

Citizen Empowerment through e-Governance in Telangana State

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ABSTRACT

Citizens benefit from e-Government, particularly in developing countries which includes faster service delivery, transparency in government decision-making, and accountability access to current information in real time, administrative efficiency, internet technology access, revenue generation, transaction cost reduction, and citizen-centered services. This G2C initiative establishes a critical chain or link in the relationship between the government and citizens. It provides excellent communication services, holds people accountable, and equips people with the knowledge they need to handle public affairs in supportive environments. The government made significant efforts through G2C to provide public utility services such as tax return filing, license renewal, payment of electricity and telephone bills, and so on. This effective system was a huge success, and the public was eager to participate and exchange information with the government, expressing their delight. It provides all necessary information for all walks of life, from the common man to business and legal matters, and it fosters a strong relationship between the public and government.

Keywords: e-services, awareness, risk factors, user's intention, citizen empowerment.

INTRODUCTION

Making decisions involving issues of public concern is a component of governance. E-governance is the use of technology to inform the public about public service termination or to involve society in decision-making processes. In order to carry out their duties, the majority of government agencies now rely on technology, particularly information and communication technology (ICT), because it is less expensive and quicker, using knowledge and communication technology is the only way to ensure good governance. The public is served by the government either directly or indirectly. For public service delivery to be citizen-centric, effective governance is necessary. Governments around the world must modify their systems to allow for the delivery of services that are focused on the needs of the citizens using cutting-edge ICT (ICT). Governments now need to create new strategies for delivering public services as a result of e-government (Ume Laila et al., 2020). Modern ICT tools have revolutionized how the government interacts with its own departments as well as with citizens, businesses, and other stakeholders (Bhattacharya, 2008).

In order to create "Simple, Moral, Accountable, Responsive and Transparent" (SMART) governance, information and communication technology are applied to government processes through e-government, also known as "electronic governance." In order to provide citizens with quick and improved services, the government must integrate ICT into public sectors given the current trend of population growth and technological advancement. However, the urgency of introducing ICT adoption in public sectors is not felt with the same intensity. The reason may be the transformation of legendary traditional system to modernized computer system initiates a number of packed obstacles which are faced by the government. The main reasons why the government is unable to fully implement ICT in public sectors include decision-making, IT infrastructure, political instability, illiteracy, poverty, a lack of technical staff, a lack of awareness, a lack of policy framework and regulation, and employee behavior.

Reflective Study

The government of Telangana provided the e-services with the objective of making the life of every citizen easier. It has created a platform of opportunities to provide the services of the government in broader reach at optimal quality, place, cost and time. The government showcases its leveraging strength in IT, to provide 'Anytime, Anywhere Citizen Services' and lays a road map for empowerment. The following list showcases the e-governance initiative in Telangana.

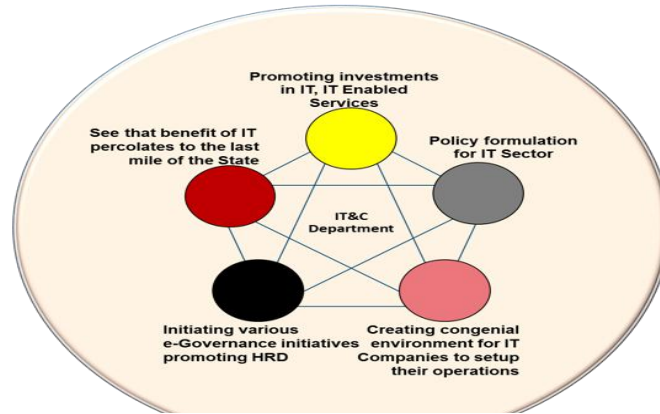


Fig 1.a IT&C Department’s

Source: <https://it.telangana.gov.in/about-us/organisation-profile/>

Table 1.1 E-governance initiatives in Telangana

Citizen Service with e-Seva	Meeseva Portal	TS Online
Telangana State Portal	E-Procurement	TS State Wide Video Conference
SoFTNET	e-Return – VAT eReturn	TSSWAN- TS State Wide Area Network
e-Suvidha – Complete Application for Municipalities	MGNREGS – Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme	CDSC – Online issue of statutory Forms of CT (Commercial Taxes) Department
CFST- Transport Department Services	Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs) in e-Governance Projects	Telangana State Senior Citizens Maintenance Cases Monitoring System(TSCMMS)

Source: <https://it.telangana.gov.in/sectors/e-governance/>

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Manoharan, Ingrams, Kang & Zhao (2021), The increased use of digital government technology has changed how the government operates and interacts with the public.

Fernández-Batanero, (2020), Governments have upgraded their services through the use of e-government systems, which use ICT to process information and redesign communication platforms.

Kumar(2018)The first sign that e-governance projects have been successfully adopted by the public is awareness among citizens. However, there are few clearly defined systems, procedures, and models, and few people are aware of the mechanisms for e-governance at all levels, while lack of education makes it difficult to raise awareness among those who are the true end users.

Broome (2015)E-governance is a more comprehensive term for the use and application of ICTs to the management of social networks and relationships.

Kalsi and Kiran (2015), raising awareness of e-government, its uses, and its advantages among citizens and within government.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This study is conducted in the State of Telangana. The study attempts to understand how e-governance services are able to empower its citizens by providing public utility services at their door steps.

Research design

This study used a mixed-methods approach to gather data and information from our intended audience. The research was conducted using a quantitative approach using survey questionnaires to address the research questions, and one-on-one interactive interviews with the respondents to obtain the most abstract representation of the ground truth.

Target Population

The target population of the study was on the citizens able to access the public utility services provided by the government through the platform of e-governance to get the grip over multi-faceted behaviour of adolescent students.

Sampling

For research purposes, the study employs a random sampling method. To collect data in the state of Telangana, respondents from the selected area were contacted. A total of 323 responses (citizens) were received in the selected areas of the research for a confidence level of 95% and a margin of error of 5%. Hyderabad, Ranga Reddy, Suryapet, Bhongiri, and Mahabubnagar were chosen at random by the researcher for the study. The research was conducted within these areas, and the researcher did not consider the responses of 23 respondents because the responses were incomplete and errors were discovered while responding to the questions asked. In light of new information, additional questions were added.

Objectives of the Study

- To study the awareness levels of citizens regarding e-services in Telangana.
- To understand the factors influencing e-governance services
- To study the impact of e-Governance services in public utility service sector.
- To know the current status e-service among citizens.

Hypothesis of the Study

H1: e-services system has positive influence on citizen's ease of use service.

H2: There exists a positive relationship between e-public services and citizen empowerment.

H3: Risk factors influence e-service users' intentions.

Method of Data Collection

The researcher gathered secondary data to understand the problem at hand and the progress made in for citizen empowerment through e-governance services, as well as to identify the undiscovered dimension in the current study. The primary data was collected using a questionnaire that was designed to capture the targeted data and was based on the research objectives. The questionnaire includes a closed-ended questionnaire with a 5-point Likert scale to direct the results toward the objectives and create a platform for effective statistical analysis, while the open-ended questions must be processed to draw meaningful conclusions from the observations.

Results and analysis

The proposed study tries to measure whether the e-service platform leads to citizen empowerment in Telangana State by using a quantitative study and factor analysis extracted from dive dimensions, even though the sample size (n=250) is too small for any conclusive results, but the reliability analysis and factor analysis results suggest a good factor structure for the study, highlighting the initial step, which was to assess the reliability of the questionnaire using Cronbach's Alpha indicates that the questionnaire's reliability is high. The standardised item value for the test is.961, while the Cronbach's alpha value is.947.

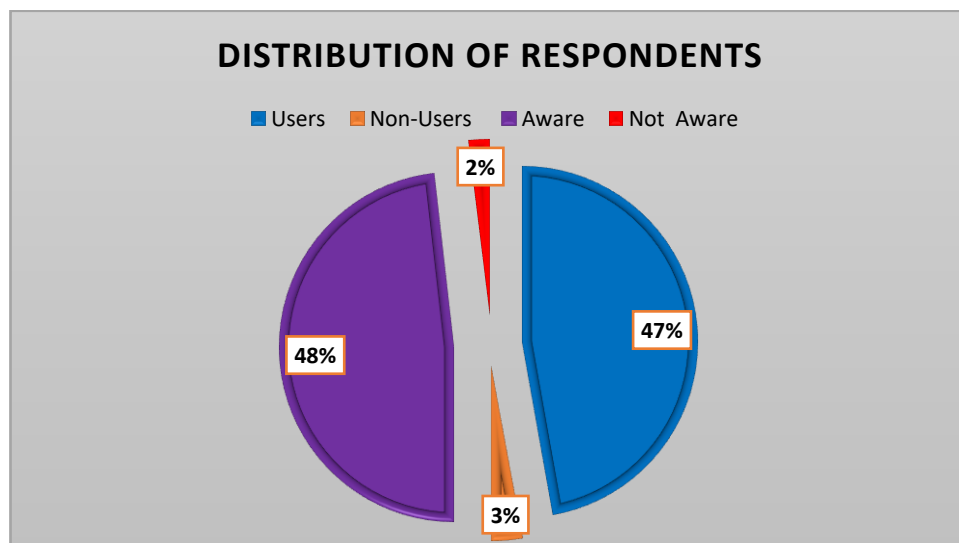


Fig 1.b: Distribution of Respondents
Source: 'The Author'

The above table summarizes the category distribution of respondents of e-services. From the above table it can be stated that 44 percent of the respondents are the users of e-services while 6 percent of the respondents are non-users, while 47 percent of respondents are aware of the e-services and 3 percent of the respondent's state that they are not aware of the services these services.

Table1.2 : e-services system has positive influence on citizen's ease of use service

ANOVA						
		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Easy to get information	Between Groups	11.481	1	11.481	6.649	.010
	Within Groups	428.235	248	1.727		
	Total	439.716	249			
Easy to use services	Between Groups	36.877	1	36.877	160.901	.000
	Within Groups	56.839	248	.229		
	Total	93.716	249			
Accomplish Tasks More quick	Between Groups	106.681	1	106.681	28.892	.000
	Within Groups	915.723	248	3.692		
	Total	1022.404	249			
Well organized appearance	Between Groups	4.852	1	4.852	7.257	.008
	Within Groups	165.804	248	.669		
	Total	170.656	249			
Transparency in process and Procedures	Between Groups	3.187	1	3.187	5.606	.019
	Within Groups	140.985	248	.568		
	Total	144.171	249			
Easy to complete transaction	Between Groups	37.338	1	37.338	9.400	.002
	Within Groups	985.066	248	3.972		
	Total	1022.404	249			

Source: 'The Author'

From the table 1.2, the Anova test result concludes that e-services system has positive influence on citizen's ease of use service includes easy to get information, easy to use services, accomplish tasks quicker, well organized appearance, transparency in process and procedures, easy to complete transaction. Hence, the stated hypothesis is accepted. While analysing the relationship between e-services and citizen empowerment, the elements personalization of e-service, familiarity, services in local language, security, performance expectancy.

Table:1.3, There exists a positive relationship between e-services and citizen empowerment.

ANOVA						
		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Personalization of e-service	Between Groups	8.087	2	4.043	28.688	.000
	Within Groups	34.813	247	.141		
	Total	42.900	249			
Familiarity	Between Groups	23.913	2	11.957	22.940	.000
	Within Groups	128.743	247	.521		
	Total	152.656	249			
Services in local language	Between Groups	26.260	2	13.130	14.007	.000
	Within Groups	231.536	247	.937		
	Total	257.796	249			
Security	Between Groups	83.316	2	41.658	20.713	.000
	Within Groups	496.780	247	2.011		
	Total	580.096	249			
Performance expectancy	Between Groups	72.946	2	36.473	14.007	.000
	Within Groups	643.154	247	2.604		
	Total	716.100	249			

Source: 'The Author'

The table 1.3, the Anova test results shows there exists a significant positive relationship between e-services and citizen empowerment which includes personalization of e- service, familiarity, services in local language, security, performance expectancy. Accordingly, it can concluded that e-public services leads to citizens empowerment, hence we accept the stated hypotheses. When analysis the risk factors involved which impacts the user’s intention to utilize the e-services has been taken for the study, the elements includes transaction error, payment inconveniences, safety on personal information and sensitive information

Table 1.4, Risk factors influence e-service users' intentions

ANOVA		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Transaction error	Between Groups	18.444	2	9.222	6.295	.002
	Within Groups	361.860	247	1.465		
	Total	380.304	249			
Payment Inconveniences	Between Groups	21.545	2	10.773	9.006	.000
	Within Groups	295.451	247	1.196		
	Total	316.996	249			
Safety on Personal Information	Between Groups	142.856	2	71.428	55.507	.000
	Within Groups	317.848	247	1.287		
	Total	460.704	249			
Sensitive information	Between Groups	26.584	2	13.292	12.005	.000
	Within Groups	273.480	247	1.107		
	Total	300.064	249			

Source: ‘The Author’

The above Anova table explain the relationship between risk factors and users intention regards the use of e-service. Hence, the results shows a significant relation that exists between the variables selected for the test. Thus the stated hypothesis is accepted.

CONCLUSION

From various e-Government adoption literatures, this study identified factors that contribute to citizen intention to use e-Government systems. This study identified the parameters as ease of use, usefulness, security, quality of website, risk, local language, familiarity with citizen empowerment as dependent factor. The study is important for both government as well as citizens because it provides insights and methodology for measuring the intention to use the e-Government system in public utility service sectors. As the government is required to provide an online system for its citizens in the digital age, the study concludes that citizen empowerment has occurred through the platform of e-governance services because it was able to reach diverse sections of the society in Telangana State. As a result, the stated hypotheses have been accepted because the ANOVA test results show that the majority of respondents are aware of and use the e-service platform for their transactions, and citizens feel empowered when e-services are easy to obtain information, easy to use, and get the task done in a short period of time, the website structure was simple to understand, and transparency is experienced in process and procedure, risk factors such as transaction error, payment inconveniences, and so on needs attention. Yet, if the government focuses more on well-defined strategies to attract maximum user it will have a significant impact on citizens' willingness to move forward and interact with the online system.

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