

# A Critical Appraisal of e-Governance in Rajasthan State with Special Reference to Tribal District Dungarpur, Rajasthan, India

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## Abstract

*In this world of digitalization, expectation of citizens are also high. e-Governance is the key tool to fulfill those expectations. Each day technology upgrades itself, which also increases the expectations in a qualitative way. This creates continuous challenges for the government. Respondents with diminutive information about the projects are also un-sure about the potential benefits of the projects. The research indicates that currently, the respondents in this work have not much of prior knowledge of e-governance and computerization in government sector, after explaining the current ongoing projects in government sector; they were able to answer the questions of interview. e-Governance projects have helped in better administration and promoting greater transparency and accountability and provide a citizen friendly environment. These projects also help in better service delivery. It is not an easy task to eliminate corruption and it requires very extra ordinary efforts. e-government has shown promise in this regard, and in many instances it has delivered by eliminating or at least reducing corruption in public services delivery. Active public participation is required to make e-Governance successful. Negative perception of citizens about service delivery is a major challenge before government but Dungarpur's citizens are very curious and adoptive, so if they will be cognized then it will be more fruitful. The major problem in Dungarpur district is that there power breakdown is frequent and lasts for a minimum of 6 h. The other major problem is internet connectivity. Due to low connectivity, online e-Governance projects cannot succeed as per the expectations.*

**Keywords:** e-Governance, technology, Dungarpur, citizens, government employees, projects

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## INTRODUCTION OF e-GOVERNANCE

Dr. APJ Abdul Kalam has visualized e-Governance in the Indian context to mean: "A transparent smart e-Governance with seamless access, secure and authentic flow of information crossing the interdepartmental barrier and providing a fair and unbiased service to the citizen" [1].

## e-GOVERNANCE AND RAJASTHAN STATE

The Rajasthan Government has taken various measures in introducing IT in various departments of the state [2]. The people of Rajasthan are the prime priority for the government and the state is committed to provide them with better governance. The idea

is of SMART (Simple, Moral, Accountable, Responsive and Transparent) governance. Some of the major key projects initiated by the state government are E-Mitra project, Rajasthan State Wide Area Network (RSWAN) local area network in Secretariat (SecLAN) and creation of State Data Centre (SDC). Various portals have been developed in different sectors which are directly associated with citizens like the revenue, police, medical and health, education, power and PHED departments [3]. The common man is also being provided facilitating environment through E-Mitra and CSC's centres.

## Major Policy Decisions

The state government has taken major policy decisions to give a new facelift to the

information and technology sector. The following initiatives have been taken to make the process successful: Up to 3% of the state's plan outlay is being invested in IT. All revenue earning departments are to be fully networked and computerized. Each of 33 districts has an integrated IT center to out-source the private sector. Introduction of IT at all points of contact between the citizens and the government and internet connectivity to all *Panchayat* headquarters have been provided.

The state government has a state-of-the-art computer network RAJSWAN to provide a seamless integration among the state wide value added network. Government has established contracts with leading and reputed IT service providers like BSNL and Airtel. The state government has also reformulated the IT policy of the state that is specifically capable of synergizing with prevailing and emerging technologies and economic trends [4–7].

#### **e-Governance and Dungarpur District**

At the district level, NIC district centre officers provide effective informatics support to the development, revenue and judiciary administration of the district. NIC district centre at Dungarpur was established in the year 1989. Two officials are posted for the need of district administration and other district officials. With the coordination of NIC officials, district administration and other district officials, NIC has created its necessity in various administrative and decision level works [8]. NIC centre has the internet link of All India Computer Communication Network (NICNET). The district centre is equipped with high speed OFC leased line of 100 Mbps, video-conferencing studio, high end Unix and Windows servers for database, mail and internet services, desktop systems for catering the communication and other needs of the district administration and various district offices. Depending on the wide variety of work, NIC has various working environments like UNIX, Windows and Linux.

#### **RESEARCH OUTCOMES**

After analysis of data collected from citizens and employees, researcher infers the following conclusions:

##### **Low Use**

In Dungarpur district, availability of electricity and internet connectivity is very low. Online

services are not available in rural areas. Due to low computer literacy and no computer facilities in rural areas, citizens cannot use e-Governance service from their home. This situation makes CSC the most important e-Governance service in rural areas. In Dungarpur district, most of rural tribal people are farmers. The young generation is moving towards education. The services that citizens avail are limited to some extent. The major services availed by citizens are few like, land records, digital certificates, examination form and fee submission, payment of bills etc. Thus the most important e-Governance services in this district are: e-Mitra/CSC (Billing, Digital Certificates), Land Record Computerization/Apna Khata (Land Records & ROR), and e-Sugam (Single window for various purposes).

##### **Awareness is Low but Increasing**

In Dungarpur, the awareness level of public is low but it is increasing. If we divide the study into literate and illiterate people then the awareness level comes out to be 70% in educated people but it comes down to about 14% in illiterate people of Dungarpur. Higher percentage of the rural people is farmers and they are illiterate, so it is very tough for CSC kiosk holders to survive in this scenario and the story of CSCs also says this. There are total 179 CSCs in Dungarpur but only 146 are operational. About 33 CSCs are not operational because CSC's owners are not taking much interest. Tribal people are not aware about these CSCs and thus they were running in loss and finally they were closed.

##### **Users are Satisfied**

One of the major finding of this study is that the satisfaction level of e-Governance application users is very high. The cost of availing services has decreased; time and effort required for availing services have also decreased.

##### **Reduction in Cost and Time**

The cost and time required for availing services has reduced. The major reason behind this fact is fast speed of working due to computerization. The average number of trips is decreased to about 1.5 that is a very significant change. Less number of trips

actually results in less cost and time for availing services. Establishment of service access points near to the location of citizens also reduces the cost and time required. The other reason of decrement in time is smaller queues. Citizens think that they had to spend 3–5 h or a whole day for a small work but now that time has reduced to 15–20 min after implementation of e-Governance projects.

### Positive Attitude of Administration

Administration is trying hard to cover the gap between government and citizens. All the information about facilities in villages is updated on e-Gram portals. The administration is running awareness programs through 'Gram Sabhas', 'Preraks', and media, both electronic and print. New computer operators are already appointed in all the departments that is a good initiative. Officers are also providing information about various e-Governance applications in public hearing 'Jan Sunavai'. Almost 95% of the government officials believe that e-government initiatives would benefit to the citizens. Moreover, no one expressed negative attitude regarding the benefits of the e-government initiatives. All the e-Governance initiatives of GoI and GoR have been implemented [9–11].

### CONCLUSION AND WAY FORWARD

In this world of digitalization, expectations of citizens are also high. e-Governance is the key tool to fulfill those expectations. Each day technology upgrades itself, which also increases the expectations in a qualitative way. This creates continuous challenges for the government. Respondents with diminutive information about the projects are also un-sure about the potential benefits of the projects. The research indicates that currently, the respondents in this work have not much of prior knowledge of e-governance and computerization in government sector. After explaining the current ongoing projects in government sector, they were able to answer the questions of interview and most of the respondents replied in an optimistic opinion. The researcher has concluded on the impact of e-Governance on citizens and government employees. Computerization in government sector has helped in better administration and

more transparency to citizens. These computerized projects also helped in better service delivery to end users.

It is not an easy task to eliminate corruption and it requires very extraordinary efforts. e-Governance has shown promise in this regard, and in many instances it has delivered by eliminating or at least reducing corruption in public services delivery. Active public participation is required to make e-Governance successful. Negative perception of citizens about service delivery is a major challenge before government but Dungarpur's citizens are very curious and adoptive, so if they will be cognized then it will be more fruitful. The major problem in Dungarpur district is that there is frequent power breakdown and it lasts for a minimum of 6 h. The other major problem is internet connectivity. Due to low connectivity, online e-Governance projects cannot be succeeded as per the expectations.

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