to economic development. With the help of science and technology, the life style of an individual is changing from time to time. Social system is a dynamic process like nature. In the present modern, scientific, technological and globalized word enormous changes are occurring in all the spheres of an individual life. The role and responsibilities of States and Central Government is also changing from time to time. The administrators are using Information and Communication Technologies (ICTs) to reach the people easily, quickly and efficiently. University Grants Commission (UGC) is the highest regulatory body in the field of higher education in India. The UGC and other administrative bodies in the Union of India are using ICTs in their daily work. The main aim of e-governance is to speed up in delivering government services effectively without any bias. In the present paper the researcher has explained how e-governance helped to overcome the problem and also an attempt has been made to prove the strength of e-governance regarding UGC Research Award for the year 2016-18.

INTRODUCTION

Education is a key for national development and individual development. Government is responsible for organizing and regulating not only the traditional activities of law and order, safety and security, and defence but also social welfare through different programmes and human resource development. In India, University Grants Commission is the foremost autonomous regulatory body under the ministry of Human Research Development. In the present high-tech, scientific, globalized and westernized society, many changes are happening in the daily life of people. Based on the needs and necessity of people central and state governments are introducing many programmes and concentrating reforms in administration for effective delivering of services. E-Governance is an effective tool for good governance without any prejudice. There is no doubt at all if we said the present society is techno-centric society. Information and Communication Technologies are reduced the distance between the continents and strengthen the work culture quickly and effectively.

E-Governance

Electronic governance or 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-customer (G2C), customer-to-government (C2G), government-to-business (G2B), business-to-government (B2G), government-to-government (G2G) and interactions within the entire government framework. The aim, ultimately, is to simplify and improve governance and enable people's participation in governance through mail, and internet. E- Governance is much more than just preparing some websites. It ranges from the use of internet for dissemination of information its simplest level to services and online transactions on the one hand and utilizing information and communication technologies in the democratic process for the welfare of society and nation. E-mail, Internet web sites, WAP application and publishing, SMS connectivity, Intranet development and usage, and Promotion of citizen access are using in e-governance as IT tools. These IT tools are using in Education, Business, Medicine and Human Resource Development sectors. The advent of these other components and of Information and Communication Technology as a highly leveraged enabling tool for delivery of services in the public and private sector has now been universally recognized. Now e-governance is a well recognized delivery mechanism of services for betterment and welfare of society.

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Why E-Governance?

The fundamental motivation for the campaign of e-governance in India and elsewhere is a slogan – to provide SMART government – "SMART" being an acronym for Simple, Moral, Accountable and Responsive Government. Disintermediation and low corruption or zero corruption is possible through e-governance only. Government service will be reached the beneficiaries quickly and effectively without any bias. Empowerment of women and inclusive development is also possible through e-governance easily. E-governance is very useful in the field of education regarding admission, evaluation and selection process of students and staff.

Higher Education

The first attempt to formulate a national system of education in India came in 1944, with the Report of the Central Advisory Board of Education, also known as the Sargeant Report. It recommended the formation of a University Grants Committee, which was formed in 1945 to oversee the work of the three Central Universities of Aligarh, Banaras and Delhi. In 1947, the Committee was entrusted with the responsibility of dealing with all the then existing Universities. The University Education Commission was set up in 1948 under the Chairmanship of Dr. S Radhakrishnan. It recommended that the University Grants Committee be reconstituted on the general model of the University Grants Commission of the United Kingdom with a full-time Chairman and other members to be appointed from amongst educationists of repute. The University Grants Commission (UGC) was formally inaugurated by late Shri Maulana Abul Kalam Azad, the then Minister of Education on 28th December 1953. The UGC, however, was formally established only in November 1956 as a statutory body of the Government of India through an Act of Parliament for the coordination, determination and maintenance of standards of university education in India. UGC has a prominent role in the field of Higher Education in India under the Ministry of Human Resource Development (MHRD). There are different disciplines in higher education viz. arts, commerce, science, technology, medicine, law and management.

A Success Story of E-Governance in Higher Education

University Grants Commission (UGC) is a regulatory body and funding agency for higher education in India. UGC is encouraging students, scholars, in-service teachers and retired teachers through different types of fellowships, scholarships and research award for better and quality research in higher education. On 14th April, 2015 UGC has given notification for different types of fellowships, scholarships and research award. Dr. N. Amareswaran, an assistant professor of education at North-Eastern Hill University (NEHU), Shillong, Meghalaya has applied for UGC Research Award (2016-18) on 29th May, 2015 (31st May, 2015 was the last date) by opting Institute of Advanced Studies in Education (IASE), Sri Venkateswara University, Tirupati as a research centre (proposed institution for research) for study. UGC has uploaded the shortlisted candidates to attend interface meeting at UGC Office in New Delhi on 24th June, 2015. The researcher has attended the interface meeting on 22nd July, 2015. The subject expert has recommended the researcher by giving first rank under general category in the subject 'Education' and the same was uploaded in the UGC website on

24th July, 2015. On October 5th the UGC has announced the final selection list of awardees in their website. Unfortunately, the researcher has not been selected for the award. He has cross-checked the list of recommended candidates and selected candidates in all the subjects under general category. All the recommended 1 researchers in all the subjects have selected expect Dr. N. Amareswaran under the subject of Education.

On the same day (5th October, 2015) he has contacted the UGC through telephone and e-mail. There was no response from UGC. Finally he has filed a grievance to President's Secretariat Helpline (http://helpline.rb.nic.in/) through online. He has received a confirmation SMS and e-mail on the same day. One the same day one more grievances filed through online (http://darpg.gov.in/) to Department of Administrative Reforms and Public Grievance (DARPG) and received the confirmation mail and SMS. On 6th October, 2015 additional information was provided to President's Secretariat Helpline and DARPG by separate grievances respectively and 40 mails sent to Secretary, Chairman and Vice-chairman, Deputy Secretary of Selection and Awards Bureau of UGC, Secretary of Higher Education Department and some other officials. Two complaints filed to National Human Rights Commission, New Delhi through online (http://164.100.51.57/HRComplaint/pub/NewHRComplaint.aspx) on 7th and 31st October, 2015 respectively. The researcher have requested through 200 mails from 7th October to 31st October, 2015 to different officials at UGC, Higher Education Department and Ministry of Home Affairs to do justice. Only four officers at Higher Education Department have responded and they forwarded mails to concerned officer at UGC and Higher Education Department but no single reply from UGC. The researcher has taken this matter to Hon'ble Prime Minister and MHRD through face book and twitter. He received supportive messages from readers and also received suggestion through them to file an RTI to get valid information.

On 3rd November, 2015 the researcher filed first RTI through online (https://rtionline.gov.in/) and sent mails to Ministry of Home Affairs and MHRD. On 11th November, 2015 the researcher has received reply for RTI. The reply of UGC was stated like that, 1. the said candidate could not be awarded because the proposed institute for project is not covered under section 2(f) and 12(B) of UGC Act 1956, and 2. The selection for UGC research award is done on the basis of norms and guidelines of the scheme. This is the first victory of the researcher with the help of e-governance without writing a single letter or approaching a person directly to get information from UGC. The reply given by UGC is 100% wrong with the proof of UGC letter as on 14th August, 2014 in the UGC website itself. The same information was informed to UGC through mail and RTI through online. The same information was informed to Prime Minister Office (PMO), MHRD and Ministry of Home Affairs through online RTIs. The researcher has filed 54 RTIs including first appeals to the following government bodies to get justice. They are

1. President's Secretariat, New Delhi.
2. Vice-president's Secretariat, New Delhi.
3. Prime Minister Office, New Delhi.
4. Delhi Police, New Delhi.
5. National Human Rights Commission, New Delhi.
6. Central Information Commission, New Delhi.
7. Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment, New Delhi.

8. Ministry of Home Affairs, New Delhi.
9. Ministry of Justice, New Delhi.
10. Ministry of Development of North-Eastern Region, New Delhi.
11. Department of Administrative Reforms and Public Grievances, New Delhi.
12. Department of Higher Education, New Delhi.

The researcher has filed couple of grievances to Hon'ble Prime Minister of India through online by interact with Prime Minister Website (http://pmindia.gov.in/en/interact-with-honble-pm/). The Prime Minister Office forwarded the grievances to the UGC to look into the matter. The respected Secretary of UGC has given different types of replies to different ministries and department for the same content of grievances and RTIs. The Researcher has observed that, UGC is killing the time without doing any justice. He understood the real functioning of government agencies for public. He utilized the e-governance effectively and criticized the Prime Minister Office, President's Secretariat, UGC, MHRD, NHRC and other bodies in delaying to do justice. All these things were done by the researcher through online only. On 8th December, 2015 UGC has contacted the researcher through telephone. He was not satisfied by UGC. On the same day the researcher has sent fax to MHRD, Ministry of State for MHRD, Chairman of UGC and Secretary of UGC to do justice. The researcher has sent more than 300 mails to different officers of UGC to look into his matter. The researcher has started to receive RTI reply through online and offline. The PMO and Vice-President's Secretariat have responded positively and quickly. The researcher has given pressure on UGC through different ministries and department including President's and Vice-president's Secretariats. The Central Information Commission also responded positively and requested the researcher to file complaint against UGC. UGC has given reply to six RTIs on 8th December, 2015 by stating that, we will reconsider your case. The researcher was keenly observed all these things and waited up to 5th January 2016 by sending mails and filing RTIs here and there. On 5th January the researcher has written in detail by summing up the reply given by UGC and placed a condition on before UGC that, he will be waited up to 5th February, 2016 to get justice and also informed them he is ready to inform all these things to national and international media by doing hunger strike in front of UGC in a democratic way. On 15th January, 2016 the researcher has received a reply for one online RTI. It was a memorable day for the researcher. The UGC has resolved the matter. The UGC said in the reply that, Sir, Your matter has been solved. We are sending a letter for informing you that you have been selected for the award on the condition that you will change your research centre to an institution covered under section 2(f) and 12(B) of UGC act, 1956 and National Importance established by the Central/State Govt. You are requested to inform us within 15 days so that

further action can be taken. The final day came for the researcher to get justice. UGC has announced the result exactly on 5th February, 2016 on her website. Along with the researcher 39 candidates (7 Research Awards and 32 Post Doctoral Fellowships) were selected for Research Awards and Post Doctoral Fellowships. The researcher has achieved this with the help of e-governance only. He spent only Rs. 500-1000 to do all these things to get justice.

Educational Relevance

From the above story, the researcher has observed the following educational relevance for the welfare of society.

1. Never Give-up.
2. Be Sincere to solve a problem.
3. Do hard work to overcome the challenge.
4. Be courageous.
5. Problems are stepping stones for success.
6. Satyamev Jayate.
7. Technology is powerful.
8. Search for truth.

Conclusion

E-Governance is an effective tool for social justice. It is powerful tool to reduce corruption and serve the people effectively and quickly. There is no doubt at all any individual can use e-governance for his/her development in a right way. It helps the people to solve their problem also. The above said story proves this thing in a right way. It is a duty and responsibility of a citizen to use e-governance in a right way for the welfare of society and nation.

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Prime Minister's Office, Government of India, New Delhi.

University Grants Commission, Ministry of Human Resource Development, Government of India, New Delhi.

Vice-President's Secretariat, Government of India, New Delhi.

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