

## PRIVATE HIGHER EDUCATION INSTITUTIONS (PHEI) AND NECESSITY OF E-GOVERNANCE

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### **Abstract**

The Private Higher Education Institutions (PHEI) in India, are functioning to give better outcome to its stakeholders. As the number of Courses, students, administrative activities are increasing rapidly. The managing information related to PHEI's become tedious and dissemination of information is also burden. To achieve global outcomes of higher education, the institutions should adopt quality standards in various work areas of institution. The Institutions have to ensure transparency and accountability to its stake holders through efficient and effective services. This paper attempts to focus on implementing e-governance for quality academics in private higher education institutions.

**Keywords:** e-governance, higher education, quality academics, stakeholders

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## 1. Introduction

In India, the higher education is imparted through universities, autonomous and affiliated colleges. At the university level, there are Central Universities, Deemed Universities, and Institutes of National Importance, Institutions established under state legislation, state private universities, and state Universities. At college level, autonomous colleges and affiliated colleges imparting the said education. As per the statistics in [1] [8] [9] [10] [11], two-third to three-fourth of higher education is in private sector. In [2], it was mentioned that the quality of higher education in Private Higher Education (PHE) is not even at desirable level. Only 0.75% colleges have rich history, strong infrastructure, faculty and large juxtaposition of students.

The recent higher education study [3] reveals that it has become a multi-billion dollar industry and plays an imperative role in fostering and developing intellect community, later contributes to the nation economy.

Information Technology (IT) is growing with rapid alacrity. Every stakeholder of either public or private sector is expecting Freedom of Information. Recently, in particular, the right of access to information held by various public and private bodies, has attracted a substantial amount of attention. The PHE is not an exception from this.

The PHEI should be transparent about their courses, Learning Resources, Infrastructure, Faculty, Library, Research & Development, Educational data of student etc. It has to protect interests of stakeholders through systemic governance.

## 2. Objectives

The e-Governance in PHEI's has to ensure following objectives

- Efficient information dissemination to stakeholders
- Protecting interests of stakeholders
- Fulfilling objectives and goals of the PHEI.
- Providing transparency, effectiveness of the academic and administrative activities.
- To ensure global education in PHEI.

### 3. Benefits

In PHEI, the benefits of e-governance are

- To improve efficiency of information dissemination to the stakeholders.
- To increase transparency and accountability of academic and educational administrative activities of PHEI.
- To be convenient and faster to obtain and access the services of PHEI, and
- To lower the costs for administrative services.
- Better use of Information and Communication Technology (ICT) at Intra and Inter levels of PHEI.
- To maintain the data vertically and horizontally.

The above said benefits are realized in the following way:

- The Management, Faculty, Non-teaching staff, Students, administrative staff and other stakeholders are get allied to the each other.
- Faster dissemination of data and information with more efficiency through an enhanced and effective delivery service at a very low cost.
- The cases of human error are reduced as accountability and transparency is increased.
- Equal opportunity to access to information is provided regardless of one's physical location and physical disability, which removes distance barriers.
- Interdepartmental exchange of data and information is enhanced, thereby leading to significant reduction of transaction costs, time, space, and manpower.
- Providing global classroom environment through ICT.
- Easy sharing of Institutional Information with various authorities like affiliating universities, AICTE, UGC, state governments, MHRD, NBA, NAAC, DST etc for various approvals, sanctions and grants for Institutional development.

#### 4. Issues

Different issues are encountered to successfully implement e-Governance. The factors which are effecting e-governance implementation are

- Stakeholder factors – human attitude, interdepartmental barriers, fraudulent activities, lower computer literacy, and lack of skilled labour.
- Technical factors – Infrastructure barriers, feeble maintenance of installed technology, power failures, lack of technology post installation technical support.
- Financial factors – limitation in budgeting and funding, high cost of technology acquisition,

Stakeholder's factors are addressed by conducting rigorous training and enlightenment sessions through top management and middle management to make them to understand the necessity and benefits of e-governance.

Technical factors are addressed by initiating public-private partnerships and also adequate power backup facilities.

To tackle the financial factors, e-governance technology is to be developed and implemented through outsourcing or with help of local computer professionals and technologists (teachers, programmers, students).

#### 5. E-Governance Frameworks and Standards

There are a number of Governance frameworks and standards such as Control Objectives for Information and Related Technology (COBIT), IT Infrastructure Library (ITIL) and Capability Maturity Model (CMM) are available to help organizations in improving their accountability, governance and management. COBIT focuses on specific aspects of e-Management [4] [5].

## 6. Status of E-Governance Andhra Pradesh

The government of AP has initiated many e-governance projects to provide transparency to the people of AP. The state has well augmented IT infrastructure regime, an essential prerequisite for a sustainable e-Governance society. In the field of e-Governance, Andhra Pradesh has appeared as a frontrunner among all other states of India. It has scaled a distinguished rank of L1 in terms of e-Readiness and is also placed in the "Leader" category on e-Readiness index. The state government of AP should plan and direct the PHEI for e-governance through public – private partnership for faster and better implementation of e-governance system. The said system in parallel helps the state government for better implementation of schemes designed for student's community and monitoring of PHEI functioning as per the stipulated rules and regulations existent from time-to-time. The ongoing e-governance projects in AP [12] show that the number of services, number of data centers, number of transactions and amount collected have been increasing every year, since 2004, at a swift rate.

## 7. Uses of E-Governance in PHEI

E-Governance in PHEI helps in seamlessly providing information and services [6] to the stakeholders. The spectrum of e-Governance utilization in various areas of PHEI is as follows:

- Maintenance of faculty, courses, syllabi, degrees and other related data.
- BoG information management
- BoS information (if PHEI is autonomous)
- Financial practices and management
- Decision making
- Admission of students
- Recruitments and promotions of faculty and staff
- Training and placements
- Employment security
- Professional bodies and its activities etc.
- Finishing schools
- Students related data like internal assessment, attendance etc.

- Efficient library management
- Providing e-content
- Grievances through SMS, e-mails etc.
- Mobile Education
- Monitoring and evaluation through transparent and globally accepted quality benchmarking.
- Alumni tracking

## 8. Conclusion

From the statistics [8][9][10][11], the education in PHEI's is increasing every year with high number. It should be organized, conducted, monitored for a robust quantitative quality outcome. The degree of contentment is improved in the stakeholders. E-Governance has the capability to deliver on-demand requirements of PHEI using ICT.

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