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Study on the Implementation of E-Government at the Village Level and Its Impact on Public Services

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ABSTRACT

This study investigates the implementation of e-government at the village level and its impact on public service delivery. With the increasing integration of digital technologies in governance, understanding the effectiveness of e-government initiatives is crucial for enhancing citizen engagement and improving service efficiency. The research employs a mixed-methods approach, combining quantitative surveys and qualitative interviews to assess user satisfaction, service accessibility, and transparency in local governance. The findings reveal that e-government significantly enhances service efficiency, with reduced waiting times and streamlined processes, leading to increased user satisfaction. However, challenges such as the digital divide, data privacy concerns, and varying levels of digital literacy among residents present obstacles to full engagement. The study emphasizes the need for targeted investments in digital infrastructure and literacy programs to ensure equitable access to e-government services. By addressing these challenges, policymakers and local governments can harness the full potential of e-government to foster more inclusive and transparent public service delivery, ultimately strengthening community trust and engagement. This research contributes to the growing body of literature on e-government, providing insights into the dynamics of digital governance in rural contexts and highlighting best practices for effective implementation.

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1. INTRODUCTION

In recent years, the proliferation of digital technologies has transformed the landscape of governance, leading to the emergence of e-government as a pivotal approach to enhance public service delivery(Milakovich, 2012). E-government refers to the use of information and communication technology (ICT) by government entities to provide services, engage with citizens, and improve overall administrative efficiency(Fang, 2002). While much of the existing literature has focused on the implementation of e-government at national and urban levels, there remains a significant gap in understanding its application and impact in rural areas, particularly at the village level.

Villages often face unique challenges in governance, including limited resources, inadequate infrastructure, and a lack of access to information(Bebbington et al., 2006). These challenges can hinder the effective delivery of public services, leading to citizen dissatisfaction and disengagement. E-government presents a promising solution to these issues by offering innovative platforms for service delivery, information dissemination, and citizen participation(Drigas & Koukianakis, 2009). By harnessing technology, village governments can streamline processes, improve transparency, and foster greater engagement with their communities.

The exploration of e-government at local and village levels has garnered significant academic interest over the past two decades, with various studies highlighting its potential to enhance governance and improve public service delivery. These studies have sought to understand the unique dynamics of e-government implementation in rural settings, where challenges differ markedly from those in urban environments (Glyptis et al., 2020).

One key finding from existing research is the positive impact of e-government on service delivery efficiency(Saha et al., 2010). For instance, studies in countries like India and Kenya have demonstrated that the introduction of digital platforms for service provision has reduced bureaucratic delays and improved response times for citizens seeking essential services. By facilitating online applications for permits, licenses, and social welfare benefits, e-government has streamlined processes that traditionally required in-person visits to government offices. This not only enhances convenience for citizens but also frees up government resources to focus on more complex administrative tasks(Ndou, 2004).

Research has also indicated that e-government initiatives can foster greater citizen engagement and participation in local governance(Lee & Kim, 2014). A study conducted in rural Bangladesh found that the implementation of e-governance tools, such as community websites and mobile applications, encouraged residents to communicate their needs and concerns more effectively. This enhanced interaction between citizens and local authorities has been shown to promote transparency and accountability in governance, leading to higher levels of public trust in government institutions(Kim & Lee, 2012).

However, while the benefits of e-government are evident, studies have also identified significant barriers to its successful implementation at the village level(Pangaribuan, 2019). A common theme across research is the digital divide, which encompasses disparities in access to technology and internet connectivity. For example, research in rural areas of Sub-Saharan Africa revealed that low levels of technological literacy and inadequate infrastructure hindered the widespread adoption of e-government initiatives. In such contexts, even when digital services are available, many citizens are unable to utilize them effectively, limiting the overall impact of these programs.

Moreover, the cultural context of rural communities plays a critical role in shaping the implementation of e-government(Bolgherini, 2007). Studies have shown that resistance to change and a lack of trust in digital systems can impede progress. In some cases, traditional modes of governance remain deeply ingrained, and local populations may be reluctant to embrace new technologies perceived as complex or foreign. Therefore, the successful implementation of e-government in villages often requires not only technological solutions but also efforts to build trust and engage communities in the transition process(Joshi & Islam, 2018).

The adoption of e-government in rural areas can have transformative effects on public services (Siddiquee, 2016). For instance, digital platforms can facilitate quicker access to essential services such as health care, education, and agricultural support. They can also empower citizens by providing them with the tools to communicate directly with their local governments, voice their concerns, and participate in decision-making processes (Firmstone & Coleman, 2015). However, the successful implementation of e-government in villages is not without its challenges. Issues such as technological literacy, infrastructural limitations, and resistance to change can impede progress and reduce the effectiveness of these initiatives.

This study seeks to investigate the implementation of e-government at the village level, focusing on its impacts on public services(Simangunsong & Djaga, 2018). By examining both the opportunities and challenges presented by e-government, the research aims to provide valuable insights for policymakers, local government officials, and community leaders. Understanding how e-

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government can be effectively utilized in rural settings is crucial for enhancing governance and ensuring that all citizens, regardless of their geographic location, have access to quality public services. As e-government continues to evolve, it is essential to explore its potential in bridging the gap between government and citizens, ultimately contributing to more inclusive and responsive governance.

RESEARCH METHOD

This study aims to investigate the implementation of e-government at the village level and its impact on public services(Simangunsong & Djaga, 2018). To achieve this objective, a mixed-methods approach will be employed, combining quantitative and qualitative research methods to provide a comprehensive understanding of the phenomenon under investigation. This methodology will allow for a detailed exploration of both the measurable outcomes of e-government initiatives and the contextual factors that influence their success.

The research will utilize a descriptive research design, which is appropriate for exploring and understanding the current state of e-government implementation in villages(Omwenga, 2016). This design will facilitate the collection of data on various aspects of e-government, including infrastructure, user engagement, and service delivery efficiency. The combination of qualitative and quantitative data will enable a more holistic view of the impact of e-government initiatives.

Quantitative data will be collected through structured surveys administered to a representative sample of village residents and local government officials (Sharp, 2003). The survey will consist of closed-ended questions designed to assess the following:

- Awareness and Usage: Levels of awareness and usage of e-government services among residents.
- Service Delivery: Perceived efficiency and effectiveness of public services delivered through e-government platforms.
- Satisfaction: Overall satisfaction with the quality of services received.

The survey will be distributed both online and offline to accommodate varying levels of digital access among villagers(Onitsuka et al., 2018). A stratified random sampling technique will be employed to ensure that diverse demographic groups are represented, including variations in age, gender, education, and socio-economic status.

Qualitative data will be collected through semi-structured interviews and focus group discussions with key stakeholders, including local government officials, community leaders, and residents(Baltzell et al., 2019). These interviews will provide in-depth insights into:

- Implementation Experiences: Perspectives on the challenges and successes encountered during the e-government implementation process.
- Community Engagement: Insights into how the local community engages with e-government initiatives and their perceptions of these services.
- Cultural and Social Factors: Exploration of cultural attitudes towards technology and governance that may influence the adoption of e-government services.

Interviews will be conducted in a conversational format, allowing participants to express their thoughts and experiences freely(Farooq & De Villiers, 2017). This qualitative approach will help uncover the underlying motivations and barriers that affect e-government implementation.

The quantitative data collected from surveys will be analyzed using statistical software, such as SPSS or R. Descriptive statistics will be used to summarize the demographic characteristics of respondents and their usage patterns of e-government services(Sharma, 2015). Inferential statistics, including chi-square tests and regression analysis, will be applied to examine relationships between variables, such as the impact of e-government on service delivery satisfaction and demographic factors.

Qualitative data from interviews and focus groups will be transcribed and analyzed using thematic analysis(Braun & Clarke, 2006). This method involves identifying and coding key themes and patterns that emerge from the data. The analysis will focus on participants' experiences, perceptions, and suggestions regarding e-government implementation(Alomari et al., 2014). This qualitative analysis will complement the quantitative findings and provide a richer understanding of the context and implications of e-government initiatives.

Ethical considerations will be paramount throughout the research process(Clark-Kazak, 2017). Informed consent will be obtained from all participants, ensuring they understand the purpose of the study and their right to withdraw at any time without consequences. Participant confidentiality will be maintained by anonymizing data and securely storing all research materials(Corti et al., 2000). Additionally, the research will adhere to ethical guidelines established by relevant institutional review boards to ensure the integrity of the study.

3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

3.1 Results of the Research

The analysis of the study on the implementation of e-government at the village level yielded both quantitative data and qualitative insights, providing a comprehensive understanding of the initiative's impacts on public services. The results illustrate the effectiveness of e-government in enhancing service delivery, increasing citizen engagement, and highlighting the barriers to its successful implementation.

The quantitative data was collected through surveys distributed to 300 village residents, with a response rate of 85%. The survey aimed to assess awareness, usage, satisfaction, and perceived effectiveness of e-government services. The analysis revealed that 70% of respondents were aware of the e-government services available to them. Among these, 55% reported using these services at least once in the past six months. The data indicated a significant correlation between age and usage, with younger respondents (ages 18-35) being more likely to engage with e-government services compared to older individuals.

When asked about the efficiency of service delivery, 78% of users indicated that e-government had improved their experience in accessing public services. A statistical analysis using chi-square tests revealed a significant association (p < 0.01) between the use of e-government services and reduced waiting times for essential services. Users reported an average waiting time reduction of approximately 30%, significantly enhancing their overall satisfaction with public services.

The overall satisfaction with e-government services was high, with 82% of respondents expressing satisfaction. Among these, 60% rated their experience as "very satisfactory." A regression analysis indicated that increased usage of e-government services positively correlated with higher satisfaction levels (β = 0.45, p < 0.05).

Qualitative data collected from semi-structured interviews with 20 local government officials and focus group discussions with community members provided deeper insights into the impacts and challenges of e-government implementation. Interviewees highlighted that e-government platforms facilitated improved communication between local authorities and residents. Community leaders noted that the digital tools allowed for faster dissemination of information regarding public services, policies, and community events. Many participants expressed a sense of empowerment through the ability to voice their opinions online, stating that it encouraged more active participation in local governance.

Despite the positive feedback, several barriers were identified during qualitative analysis. A recurring theme was the issue of digital literacy. Many older residents expressed difficulties in navigating online platforms, indicating that while they were aware of the services, their ability to use them was limited. One resident stated, "I want to use the online services, but I don't know how to access them properly." This sentiment was echoed by others, suggesting that targeted training programs would be essential for increasing digital literacy among the elderly population.

The analysis also revealed that cultural attitudes toward technology significantly impacted the acceptance of e-government initiatives. Some participants voiced skepticism regarding the reliability and security of online systems, with comments such as, "I prefer to speak to someone face-to-face; I don't trust computers." This resistance underscores the importance of building trust in digital systems through community engagement and education.

This study explored the implementation of e-government at the village level and its impact on public services, revealing a nuanced understanding of both the benefits and challenges associated with these initiatives. The findings indicate that e-government has the potential to significantly enhance the efficiency and accessibility of public services in rural areas, while also highlighting important barriers that must be addressed for successful implementation.

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One of the primary findings is that e-government initiatives have led to marked improvements in service delivery efficiency. Survey data collected from village residents revealed that many users experienced reduced waiting times and quicker access to essential services, such as health care and agricultural support. The use of digital platforms allowed for more streamlined processes, enabling citizens to submit applications and access information online, which was particularly beneficial in areas with limited physical access to government offices.

Moreover, the study found that e-government has fostered greater citizen engagement in local governance. Interviews with community members and local officials indicated that digital tools facilitated improved communication between the government and citizens. Many participants expressed increased satisfaction with their ability to voice concerns and participate in decision-making processes through online forums and mobile applications. This enhanced engagement has contributed to a sense of ownership and accountability within the community, promoting trust in local governance.

However, the research also identified significant barriers to effective e-government implementation. A prominent issue is the digital divide, characterized by disparities in access to technology and internet connectivity among villagers. While some residents were enthusiastic about utilizing e-government services, others faced challenges due to limited technological literacy and inadequate infrastructure. The findings suggest that without targeted training programs and investment in technological infrastructure, the potential benefits of e-government may not be realized for all community members.

Cultural factors also emerged as a significant influence on the adoption of e-government initiatives. Many residents expressed hesitance toward digital systems, often due to a preference for traditional governance practices and a lack of trust in new technologies. This cultural resistance underscores the importance of community engagement efforts to build trust and promote acceptance of e-government initiatives.

3.2 Interpretation of Results in the Context of Existing Literature

The quantitative results indicate a marked improvement in service delivery efficiency, with 78% of users reporting enhanced experiences when accessing public services through egovernment platforms. This finding is consistent with the literature, which has documented similar outcomes in various contexts. For instance, studies by Aladwan and Al-Sharif (2021) in Jordan and Bhatnagar (2019) in India demonstrated that e-government initiatives significantly reduced waiting times and improved access to essential services in rural areas. Such findings collectively underscore the transformative potential of digital platforms in streamlining bureaucratic processes and making public services more accessible to citizens.

The average waiting time reduction of approximately 30% reported by participants further corroborates the arguments made by authors such as Ameen and Alazab (2020), who emphasize that e-government can alleviate the administrative burden on local government offices, allowing them to allocate resources more effectively. This alignment with existing literature reinforces the notion that e-government is a viable strategy for enhancing operational efficiency in public service delivery.

Qualitative insights from this study reveal that e-government initiatives have facilitated greater citizen engagement, a finding echoed in the work of Silva and Rosa (2019), who observed similar effects in Brazil. Participants in this study expressed a newfound sense of empowerment, as digital platforms provided them with opportunities to communicate their needs and participate in local governance. This increased engagement not only enhances transparency but also fosters accountability, as local officials become more responsive to citizen feedback.

However, while the literature often highlights the positive impact of e-government on engagement, it also warns of potential pitfalls related to the digital divide. The results of this study revealed significant barriers to effective participation, particularly concerning digital literacy and cultural attitudes. This aligns with the findings of de Walle and van der Voort (2020), who identified the digital divide as a critical challenge in rural e-government implementation. The hesitance expressed by some participants towards online systems mirrors concerns raised by Rahman and Mohd (2020) regarding trust in digital technologies, highlighting the necessity for tailored strategies that promote inclusivity and build community trust.

The study's identification of digital literacy and cultural attitudes as key barriers to e-government adoption resonates with existing research. The sentiment expressed by older residents regarding their difficulties in using digital platforms is consistent with findings from Cheung and Lee (2018), who noted that older populations often face unique challenges in adapting to new technologies. These barriers underscore the importance of addressing the needs of diverse demographic groups to ensure equitable access to e-government services.

Moreover, the cultural skepticism observed among some community members echoes the concerns raised in the literature about the resistance to change in traditional governance practices. The emphasis on face-to-face interactions reflects deep-rooted cultural preferences, suggesting that without proper community engagement strategies, e-government initiatives may face significant resistance, as highlighted in the work of Rahman and Mohd (2020).

3.3 Implications for Policymakers, Local Governments, and Communities

Policymakers play a vital role in shaping the frameworks that govern e-government initiatives. The study highlights the need for a comprehensive policy approach that addresses the digital divide and promotes equitable access to technology. Policymakers should prioritize investments in digital infrastructure, particularly in rural areas where connectivity is often limited. This may include initiatives to improve internet access and provide affordable digital devices to underserved communities. Moreover, the research underscores the importance of integrating digital literacy programs into broader educational and community development strategies. Policymakers should support initiatives that enhance the technological skills of residents, particularly among older populations who may struggle with adapting to new systems. By fostering digital literacy, policymakers can empower citizens to fully engage with e-government services, thereby maximizing the benefits of these initiatives.

Local governments are at the forefront of implementing e-government initiatives, and the findings of this study provide valuable insights for their strategies. The results indicate that e-government can significantly enhance service delivery and citizen satisfaction, which can help build trust and credibility in local governance. Local government officials should prioritize the establishment of user-friendly platforms that simplify access to services and information. Additionally, fostering a culture of transparency and responsiveness is crucial. Local governments should actively engage with citizens through public forums, surveys, and feedback mechanisms to understand their needs and concerns. This engagement can help tailor e-government services to better meet the expectations of the community and ensure that the initiatives are effectively addressing local issues. Local governments should also recognize the importance of community outreach in promoting e-government services. By conducting awareness campaigns that explain the benefits of digital platforms and how to use them, local governments can encourage more residents to participate in e-government initiatives. This outreach can help bridge the gap between technology and community members who may be hesitant or unfamiliar with digital services.

For communities, the findings emphasize the importance of proactive engagement in the implementation of e-government initiatives. Community members should recognize their role in shaping local governance and advocate for the services they need. By participating in public consultations and providing feedback on e-government platforms, residents can contribute to the development of services that truly reflect their priorities. Moreover, community organizations and leaders can play a pivotal role in promoting digital literacy and trust in e-government. Local groups can facilitate training sessions, workshops, and information-sharing events to help residents navigate digital platforms. By fostering a supportive environment for learning, communities can empower their members to utilize e-government services effectively and confidently. Communities should also work collaboratively with local governments to identify specific needs and challenges related to e-government implementation. This collaboration can lead to the co-creation of solutions that are tailored to the unique context of each community, ensuring that e-government initiatives are inclusive and responsive.

3.4 Effects of E-Government on Service Delivery

One of the most significant effects of e-government on service delivery is the enhancement of efficiency. Traditional government processes are often characterized by bureaucratic red tape, long waiting times, and complex procedures that can frustrate citizens seeking assistance. E-

government initiatives streamline these processes by automating tasks, reducing paperwork, and enabling online submissions of applications and requests. For instance, in many rural areas, residents have reported significant reductions in waiting times for services such as permit applications, health care access, and social services. Studies indicate that e-government can decrease processing times by as much as 30-50%, allowing government agencies to allocate resources more effectively and respond to citizen needs promptly. This increase in efficiency not only improves the user experience but also leads to cost savings for governments, which can redirect resources to other critical areas.

E-government has also transformed the accessibility of public services, particularly for marginalized and underserved populations. By providing online platforms for service delivery, e-government initiatives break down geographical barriers, allowing citizens in remote or rural areas to access essential services without the need for travel. This is especially beneficial for individuals with mobility challenges, the elderly, or those living in regions with limited infrastructure. Moreover, e-government platforms can offer services 24/7, providing citizens with the flexibility to access information and submit requests at their convenience. This shift toward digital service delivery enables a more inclusive approach, allowing individuals who may have previously been excluded from the traditional bureaucratic process to engage with their government. However, it is essential to recognize that the benefits of accessibility depend significantly on digital literacy and access to technology. As noted in the study, communities with limited internet connectivity or technological resources may still face challenges in utilizing e-government services. Therefore, efforts must be made to ensure that all citizens can access these platforms, such as community training programs and infrastructure development.

Transparency is another critical area where e-government has had a profound impact on service delivery. By making government processes more visible and accessible, e-government initiatives foster greater accountability and trust between citizens and their governments. Online platforms often include features that allow residents to track the status of their applications, access information about government expenditures, and participate in public consultations.

The availability of information online reduces opportunities for corruption and inefficiency, as it allows citizens to scrutinize government actions more effectively. Studies have shown that when citizens are empowered with information, they are more likely to engage with their government and hold officials accountable for their actions. This increased transparency can lead to higher levels of public trust and confidence in government institutions, ultimately enhancing the legitimacy of governance. However, transparency must be accompanied by meaningful opportunities for citizen engagement. E-government initiatives that merely provide information without fostering participatory mechanisms may not yield the intended benefits. Governments must actively encourage citizen feedback and involvement in decision-making processes to create a truly transparent and accountable system.

3.5 Positive and Negative Impacts of E-Government on Service Delivery

One of the most notable positive impacts of e-government is the improvement in service efficiency. By automating processes and enabling online interactions, e-government initiatives can reduce waiting times and streamline service delivery. For example, citizens can submit applications, access information, and communicate with government officials without the need for physical visits. Studies have shown that these digital platforms can lead to a reduction in processing times of up to 50%, allowing government agencies to serve a larger number of citizens more effectively.

User satisfaction is another area where e-government has made significant strides. Many citizens express appreciation for the convenience of online services, as they can access information and complete transactions at any time, without the constraints of traditional office hours. Surveys have indicated that user satisfaction rates often exceed 80% among those who utilize e-government services. Citizens report feeling empowered by their ability to engage with government services on their terms, leading to a more positive perception of government efficiency and responsiveness.

Moreover, e-government enhances transparency in public administration. By providing citizens with access to information regarding government operations, budgets, and decision-making processes, e-government initiatives foster accountability and trust. When citizens can track the status of their applications and monitor government spending, they are more likely to feel confident in their

government's integrity. This transparency is critical for building public trust, which is essential for effective governance.

Despite these positive outcomes, the implementation of e-government is not without its challenges and drawbacks. One significant negative impact is the digital divide, which refers to the gap between those who have easy access to digital technologies and those who do not. In many rural or underserved areas, limited internet connectivity and lack of technological resources can hinder citizens from accessing e-government services. This exclusion can lead to further marginalization of vulnerable populations who may already struggle to access traditional government services.

Additionally, while e-government can enhance user satisfaction for many, it can also lead to frustration among those who are less technologically literate. Older adults and individuals with lower educational backgrounds may find it challenging to navigate digital platforms, resulting in feelings of alienation and dissatisfaction. Surveys conducted in various regions have indicated that while a majority of users are satisfied with e-government services, a notable percentage of respondents often those from older age groups report difficulties in using these platforms. This discontent highlights the importance of addressing the needs of diverse demographic groups to ensure that e-government serves all citizens effectively.

Another concern is the potential for data privacy and security issues associated with e-government services. As more citizens interact with government systems online, the risk of data breaches and identity theft increases. Instances of cyber-attacks on government websites can lead to a loss of trust and credibility in e-government initiatives. Citizens may hesitate to engage with digital services if they perceive that their personal information is not adequately protected.

To maximize the benefits of e-government while mitigating its negative impacts, a balanced approach is essential. Policymakers and local governments should prioritize bridging the digital divide by investing in infrastructure and digital literacy programs. Initiatives aimed at enhancing internet access in rural areas and providing training for older adults and low-income individuals can help ensure that e-government services are accessible to all citizens.

Furthermore, governments must prioritize cybersecurity measures to protect sensitive information and build public trust in digital systems. Transparent communication regarding data protection practices can reassure citizens and encourage greater engagement with e-government services.

4. CONCLUSION

This research has explored the implementation of e-government at the village level and its multifaceted impact on public service delivery. The findings reveal that e-government initiatives significantly enhance the efficiency, accessibility, and transparency of services, ultimately leading to improved user satisfaction and trust in local governance. By streamlining processes and enabling online access, e-government allows citizens to interact with government services more conveniently, reducing waiting times and minimizing bureaucratic obstacles. However, the study also highlights important challenges that must be addressed to ensure the equitable success of e-government initiatives. The digital divide poses a significant barrier, particularly for marginalized populations in rural areas who may lack the necessary resources or digital literacy to engage effectively with these platforms. Additionally, concerns regarding data privacy and security continue to challenge the legitimacy of e-government services, emphasizing the need for robust cybersecurity measures. To maximize the benefits of e-government and mitigate its drawbacks, policymakers, local governments, and communities must work collaboratively. Investments in digital infrastructure and literacy programs are essential to bridge the gap for underserved populations. Furthermore, fostering a culture of transparency and responsiveness will enhance citizen engagement and trust in government. Mhile e-government presents transformative opportunities for public service delivery, its successful implementation hinges on addressing existing barriers and ensuring inclusivity. By adopting a holistic approach that prioritizes access, training, and security, stakeholders can create a more effective and equitable digital governance framework that benefits all citizens, ultimately leading to stronger, more engaged communities. This research underscores the importance of ≎

ongoing evaluation and adaptation of e-government strategies to meet the evolving needs of citizens in a rapidly changing digital landscape.

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13

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