

E-GOVERNANCE FRAMEWORK FOR EFFECTIVE IMPLEMENTATION OF SUWIDHA IN THE STATE OF PUNJAB

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ABSTRACT

Responsiveness, transparency and accountability in Government Operations, needs the effective implementation of e-Governance. For that active participation of citizens is essential in the design and implementation of e-Governance framework. This will enhance the interaction between Government and citizens. This will also enable Government to achieve the best satisfaction level among the citizen. A range of earlier studies and collection of citizen's view have been critically explored, examined and analyzed by the researchers in-order to suggest suitable e-Governance framework for effective implementation of SUWIDHA in the state of Punjab. Suwidha has been conceived to facilitate citizens by capturing the input at a single point, and provide the specified delivery date depending upon the type of service. In this paper a proposed effective e-Governance framework is presented. It is expected that the performance of existing E-Governance system will be enhanced via the proposed framework after its successful implementation.

Keywords: e-Governance, Suwidha, Framework

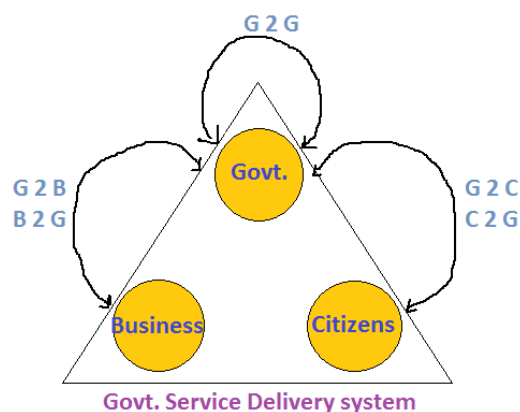
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1. INTRODUCTION

E-Governance is the use of information technology for efficient and effective delivery of government services to citizens. The aim of e-governance implementation is to provide SMART governance, which means Simple, Moral, Accountable and Responsive Government. It is to improve the governance and enable citizen's participation in decision making, policy design for better implementation of government service delivery system, which improves the transparency by eliminating the middlemen or agents between government and citizens. Government Services fall in to following broad categories.

- 1). G 2 C (Government to Citizens) : Government provides the basic services to the citizens. It includes registration of vehicles and land, certification of birth, death, marriage etc.
- 2). C 2 G (Citizens to Government) : It includes interaction of citizens with the government.



- 3). G 2 B (Government to Business) : This category includes the Government interaction towards the business for standard enforcement, taxes collection, issuing the licenses.
- 4). B 2 G (Business to Government) : Businessmen interacts with the Government in terms of registration for licenses , submission of taxes etc.
- 5). G 2 G (Government to Government) : Government departments interact with each other for various operations like monitoring , controlling etc.

2. SUWIDHA

SUWIDHA means Single User Window Disposal Help Line for Applicants. This project was started with the objective of providing the single point for receipt and delivery of various applications related to different departments of Deputy commissioner and accepting the required service fee at the counter itself.

Objectives of SUWIDHA

- To define the specified delivery date according to the Service.

- To integrate the front end services and back end services to reduce the service delivery time.
- To standardize the functioning throughout the State
- To implement the single Window system
- To provide the Application status 24X7 days
- To bring the transparency, responsibility, accountability, efficiency in the Government operations.

Services provided by the Suwidha are Birth/Death Certificate, Married/Unmarried Certificate, Issuance of NOC, Attestation of affidavit etc.

3. OBJECTIVE AND SCOPE OF THE STUDY

The objective of study was to look at services provided by SUWIDHA centre and analyze the views of citizens and the way of services provided at the SUWIDHA to design the required framework of e-Governance for better implementation. In view of the certain constraints like time, area and money, the study was confined to the State of Punjab in India because Punjab is growing State of India where SUWIDHA is implemented in successful manner. For this purpose whole Punjab was categorized into three traditional Zones mainly known as Majha, Malwa and Doaba. Two districts in each zone were selected on random basis and 50 % Tehsils from each selected district are included in the study

4. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

After a through literature review on e-governance, a questionnaire was framed to study the views of citizens. The questionnaire is based on five point scale. The research involves the collection of data from the citizens who are availing the services from the SUWIDHA. The total number of respondents, the sample size and applications of statistical techniques has been followed. The details of the research methodology adopted in this research are given below :

4.1.1 For the State of Punjab

1. *Universe of study*-All Districts of Punjab State.
2. *Sample selection*-The present study is basis on analysis of SUWIDHA. It was confined to State of Punjab with 6 districts from 3 different regions of the State (2 districts each) namely Bathinda, Faridkot , Amritsar, Tarantaran, Jalandhar, S.B.S. Nagar. and 50 % tehsils of these districts.

4.1.2 For the respondents

1. *Universe of study*-All common citizens.

2. Sample Selection-A number of respondents from the selected districts were selected using stratified random sampling (shown in table 1).

5. DATA COLLECTION AND MAIN FINDINGS

Keeping in view the above objective the data was collected through direct personnel investigated method. As a result, numbers of factors are identified useful to design proposed effective e-governance framework. The responses of 345 citizens of the selected districts under study were recorded on five point scale with score ranging from 1 to 5.

Table 1. Sample Table

Group		Number of Respondents	%age Response size
Gender	1. Female	100	28.99
	2. Male	245	71.01
Residence	1.Urban	211	61.16
	2.Semi-Urban	94	27.25
	3.Rural	40	11.59
Qualification	1.PG	41	11.88
	2.Graduate	180	52.17
	3.Matric	91	26.38
	4.Under Matric	33	9.57
Income Level	1.BPL/ Yellow Card	100	28.99
	2.Non ITaxPay	180	52.17
	3.ITax Payee	65	18.84
Occupation	1.Unemployed	45	13.04
	2.Service	108	31.30
	3.Business	87	25.22
	4.Student	105	30.44
Age Group (Yrs.)	1.Up to 18	69	20.00
	2. 18-40	218	63.19
	3.Above 40	58	16.81
All Data		345	100

Table 2. Facilities needed at Suwidha Centre

Sr. No.	Factors	Avg.
1.	Regular Doctor for medical checkup	4.40
2.	Regular attestation officer	4.32
3.	Regular Photographer	3.92
4.	Stamp paper vendor	4.18
5.	Appellant channel against Suwidha Centre on-site	3.63
6.	A counter for forms	4.20
7.	open on Saturday and Sunday	4.17
8.	Some concessions for BPL families	4.16
9.	On-line fees payment facility	4.25
10.	On-line form apply facility	4.26

Table 3. Problems faced at Suwidha Centre

Sr. No.	Factors	Avg .
1.	Non availability of forms	3.28
2.	Lack of knowledge about documentation to be appended	4.26
3.	Costly forms	2.86
4.	Too much crowding	4.12
5.	Lack of sitting arrangement for waiting	3.01
6.	Lack of drinking water facility	3.35
7.	Delay at the time of form submission at the counters	3.20
8.	Officials asking more money than fee	2.84
9.	Interference of agents	3.42
10.	Embarrassment by officials	2.87
11.	Website not updated	3.40

Table 4. Crowd Controlling Factors at Suwidha

Sr. No.	Factors	Avg .
1.	On-line payment of fees	4.50
2.	By opening Suwidha Centers at village level	4.35
3.	Govt. representatives should be sent to villages	4.16
4.	Availing Services of N.G.O.	3.95
5.	Availing Services of Panchayats	3.77
6.	Knowing application status via SMS	4.13

Above **table 2** clearly shows the views of the citizens of Punjab State regarding the facilities required at Suwidha center. On the basis of average score we come to know that they except factors 3 and 5 and every other factor must full-filled at primary level. On the basis of highest average it shows that citizens require a regular doctor for medical checkup in Suwidha center. Though the days are fixed for medical checkup in civil hospitals but still the Government doctors are unable to meet the demands of the citizens. As the number of patients visiting these

doctors is very high. People want that one particular doctor should be assigned permanently so that they can avoid wastage of their precious time. As per the second higher average, people of the Punjab State require permanent attestation authority in the Suwidha Centre. People suffer lot of harassment because the officer on these seats is temporary.

According to the other average score citizens need permanent stamp vendor and form counter inside the Suwidha. Even citizens demands that the forms should be made available on Saturday and Sunday so, that purchase of forms should be in reach of every single person especially business class as businessmen don't get time to move to Suwidha centre on week days (Monday to Friday) they get time on Saturday and Sunday, same way it is easy to come on Sunday for the service class. There should also be reduction in the cost of services for the people belonging to BPL (below poverty line). In the age of Information technology, there should be an online system of paying fee and filling the form online, which will reduce the work load of the person in-charge as well as of the applicant.

People hardly showed interest in appointing a permanent photographer because they are of view that in today's world every one has photograph in his pocket or they can get it clicked at that very moment by web camera in Suwidha Centre.

Table 3 shows various problems faced at Suwidha Centre and average score for these problems. It is evident from the table that lack of knowledge about the documents to be appended and crowding are the major problems faced by the citizens at Suwidha Centre. This is probably because people have to ask again again about documents and there is lack of proper guidance system as there are no displays or instruction booklets about required documents for particular services. Even this information is not available on line.

Crowding at Suwidha Centres may be due to the reason that most of the buildings of Suwidha Centres are old and arranged as a part of some office. Factors 1,5,6,7,9,11 are not major but shows important problems as these have moderate response from citizens. It is probably because most of Suwidha Centre buildings do not have adequately managed basic facilities like sitting arrangements, drinking water. Moreover other problems may be due to prevalence of old system of work which involved lot of interference of agents who are responsible in delay of services delivery to citizens. Probably a reason for not updating of website is the less availability of Computer expert staff that could quickly upload data on daily basis.

Table 4 shows the citizen's view about how crowd can be controlled at Suwidha Centre. Online payment of fee, opening Suwidha Centre at village level and sending Government representatives to villages are most favoured solutions given by the citizens. It may be due to their practical experiences which they are facing at Suwidha Centres. Researchers also

observed that these solutions may contribute in a big way to control over crowding at Suwidha Centres and it would also help to flourish benefits to citizens at root level. Hence researchers also recommended these solutions for making e-governance project make effective and hassle free.

6. PROPOSED FRAMEWORK

Looking at problems faced by citizens and solutions possible, researchers would like to introduce a better framework in order to reduce hassles and over crowding at Suwidha Centre. Suwidha Centres operational under the supervision of Deputy Commissioner should be connected at 4 different ends simultaneously.

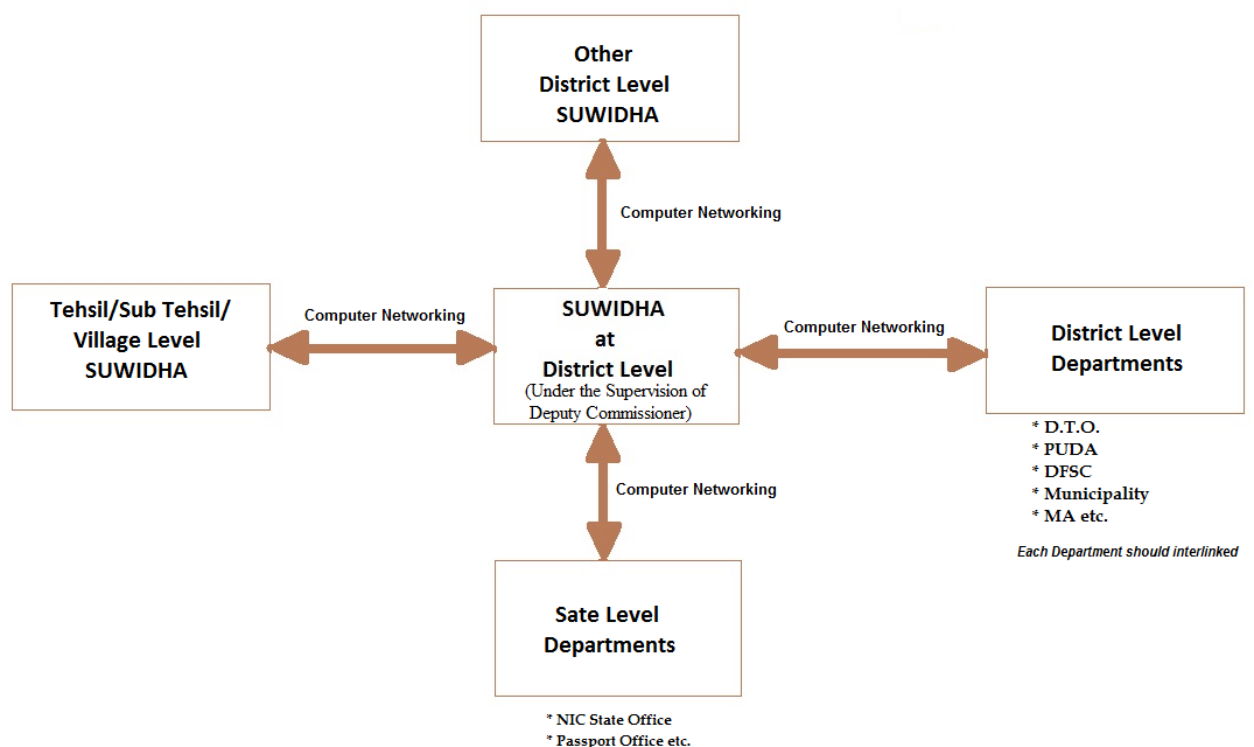


Fig. 2. PROPOSED E-DISTRICT SUWIDHA MODEL

At one end e-district Suwidha Model should be connected via computer network to all the departments at the district level which contributes the services of Suwidha. These days various departments are connected to Suwidha Centres via human network. Paper Applications are collected at Suwidha centre after entering the data at Suwidha Centre, applications are sent to concerned departments. Departments re-entered the same data in their respective registers and after performing the required action, documents are send back to the Suwidha Centre. This is actually a very time consuming and cumbersome task. If all departments are connected to Suwidha Centre via Computer Networks, it will reduce the redundancy, save the time and

efforts of employees. It will also offer quick service delivery to citizens because once the required information is fed at Suwidha Centre; the electronic application will directly go to concerned department then department can reply quickly.

At the second end it should be connected to Suwidha centre at Tehsil/SubTehsil/Village Level. These days when people give the application at these Suwidha Centre, only services of Tehsil/SubTehsil/Village Level are provided to the citizens. Otherwise citizens are required to move to district Suwidha Centre for other services personally. But if all Suwidha Centres of Tehsil/SubTehsil/Village Level are directly connected with the District Suwidha Centre via computer networks, e-application can be send to District office for further processing. It will save the precious time of citizens and it will also ensure quick delivery of service to the citizens residing at Tehsil/SubTehsil/Village Level. In this way Suwidha may be popular and approachable to all.

At third end it should be connected to state level departments like Regional Passport Office, NIC and other departments which are included in providing services to citizens at state level. These days if some service need processing at state level then it is required to be send by post or submitted personally which delays the service delivery. If Suwidha Centres are connected via computer network at state level then application can be forwarded after verification electronically with surety and security. This will save lot of human efforts and energy being wasted these days.

At the Fourth end District level Suwidha Centre should be connected to other district level Suwidha Centres. These days Suwidha Centres at different districts are not inter connected. If a citizen is transferred from one district to another district, citizen has to move to previous district again-2 for services like birth certificate, shifting of gas/ration card connection etc. If district are interconnected via computer networks, information of one district can be accesses from other district or application can be send electronically and person could avail services at Suwidha Centre nearby.

7. CONCLUSIONS

In this paper researchers have studied the existing SUWIDHA and its functioning in the state of Punjab by collecting views of citizens who visit Suwidha Centres. Out of those views of people and own observations of Suwidha centre, researchers has proposed a new framework of Suwidha Centres network which would help to increase responsiveness and effectiveness at Suwidha centre across state, and would also help to reduce obstacles faced by the citizens of state.

With the proposed new framework researchers also like to recommend few changes at human behavior level and infrastructure level at Suwidha centre. In the age of Information Technology, people should consider IT as a favorable tool to reduce work load and quicker delivery of service. Researchers found through interactions with staff of Suwidha Centre that software used in these Suwidha Centre are not as effective and can be improved by making it sharable software which could be connected to other Suwidha Centre simultaneously, So that data updates at one Suwidha Centre could be accessible at other Suwidha Centre. In addition this software should be secured software so that any malicious software like virus, trojan are not able to attack and data should be secure. This should also have proper database administration software, so that if there is some crash of data it could be regained from the database. Moreover proper training of staff is a very important asset for improving the working of the system.

Infrastructure of Suwidha Centres should be improved with dedicated buildings and equipped with all basic facilities like proper sitting arrangements, drinking water facility, and comfortable environment. Implementation of proposed framework and better facilities with interconnectivity would surely help in effective working of e-Governance system in the State of Punjab.

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