

Role of e-governance in educating and empowering women in rural areas of Prayagraj district

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Abstract

E-Gernance is the application of information and communication technology (ICT) and it is basically for delivering government services, between

- Government-to-Citizens (G2C)
- Government-to-Business (G2B)
- Government-to-Government (G2G)

Within the entire government framework. Through e-Governance, in ICT the government services will be helpful to the women in their empowerment to promote and make them aware.

The purpose of this study is to know the role of e-governance in women's empowerment. The present research study is exploratorily aimed at knowing the impact of Digital India programs on rural women in prayagraj District of eastern up State, For the present study, a multi-stage sampling technique is adopted. The study is conducted in 2 villages of sorav Tahsil in the Prayagraj district. The selection of the Sample villages will be followed by the random sampling method. From the selected area total of 450 respondents were selected. Through the questionnaire and interview schedule, got 400 responses. By combining both quantitative and qualitative data more accurate first-hand information can be collected. The study found that e-governance is improving the quality of women's life. E-governance is empowering women digitally and it also has an emphasis on universal digital literacy, availability of digital resources or services in Indian languages along with the participation of women at the grassroots level.

Keywords: governance, women empowerment, inclusive development, rural women

Introduction

Governance is basically the exercise of power by the political leaders for the well-being of their country's citizens. It is the structure and processes to ensure accountability, responsiveness, transparency, rule of law, stability, inclusiveness, equity, empowerment, and broad people's participation.

There are the basic pillars of governance

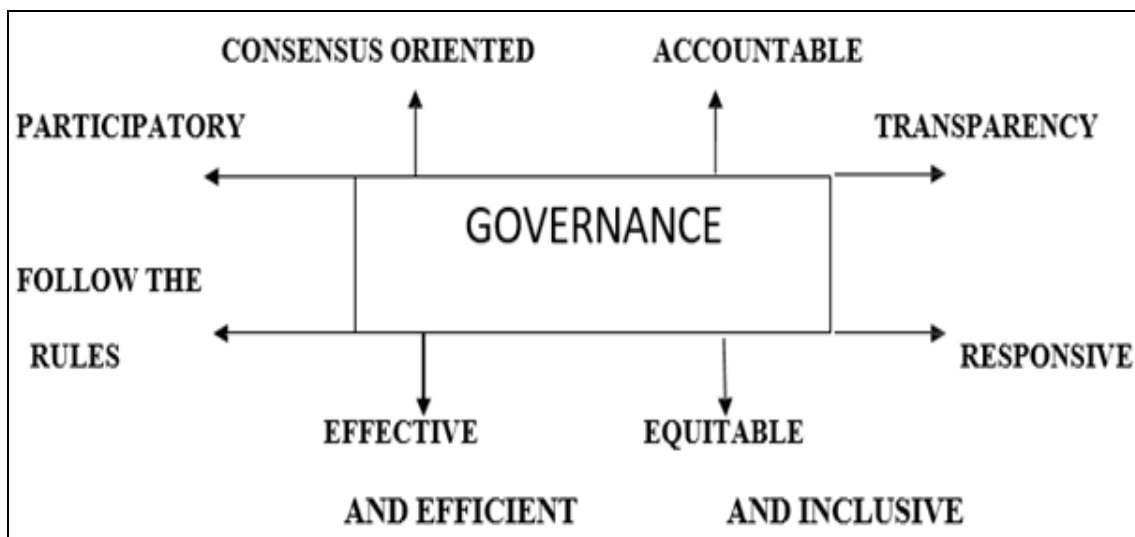


Fig 1

E-Governance- E

Governance is an initiative of the government to not only connect with the citizens of India and business enterprises to provide online facilities but also to reach all levels and inclusively grow by using Information and Communication Technology (ICT). E-governance is no more and no less than governance in an electronic environment. It is both governance of that environment and governance. The use of IT in government facilities is an efficient, speedy, and transparent process for disseminating information to the public and other agencies, and for performing government administration activities.

E-Governance is a new way of accessing education, listening to citizens, and delivering information and services. E-governance is generally considered a wider concept than e- government since it can bring about a change in the way citizens relate to governments and to each other. E-governance is to enable and empower the citizen."

E-Governance structure:- The Basic Structure Based on technical, organizational, and managerial feasibilities, E-governance is constructed on four pillars.

- Cataloguing or Information
- Transaction
- Vertical Integration
- Horizontal Integration

These four stages were arranged keeping in mind the complexities and different levels of integration.

Cataloguing or Information is the first stage that focuses on establishing the online presence of the government. Efforts are made to present the information on the web. This stage merely offers an online presence with a basic view of the website, India has already crossed this stage.

The transaction is the second stage which is a two-way communication process. Here the citizens shift to an active role from a passive one. The online transaction offers room for improvement and efficiency for both the citizens and the government than simply projecting the information.

The third stage is Vertical Integration. India is currently in the third stage of E-governance. The objective of vertical integration is to smoothly integrate the central and state systems for cross-referencing and checking. By inculcating with an administration, the information moves upward or downward to the appropriate counterparts.

The fourth and final stage is Horizontal Integration. It is the stage where all the functional areas are interconnected and communicate with each other with ease. Horizontal integration is the connecting of different functional service branches of government.

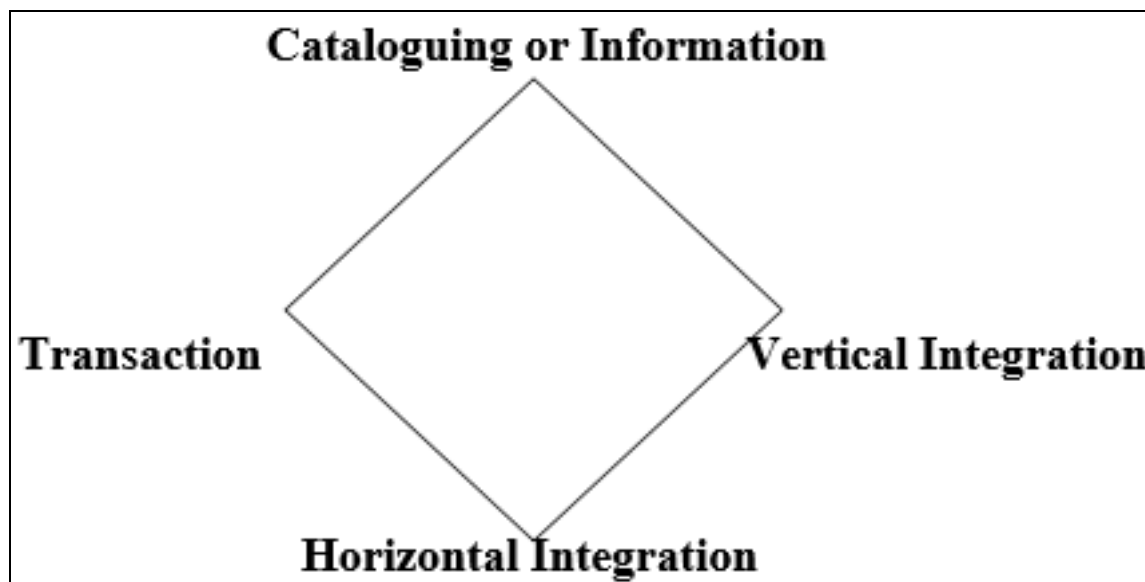


Fig 2

Horizontal Integration Review of Literature

This paper presents the literature review in the area of E-Governance using a classification approach. In this paper, e-governance implementation supporting factors. In this paper Users' acceptability and awareness of E-Governance are reviewed. Additionally, Legal and policies are discussed, which include economies; development, and benchmarking of e-government successful growth in various nations.

Neera Desai & Usha Thakkar (2001) discussed in their book 'Woman in Indian society' the actual condition of women in Indian society and the actual need for the empowerment of the woman. Basically, technical knowledge will make the woman socially strong and empower this society.

Gupta and Jana (2003) E-governance involves activities like the design of a user-friendly citizen interface in local languages, back-end database integration, multiple channels of communication (like e-mail, wireless,

satellite, etc.), security of transactions, cyber law infrastructure, participating policy-making processes, transparency in government activity.

Prabhu (2004) Smart governance by focusing on citizens and prefixed with 'e' (usage of ICT tools to achieve desired objectives) is e-governance Dwivedi and Bharti (2005) ^[1] discussed the basic problems and acceptability of E-Governance in India and also studies the Governments and public sector organizations. Around the world and say that e-Governance is the key to "Good Governance" for developing countries like India to minimize corruption, and provides efficient and effective or quality services to their citizens.

Kalsi (2009) ^[4] this paper discusses the requirement for revolution from traditional governance to e-governance. In addition, it tries to identify a good way for governance. They have also focused on the utilization of e-governance for citizens.

Ghosh's (2011) ^[3] this paper presents a brief review of the inventive projects in ICT for rural development and how far it has contributed. The other intention is to deliberate on the achievements and the failures of ICT in the sustainable development demonstration.

Padmapriya's (2013) ^[6] studies to focuses on the initiatives taken by India, ways to build and deliver electronic government services, ways to develop and ensure interdepartmental collaboration and service delivery, and critical factors required for successful implementation of e-governance.

Mittal and Kaur (2013) ^[2] study the emergence of Information and Communication Technology (ICT) has provided means for faster and better communication, retrieval of data, and utilization of information to its users. They highlighted the main challenges related to the implementation of E-Governance in India.

Dhillon and Laxmi (2015) ^[8] here the author said that the developments in the field of ICT have helped a lot of governments and the people. The people have been capable to use the services provided by the governments with no difficulty. They said that E-Government is a multidimensional and complicated consideration.

Objective

1. To study the socio, economic and educational characteristics of rural women in digitally enabled E-governance.
2. To study the impact of E-governance Initiatives on rural women empowerment.
3. To know the E-governance usefulness for the empowerment of women.
4. To understand the response about the E-governance schemes and their usefulness for the empowerment of women.

Research Methodology

This research paper is based on literature reviews of available and accessible research papers, book chapters, and reports from various government organizations involved in E-Governance activities. The research study is exploratory in nature and aimed at knowing the impact of E-governance programs on rural women in Prayagraj District of up State For the present study purposive and convenience sampling technique is adopted. The study is conducted in Nyaipur Chaurara and kalyanpur village of Sorav tehsil in the Prayagraj district. The selection of the Sample villages will be followed by the random sampling method. From Sorav tehsil from the selected villages, a total of 400 respondents were selected. The questionnaire is distributed among the respondents and got 320 responses. By combining both quantitative and qualitative data more accurate first-hand information can be collected.

Status of women in India

In Indian society there occurs a great disparity in the matter of economic resourcefulness between a man and a woman. It is either because of the patriarchal mind set or the legacy of orthodoxies and conservative approach which we have carried till now. Empowerment is a multi-dimensional social process that aids people gain control over their lives. We commonly refer to the process by which women augment their power to take control over decisions that shape their lives, including in relation to access to resources, partaking in decision making, control over the distribution of benefits, participation in grass-root democracy, and many other forms. The unremitting projection of negative and degrading images of women in media communications - electronic, print, visual and audio - must be altered. Print and electronic media in most countries do not offer a balanced picture of women's miserable lives and contributions to society in a varying world. The worldwide drift towards consumerism has created a climate in which advertisements and commercial messages often depict women primarily as consumers and target girls and women of all ages improperly. Women and girls are exposed to great discrimination in economic, education, health, and social services access worldwide, and even to protect women against such discrimination certain fundamental rights and directive principles are embedded in the Indian constitution which can be seen in article 23,39(a),39(b),41,42,43,43(a), etc. It embraces formal sector and informal sector employment, as well as self-employment in farming, trading and crafts production, etc. There are plentiful possibilities for E-governance to improve women's economic activities in the field of trade, governance, education, health, crafts, and employment in the formal as well as the informal sector. E-governance brings a lot of openings to women in work situations and small businesses thereby projecting the dream into the reality of educating and empowering women.

Table 1

Sr.No	Elements	Description
1	Economic Empowerment	Women are economically endowed when they are supported to engage in a productive activity that permits them some degree of Independence. This type of empowerment is also concerned with the quality of their economic involvement.
2	Social Empowerment	It is concerned with augmenting the power of voice and collective action by women. Besides, it confirms equitable representation of women in decision-making structures, both formal and informal, and strengthens their voice in the formulation of policies affecting their societies.
3	Political Empowerment	This is a process of attaining information, knowledge, and skills; and auxiliary participation of women in social organizations without any gender biases in day-to-day activities.

E-governance for educating and empowering women

Any technology under E-governance that is not proper for women is not justly appropriate technology. In the last 30 years, communication technologies featuring the accountability and responsiveness of e-governance have been put into action in a number of educational and developmental applications. The Ministry of Human Resource Development put in considerable attempts to utilize technologies in the primary school sector. These technology schemes envisaged the dissemination of audio cassettes and television sets in primary schools. In addition, there were distinct schemes to offer primary teachers' training through video and television. In most of the other E-governance initiatives that depend on print media, Internet kiosks, portals, call centers, mobile, video digital photography, etc, there is not enough evidence to show its access and use by women. This could be due to the following reasons:

- These tools and their applications are generally deployed for disseminating information to rural communities without any specific attention to women's special needs for information and their constraints in accessing.
- The information provided through these tools is generic and so while it adds to the information base of rural communities including women, its lack of contextualization prevents both men and women from using this informational platform effectively.
- Men are specifically targeted in these initiatives as they take decisions on inputs, farm operations, marketing, accessing government schemes, etc.
- Lack of adequate research on women's access to ICTs and the resultant lack of data constrain any specific action that might be needed to improve women's access.

However, the role of E-governance in such a field can't be neglected which are:

Government is giving sufficient support to provide ICT education to women.

1. E-governance and its platform have provided the women opportunity to work from home and earn.
2. Impact of E-governance on urban/rural women through self-help groups.
3. E-governance (ICT) can be used by women after awareness of the technology that the government should take some action to make women come to the forefront to use it.
4. Training in the use and design of computer applications, such as e-mail, word-processing, and design applications, builds marketable skills.
5. Increased agency and self-confidence allow women to travel more and develop a wider network of contacts.
6. ICTs open new avenues for education, communication, and information sharing.
7. ICTs can be a valuable tool for the organization and mobilization of women's advocacy and interest groups.
8. Education and information increase knowledge about the world and the political, economic, social, and cultural factors that shape women's lives.

Woman and E-Governance

It is a commonly held view that women are less engaged with E-governance (ICTs) than men. Enabling tools of E-governance is for everyone and women have to be equal beneficiaries of the advantages offered by the technology, which emerges from their use. The application of tools of E-governance need not be restricted to the upper strata of the society but have to freely flow to all strata of the female population. The scope of areas in which E-governance (ICT) can put a greater switch in the hands of women is wide and uninterruptedly expanding, from man-aging water dissemination at the village level to standing for local elections and having access to lifelong learning prospects. E-governance (ICT) in convergence with other forms of communication has the potential to reach those women who hitherto have not been reached by any other media, thereby empowering them to partake in economic and social progress and make an informed decision on issues that affect them.

Some of the key initiatives that strengthen women with E-governance are:-**Beti Bachao Beti Padhao**

Since the launch of Beti Bachao Beti Padhao, the multi-sectoral District Action Plans have been operationalized in almost all states. Capacity-building programs and Training have been imparted to Trainers to further strengthen the capacities of district-level officials and frontline workers. Nine sets of such training have been organized covering all States/UTs the Ministry of Women & Child Development from April-October, 2015.

National Repository of Information for Women

The portal was launched in New Delhi by Mrs. Maneka Gandhi. On the 2nd of Jan 2018, at an event, Mrs. Gandhi officially announced the initiative for women.

NARI Portal

National Repository of Information for Women NARI portal is specially designed for women. All sorts of information regarding schemes for women will be available in this portal. Over 350 schemes' details will be available in that portal. Besides the overall information, the portal will also help the women with additional information such as how to register under these schemes and so on. Through this portal, women will be able to contact directly the government departments that are associated with diverse schemes.

Mahila e-Haat

Mahila Haat (MH) is a national-level organization registered as a society under the Societies Registration Act of 1860 on November 23, 1987. It has also been registered on September 6, 1988, under section 12A (a) of the Income Tax Act Empowerment of women, particularly the underprivileged and hardworking women through their economic upliftment and social emancipation, is the mission of MH.

E-Governance schemes are in India specific to the woman**Table 2**

Sr.No	Project	URL	Description
1	SSPY	https://sspy-up.gov.in/HindiPages/index_h.aspx	Integrated Pension Portal for Old Age, Widow, and Divyangjan
2	Skill Development	https://www.upsdm.gov.in/	UPSDM is the implementing agency for skill development targeted at enhancing employability in Uttar Pradesh
3	Mahila Samman Kosh	http://msk.upsdc.gov.in	Online portal for monetary medical & educational relief & assistance to women/children affected by violence
4	Shadi Anudan Portal	https://shadianudan.upsdc.gov.in/	Portal was developed with the aim of helping in the marriage of daughters of poor families
5	e-Parinay Patra	http://igrsup.gov.in	Online issuing of marriage registration certificates in Hindi and English
6	Scholarship	https://scholarship.up.gov.in/	Scholarship and Fee Reimbursement Online System
7	Mukhyamantri kanya sumangla yojana	https://mksy.up.gov.in/women_welfare/index.php	The Mukhyamantri Kanya Sumangala Yojana is a initiative where Parents of girl children can get Rs.15,000 per child, if they enroll in the Kanya Sumangala Yojana. The scheme provides monetary benefits for the welfare of girl children in Uttar Pradesh.
8	Mission shakti	https://missionshakti.odisha.gov.in	"Mission Shakti" is the self-help mission for empowering women through promotion (WSHG) to take up various socio-economic activities. Nearly 70 lakh women have been empowered so far.
9	Deen dayal antyodaya yojana	https://www.india.gov.in/spotlight/deen-dayal-antyodaya-yojana	Deen Dayal Antyodaya Yojana (DAY) with an aim to uplift the urban poor folks by enhancing sustainable livelihood opportunities through skill development.

Findings

E-Governance for Education and empowerment - Education is seen as a vital input to addressing issues of poverty, gender equality, and health. This has led to an expansion of demand for education at all levels. Given limited education budgets, the opposing demand for increased investment in education against widespread scarcity of resources puts intolerable pressure on many countries' educational systems. Meeting these opposing demands through the traditional expansion of education systems, such as building schools, hiring teachers, and equipping schools with adequate educational resources will be impossible in a conventional system of education. ICTs offer alternate solutions for providing access and equity, and for collaborative practices to optimize costs and effectively use resources. Since the education sector plays a vital role in Women's development, Education System in developing countries should align with the fast-evolving technology because technological literacy is one of the required skills in our current era. ICT can enhance the quality of education for women by increasing learner motivation and engagement, facilitating the acquisition of basic skills, and enhancing teacher training which will eventually improve communication and exchange of information that will strengthen and create social and women development.

Table 3: Age-wise distribution of women Respondents

Age	Frequency	Percentage
18 to 25	176	44.16
26 to 35	124	31.01
36 to 45	68	17.17
46 and above	32	8.66
Total	400	100

The above table demonstrates the frequency of women respondents from a certain age, as of result the above table it is being depicted that the women in the age group of 18-25 yrs had responded with a high frequency that is equivalent to 44 percent.

Table 4: Education level of women respondent

Education	Frequency	Percentage
Illiterate	108	27.19
S.S.L.C and Below	96	24.27
P.U.C	83	20.88
Graduation	64	16.18
Post-Graduation	49	12.48
Total	400	100

The above table demonstrates the frequency of women respondents from a certain level of educational field, as of result the above table it is depicted that the women who are illiterate have the highest frequency followed by SSLC and below.

Table 5: Working pattern of the woman Respondents

Employment	Frequency	Percentage
Self-Working	36	9.08
Private sector	24	6.18
Agriculture	112	28.12
Govt. employee	20	5.10
Housewife	108	27.23
Student	10	2.52
Total	400	100

The above table demonstrates the frequency of women respondents from certain areas of employment, as of result the above table it is being concluded that the women who are engaged in agriculture show a max frequency equivalent to 28 % followed by housewives equivalent to 27%.

Table 6: Responses of Woman Respondents for Govt. Initiative

Initiatives	Extremely Useful	Useful	Moderately Useful	Slightly Useful	Not at all Useful
Nari Portal	75 (18.81%)	127 (31.94%)	96 (24.05%)	67 (16.88%)	33 (8.32%)
Nirbhaya app	31 (7.84%)	86 (21.57%)	147 (36.85%)	95 (23.82%)	39 (9.92%)
Beti Bachao Padhao campaign	176 (44.07%)	152 (38.06%)	32 (7.94%)	23 (5.85%)	16 (4.08%)

Mahila E-Haat	36 (9.88%)	103 (25.87%)	123 (30.89%)	103 (25.92%)	28 (7.44%)
Women helpline scheme	71 (17.76%)	83 (20.75%)	75 (18.86%)	103 (25.87%)	67 (16.76%)
Mahila Digital Saksharta Abhiyan	111 (27.92%)	146 (36.73%)	55 (13.85%)	68 (17.04%)	17 (4.46%)
Prime Minister Gramin Digital Saksharta Abhiyan (PMGDSA)	91 (22.84%)	143 (35.91%)	43 (10.81%)	83 (20.90%)	36 (9.54%)

In Uttar Pradesh, women's security was a major issue. So The state government launched Mahila Sakti Mission on Sharad Navratri, under which Women Help Desks were formed in 1535 police stations in 350 districts in the first phase. All of them are functioning properly, and the complaints are registered on priority with these desks. To ensure women feel safer while registering complaints and crimes against women are dealt with quickly, 218 courts were established in the state that deal in crimes related to women. A new helpline 181 was started that is dedicated to complaints related to domestic abuse. CM Helpline 1076 is also there to help women in distress, and all these lines are well integrated into each other and to 112, which is the national helpline number however there are some lacunae that women are facing in their daily routine when the question comes about to strengthen the women through E-governance such as :

- They don't have mobile phones to access the internet and other facilities available through mobile phones.
- Since most of the women live in rural areas and they lack internet connectivity and thereby affecting the one to one communication
- Women are often excluded from banking services as they lack an official form of identification.
- Women have low financial capability which makes them dependent on men related to their demands
- 74% men have their own account in banks while women have 68%.

Conclusion

The main goal of this paper was to develop a sense of initiative in the areas of E-Governance for women's education and empowerment. The empowerment of women through e-commerce/e-retailing. We began with a review of the existing theoretical literature regarding the main factors influencing the success of ICT-based e-commerce/e-retailing projects for women. In light of the theoretical framework, we examined special case studies to understand how well theory correlates with the practical fieldwork realities of women-owned e-commerce/e-retailing projects and to develop an awareness of rural women's education and empowerment. I found still that there is a need for awareness, technical education, and motivational support to ensure the development of women in regard to e-governance.

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