

PalArch's Journal of Archaeology of Egypt / Egyptology

E-Governance and the Influence of Common Service Centers on Rural Citizens: A Study in Rayagada District

¹Amiya Kumar Sahoo, ²Dr. Anita Patra, ³Dr. Dasarathi Sahu

¹ Associate Professor, GIET University, Gunupur, Odisha & Research Scholar, CUTM, Bhubaneswar, Odisha, India

² Professor, School of Management, Centurion University of Technology and Management, Odisha, India

³ Head of the Department (HoD), in the department of Business Administration, Utkal University, Odisha, India

Email: ¹amiyasahoo@giet.edu, ²anita@cutm.ac.in, ³d_sahu2000@yahoo.com

Amiya Kumar Sahoo, Dr. Anita Patra, Dr. Dasarathi Sahu: E-Governance and the Influence of Common Service Centers on Rural Citizens: A Study in Rayagada District -- PalArch's Journal Of Archaeology Of Egypt/Egyptology 17(9). ISSN 1567-214x

Keywords: E-Governance, Common Service Centers, Rayagada District, Odisha, PPP, Citizens, VLE

ABSTRACT

The “Government of India” in the year 2006 has initiated the step of establishing rural tele-centers in the name of “Common Service Centers (CSC)” under “National e-Governance Plan (NeGP)” to provide “various government services” electronically to citizens. The idea behind establishing such tele-centers in public private partnership (PPP) was to provide quick, effective and hassle free government services in affordable price within the village or panchayat, so that the citizens should not go to various offices physically. When the researchers were reviewing the available literatures in the area of e-governance and CSCs found various studies. But as far as Odisha state is concerned there were absolutely very few studies were available on this area. Further “Rayagada” being a tribal dominating district far from the state capital attracts the “researchers to focus and conduct the study”. The main focus of the study is to find out how influential are the CSCs to cater the need of the citizens for various government services electronically. This paper addresses and evaluates the influence of CSCs on rural citizens in rendering e-governance services with a focus on Rayagada district of Odisha state.

1. Introduction

E-Governance in India

The CSC initiatives have started way back in 2006 by “Department of electronics and information technology (DeitY) now known as MeitY” and

“Department of administrative reforms and public grievances (DARPG)” under NeGP. The mode of operation has decided that the CSCs will be operated in “PPP” mode, where the stake holders are Central Government, State Governments, “Service center agencies (SCA)” as the operational partner, “State designated authorities (SDA)” as the technical partners and the “Village level entrepreneurs (VLE)” as the service delivery partners[1]. Citizens in general are service takers.

There was a clear vision of the Government while setting up this CSCs as “to deliver and make accessible all Government , social and private sector services in the area of agriculture, health, education , utility payments , banking , financial services and many more to the citizens at affordable cost”[2]. The “former president of India Dr. APJ Abdul Kalam” has quoted in the context of providing all government services to the citizens as “Delivery of services to citizens is considered a primary function of the government. In a democratic nation of over one billion people like India, e-Governance should enable seamless access to information and seamless flow of information across the state and central government in the federal set up. No country has to so far implement an e-Governance system for one billion people. It is a big challenge for us”[3]

E-Governance in Odisha

The “Common Service Center”, is popularly known as “Jana Seva Kendra” in Odisha. The government of Odisha has taken “various initiatives to implement the e-Governance projects in the state in association with

Odisha Computer Application Center (OCAC) as the SDA for technical support, “Tata Consultancy Services (TCS)” as technical support partner, “National Informatics Center (NIC)” as another technical partner to provide the back end data support, and Odisha e-Governance Services Limited (OeSL)”. The “e-Governance roadmap of Odisha was released on 14th June 2006 by the Hon’ble Chief Minister of Odisha with good governance vision , governance strategy and the blue print for capacity building”[4][5]. The “Information and Communication Technology (ICT)” is used extensively to support the e-Governance projects in Odisha. Odisha State Wide Area Network (OSWAN) has established which connects to “State Head Quarter(SHQ)”, 30 district head quarters, 284 blocks of the state and 60 horizontal offices of the state [6]. Odisha State Data Center(OSDC) is “fully functional since October 2011 with an objective to provide shared, secured and managed infrastructure for consolidating and securely hosting state level data and applications”. Applications like e-districts, e-registrations and e-municipality are some of the main focuses of OSDC [6]. State Service Delivery Gateway (SSDG) is established to provide seamless interoperability and exchange of data across multiple government departments [6]. Tata Consultancy Services (TCS) is the service provider for SSDG.

E-Governance in Rayagada

Odisha Government has started the e-District project under NeGP and the Rayagada district has its own portal to provide all the services to its citizen designed and maintained by “National Informatics Center (NIC)”. The district was initially under the undivided Koraput district and became one independent district on 2nd October 1992. The district with 7,073 square kilometer area, 11 blocks , 182 gram panchayats and 2667 villages has a total population 9,67,911 (source census 2011). The literacy rate is 42.13% [7]

Out of 445 sanctioned CSCs only 197 CSCs are rolled out in Rayagada District till 2019[8]. Some of the major services provided to the citizens through CSCs are caste certificates, legal heir certificates, residence certificates, employment exchange registrations, land record registrations as state government services along with all central government services.

The Service Center Agency (SCA) for Rayagada district is BASIX [10][11] and the same organization is in charge of 4 districts of Odisha including Rayagada and they have their operations in 19 states of India including Odisha[11]. The role of SCA is to provide digital network support to VLEs.

2. Objective Of The Study

The main objective of this study is to find out the influence of Common Service Centers in rural India with a special reference to Rayagada district of Odisha State. Further the study will reveal the influence of CSCs on two major stakeholders of e-Governance initiatives i.e. the Village Level Entrepreneurs (VLEs) as the service providers and the citizens at large as the service takers.

3. Methodology

This study has been carried out by conducting a survey in the district of Rayagada to collect primary data. The secondary data is also collected by referring various web portals. The researchers have used two sets of structured questionnaires to collect the primary data from the VLEs and the Citizens separately. Five VLEs from each block (11 blocks of Rayagada) were participated in the survey except Chandrapur block.[11] . Under each VLE 10 citizens were contacted randomly as respondents. The data were compiled and refined in MS-Excel sheets and then data analysis tool “Pivot Table” and graphical tool like “Pivot Graphs” were used to analyze the data and the findings represented.

4. VLE Data Analysis

VLE Respondent Details

The respondents in each stakeholder are chosen carefully, which is a mix of all category users to get some quality data for this study.

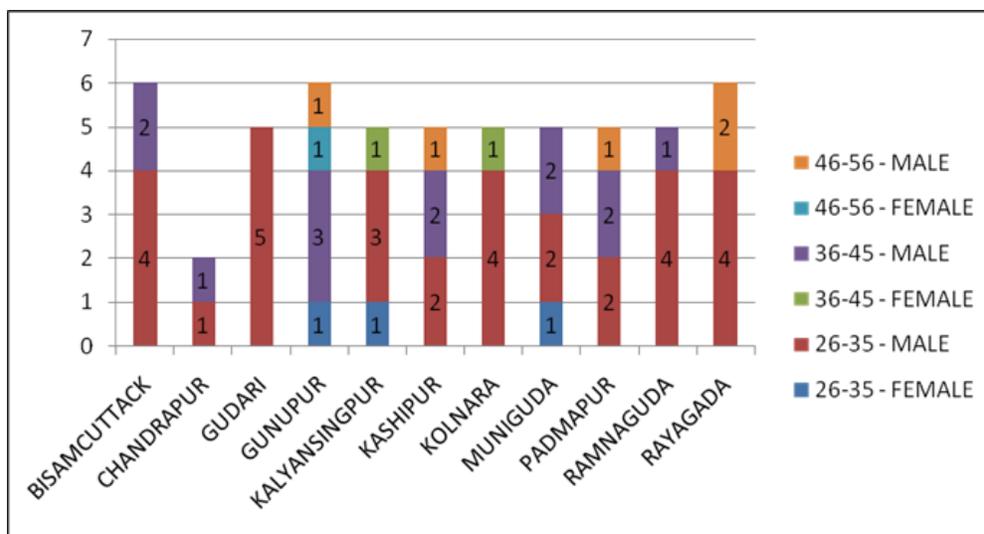


Figure-1. Block wise Age wise Gender wise VLEs as respondents

As per the data in Figure-1 out of 55 VLEs Bisamcuttack, Gunupur and Rayagada have 6 VLEs each and Chandrapur block has 2 VLEs and all other blocks have 5 VLEs each. There are 6 female (10.90%) VLEs and 49 male (89.10%) VLEs. The age of the VLEs ranges from 26 to 56, out of which 31 VLEs (63.26%) are male of the age group of 26 to 35. Then 13 male are from the age range of 36 to 45 which is 26.53% of total male VLEs.

Table-1. Block wise Qualifications of all VLEs as respondents

Block Names	Highest Qualification			Grand Total
	Intermediate	Graduate	Post Graduate	
BISAMCUTTACK	1	3	2	6
CHANDRAPUR	0	2	0	2
GUDARI	2	3	0	5
GUNUPUR	1	4	1	6
KALYANSINGPUR	1	3	1	5
KASHIPUR	0	5	0	5
KOLNARA	0	5	0	5
MUNIGUDA	2	2	1	5
PADMAPUR	0	5	0	5
RAMNAGUDA	2	2	1	5
RAYAGADA	0	6	0	6
Grand Total	9	40	6	55

As per the data available in Table-1, out of total VLEs 40 (72.72%) VLEs are graduates, 9 (16.36%) VLEs are intermediate and 6 (10.90%) VLEs are post graduates.

Citizen Respondent Details

Table-2. Block wise Age group wise Citizen Details as respondents

BLOCK NAMES	AGE GROUP						Grand Total
	19-28	29-38	39-48	49-58	59-68	69-78	
BISAMCUTTACK	14	18	22	5	1	0	60
CHANDRAPUR	3	6	4	7	0	0	20
GUDARI	8	14	19	7	2	0	50
GUNUPUR	18	26	11	4	1	0	60
KALYANSINGHPUR	6	21	16	7	0	0	50
KASHIPUR	17	14	17	2	0	0	50
KOLNARA	9	23	15	2	1	0	50
MUNIGUDA	17	15	13	5	0	0	50
PADMAPUR	13	10	15	10	2	0	50
RAMNAGUDA	7	23	14	4	2	0	50
RAYAGADA	14	15	20	9	1	1	60
Grand Total	126	185	166	62	10	1	550

Source: Primary Data

Based on the data available in Table-2, there are 185 (33.6%) citizens from the age group 29 to 38. From the age group 39 to 48 there are 166 (30.2%) citizens, 126 (22.90%) are from the age group 19 to 28. Next age group is 49 to 58 where 11.3% citizens were participated in the survey. The age group 59 to 68 has 10 citizens which is only 1.82% of the total respondents. And finally only one respondent (0.18%) is from the age group 69 to 78.

Influence of Common Service Centers on VLEs

A. Prior Computer Knowledge of VLEs

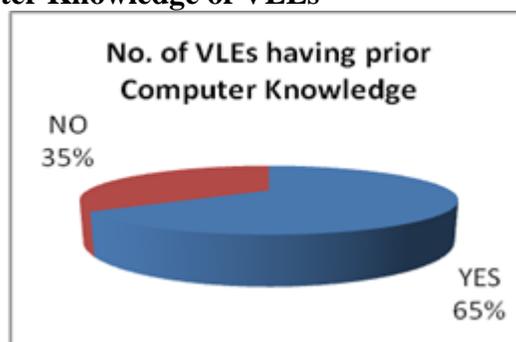


Figure – 2. Prior Computer Knowledge of VLEs

As per the data in Figure-2, which shows there are 35% of the VLEs were not having any prior computer knowledge, but after starting of CSCs they have been provided training on how to operate computers for performing day to day business activities, which is a positive influence of having CSC to render e-Governance services.

B. Profession of VLEs before setting of CSCs

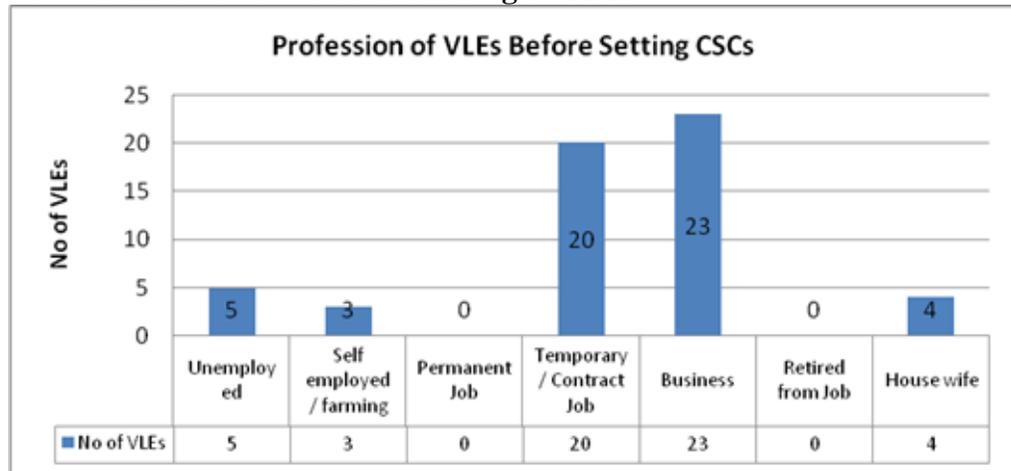


Figure-3. Profession of VLEs before Setting of CSCs

As we can see the data in the Figure-3, that 20 VLEs (36.36%) were in temporary or contractual job , 5 VLEs (9.09%) were unemployed and 4 VLEs (7.27%) were house wives but now each of them are earnings by opening CSCs as a business option, which is a positive influence of CSC.

C. The VLEs income before CSC and after CSC

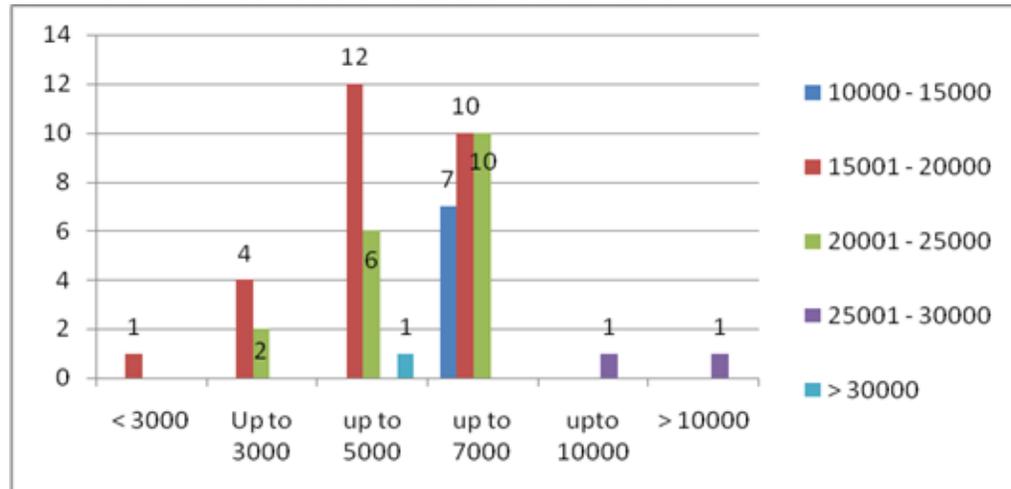


Figure-4. Income Comparison of VLEs before and after the CSC business

Now let us compare the data shown in the Figure-4 which shows the income of the VLEs before they have CSSs and after the CSCs. We can see there are 12 members who were having the earnings up to 5000 now having the income of 15000 to 20000. Similarly 10 VLEs were having the income up to 7000 and now have 15000 to 20000. Similarly there were 10 VLEs who were getting up to 7000 and 6 VLEs who were getting up to 5000 now getting 20000 to 25000 per month. Those who were earning 10000 or more than 10000, are now earning 25000 to 30000, per month. One VLE was earning 5000 per month,

now earning more than 30000 per month. So the impact and influence of CSC is very impressive on the financial and hence the social growth of the VLEs.

Influence of Common Service Centers on Citizens

A. Whether to use CSCs or the office physically for e-Governance services

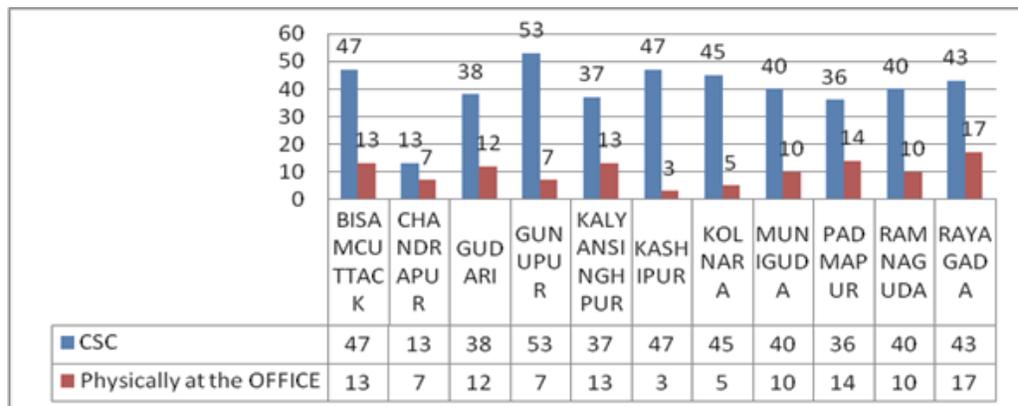


Figure-5. Use of CSC or Office for e-Governance services

After referring the data set in Figure-5, we can conclude that most of the citizens prefer to get the services at CSCs rather than visiting the office physically. The graph shows a very clear picture that almost in all the blocks people preferred to visit CSCs. 79.81% of Citizens given their choice to use CSCs where as only 20.18% of Citizens said they prefer to visit the respective offices to get their work done. The result analysis shows that the Citizens behavior of getting the e-governance services is quite influenced by CSCs.

B. Computer Literate Citizens

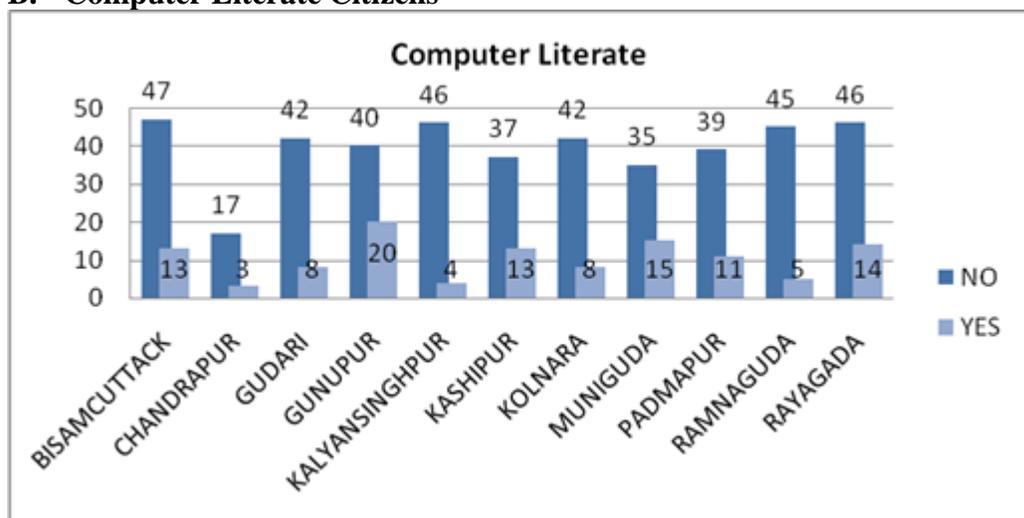


Figure-6. Computer literacy

As per the data available in Figure-6, which says, 436 citizens (79.27%) out of 550 are not computer literate that they can't operate computer of their own. The remaining (20.72%) of citizens can operate computers of their own. When a citizen can do his/her own work at CSCs, efficiency of the work will increase and that will be inspiration to others who don't know to operate computers.

C. CSCs Provides better e-Governance Services

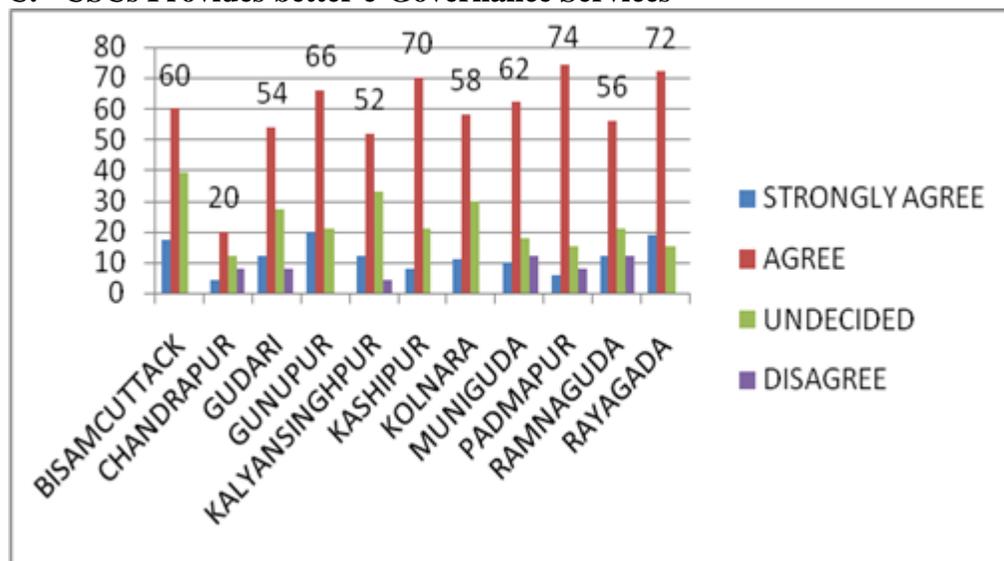


Figure-7. CSCs provide better e-Governance services

The data in Figure-7 shows almost every block's citizens admitted that the CSCs are providing better e-governance services, so which is very influential reason to use services rendered at CSCs.

5. Findings Of The Study

After a thorough study on the Common Service Centers at Rayagada district with 55 active VLEs and 550 Citizens of all categories, it is observed that the CSCs have enough positive influence on the rural citizens. Some of the findings of the study are as follows.

- The VLEs having prior computer knowledge are providing better e-governance services and hence those VLEs did not know computer operations earlier are trained by the service center agencies (SCA).
- Those VLEs were unemployed or house wives are also earning more than they have expected through CSCs.
- It is also observed that CSC owners or VLEs are earning more than they were earning before setting up CSCs.
- Majority of the citizens of Rayagada are preferred to use CSCs for their e-governance services rather than visiting the offices physically.
- The citizens who are computer literate are using the services at CSCs efficiently and effectively.
- Citizens agreed that CSCs provides better e-Governance services.

6. Conclusion

The researchers have concluded from this study that, the Common Service Centers are having a very influential role on citizens and Village Level Entrepreneurs. The various e-Governance services rendered at CSCs of Rayagada district are widely acceptable by the citizens, but bit more awareness is needed among the citizens. Both the stakeholders (VLEs and Citizens) are benefitted out of the services provided at CSCs. The VLEs are getting earnings, name and fame at the same time the citizens are getting the services within their locality.

References

- <https://meity.gov.in/content/common-services-centers-0>.
<https://digitalindia.gov.in/writereaddata/files/2.1%20CSC%20Scheme.pdf>.
<https://cic.gov.in/inaugural-address-president>.
 Sahoo, Amiya & Sahu, Dasarathi. (2014). E-governance: Initiatives and Implementations-A case study on Rayagada, a Tribal District of Odisha Information Technology.
<https://www.ocac.in/>.
<https://it.odisha.gov.in/Content/21/82/33>.
<https://rayagada.nic.in/services/>.
 Kumar, A., & Sahu, D. E-Governance Services: Issues & Challenges of VLES of Common Service Centers of Rayagada District of Odisha.
<https://www.csc.gov.in/>.
 Sahoo, Amiya & Sahu, Dr & Patra, Anita. (2018). Exploratory Study on Public Utility Services to Citizens, Through Common Service Centers, Is an Effective E-Governance Tool, With Special Reference to Rayagada District of Odisha. International Journal of Interdisciplinary Research and Innovations ISSN 2348-1226 (online) Vol. 6, Issue 3, pp: (247-252).
 Sahoo, Amiya & Sahu, Dr & Patra, Anita. (2020). [10] Sahoo, Amiya & Sahu, Dr & Patra, Anita. (2018). Exploratory Study on Public Utility Services to Citizens, Through Common Service Centers, Is an Effective E-Governance Tool. Test Engineering and Management ISSN: 0193-4120 Vol. 83, Issue Mar-April 2020, pp: (17126 - 17134).
<https://www.odishaonline.gov.in/Site/Content/General/sca.html>.
 Pathak, P, & Barnwal, S. K. (2013). E-governance in India—a critical appraisal. Journal of Advanced Management Science Vol, 1(2).
 Mishra, P. (2014). Progressive Punjab: A Step Towards E-Governance. Indian Journal of Public Administration, 60(2), 341-349.
 Kumar, H., Poonia, S., & Iliyas, M. (2017, March). A Step Towards Empowerment and Digital Inclusion of Rural Public in India. In Proceedings of the 10th International Conference on Theory and Practice of Electronic Governance (pp. 375-383).
 Singh, P. (2020). Challenges of E-Governance in Rural areas of Haryana. Studies in Indian Place Names, 40(3), 1583-1604.