

Citizen's Charter Model as an Instrument of Renovation of Public Service Delivery System

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Abstract

Twentieth century has passed and we are standing at the threshold of second decade of 21st century, which is the era of some kind of renovation of old or traditional model which have been dysfunctional to achieve the goals set by policy maker for the wellbeing of citizens. Looking at the past and reviewing the various plans, programmes and schemes for public service delivery, the finding have shown that these schemes have been ineffective and over expansive which led to the criticism for not providing public service well to the citizen. In this regard, citizen's is one instrument at local level, enhancing the efficiency of bureaucratic apparatus, increasing the peoples satisfaction with respect to quality of governmental services and its delivery in efficient and effective manner to the entitled people,

Keywords:

Citizen's Charter Model, Instrument of Renovation, Public Service Delivery System, traditional model, bureaucratic apparatus

Introduction

Any society is considered well established where goods and services are provided regularly by the responsible agencies, because availability of goods and services among the citizen is the best parameter to judge the quality of life of people residing in a fixed domain.

It is well known that goods and services are made available by public or private institution, agencies, organization.

Generally public services are those services which are delivered by government to fulfill the needs to its citizen residing within its territory. There are various kinds of services like health, education, sewage etc

On the other hand public service delivery is institutional arrangements to implement those services provided by government to its citizens. Though there are various core functions of government but one of them public service delivery is important one.

Analysis and Discussion

Generally public services are grouped into three categories:-

1. Goods services: - which includes food distribution, waters, electricity.
 2. Administration services:-it deals with land certificate, marriage, birth, and death certificate more or less all kind of formal documents.
 3. Facilitating Services:-among the facilitating services there is health education. Post transportation etc.
- The basic difference between Public and private institution has been from the beginning, the pattern of public service delivery, which particularly in developing countries has been unproductive, insufficient, and vexatious and plagued with red tapism, without transparency.

It clearly spells out, that public services provider even today acting as a master while it is true that they are appointed as a servant of

common citizen, the real master. Today if we look at in society most of the people are unaware about their rights and services, that is how and from where to obtain a service and consequently it leads to the corruptions. It is also fact that red tapism also contributed in wastage of time.

The most challenging issue that faces a democracies society is how the public agencies, responsible for service delivery could be made more prompt, responsive, accountable, and transparent and cost effective.

Today Indian state faces serious need to renovate the mechanism of public services delivery. In fact over a decade there is a rapid economic growth in India, but the problem, before both the central and state government, is to ensure inclusive growth so that the benefits of economics gain could be distributed in just way for the needy section of society. Services having high quality such as education and health, perform an important role in enhancing individual capacity which leads in participation of all

kinds of development, A heavy amount is being allocated to public services in every budget but it is evident that benefits on these allocated amount goes to the rich, if services reach to non poor, its generally low quality and dysfunction.

Traditional model of accountability, bureaucratic, complexities and procedure make it difficult for the citizen for timely and quality delivery of services. Citizen suffers a lot due to indifference shown by staff to their problem. Even there is little sympathetic response from office while seeking the services by the people. The lack of transparency and secrecy even today is being followed which had been left by colonial rulers. Besides, prevalent of corruption has also geared up injustices favoritism and discrimination in public service delivery. The frequent transfer of key civil servants has enormously contributed to failure in delivery of services. The citizen (Particularity the Poor) faces more barriers in accessing over a free public services, because they failure to paid the implied cost, also people residing in remote rural areas

deprived from receiving banking and medical facilities due to lack of infrastructure, unawareness about policies and programme also generated low voice among people.

Even today society had various forms of discriminated and deprivation in allocating of public services which should be abolished so that there is a justice and equality in public services delivery.

So growing dissatisfaction among the citizen regarding public services delivery has focused that, today public services delivery system is in crisis and plagued with many impediments, so there is or gents need of renovation in public service delivery system.

To meet all the challenges and programmers several imitative have been adopted since independence. It is well established norm that democratic governance foster the principle of transparency, accountability and responsibility, fairness equality morality and ethics which is an essential elements to improve public service delivery.

Hence for all, that reasons the concept of citizen charters was

launches to improve service delivery mechanism. Citizen's charter actually is written, voluntary commitment or declaration by any organization that provides services. Citizen's charter highlights the services standard, nature of services information choice and consultation process of grievance redressed and their avenues.

It is evident that administrations of developing countries are rigid, rule bounded, inefficient and unresponsive to their clients. Citizen's charter thus has been adopted as an innovated model to improve quality of services and to meet the requirement of consumers. We can say Citizen's Charter is a tool to bridge the gap between services seekers (consumer) and service provider (government official).

The concept of citizen charter is based upon two major theories first is good governance and second is new public management.

Though, concept of good governance in India is very old but since 1980, it has gained greater importance because the core aspect of good government is consensus, transparency, accountability and

responsibility. Consensus oriented, participatory effective and efficient administration, follows the rule of law equitable and inclusiveness.

Among the above mentioned aspect the three aspects is more important namely transparency, accountability and responsibility of administration.

Actually good governance is a concept which deals with efficient public service delivery, trust worthy legal mechanism and citizen centric administration.

Under the patronage of good governance to promote effectiveness in public services delivery citizen character is a new development. The basic purpose of citizen character is to provide necessary information about government services like, time, cost of services delivery, and grievances etc with respect to the public service delivery, so it may be said that citizen character is a model of ensuring good governance.

Transparency in administration implies non opaque administration i.e free access to information what is going on in administration, how decision are made, who is in charge how and when good and services

are delivered and so on. Thus transparency is the patronage of procedural clarity.

To be responsive about the consumer's need is successful key to effective services delivery. But in past, even today, discretionary nature and less responsiveness have been the characteristics of administration.

Responsiveness is a quick response to the demand. Recently Citizen's Charter under the patronage of good governance has made administration more responsive. Accountability has been the key issues for any society. Accountability is an obligation of an official the account for its activities; accept responsibility for them and to disclose the result in transparent manners. The basic mean to ensure accountability is grievance redressed mechanism and providing information regarding services. Both principle are fostered by the citizen character.

The second concept, new public management (NPM) is latest doctrine of reforms in public administration which aims at to improve public service delivery. NPM term first referred by Hood

which spells out broadly the government policies since 1980, that aimed to modernize and render more effective to public agencies. NPM points out that market oriented management in public sectors will lead to greater cost efficiency for government. There are four basis model of NPM namely the Efficiency drive model, Downsizing model, and Decentralization, Excellence search model and Public services orientation model. Among the above model the fourth model of NPM emphasizes upon services quality, participation and accountability, consumers voice reliance, citizenship concept.

Thus main element of Citizen's Charter is transparency accountability and responsiveness which is the major component of NPM and good governance.

Citizen's charter concept is a means to establish trust between the service provider and its users. Actually in 1991, for the betterment of quality of services and establish the trust between service seeker and service provider, under the leadership of John Major the then

prime of UK, the concept of CC was launched with six principle like

- To improve service quality;
- To provide choice;
- To specify what to expect and how to act if standards are not met;
- To add value for the taxpayers' money;
- To be accountable to individual and organizations; and
- To ensure transparency in rules, procedure, grievance etc .

But in 1998 the charter programme were re-launched under the leadership of Prime Minister Tony Blair and it was renamed as “service first” and given nine principle of Citizen’s Charter they are as follows.

- To set service standard;
- To be open and provide full information;
- To consult and involve;
- To treat all fairly;
- Putting things right when they go wrong;
- To use resource effectively;
- To innovate and improve; and
- To work with other providers.

After the successful implementation of citizen’s charter in UK, many other countries across the world adopted charter

programme as the nation of the world were also facing the problems in service delivery system,

To meet the challenges with respect to public service delivery the government of India is also following the principle of democratic governance, good governance and new public management. On the basis of above mentioned concept the government of India also adopted citizen’s charter to reinvent public service delivery system. In India, however citizens charter were first implement in India in 1994 when consumer rights activists drafted a charter for health service provider at a meeting of the Central Consumer Protection Council in Delhi, but in 1996 Prime Minister of India initiated the citizen’s charter programme at national level. Indian citizens charter are expected to incorporate the following element, like

Vision and Mission Statement;

Details of business transacted by the organization;

Details of clients:

Details of services provided to each client group;

Details of grievance redress mechanism and how to access it; and

Expectation from the clients

Since when the CC programme was launched in India, the different ministries, department, directorates and other organization at union level have formulated 131 CC as on January 20 11.

The citizen's charter initiative in India initiated at the state level at a conference of Chief Minister held in May 1997 where the "Action plan for effective and responsive government at Centre and state level" was adopted.

Accordingly since then as on January 2011, about 729 such charters developed by various department and agencies of the 24 state governments and union territories.

Looking at the basic thrust and principle of citizen's charter, it has been found that the basic objective is to spread information to general citizen regarding public service and helps public institution, engaged in delivery of public services, to work efficiently.

Citizen's charter spells out that empowerment of consumer/client is the centre purpose and objective of the institution, and yet one of its major principal business is the reorganized of management structure, financial responsibility, and officials accountability of the organization concerned in public service provision and delivery.

Conclusion:-

No doubt citizen's charter is strong initiative to improve public service delivery and ensuring accountability of public officials but it would be possible only when the CC will be implemented in efficient and effective manner. So to make CC efficient and effective it should be given constitutional status, there must be wide publicity about charter programme among people.

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